

## **INSECURITY AS A LIVESTYLE**

### **LA INSEGURIDAD COMO ESTILO DE VIDA**

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#### **Resumen**

Este artículo investiga la relación entre la antropología, los estudios de seguridad y la producción de conocimiento. Su objetivo es brindar una lectura antropológica crítica del concepto de seguridad, analizar el proceso de securitización y proponer el concepto de inseguritización. La seguridad se considera aquí como un término ideal cuyo significado es el resultado de una producción subjetiva de la estructura de poder-saber. Por tanto, a través de un análisis del proceso de securitización considerado como un ritual-espectáculo específico de la política del miedo, y un lugar antropológico, se identifican sus estructuras de significación. Estas radican en la manipulación de la ansiedad y el miedo, a través del uso de un lenguaje específico y mitos culturales para movilizar a las sociedades (proceso de inseguritización). A partir de una mirada antropológica específica se pretende brindar una lectura crítica de las políticas de seguridad para evitar el peligro de la paradoja de la seguridad.

**Palabras clave:** antropología, seguridad, securitización, inseguritización, política del miedo, posverdad.

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**Abstract**

This article investigates the relationship between anthropology, security studies and the production of knowledge, and its aim is to provide a critical anthropological reading of the concept of security, and the securitization process, and to present the notion of the insecurity process. Security here is considered as a mythical term whose meaning is the result of a subjective power-knowledge structure production. Therefore, through an analysis of the securitization process considered as a specific ritual-spectacle of politics of fear, and an anthropological place, its structures of significance are identified. These lay on the manipulation of anxiety and fear, and on the use of a specific language and cultural myths in order to mobilize societies (insecurity process). In order to provide a critical and emancipatory reading of security issues-politics, and to avoid the danger of the security paradox a specific anthropological gaze is proposed.

**Keywords** anthropology, security, securitization, insecurity, politics of fear, post-truth .

**Introduction**

This paper is based on long considerations on the relation between anthropology and security studies (Antón Hurtado and Ercolani, 2013). It aims to present the notion of the insecurity process which is based on the employment of an anthropological gaze. Therefore, it investigates the relationship between anthropology, security studies and the production of knowledge, and provide a critical anthropological reading of the concept of security and the securitization process (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998; Balzacq, 2011).

The paper adopts the position that the securitization process has to be analysed inside the interpretative paradigm provided by the security dilemma which, for Booth and Wheeler (2008: 4-5) is a complex relationship of both psychological and material dimension. Inside this dimension political and military responses are based on interpretations dangerous perceptions and even 'doxa' (opinion), which, if not rooted in reliable knowledge can produce a spiral of hostility or wrong doings which are defined as the security paradox (Booth and Wheeler 2008: 4-5).

Therefore, looking both at the interpretative and psychological dimension of the security

dilemma, the securitization process is seen inside the theoretical framework provided by the concepts of the ‘sacralisation of politics’-‘theopolitics’ (Gentile, 2007, 2008) and the ‘sacral’ (Chan, 2000), and is observed as a political ritual through which a specific concept of security is fabricated, an insecurity-anxiety issue is shaped and both are presented as the official knowledge of reference; and security function as a myth.

The visual-interpretative position adopted here is that the meaning of security is subjective, and any official political power-knowledge structure through the securitization process has the power to define a specific human event (the other, the enemy, etc.) as an ‘existential threat’ to its community; to exalt and promote its ‘securing’ and moral qualities-capabilities; and to mobilize the masses-target audience producing large-group regression and blind trust (Volkan, 2004, 2006).

However, in doing so, it needs to set up a ‘spectacle’ (a ritual) in which the ‘enemy’ is portrayed as the amoral ‘devil’, the source of ‘insecurity’ and anxiety, and this technique of ‘panic broadcasting’ (Orr, 2006) is defined in this paper as the process of securitization. The process of securitization operates as a politics of fear-anxiety; and it utilizes a mix of fear-anxiety and cultural manipulation (Thompson, 2017). This politics of fear-anxiety can present and enforce itself through the adoption of specific laws (state of emergency), through the promotion and implementation of social practices, and is transformed into the dominant ideology-*pensée unique* (French for ‘single thought’)

In this work, it is assumed that a sceptical and emancipatory approach (Booth, 1991, 1999, 2005) to security is needed, because we are operating in a context of post-truth politics<sup>4</sup> (largely framed by appeals to emotions); and the power-knowledge structure strongly wants to maintain its dominant status quo position and therefore has an interest in manipulating the real dimension of the threat-enemy-anxiety.

As a consequence of this theoretical introduction, the whole ritual of the securitization process, due to its employment and constant reference to consolidated myths, symbols, and rituals, is framed and considered as an anthropological place, a text, which the anthropologist can read and analyse. Then the reading activity of ‘sorting out the structures of

<sup>4</sup> Post-truth politics (also called post-factual politics) is a political culture in which debate is framed largely by appeals to emotion disconnected from the details of policy, and by the repeated assertion of talking points to which factual rebuttals are ignored.

signification' (Geertz, 1973:9) which is accompanied by a critical anthropological gaze become critical tools necessary for the de-securitization of the 'existential threat-enemy-other'; the production of legitimate security knowledge (Huysmans, 2006); and the developing of acts of resistance toward the manipulation of the politics of fear-anxiety.

The paper is organized in three parts: the first one shows the relation between the production of the meaning of the concept of security and the securitization process; the second part unfolds the idea that the securitization process is a ritual; the last part develops the image of the process of insecurity. The conclusion suggests the value of a critical anthropological gaze toward security politics-narratives-social practices.

### **1. The securitization process and the production of the myth of security**

Since the implosion of the former Soviet Union, the terrorist attacks of Sep 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, and the recent 'problems' of mass illegal immigration in Europe, the concept and image of insecurity have become more and more blurred, liquid and manipulated. Whilst during the Cold War 'order' period the Soviet Soldier embodied the meaning and icon of 'insecurity' and NATO the essence of security for the Western World, the more recent bloody human events on a world scale have confirmed the difficult of producing a common and constant meaning for insecurity and security valid for the whole of the planet.

However, linguistically, the constant significance of the concept of security, is provided by its etymological meaning: security derives from the Latin word 'securitas' and in its turn from 'sine' (without) + 'cura' (anxiety, worry).

This etymological meaning represents the interpretative anchor of reference in this paper because any time we talk about 'security' constantly we refer to the human need to be free from the emotion of anxiety. The term 'security', however, in its political use and in social practices, has been carrying different significations; this has been possible because between its etymological meaning, and its political employment, the power-knowledge-securing structures, making use of the securitization process, have participated in the fabrication of its grammar and protocol of interpretation (the security myth, metalanguage) for their own political benefits.

Here, for 'Power-Knowledge-Securing' (PKS) structure is defined a political agency

which (1) has legitimate power to get X to do something that X would not otherwise do (Lukes, 2005:11); (2) it is legitimate to perform the security speech act (securitization process); (3) it presents itself as the moral authority; and (4) it is the holder of the truth.

The PKS structure produces the official security-insecurity knowledge-paradigm of reference through the use of a technocratic apparatus (Galimberti, 2011); defines and certifies as reliable knowledge what insecurity is (the existential threat, the enemy), and the protocol which must be adopted for the security operation; and it has recognized legitimate power and the monopoly of the use of force, therefore it can take and carry security actions (war, crisis management operations, etc.). More importantly, the security-insecurity knowledge is manufactured as 'baby-food' meaning that it is simple to understand, it employs uncomplicated terminology, and it doesn't require high level of education to conceive it.

Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde define securitization as 'a more extreme version of politicization. In theory, any public issue can be located on the spectrum ranging from non-politicized (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicized (meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitized (meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying action outside the normal bounds of political procedure)' (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998:23-24).

In this way, the process of securitization is more than a speech act (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998:24-26; Balzacq, 2011) through which an issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures, and justifying actions outside the bounds of the political procedure (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998:23-24). It is rather an emotional act, meaning that emotions are also actions (Spackman, 2002) in which 'an articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thought, and intuitions) about the critical vulnerability of a referent object that concurs with the securitizing actor's reasons for choices and actions, by investing the referent object with such an aura of unprecedented threatening complexion that a customized policy must be undertaken immediately to block its development' (Balzacq, 2011:3).

Moreover, the securitization process produces the official language-dictionary of the security-insecurity politics of emergency (the metalanguage of security). This official-authorized (Bourdieu, 2005:107-116) language-dictionary operates like Orwellian Newspeak, which differs from almost all other languages in that its vocabulary grew smaller instead of larger, and each reduction is a gain, since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought (Orwell, 2000 [1949]:322).

It is through the securitization process that the cause of fear-anxiety is defined, and the myth of security is fabricated. This transformative process is explained here using the concept of myth developed by Roland Barthes in 'Mythologies' (2000) for whom the myth is a system of communication defined as a 'second order semiological system' (Barthes, 2000: 114).

In the linguistic system, which represents the first order, the word 'security' has only one meaning, 'without anxiety', which is derived from its Latin etymology 'securitas'; on the contrary, in the metalanguage system (the second order), the meaning of the term 'security' (the myth of security) is the result of a linguistic-narrative fabrication, operated by a power-knowledge-securing structure, which change with time and space. In this system the meaning given to the term of security becomes 'fear of X', 'to have anxiety of/for X', where 'X', the cause of anxiety and fear, can change accordingly to the political agenda of the political elites.

Thus, the step from the first linguistic system to the second semiological order, which represents the very fabrication of the myth security ('fear of X'), is possible through the securitization process which allow the power-knowledge-securing structure (1) to define, to give a name to the 'X' which represents the cause of fear-anxiety, therefore, the existential threat to the survival of the community it protects; (2) to add the element of 'emergency' which blocks any external (of the structure) tentative to criticize the move; and (3) to present the myth security as 'reliable knowledge', therefore, 'legitimate security knowledge'<sup>5</sup> when in reality it can be classified as an 'image of knowledge'<sup>6</sup>.

However, once any legitimate power-knowledge-securing structure which presents itself as the only security actor fabricates its own security myth, it needs an image-symbol, a

<sup>5</sup> For Huysmans (2006: 18) 'legitimate security knowledge refers to security knowledge which one can profess as a security expert with a degree of seriousness and without being labelled an idealist or a fool'.

<sup>6</sup> Yehuda Elkana (1981) defines 'images of knowledge' as socially determined views on knowledge supported and tied to a specific spatial-temporal cultural, political, and power context.

ritual, a spectacle-representation in order 'to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thought, and intuitions) (Balzacq, 2011:3). And paraphrasing Huysmans (2006), who sees in the process of securitization a technique of governing danger, here are identified, but to govern and manage anxiety, the same technique in the 'articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.)' (Balzacq, 2011: 3) are condensed in the ritual-spectacle of the myth security.

## **2. The securitization process as a sacral political spectacle-ritual and an anthropological place**

For the Italian philosopher and psychoanalyst Umberto Galimberti (2011:9), mankind has never lived in the world, but always in its description which, in different historical periods, has been provided by religion, philosophy, science, and now technology. Mankind lives into the description of the world, and his relation with it passes through the ideas that wrap the things.

The same concept can be applied here to both the idea of security and of insecurity, because, both are myths and constructed as myth, and what mankind lives and experience is their descriptions, their rituals and the ideas that wrap their real meanings. Without the emergence of the unexpected existential threat, its identification, its framing, and the implementation of security measures, there won't be any securitization process. This brings the necessity to move our gaze in the direction of the so labelled insecurity event which is the cause of fear-anxiety.

For Huysmans (2006:2-4) 'insecurity is a politically and socially constructed phenomenon (...) (and) thus emerges from discursively and institutionally modulating practices in terms of security rationality that makes policies intelligible as a security practice'. In its *modus operandi* 'insecurity' follows the same Barthes' metalanguage process which has been applied here to the myth of security. Nevertheless, 'insecurity is not a fact of nature but always requires that it is written and talked into existence' (Huysmans 2006:7), and the politics of insecurity is both a political spectacle and technocratic.

It emerges, therefore, the needs of the PKS structure to shape the securitization process as a political spectacle which 'consists of the development and circulation of symbols in public

contests of policies and power positions.’ Whilst the technocratic aspect is identifiable in the process of securitization which ‘emerges at the interstice of a symbolic politics of fear generated in the field of professional politicians, which also includes the media and opinion polling institutions, and the technological governances of insecurity primarily generated in the field of security professionals, including most explicitly the different security services (police, military, and intelligence)’ (Huysmans, 2006:154-155). And all the above contribute to introduce the idea that the securitization process is an anthropological place which ‘is a place intensely symbolized, lived by individuals in which they found their spatial, temporal, individual and collective benchmarks’ (Augé, 2011:158).

However, this spectacle-representation has to acquire a particular ‘aura’ which enforces its authority and efficacy. This can only be provided by transforming the securitization process-political spectacle into a ‘sacral’ ritual. Thus, this ritual has to be considered inside the frame of the concept of the sacralization of politics which consists of bestowing a sacred character to a secular entity, as the nation, the state, the race, the political party and the leader. In these situations, politics become a religion because, through a complex of beliefs, expressed by the use of myths, rituals, and symbols, it pretends to define the meaning and the final end of the individual and the collective existence (Gentile, 2007: vii).

The power-knowledge-securing structure may even proclaim, making use of religious messages and performances that it is acting in the name of God, and these actions and responses are defined as ‘theopolitics’, meaning a new experience of the sacralization of politics, carried out by those politicians who proclaim that they are acting in the name of God, so merging religion with politics, asserting that politics cannot survive without religion, and that religion has to lead politics (Gentile, 2008:xv).

As a result of this process the spectacle-ritual acquires the ‘aura’ of the ‘sacral’. ‘What do I mean by this word? Not “sacred”, but with the capacity to become sacred; founded on ancient rites and beliefs, it is a projection of these rites and beliefs into a sphere beyond their antiquity. It is a relocation of an antiquity into a future condition, so that progress towards it is, simultaneously, a progress and a sort of regression: it is an eternal return or eternal recurrence. As far as “truth” is concerned, and the superhuman effort towards it, this superhumanity is necessary precisely because truth is elusive, and even if attained, can only be held momentarily in its eternal cycle’ (Chan, 2000:568).

On the whole, the sacral political spectacle-ritual can be seen as a large stage where a Manichean duel is staged between the hero (the PKS structure) and the forces of the evil (the insecurity event). And into the space of the spectacle politics even the practice and the language of existential threat is transformed into a myth (the myth of insecurity), and the security rhetoric used in the performance works in such a way that the danger remains in the political discourse, and the existential threat is accepted by the audience (Salter, 2011:120-122).

Indeed, it is in this space that the sacred envelops the notion of the performance (Girard, 2006:329) and it generates psycho-power which 'represents technologies of power and techniques of knowledge developed by a normalizing society to regulate the psychological life, health, and disorders of individuals and entire populations. In part, conceptual kin and strategic ally of bio-power, psycho-power operates through psychological monitoring, measurement, and discipline, administering order in the unruly psychic realms of perception, emotion, and memory' (Orr, 2006: 11). Thus, psycho-power can be seen as an exercise of 'engineering of consent' (through reason, persuasion and suggestion) which, as a manufactured product, resembles the 'panic broadcast' experiment carried out by Orson Welles on Oct 30th, 1938 through his radio adaptation of H. G. Wells' 'The War of the Worlds' (on panic broadcast, see also Orr, 2006:33-77).

The ritual broadcasts panic and creates two opposite forces: centripetal and centrifugal. The centripetal force is evident, when the rite, for its character of urgency, emergency, and existential threat represented by the insecurity event, participates in the reinforcement and in the recreation of the identity and moral authority of the power-knowledge-securing structure.

The centrifugal force of the rite generates that spark (Canetti, 1972), and/or social (and religious) electricity that make an audience to be called to play not a game but an active emotional-interpretative role because this situation is inherently dramatic: the participants 'not only do things, they show themselves and others what they are doing or have done: actions take on a reflexive and performed-for-an-audience aspect' (Schechner, 2003:186); they also crystallize as mass, leaving aside what is a formless and shapeless quality (Canetti, 1972). It spreads fear-anxiety and produces emotional contagion which creates 'collective effervescence' by which 'within a crowd moved by a common passion, we become susceptible to feelings and actions of which we are incapable on our own' (Durkheim, 2001:157). It transmits an alarm signal which participates in the construction of imagined

communities (Anderson, 2006) through its language. It recruits subjects among the individuals, or transforms individuals into subjects through an operation called 'interpellation', which refers to the process by which people, when 'hailed' by discourse, recognize themselves in that hailing (Althusser, 1988:55). It identifies, silences and ostracizes heretic-sinner voices. And it produces blind-trust toward the political leader.

The rite provokes an emotional situation defined as large-group regression in which 'the individuals within the group lose their individuality to one degree or another, follow the leader(s) blindly, and become prone to taking in (internalizing) political propaganda without really questioning its validity' (Volkan, 2004:84).

Through this process, the significant (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998:27), empowering (Balzaq, 2011:8-11) and playing audience is transformed into a Mass ritual, in docile bodies, and acquires 'habitus'. The liturgical mass (Gentile, 2007:73), unlike in a theatrical representation, is efficient, and no matter how much the service has very important aesthetic dimensions, what is important is the passionate affirmation. The Mass ritual is a closed circle which includes only the congregation and those officiating, and there is no room for mere appreciators. As an obligatory action, its members enter into it, and signal to each other and to the hierarchy (Schechner, 2003:137).

This might be compared to the Orwellian 'Two Minutes Hate' where 'a hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge-hammer (seems) to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic. And yet the rage that one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to another like the flame of a blowlamp' (Orwell, 2000 [1949]:16).

Therefore, the Mass ritual, has completely embodied the language of the security ritual, and reacts as a model reader who fully cooperates with a text (Eco, 2006:62) because it fully recognises itself in the same fear-anxiety, in the language, in the moral mission, and in the cultural idiosyncrasy and individual idiosyncrasy of the myth security, and then in the ritual (Ercolani, 2011:72-73). At the same time the Mass ritual is disciplined and shaped as docile bodies 'that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' (Foucault 1991: 136), and it creates a 'habitus' which represents 'a set of disposition which incline agents to act and react in certain ways' (Bourdieu, 2005:12).

However, in the ritual the political leader plays not only the fear-anxiety, and sacral card, but the moral and cultural one, meaning that he presents himself as the moral authority who decides what is right-good-moral and what is wrong-bad-immoral-sin, and that the 'we' culture, the 'we' identity is opposed to the 'Other' threat which is presented as wrong-bad-immoral-sin, and the cause of fear-anxiety.

Then, due to its 'mimesis didactic aspects' (Cobley, 2006:81), the rite is converted into 'a set of statements and practices through which certain language becomes institutionalized and normalized over time' (Neumann, 2009:61). And it produces a cultural artefact: 'a cultural practice traceable to a particular historical context concerned with shaping the politics of security' (Williams, 2007:4). In Foucauldian terms, the rite has the power to assemble, to produce, and to fabricate knowledge (Foucault, 1980:59) and the paradigm of interpretation. In this cognitive space the power-knowledge-securing structure occupies a central panoptical position from which it gazes out and controls through its own paradigm the territory, the space, the use and the interpretation of its security myth-ideology-concept (Foucault, 1991:195-228) which is presented and accepted as unquestionable knowledge.

To sum up, security, through the securitization process-sacral political spectacle-ritual is transformed into an ontological-epistemological paradigm, and into a moral and cultural system of reference which manages and administers fear-anxiety; here culture 'denotes an historically transmitted patten of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life' (Geertz, 1973:89). It makes use of culture patterns (religious, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific, ideological) which are 'programs' that 'provide a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes, much as genetic system provides such a template for the organization of organic processes' (Geertz, 1973:216). It provides the cultural protocol which the individual observes in threatening situation because the mankind produces his response to anxiety and fear following culture patterns. For Geertz the response to an insecurity threat is cultural because, 'like a frightened animal, a frightened man may run, hide, bluster, dissemble, placate, or, desperate with panic, attack; but in his case the precise patterning of such overt acts is guided predominantly by cultural rather than genetic templates (Geertz, 1973:75). And it becomes an ideology whose function 'is not to offer us a point of escape from our reality but to offer us the social reality itself as an escape from some traumatic, real kernel'

(Zizek, 2008:45).

At the end of this myths-symbols-identity-fear-anxiety process it is clear how the securitization process becomes an anthropological place-space in which the anthropologist ‘can read, and decode the social relations and the common forms of belonging’ (Augé, 2011:158).

### **3. Politics of fear, process of securitization, large-group regression and blind trust**

In his book on the leaders’ words, Philippe-Joseph Salazar condenses the whole of the political action into the activity to persuade. For him ‘all political action is to persuade. To persuade that which is not yet I must mount a scaffolding of words that I reinforce of things that exist and of examples of my virtue. Thus, I produce an effect of reality, just as a film-maker produces a real effect’ (Salazar, 2011:194).

It is not a surprise that in this relation between politics, power, and mobilization ‘public opinion, publicity, and public relations all come to prominence toward the end of the nineteenth century, and from there, they only grew in importance. The increased deployment of these industries suggests that over time, power has increasingly come to understand and utilize the tools of culture to sell, manipulate, and excite. Essential to the rise of techniques designed to cajole, provoke, placate, and outrage is a shared understanding of human fallibility. Every successful PR executive and every advertiser has understood that people can be reduced to their emotions, which can be manipulated’ (Thompson, 2017:27). And the same is valid for the political activity and is not a secret anymore the employment of spin doctors by politicians. This is even more important when dealing with security issue in which fear is the more powerful emotion because as Franklin Delano Roosevelt (32<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States of America) stated in 1933 ‘the only thing we have to fear is fear itself’, and security politics is transformed in politics of fear.

Therefore, it is necessary to look again at the ritual of the securitization process; to sort out from it the process which focuses on the fabrication of the ‘devilization’ (to turn into a devil or make devilish) of the enemy-other; and to identify the structures of signification. This manufacturing of the enemy-other-devil is defined here as the securitization process, meaning the process through which the PKS structure summons latent cultural mythologies and employs

them to present the enemy as devil, to stigmatize ‘it’, and to create-spread fear. While the Prince of Machiavelli (which here can be considered the very PKS structure) has to appear merciful, faithful, humane, trustworthy, and religious (Machiavelli, 2005 [1513]:61), aim of the process of securitization is to make the enemy cruel, unfaithful, inhumane, unreliable, and irreligious. Thus, a moral panic is added to the ritual of the securitization process. And the enemy-devil becomes the fulcrum of political manipulation.

As an example, here can be the emergence of the ‘Arab terrorist’. For Thompson ‘there’s no better contemporary example of the deployment of fear than the Global War on Terror. In many ways, the Global War on Terror feels like the culmination of three decades in which the increased use of culture came to define political and social life. Here was a war waged –on the rhetorical level – against a human emotion in response to a sequence of events perfectly designed to produce fear. The orchestrators of the attacks of September 11 understood that to get attention was to acquire power. In an age saturated by cultural production, a mass tragedy created an extraordinary opportunity’ (Thompson, 2017:82).

And while the horrific violence remained fresh, a new specter emerged in the public consciousness: the Arab terrorist’ (Thompson, 2017:82). And on this ‘Arab terrorist’ an easy to understand and accessible mythology has been constructed; and a cultural manipulation has been operated, by opportunist politicians and news media, with dangerous repercussions (some time explosive) in multicultural societies in which real culture wars can sparks.

On the whole, the securitization process-ritual endorsed by a politics of fear and the securitization process draws those cultural templates which guides the ‘frightened man’ (Geertz, 1973:75). This strong relation between the political leader (the Power-Knowledge-Securing structure), the manipulation of cultural mythologies and fear has been proved in ethnic conflict studies by the emotional situation defined by large-group regression which produces blind-trust toward the leader himself. For Vamik Volkan large-group regression describes an emotional situation in which ‘the individuals within the group lose their individuality to one degree or another, follow the leader(s) blindly, and become prone to taking in (internalizing) political propaganda without really questioning its validity’ (Volkan, 2006:84).

Regression is a response to anxiety and is one of the key concepts in the mental health field. For Volkan (2004: 56) ‘anxiety is an internal signal that something dangerous is about to happen, and is thus distinguishable from fear. Fear is what one experiences when one faces an

actual danger; for instance, a person will experience fear if, while visiting a zoo, he or she sees an escaped lion approaching. By contrast, if that person experiences uncomfortable sensations, racing heart, or sweaty palms while visiting a zoo where all the dangerous animals are safely contained, he or she is feeling anxiety – because the lions locked in their cages symbolize some psychological danger for that individual, not because they actually pose a threat to life and limb; one need not be in real peril in order to experience anxiety. Since anxiety is an unpleasant feeling, people develop various mental mechanisms for avoiding it, one of which is regression’.

Anxiety (insecurity) is what large-group like tribes, nations, states, experience in the securitization process-ritual, and their shared anxiety may lead to a societal regression. However, the political leader (the PKS structure) which is considered here is the one who is interested to maintain his status quo position (and manipulation in post-truth politics, post-factual politics is the rule of the power game), and not the ideal charismatic authority which for Max Weber is resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him (Waters and Waters, 2015). And societal regression can be fabricated and manipulated by the unscrupulous-ambitions political leader.

‘In general terms, regression in an individual involves a return to some of the political expectations, wishes, fears, and associated mental defense mechanisms of an early stage of the human development. (...) Large groups also regress. Activities such rallying around the leader, exhibiting flags, attempting to “purify” the group from those whose names or skin colors suggest that they may be affiliated with the enemy, and dividing the world into clashing civilizations may be related to concepts as patriotism and national security. (...) Thus, a group’s realistic efforts to feel secure merge with expressions of human nature under stress, and, in certain areas, reality and fantasy become blurred. Regression itself is not good or bad; it is a human condition that appears in individuals and large groups. But regression in large groups is subject to manipulation by political leaders. The relationship between a political leader and his or her followers is rather like a busy street. In normal times, the traffic – information and political decision-making as well as other means of influence – flows smoothly in both directions between the leader’s influence and the public’s awareness. Naturally, the flow is sometimes greater in one direction and sometimes in the other, as at rush hour on a busy highway. At other times, however, for one reason or another, the street is officially declared “one-way” from leader to public: this is seen in the political propaganda of totalitarian regimes.

Even in democratic countries, during times of crisis and terror, there is more focus on the “traffic” traveling from the leader/government to the public, since the public seeks a “savior” to protect them and their personal and large-group identities. Leaders and government can exaggerate people’s need to have enemies and allies. Some leaders may help people differentiate where the reality of threat ends and where the fantasy of threat begins. This lessens anxiety. Other leaders, due not only to what is called “national interests”, but also to their own personality characteristics, may magnify the dangers, increase anxiety, and help the group to remain in regression, which itself will have further societal and political consequences. In times of crisis and terror, leaders can heal or poison their followers. Large-group regression disturbs what the late psychoanalyst Erik Erikson called basic trust, a concept that describes how a child learns to feel comfortable putting his or her own safety in the caretaker’s hands; by developing basic trust, a child discovers, in turn, how to trust him or herself. In normal circumstances, adults also depend on trusting themselves and others to remain functioning citizens. Without basic trust, for example, I would not be able to board an airplane without extreme anxiety because I could not feel comfortable putting my life in the hands of the designers, builders, and pilots of the plane. Basic trust is so fundamental that those who have functional basic trust are even aware of using it. Once the basic trust of members of a group is shaken, it gets perverted and is replaced by blind trust. In such a societal regression, we tend to follow leaders’ views and directions, whether they are reparative or destructive’ (Volkan, 2004:12-14).

## **Conclusion**

The conundrum which this paper proposes is how to produce legitimate security knowledge in a situation in which post-truth politics is a reality in which we live? Because ‘the dynamics of cultural manipulation are not only abstractions, they also become policies that become laws that become institutions that become infrastructures. In a landscape congested with media playing on symbols and toying with popular emotions and anxiety, the results are not just a broad-based confusion by the public on what is in their economic interest, but an entire economy and built environment produced by way of the real culture wars’ (Thompson, 2017:88).

Moreover, this manipulation occurs with the employment of the metalanguage of security (the ‘new Orwellian Newspeak’, which we call here ‘Ingsec’ as an evolution of

‘Ingsoc’). This language limits our thinking and our world because, as Wittgenstein says ‘the limits of my language mean the limits of my world’. This mental technique which sees language playing an unquestionable role is called ‘reality control’ and in the Orwellian Newspeak it is called ‘doublethink’. In a post-truth, post-factual politics ‘doublethink’ is what emerges as political practices, ‘Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one’s mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them. (...) Doublethink lies at the very heart of Ingsoc (read here ‘Ingsec’), since the essential act of the Party (read here the PKS structure-political leader) is to use conscious deception while retaining the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty. To tell deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them, to forget any fact that has become inconvenient, and then, when it becomes necessary again, to draw it back from oblivion for just so long as it is needed, to deny the existence of objective reality and all the while to take account of the reality which one denies – all this is indispensably necessary. Even in using the word doublethink it is necessary to exercise doublethink. For by using the word one admits that one is tampering with reality; by a fresh act of doublethink one erases this knowledge; and so on indefinitely, with the lie always one leap ahead of the truth. Ultimately it is by means of doublethink that the Party has been able – and may, for all we know, continue to be able for thousands of years – to arrest the course of history’ (Orwell, 2000 [1949]:223).

One of the possible answers, at least the one proposed here is take a critical stance meaning the use of anthropological approach because it is an ‘uncomfortable science that spoke truth to power and provoked contention (Firth, 1981:198); and to interrogate and disrupt the language of fear (‘Ingsec’). This brings to face critically and skeptically the securitization process, to deconstruct the securitization process manufactured as baby-food, and its cultural mythologies, to adopt ‘emancipation’ as main leitmotiv of the work, and to take a clinical anthropological gaze. Emancipation, which for Booth ‘is the theory and practice of inventing humanity, with a view of freeing people, as individuals and collectivities, from contingent and structural oppressions. It is a discourse of human self-creation and the politics of trying to bring it about. Security and community are guiding principles, and at this stage of history the growth of a universal human rights culture is central to emancipatory politics. The concept of emancipation shapes the strategies and tactics of resistance, offers a theory of progress for society, and gives a politics of hope for common humanity’ (Booth, 1999:46).

Then emancipation provides a philosophical anchorage; a strategic process; and a guide for tactical goal setting. As philosophical anchorage, ‘emancipation can serve as a basis or test

for saying whether something is true; in other words, whether particular claims to knowledge should be taken seriously. An anchorage is not a neutral foundation but rather a historically contingent yet powerful position from which people can begin to discuss what to do next in their political projects' (Booth, 2005:182). As a strategic process 'is a dynamic process with changing targets. It is strategic in the sense that it is concerned with bringing about practical results, but it is a process in the sense that it is a project that can never be completed. Its practicality lies in its being based in immanent critique' (Booth, 2005:182). As a guide for tactical goal setting: 'as a result of engaging in immanent critique emancipatory ideas can develop that in turn can be translated into tactical action. Praxis is the coming together of one's theoretical commitment to critique and political orientation to emancipation in projects of reconstruction' (Booth, 2005:182).

At the end, and this is the position that this paper sustains, emancipation is the 'freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do. War and the threat of war is one of those constraints, together with poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on. Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin. Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security' (Booth, 1991:321).

Now the security-insecurity global situation in which we live, is characterized by (1) a world which has become contemporaneous meaning that 'we must speak of worlds in plural, understanding that each of them communicates with the others, that each world possesses at least images of the others (Augé, 1999:89); (2) a planet that 'has shrunk; information and images circulate readily, and because of this the others' mythic dimension is fading. The "others" are in fact not so very different, or rather, their otherness remains, but the prestige of their erstwhile exocitism is gone (...) We are experiencing an "acceleration of history" (...) that involves both objective interactions within the "world system" and the instantaneity of information and image dissemination. Each month, every day, we experience "historical" events; each day the border between history and current events becomes a bit more blurred. The parameters of time, like those of space, are changing, and this is a unprecedented revolution' (Augé, 1999:14); and (3) a society, defined as 'global risk society' in which everything revolves around the concept of risk (Beck, 1992) which is even more liquid and blurred than the concept of security-insecurity.

Therefore, it is this global situation, which demands a different way of seeing, because

seeing is not a definitive judgment 'but a process of mental analysis that goes backwards and forwards between different areas of the brain. It takes a brain to see, not just a pair of eyes' (Mirzoeff, 2015:82).

Then, here is sustained the idea of the adoption of a clinical anthropological gaze which is based on the question 'What is the matter with you?' (Foucault, 2005: xxi) which sees and includes the patient in a whole of relations. Meaning that the whole of the insecure human situation that has sparked the securitization process is 'read' (1) inside the whole of its relations; and (2) outside the imposed paradigm of interpretation and action, and the securitization process-ritual. This clinical anthropological gaze become an epistemological instrument (1) to deconstruct the politics of fear-anxiety built on opposing cultural mythologies, most of the time a post-truth curtain that masks status quo power ambitions and relations; and (2) to reconsider security as a cultural universal, in which all forms of culture provide group's survival formulas developed according to group's time, environment, knowledge, and believes (Lison Tolosana, 2015).

Thus, the aim of the above presented approach becomes an act of resistance toward the manipulation of the politics of fear (and language of fear, Ingsec) which goes behind the fact to work to produce legitimate security knowledge (which most of the time is 'read' only inside the academic world) and to actively contribute to produce a process of desecuritization which is 'the shifting of issues out of emergency mode and into the normal bargaining process of the political sphere' (Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, 1998:4) and, therefore, to avoid the trap of the security paradox.

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