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Constructing Arctic security: an inter-disciplinary approach to understanding security in the Barents region

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ABSTRACT. The field of Security Studies traditionally focused on military threats to states' survival, however, since the end of the Cold War the concept of security has widened and individuals and communities have gradually become viewed as appropriate referent objects of security: Multifaceted challenges facing communities at the sub-state level are increasingly regarded as security threats, including their potential to cause instability for the larger society, thus affecting states' security. In the Arctic region, a central challenge is that inhabitants are exposed to multiple non-traditional and non-military threats resulting from environmental, economic, and societal changes, which can be understood as threats to *human security*. We argue that a comprehensive approach to human security overlaps with the concept of *societal security*, and must therefore consider threats to collective identity and the essential conditions necessary for the maintenance and preservation of a distinct society. We see the human security framework as a suitable analytical tool to study the specific challenges that threaten the Arctic population, and in turn the well-being of Arctic societies. Therefore, we argue that utilising the concept of human security can promote societal security in the context of the Arctic, and in particular, its sub-regions, for example, the Barents region.

Introduction

The academic discipline of Security Studies arose from the fields of Political Science and International Relations as a result of the geopolitical and ontological changes that emerged with the Cold War. Security Studies has typically dealt with threats to the survival of valued referent objects, particularly sovereign states and their territorial boundaries, populations, and socio-political institutions. When the Cold War came to an end, the changing geopolitical reality also caused a parallel change to the concept of security. With the decreased tension between the superpowers, Russia and the United States, and acknowledgment of other longstanding or newly emerging global problems – such as environmental degradation, climate change, identity-based ethnic and religious conflicts, and poverty – state sovereignty was no longer the sole focus of what needed to be secured, and state institutions lost their monopoly as securitising actors. Instead, non-traditional security issues related to the survival, development and well-being of human populations gained momentum within security discourses. As a consequence, more complex and comprehensive concepts of security were developed, of which human security was one of the most prominent to materialise within global political discourse and in numerous state and multilateral policies.

Nonetheless, in popular discourse and state policy non-traditional aspects of Arctic security are still often ignored. Research on security in the Arctic largely focuses on 'traditional' security issues, i.e. threats in the military, political, and economic sectors and often is linked to and/or led by the state (for example Tamnes and Offerdal 2014; Kraska 2011; Byers 2010; Wilson Rowe 2009; Buzan and others 1998). This is likely due to the Arctic's Cold War military legacy and the region's abundance of natural resources, particularly hydrocarbons, which some Arctic states have depicted as of the utmost importance for their respective national security (Zojer 2014: 43–47; Heininen 2011). However, although the Arctic is rich in natural resources and resource abundance has sometimes led to violent conflicts (Le Billon 2001), in recent history

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Arctic resources have not been a source of significant military tension (Hilde 2014; Le Mière and Mazo 2013). This strong focus on traditional security largely ignores threats emerging from socio-environmental and socio-economic realities that impact diverse aspects of human and societal security of the four million Arctic inhabitants, both indigenous and non-indigenous. Rather than military danger, most current challenges and threats for Arctic inhabitants and communities originate from the interactions between climate change, environmental degradation, rapid economic development, industrialisation, integration into global markets, erosion of cultural traditions, disputes over political autonomy, or conflicts over land use (for example AHDR 2004; AHDR 2014; Hoogensen Gjørv and others 2014; Heininen 2010, 2013; Le Mière and Mazo 2013). Many of these challenges and threats are of particular relevance to the approximately 400,000 recognised indigenous inhabitants whose peoples have lived in the region for millennia, representing approximately one tenth of the total Arctic population (Hossain and Petrétei 2016).

As a result of these challenges, traditional patterns of life in the Arctic are changing or will be forced to change – and adapt to new realities. However, these traditional ways of life continue to shape the cultural and communal context from which many people obtain their identities. For most people, personal well-being is connected to membership in a group that provides an identity on the basis of language, traditions and customs, spirituality: in sum, a shared understanding of reality and common values, and which provides them with a feeling of belonging from which their sense of security is derived (UNDP 1994: 31). That is, the well-being of the individual is connected to the well-being of the broader community which they belong to. Societies with such a 'we-feeling' or sense of belonging are not necessarily territorially-based; shared values can exist transnationally and connect people across disparate geographies, as is the case for Arctic indigenous peoples in North America and the Barents region. Preservation of the essential identities that link people together is necessary for a society's survival and for a comprehensive sense of security among its members. The greater the prospective changes to identities and the practices that underpin it, the greater the challenge to societal security and human well-being for discrete groups of people.

The magnitude of changes occurring in the circumpolar region makes an analysis of societal security particularly relevant in the Arctic. The specific vulnerabilities faced by Arctic populations must be addressed using innovative, comprehensive and inclusive approaches to human security. A non-traditional and comprehensive approach to security helps to illustrate and analyse current and emerging threats that impact diverse aspects of human security for Arctic inhabitants, and allows Arctic communities to become more active in this process. A comprehensive approach to security should not only focus on the well-being of individuals, but needs to address challenges and threats to their community and societal security as well. Since human security is linked to numerous issues that influence societal security, promoting human security as a tool and developing policies addressing specific human security challenges can also promote societal security. However, while these comprehensive aspects of security are relevant across the Arctic, relatively little attention has been paid to applying a societal security lens to its various sub-regions.

Therefore, the authors argue that strengthening human security can be a promotional tool for promoting societal security in the Arctic. In this article, we suggest that promoting and sustaining societal identity is necessary to support overall human security in the Arctic. To support this argument, we first introduce the concepts of security and human security. Second we discuss advantages and limitations of the human security concept, before we finally elaborate why the concept is important in regards to Arctic developments and how its utilisation can promote societal security in the region, for which we use the Barents region as an exemplary case.

A multidisciplinary introduction to the concepts of security and human security

Security Studies is a widely recognised sub-discipline of International Relations (IR) and Political Science. In general, security is an old concept linked to the principle of survival: the survival of the individual, those in power, or the state. Realism and Liberalism have traditionally been the dominant theoretical approaches towards Security Studies and, particularly during the latter half of the 20th century, understood security to concern political and military threats to states' sovereignty and core national interests. Marxist and Constructivist theories later challenged these assumptions, but while Marxists theories focused on economic explanations of conflict, Constructivism, particularly Constructivist-inspired critical security theories, questioned the ontological and epistemological foundations of Security Studies. Constructivists argue that norms and ideas are structural factors that shape the identities, interests and behaviour of political actors, placing individuals and social groups, not states and intergovernmental organisations, at the centre of the international system (Agius 2013; McDonald 2013). Constructivism, with distinct branches and strong presence in both Europe and North America, is perhaps the most diverse of all the approaches to security (McDonald 2013; Wendt 1999; Adler and Barnett 1998; Biersteker and Weber 1996).

In the 1980s, new voices began arguing for a widening of security beyond threats to the political, military, and economic interests of states. These new approaches, which were linked to broader theoretical developments in Constructivism and Peace Research, questioned the foundational assumptions of traditional approaches to security: the state was no longer the sole referent object to be protected; individuals and social groups were identified

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as alternative referent objects; the nature and scope of threats changed as these were recognised as socially constructed and not objective material phenomena; and new securitising actors were recognised distinct from the state. Indeed, the very nature of Security Studies was contested (Bigo 2013; Collins 2013; Mutimer 2013; Williams 2013; Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010; Buzan and others 1998; Booth 2005).

In the 1990s, the introduction of the word *human* alongside the term *security* suggested the latter could no longer focus only on the survival of the state, but should include the survival and well-being of individuals and their communities (UNDP 1994). The concept of survival was also expanded to address intangible goods such as culture, identity, or human progress. Although physical survival is fundamental for any human population, to be truly secure one does not only need to be free from fear of immediate death or physical harm (freedom from fear), but also free from the absence of material and ideational goods essential for individual and collective survival (freedom from want), ranging from such basic needs as food and shelter to personal identity, spiritual beliefs, and communal belonging. These negative and positive forms of security are comparable to negative and positive human rights, where the 'wants' are as important as the 'fears' (Roe 2008; Hoogensen Gjørv 2012). Although their immediate relevance may be different, long-term consideration of both is necessary to achieve long-lasting human survival, security and well-being. However, the discussion around the limits of what freedom from fear and freedom from want are remains unsolved, and defining boundaries and establishing accepted roles for different actors in providing human security, in particular the role of the state, still remains a major challenge even after 20 years of academic debate and discussions (CSS 2011: 1).

Defining human security

Since its inception, human security has been theorised and critiqued from various ontological and epistemological perspectives, demonstrating both the contestation and malleability of the concept of security (Smith 2005). While illustrating the diversity and versatility of the human security concept, this also highlights the challenge of specifying what human security means and how it can be achieved. The move towards human security is situated within the broader process of 'widening and deepening' security that began in the 1980s (Buzan and Hansen 2009: 187). This shift emerged from recognition that it was untenable in a post-Cold War era characterised by American unipolarity, greater international cooperation, economic globalisation, environmental degradation, and asymmetrical and intra-state conflicts to restrict the study of security to military threats to sovereign states. Human security directly challenges Rationalist theories of international security that posit the sovereign state as the appropriate referent object of security because of its centrality to international political order, and which emphasise organised military violence as the central means through which states' national security can be threatened (Keohane 1988; Smith 2004). This traditional approach to security has changed profoundly in recent decades. Today, scholars, practitioners, policy-makers and publics have acknowledged a new reality where threats do not only come from other states, but also from within states from non-state actors and from non-military and non-violent sources related to environmental, health, economic, and societal challenges.

But there is still neither a universally accepted nor fully satisfactory definition of human security. Academics and practitioners agree on the minimum content for such a definition, but fail to establish clear boundaries for what is or is not related to human security. This is hardly surprising given that it was developed with the intention of enlarging the traditional understanding of security and incorporating a radically new account of what it included. In 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated:

> Human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. Such threats can exist at all levels of national income and development. (UNDP 1994: 23)

The UNDP report broadened the areas that must be addressed to achieve lasting and meaningful security for human communities. It listed seven non-exhaustive dimensions or areas of human security encompassing both freedom from fear and freedom from want, namely economic (assured basic income), food (assured access and possibility to purchase basic foods), health (assured access to basic health services), environment (protecting the environment – particularly water, soil, and air – while allowing for the sustainable use of natural resources now and by future generations), personal (protection from all kinds of physical violence and abuse), community (protection of the positive aspects and values of group, community or ethnicity identities; a negative traditional value listed by the report is genital mutilation of girls), and political security (protection and promotion of human rights). The report clearly states that these categories are closely interlinked and sometimes can overlap; yet, they offer an undeniable comprehensive framework that can ensure a holistic approach to human security (UNDP 1994: 25–33).

Many have built on the UNDP definition and its seven categories, broadening the understanding of threats and deepening the referent object from the level of the state to that of its population. For example, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan referred to human security as an inclusive notion that 'embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict' including for example 'human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential.' He added that '[f]reedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural

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environment – these are the interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national – security.' (Annan 2000). The 2003 report of the Commission on Human Security (CHS) defined human security as '[t]he protection of the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment [.. including] processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity' (CHS 2003: 4). These overreaching definitions have been largely criticised by authors like Hampson. As she points out, 'should personal fulfilment be placed alongside freedom as a basic right and public responsibility? [..] Placing the individual as the key point of reference, the human security paradigm assumes that the safety of the individual is the key to global security,' and naturally, 'when the security of individuals is threatened, so is international security' (Hampson 2013: 282 f.). The implications of this argument should be taken into consideration. On the one hand, aligning basic freedoms with 'personal fulfilment' may weaken academic analysis, as the limits of what is and is not security may be unclear, overly-subjective, and always contested. On the other hand, it may result in policy-makers feeling more inclined to ignore a too-inclusive definition of human security, resulting in policies that do not address the specific security challenges of the referent population. However, it should be noted that the UN definition refers not only to individuals but to groups of individuals or communities. Moreover, what is included within the 'fears' and the 'wants' refers to nothing less than the areas in which states and their institutions should be working in order to protect and enhance the well-being of their populations, and thus preserve the social contract by which people delegate their sovereignty to the state in return for security and social order (Locke 2014). Human security, broadly understood, can thus be seen as a tool for the promotion of good governance and effective state institutions.

Theories, approaches and criticisms to security and human security

Human security has been strongly critiqued by Rationalist theories of IR, especially Realism, which generally dismiss human security's analytical validity. This is unsurprising given human security challenges many of Rationalism's central premises. Rationalist critiques can be categorised in two ways: objections to the widening of security issues away from traditional politico-military issues, and objections to the deepening of security to referent objects above and below the sovereign state. The first critique unites disparate scholars in the view that by recognising all harmful phenomena as potentially relevant to human security is too broad to be analytically useful. For instance, Roland Paris (2001: 88) calls human security 'slippery by design [… which] diminishes the concept's usefulness as a guide for academic research or policymaking.' As other scholars have also discussed (Buzan 1983; Walt 1991; Baldwin 1997), Paris' focus on organised military violence offers analytical coherence to security studies, without which potential threats to human security are so numerous they encompass virtually any conceivable danger and render 'security' too broad to be useful. In an oft-quoted passage, Paris (2001: 93) observes: 'If human security means almost anything, then it effectively means nothing.' This concern is echoed by Keith Krause's (2004: 367) warning that for human security to be useful it must avoid becoming 'a loose synonym for "bad things that can happen".' Taylor Owen (2004) has attempted to resolve this impasse by proposing a threshold-based definition that focuses on the most acute threats within a given context, rather than an *a priori* determination of which threats matter most. He writes 'human security threats should be included not because they fall into a particular category, such as violence, but because of their actual severity [..] What human security means is not defined by an arbitrary list, but by what threats are actually affecting people [..] Only those that pass a threshold of severity should be included' (Owen 2004: 20).

Other objections to human security focus on the implications of deepening security studies. Realist objections to valorising forms of human community above the level of the sovereign state – such as alliances, regional blocs, the international community, or even the entire human species – are well established in IR (Mearsheimer 1994/95; Rynning 2011). However, some critiques focus particularly on deepening human security below the state to the level of the individual. Barry Buzan, for instance, finds human security incoherent because 'individuals are not free standing, but only take their meaning from the societies in which they operate: they are not some kind of bottom line to which all else can or should be reduced or subordinated' (Buzan 2004: 370). Security, in this account, is not an individual property but a relationship between individuals, their communities, and the state (Rothschild 1995: 61). Thus, the perceived individualistic focus of the UNDP approach to human security operationalises security at a level at which it can never be achieved; individual life cannot be entirely secured, nor can security be measured solely at the level of the individual human. Rather, meaningful security can only be achieved, and measured, in terms of the collective security of human communities, whether or not these are congruent with the boundaries of sovereign states. Efforts to secure human beings individually comprise, according to Buzan (2004), 'a reductionist, idealistic notion that adds little analytical value' to the concept of security.

Given that it, too, critiques Rationalist accounts of security, it is notable that Critical Security Studies has often also been sceptical of human security. Critical Security Studies is generally characterised by a normative concern for promoting conditions of human freedom and emancipation. According to Ken Booth (1991: 319): 'Emancipation produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security.' While this leads critical scholars

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to generally support widening security to include the diversity of threats that restrict human emancipation, it has also led to scepticism over the liberal theoretical valorisation of the individual and the institutionalisation of human security. Despite human security's 'Asian roots' (Acharya 2001: 44), the putatively Western liberal origins of human security are invoked throughout the literature, usually in the context of explaining the shift in focus from states to 'the individual' (see Rothschild 1995). Giorgio Shani observes that, consequently, in most human security discourse 'the cultural context within which the individual realises his/her self-consciousness or is "empowered" is either ignored or downplayed [.. resulting in a] de-historicised and deracinated individual' susceptible to homogenising global forces and vulnerable to external interference in their agency (Shani 2011: 57).

Human security often naturalises the liberal individual as the referent object of security, implicitly privileging the political philosophy of Western states and reinforcing the view of human security not 'as a concept that is relevant the world over [..] but as a service offered by the global north to the global south, defined by the global north (scholarship and policymaking) and distributed by the global north' (Hoogensen and Stuvøy 2006: 216). Others share this critique by noting that human security discourse locates threats to people in the Global North and the Global South within the developing world (Chandler, 2008: 427–238), labelling human security a Western construction imposed on the Global South (Duffield and Waddel 2006). When applied to developing or non-Western contexts, therefore, human security risks being another example of 'virtuous imperialism' by a hegemonic and interventionist West (Hoogensen Gjørv and others 2014). On the other hand, the concept is backed by the G-77, a coalition of developing countries which have co-developed the Sustainable Development Goals, discussed below, and the African Union, which has widely accepted the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (African Union 2005).

A similar discussion relates to the applicability of human security in the Arctic, as not all analysts are convinced it is an appropriate paradigm for the region. Scholars such as Griffiths (2008) see it as a southern imposition on the High North (southern as a referral to the geographic location of the political centres within the Arctic states), while others (Greaves 2012a; Hoogensen and others 2009) insist that it is an appropriate framework. The reality is that any definition of security is 'an act of power which marginalises some and empowers others' (Grayson as cited in Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007: 43). The key to avoiding a patronising imposition of Western concepts and structures onto Northerners when analysing human security in the Arctic is to listen to the voices of the people themselves, and to incorporate their priorities and understandings of threat into the definition of human security when being employed. This means more than simply asking, for example, indigenous people to reflect on the terminology being offered to them, since the challenge for indigenous peoples 'is first and foremost to decolonize ourselves. We suffer from a colonised mind' (Stenbæk 1985: 59).

Some critical scholars express concern that how human security has been institutionalised reinforces state-centrism that undermines the basic purpose of human security of employing people as the referent object of security analysis. Particularly when associated with humanitarian intervention or a human security foreign policy agenda, human security often reinforces a secure/insecure dichotomy according to which people's security is considered determined by the security of their respective state (for examples see Peou 2002; Thomas and Tow 2002; Behringer 2005; Riddell-Dixon 2005). By their very nature, most human security threats transcend state borders, but analytical and policy state-centrism obscure how the causes, transmission, and impacts of human insecurity cross state boundaries. Overlooking trans- and sub-state insecurities reinforces 'the dominant state-centric security orthodoxy [that has] provided at best a very partial representation of reality and at worst completely misunderstood, misrepresented, or ignored other important security concerns' (Thomas 1999: 9). This state-centrism is compounded when human security is restricted to violent threats, because it privileges state policies and actors engaged in the organisation and deployment of military force. Taken with the tendency to valorise the liberal individual, critical responses suggest human security discourse perpetuates power/knowledge relations that privilege northern states and their citizens.

State-centric human security analysis is also problematic because of the role that states can play as agents of *in*security for their citizens. Much human security theory assumes the state remains the central provider of security for its citizens. For instance, to Krause and Williams (1997: 43), 'security is synonymous with citizenship,' such that creating states capable of delivering the goods of citizenship is synonymous with providing human security. The literature notes the prospect for predatory, despotic, or unstable states to threaten their own citizens' security, but generally locates such possibilities in particular regions of the Global South (for example Hampson and others 2002; Thomas and Wilkin 1999). But by assuming human security accompanies the existence of effective states, conventional human security theories have difficulty explaining conditions of insecurity for minority or marginalised groups within wealthy states with high security-provision capabilities (Greaves 2012b). This is particularly the case when such insecurity is caused by the state itself. States can threaten human security directly – as when, for instance, state actors inflict violence upon their own population – or indirectly, when state policy contributes to the (re)production of structures or conditions that harm particular groups of citizens. Critical human security analyses have thus increasingly looked within developed states to examine the actions and structures that generate human security threats for non-dominant populations, such as poor, racialised, or otherwise marginal groups (Newman 2010). Such analyses have included studies of

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human security for indigenous peoples (Greaves 2016a; Greaves 2016b), women (Stuvøy 2014), indigenous women (Deiter and Rude 2005; Irlbacher-Fox and others 2014), and migrants (Lowry 2002; Ibrahim 2005). Human security theory can thus illuminate insecurities that exist within developed states, but if applied uncritically, can also obscure such threats by locating them primarily within the Global South. States can, of course, contribute positively to the human security of their citizens; but too often they do not, and such negative human security effects are not limited to more or less developed states. In effect, the existence of national security for a state does not automatically entail human security for all people living within that state.

Finally, constructivist theories of IR have also engaged in debates around human security, primarily with respect to their ability to theorise the various disputed approaches to human security (Newman 2001). Indeed, the very existence of distinct conceptions competing with each other for policy relevance is readily explained through constructivist theories that understand security claims as speech acts attempted to discursively construct particular threat-referent pairings as security-relevant, such as securitisation theory (Buzan and others 1998). Applying the term 'security' is not an innocent act. Security is a socially constructed concept and has a specific meaning only within a particular social context. Because security has a history, as a term traditionally associated with the state and military, there is a risk that securitising an issue will leave it vulnerable to being militarised. In this account, human security advocates are securitising actors making claims that people should be the conceptual focus of security policy (Floyd 2007). Related enterprises that construct people as worthy of protection through exceptional measures, such as humanitarianism, can also be conceived through the logic of securitisation (Watson 2011). Other scholars argue human security reflects the ideational focus of constructivist IR more broadly, underscoring the role and relevance of changing norms and values to the practice of global politics (Newman 2001). Indeed, even when not examined through an explicitly human security lens, many of the major policy achievements of the human security foreign policy agenda – such as normative prohibitions on the use of certain weapons, prohibitions on the use of child soldiers, and the establishment of the International Criminal Court – can be effectively understood using constructivist theoretical tools (Price 1998; Fehl 2004). Realism, Liberalism and Marxism fail to explain and address the broadened understanding of security proposed by critical approaches linked to Constructivism, as well as a reality that seems far more complex than the assumptions of traditional Rationalist understandings of security.

Besides offering dynamic new perspectives, constructivist theories provide a broader understanding of the concepts of security and human security, as well as useful epistemological and methodological approaches to study them. In other words, constructivist theories provide a solid and comprehensive theoretical framework that helps to identify and analyse human security challenges in a particular area, and to frame and propose innovative, comprehensive and inclusive policy proposals.

Linking theory and praxis

Human security nonetheless not only presents a theoretical discourse, but also found practical implementation in numerous fields, whereas the United Nations has been the leading body in applying the concept: In fact it could be argued that much, if not most, of the development work carried out by UN and other specialised development agencies during recent decades, including the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is linked to the areas of human security outlined in the 1994 UNDP report. However, bringing the body of theoretical knowledge to the work being carried out by human security practitioners and making it relevant to them remains a challenge. Part of the challenge, as we have seen, is defining boundaries of what is and is not human security. Another concern is developing approaches and tools that link theory and praxis in a meaningful way for academics, practitioners (including policy-makers), and the public. But yet another challenge has been finding a way to measure threats, progress in reducing threats, and eliminating their root causes. In particular, the disciplines of Economics, Development Studies, and Law have made significant progress in linking the praxis and theory of human security.

Economy, development, and human security

Much of the academic work on human security in the fields of Economics and Development began with Amartya Sen, who in 1999 called for a new approach that should see development 'as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy' (Sen 1999: 3). Sen claims that human freedom is necessary to achieve real and lasting development. He argues that development should enable and enhance the freedoms people enjoy: 'Freedom to satisfy hunger, or to achieve sufficient nutrition, or to obtain remedies for treatable illnesses, or the opportunity to be adequately clothed or sheltered, or to enjoy clean water or sanitary facilities' (Ibid.: 4). He also explains that rapid economic development should serve to promote, among other goals, transparent governance, increased political participation, enhanced social systems, mechanisms to reach the most vulnerable people, and ecological responsibility, all with the objective of supporting a 'concerted promotion of security of daily life' (Sen 2000: 3–5). Development should therefore not only lead to macroeconomic improvements, but also be reflected in better lives and more secure livelihoods for those for whom development is or should be intended.

Also significant in linking development and human security was the publication of the *Report by the Commission on the Measurements of Economic Performance and Social Progress* (Stiglitz and others 2009), or

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the so-called Sarkozy Report. The report addressed the concern of the French government, one of the largest international development donors, 'to consider better ways of measuring social progress' (Easterlin 2010: 119), that is, to better reflect progress, development and freedoms (and thus, security) in terms other than economic, much in the way started by Sen.

The work begun through these initial efforts has been complemented by numerous institutions and scholars. For example, in 2008 David A. Hastings published the first version of the 'Human Security Index' (updated in 2010), in which he uses different socioeconomic and socio-political macro data to develop a global index of economic, environmental, and socially-driven threats to human security (Hastings 2008, 2010). Other indexes also inspired by or heavily reflecting human security principles have been published by, for example, the World Economic Forum (WEF 2015). In the Arctic context, the Arctic Human Development Reports (AHDR 2004; AHDR 2014) provide an excellent baseline from which to discuss and analyse development issues and challenges in the Arctic. Should this discussion be aligned with the approach started by UNDP and Sen, it can lead to a fruitful analysis and mapping of threats to human security in the Arctic in a manner distinct from state-centric macroeconomic data.

Integration of the concept of human security in the discipline of law

Legal rules are promulgated in order to protect the subjects of law against arbitrary behaviour. Safeguarding security requires the existence of a higher authority – the sovereign – implicitly agreed upon by those to be ruled as implied in the 'social contract theory'. Law is underpinned by the sovereign's order, which has both internal and external dimensions; internal, by way of enjoying exclusive legislative, judicial, and administrative power within its territorial jurisdiction, and external, by protecting its 'territorial integrity and political independence' (UN Charter 1945: art. 2(4)) from direct foreign interference. While sovereignty still plays a central role in the legal field, the traditional understanding of sovereignty-oriented security has become blurred by new developments taking place since the end of the Cold War, as discussed above. In the legal discipline, a broadened security agenda has already been affirmed both within the framework of legally binding United Nations Security Council resolutions, and according to international human rights as referred to in the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Program of Action that ended the debate over the relative hierarchy of civil and political rights versus economic, social, and cultural rights (Vienna Declaration 1991). The Declaration stated that all human rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent and interconnected – the holistic view embracing all aspects of challenges facing human beings. Increasingly, legal approaches to security also endorse collective dimensions affecting a group of people, such as, for example, the right to a clean environment, right to development, or the rights of indigenous peoples.

Despite the uncertain realisation of these rights, they provide normative importance to the understanding of human security. While human security as an analytical framework does not have any independent legal status, the policy goals expressed by utilising this framework have a significant role to play in norm building within the legal discipline. Much of the human security agenda has already been embraced within human rights frameworks, which impose obligations upon states to comply with, for example, the ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) or the ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). Much of the human security agenda also requires concurrent actions and policies to be integrated within domestic and international law. The Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention (1997), the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005) and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (2009) are only some examples of the endorsement of human security principles within the framework of international law. As such, while some of these legal documents capture aspects of human security issues in the Arctic, other aspects inform the need for the adoption of legal rules. The two recently adopted Arctic specific legal instruments under the auspices of the Arctic Council – the agreements on search and rescue, and cooperation on oil spill response – can be understood as motivated by human security concerns within the region.

A non-traditional security approach to meet Arctic realities

Indeed, human security offers a very useful tool for both, analysing and responding to the multiple aspects of current Arctic realities. While recent trends in the Arctic – such as offshore oil and gas development, increased mining activities and other extractive industries, or the broad influence of globalization – may have implications for traditional security concerns, these developments have actually strengthened cooperation among Arctic actors. Most of the region's natural resources are thought to lie in undisputed sovereign territory, and thus far circumpolar states have shown strong commitments to abide by international law. Many observers argue the Arctic will remain a peaceful region free of violent inter-state conflict for the foreseeable future, unless external events spill over and affect regional cooperation. Thus, conflicts in the Arctic occur between regional and central governments or different economic sectors, as well as among different interest groups, rather than between states (Tamnes and Offerdal 2014; Berkman and Vylegzhanin 2013; Le Mière and Mazo 2013; Nicol and Heininen 2013; Morozov 2009).

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After the Cold War, common interests in the Arctic, as well as in sub-regions such as the Barents, triggered processes of region building and eventually led to the emergence of new political institutions (Keskitalo 2004). Regionalisation directly impacts security, since 'region building processes are used as a security policy approach – as a way to promote peace and stability' (Rafaelsen 2013: 487). For example, the Arctic Council (AC) was established in 1996 as the successor to the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), and is considered the main forum for inter-state cooperation in the Arctic, as well as for engagement with indigenous peoples and other non-governmental organizations. While military issues are explicitly excluded from the AC's mandate, cooperation on business development, emergency preparedness and response, and environmental protection decrease the potential for regional confrontation. The five Arctic littoral states of Canada, Denmark (Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Norway, Russia, and the USA (the so-called Arctic-5) have affirmed their commitments to peaceful cooperation in numerous fields, including the settlement of maritime boundary disputes through the existing international legal framework under the Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS).

Relevance of non-traditional security in the Arctic: the case of the Barents region

As Zellen indicates (albeit while focusing on geopolitics and not critical theories of security), the traditional focus in the Arctic has been linked to Western understandings of security based on European and North American interpretations of threats and realities. Security in the Arctic was framed by and tied to security in Western Europe and North America; it was never *Arctic* (Zellen 2009: 86). This, however, is changing for three reasons. First, the old Cold War realities no longer apply, and therefore the Arctic is no longer another site of potential superpower confrontation. Second, academic and policy-making understandings of security have broadened. And third, new security challenges and threats have emerged in recent decades, and these threats and challenges cannot be understood or tackled through old approaches. In this new context, human security is a perfect tool for research and analysis of new threats and challenges to security in the Arctic, placing human beings and communities as both referent objects and securitising actors, and allowing for a new approach where Arctic security can be considered truly Arctic.

This is also true for the Eurasian part of the Arctic, the Barents region, which encompasses the Arctic areas of Scandinavia and northwestern Russia. The establishment of the intergovernmental and interregional Barents Cooperation regime (which embraces the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council) can be interpreted as an attempt to promote peace and stability in the region. While traditional security and political issues were initially significant, cooperation currently focuses more on safety (particularly maritime safety), culture, and business. Although the Barents region has a history of cooperation (for example the Pomor trade), there are significant differences between the west and the east, such as standards of living, language and culture, religion, or political and economic traditions, which date back to pre-Soviet times. Nonetheless, region-building may help to establish or strengthen a Barents regional identity (Zimmerbauer 2013). In this regard, the Barents region is of particular interest, as the long border of the Russian Federation separated West and East during the Cold War, including several hundred kilometres of border between Norway, a NATO member, and the former Soviet Union. However, by promoting positive cross-border interaction through the Barents Cooperation, the 'involved countries signalled an important shift from hard security priorities to an alternative and diversified security approach' (Rafaelsen 2013: 486).

With their specific characteristics, different regions may have distinct understandings of what human security means, and consequently may identify different sets of challenges. Even within regions, sub-regions may experience distinct challenges that result in security being understood differently than in neighbouring areas. Every society, including well-organised and stable ones, have their own wants and fears: 'Risks and insecurities are case- and person-specific, and partly subjective, so human security analysis requires listening to people's "voices", their fears, perceptions, including the "voices of the poor" but also of the rich' (Gasper 2014: 34). The Arctic, for example, should not be understood as a homogeneous socioeconomic or political theatre, but rather as a region of sub-regions, such as the Barents (see also Tamnes and Offerdal 2014: 170), where different characteristics and realities are to be found depending on geographic, demographic, and socio-political distinctions.

In the Barents region, the security threats faced by the northern populations do not reflect typical Realist concerns such as armed confrontation of inter or intra-state nature, but do include socio-economic insecurities, educational and health issues, climate change, and modernisation pressures on northern and indigenous lifeworlds (Greaves 2016b). Due to its abundance of natural resources and relative accessibility (compared to other Arctic areas), the region is undergoing a rapid process of economic development. The Barents region thus reflects many of the distinctive features of the circumpolar Arctic, and offers a multi-faceted case study for examining comprehensive security in the region. Besides including the territory of four different states (Finland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden), the Barents region also encompasses the homelands of indigenous peoples, the Nenets, Sámi, and Veps. The region furthermore is the home of other minority groups, such as the Komi or Pomor in Russia, or the Finnish speaking community of Bugøynes in northern Norway. Climate change and cultural pressures are perhaps the greatest security threats facing northern inhabitants, and in the Arctic the two are intimately related (Greaves 2012b; 2016b). In turn, these

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contribute to generating other security demands, such as that of self-determination, by diverse groups of indigenous peoples (Koutaki and Farget 2012; ICC 2009). These developments contribute to the promotion of a security discourse from non-traditional perspectives resulting in significant effects on local communities at both individual and community levels.

The changes occurring in the region are generating tensions that create increasingly vulnerable social, economic, and environmental conditions for many local and indigenous communities (Lukovich and McBean 2009: 699; USAID 2004: 3). While some may benefit from new activities that bring economic benefits by employing locals or constructing new infrastructure, others may suffer harmful or unintended impacts. After all, natural resource extraction and other major development projects are one of the most significant sources of abuse of the rights of indigenous peoples (Anaya 2011: para 82). The *Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region 2009–2012* points out that the 'present increased selection of resources does not necessarily lead to development of the local communities and indigenous peoples' communities, but rather to problems of industrial, environmental and social kind' and criticises lack of involvement of local inhabitants (WGIP 2009: 13). Another relevant aspect of human security for Arctic communities is that the region, particularly the remote areas, suffers from high levels of poverty. While the Barents region is rich in natural resources, providing opportunities for economic growth and development, the local perspective in the remote areas is dominated by a lack of financial resources, infrastructure, and services, and people and livelihoods often struggle to benefit from regional development (Tennberg and others 2014: 68). Establishing new economic activities, such as large-scale natural resource extraction, may create new job opportunities and lead to improved infrastructure, but may also hamper traditional or informal economies, which are still important for many northern inhabitants. For instance, activities such as mining or forestry increase competition over land use and decrease the availability of traditional foods such as berries, mushrooms, and animal products, which are important for meeting healthy dietary needs. Obstacles to accessing traditional food resources or their contamination from pollution also affect the safety and quality of traditional food chains (Letchera and others 2010). Imported food that is heavily processed and less healthy may contribute to various health-related risks for communities in the North (Hedlund and others 2014; Jorgenson and Kue 2008: 291).

The impacts of ongoing developments not only affect the continuance of traditional livelihoods but can also be considered as a transformation of a group's identity, resulting in a threat to the societal security. For instance, reindeer-herding practices are an important cultural marker and a common means of subsistence for many Sámi people in Fennoscandia (Aarsæther and others 2004: 136). Although the right to practice reindeer herding is not an exclusive right to Sámi in all four Barents countries, the practice is regarded as an emblem of Sámi identity (Seurujärvi-Kari and others 1997: 21). The practice has also been a typical cultural feature and essential part of other indigenous cultures in northern Eurasia like for the Nenets' (Pennanen 2002: 60). Due to climate change, reindeer herding is becoming less and less resilient (Magga and others 2011), and the amount of grazing land has gradually shrunk due to new forms of land use (Koivurova and others 2015: 13). A loss of herding traditions would ultimately also affect the communal identity of these peoples since language, cultural artefacts, and spirituality are closely linked to reindeer herding activities (Pennanen and Näkkäläjärvi 2002). For many coastal Sámi, fishing has equal importance as reindeer herding activities to the inland Sámi, but is also becoming increasingly difficult as commercial fisheries extend further north because of more accessible waters (ACIA 2005: 696, 699–701). But also near shore mining activities and their related discharges endanger the fishing grounds of coastal communities, as it is for example the case in the Kvalsund municipality in Norway, where protests of the local Sámi against a new mining project remained unsuccessful. While outmigration already weakened the Sámi identity, this new threat to local fisheries may increase the trend (Koivurova and others 2015: 31). Even inland fisheries, such as salmon fishing, have become threatened due to growing interest from outside actors. For example, the Tana river valley, located between Norway and Finland and being the home of Sámi people on both sides of the border, is increasingly attracting tourists for salmon fishing, and today over one fourth of the fish is harvested by tourists (Tana River Fish Management no date).

While informal economic activities, such as hunting, herding, fishing, or berry picking are an important part of northern livelihoods for indigenous as well as non-indigenous peoples, indigenous cultures are more vulnerable. In this respect, indigenous peoples are more vulnerable to threats to their societal security, because their spiritual and cultural systems are based on a close connection to the land and the practice of hunting on it. Whereas, non-indigenous people may also depend on hunting for food, they are affected differently by environmental changes because the land and their relationship to it does not form part of their collective identity or sense of self in the same way as for indigenous peoples (Greaves 2012b). As minorities across the region and within their respective states, 'the preservation of indigenous culture is the paramount security issue from the perspective of Arctic indigenous groups themselves' (Exner-Pirot 2012: 4).

Drawing on indigenous cultural resources in framing understandings of security is also appropriate because these resources potentially allow a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the issues. This can be seen, for example, in relation to environmental pressures, where indigenous data, in the form of historical memory

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of climate patterns and change and its impact (often called Traditional Knowledge), can complement data derived from scientific practices, as for example in the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA 2005; see also Martello 2008). A holistic approach to the relationship between environmental security and other security sectors is also encouraged by indigenous understandings of 'the deep interconnection between human beings and other elements of creation' (Alfred 1999: 60).

A non-traditional security framework is also able to account for threats perceived differently by non-indigenous Arctic inhabitants. They, too, live in relatively fragile communities that are affected by many of the same socio-economic and socio-political trends and challenges affecting indigenous peoples. Although the languages and cultures of non-indigenous northerners are less likely to be affected by these changes, they do have to adapt to the changes that economic development, evolving demographics, and climate change are bringing to the region. Besides helping identify and address challenges common to all northerners, human security could help identify possible areas where the realities for non-indigenous peoples and indigenous peoples differ, thus supporting the development and implementation of targeted policies.

Clearly, non-traditional security challenges are often interconnected and mutually constitutive. For example, environmental hazards threaten the maintenance of indigenous cultures, which is a form of community security: pollution contaminates traditional food supplies that affect food security, further threatening people's health security; and reduced or thinner ice leads to behavioural changes in animal patterns, resulting in changing ecosystems for both humans and animals. Chronic societal problems such as unemployment, domestic violence, alcoholism, and substance abuse can also contribute to human insecurity when their effects become severe or widespread enough to affect the fabric of entire communities. Consequently, threats to human security not only endanger the well-being of individuals, but the viability of whole communities, and thus the capability to preserve the essential conditions for societies' survival. Simultaneously, one aspect of security can undermine another, making the pursuit of security a contradictory exercise. Thus, it is important to emphasise the question of how security is perceived, and how perceptions of security can be changed so that certain practices or institutions believed to provide one form of security can be altered to achieve another form of security.

Human security as a promotional tool for societal security in the Arctic

A great virtue of the human security approach is precisely the feature for which it is most criticised: its breadth and flexibility. This flexibility is crucial because human security issues in the Arctic are multi-faceted and include dimensions that have not always been prioritised even within the human security literature. Moreover, a narrow definition of security or human security would fail to address most of the threats that challenge Arctic populations (Exner-Pirot 2012: 3).

But the breadth of the human security concept is also problematic. Security is an essentially contested concept, meaning its definition will always be debated in the same way as terms like 'order', 'justice', and 'freedom' (Smith 2005). This does not mean that security can mean anything, but it does mean that it is useful and understandable only in relation to other ideas and to the time and circumstances to which it is being applied (Bain 2006). The human security approach has particular advantages and virtues for analysing a range of issues facing the Arctic region and its peoples, but is ultimately as much a normative project as it is an epistemological instrument, with value for addressing issues that might otherwise be ignored or underestimated by policymakers.

The question of what exactly we mean by security is important in another sense, where again the human security approach has advantages over alternative conceptualisations. For human beings, life is about more than simple survival. Humans live in complex social organisations, devise elaborate belief systems, and aspire to a certain quality of life, not just a certain quantity of necessities. These 'psycho-social' needs reflect the reality that individuals not only have material needs for basic survival, but also non-material requirements for identity, participation and autonomy. They also need a satisfactory relationship with time, 'an acceptance of the past and a positive grasp of the future' (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007: 44). Consequently, security as a concept can neither meaningfully be applied only to individuals nor to states, but must consider the relationship between individuals and the communities they are embedded in, whether or not the boundaries of these communities are congruent with that of a sovereign state.

While human security has often focused on the individual, Arctic inhabitants generally assess their identities and understand the security problems facing them in terms of their community. Thus, it is the individual within the community or the community itself that is the key referent object for Arctic security, and threats are as much cultural and environmental as they are economic and political. Consequently, a comprehensive approach to security should not only focus on individual well-being, but must also take account of threats affecting the bonds that connect human collectivities, since 'most people derive security from their membership in a group [..] that can provide a cultural identity and a reassuring set of values' (UNDP 1994: 31). These bonds of common identity have been described by the Copenhagen School as 'societal security', which, aside from military, environmental, economic, and political security, forms one of the main sectors that Buzan and others (1998) defined for their security framework. They define societal security as 'the ability of a society to persist under changing conditions and possible and actual threats. More specifically, it is about the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for

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evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and religious and national identity and custom' (Wæver and others 1993: 23). Thus, 'society', or the collective identity of a distinct group of people, is the referent object to be protected (Buzan and others 1998).

Societal security represents a key dimension of the broader human security agenda within the Barents region. While the two understandings of security can be distinguished from each other (Thiel 2007: 5) in practice, in the Barents region they are fundamentally inter-related. Wæver and others argue that threats to societal security, understood as threats to collective identity, reflect factors ranging from 'the suppression of its expression, to interference with its ability to reproduce' (1993: 21). For the original population of the Barents region, while societal insecurity clearly exists in the former sense of threats to the survival of distinctive cultural practices and to some communities also in regard of language, these cannot be separated from the broader human security problems which threaten the societies 'ability to reproduce' itself. This is true both in a general sense, as with economic or health-care deficiencies that encourage out-migration, but also in a specific sense, for example as environmental changes and the evolution of economic activities threaten cultural identifiers such as the Sámi reindeer herding and fisheries.

We argue that human security as an analytical framework provides a useful tool for promoting societal security in the Arctic. This reflects our view that 'security' has different inherent meanings; in this case, human security provides an analytical and policy tool that can be used to promote a certain kind of security as a public good that can be experienced in tangible and ideational ways by actual groups of people. The communal identities of Arctic residents provide a valuable example because they have undergone substantial change over a relatively short period of time in recent decades, and continue to experience significant and increasing pressures from the combined effects of economic disruption and modernisation, colonisation, and human-caused environmental change. Arctic peoples, particularly indigenous peoples, are distinct from even their fellow citizens who do not inhabit the Arctic, and have strongly developed senses of their unique collective identities (for examples see Saugestad 2012; Sabin 2014). Their identities are what make them specific peoples; to undermine the basis of those collective identities is thus to undermine the foundation of Arctic peoples' shared experiences. Quite simply, the loss of their identities threatens their existence as distinct communities.

Linking societal security and human security makes it possible to analyse those identities and the specific threats they are experiencing while avoiding discussing particular groups or societies in monolithic terms. For example, in discussing the threats to cultural security facing Sámi people, it is important to understand that among Sámi there are wide variations in terms of the kinds of threats considered most critical, and their level of resilience in facing them. The Sámi language is threatened, but it is not a single language, but rather a group of related ones, and some of the languages are in far more critical conditions than others. Similarly, the interests of reindeer herding Sámi are not necessarily the same as those of coastal Sámi. Nor are the positions of the Sámi within the states they inhabit politically or economically identical. The conditions of Sámi vary significantly across Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, and Sámi in urban areas face different challenges to their culture and identity as reindeer herders in rural regions. Such distinctions are crucial for an effective overall analysis of human security in the Arctic.

Despite the criticism attracted by the concept of human security, our argument is that human security can and should be understood as the security of individuals within communities. Human security can therefore be used at the analytical level to promote security, including societal security, for example by supporting the identification of issues and self-identified threats affecting Arctic communities. If the general well-being of individuals is not achieved, it would be difficult to argue that such well-being is achieved at the community level or above (for example at the state). Addressing human security issues means nothing less than promoting traditional and non-traditional security at all its levels.

Conclusions

During the Cold War, Security Studies focused on military and political threats to states as referent objects and, in this regard, the Arctic was seen as a potential theatre of inter-state conflict. Since the 1990s, more comprehensive approaches, such as human security, have offered a broader understanding of the concept of security that has both challenged and complemented traditional theories. While criticism of traditional security studies helped to widen the discourse of security, the end of the Cold War also led to decreased tensions between the East and West blocs. This had significant implications for the Arctic, allowing the Arctic states to establish limited, but growing, regional cooperation through institutions such as the Arctic Council or the Barents Cooperation.

Nonetheless, popular and official security discourses on the Arctic still tend to focus on state-centric security issues, ignoring or downplaying the wants and fears of Arctic residents. However, increasing industrial activities due to resource extraction impact the livelihoods of Arctic populations, which are also challenged by other environmental and socio-economic changes. Studying Arctic security solely from a traditional perspective ignores a majority of threats and insecurities facing people in the Arctic, both indigenous and non-indigenous. One of the results of ignoring or downplaying non-traditional security issues is that Arctic populations become passive actors when it comes to what they perceive to threaten their own security.

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The concept of human security offers a more comprehensive approach to Security Studies that places people and communities as the referent objects of security analysis. The 1994 UNDP report's seven interrelated dimensions of human security (economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political security) have proven useful for many academic disciplines; the report has influenced international legal frameworks, International Relations and Political Science, and informed the core of the international development agenda. Thus, the concept of human security offers a useful framework for analysing and identifying a wide range of threats and challenges the Arctic population is facing, but ultimately it is a normative project as well as an epistemological instrument. The use of human security to identify, analyse and provide applicable knowledge to academic and policy-making communities allows for a broadened and case-relevant understanding of security from multi-, and cross-disciplinary angles. As discussed above, the Arctic is a low-conflict zone where security challenges emerge from climate change, fast and resource-targeted economic development, environmental issues, or limited political participation of local and in particular indigenous communities. These changes affect not only the environmental and socio-demographic realities of the Arctic, but also present potential challenges to traditional livelihoods, languages, identities and cultures.

In the end, security is not an individual property but a relationship between individuals and the communities in which they are embedded and from which they obtain their identities, whether or not the community is a sovereign state. In this account, human life is not only about simple survival, but people's struggle for forms of well-being that includes their 'psycho-social' needs. Consequently, the key referent object of a meaningful and comprehensive security approach has to be the individual within its community. Human security is a useful analytical tool for identifying challenges and threats to people because it is embedded with certain assumptions about the protection of ideas and values, of dignity and solidarity, as well as lives and social structures. It is able both to reflect the 'narrow' human security approach (freedom from physical threats), and the 'broader' approach, more obviously appropriate for the Arctic, which seeks to protect 'the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment' and 'to empower [people] to act on their own behalf' (CHS 2003: 2, 4). To the extent that security is about ensuring human development (Young and Einarsson 2004), we argue that promotion of human security also promotes security at the societal level. Our point therefore is that enforcing the concept of human security as an analytical tool helps to identify the particular challenges and threats that face a community, and enlarges the number of actors able to participate security-related discourses. If properly employed, human security can support the promotion of societal security and the development and implementation of policies that address the wants and fears of Arctic peoples.

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