

Security as Justification

*An Analysis of Deng Xiaoping's Speech to the Martial Law
Troops in Beijing on the Ninth of June 1989*

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NACS Conference
Oslo, 19.-21.6.2003

Introduction

This article focuses on the mechanism of justifying “special politics” through security arguments in the People’s Republic of China (PRC, China). This happens through a micro level analysis of Deng Xiaoping’s speech to the martial law troops in Beijing on the ninth of June 1989. Speech act analysis and the framework of securitization, developed by Ole Wæver¹, are utilised as tools in this analysis. The framework of securitization has not been applied to study China before and it has not been widely used² in studies focusing outside the democratic political systems of Europe and the US. The framework thus offers a new vantage point or perspective on how certain policies are justified in the PRC, which has a political system that is not liberal-democratic³. China offers a challenge for the theory, which is premised on universal mechanisms of human communication (but not on a universal culture). This article is part of a PhD project that studies the social construction of security in the PRC and strives to critically develop the theory of securitization through application and adaptation to China.

The task set forth in this article stems from questions like: 1) how are official truths and political myths maintained and reproduced in authoritarian or totalitarian political systems through security arguments, 2) what happens after securitization: how does a certain issues remain on the security agenda and, 3) how is security utilised to justify actions already taken?

Traditional security studies have considered the concept of security as a neutral scientific concept, which has no normative or political aspects. Security has most often been reserved to encompass the national security of states. The term has for example been defined as the domestic freedom of political decision-making even under pressure from an external aggressor (Goldmann 1997, 3-4; Andrén 1984, 11). This Realist point of view focuses on differences in the power capabilities of functionally identical actors (Waltz 1979). However, security has entailed different meanings. For example, during the Cold War, security had different meanings in the West and in the East: the concept of security was militarised in the West while in the East it contained economic independence and different forms of non-interference in the internal affairs of states (Wæver 1995, 59). This was due to the virtual non-existence of the threat of internal revolts in the West while the

¹ The most referred to works on securitization are Wæver et al. 1993, Wæver 1995 and Buzan et al. 1998.

² An exception is Johan Matz’s doctoral dissertation on Russian foreign policy rhetoric in the early 1990s (see Matz 2001).

³ Sujian Guo (2000) goes so far as to argue that the PRC is still a totalitarian political system in his work on the model of totalitarianism.

Eastern bloc was under constant threats of internal subversion. In Barry Buzan's terms, the Western states were strong and the Eastern states were weak⁴.

The détente between the East and the West finally led to radical changes in the political systems of the Eastern bloc: the slow process of change was partly affected by a change that happened during the period of rapprochement, where threats became challenges and security became politics. This opened up space for internal political debate and struggle. The result was the failure of securitization speech acts in 1989, when the return to speaking with threats about the West was no longer possible after its desecuritization (Wæver 1989).

The loss of belief in the value and success of their own system on the part of the Eastern political elites has been attributed as one of the reasons for the collapse of the Eastern regimes. Upholding a repressive system requires that the leading elite shares, at least in part, a common world view. Changes in totalitarian systems happened through changing leaders, while the truths and the myths of the system were maintained (Staniszki 1992). Wæver sees this inside-out collapse as a result of the failure of securitization speech acts: the performative of securitization and the upholding of the official truth suddenly collapsed. As a result, describing the East-West relationship through security has become a virtually non-existent dimension in Europe (compare with the "changed role of Nato").

The leadership of the PRC was acutely aware of the situation in Eastern Europe. The case of Poland functioned as a stern warning for hard-liners (see Excerpts... 2001 for example). The year 1989 saw unrest and protests in China as well, even though the background and the motives were different to those in Europe. In China, the leadership elected to disperse the protest by using force and to maintain official truths and the myth of the Communist party. Securitization speech acts within the premier leadership and the chain of command did not fail.

The Tiananmen incident of 1989 is still relevant in contemporary China. Many people hope for the reversal of the verdict of the incident. This can be seen for example in the 2001 (Nathan & Perry) publication of the Tiananmen Papers (Pye 2001). This is why it may be fruitful to take a look at

⁴ The strength or weakness of states refers (in contrast to the weakness/strength of powers) to the political strength of states, i.e. the degree of sociopolitical cohesion, not to how strong powers are when "power" is used as a measuring unit in internal relations. (See Buzan 1991, 96-107, 154-158.)

how the incident was securitized and how this securitization was reproduced after the protests were dispersed.

The Social Construction of Security

Traditional security studies have confined the concept of security to encompass only the (military) national security of states. This has led to security often being considered to be “free of politics” or objective. The wideners of the security studies agenda (Buzan 1991 for example) stress, that the same logic that is applied to military security is also used in other fields. Combining the frameworks of securitization and of the security complex (Buzan et al. 1998) provide security studies with tools for analysing questions that cover different levels of interaction (system, inter-unit, unit, individual etc.) and different sectors (military, political, societal, economic, environmental). Each of these levels and sectors follow the same logic in the creation of the security agenda, securitization, even though the threats and referent objects of security differ.

According to Wæver, security⁵ is a socially constructed, intersubjective and self-referential practice. Thus, the approach of securitization doesn't take security as a given necessity but sees it as an intersubjective construction. By drawing on constructivist language theory, securitization is seen as being about the power politics of a concept. According to this view, there are no objective threats, only attempts to saddle issues with “security” implications. This labelling provides legitimacy for the political actions one is trying to achieve. The approach doesn't deny that many issues on the security agenda have to do with the existence of referent objects, but it deals more with problems that follow from the possibility of constructing almost any issue as an issue of “national security”. The framework thus supplements traditional ways of studying security through problematising the concept of security.

Securitization is an illocutory speech act⁶ where an existential threat is produced in relation to a referent object; an act of securitization is to classify an issue as an existential threat requiring drastic measures. If the securitization is successful, legitimacy created through the widening social process, consisting of increasing cases of the act of securitization, enables the speaker to break the rules that

⁵ The phenomena of security also contains both physical and social factors, but the focus here is limited to how certain issues are produced as issues of security through the use of language.

⁶ On speech act theory, see Austin (1975) and Searle (1969).

normally bind behaviour and policies after which the question can be moved into an area of “special politics”. The logic is that if “a” claims all of “A” to be threatened by “B”, this is generally accepted as valid and powerful and “a” gains acceptance for doing “X”.

The application of the theory of securitization to the PRC is based on the premise, derived from J.L. Austin (1975) and John Searle (1969), that speaking a language is rule governed behaviour and that all human languages share a set of constitutive rules that lie underneath the conventional semantic structures of different languages. Language (as the ability) thus precedes language and cultures. Human languages, to the extent they are intertranslatable, can be regarded as different conventional realisations of the same underlying rules (Searle 1969, 36-37). Illocutory speech acts, like securitization, are an example of practices that derive from these universal rules.

Wæver argues, that securitization is a speech act. If this is so, securitization should follow the same constitutive rules in all societies, including China. In addition to constitutive rules, securitization is dependant on cultural factors, which may be unique to political systems or to political cultures. This requires that the method of inquiry should be based on pragmatics (the study of the ways in which meaning is derived from the interaction of utterances with the contexts in which they are used) and not on purely semantics (the study of meaning)⁷.

According to Wæver (Buzan et al. 1998, 26), securitization has a certain rhetorical structure (survival; the imperativeness of the suggested course of action, for “if the problem is not dealt with now, it is too late, and we won’t be around to correct our mistake”). In a securitization discourse the issue at hand is dramatised and presented as of utmost priority. Thus, by marking the issue with “security”, the actor is claiming that the issue requires and justifies the use of special procedures.

The speech act of security doesn’t happen if someone utters the word security but through the production of a threat to something’s existence (by claiming so) and by suggesting emergency action that will repel the threat. The word security may not have to be used at all as security can manifest itself on a metaphorical level, implicitly or through institutional security (when some phrase automatically contains the element of security). Security is about existential threats, but the threats can vary from sector to sector. The same logic of security can be used in many sectors though, which makes it possible to broaden the analysis of security outside the military sector.

The most important internal or constitutive rule of successful securitization is the form of security, its grammar. By following the grammar of security a plot is constructed. This plot contains an existential threat, a point of no return and a possible way out. A successful securitization speech act requires the grammar of security but also “dialects” of different sectors: identity in the societal sector, sovereignty in the political sector etc. The requirements outside the speech act itself contain two elements: the social status of the actor (the securitizing actor has to be in a position of authority to the audience, which is not necessarily formal) and aspects related to the threat itself (issues are easier to produce as threats if similar issues are generally considered to be threats). The requirements of securitization are: 1) the demands internal to the speech act, following the grammar of security, 2) social demands related to the positions of authority between the securitizing actor and the audience, and 3) the attributes of the claimed threat that either help or hinder the act of securitization.

The speech act of securitization can be divided into three separate speech acts (Vuori 2001): 1) claim: something is an existential threat for a referent object that should continue to exist (box 1), 2) warning: the threat concretises, if things remain the same (box 2), and 3) request/demand: do this, and the threat won’t come to pass (box 3). This analytical apparatus of the separation of three speech acts can be utilised to analyse securitization arguments and to evaluate their parts against the social function of security for example.

Types of rule	Claim	
	Propositional content	Any claim (C).
	Preparatory	1) Speaker (S) has proof (reasons etc.) of the truth of C. 2) It is not obvious to both S and hearer (H) that H knows (doesn’t need to be reminded etc.) that C.
	Sincerity	S believes that C.
	Essential	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that C represents an actual state of affairs.

Box 1: Claim speech act (derived from Searle 1969, 66-67).

⁷ On the difference between semantics and pragmatics, see for example Trask (1999) or Itkonen (1997).

		Warn
Types of rule	Propositional content	Future event, state etc. (E).
	Preparatory	1) H has reason to believe that E will occur and that it is not in H's interest. 2) It is not obvious to both S and H that E will occur.
	Sincerity	S believes E is not in H's best interest.
	Essential	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that E is not in H's best interest.

Box 2: Warn speech act (Searle 1969, 67).

		Request
Types of rule	Propositional content	Future act (A) of H.
	Preparatory	1) H is able to do A. 2) It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A on its own accord.
	Sincerity	S wants H to do A.
	Essential	Counts as an attempt to get H to do A.

Box 3: Request speech act (derived from Searle 1969, 66-67).

Wæver claims that security arguments are about the future, possible futures and contingent factors. A security argument contains two forecasts: what will happen, if the suggested procedures won't be realised (the threat) and what will happen, if the procedures are realised (how the suggested policies would effect the issue). Making these kind of forecasts would require that the social system would be closed and deterministic, and that security would not be about intersubjective conceptualisation, that security would not be about politics. The task of the analyst is not to find out whether the claimed threats are "real", but to study the process of securitization, in this article the use of security as a tool of legitimacy.

It is argued here though, that security can also be used to justify past actions. This can be seen to be the case in systems, where public debate is not as relevant for decision making as in democratic systems. In systems where the political process is not very public, actions already taken can be justified through securitization after the fact. Also, the security status of past actions must sometimes be maintained and reproduced. This article takes a look at this, the reproduction of a securitized issue.

Political Discourse and the Propaganda System in China

Official political discourse in the PRC works through a trickle down effect. The role of the paramount leader is central in defining the formulations (tifa) and “lines” (luxian) that have a constraining effect on the discourse that follows them. (Shambaugh 1992) A certain definition or labelling of an issue justifies certain political actions while on the other denies certain forms of behaviour.

The Chinese leadership designs political discourse to have the most persuasive impact on the populace. Whereas Western political discourse is meant to appease constituents, Chinese political discourse is meant to be persuasive. This persuasiveness arises out of (moral) justification. According to Xuezi Guo (2002), political legitimacy in China since the dynastic eras has arisen from moral superiority. Chinese political discourse is also very ideological and it is crafted to appear unchanging and universal. Godwin Chu (1977) has argued that Chinese political communication differs from Western political discourse by being explicitly normative and value-oriented, oriented toward changing the values of the audience. The aim of Chinese political discourse is to teach and bind the audience to a certain ideological position rather than to disseminate information. Alan Kluver (1996, 130-134) lists three types of audiences for propaganda: I) officials for whom official language is a game and a tool for social impact, II) intellectuals for whom official language is a tool of aggression and defence, and III) the masses for whom official language is transformatory, it legitimates and delegitimates different forms of action.

Propaganda in China doesn't have the pejorative connotation that it contains in the West, it serves a large variety of functions. Propaganda creates a political lexicon, that defines and restricts political discourse (Starr 1973, 127-43). In this vein, propaganda is considered entirely legitimate as it serves an essentially educational function for integrating various elements of society. Propaganda is also used to propagate an orthodox ideology, indoctrinate the mass public and particular target groups among the populace, deceive enemies (black propaganda) and denounce opponents, foment political agitation and mass action, convey information about party and state policies, and interpret events (Kenez 1985). In addition to drawing on soviet propaganda traditions, the CCP also continues on a long Chinese imperial tradition. According to David Shambaugh (1992, 4-5) the term propaganda (xuanchuan) is derived from the xuanjiang popular lectures that disseminated the Kangxi Emperor's Sacred Edicts during the eighteenth century. In this sense, the propaganda system functions as a dissemination channel of orthodox ideology to the masses and to party and army members.

Propaganda in China is noteworthy for its uniformity of content – events such as those of June 4th 1989 receive an almost uniform official version of description regardless of the forum of publication. This has a lot to do with how the formulations are adopted as lines or guiding principles (fangzhen) and with the process of disseminating this orthodoxy (Shambaugh 1992). Michael Schoenhals (1992) argues that this formation of strictly defined official language is the strongest means of political control in China. The government issues official lists (Schoenhals 1991) of “scientific” formulations of phrases which implies a tight connection between the signifier and the signified. Through these lists, form and content become one. This restricts language to “what is” instead of “what could be”. The use of formalised language can be seen as a means of deliberate formation of hegemonic discourses and a way of violently circumscribing rhetorical space and the construction of social reality. Lucien Pye (1981) has also noted, that words in China are not only political objects, but loyalty tests in a system defined by inter-factional struggle. Political loyalties are measured through the extent of following the official line.

According to Alan Kluver (1996, 15) there are two bases for legitimacy in the People’s Republic of China: the national myth and ideological orthodoxy, which are often mixed or intertwined. The nation equals identity and orthodoxy equals stability. Compared to imperial China, the nation equals the mandate of heaven and orthodoxy equals virtue. Legitimacy in the PRC is not formed through processes but through visions of the future: even atrocious acts are all right “for the sake of the revolution”. This makes the use of force legitimate if the position of the party is under threat. A certain label (counterrevolution⁸) makes certain responses legitimate, as there are no other possibilities to handle the situation.

According to the national myth, if the protest movement of 1989 was counterrevolutionary and based on foreign intrusion, the government had every right to take whatever steps were necessary to quell the rebellion as resistance to foreign intrusion is a major part of the national myth. If the movement represented the actual aspirations of the people, the Communist Party would have to support it, or/and risk loosing its legitimacy. The national myth and orthodoxy are important pre-

⁸ Counterrevolution (fan’geming) is closely connected with national security in the PRC. The concept of counterrevolution has been institutionally securitized, security implications follow its use automatically. This is explicit in the fact that the “counterrevolutionary” penal code, formulated in 1951, was changed into the crime of “jeopardizing national security” in 1997 (He 2001, 121). Counterrevolutionary crimes, like counterrevolutionary rumour mongering or counterrevolutionary murder, were transformed into crimes that endanger national security. According to the original counterrevolutionary act, any acts of trying to overthrow CCP power or to shake the socialist system should be considered as counterrevolutionary. The maximum penalty was death.

contracts of the discursive communities (Perelman 1996) involved in the labelling and securitization of the protest of the Beijing spring of 1989.

According to Lucien Pye (1985, 185), both in Confucianism and in Communism the myth of the paramount leader is the main source of legitimacy: the most important cultural factor shaping Chinese politics and the ability to maintain a centralized authority system has been the “exaggerated ideal of the great man as leader – the emperor, generalissimo, chairman – who is an amplification of the Confucian model of the father as the ultimate authority in the family”. A profound fear of chaos and disorder among the political elders is a defining aspect of the Chinese political system (Pye 1992, 12-16). This leads to them placing an overwhelming emphasis on ideological consensus. The Four Cardinal Principles⁹ defined the limits and tolerance of dissidence. These principles were at the core of the national myth and thus the base of legitimacy of the regime. A threat to these principles was a threat to the nation.

An Analysis of Deng Xiaoping’s Speech to the Martial Law Troops in Beijing on the Ninth of June 1989

The first hint of the propaganda line to follow the Tiananmen incident appeared in Deng Xiaoping’s speech (Deng 1992) to the martial law troops in Beijing on the ninth of June 1989. The speech was widely published at the time and it was the first time that Deng appeared in public after the dispersion of the protests. Deng’s speech is a relevant object of study regarding the justification of the actions of the regime regarding the incident, as the paramount leader has a key role in the formation of the official political discourse in events as crucial as those of June fourth 1989. Deng’s speech was one of the most relevant single cases which defined the official nature of the incident. The speech defined the formulation and the political line.

Deng had already labelled the protests as turmoil (dongluan) in the instructions he had given to Li Peng and Yang Shangkung on the 25th of April 1989 (Excerpts... 2001, 94-97). Deng interpreted the protests as a conspiracy designed by a small group which aimed at rejecting the Communist

⁹ The four cardinal principles are: 1) keeping to the socialist road, 2) upholding the “people’s democratic dictatorship,” 3) leadership by the Communist Party, and 4) Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. Related to the four cardinal principles is the principle of “one center, two basic points”: one central goal of the nation is to develop the productive forces, and two basic points are to uphold the Four Cardinal Principles and to persevere in reform and the policy of openness to the outside world. (Deng 1995, 174.)

party and the socialist system at the deepest possible level. In order to stop the unrest, decisive measures should be taken and the turmoil should be crushed. Deng linked the turmoil with events in Eastern Europe, especially to the events in Poland. He derived a lesson from Poland: “concessions lead to chaos”. In the same instructions, Deng instructed the publication of a strong editorial in the People’s Daily. This editorial (The Necessity... 1990, 206-207) had a significant role as a warning to the protestors and as a hint of possible repercussions, if the protests were to continue. The events of June fourth were thus preceded by warnings in editorials and other speeches, but the speech of June ninth was even harsher in its definition of the events.

The martial law troops were the direct audience of the speech. The speech was none the less also directed to the cadres of the party as well to the masses, even to the international community. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops are considered to be the sons of the nation, as a part of the people, its heart. The troops acted correctly because they repelled an ideological threat to the nation, a “counterrevolutionary rebellion”, which aimed at toppling the socialist system and turning China into a vassal state of the West. The content of the speech defined the nature of the incident and functioned as a basis for the propaganda line that followed.

Deng’s speech follows the grammar of security: counterrevolution threatened socialism and the Communist party, which meant that the protests had to be crushed and concessions could not be allowed, as they would have led to bourgeois liberalism and in the end, to the destruction of the party. Deng was in a position of authority in relation to his audience, where it was possible for him to put forward security arguments. He was the premier leader of China, even though he no longer held formal positions. Deng had a key role in the formulation of political lines and he was a symbol of the political system and national myth.

Student protests in China are not automatically condemnable. Progressive students, who rise against corruption and injustice are a part of the national myth¹⁰. Some verdicts of counterrevolutionarism of student movements have also been reversed¹¹. This made it more difficult to mark the protests with counterrevolution (national security). The problem for the regime was: how to justify crushing

¹⁰ The May fourth movement was one of the most famous anti-foreign movements in China in the year 1919. This student movement has been considered as the “Chinese enlightenment” and as a beginning for the rise of nationalism. (Schwarcz 1992.)

¹¹ A large group of protestors gathered at the Tiananmen square on the fourth of April 1976 to respect the late Zhou Enlai. Mao declared the gathering as counterrevolutionary, but the verdict was reversed by the central committee in the year 1978. (Notes 1995, 412-413.) The protests of 1989 began in a similar vein: showing of respect to the late Hu Yaobang.

the protests while maintaining the right of the masses to protest against corruption. Linking the “leaders” of the protests with foreign powers and criminal activities acted as the strategy of dimming the righteous aura of the students.

The existential threat in Deng’s speech was the subversion of socialism and China becoming dependent on foreign powers. If the unrest and turmoil would be left unattended, the party would lose its position and China would fall under the humiliating rule of foreign powers. Emergency measures were already taken to prevent this: martial law had been declared and the PLA had been ordered in to prevent a counterrevolution. Martial law relieved the leadership of the rules that normally bind policies and the voice of the protestors was silenced by using force. By labelling the protests as a “counterrevolutionary rebellion” all that they had said became criminal. Securitization had thus major effects: the loss of life and the renouncing of the possibility of political change. Whether the security argument succeeded in gaining wide support for the actions of the regime among the general populace is not answerable in this article¹². However, security was the argument the regime tried to justify its actions with.

The referent object of the security argument was the Communist party and socialism, which were under threat from a “counterrevolutionary rebellion” and “bourgeois liberalism”:

“It all became clear once the incident broke out. They have two key slogans: one is to overthrow the Communist party, the other is to topple the socialist system. Their aim is to establish a bourgeois republic totally dependent on the West. We certainly accept the people’s demand of opposing corruption. We will even have to accept as fine words the so-called anticorruption slogan by some people with ulterior motives. Of course, this slogan serves merely as a foil, and its crux is to overthrow the Communist party and topple the socialist system.” (Deng 1992, 32-33.)

The securitizing actors were Deng Xiaoping and the premier leadership, who declared that the protests were “counterrevolutionary violence” and thus condemnable criminal activity. Functional actors or factors related to the speech were the future of the socialist world and international socialism and the international conspiracy to overthrow communism. Deng declared that the events were unavoidable taken the domestic and international situation into account:

¹² According to Xueyi Chen and Tianjian Shin (2001), massive propaganda campaigns lessen trust for the policies of the government; the regime failed in maintaining a supportive opinion towards the government in the period following the Tiananmen incident.

“This disturbance would have come anyway. Dictated by both the international climate and the domestic climate in China, it was destined to come, and the outbreak of this disturbance is independent of man’s will.” (Deng 1992, 31.)

Securitization begins with a securitization move, by which the securitizing actor strives to gain support for the idea that the claimed threat is acute and relevant, the kind of threat that requires action that goes beyond the scope of everyday politics. In the case under study here, securitization in this sense had already happened: the (majority of the) premier leadership was convinced of the necessity of emergency measures. This is why the last speech act of securitization (request/demand) is replaced in this model of the “reproduction of securitization” with that of explaining (box 4).

Types of rule	Explain	
	Propositional content	Reason (R) for past act (A) of speaker (S).
	Preparatory	1) S has done A. 2) It is not obvious to Hearer (H) why S did A.
	Sincerity	S wants H to do understand and accept why A.
	Essential	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that R represents the actual state of affairs.

Box 4: Explain speech act (derived from Searle 1969, 66-67).

Concessions would have been a point of no return, as they had led to the collapse of the system in Poland. The way out of the threatening situation was no concessions and the crushing of the protests. Deng’s speech refers to the experience of old revolutionaries and to the understanding that turmoil has to be dealt with right away, lest the situation leads to chaos similar to the Cultural Revolution. The purpose of Deng’s speech was to justify the action taken by the regime.

Deng’s speech contains three speech acts that are consistent with the reproduction of security: I) Claim (box 5): the protests were counterrevolutionary violence. The protests on their own were not condemnable, as protesting students have initiated progressive movements in the past (which is a part of the national myth). By referring to the bad influence of foreign powers and to a small group of evildoers, who had mislead the masses, the speech gathers up evidence for the claim of the counterrevolutionary nature of the incident.

“Some comrades cannot see the nature of the issue, and believe it is simply a problem of dealing with the masses. In fact, the opponents are not only the masses who cannot distinguish right from wrong, but

also a group of reactionaries and a large segment of the dregs of society. They are attempting to subvert the state and overthrow the Communist party which is the essence of the issue.” (Deng 1992, 32.)

“We were only cracking down on counterrevolutionary rebellion.” (Deng 1992, 37.)

II) Warning (box 6): the aim of the protests was to topple the socialist system. A counterrevolution would lead to the end of socialism and China ending up as a vassal state of the West. The “century of shame” is a part of the national myth and opposing foreign rule will justify almost any measures.

“Their aim is to establish a bourgeois republic totally dependent on the West.” (Deng 1992, 32.)

III) Explanation (box 7): resolute measures were necessary to prevent a counterrevolution, the toppling of the socialist system and dependency on the West. Because there was still confusion as to the nature of the incident in the minds of some, Deng explained in his speech what the protests were all about and what their true nature was:

“Although some comrades do not understand it for the time being [the necessity of adopting resolute actions to suppress the rebellion], they will eventually understand and support the decision of the party central leadership.” (Deng 1992, 32.)

“If we do not understand this fundamental problem [subversion of the state and overthrow of Communism are the essence of the issue], it means we are not clear about the nature of the issue. After making conscientious efforts in our work, I believe we will be able to win the support from the overwhelming majority in the party for determining the nature and handling of the issue.” (Deng 1992, 32.)

I speech act: claim	
Propositional content	The protests were a counterrevolutionary rebellion by nature (C).
Preparatory content	1) Deng lists the reasons and evidence as to the accuracy of C. 2) It is not obvious, that student protests are counterrevolutionary, as Chinese history has witnessed patriotic and progressive protests, which belong to the national myth (the May fourth movement for example).
Essential content	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that the protests were a counterrevolutionary rebellion by nature.

Box 5: The claim speech act of Deng’s speech

II speech act: warn	
Propositional content	Counterrevolution leads to the end of socialism (China's freedom) and to China becoming totally dependent on the West, which is not in the best interest of the hearer.
Preparatory content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The hearer has a reason to believe, that China could become dependent on the West, and that it would not be in the interest of the hearer (China was dependent before the era of socialism). 2) It is not obvious that China will become dependent on the West regardless.
Essential content	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that China's dependency on the West (the end of socialism) is not in the hearers best interest.

Box 6: The warn speech act of Deng's speech

III speech act: explain	
Propositional content	The prevention of a counterrevolution (the maintenance of socialism and China's freedom) was the reason for declaring martial law and dispersing the protests by using force.
Preparatory content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Martial law was declared and the protests were dispersed. 2) It is not obvious, why the protest of (patriotic) students had to be dispersed by using force.
Essential content	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that the dispersion of the protests as a way of preventing a counterrevolution represents the actual state of affairs.

Box 7: The explain speech act of Deng's speech

Conclusions

Deng strived to justify the dispersion of the protests by using force on the fourth of June 1989 by using a security argument. By labelling the protests as counterrevolutionary violence they became an issue of national security and the use of force was justified vis-à-vis the national myth. It is a different matter, whether or not the measures taken were justified in the minds of the people, but the legitimacy of the actions rested on a security argument. Security was thus used on its part in reproducing the official truth and the myth of the Chinese Communist party.

Even though the threat was counterrevolution – an internal revolt – foreign threats had to be taken into the argument to make it more convincing and powerful. Foreign threats were exaggerated and put out of proportion in an international environment that was “safer” than ever before in the history

of the People's Republic. Legitimacy for emergency measures was sought for from the shame and fear of dependency on foreign powers, which is a part of the national myth.

On the basis of the analysis presented in this article, it can be concluded that Deng's speech followed the grammar of security. As the case was about justifying past actions, the structure of the argument differs from securitization in its last speech act, as the securitization had already happened. On the basis of this single micro-level analysis, it seems that this method of analysis has value in the dissection of Chinese rhetoric, even though it was induced from European politics.

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