# Security as translation: threats, discourse, and the politics of localisation

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Abstract. This article aims at enhancing our understanding of how collective interpretations of threats, stabilised and temporarily fixed in names, travel across different local discourse communities. I contend that globally accepted names result from gradual cross-cultural processes of localisation. Specifically, I argue that the discursive dynamics of elusiveness, compatibility and adaptation suggest a framework of analysis for how collective interpretations or names travel.

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## Introduction

The purpose of this article is to present a framework of analysis on how collective interpretations of threats, stabilised and temporarily fixed in 'names', travel across different local discourse communities; and to illustrate this framework with a comparison of the successful versus failed 'localisation' of 'organised crime' and 'rogue states' into German security discourse.[1] I thereby contend that globally accepted 'names' for perceived threats such as 'terrorism', 'organised crime' or 'failed states' result from gradual cross-cultural processes of localisation.

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[1] Both 'names' are cases of a highly unlikely localisation from their origin in the US into German security discourse. The rogue states image stands in stark contrast to the hegemonic foreign policy discourse in Germany usually referred to as 'culture of restraint' stressing dialogue, multilateralism and non-military means of security policy. With regards to 'organised crime' actors from the very beginning argued that such a threat would not go beyond local 'gang crime' in Germany so that 'organised crime' would not exist, never had existed and never will exist in Germany. In other words, 'organised crime' did not correspond with the perceived reality of the threat in Germany. Yet, while Germany has remained highly sceptical to take over 'rogue states', it did localise 'organised crime' despite the fact that it did not 'fit' to the situation in Germany. The article will show that this 'puzzle' can be understood by reference to the successful versus failed politics of localisation in German security discourse. On these criteria for selecting cases for a comparative research design, Jason Seawright and John Gerring, 'Case-Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options' (unpublished manuscript, 2005).

Specifically, I argue that discursive dynamics resulting from 'elusiveness', 'compatibility' and 'adaptation' illustrate the establishment of a global 'modus of security' for issues through various local 'actions of translation'.

Overall, my argument relates the reflections of this article to discursive approaches in security studies and in particular to the concept of securitisation which provides the by far most elaborate – and prominent – understanding of how threats/ threat discourses are produced in world politics.[2] These perspectives do not deny 'reality' but claim that we do not have exclusive access to this reality without interpretation and giving what we perceive (or others claim) to be true a 'name', which in turn has significant cognitive and social effects. Giving a case or development a 'name' therefore isn't trivial.

The idea of securitisation, first articulated by Wæver in the 1980s and subsequently extended in collaboration with Barry Buzan and Jaap de Wilde,[3] has recently been taken up by a 'second generation' of more contextual securitisation scholars who are elaborating various ways to incorporate notions of context and power into securitisation theory in order to construct a more comprehensive understanding of its underlying processes.[4] However, while the reflections of this latter body of literature, which this article continues,[5] are increasingly explicit with regards to the socio-linguistic and/or socio-political micro-dynamics of generating threats and have been applied to various issue areas already,[6] they have so far not

[2] Ole Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 46–86; Ole Wæver, 'Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen: New "Schools" in Security Theory and their Origins between Core and Periphery' (unpublished manuscript, 2004); Karin M. Fierke, *Critical Approaches to International Security* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007); Johan Eriksson (ed.), *Threat Politics: New Perspectives on Security, Risk and Crisis Management* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Jutta Weldes, Mark Laffey, Hugh Gusterson and Raymond Duvall (eds), *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities, and the Production of Danger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); David Campbell, *Writing Security: US Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (London: Routledge, 2006); Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006).

[3] Ole Wæver, 'Security, the Speech Act: Analyzing the Politics of a Word (and the Transformation of a Continent)' (unpublished manuscript, 1989); Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

[4] Thierry Balzacq, 'The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11:2 (2005), pp. 171–201; Holger Stritzel, 'Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond', *European Journal of International Relations*, 13:3 (2007), pp. 357–83; Mark B. Salter, 'Securitization and Desecuritization: a Dramaturgical Analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 11:4 (2008), pp. 321–49. See also, Didier Bigo, *Polices en réseaux, l'expérience européenne* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1996); Huysmans, *Insecurity*; Hansen, *Practice*; for a recent overview, Thierry Balzacq (ed.), *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* (London: Routledge, 2010).

[5] Stritzel, *Securitization*.

[6] Rita Abrahamsen, 'Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear', *Alternatives*, 30:1 (2005), pp. 50–80; Didier Bigo, 'Security and Immigration: Towards a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease', *Alternatives*, 27:1 (2002), pp. 63–92; Barry Buzan, 'Will the "Global War on Terrorism" Be the New Cold War?', *International Affairs*, 82:6 (2006), pp. 1101–18; Myriam Dunn-Cavelty, *Cyber-Security and Threat Politics: US Efforts to Secure the Information Age* (London: Routledge, 2007); Rita Floyd, 'Towards a Consequentialist Evaluation of Security: Bringing Together the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School of Security Studies', *Review of International Studies*, 33:2 (2007), pp. 327–50; Huysmans, *Insecurity*; Nicole J. Jackson, 'International Organizations, Security Dichotomies and the Trafficking of Persons and Narcotics in Post-Soviet Central Asia. A Critique of the Securitization Framework', *Security Dialogue*, 37:3 (2006), pp. 299–317; Matt McDonald, 'Securitization and the Construction of Security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 14:4

been related to discursive processes of travel, that is, what could be called in terms of securitisation theory, to 'cross-securitizations'.

Establishing my argument in the broader context of this debate I suggest to replace the notion of 'speech act' with the concept of 'translation' which modifies Wæver's initial ideas on securitisation in various ways. Most fundamentally, the notion of translation provides a much more processual, iterative, and much less static, understanding of the process of attaching the meaning of security to an issue, arguing that a modus of security does not result from any single authoritative speaker and/or 'original utterance' but from dynamic socio-linguistic and socio-political processes of transforming past constructions of meaning.[7] From this perspective, there never is, and never can be, any truly original 'constitutive act'. Second, in line with many second generation scholars of securitisation, this article also places less weight on the formal requirement for a 'securitizing move' to ask for a 'state of exception', or 'extra-constitutional' measures, to deal with an issue outside the realm of 'normal politics', arguing that many security issues after the end of the Cold War have in fact been dealt with *below* the level of exceptional politics, especially in Europe. Finally, this article is less interested in securitisations *per se*, but in a conceptual framework to analyse/understand the travel and *localisation* of threat discourse.

## The three mechanisms of translation: elusiveness, compatibility and adaptation

Generally speaking, the localisation of 'names', understood as relatively stable products of discourse, into a new local context draws attention to the 'interim passages' of threat texts and the nature of transformation of an initial enunciation in a new context: how is the US threat text 'organised crime' socio-linguistically and socio-politically transformed in German discourse into '*Organisierte Kriminalität*' and how is the US threat text 'rogue states' socio-linguistically and socio-politically transformed in German discourse into '*Schurkenstaaten*'. In other

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(2008), pp. 563–87; Paul Roe, 'Actor, Audience(s) and Emergency Measures: Securitization and the UK's Decision to Invade Iraq', *Security Dialogue*, 39:6, pp. 615–35; Salter, *Dramaturgical*; Stritzel, *Securitization*; Roxanna Sjöstedt, 'Exploring the Construction of Threats: The Securitization of HIV/AIDS', *Security Dialogue*, 39:1 (2008), pp. 7–29; Maria Julia Trombetta, 'Environmental Security and Climate Change: Analyzing the Discourse', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 21:4 (2008), pp. 585–602; Juha Vuori, 'Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitization: Applying the Theory of Securitization to the Study of Non-Democratic Political Orders', *European Journal of International Relations*, 14:1 (2008), pp. 65–99; Claire Wilkinson, 'The Copenhagen School on Tour in Kyrgyzstan. Is Securitization Theory Useable Outside Europe?', *Security Dialogue*, 38:1 (2007), pp. 5–25.

[7] This explicitly processual and retrospective focus of the notion of translation draws parallels to the concept of intertextuality. However, in contrast to an intertextual analysis which is more concerned with the study of synchronic and/or diachronic *linkages* of certain texts to other texts, the notion of translation leads to an in-depth socio-linguistic and socio-political study of *actual processes of transforming meaning* in a 'new' setting. Specifically, this different focus allows one to analyse the actual process of travel and localisation of a certain discourse or concept rather than just tracing their *linkages* to previous and/or parallel discourses, as in intertextual analysis. On intertextuality, Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000); Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (eds), *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989); Hansen, *Practice*.

words, what are the linguistic and social mechanisms of localising a 'foreign' name such as organised crime or rogue states into a new local discourse such as the one in Germany; and what performative, socio-linguistic and socio-political, effects does the 'foreign' text have in the new local context (with and without successfully translating it)?

I contend that these processes of *localisation* are crucial for understanding the evolution of global narratives on the (perceived) 'nature of threats'. Their study can be broken down into three central 'mechanisms of translation' which are closely related and can thus overlap in multiple ways: (1) the elusiveness of a threat text; (2) the compatibility of a threat text with the new local context; and, most importantly, (3) socio-linguistic and socio-political processes of adaptation, that is, the creative, yet power-laden, attempts of modifying the threat text and/or the dominant discourse in the new context. This latter aspect should be understood as the actual socio-linguistic and socio-political action (or 'agency') of translation, realising the structural (textual and discursive) potentialities of an existing threat text in a new local discourse.

The first mechanism refers to the idea that some structures are easier to translate into new contexts/discourses than others. Broadly speaking, the sparse literature on this question suggests that more elusive (textual) structures are easier to translate cross-culturally and are thus more powerful in various contexts.[8] In a similar way, socio-linguist Paul Chilton highlights the ability of the textual structure of 'metaphor' to create 'interpersonal common ground' because of its 'ambiguity and vagueness'.[9] This basic idea is also expressed with the concept of 'boundary objects' and their circulation across different sites in the sociology of science and technology.[10] As Star and Griesener elaborate: 'Boundary objects are [. . .] both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common usage and strongly structured in individual site use.'[11]

The idea that some textual structures are easier to translate than others is not unproblematic because, for a reflectivist position, social meaning is always context-specific and socio-politically generated. As a result, meaning is never completely fixed or 'stable' but always structurally open to change.[12] The idea of a different translatability of (text) structures also should not be misunderstood as an abstract textual universalism which would repeat the endless discussions in linguistics directed against Saussure. The translatability of a certain text can

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[8] Joel Best (ed.), *How Claims Spread: Cross-National Diffusion of Social Problems* (New York: de Gruyter, 2001); Peter Hall (ed.), *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism across Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

[9] Paul Chilton, *Security Metaphors: Cold War Discourse from Containment to Common European Home* (New York: Lang, 1996), p. 32.

[10] I would like to thank Christian Büger for introducing this literature to me; Christian Büger, *Human Security – What's the Use of it? On Boundary Objects and the Constitution of New Global Spaces* (unpublished manuscript, 2008).

[11] Susan Leigh Star and James R. Griesener, 'Institutional Ecology, Translations and Boundary Objects. Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907–39', *Social Studies of Science*, 19:3 (1989), p. 397.

[12] Jacques Derrida, 'Signature Event Context', *Glyph*, 1 (1972), pp. 172–97; Judith Butler, 'Performativity's Social Magic', in Richard Shusterman (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

ultimately only be evaluated in hindsight. There can be no definite list of abstract criteria which tell a researcher in advance how translatable a text is or which performative effect its translation will have. Translatability, as understood in this article, is no 'independent variable' but always situational and contextual, and thus inextricably linked to social agency.

The second structural mechanism is inspired by the constructivist literature on international norm dynamics which stresses that the spread of norms depends on what various authors have called 'compatibility', 'congruence', 'fit', 'resonance' or 'cultural match' between an international norm and the pre-existing web of domestic norms of a recipient context.[13] Similarly, the early literature on Europeanisation stresses the 'goodness of fit' of measures at the supranational level of the EU with domestic and administrative structures at the national level of EU member states.[14] Finally, the literature on framing has developed the similar concept of 'frame resonance' to stress that a successful 'frame' needs to speak to the expectations and values of its target audience.[15]

Again, however, compatibility too does not operate outside its situational and contextual social usages. Compatibility is thus always open to transformations and it therefore depends on how the 'match' of a text and a recipient context is constructed in discourse. In other words, linguistic compatibility always also reflects the creative ability of agents to successfully construct a match between an existing threat text and existing discourse, a process which necessarily involves a certain degree of transformation. It is precisely through processes of transformation that a given 'name' is structurally adapted to 'local' particularities in order to 'make it fit' with the 'new' local context.

This latter aspect draws attention to the central importance of the third, more explicitly agential mechanism: socio-linguistic and socio-political processes of adaptation. In the most basic sense, the notion of adaptation assumes that threat texts 'do not spread effortless across the globe'.[16] In other words, processes of adaptation are particularly visible when a certain 'name' is not easily translatable into new settings so that actors need to be engaged in a process of what Amitav Archarya has called 'localisation'.[17] According to Archarya, there are several 'catalysts' for such a localisation to occur such as 'crisis', 'systemic change', 'domestic political changes' or the regional or international 'presence' of an issue.[18] Alternatively, local actors may simply begin to realise that incorporating a certain issue/'name' has a potential to enhance their legitimacy, authority and/or resources,

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[13] Andrew P. Cortel and James W. Davis, 'Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda', *International Studies Review*, 2:1 (2000), pp. 65–87.

[14] Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli (eds), *The Politics of Europeanization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

[15] David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, 'Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization', in Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney Tarrow (eds), *From Structure to Action. Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures* (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1988), pp. 197–217.

[16] Martha Finnemore, 'Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism', *International Organization*, 50:2 (1996), p. 339; Theo Farrell, 'World Culture and Military Power', *Security Studies*, 14:3 (2005), p. 452.

[17] Amitav Acharya, 'How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism', *International Organization*, 58:2 (2004), pp. 239–75; see also, Michael Barnett, 'Culture, Strategy and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Road to Oslo', *European Journal of International Relations*, 5:1 (1999), pp. 5–36.

[18] Archarya, *Localization*, p. 247.

in particular if actors manage to frame these incorporations in ways that establish value and/or plausibility to local audiences without fundamentally altering existing local identity narratives.[19]

Socio-linguistically, actors localising issues are usually involved in various discursive strategies of matching and/or addressing linguistic, factual or political incompatibilities, including (re)framing, selection, grafting and linking.[20] Another discursive strategy has been identified by Theo Farrell who argues that actors localising issues often use 'strategies of stretching' in order to reduce an initial incompatibility between a content and a context.[21] Alternatively, actors may attempt to reinterpret central elements of an existing discourse, that is, the 'recipient side' of an initial untranslatability. Overall, these diverse strategies ultimately all aim at making a threat text/name 'appear local' and/or attractive for local audiences. Yet, there can be no 'conclusive list' for such strategies as they strongly depend on the situational creativity of local actors and the 'social magic' of their application.

Socio-politically, Archarya stresses the importance of 'local agents' while the general literature on international norm dynamics is usually more concerned with *transnational* actors as individual 'moral entrepreneuers' or 'social movements'. However, both contributions occasionally mention but often neglect questions of social power with regards to processes of adaptation. Yet, meaning – as 'norms' or 'threat texts/names' – does not circulate freely in the social sphere but is always produced and reproduced in particular sites of production. These sites of production are historically specific, socially structured and thus necessarily asymmetric in terms of power and resources.[22] Local 'security professionals' incorporating threat texts into local discourse, their relative position of power and their creative socio-linguistic strategies are thus of central importance for a successful localisation of an existing 'name'.[23]

The following reflection will illustrate this framework with regards to the successful versus failed translations of *organised crime* and *rogue states* into *Organisierte Kriminalität* and *Schurkenstaaten*. I hope to show that the difference between the two cases can be understood by reference to three principal aspects: First, while the 'name' rogue states is embedded in a distinctly US cultural

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[19] Ibid., p. 251.

[20] Ibid., pp. 243–44.

[21] Farrell, *Culture*, pp. 459–61.

[22] John B. Thompson, 'Mass Communication and Modern Culture. Contribution to a Critical Theory of Ideology', *Sociology*, 22:3 (1988), pp. 359–83; Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991).

[23] On the notion of 'security professional' and the related concept of 'positional power', Bigo, *Polices*; Stefano Guzzini, 'Structural Power: The Limits of Neorealist Power Analysis', *International Organization*, 47:3 (1993), pp. 443–78; Stritzel, *Securitization*. See also, Bourdieu, *Power*; Stefano Guzzini, 'A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 6:2 (2000), pp. 147–82; Stefano Guzzini, 'The Concept of Power. A Constructivist Analysis', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33:3 (2005), pp. 495–521; Anna Leander, 'The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33:3 (2005), pp. 803–825; Anna Holzscheiter 'Discourse as Capability: Non-State Actors' Capital in Global Governance', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33:3 (2005), pp. 723–46. For recent taxonomies on power beyond IR realism, Felix Berenskötter and Michael J. Williams (eds), *Power in world politics* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall (ed.), *Power in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Steven Lukes, *Power. A Radical View* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).

discourse tradition, the threat text of organised crime is much more elusive and embedded in a universal pop cultural vocabulary of what has been referred to as 'the mafia mystique'.[24] Second, both threat texts were initially incompatible with the German context. While the threat text of rogue states is incompatible with the hegemonic discourse traditions of multilateralism and culture of restraint, the threat text of organised crime did not correspond with the perceived reality of crime in Germany. Third, most importantly, local securitising actors were only successful in translating 'organised crime', adapting it successfully to local particularities and creating emotionally potent narratives for German audiences. Similar moves of translation can be found – yet in a much less elaborate and less consistent form – with regards to 'rogue states'.

### The successful translation of *Organised Crime* into *Organisierte Kriminalität*

The threat text of organised crime received its main imprints in 19th century Italy and in the US of the late 19th and early 20th century. In Italy it is mainly associated with the term 'mafia' and various narratives about the perceived origins and nature of Mafia, Camorra and Ndrangheta.[25] In the US, this heritage was taken up and supplemented by perceptions of mass immigration and the Italian diaspora, political and union corruption and the Prohibition period which were in turn embedded in powerful cultural discourse traditions of US exceptionalism and distinctly US civil-religious discourse.[26] Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, the US cultural industry discovered the topic in the 1920s and created powerful fictional narratives about organised crime that continue to influence the perceptions of audiences world-wide.[27]

With regards to the concept of translation this is an interesting particularity of the threat text of organised crime because Hollywood helped to go beyond merely *national* reference systems for organised crime constituted by *national* discourses. Instead a truly *universal* pop cultural vocabulary was created with the potential to be emotionally potent in various cultural contexts. Importantly, this is enabling securitising actors in various cultural-political contexts including Germany to construct emotional resonance with local audiences in local discourse communities.[28]

On a general, pop cultural level, images of 'the mafia' and 'US organised crime' thus entered German discourse constantly at least since the 1930s through

[24] Dwight C. Smith, *The Mafia Mystique* (New York: Hutchinson, 1975).
[25] Henner Hess, *Mafia and Mafiosi: The Structure of Power* (Farnborough: Heath, 1973); Smith, *Mafia*; Salvatore Lupo, *History of the Mafia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); John Dickie, *Cosa Nostra: A History of the Sicilian Mafia* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).
[26] Lee Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace: Organized Crime in Cold War America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Michael Woodiwiss, *Organized Crime and American Power: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Dennis J. Kenney and James O. Finckenauer, *Organized Crime in America* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1995); Jay S. Albanese, *Organized Crime in America* (Cincinnati: Anderson, 1996).
[27] David E. Ruth, *Inventing the Public Enemy: The Gangster in American Culture 1918–1934* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
[28] For the similar example of Russian discourse, Gilles Favarel-Garrigues, 'Competition and Confusion in the Discourse on Organized Crime in Russia', *Alternatives*, 28:4, pp. 423–57.

countless Hollywood films, TV series and other products of popular culture including *Little Cesar* ('Der kleine Caesar', 1931), *On the Waterfront* ('Die Faust im Nacken', 1954), *The Untouchables*, 1959–1963 (first screened in Germany in 1964 as 'Chicago 1930'), *The Godfather* ('Der Pate', 1972, 'Der Pate – Teil II', 1974, 'Der Pate – Teil III', 1990) or the TV series *Allein gegen die Mafia* ('Alone against the mafia') – in the Italian original 'La Piovra' meaning 'the octopus' – from 1984 to 1999 which was one of the most successful TV series in Germany of all times.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s these popular cultural influences on perceptions of organised crime in Germany started to become supplemented by an expert discourse of German police professionals which was openly exchanged in expert journals and at expert conferences.[29] A landmark event for the early spread of the term 'organised crime' in Germany was a major workshop held by the *Bundeskriminalamt* (BKA), the main German police agency at the federal level, in 1974.[30] Discussing *Die Erscheinungsformen und die Bekämpfung organisierten Verbrechens* ('the apperances and the combat of organized crime'), several experts were invited, including experts from the US and Italy. Similar seminars were also held by the *Polizei-Führungsakademie* (PFA), the main training centre for police executives in Germany, in 1973 (*Organisierte Kriminalität. Phänomen und Bekämpfung*), 1974 (*Die Organisierte Kriminalität und die Möglichkeiten ihrer Bekämpfung*) and 1976 (*Europäische Straftätergruppen. Erfahrungen, Bekämpfungsmethodik, Rechtsfragen wirksamer Strafverfolgung des gemeinen Verbrechens*) and by the *Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter* (BDK), the main police union in Germany.[31] In addition, several articles appeared in *Kriminalistik*, *Der Kriminalist*, *Die Polizei* and other leading police journals discussing the 'nature' of organised crime in Germany and providing definitions that used the US as a comparison.[32] With these events – and in addition to the contributions in police journals – the German police, in particular the BKA and the PFA, provided an early forum for foreign experts to introduce their perceptions on organised crime to the German discourse.

Reading the early events by Germany's leading police institutions such as the major BKA conference as a micro-cosmos for evolving expert reflections on organised crime, it is striking that actors initially felt obliged to react to the general perception that organised crime (that is, 'US organised crime') would not exist in Germany. For example Gemmer, a leading representative of the BKA,

[29] Jörg Kinzig, *Die rechtliche Bewältigung von Erscheinungsformen organisierter Kriminalität* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2004), pp. 50–60; Anna Luczak, *Organisierte Kriminalität im internationalen Kontext* (Freiburg: iuscrim, 2004), pp. 175–262; Willi Flormann, *Heimliche Unterwanderung* (Lübeck: Schmidt-Römhild, 1995), pp. 15–25.

[30] Bernhard Wehner, 'Zur Arbeitstagung über organisiertes Verbrechen', *Kriminalistik*, 28:6 (1974), pp. 533–6.

[31] Karl-Heinz Gemmer, 'Organisiertes Verbrechen. Eine Gefahr für die Innere Sicherheit?', *Kriminalistik*, 28:12 (1974), p. 530; Friedrich Heinhold, 'Die organisierte Kriminalität und Möglichkeiten ihrer Bekämpfung', *Kriminalistik*, 28:5 (1974), pp. 252–5; Flormann, *Unterwanderung*, pp. 15–25.

[32] Examples Enclude Hans Kollmar, 'Organisierte Kriminalität: Begriff oder Bezeichung eines Phänomens?', *Kriminalistik*, 28:1 (1974), p. 6; Friedrich Berckhauer and Heinz Rada, 'Organisierte und grenzüberschreitende Wirtschaftskriminalität', *Der Kriminalist*, 9:3 (1977), pp. 50–1; Hans-Werner Hamacher, *Tatort Deutschland* (Bergisch-Gladbach: Lübbe, 1973), pp. 69–70; Hans Heinold, *Kriminalität*; Herbert Schäfer, 'Neue kriminalstrategische und kriminaltaktische Methoden in der Bekämpfung der Kriminalität', in Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter (ed.), *Dokumentation* (Düsseldorf: BDK, 1975), pp. 8–9.

expressed a consensus at the BKA conference by stating that crime in Germany would not come close to 'organised crime', neither in quantity nor in quality.[33] There would neither be 'strictly structured organisations' nor any 'exertion of influence on state institutions or the economy through corruption or infiltration'. Moreover, criminal projects would only be 'very limited' both temporally and substantively.[34]

In light of this early consensus within the expert community it is surprising, and a research puzzle on its own, that security professionals in Germany still started to localise the threat text of organised crime. They did so not only despite the fact that it did not correspond with the perceived reality of the threat in Germany but also despite the fact that the security expert community in Germany agreed in the early 1970s that there was no such threat for Germany. In the 1970s many security professionals in Europe observed slight changes in criminal practices towards a stronger professionalisation of crime.[35] But why didn't security professionals in Germany then create their 'own' threat text if the pre-existing 'name' didn't fit? The sparse existing literature on this puzzle suggests that the *international presence* of the threat text of organised crime and *instrumental and professional interests* of security professionals played a major role as central 'catalysts of localisation'.[36]

Pushing this argument further, some scholars could hold that the puzzling localisation of organised crime is arguably an interesting difference to the security threat depicted by the term 'rogue states' which arguably 'is' or 'should be' an important security concern for Germany. For those believing, without any qualifications, in an 'objective reality' of threats, a comparison of organised crime and rogue states almost appears to be paradoxical: a threat text that did *not* match with the (perceived) reality of the threat *was* localised while a threat text that arguably *does* match *wasn't*.

Obviously, the threat-reality nexus is more complex than that because threats always have to be articulated.[37] Articulating a threat requires difficult interpretations about perceived realities and possible futures. A 'threat' usually isn't already actualised and it usually isn't as clear as 'a bullet in the head'.[38] Therefore, actors need to interpret and qualify incomplete and often contradictory data of what *might* happen which involves diverse political, bureaucratic and cultural processes of interpretation, naming, renaming and negotiation among various actors who have access to a relevant political conversation. These power-laden socio-linguistic and socio-political processes in turn have an impact on the very naming of a perceived threat, and they influence whether a particular naming takes on societal salience, which again has socio-linguistic and socio-political effects which impact on how something is named, and so on.

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[33] Gemmer, *Verbrechen*, p. 531.

[34] Ibid., p. 531.

[35] John A. Mack and Hans-Jürgen Kerner, *The Crime Industry* (Farnborough: Lexington Books, 1975).

[36] Heiner Busch, 'Organisierte Kriminalität – Vom Nutzen eines unklaren Begriffs', *Demokratie und Recht*, 20:4 (1992), pp. 374–95; Klaus von Lampe, 'The Concept of Organized Crime in Historical Perspective', *Forum on Crime and Society*, 1:2 (2001), pp. 99–116.

[37] For interesting reflections on language and reality from a critical realist perspective, Jonathan Joseph and John M. Roberts (eds), *Realism, Discourse and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 2003).

[38] David Campbell, 'Post-Structuralism', in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki and Steve Smith (eds), *International Relations Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 217.

As I hope to illustrate in what follows, my specific perspective on this general line of argument of an essentially reflectivist position is to focus on the successful versus failed politics of translation in a local recipient discourse. It is important to stress, however, that the general argument that threat discourse travels through processes of translation is thereby independent of whether a threat text matches with the perceived reality of a threat or not. Obviously, if it does, then its spread is more likely. However, because of different language systems, cultural discourse traditions and different local identity narratives world-wide, I would always expect – to some degree – questions of compatibility to arise and processes of transformation and adaptation to occur.

The following case study summarises the results of a larger research project which was based on an analysis of all parliamentary debates, all articles in major German expert journals as well as all speeches from state representatives, party spokesmen, security experts and party documents available in the specialised archives of the *Bibliothek des Bundeskriminalamtes* in Wiesbaden and the *Institut für Bürgerrechte und öffentliche Sicherheit* in Berlin.[39] On the basis of this data, three principal discursive streams could be identified: an *expert discourse*, dominant from the early 1970s to the early 1990s, in which security professionals discussed organised crime and sought consensus within the expert community; a parallel *institutional discourse* in which prominent security professionals and state representatives attempted to reach agreement on how to define organised crime in a series of committee initiatives; and finally a *political discourse* of major parliamentary debates, various political speeches, party programmes on organised crime, formal parliamentary interpellations and intensive media coverage in the 1990s. With that not only the major sites of discussing organised crime changed from expert journals and expert conferences to the German parliament and the media. While security professionals continued to lobby for 'organised crime' throughout the 1990s, it was now that more and more political actors entered the scene as major players in the process of securitisation and translation by seeking legitimacy for political initiatives against organised crime.

Overall, the case study on organised crime illustrates various socio-linguistic strategies of localising 'organised crime' in Germany, structurally supported by its elusiveness and its universal (pop) cultural presence in local discourses word-wide. Specifically, the German security discourse is marked by four principal discursive strategies: (1) enunciations that were particularly strong at the early stages of the expert discourse which aimed at *justifying the incompatibility* of 'organised crime' with the perceived reality of the threat in Germany; (2) enunciations in the expert discourse that aimed at *linking debates*, in particular linkages to previous expert debates about organisational changes of policing in Germany and more funding for security professionals; (3) enunciations in a series of committee initiatives in the institutional discourse of consecutively *stretching the meaning* of organised crime and, finally, (4) enunciations in the political discourse, mainly within the German parliament, of *constructing discursive compatibility and resonance* for German audiences.

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[39] Holger Stritzel, *How Threat Images Spread: Organized Crime, Rogue States, and the Politics of Translation in Germany* (unpublished PhD, 2008).

*The expert discourse: justifying incompatibility and linking debates*

In light of the concept of translation the expert discourse between 1970 and 1990 is mainly marked by discursive strategies which aimed at justifying the incompatibility of organised crime with the perceived reality of crime in Germany and initiatives of linking organised crime with previous and parallel debates within the expert community. Enunciations which aimed at justifying the incompatibility of 'organised crime' with the perceived reality in Germany mainly took the form of arguing that the threat of organised crime was *not yet* fully actualised. For example, Gemmer argued that although organised crime would 'not exist' in Germany, counter-measures should be taken now to avoid an immediate threat for Germany in the future.[40] Others, such as Hamacher and Schäfer, claimed that organised structures, 'starting to emerge gradually' in 'the underworld', would become more and more threatening for Germany over time.[41] An interesting rationalisation of such arguments which allowed to keep alive the (US) threat text for the German context despite the fact that it did not correspond with the perceived reality of crime in Germany was provided by Otto Boettcher, a leading security professional of the 1970s, at the first PFA workshop in 1973: 'Crime in Germany seems to operate at an *early stage* of its organization with a clear tendency *towards American patterns*'.[42]

In addition, at the BKA and PFA conferences actors also started to amalgamate organised crime with previous police expert debates and claims for more resources. With that actors made the threat text of organised crime more attractive for the expert community and helped to establish a consensus among the security professionals. For example, Gemmer claimed that 'new, organised forms of criminality' would require 'new, organised tactics of the police'.[43] Heinrich called for an 'organised group of police agents' to establish a *Waffengleichheit*[44] with organised criminals.[45] Using a similar line of argument, Jansen claimed better equipment and personnel, better training and new police technology[46] and his colleague Schäfer related the issue of 'better competences for the police' to the broader issue of changing the overall strategic doctrine of policing in Germany.[47]

These utterances need to be read against the broader background of the role and status of home affairs and policing in Germany after World War Two because early Germany lacked for a long time a 'normal' *Innenpolitik* ('home affairs') and was required to have a strongly decentralised police with only limited competences

[40] Gemmer, *Verbrechen*, p. 532.
[41] Hans-Werner Hamacher, *Tatort Deutschland* (Bergisch-Gladbach: Lübbe, 1973), pp. 69–70; Herbert Schäfer, 'Neue kriminalstrategische und kriminaltaktische Methoden in der Bekämpfung der Kriminalität', in Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter (ed.), *Dokumentation* (Düsseldorf: BDK, 1975), pp. 8–9.
[42] Flormann, *Unterwanderung*, p. 16, emphasis added.
[43] Gemmer, *Verbrechen*, p. 532.
[44] There is no direct translation for the term 'Waffengleichheit'. The literal translation would be 'equality in the (amount of) weapons', meaning a balance in capabilities.
[45] Wolfgang Heinrich, 'Über die Notwendigkeit der Schaffung besonderer polizeilicher Ermittlungseinheiten zur Bekämpfung organisierter Kriminalität', *Kriminalistik*, 29:7 (1975), p. 294.
[46] Hans-Peter Jansen, 'Zentrale Ermittlungsdienststellen als organisatorische Voraussetzung für die wirksame Bekämpfung krimineller Gruppen', in Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter (ed.), *Entwicklung neuzeitlicher Strategien zur Bekämpfung des organisierten Verbrechens* (Düsseldorf: BDK, 1975), p. 83.
[47] Schäfer, *Methoden*, p. 11.

as laid down in the so-called *Polizeibrief* ('police letter') of the Allied Forces in April 1949 regulating police competences in the Western occupation zones.[48] With Germany's reputational and economic recovery in the 1960s this situation changed and Germany could for the first time start to have a broader reflection on the character of its *Innenpolitik* and the meaning of 'internal security' for Germany.[49]

In light of rising crime rates in the late 1960s a fundamental debate started which had two main sub-debates. The first debate was concerned with the future structure of policing in Germany, driven forward by pleas from police experts to move from the federal, highly decentralised structure towards a more centralised one. In this debate it was often argued that additional competences should be given to the BKA founded in 1951 as an only coordinating agency with very limited competences.[50] The second debate addressed modern policing techniques and new police strategies and was at that time mainly concerned with the potential virtues of applying modern computer technology and data processing to policing.[51] With the promotion of organised crime these sub-debates of early German policing became amalgamated under the heading of 'organised crime': substantive claims for a more centralised structure of policing in Germany (and more competences for the BKA) and new policing techniques (including modern data processing) could now be rearticulated as claims necessary to fight organised crime. This forestalled what unfolded in the 1980s under the headings of *vorbeugende Verbrechensbekämpfung* ('preventative fight against crime') and *Vorverlagerung* ('forward displacement') as a fundamental change in the strategic doctrine of policing in Germany for which the threat text of organised crime provided conceptual guidance and direction.[52]

### The institutional discourse: stretching the meaning of organised crime

In light of the concept of translation the institutional discourse appears as a consecutive process of turning the US threat text of organised crime into a flexible catch-all phrase that matches various cultural contexts including Germany. In other words, the institutional discourse in Germany can be interpreted as an alternative attempt to address the problem of incompatibility: While early enunciations in the expert discourse addressed the problem of incompatibility by arguing that organised crime had 'not yet' reached the situation in the US or that the situation in Germany would be at an early stage of development 'towards

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[48] Hans Boldt, 'Geschichte der Polizei in Deutschland', in Hans Lisken and Erhard Denninger (eds), *Handbuch des Polizeirechts* (München: C.H. Beck, 2001), pp. 2–43; Falco Werketin, *Die Restauration der deutschen Polizei. Innere Rüstung von 1945 bis zur Notstandsgesetzgebung* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1984).

[49] Thomas Kunz, *Der Sicherheitsdiskurs: Die Innere Sicherheitspolitik und ihre Kritik* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2005).

[50] For an overview of this debate, Hartmut Arden, 'Das Bundeskriminalamt: Intelligence-Zentrale oder Schaltstelle des bundesdeutschen Polizeisystems?', *Bürgerrechte & Polizei/CILIP*, 62:1 (1999), pp. 6–17; Dieter Schenk, *Der Chef: Horst Herold und das BKA* (München: Goldmann, 2000).

[51] For an overview of the debate, Luczak, *Kriminalität*; Kinzig; *Kriminalität*.

[52] Alfred Stümper, *Systematisierung der Verbrechensbekämpfung. Die Herausforderung von Politik, Justiz und Polizei durch eine sich tiefgreifend verändernde Sicherheitsproblematik* (Stuttgart: Boorberg, 1981).

American patterns', actors here applied a discursive strategy of stretching in an attempt to increase the translatability of organised crime for the German context.

Specifically, this process of consecutively adapting the pre-existing text structure of organised crime to the German context took three principal steps. The first was a definition of the *AG Kripo*, a group of leading security representatives at the federal and the state levels led by Otto Boettcher, in 1973, followed, second, by an *ad hoc* commission at the level of Germany's federal state ministers of interior (the 'Ad-hoc Ausschuss des Arbeitskreises (AK) II der Innenministerkonferenz (IMK)') in 1983. These two moves finally culminated, third, in the formal decision of the IMK itself in 1990. Importantly, at the end of this process was a fundamental transformation of the meaning of organised crime in which the initial threat text had been adapted to the German context by blurring mafia connotations and by excessively broadening the notion of organised crime, thereby giving the already rather elusive term 'organised crime' even more elusive/ambiguous connotations.

The AG Kripo in 1973 argued that 'the term organised crime comprises offences that are committed by organisations with more than two levels, or by many offenders who work together with a division of labor, to gain profits or to influence public life'.[53] This first official definition of the *AG Kripo* is indicative of the strong reference that was made to the mafia images of Italian und US discourse. The first striking feature is the reference to a hierarchical organisational structure: 'organisations with more than two levels' and, to a lesser extent, 'with a division of labour'. The second feature is the requirement that their motivation is to gain or exert influence on the public life. Both aspects are important elements of the 'mafia mystique' that had evolved in the Italian and US organised crime discourse.

Similar proposals to define organised crime in such a way can be found in the expert journal articles and expert conferences of that time. For example, the combination of 'elaborate organisation' and 'using a division of labour' was central for a definition of organised crime criminologist Jürgen Kerner used in a major study for the European Council, published as 'The Crime Industry' in 1975.[54] At the second organised crime workshop of the PFA in 1974 he was even more specific than in his study for the European Council by naming three important 'indicators' of organised crime: (1) a durable organisation, (2) a hierarchical structure and, (3) an *arbeitsteilige Rollengliederung* ('a division of labour which gives members functional roles').[55] In the same year Kollmar defined organised crime as a 'multilevel system of subordination'.[56] Similarly, Schäfer assumed a 'system of subordination'[57] and Berckhauer and Rada spoke about a 'highly developed criminal organisation'.[58] Even more explicitly Hamacher imported ideas from the US discourse when he argued that 'managers of gangsterism' would make up 'task forces' while a large organisation would tie its members together through social welfare and other benefits.[59]

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[53] Gemmer, *Verbrechen*, p. 530.
[54] Kerner, *Crime*.
[55] Heinhold, *Kriminalität*, p. 253.
[56] Ibid., p. 6.
[57] Schäfer, *Methoden*, p. 500.
[58] Friedrich Berckhauer and Heinz Rada, *Wirtschaftskriminalität*, pp. 50–1.
[59] Hamacher, *Tatort*, p. 69.

According to security professional Willi Flormann these rather strong mafia elements of the early German expert discourse, and the mafia elements in the reflections of the AG Kripo in particular, produced severe disagreements among the police experts as a result of which the AG Kripo had to withdraw its mandate.[60] The work of the AG Kripo was therefore only reactivated in 1979 when sensationalist newspaper stories reported on organised crime and the AG Kripo initiated the AK II to establish another *ad hoc* commission. However, this new commission then wasn't mandated anymore to define organised crime as such but to examine whether 'new developments in crime' would require 'new methods of policing'.[61] This change in the emphasis of the mandate has to be read against the background of the disagreements of the early 1970s: while the threat image of (US) organised crime remained controversial for the German context it was easier for the German expert community to examine and agree upon what kind of new methods of policing were needed to combat (organised) crime. In other words, the change in the mandate was ultimately a socio-linguistic strategy of *linking debates*.

This second official investigation of organised crime in Germany still produced a definition that was finally agreed upon by the AK II in 1983: 'Organised crime is not only a mafia-like parallel society known as "organised crime" but a large cooperation, durable and created on purpose, which uses a division of labour to commit crimes – often by also using modern infrastructure – with the goal of achieving high profits in a short period of time.'[62] This second definition shows the fusion of two elements. On the one hand, the mafia-influence is still clearly evident as a negative reference: it is explicitly referred to as a 'mafia-like parallel society' to argue that organised crime can *also* have a 'second meaning'. With respect to this 'second meaning' the AK II introduced a much broader and more flexible text structure ('division of labour', 'durable', 'often by using modern infrastructure'), thereby paving the way for what turned out to be a distinctly German translation of 'organised crime'.

The tendency to broaden the definition is even more clearly expressed in the final decision of the IMK in 1990 which was henceforth dealt with as the authoritative official definition of *Organisierte Kriminalität*. The definition provided a long list of vague criteria of organised crime that could match various national/cultural contexts and covers multiple forms of crime: 'striving for profit', 'committed in a planned way', 'of major importance', 'more than two offenders', 'working with a division of labour', 'for an indefinite period', 'business-like structures', 'using violence or other methods of intimidation'.[63] Critics claim that this definition includes *all* forms of crime that are not just spontaneous.[64]

*The political discourse: constructing compatibility and resonance for German audiences*

On the basis of this new, much less distinctly US or Italian, meaning, the threat text of organised crime could enter the political realm of seeking legitimacy for the

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[60] Flormann, *Unterwanderung*, pp. 31–3.
[61] Ibid., pp. 33–5.
[62] Luczak, *Kriminalität*, pp. 200–1.
[63] Lutz Meyer-Groner, *Strafprozessordnung* (München: C. H. Beck, 2003), p. appendix E.
[64] Busch, *Kriminalität*.

translation of organised crime in Germany. In light of the concept of translation, this political discourse since the late 1980s is marked by enunciations which aimed at constructing compatibility and emotional resonance for German audiences. More specifically, compatibility and resonance were achieved by combining the familiar universal cultural-political vocabulary of the mafia mystique established in Italian and US cultural-political discourse with a distinctly German cultural-political vocabulary of addressing perceived security problems. While the public lobbying of seeking legitimacy was thus strongly cultural in Germany, the expert discourse and bureaucratic-institutional process of securitisation since 1990 could still draw on the vague definition of the IMK which had resulted from a 20 year socio-linguistic process of redefinition through 'stretching' since the early 1970s.

The first aspect of mafia images in German discourse is evident in several securitising moves of the 1990s, warning against 'parallel societies' or 'parallel structures' which would constitute a 'countervailing power' operating according to its 'own violent laws', seeking to gain political influence in danger of becoming sedimented in German society. For example, in the *Große Anfrage* ('major interpellation') on organised crime in Germany of 1993, the Social Democrats elaborated why organised crime is dangerous with reference to the mafia image: 'The fact that the criminal organisations are so dangerous, their tightened, often international organisational structures as well as their secret quest for influence in politics and the economic sphere make it necessary to fight organised crime with all constitutional means possible. There is the danger that parallel societies can be established which will become a countervailing power to the democratic state'.[65] Similarly, in the German parliament, Geis argued that 'the masterminds will become socially accepted, and there is the fear that they will soon gain political influence' and de With held that 'the dangerousness of organised crime at its most advanced stage of development is marked by [. . .] [the fact that] it is durable and will literally be handed down'.[66]

These articulations within the German parliament correspond with threat constructions by major securitising actors such as Home Secretaries Kanther and Schily or BKA President Zachert. For example, in his inaugural address of a BKA conference on organised crime in 1996, Home Secretary Kanther argued that 'organised crime is a disease which can only be cured at the beginning before its corrosive poison is firmly established in the social body'[67] and BKA President Zachert held that 'the invisible part of organised crime that takes place in back rooms and family clans, or behind legal facades of respectable businesses, makes it so dangerous. This is where the power of organised crime is grounded, this is where the creeping poison of infiltration starts.'[68] Otto Schily (SPD) who replaced Kanther as home secretary, confirmed this threat construction: 'When organised

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[65] SPD, *Große Anfrage 'Organisierte Kriminalität in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland'* (12 May 1993), p. 1.

[66] Geis in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 12, Wahlperiode, 216. Sitzung, 10 March 1994, p. 18739; de With in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 13. Wahlperiode, 214. Sitzung, 16 January 1998, p. 7817–8.

[67] Manfred Kanther, 'Die Bekämpfung der Organisierten Kriminalität in Deutschland', in Bundeskriminalamt (ed.), *Organisierte Kriminalität* (Wiesbaden: BKA, 1997), p. 41.

[68] Hans-Ludwig Zachert, 'Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Visier des Organisierten Verbrechens', in Hans-Ludwig Zachert (ed.), *40 Jahre Bundeskriminalamt* (Stuttgart: BKA, 1991), p. 77.

crime gains the upper hand, then it will erode the foundations of democracy. Then the basic rights are worthless, if there is a parallel power, a quasi-state structure which operates according to its own brutal laws.'[69]

Finally, these securitising moves were supported by several distinctly pop cultural icons and metaphors in the discourse such as 'octopus', 'gangster', 'omerta' or 'Al Capone'. For example, Bavarian Prime Minister Stoiber argued that 'it is necessary to use all means to fight the mafia which pitches into Germany like an octopus';[70] van Essen claimed in the German parliament that 'the constitutional state is in danger if it cannot protect itself against the octopus of organised crime. Of course Germany is not yet Italy but we all have the responsibility that this does not become reality';[71] and Marschewski held that 'Germany must not turn into an Eldorado for gangsters and gangster bosses'.[72]

While German securitising actors thus made constant uses of the universial reservoir of the 'mafia mystique' to localise organised crime in Germany, many also strongly adapted the initial text structure to German discursive particularities. Processes of adaptation are thereby most clearly evident, especially in the parliamentary debates, in a highly legalistic language as well as in excessive references to the German federal constitutional court.[73] Tellingly, Schneider argued that 'one must not deny the democratically legitimised constitutional state the instrument it needs to defend itself. Otherwise one would put it on equal footing with the authoritative state of past epochs of German history.'[74] In a similar way Home Secretary Kanther argued that Germany would need a *wehrhafter Staat* ('well-fortified state') to defend the fundamental values of the German constitution,[75] combining the reference to the German constitution with a popular, distinctly German metaphor in securitising discourses, especially in conservative milieus. Developed in the fight against terrorism in the 1970s, the metaphor of the *wehrhafte Demokratie* has been constructed in antithesis to the democracy of the Weimar Republic (1919–1933), implying that Weimar was 'taken over' by the Nazis because it was too weak and too tolerant with its enemies.

As the latter quotes by Schneider and Kanther indicate, in the German context references to the German constitution are strongly related to the fundamental values of the precarious project of German democracy after the experiences of Nazi-Germany and World War Two to change Germany's militaristic culture since the *Kaiserreich* into democratic and liberal values. The German constitution is the quintessential symbol for these 'new' values in German discourse which have replaced former 'nationalist' and now substitute conventional 'patriotic' references in Germany. Linking securitising moves with these values promises to create resonance with German audiences.

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[69] Otto Schily, 'Die Linke hat Probleme mit ihrem Staatsverständnis: Gespräch/Norbert Seitz unterhielt sich mit Otto Schily', *Neue Gesellschaft – Frankfurter Hefte*, 45:2 (1998), p. 127.

[70] Stoiber (1992), p. 24.

[71] Van Essen in *Verhandlungen*, p. 7821.

[72] Marschewski in *Verhandlungen*, p. 19558.

[73] Geis, van Essen, Meyer, Kleinert, Schmidt-Jortzig, Scholz, Schily, Marschweski, de With, Lüder, Fuchs, Kanther, Graf in *Verhandlungen*, pp. 7818, 7819, 7821, 7836, 18159, 18169, 18187, 18739, 18744, 19518, 19524, 19529, 19532, 19541, 19543, 19559.

[74] Hans Joachim Schneider, *Kriminologie für das 21. Jahrhundert* (Münster: LIT, 2000), p. 334.

[75] Kanther, *Bekämpfung*, pp. 42, 45. For similar framings, see CDU, *Antrag*, p. 3; Marschewski in *Verhandlungen*, p. 18178.

### The failed translation of *Rogue States* into *Schurkenstaaten*

These various successful transformations of 'organised crime' which allowed actors to adapt a 'foreign' threat text to the socio-linguistic and socio-political particularities of a new local context mark a fundamental difference to the German rogue states discourse. The few securitising moves that can be found here did not manage to overcome the initial structural incompatibility of a mismatch of the threat text with German context in the form of powerful traditions of German security discourse centred around the notion of a 'culture of restraint'.[76] As a result, 'rogue states' remained 'foreign', a distinctly US threat text that wasn't emotionally potent and convincing in the German context. On the contrary, lacking a successful translation into German discourse, the rogue states image was rather emotionally potent as a linguistic resource for articulating disagreement and mobilising resistance.

In contrast to 'organised crime', the threat text of rogue states originates exclusively in US discourse and does not have any universal or 'global' cultural-political reference system. On the contrary, it is in many respects distinctly 'American'. In a nutshell, the threat text frames the general structural problem of revisionism in international society in a distinctly American language marked by a moralist rhetoric embedded in American exceptionalism typical for US cultural-political discourse.[77] In the broader context of this powerful discourse tradition the term 'rogue states' itself was a media creation in the late 1970s before the expression entered into the official language of US administrations, criticising Pol Pot's Cambodia and Idi Amin's Uganda for massive human rights violations, genocides and dictatorships.[78] In the 1980s US President Reagan introduced this vocabulary to the official language of US administrations before the term turned into a major concept of US counter-proliferation discourse which gave strategic guidance and direction for US military planning and debate.[79]

'Rogue states' entered German security discourse rather late. According to a study by Dirk Schmittchen the term itself first appeared in the German media discourse in the mid 1990s as '*Schurkenstaaten*' in the context of unilateral US sanctions against Cuba, Libya and Iran where the term was used as a resource to frame disagreement and/or resistance with US policies.[80] However, several earlier reflections on related concepts can be found in the German expert discourse, in particular in light of the surprising revelations of an Iraqi nuclear programme in 1991. Overall, however, these reflections remained much more sporadic and much less elaborate in German discourse than reflections on organised crime.

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[76] Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Kerry Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy, 1990–2003* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, *Germany, Pacifism and Peace-Enforcement* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

[77] Deborah Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (Edinburgh: University Press of Mississippi).

[78] Robert Litwak, *Rogue States and US Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), p. 50.

[79] Michael Klare, *Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America's Search for a New Foreign Policy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995); Litwak, *Rogues*; Tanter, *Rogues*; Anthony Lake, 'Confronting Backlash States', *Foreign Affairs*, 73:2 (1994), pp. 45–55.

[80] Dirk Schmittchen, *Rogue States: Sprachwissenschaftliche und politische Analyse eines Schlüsselbegriffs der US Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* (Saarbrücken: Vdm Verlag, 2007).

Instead, Germany's 'external' security discourse in the 1990s was marked by enunciations which created the picture of an unclear, amorphous, multidimensional, contradictory and non-state-centric strategic environment which was usually highlighted by a deliberate switch from the notion of 'threat' to the notion of 'risk'. According to this understanding, Germany was no longer confronted with massive and clearly identifiable dangers for its military security but rather with a more ambiguous set of issues beyond military security and below the level of emergency. It is thus not surprising that it was popular in Germany at that time to talk about multiple 'dangers of instability' or 'a dialectic of integration and fragmentation' rather than 'new enemies'.[81] The notion of integration thereby stood for a whole set of positive experiences most of which are in one way or another related to the EU and CSCE experiences of taming power rivalries and building trust through supranational forms of governance and multilateralism; economic prosperity, wealth and desecuritisation as policy ideals; the evolution of international legal norms, mutually beneficial win-win diplomacy and the potentially peace-inducing effects of economic interdependence. In light of this, fragmentation was portrayed as a force with the potential to disrupt or reverse integration and cooperative forms of interdependence. In the German reading, the 'dynamics of fragmentation' would have to be tamed and 'regulated back' into 'integration', a line of argument that German actors also explicitly applied to the issue of proliferation and *Problemstaaten* ('problem states') or *Risikostaaten* ('risk states').[82] More specifically, German security professionals stressed the dangers of uncertainties with regards to future developments in Eastern Europe and Russia and defined Germany's main foreign policy priority as one of stabilising its immediate post-Cold War environment by exporting the positive experiences of Europeanisation, economic integration and German *Ostpolitik* to the periphery of Europe.

Germany's official non-proliferation initiatives in the first years after the end of the Cold War were broadly in line with the main focus of these principal narratives. They reflect the preference for multilateralism, a strong UN, disarmament, staying within existing structures of non-proliferation regimes and, overall, a paradigm of 'cooperative security' as opposed to a new 'rogue states doctrine'.[83] Germany tightened its export policy in 1990 and again in 1992, supported technical improvements of the existing control system of non-proliferation such as the IAEO safeguards system,[84] lobbied for the unlimited extension of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995[85] and launched two autonomous German initiatives related to non-proliferation: the *10-Punkte Initiative zur Nichtverbreitungspolitik* (10

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[81] Hanns W. Maull, 'Internationale Politik zwischen Integration und Zerfall', in Karl Kaiser and Hanns W. Maull (eds), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik – Band 2: Herausforderungen* (München: Oldenbourg, 1995), pp. 1–22.

[82] Erler in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 14; Wahlperiode, 158; Sitzung, 15 March 2001, p. 15380; Sven Behrendt, 'Reintegration und Prävention von "Risikostaaten"', *Internationale Politik*, 54:6 (1999), pp. 29–34.

[83] This resembles William Walker's reflections on nuclear 'enlightenment' versus 'counter-enlightenment'; William Walker, 'Nuclear enlightenment and counter-enlightenment', *International Affairs*, 83:3 (2007), pp. 431–53.

[84] Harald Müller, 'Western Europe and Nuclear Non-proliferation 1987–1992', in Harald Müller (ed.), *European Non-proliferation Policy 1988–1992* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 1993), pp. 19–20.

[85] Alexander Kelle, 'Germany', in Müller, *Non-Proliferation*, pp. 136–7; Alexander Kelle and Harald Müller, 'Germany', in Harald Müller (ed.), *European Non-Proliferation Policy 1993–1995* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 119–27.

points initiative of non-proliferation) in December 1993[86] which highlighted regional strategies of non-proliferation, a strong UN and measures to improve the transparency of disarmament and, as a bilateral equivalent, the policy of a 'critical dialogue' with Iran[87] which was aimed at achieving changes in Iran's internal and external behaviour by entangling the country in a web of economic and cultural relations and a sustained diplomatic dialogue similar to German *Ostpolitik*.

In the context of these principal concerns and powerful discourses it is not surprising that hardly anyone reacted positively to the 'international presence' of the threat text of rogue states in Germany. The analysis of all parliamentary debates on the rogue states problematic, all articles in the major German policy journal *Internationale Politik* as well as all speeches and articles by members of the German government, party spokesmen for security and major German prolifer- ation experts available in the specialised archives of the *German Council on Foreign Relations* in Berlin reveals that only one local actor actively lobbied for the threat text in German discourse in addition to two further securitising moves in the early 1990s: The only consistent local actor and socio-political translator in German security discourse who continuously lobbied for the rogue states doctrine in Germany was Joachim Krause, the director of the Institute for Security Policy in Kiel and one of only three leading proliferation experts in the small German expert community (together with Harald Müller at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt and Oliver Thränert at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin). The two further securitising moves are from Harald Müller who later turned into a severe German expert critic of US counter-proliferation policy and Hans-Jochen Vogel, a prominent German politician from the Social Democratic Party.

The fact that only very few localising moves can therefore be analysed with regards to (failed) strategies of translation not only confirms the strong presence of a 'culture of restraint' in German security discourse, it also clearly limits the generalisability of the following case study on the German rogue states discourse. Although it is strongly recommended by comparative methodologists to include cases of 'dogs that didn't bark' in order to avoid the problem of 'selection bias',[88] it is in practice of course difficult to *illustrate* and *elaborate* securitisations that 'did not happen' largely because of enunciations that 'did not take place'. Nevertheless – when read *complementary* to the case study on organised crime – the few localising moves that can be found in German security discourse are still informative with regards to the concept of translation. Basically, the moves reveal very similar initiatives of dealing with the problem of incompatibility and of trying to transform and adapt the initial text structure of rogue states to Germany's 'external' security discourse as actors did successfully with regards to organised crime and Germany's 'internal' security discourse. The case study thus provides additional material which, I hope to show, further illustrates the plausibility and

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[86] Die Deutsche 10-Punkte Initiative zur Nichtverbreitungspolitik vom 15.12.1993, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung (ed.), *Bericht zur Rüstungskontrolle und Abrüstung 1993* (Bonn: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 1994), pp. 199–202.

[87] Mathias Struwe, *The Policy of 'Critical Dialogue': An Analysis of European Human Rights Policy towards Iran from 1992 to 1997* (unpublished manuscript, 1998).

[88] Barbara Geddes, 'How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics', *Political Analysis*, 2:1 (1990), pp. 131–50.

usefulness of the suggested analytical framework of a 'politics of translation'. Furthermore, it illustrates that the framework is not limited to localisations of threat texts in the field of 'internal' security but can be applied to 'external' security discourse as well.[89]

With regards to socio-linguistic strategies of translation, the few securitising moves that can be found are marked by three principal moves: (1) enunciations which aimed at *switching* the term rogue states, thereby addressing the weak textual translatability of the threat image; (2) enunciations which aimed at *reconciling* the rogue states text with the dominant 'cooperative security' discourse in Germany, thereby addressing the weak discursive translatability or discursive incompatibility of the threat text and, (3) enunciations which aimed at *reinterpreting* central elements of traditional German discourse, thereby addressing the recipient side of the discursive untranslatability of the rogue states text in German security discourse.

### Switching the term 'rogue states'

The most common – and probably most obvious – translational strategy with regards to the rogue states image in German security discourse was to simply switch the term. For example, Müller refers to what he calls 'the most problematic cases of proliferation' as 'crazy states'[90] which he defines as unpredictable actors with a personalised leadership, problems of internal legitimacy, expansive ambitions and a totalitarian government.[91] He explicitly names the examples of North Korea, Iran, Iraq and Libya which he characterises as blackmailing,[92] unstable, non-transparent, aggressive and totalitarian.[93] In another publication he is more cautious, calling respective actors *Vertragsbrecher* ('deal-breaker') which 'should be isolated and [. . .] pay for [their] breach of international law with economic sanctions'.[94] In a speech at an annual security conference in Munich Vogel also addresses the issue of what he calls a problem of 'nuclear threshold countries' (he mentions, for example, North Korea, Iran, Libya and Iraq)[95] and 'fundamentalist

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89 On the deconstruction of the categories of internal/external security, Didier Bigo, 'The Möbius Ribbon of Internal and External Security(ies)', in Mathias Albert, David Jacobson and Yosef Lapid (eds), *Identities, Borders and Orders* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 91–136; Didier Bigo and R. B. J. Walker, 'Political Sociology and the Problem of the International', *Millennium*, 35:3 (2007), pp. 725–39; R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

90 Harald Müller, 'Rüstungs- und Zerstörungspotential als Herausforderung der internationalen Politik', in Karl Kaiser and Hanns W. Maull, *Deutschlands neue Auenpolitik – Band 2: Herausforderungen* (München: Oldenbourg, 1995), p. 205. The concept is taken from Yehezkel Dror, *Crazy States: A Counterconventional Strategic Problem* (New York: Krause Reprint, 1980).

91 Müller, *Herausforderung*, p. 205.

92 Ibid., p. 209.

93 Ibid., p. 211.

94 Harald Müller, 'Die (Nicht-)Weiterverbreitung von Massenvernichtungswaffen: Internationale Regime und ihre Wirksamkeit', in Hans-Georg Wehling (ed.), *Sicherheitspolitik unter geänderten weltpolitischen Rahmenbedingungen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1995), p. 56.

95 Hans-Jochen Vogel, *Proliferation als Sicherheitsrisiko – Rede auf der Internationalen Konferenz für Sicherheitspoli- tik in München* (8 February 1992), p. 25.

dictatorships and terrorist groups'[96] but frames this problematic as a new 'global security risk'.[97] Other more sporadic and less elaborate enunciations in German security discourse switched the term 'rogue states' to 'problem states', 'risk states' and 'high risk states' when reflecting on the perceived problematic.[98]

With respect to the *term* 'rogue states', the main securitising actor and only consistent translator of the rogue states image in Germany, Joachim Krause, also prefers a switch to the term 'problem states' or 'states of concern' although he is not entirely consistent with his usage, referring to the issue as 'states that the US calls "rogue states"',[99] 'highly armed problem states',[100] '"*Schurkenstaaten*"' ('rogue states'),[101] 'radical islamic states',[102] 'adventurer, criminal family clans, religious zealots and eccentrics',[103] 'rentier states',[104] 'states which massively challenge world order'[105] and 'states which the majority of the international community considers to be problematic due to the radicality and ruthlessness of their political leaders'.[106] However, Krause also explicitly expresses his uneasiness with the US rogue states terminology which would give the new US counter-proliferation doctrine depicted by the term 'rogue states' a too military connotation (in other words, a connotation that does not resonate well with the dominant German security discourse of 'cooperative security'): 'With regards to the use of military means this implies that it has to be built on a broader basis than the US concept of rogue states at first seems to suggest.'[107]

While seemingly only switching terminology, these utterances are interesting with regards to the concept of translation because they reveal a much less elusive and flexible text structure of 'rogue states' in comparison to 'organised crime' which made it more difficult for local actors in Germany to deal with the problem of incompatibility. While local actors in Germany's 'internal' security discourse could maintain the term 'organised crime' (literary translated as '*Organisierte Kriminalität*'), 'rogue states' had to be switched to alternative terms. When the Clinton administration officially switched from 'rogue states' to 'states of concern' towards the end of the 1990s,[108] local actors in Germany could be relieved because this move reduced the incompatibility of the term with German discourse traditions. This point is clearly expressed in the following statement in a

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[96] Ibid., p. 26.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Examples include Erler, *Verhandlungen*; Hans-Peter Schwarz, 'Von Elefanten und Bibern: Die Gleichgewichts- störungen deutscher Auenpolitik', *Internationale Politik*, 58:5 (2003), pp. 21–30; Behrendt, *Risikostaaten*.
[99] Joachim Krause, 'Streit um Raketenabwehr: Ursachen der neuen transatlantischen Krise', *Internationale Politik*, 55:3 (2000), p. 37; Joachim Krause, *Strukturwandel der Nichtverbreitungspolitik – Die Verbreitung von Massenvernichtungswaffen und die weltpolitische Transformation* (München: Oldenbourg, 1998), p. 380.
[100] Krause, *Raketenabwehr*, p. 37.
[101] Ibid., p. 38.
[102] Ibid., p. 40.
[103] Joachim Krause, 'Wie ernst ist die Krise? Atomare Proliferation und internationale Ordnung', *Internationale Politik*, 61:8p. 10.
[104] Ibid., p. 10.
[105] Ibid., p. 12.
[106] Krause, *Nichtverbreitungspolitik*, p. 343.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Richard Boucher, *Daily Press Briefing* (19 June 2000).

'Transatlantic Joint Memorandum' by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)[109] and the Federation of German Industries on 'the future of transatlantic relations': 'Successful non-proliferation policy needs containment as well as diplomatic integration of possible proliferators [...] *The US have already turned down* **the unhelpful term rogue states** *to characterise problem states.* [...] Legitimate critique [...] should be separated from unhelpful talk of decoupling or exaggerated fears in the area of arms control.'[110]

While a change in terminology was thus helpful to localise the threat text of rogue states, its continued presence in German discourse also provided a resource to express disagreement and to mobilise resistance. For example, Wolfgang Gehrcke argued in the German parliament at a time the US administration had switched to 'states of concern': 'If US politicians allocate certificates for states in the world and classify countries as worrying – in the past they even used the term rogue states – then I can only label the US itself as worrying [...] The US is worrying to me [...] [NMD] isn't a defense system but part of an aggressive policy. In other words: the US is striving for world domination.'[111] Schrader claimed that the threat text of rogue states is a 'useful tool' to cover the whole spectrum of 'US geopolitical goals and armament projects' and a 'means to establish a pax americana'.[112] In a similar way Strutynski argued that under the presidency of George W. Bush 'the axis of evil is nothing else but a useful reduction of the rogue states concept of previous presidents against countries which currently lie at the center of US expansionism'.[113]

These latter quotes draw attention to a second important difference to the process of localising organised crime. While organised crime received a relatively stable meaning through its cultural-political production in early Italian and US discourse before it was localised *as such* into German discourse, changes in US discourse were permanently present as an influence on reflections in Germany. In other words, the German discourse on organised crime was much more autonomous with regards to influences from the 'source country' US. This difference became particularly visible when George W. Bush reinvigorated 'rogue states' as 'axis of evil' in US discourse. Arguably, the permanent presence and influence of US discourse (and the US as a foreign actor as well as German 'atlanticists' as domestic actors) is a principal difference between 'internal' and 'external' security of which the threat texts of 'organised crime' and 'rogue states' are good illustrations.[114] Although, as Ethan Nadelmann famously argued, the US is also a dominant actor in the area of crime control where the US promotes its own

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[109] The KAS is an institute of the CDU which combines political education, Think Tank consultancy and research support to young scholars.

[110] Memorandum (2001), p. 65, emphasis added.

[111] Gehrcke in *Verhandlungen*, pp. 15372–3.

[112] Lutz Schrader, 'Unilateralismus versus Global Governance: Die so genannten Schurkenstaaten als Problem der internationalen Sicherheitspolitik', in Maria Behrens (ed.), *Globalisierung als politische Herausforderung. Global Governance zwischen Utopie und Realität* (Wiesbaden: Vs Verlag, 2002), pp. 210–1.

[113] Peter Strutynski, 'Zwischenaufenthalt Bagdad: Kriege im Zeitalter des Neoimperialismus', in Österreichisches Studienzentrum für Frieden und Konfliktlösung (ed.), *Schurkenstaat und Staatsterrorismus. Die Konturen einer militärischen Globalisierung* (Münster: agenda, 2004), p. 33.

[114] On the evolving research programme on the internal/external security nexus, Johan Eriksson and Mark Rhinard, 'The Internal-External Security Nexus: Notes on an Emerging Research Agenda', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 44:3 (2009), pp. 243–67.

domestic agenda,[115] the personal, institutional and cultural domestic support structures of transatlanticism in 'allied' countries are much weaker in the field of 'internal' security.[116]

### Reconciling and redefining traditional discourse

Apart from switching the term, securitising actors also aimed at reconciling the threat text of rogue states with traditional German foreign policy discourse and/or aimed at redefining this discourse. In light of the concept of translation both initiatives aimed at compensating the weak discursive translatability of the threat text of rogue states.

The most comprehensive attempt to pursue a strategy of reconciling the rogue states text with German discourse was taken by Joachim Krause in his voluminous historical study *Strukturwandel der Nichtverbreitungspolitik* ('the structural change of non-proliferation'),[117] which summarises a series of studies he conducted for the German ministry of defence in the mid 1990s and arguably represents the most comprehensive reflection on proliferation policy in German. In the policy chapters of this study Krause essentially translates the US counter-proliferation discourse of the 1990s into German – *and* German discourse! Krause's specific strategy of thereby mitigating the negative effects of the rogue states image in a new discursive context are most clearly visible in his discussion of the use of force where he combines a strategy of adaptation, embedding military means in what he calls 'cooperative security paradigm', with a critique of Germany's existing non-proliferation policy.[118] Overall, Krause argues that military aspects of the evolving counter-proliferation doctrine in the US, which is depicted by the term 'rogue states', would be 'overemphasised' in German discourse. Essentially, the initiative, specifically the US Defense Counterproliferation Initiative (DCI), would in fact be 'non-military' and therefore compatible with the paradigm of 'cooperative security'.

Similar strategies of reconciling the rogue states image with traditional German security discourse can be found in the enunciations by Vogel and Müller. For example, Vogel links what he portrays as a major new global security risk in the post-Cold War era with a plea for a stronger UN and the establishment of what he calls a 'world government'.[119] Interestingly, similar idealist/liberal references to 'international community' or 'world order' by Müller allow him to make radical securitising moves in German discourse. For example, with regards to measures against 'crazy states' Müller proposes isolation, containment, pre-emption[120] and preventive repression.[121] Three times he even raises the question of 'eliminating' these states:

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[115] Ethan A. Nadelmann, *Cops across borders: the internationalization of US criminal law enforcement* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).
[116] This is an aspect Bigo's strongly Eurocentric perspective on the internal/external security nexus overlooks.
[117] Krause, *Nichtverbreitungspolitik*.
[118] Krause, *Raketenabwehr*, pp. 41–2; Krause, *Nichtverbreitungspolitik*, pp. 373, 386.
[119] Vogel, *Proliferation*, p. 28.
[120] Müller, *Herausforderung*, p. 206.
[121] Ibid., p. 209.

Should regimes which are suspected to strive for WMD be eliminated? [. . .] This question will be part of the international agenda.[122]

This addresses the fundamental world order question if non-transparent, aggressive and totalitarian regimes, by invoking the principle of sovereignty, still have a right to exist.[123]

Again, one can ask if the international community can afford to let these states be part of them.[124]

An alternative strategy to improve the discursive translatability of threat texts in German discourse is to address the 'recipient side' of discursive incompatibilities. Here Krause in particular interfered in German security discourse with various attempts to reinterpret traditional German notions of 'multilateralism', 'international order' and 'restraint' which he gave a much more power-political, realist (or 'American') connotation.

The dominant foreign and security discourse in Germany interprets multilateralism in a more idealist/liberal way as a way of taming power politics and anarchy which is usually closely read in relation to 'the rule of law' in world politics. Consequently, for hegemonic German discourse the UN and international law are at the centre of an aspired international system of multilateralism with bindings for all actors including the US. The hegemonic German discourse thus tends to equate multilateralism with (good, stable and legitimate) international order and 'international legalisation' as a way of gradually transforming the international anarchy of power politics into the domestic rationales of *Weltinnen-politik* (world home affairs). In contrast, Krause promotes a more realist understanding of international order based on the defence of the *status quo* by the US and a 'unified west' behind US leadership. Only if this *unity* erodes, Krause argues, international order is in danger: 'The existing international order can only work and be improved further if the Western community continues to form a powerful unit of action. Today this is less and less the case, and we can see the consequences: first and foremost the nuclear crises with Iran and North Korea.'[125] Similarly, for Krause the use of force in the international system isn't so much a matter of 'international law' as the hegemonic German discourse would read it but – in the case of Western uses of force – a 'use of force to maintain a cooperative and liberal international order'[126] for which the US is the '*zentrale Garantiemacht*'(central guaranteeing power).[127]

If Krause had succeeded in changing traditional German security discourse, he would have reduced the incompatibility of the threat text of rogue states with the German context, thereby making an incorporation of the rogue states doctrine in Germany more likely.[128] Obviously, however, as a single securitising actor without direct access to the German government, Krause was in a much weaker position of power to change discourse than German security professionals with regards to organised crime who had further textual and discursive *structural* advantages with regards to translating 'their' threat text into German discourse. While Krause's

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid., p. 211.
[124] Ibid., p. 213.
[125] Joachim Krause, 'Die internationale Ordnung in der Krise', *Internationale Politik*, 62:7 (2007), p. 8.
[126] Ibid., p. 8.
[127] Krause, *Krise*, pp. 8–9.
[128] On counter-factual reasoning, Richard Ned Lebow, *Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations* (forthcoming).

failure is thus not surprising with regards to his weak positional power,[129] I would argue that his socio-linguistic strategy of trying to translate rogue states into German discourse is still interesting and illuminating with regards to the concept of translation.

## Conclusion

I hope that the analysis of the German discourse on localising organised crime and rogue states could lend empirical plausibility to the theoretical reflection on the concept of translation. Despite the incompatibility of both organised crime and rogue states with German context, only the threat text of organised crime was successfully incorporated into German security discourse. I have analysed these processes as a successful versus failed politics of localisation.

Specifically, four central aspects of my framework/argument could be illustrated. First, the construction of both threat texts in Germany did not happen autonomously but, on the basis of a pre-existing 'foreign' threat text, as a process of successful versus failed localisation. Second, the threat text of organised crime is much more likely than the threat text of rogue states to spread to various contexts including Germany because of its elusive general structure and its global presence and (pop) cultural currency. Third, most importantly, in the case of organised crime local securitising actors, mainly in the form of local security professionals, succeeded in persuading elites and the German public to take over 'organised crime' despite its (perceived) factual incompatibility with German context. They did so by applying various discursive strategies, most importantly by excessively stretching the notion of organised crime, by linking organised crime with local expert debates and the global pop cultural vocabulary of the 'mafia mystique' and by constructing local resonance with a distinctly German vocabulary of addressing security problems ultimately grounded in the collective memory of Germany's Nazi past. Fourth, similar socio-linguistic moves of trying to adapt a threat text to the particularities of a local recipient discourse were also evident in failed attempts to localise 'rogue states' in Germany.

In sum, these aspects underline the central importance of *discursive strategies* for successful localisations. Yet, in both case studies the contingent discursive strategies actually employed were also to a large extent a reaction to the more structural factual versus discursive incompatibility of organised crime and rogue states with German context. In the case of organised crime, actors had to find a response to the lack of correspondence with the perceived reality in Germany, while in the case of rogue states they had to find a response to its mismatch with the hegemonic discourse traditions of 'cooperative security' and 'culture of restraint'. Furthermore, in both cases discursive strategies were closely related to the notion of elusiveness. As one could see, in the case of organised crime the single most important discursive strategy to cope with the perceived factual incompatibility of organised crime with German context was its stretching into a

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[129] For a reflection on whether single individuals can succeed in changing an established discourse; Terry Lovell, 'Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 20:1 (2003), pp. 1–17.

highly elusive catch-all phrase for professional forms of crime. In contrast, due to the much less elusive notion of 'rogue states' such a strategy was much more difficult to apply. This ultimately highlights that all three mechanisms of translation are closely related and can overlap in various ways.

Overall, I would argue that such a perspective on how global 'names' evolve and threat discourse travels based on the notion of translation provides a more comprehensive and convincing perspective than alternative perspectives. From a realist point of view, the successful versus failed incorporations of the threat texts of organised crime and rogue states would either be analysed as a function of the power discrepancy between the US and Germany or in terms of different 'objective realities' of both threats. From a social constructivist (strategic culture) perspective, 'culture of restraint' would play a central role in the analysis of Germany's security discourse. Finally, a 'pluralist' perspective would focus on the domestic politics of bureaucracies and interest groups in generating a threat discourse.

All three perspectives are partly illuminating. German security professionals arguably would not even have discussed 'rogue states' if the 'name' originated in, for example, Papua New Guinea, 'culture of restraint' played an important role with regards to the failed securitisation of rogue states and 'domestic politics' was an important aspect in both discourses. However, what all three alternative perspectives underestimate is the importance and dynamics of language which is tied into 'domestic politics', 'culture', 'power discrepancies' and '(perceived) realities'. From a reflectivist/discursive perspective the 'comparative test' of 'domestic politics' versus 'culture' versus 'power' versus '(perceived) reality' is misleading. Language and other cultural resources are central aspects in the struggle over whose individual interpretation of reality becomes dominant in a discourse and these essentially domestic struggles are never entirely symmetric. What we could observe thus wasn't just domestic politics, culture, power discrepancies *or* perceived reality but more complex and dynamic interactions marked by, as I hope to have shown, a politics of translation.

The reflections of this study have at least three important implications for International Relations theory and security studies. First, most importantly, I hope to have shown that 'translations matter' in world politics, especially with regards to processes of localisations and the travel of discourse. Neither the perceived reality of a case or development nor the cultural context of perception alone 'determine' a 'name'. Rather, (local) reality is sometimes perceived with pre-existing, 'foreign' texts, even if these texts do not correspond with the perceived reality at a certain point in time. Cultural contexts do not 'determine' the genesis or incorporation of texts either but rather seem to provide crucial socio-linguistic resources for socio-politically positioned actors to improve the correspondence between a text, the perceived reality of an issue and the cultural context in which a text is discussed. Second, with regards to reflections on the concept of 'travel' in international politics this study provides an explicitly discursive perspective which is focussed on socio-linguistic and socio-political mechanisms of localisation. I hope that this framework will not only be useful for travel of threat discourse but for processes of localisation with regards to other contents as well. Third, with regards to securitisation theory this study introduces a perspective on 'cross-securitizations' and it challenges the dominant understanding of security as a 'speech act'. Specifically, here the notion of translation provides a more processual

and relational understanding of how threats are generated, arguing that security isn't so much an original performative 'speech act' but a more complex performative action of socio-linguistic and socio-political processes of translations.