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Can the subaltern securitize? Postcolonial perspectives on securitization theory and its critics

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Abstract

Drawing on postcolonial and feminist writings, this article re-examines securitization theory's so-called 'silence-problem'. Securitization theory sets up a definably colonial relationship whereby certain voices cannot be heard, while other voices try to speak for those who are silenced. The article shows that the subaltern cannot securitize, first, because they are structurally excluded from the concept of security through one of three mechanisms: locutionary silencing, illocutionary disablement, or illocutionary frustration. Second, the subaltern cannot securitize because they are always already being securitized and spoken for – as in this case by the well-meaning intellectuals trying to highlight and remediate their predicament. Third, the subaltern cannot securitize because the popular rendering of securitization theory as critical obfuscates and rationalises their marginalisation. This article thus reveals the 'colonial moment' in securitization studies, showing how securitization theory is complicit with securitizations 'for' that marginalise and silence globally, not just locally outside 'the West'.

Keywords: Postcolonial and Feminist Critique; Securitization Studies; Critical Security Studies; Epistemology; Silencing; Marginalisation; Speech Act Theory

Introduction

What makes a theory critical? This question has been asked many times and yet, despite almost 25 years of research into the possibility of a critical security studies, it remains as relevant as ever. The debate around securitization theory's critical status illustrates the importance of this question. Despite its inclusion into the canon of critical security studies,¹ securitization theory has been described as 'elite-centric, discourse-dominated, conservative, politically passive, and neither progressive nor radical',² leading to a tension between readings of securitization theory as a critical

¹Securitization theory features prominently in the mythological rendering of critical security studies, as well as in textbooks and articles defining its scope. In a 2003 introduction to critical security studies for instance, a whole chapter is devoted to securitization theory, analysing its contributions 'as a critical approach to security': Jonna Nyman, 'Securitization theory', in Laura J. Shepherd (ed.), *Critical Approaches to Security: An Introduction to Theories and Methods* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 51. As examples of articles explicitly dealing with the critical dimension of critical security studies and the way in which securitization theory's fits into this, see, for example, João Nunes, 'Reclaiming the political: Emancipation and critique in security studies', *Security Dialogue*, 43 (2012), pp. 345–61; Christopher S. Browning and Matt McDonald, 'The future of critical security studies: Ethics and the politics of security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 19 (2013), pp. 235–55. The popular and powerful way of mapping critical security studies into three competing schools – Paris, Aberystwyth, Copenhagen – has particularly cemented securitization theory's inclusion into the field of critical security studies, as securitization theory is subsumed into the Copenhagen School, see, for instance, Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 9.

²Buzan Barry and Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 215. The literature has especially critiqued the connection between power and the ability to securitize, as well as the

approach³ and competing interpretations denying its critical status.⁴ At the heart of these critiques lies what has been called the 'security as silence' problem,⁵ that is, the realisation that a conception of security that relies on speech might exclude those actors who are not able to speak and voice their concerns.

Postcolonial theory has given IR scholars new perspective on the blind spots of putatively critical scholarship.⁶ Re-examining the 'silence-problem' from this angle, this article shows how securitization theory sets up a definably colonial relationship whereby certain voices cannot be heard, while other voices try to speak for those who are silenced.

I show this 'colonial moment' in securitization studies⁷ in two steps. First, I examine the existing claim that securitization theory marginalises the subaltern,⁸ a claim that is rooted in the idea of silence as speech act failure. I show that the current literature does not capture the full range of mechanisms through which this happens. I suggest there are in fact three: when the subaltern cannot speak, when the subaltern are not being listened to, and when the subaltern cannot be heard or understood. I call these mechanisms locutionary silencing, illocutionary frustration, and illocutionary disablement. I put forward in particular the third form of silence that occurs when the subaltern cannot be heard or understood due various types of disabling frames. Second, I demonstrate how, if the subaltern are marginalised, others have to step in: they have to speak and securitize 'for' them. This describes a second form of silencing that derives not from speech act failure, but from the imposition of securitizations 'for' onto the subaltern, from speaking security for them. Drawing on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, I highlight the colonial

ethico-political problems resulting from it. See, for example, Michael C. Williams, 'Words, images, enemies: Securitization and international politics', *International Studies Quarterly*, 47 (2003), pp. 511–31; Monika Barthwal-Datta, 'Securitizing threats without the state: a case study of misgovernance as a security threat in Bangladesh', *Review of International Studies*, 35 (2009), pp. 277–300; Johan Eriksson, 'Observers or advocates?: On the political role of security analysts', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34 (1999), pp. 311–30; Jef Huysmans, 'The question of the limit: Desecuritization and the aesthetics of horror in political realism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 27 (1998), pp. 569–89; Lene Hansen, 'The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma and the absence of gender in the Copenhagen School', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 29 (2000), pp. 285–306; Nicole 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 (2006), pp. 299–317; Megan MacKenzie, 'Securitization and desecuritization: Female soldiers and the reconstruction of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone', *Security Studies*, 18 (2009), pp. 241–61.

³See, for example, Browning and McDonald, 'The future of critical security studies'.

⁴The most prominent of these is by Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 168.

⁵Hansen, 'The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma', p. 301. For the sake of readability, I simplify its denomination in this article to 'silence-problem'.

⁶See, for example, Sanjay Seth (ed.), *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations: A Critical Introduction* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013). Because they foreshadow some of the arguments developed in this article, see in particular also the critiques of white Western feminism and the critiques of Critical Theory's Eurocentric focus on emancipation developed for example in Chandra Mohanty, 'Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and feminist discourses', *Feminist Review*, 30 (1988), pp. 61–88; John Hobson, 'Is critical theory always for the white West and for Western imperialism? Beyond Westphalian towards a post-racist critical IR', *Review of International Studies*, 33 (2007), pp. 91–116; Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies', *Review of International Studies*, 32 (2006), pp. 329–52.

⁷As Gad and Petersen note, the connection between securitization theory and postcolonialism has not yet been made. See Ulrik Pram Gad and Karen Lund Petersen, 'Concepts of politics in securitization studies', *Security Dialogue*, 42 (2011), pp. 315–28 (p. 324, fn. 317). In establishing this connection, I place myself within a broader intellectual space opened up in particular by Barkawi and Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies'.

⁸While Spivak has a very narrow understanding of the category subaltern as 'a position without identity' (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Scattered speculations on the subaltern and the popular', *Postcolonial Studies*, 8 (2005), pp. 475–86 (p. 476)) and not as 'generally oppressed' (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Response', *Parallax*, 17 (2011), pp. 98–104 (p. 98)), much of the literature has used the word in the wider sense as synonymous to marginalised, disenfranchised, or 'bottom rungs' (Cynthia Enloe, 'Margins, silences and bottom rungs: How to overcome the underestimation of power in the study of International Relations', in Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (eds), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 186–202)). While basing much of my argumentation on Spivak, I operate with the wider and more inclusive understanding of the term.

dimension of this move. In particular, I show how critical scholars intent on denouncing securitization theory's marginalising effects are forced into a trap set up by securitization theory's epistemological framework: in order to critique they have to do the very thing they are denouncing. Having shown that the 'colonial moment' in securitization studies is based on two main forms of silencing, each operating through a range of different mechanisms, I illustrate some of these points through a reading of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year's Eve events. The relative ease with which white women were securitized and spoken 'for' in the aftermath of these events shows that the marginalising effects of securitization theory are just as relevant within a white 'Western' liberal space, thereby countering the current literature's bias in locating the problems of silence and marginalisation solely with 'brown' people or in the 'non-West'. Securitization theory's 'silence-problem' derives from the structure of the theory itself, not from skin colour or from a specific geographical location.

Rereading securitization theory through a postcolonial lens shows that its 'silence-problem' is in fact more extensive and politically debilitating than previously assumed: it effectively reduces securitization theory to a form of 'white man's burden'. It also offers new insights about easily made connections in security studies and International Relations between criticality and philosophy of science. The analysis developed in this article shows that the recourse to a radical speech act epistemology does not automatically and unequivocally make a theory 'critical'.

Revisiting the 'silence-problem': the three mechanisms of marginalisation in securitization theory

The critique of securitization theory's so-called 'silence-problem' sits at the core of debates around its status as a critical approach to security. Securitization theory grounds our knowledge of the category 'security' in speech and discourse, which means that whomever cannot complete the required securitizing speech act is excluded from the concept of security and thus marginalised. In this section, I revisit the conceptual framing of existing critiques of silence, silencing, and marginalisation⁹ and argue that, while important and insightful, they remain limited because they do not capture the full range of mechanisms through which securitization theory marginalises the subaltern. I argue that there are three different ways in which securitization theory does so: locutionary silencing, illocutionary frustration, and illocutionary disablement. Previous critiques of securitization theory have focused mostly on the first, and to a lesser degree the second, and fail to appreciate how all three work together to silence certain voices and in particular those of the 'subaltern'.

Three types of marginalisation

From a linguistic perspective, speech acts can fail in three different ways. Jennifer Hornsby and Rae Langton have explored and systematised speech act failure with regards to sexual assaults in their feminist critique of linguistics.¹⁰ A gagged sexual assault victim who cannot speak is in a different situation from a victim who can voice his or her objections to a tormentor who chooses not to hear. A third circumstance arises when the assaulter hears the refusal but interprets it as consent.¹¹

⁹The aim of this article is not to give a detailed review of this literature. Rather, I am interested in its meta-dimension, that is, in the way in which it conceptualises silence and frames marginalisation analytically.

¹⁰See, for example, Jennifer Hornsby and Rae Langton, 'Free speech and illocution', *Legal Theory*, 4 (1998), pp. 21–37; Rae Langton, 'Speech acts and unspeakable acts', *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 22 (1993), pp. 293–330; Jennifer Hornsby, 'Subordination, silencing and two ideas of illocution', *Jurisprudence*, 2 (2011), pp. 379–85; Langton, 'Speech acts and unspeakable acts', p. 315.

¹¹Following Austin's division of speech acts into locutions, perlocutions, and illocutions, Hornsby and Langton capture these differences through the categories of locutionary silencing, perlocutionary frustration, and illocutionary disablement. See Hornsby and Langton, 'Free speech and illocution'; Hornsby, 'Subordination, silencing and two ideas of illocution'; Langton, 'Speech acts and unspeakable acts', p. 315; see, for instance, also Mari Mikkola, 'Illocution, silencing and the act of refusal', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 92 (2011), pp. 415–37 (p. 416).

Table 1. The three mechanisms of silence.

	Three components of a speech act:		
	Speaker	Audience	Message
Type of speech act failure:	Locutionary silencing	Illocutionary frustration	Illocutionary disablement
Problem of ...	Speaking	Listening	Hearing
Potential solution:	Enabling more speech	Awakening audiences	Translation?

Following Hornsby and Langton,¹² I suggest that there are three different ways in which securitization theory marginalises the subaltern: through locutionary silencing, through illocutionary frustration and through illocutionary disablement.¹³ These three categories describe whether you can speak, whether they choose to listen to what you are saying, and whether anyone can actually hear and understand you (Table 1).

*Locutionary silencing*¹⁴ happens when no speech is uttered at all, either because the speaker is physically impeded from talking, for instance by being gagged, or threatened with violence if they speak. For securitization theory, those who, like Hans Christian Andersen's *Little Mermaid*, are threatened with death but cannot speak of it become excluded from the concept of security. This is the example given by Lene Hansen who looks at honour killings of women in Pakistan in her analysis of the 'silence-problem' within securitization studies.¹⁵ Many Pakistani

¹²While two of Hornsby and Langton's categories can be directly transposed to the analysis of securitizations, the third category of perlocutionary frustration is inapplicable here, as the original design of securitizing speech acts is based on illocutions, not perlocutions; see Ole Wæver, 'The theory act: Responsibility and exactitude as seen from securitization', *International Relations*, 29 (2014), pp. 121–7 (pp. 122–3).

However, securitization theory's understanding of illocutions is built on a broader understanding of uptake than the illocutions taken into account by Hornsby and Langton's analysis. Indeed, the performance of an illocution requires 'uptake', as posited by John L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 116. This means that someone (an 'audience') needs to hear and understand what the speaker says: I can only perform a warning if someone hears my words ('watch out') and understands their meaning as a warning. There is a debate about the required depth of 'uptake': is uptake secured as soon as the audience hears the locution, only when it properly understands its full meaning, or does it have to contribute to the illocution in a more substantial way by agreeing and maybe signalling agreement? Wæver follows the broad interpretation put forward by Sbisà, whereby the audience co-constitutes the illocution in a more profound way than by simple or 'narrow' uptake: Marina Sbisà, 'Uptake and conventionality in illocution', *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics*, 5 (2009), pp. 33–52; Marina Sbisà, 'How to read Austin', *Pragmatics*, 17 (2007), pp. 461–73; Marina Sbisà, 'Illocutionary force and degrees of strength in language use', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33 (2001), pp. 1791–814; Marina Sbisà and Paolo Fabbri, 'Models (?) for a pragmatic analysis', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 4 (1980), pp. 301–19. For a security illocution (that is, a securitizing move) to be successful, hence, the audience needs to agree with the securitizing move: hearing and understanding it is not enough. See Wæver, 'The theory act'.

Because securitization theory's understanding of illocutions is therefore built on a broader understanding of uptake than the illocutions taken into account by Hornsby and Langton's analysis, I suggest that the creation of the new category of 'illocutionary frustration' can retain the focus on illocutions, while capturing the active part played by the audience in producing silence that the category 'perlocutionary frustration' highlights.

¹³This typology is phrased in linguistic terms so as to engage with the linguistic underpinnings of securitization and not be cast aside as a mere 'sociological approach to securitization'. For an overview of the debate between the linguistic and the sociological approach to securitization, see the forum discussion in *International Relations: Thierry Balzacq, Stefano Guzzini, Michael C. Williams, Ole Wæver, and Heikki Patomäki, 'Forum: What kind of theory – if any – is securitization?', International Relations*, 29 (2015), pp. 96–136.

¹⁴The marginalisation processes described by the categories of locutionary silencing and illocutionary frustration have been analysed by the current literature on silence and silencing. I use Hansen and Booth's work to illustrate each of these categories because they are prominent and emblematic examples of their specific logic of silence and marginalisation. I do not wish to suggest that they are the only scholars who have articulated concerns about securitization theory.

¹⁵Hansen, 'The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma'.

women cannot speak publically of the problems they are facing (for example, rape), because if they did so, they would be harmed or killed. The women in Hansen's example cannot claim the concept of '(in)security' to describe their experience, because they cannot speak. The category of locutionary silencing shows that securitization theory has marginalising effects: within its framework all those who cannot voice their concerns are excluded from determining what counts as security and what does not. They simply fall outside of security studies as securitization theory understands it.

Illocutionary frustration involves the unwillingness of the audience to take up the message. It happens when speech is uttered and understood, but ignored. For example, the UN Security Council's refusal in 1994 to treat the events in Rwanda as 'genocide' could be read in this way. In that case speech had been uttered, pleading for an understanding of the events as genocide. The UN Security Council heard and understood the locutions. The point is that it refused the uptake and chose not to complete the speech act. This is the example given by Ken Booth who highlights that those who face a threat to their existence *and speak*, but do not have the power to make the audience listen, are equally excluded from the concept of security: "Those without discourse-making power are disenfranchised, unable to join the securitization game."¹⁶ While seemingly only rephrasing Hansen's point,¹⁷ Booth's critique in fact reorients the analytical focus from the speaker's muteness to the audience's power to silence and exclude. The category of illocutionary frustration, thus, shows that securitization theory has marginalising effects: within its framework all those who cannot address a sufficiently powerful audience willing to listen to their concerns are excluded from determining what counts as security and what doesn't.

Illocutionary disablement describes a situation where speech is uttered, but the audience fails to hear or understand the intended meaning because of specific 'disabling frames'¹⁸ distorting the message. The classical example within linguistics is that of the actor trying to warn about a fire, but tragically failing to do so because the audience takes it to be part of the play. These 'disabling frames' are epistemological structures that filter and shape our view of reality. They are 'operations of power'¹⁹ in that they foreground specific readings of reality and disappear others, thereby leading us to see – or in this case, hear – the world according to specific pre-scripted notions. In the case of Hornsby and Langton, pornography acts as such a disabling frame, but racism, misogyny, and various other forms of prejudice work in similar ways. Certain forms of repetition could also be imagined as 'disabling frames': if someone is known for regularly screaming 'help' for the fun of it, then their words are likely to be understood differently over time and not to trigger a response anymore – even in the event of real danger. Illocutionary disablement has not yet been explored by the existing securitization literature but is in fact crucial for understanding silence. In a world that is marked by a '[e]urocentric, patriarchal, neoliberal and secular international political culture',²⁰ as well as by ascendant notions of white supremacy, the voices of all those who cannot or refuse to articulate their experience through that prism, risk being lost. The following three examples may serve as an illustration of the way in which securitizing attempts can be silenced through illocutionary disablement: ideology, conceptual vocabulary, and language difference.

¹⁶Booth, *Theory of World Security*, p. 166.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 167. Booth seems to imply that he is doing little more than paraphrasing Hansen.

¹⁸These are described in the linguistic literature as 'structural constraints ... robbing the speech of its intended force': Langton, 'Speech acts and unspeakable acts', p. 323, and sometimes compared to 'scripts'. See, for example, Nellie Wieland, 'Linguistic authority and convention in a speech act analysis of pornography', *Australian Journal of Philosophy*, 85 (2007), pp. 435–56 (p. 436); Ishani Maitra, 'Silencing speech', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 39 (2009), pp. 309–38 (p. 314). Because of their similarity to Judith Butler's concept of frames, I have dubbed these constraints 'disabling frames' (or, conversely, 'enabling frames'): see in particular Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London and New York: Verso, 2009).

¹⁹Butler, *Frames of War*, p. 1.

²⁰Sophia Dingli, 'We need to talk about silence: Re-examining silence in International Relations theory', *European Journal of International Relations*, 21 (2015), pp. 721–42 (p. 726).

Ideology or other powerful narratives can act as disabling frames. Sherene Razack's account of the power that 'narratives of innocence' have in constituting white nation-states' 'official mythologies' can be interpreted in that light.²¹ Using the example of the Canadian peacekeeping mission in Somalia, she shows how, even with numerous media images, videos, and stories of the Canadian peacekeepers' engagement in torture, violence, and cruelty during their mission abroad, the Canadian public reframed the message into a noble story of innocent Canadians bestowing civilisation upon the 'savage'. In this case, a securitization of the events would be difficult within the Canadian context. Even when reaching the ears of the relevant public, securitizing moves would not be audible, because they would be distorted and disabled by the power of narratives of 'goodness' and 'innocence' of a specifically colonial sort.

The requirement for a specific conceptual vocabulary may act in similarly disabling ways. Postcolonial theory points to the dominance of liberal ideology and its corresponding vocabulary that articulates communicative encounters within the international sphere, and highlights its exclusiveness and its inextricability from power relations.²² In order to be heard one must adopt 'Western thought, reasoning and language',²³ express one's concerns with the given grammar and vocabulary, and have the capacity to do so in the first place.²⁴ With reference to transitional justice, Paul Gready highlights, for instance, how the original experiences of victims trying to make their claims heard typically get lost.²⁵ In order to be heard, they need to rework their stories in order to neatly fit into the categories and expectations established by transitional justice regimes. Following the same logic, attempted securitizations may simply not be heard or recognised for not using the right vocabulary.

Language difference, finally, may serve as third example of illocutionary disablement. Indeed, securitization theory has no resources to deal with language difference, because it is, like most of the discipline of linguistics, underpinned by the fiction of monolinguality²⁶ and assumptions of universality.²⁷ International relations, however, are carried out under a condition of hierarchical multilinguality, a fact that has received remarkably little attention within the discipline of IR and its linguistic turn.²⁸ Similarly, at a domestic level, most postcolonial states in the world are multilingual, as Sinfree Makoni notes for the African context.²⁹ Because language

²¹Sherene Razack, 'From the "clean snows of Petawawa": the violence of Canadian peacekeepers in Somalia', *Cultural Anthropology*, 15 (2000), pp. 127–63 (p. 129).

²²Kimberly Hutchings, 'From morality to politics and back again: Feminist international ethics and the civil-society argument', *Alternatives*, 29 (2004), pp. 239–64 (p. 253).

²³Joanne Sharp, *Geographies of Postcolonialism* (London: Sage, 2009), p. 111.

²⁴Pinar Bilgin, 'The "Western-centrism" of security studies: "Blind spot" or constitutive practice?', *Security Dialogue*, 41 (2010), pp. 615–22 (p. 619); Kimberly Hutchings, 'Dialogue between whom? The role of the West/non-West distinction in promoting global dialogue in IR', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 39 (2011), pp. 639–47 (pp. 643–4).

²⁵Paul Gready, 'Culture, testimony, and the toolbox of transitional justice', *Peace Review*, 20 (2008), pp. 41–8 (p. 46).

²⁶See, for instance, the critique articulated by integrational linguistics: Roy Harris, *The Language Machine* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); Roy Harris, 'Integrational linguistics and the structuralist legacy', *Language and Communication*, 19 (1999), pp. 45–68; Nelson Flores, 'Silencing the subaltern: Nation-state/colonial governmentality and bilingual education in the United States', *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 10 (2013), pp. 263–87 (p. 271); Jon Orman, 'Linguistic diversity and language loss: a view from integrational linguistics', *Language Sciences*, 40 (2013), pp. 1–11.

²⁷Kyle Grayson, 'Dissidence, Richard K. Ashley, and the politics of silence', *Review of International Studies*, 36 (2010), pp. 1005–119 (p. 1008).

²⁸For a critique, see Einar Wigen, 'Two-level language games: International relations as inter-lingual relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 21 (2015), pp. 427–50. On the way in which language difference actually constitutes a difference in perspective within IR, see Hélène Pellerin, 'Which IR do you speak? Languages as perspectives in the discipline of IR', *Perspectives*, 20 (2012), pp. 59–82. On the way in which threat images travel across national and linguistic boundaries, see the work by Holger Stritzel, *Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). For a discussion of the linguistic dominance of English in International Relations, see Sarah Bertrand, Kerry Goettlich, and Christopher Murray, 'Translating International Relations: On the practical difficulties of diversifying the discipline', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 46 (2018), pp. 93–5.

²⁹Sinfree Makoni, 'An integrationist perspective on colonial linguistics', *Language Sciences*, 35 (2013), pp. 87–96 (p. 89).

is political³⁰ and because different languages structure our thinking differently,³¹ the language in which securitizations can be successful matters; one may try to securitize but fail to be heard for not using or not knowing how to use a hegemonic language.

The category of illocutionary disablement shows that securitization theory has marginalising effects: all those whose concerns cannot be heard or understood are excluded from determining what counts as security and what doesn't.

Implications

Revisiting securitization theory's 'silence-problem' has allowed me to systematise its marginalising effects according to three specific mechanisms of silence. Establishing such a typology not only highlights the complexity and the diversity of securitization theory's marginalising effects, but also helps to map the existing critiques of securitization theory onto this grid. What this shows, is that most of the literature treats the 'silence-problem' as a problem of 'speaking', that is, through the lens of what I have dubbed 'locutionary silencing'.³²

This is problematic: conceiving of silence only as a problem of speech implies that marginalisation results from 'non-participation'. It suggests that silence results from the speaker's disengagement in the process. Analysing silence only through the prism of speech means erasing the active role played by the speakers in many cases, disavowing their participation in the process or even denying their existence. One can be 'silent', however, while uttering words, loudly screaming and engaging in the speech act in a very real way, as the two cases of illocutionary disablement and illocutionary frustration show. These are cases where the subaltern makes securitizing or desecuritizing moves, but is just as incapable of completing the speech act of security as those who do not physically speak; the subaltern are *silenced* if not silent. Hence the necessity to move away from a sole focus on locutionary silencing and instead appreciate how all three mechanisms of silence work together in different ways to marginalise subaltern voices.

The 'colonial moment' in securitization studies

Having shown that the current literature deals with securitization theory's problem of silence from a limited perspective, I now proceed to examine a key problem that both securitization theory and its critics are steeped in: the problem of securitizing 'for', of speaking security for others. This is the 'colonial moment' in securitization studies: if the subaltern are silenced in one of the three ways described above, then others must speak for their security problems. Putting words into the subaltern mouth is problematic as it buries those words under layers of representation and thus silences them further. In that sense, this section excavates a second form of silence in securitization studies: silence through speaking security for others.

³⁰John E. Joseph, *Language and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

³¹Grayson, 'Dissidence, Richard K. Ashley, and the politics of silence'.

³²Indeed, following Hansen's original analysis, the conceptualisation of silence as a problem of speech is the prevalent mode of thinking through issues of marginalisation in the securitization literature. Two examples can illustrate this. Barthwal-Datta's analysis of misgovernance in Bangladesh, for example, shows that securitization theory's 'reliance on the speech act by an actor with social capital and political authority restricts the consideration of threats which for one reason or another cannot – or are not – being articulated by someone in such a position.' Barthwal-Datta, 'Securitizing threats without the state', p. 278. Similarly, Jackson concludes her analysis on human trafficking in Central Asia by pointing to the 'silence-problem': 'For some scholars, a key problem with the Copenhagen School's emphasis on language is that it suggests that actors "without a voice" cannot securitize an issue. This does seem to be the reality even if it is to be condemned. Women in Muslim Central Asia have almost no voice and have been unable or unwilling to push the issue of trafficking women for prostitution to the head of the international or state security agendas. Instead, issues such as terrorism and narcotics trafficking have received the most attention.' Jackson, 'International organizations', p. 313.

Three types of securitizations ‘for’

Securitization theory structurally excludes the subaltern from claiming the label of (in)security for the issues they face through the three mechanisms of locutionary silencing, illocutionary frustration, and illocutionary disablement. By excluding them from accessing and completing securitizing speech acts, securitization theory simultaneously also opens up a space for others to securitize for the subaltern: if the subaltern cannot securitize, then others can or even ‘must’ do it for them. This move, which we may call a securitization ‘for’, can occur in three different ways: by political action designed to remediate or take advantage of the ‘silence-problem’, by normative claims intending to critique the ‘silence-problem’, as well as by mere analysis aimed at locating and uncovering the ‘silence-problem’.

The first form of securitization ‘for’, that is, political action designed to remediate or take advantage of the ‘silence-problem’, works in a straightforward way: if for example the Pakistani women of Hansen’s example cannot securitize the issues they face, then NGOs, networks of transnational activists or other powerful human rights advocacy groups can take political action and do it for them. The second and third forms of securitizations ‘for’, however, are less straightforward to understand. Why does a critique of securitization theory’s marginalising effects or even a simple diagnosis of the ‘silence-problem’ necessarily involve an act of securitization ‘for’?

Pointing to securitization theory’s silencing and marginalising effects involves showing that some part of the securitizing speech-act is disabled. Such an analysis, however, presupposes that the subaltern actually has a ‘security’ problem, that they cannot securitize it but that they should be able to. In short, even the well-meaning critic must stipulate ‘security’ before the successful completion of the speech-act. Within the speech act epistemology established by securitization theory, however, this is impossible, since security can only come into being and be known through the successful completion of a speech act.

This paradoxical situation can make better sense by going back to the ontological and epistemological basics of securitization theory. Three different levels need to be distinguished for this purpose: that of the securitization analyst, that of the securitizing actors, and that of the theory itself. Each of these levels operates with a different logic and is placed at a different position on the divide between objective and discursive epistemology. The securitization analysts use securitization theory in order to find out what counts as security. They identify, within discourse, which claims have been successful and can thus be counted as security. At this level, both the security ontology and epistemology are discursive. The securitizing actor and the securitizing audience, however, both operate with an objective conception of what security is. They read the world and make claims about what really constitutes a security issue, thereby competing with other actors’ interpretations of the world.³³ At the level of the theory, finally, the construction is a hybrid one: securitization theory is a half discursive, half objective construction. Indeed, it makes an objective claim as to what security is by fixing its form as exception and extraordinary measures. An issue becomes securitized when a securitizing actor declares that a referent object is threatened in an existential way and therefore extraordinary measures are necessary to ward it off. However, at the same time, securitization theory also operates with a discursive notion of security by leaving its specific content open for definition by the securitizing actors and audiences.³⁴

As the distinction between these levels makes clear, the securitization analyst cannot make any normative claims about what security should be, outside of what can be found in discourse.³⁵

³³On the different ontological and epistemological positions taken by the actor and the analyst, see, for example, Lene Hansen, ‘The politics of securitization and the Muhammad cartoon crisis: a post-structuralist perspective’, *Security Dialogue*, 42 (2011), pp. 357–69 (p. 360); Eriksson, ‘Observers or advocates?’.

³⁴See Felix Ciuta, ‘Security and the problem of context: a hermeneutical critique of securitization theory’, *Review of International Studies*, 35 (2009), pp. 301–26 (p. 315).

³⁵Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), pp. 39–40.

When the securitization analysts do offer a normative critique and make claims about what security should be, they are forced to move from a discursive towards an objective conception of security and must thereby also shift from the role of a securitization analyst to the role of a securitizing actor. This means that no critique of securitization theory can be made on its own epistemological grounds. In order to critique, but even in order to point to a lack of securitization, one is forced to step out of the parameters offered by securitization theory: one must embrace an objective ontology and become a securitizing actor, that is, change levels in the model of securitization theory's ontological and epistemological positioning. However, by engaging in the securitization process, one is thereby effectively securitizing 'for' the marginalised.

The silencing effects of securitizing 'for'

Why is securitizing and thereby speaking 'for' the subaltern problematic? The problem associated with speaking 'for' the subaltern is that such a move easily ends up silencing the very people one tries to give a voice to – as laid out by Spivak.³⁶ Drawing on Marx's distinction between 'vertreten' and 'darstellen', the crux of Spivak's argument lies in a critique of an often-made conflation between the two meanings of representation as 'speaking for' ('vertreten') as in politics, and representation as 're-presentation' ('darstellen') as in philosophy or art.³⁷ Spivak illustrates this by using the example of 'sati', an Indian practice of widow sacrifice abolished by the British during their occupation of India. Denouncing the practice as barbaric, the British declared the widows to be burned against their will and hence in need of saving, a position that Spivak presents as a case of '[w]hite men saving brown women from brown men.' On the Indian side, however, as a move to resist the British colonial meddling, the opposite argument was being made in order to defend the practice of sati by contending that the sacrifice was made out of free will and that 'the women actually wanted to die'.³⁸ Both the British and the Indian men were 'speaking for' and hence representing ('vertreten') the widows politically, but at the same time they were implicitly 're-presenting' them ('darstellen'), claiming to truthfully reproduce the women's motivations, wishes and desires.

By conflating the two meanings of representation, the subaltern are further marginalised in two ways. The subaltern are silenced by the epistemic violence of essentialisation involved in the act of re-presentation. Indeed, the act of 're-presentation' (darstellen) requires a definition of the re-presented group as homogenous, thereby negating its heterogeneity and erasing the complexity and diversity of the position and agency of its group members.³⁹ This is what Spivak criticises with regards to 'sati': if the women in question had been able to speak, we would probably have ended up with a multiplicity of different opinions and voices. Both the British and the Indian positions, however, reduce that complexity into one voice, casting the women in question as a homogenous group and committing thereby an act of epistemic violence.⁴⁰

The subaltern are further silenced by the complicity of the re-presenter in the re-presentation process. By 'speaking for' while at the same claiming to truthfully portray, the re-presenters cast themselves as transparent and thereby erase their own complicity in the process of re-presentation.⁴¹ There is a gap between the re-presentation and the re-presented and in this

³⁶Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988). Her work is considered 'the classic essay on the problem of speaking for cultural others': Sharp, *Geographies of Postcolonialism*, p. 111; see also J. Maggio, "'Can the subaltern be heard?': Political theory, translation, representation, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak', *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 32 (2007), pp. 419–43 (p. 419).

³⁷Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, pp. 275–6.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 297.

³⁹Sharp, *Geographies of Postcolonialism*, p. 114; Alina Sajed, 'The post always rings twice? The Algerian War, post-structuralism and the postcolonial in IR theory', *Review of International Studies*, 38 (2012), pp. 141–63 (p. 143).

⁴⁰Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, pp. 280–1.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 275; Ilan Kapoor, 'Hyper-self-reflexive development? Spivak on representing the Third World "Other"', *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (2004), pp. 627–47 (p. 628).

Table 2. The colonial structure of securitization theory.

Type of silence	Silence as a failure to complete securitizing speech acts			Silence as a result of speaking security for others		
Mechanism of silencing	By locutionary silencing	By illocutionary frustration	By illocutionary disablement	By active remediation of the 'silence-problem'	By normative claims that critique the 'silence-problem'	By analysis that uncovers the 'silence-problem'
Logic	Exclusion			Superimposition		

inevitable gap lies what Roland Bleiker calls 'the very location of politics'.⁴² This is the space where the re-presenter's own intentions, goals, and motivations slide in, almost unnoticed, but end up thickening the layer of re-representation behind which the subject in question disappears even more effectively. In Spivak's case of sati, the women's voices get lost between the Indian anti-colonial agenda, served by a re-representation of the women's free will, and the British colonial agenda, served by a re-representation of sati as oppressive and backward: '[b]etween patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears.'⁴³

Drawing on Spivak clarifies how securitizing 'for' the marginalised has silencing effects. This happens, because in order to speak 'for' them, the securitizer needs to homogenise and essentialise the securitized and ultimately runs the risk of superimposing his or her own voice and agenda onto them. Securitizations 'for' therefore represent a second form of silencing that stands next to the one explored in the previous section. Both work through different mechanisms: the form of silencing explored in the previous section results from a failure to complete securitizing speech acts and works through the mechanisms of locutionary silencing, illocutionary frustration, and illocutionary disablement; the form of silencing explored in this section results from the imposition of securitizing speech acts 'for' and works through the mechanisms of active remediation, normative critique, and mere analysis of the 'silence-problem'. The first type of silence works through a logic of exclusion, whereby the subaltern are denied the possibility to claim the label of security to describe their issues; the second type of silence works through a logic of superimposition, whereby the subaltern are silenced because someone else's voice speaks for them (Table 2).

Both forms of silencing derive directly from securitization theory's epistemological set-up, that is, from locking security into discourse. Like two sides of the same coin, the form of silence resulting from the failure to complete a securitizing speech act and the form of silence resulting from the imposition of securitizing speech acts 'for' are intimately connected and reinforce each other: because the subaltern are silenced, others can speak for them; and because they are already spoken 'for', it becomes more difficult for the subaltern to securitize in the first place.

The colonial dimension of securitizations 'for'

Securitizing 'for' the subaltern does not only have silencing effects, it also bears a colonial dimension. This derives from the epistemological set-up of the theory itself. Moving security to discourse creates a structure where the subaltern are first silenced and then can only be spoken for. Securitization theory's 'silence-problem' thus reduces the theory to a form of 'white man's burden'.

⁴²Roland Bleiker, 'The aesthetic turn in international political theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 30 (2001), pp. 509–33 (p. 510).

⁴³Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, p. 306.

Extant critiques of the 'silence-problem' occlude this structure of relations. To illustrate their point, they select examples of 'brown' subjects or case studies located outside the 'West': the silenced ones in Booth's example are Rwandan,⁴⁴ those in Nicole Jackson's analysis come from Central Asia,⁴⁵ in Monika Barthwal-Datta's work they are Bangladeshi,⁴⁶ and the little mermaid in Hansen's critique is brown. In doing so, they inadvertently make it appear as if the 'silence-problem' was an issue of skin colour or geographical location, instead of a structural feature of the theory itself. Locating silence, powerlessness and oppression abroad is a common colonial move, also in academia.⁴⁷ As Miriam Ticktin puts it, it is usually 'they', and not 'we', who are the subjects of violence.⁴⁸ In practice, Hansen's gendered critique of securitization theory does not talk about the difficulties faced by little mermaids in general, but about the difficulties to securitize faced by *brown* little mermaids. In her analysis, the problem of silence is located abroad, as it is supposedly 'less outspoken in the West'.⁴⁹ Arguing that women are silenced and oppressed abroad has also implications for domestic politics in the sense that it suggests that women at home need not be liberated because they already are free, thus potentially covering up domestic oppression and silencing their concerns.⁵⁰ In that sense, the existant analyses suggest that securitization theory's silencing effects are limited to the 'non-West' and that 'white women' or for that matter anyone else in 'the West' faces no obstacles to translate their concerns into security. It further suggests that it is only outside 'the West' that the civil society is not fully democratic or the media not entirely free. Securitization theory's silencing effects, however, are not confined spatially, but relevant globally, as shown all too easily by the struggles of Muslim communities in 'the West' to fight their securitization,⁵¹ or the way in which 'East Germans' were silenced during the time of German reunification in the middle of a supposedly egalitarian public space and 'captured in degrading, essentialising stereotypes not unlike those critiqued in the post-colonial literature'.⁵²

Securitizing 'for' someone across the international power divide is additionally problematic, as the act of re-presentation is inevitably loaded by the legacy of imperialism.⁵³ Transnational or postcolonial feminists like Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar, Marnia Lazreg and Chandra Mohanty expose the gendered aspects of these interactions.⁵⁴ In what they term to be 'imperial feminism', they critique white Western feminists' claims to solidarity with women of colour, where 'white women save brown women from brown men'. It is important to highlight the problematic nature of such securitizations 'for' that are colonial or imperial in the sense that they reproduce historical dynamics of domination and exploitation. However, this is a different argument than the one foregrounded in this article. I argue here primarily

⁴⁴Booth, *Theory of World Security*.

⁴⁵Jackson, 'International organizations', p. 313.

⁴⁶Barthwal-Datta, 'Securitizing threats without the state', p. 278.

⁴⁷For a critique, see, for example, Lorraine Dowler, 'Gender, militarization and sovereignty', *Geography Compass*, 6 (2012), pp. 490–99 (p. 494); Kelly Oliver, *Women as Weapons of War: Iraq, Sex, and the Media* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 47.

⁴⁸Miriam Ticktin, 'The gendered human of humanitarianism: Medicalising and politicising sexual violence', *Gender & History*, 23 (2011), pp. 250–65 (p. 256).

⁴⁹Hansen, 'The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma', p. 297.

⁵⁰Dowler, 'Gender, militarization and sovereignty', p. 494; Oliver, *Women as Weapons of War*, p. 47.

⁵¹See, for instance, Katherine E. Brown, 'Contesting the securitization of British Muslims', *Interventions*, 12 (2010), pp. 171–82.

⁵²Kathrin Hoerschelmann, 'Breaking ground – marginality and resistance in (post) unification Germany', *Political Geography*, 20 (2001), pp. 981–1004 (p. 986).

⁵³Kapoor, 'Hyper-self-reflexive development?', p. 631; Cheryl MacEwan, 'Postcolonialism, feminism and development: Intersections and dilemmas', *Progress in Development Studies*, 1 (2001), pp. 93–111 (p. 98).

⁵⁴Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar, 'Challenging imperial feminism', *Feminist Review*, 80 (2005), pp. 44–63; Marnia Lazreg, 'Feminism and difference: the perils of writing as a woman on women in Algeria', *Feminist Studies*, 14 (1988), pp. 81–107; Mohanty, 'Under Western eyes'.

that we can talk of a colonial structure in securitization theory because of its double move of silencing the subaltern and forcing others to securitize ‘for’ them. This is a structural, not a historical point.

White women under attack!

In what follows I illustrate some of the silencing and marginalising effects of using securitization theory by drawing on the case of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year’s Eve events.⁵⁵

Commonly referred to as the ‘sex attacks’ of Cologne, the events of that night present themselves as follows: during the night of New Year’s Eve 2015/16, a high number of sexual offences and theft offences were committed in Cologne. The victims of these offences were almost exclusively women. According to the police, congregations of up to 1,000 people at a time were witnessed in areas around the central station. Most of these individuals were male, aged 15–35 and – based on their physical appearance – were deemed to be of Arab or North African origin. These young men were witnessed surrounding women, sexually harassing them, and in many cases also robbing them.⁵⁶ As to the extent of the events, the public prosecution authorities of Cologne disclosed that 1,054 complaints had been registered by 10 February 2016, almost half of which (454) concerned sexual assaults.⁵⁷ One striking characteristic of the New Year’s Eve events is the intensity reached by the public debate following it.⁵⁸ The wave of online outrage has been called ‘hysteria’,⁵⁹ or characterised as an ‘online mob’.⁶⁰ While the topics of this intensive public debate have revolved around the scale of the events, the question of whether or not the assaults were planned, the actions and previous knowledge of the police as well as the origin of the perpetrators,⁶¹ a recurrent and dominant theme across social media, many politicians, conservative publicists, and normal users has been a strongly voiced concern about immigrants and the safety of German women. The ‘sex attacks’ in Cologne, they say, show that there is a problem with foreigners/Muslims/refugees and that one ought to be allowed to refuse them entry to one’s country.⁶²

When approached through the lens of securitization theory, the New Year’s Eve events could therefore be read as follows: in the aftermath of the New Year’s Eve celebrations, ‘male Muslim migrants’ were successfully securitized as a danger to ‘white German women’ and thereby to

⁵⁵This reading of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year’s Eve events is not an exhaustive analysis of the case, nor does it aim at being so. It merely serves the purpose of illustrating some of the effects that result from an application of the securitization framework.

⁵⁶See the documents of the parliamentary request for an inquiry commission: LT-Drs. 16/10798, ‘Antrag zur Einsetzung eines Untersuchungsschusses gemäß Artikel 41 der Landesverfassung zu den massiven Straftaten in der Silvesternacht 2015 und zur Frage von rechtsfreien Räumen in Nordrhein-Westfalen (“Untersuchungsschuss Silvesternacht 2015”)', Drucksache des Landtags Nordrhein-Westfalen 16/10798 (19 January 2016), available at: {https://www.landtag.nrw.de/portal/WWW/Navigation_R2010/030-Parlament-und-Wahlen/015-Ausschuesse-und-Gremien/030-Untersuchungsausschuesse/PUAIV/Inhalt.jsp} accessed 30 October 2016.

⁵⁷Florian Flade, Marcel Pauly, and Kristian Frigelj, ‘1054 Strafanzeigen nach Übergriffen von Köln’, *Welt N24* (10 February 2016), available at: {<https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article152018368/1054-Strafanzeigen-nach-Uebergriffen-von-Koeln.html>} accessed 27 October 2016.

⁵⁸Andreas Rossmann, ‘Interview mit Monika Hauser: Rassismus hilft auch hier nicht weiter’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* (23 January 2016), available at: {http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/debatten/frauenrechtlerin-moni...exualisierte-gewalt-14027180.html?printPagedArticle=true#pageIndex_2} accessed 26 October 2016.

⁵⁹Margarete Stokowski, ‘Des Rudels Kern’, *Spiegel Online* (7 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/margarete-stokowski-ueber-sexualisierte-gewalt-a-1070905-druck.html>} accessed 28 October 2016.

⁶⁰Sascha Lobo, ‘Mob und Gegenmob’, *Spiegel Online* (6 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/web/koeln-silvester-mob-und-gegenmob-kolumne-a-1070724-druck.html>} accessed 26 October 2016.

⁶¹LT-Drs. 16/10798 (2016).

⁶²Hannah Beitzer, ‘Über sexuelle Gewalt sprechen – ohne Rassismus’, *Süddeutsche.de* (6 January 2016), available at: <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/panorama/2.220/uebergriffe-in-koeln-ueber-sexuelle-gewalt-sprechen-ohne-rassismus-1.2806434> accessed 26 October 2016

Germany.⁶³ As *The Economist* writes, '[a]fter Cologne, when Europeans think of refugees, many no longer picture persecuted families or toddlers. Instead they see menacing young men imbued with the sexism that is all too common across the Middle East and North Africa.'⁶⁴

Analysing the Cologne New Year's Eve events through a securitization lens illustrates a case of marginalisation through *illocutionary disablement*. Two elements play a role here: the (in)ability of many 'white German women' and 'male Muslim migrants' to determine the outcome of the securitization process, and the role of sexism and racism as disabling/enabling frames in the process. The events in Cologne had such an impact, it has been suggested, because they sit at the intersection between sexism and racism.⁶⁵ The intersection of these frames played out in two contradictory ways, in a first stage disabling the securitization of the Cologne 2015/16 New Year's Eve events, while in a second stage enabling the securitization of these same events. Indeed, in a first stage 'sexism' prevented the women who reported the events straightaway from being taken seriously,⁶⁶ while the fear of being considered 'racist' induced major nationwide newspapers and news outlets to remain silent about the events.⁶⁷ In a second stage, however, the events very soon became a massive social media phenomenon, and the role of racism and sexism changed. Sexism was reappropriated and reshaped in a very specific way by the frame of racism: 'white German women' were now the victims of sexual assaults after all – but only of assaults carried out by non-white 'male Muslim migrants', a reading that left 'white male German' perpetrators of sexual violence entirely out of the picture.⁶⁸ Here, 'racism' enabled their securitization, leaving aside the voices of those 'male Muslim migrants' who argued for a successful integration – including adaptation to German 'sexual habits'.⁶⁹ Similarly, at this stage of the process, 'sexism' discredited the voices of those women trying to push against their securitization as helpless victims of lustful migrants.⁷⁰ The important point here is that the positions and experiences of many 'white German women' and 'male Muslim migrants' were not excluded from the dominant constructions because they were silent; they were excluded while loudly making their claims. As such they were silenced, not silent – a case of illocutionary disablement.

⁶³This reflects wider dynamics identified by the literature as the securitization of migrants and migration. See, for example, Philippe Bourbeau, *The Securitization of Migration: A Study of Movement and Order* (London: Routledge, 2011); Scott D. Watson, *The Securitization of Humanitarian Migration: Digging Moats and Sinking Boats* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Alison Gerard, *The Securitization of Migration and Refugee Women* (London: Routledge, 2014); Gabriella Lazaridis and Dimitris Skleparis, 'Securitization of migration and the far right: the case of Greek security professionals', *International Migration*, 54 (2016), pp. 176–92; Ayalet Banai and Regina Kreide, 'Securitization of migration in Germany: the ambivalences of citizenship and human rights', *Citizenship Studies*, 21 (2017), pp. 1–15; Melissa G. Curley and Siu-Iun Wong, *Security and Migration in Asia: The Dynamics of Securitization* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2008); Gabriella Lazaridis and Khursheed Wadia, *The Securitization of Migration in the EU: Debates since 9/11* (Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

⁶⁴'Migrant men and European women', *The Economist* (16 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21688397-absorb-newcomers-peacefully-europe-must-insist-they-respect-values-such-tolerance-and>} accessed 30 October 2016.

⁶⁵Jacob Augstein, 'Lust der Angst', *Spiegel Online* (11 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/koeln-wenn-sexismus-und-rassismus-sich-treffen-kolumne-a-1071403-druck.html>} accessed 26 October 2016; Christina Clemm and Sabine Hark, 'Sind wir über Nacht zu einer feministischen Nation geworden? Etliche Reaktionen auf die Köner Silvesternacht sind verlogen: Ein Gespräch über ungenügendes Sexualstrafrecht und die fatale Verquickung von Sexismus und Rassismus', *Zeit Online* (18 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.zeit.de/kultur/2016-01/feminismus-uebergrieffe-koeln-clemm-hark-10-nach-8>} accessed 28 October 2016.

⁶⁶Beitzer, 'Über sexuelle Gewalt sprechen'.

⁶⁷Frauen klagen an. Nach den Sex-Attacken von Migranten: Sind wir noch tolerant oder schon blind?, *Focus Online* (9 January 2016), available at: {http://www.focus.de/magazin/archiv/titel-nacht-der-schande_id_5196177.html?drucken=1} accessed 29 October 2016.

⁶⁸Beitzer, 'Über sexuelle Gewalt sprechen'.

⁶⁹See, for instance, Sophia Maier, 'So denkt ein syrischer Flüchtling wirklich über Frauen', *Huffington Post* (8 January 2016), available at: {http://www.huffingtonpost.de/sophia-maier/frauen-syrischer-fluechtling_b_8938238.html} accessed 6 November 2016.

⁷⁰Stokowski, 'Des Rudels Kern'; Beitzer, 'Über sexuelle Gewalt sprechen'.

Analysing the Cologne New Year's Eve events through a securitization lens also illustrates the problems attached to a securitization 'for': the silencing effects, the superimposition of a political agenda and the erasure of domestic problems.⁷¹ The securitization of 'male Muslim migrants' is based on a radical generalisation from the perpetrators of Cologne to all other men looking similar,⁷² thus essentialising them into a diffuse mass of sexually aroused foreigners, mainly described with animalistic vocabulary – 'primates', 'apes', 'wild packs'.⁷³ In the case of the 'white German women', their securitization as referent object of security is tied to the narrative 'black man rapes white woman',⁷⁴ and is based on a generalisation of German women as being the helpless victims of foreign attacks – as epitomised by the title images chosen by *SZ* and *Focus*, two news outlets that both published pictures of naked white female bodies with black hands groping their bodies.⁷⁵ This homogenisation and essentialisation of 'white German women' and 'male Muslim migrants' is not only silencing, but also has two more specific implications. First, this diverts attention from domestic problems. In an interview, journalist Kübra Gümüşay comments that the concerns about women and migrants draw an idealised picture of German society and project their own sexism to the newly arrived.⁷⁶ This not only 'outsources' the problem, but also prevents a real debate about sexualised violence.⁷⁷ While the 'white German woman' is thus successfully defended against black threats, she remains available for abuse by the white man.⁷⁸ Second, the process of homogenisation and essentialisation opens up a space for the political interests of those engaged in it. Many highlight the hypocritical feminism of – mainly conservative – commentators who start caring about dangers to the equal status of women only when migrants are involved, especially if they are Muslim.⁷⁹ Such a co-optation of feminism for racist positions has been dubbed 'Femonationalism' and describes the use of feminist positions to justify an incompatibility between Islam and the Western values, or a reenactment of border for nationalist positions.⁸⁰

Analysing the Cologne New Year's Eve events through a securitization lens also illustrates the way in which an application of securitization theory effectively disables the possibility for critique. Indeed, applying securitization theory to the case of the New Year's Eve sexual assaults means that it becomes impossible for an analyst or third party observer to point to objective criteria in order to contest the securitization of 'male Muslim migrants' or 'white German women'. They would not be able to use statistics showing the high numbers of sexual molestations against women both in Germany and in Europe,⁸¹ or to highlight the fact that refugees are more often victims than perpetrators of sexual abuse and that they 'were responsible for only

⁷¹These problems were described earlier with reference mainly to the critiques of securitization theory. As shown in the case of the Cologne New Year's Eve events, however, these are also frequent dynamics in the process of securitization itself, where securitizations 'for' others are common moves.

⁷²Lobo, 'Mob und Gegenmob'.

⁷³Stokowski, 'Des Rudels Kern'.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Rassistische Titelbilder: "Süddeutsche" entschuldigt sich, "Focus" nicht', *Spiegel Online* (10 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/focus-und-sueddeutsche-zei...entschuldigung-eine-rechtfertigung-fuer-titel-a-1071334-druck.html>} accessed 29 October 2016.

⁷⁶Hannah Beitzer, "Die Gesellschaft erwartet von Flüchtlingen, dass sie Übermenschen sind", *Süddeutsche.de* (26 November 2015), available at: {<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/leben/2.220/fluechtlinge-muslimischen-maennern-begegnen-die-menschen-mit-angst-1.2745018>} accessed 26 October 2016.

⁷⁷Stokowski, 'Des Rudels Kern'.

⁷⁸Augstein, 'Lust der Angst'.

⁷⁹Beitzer, 'Über sexuelle Gewalt sprechen'; Lobo, 'Mob und Gegenmob'; Rossmann, 'Interview mit Monika Hauser'.

⁸⁰Clemm and Hark, 'Sind wir über Nacht zu einer feministischen Nation geworden?'.

⁸¹Rossmann, 'Interview mit Monika Hauser'; Hannah Beitzer, 'Silvesternacht in Köln: "Wo war die Polizei?"', *Süddeutsche.de* (5 January 2016), available at: {<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/panorama/2.220/silvesternacht-in-koeln-wir-muessen-angstraume-sichtbar-machen-1.2806314>} accessed 26 October 2016.

3.6% of the sexual offences in Germany in 2015'.⁸² They would not be able to point to the fact that sexual violence and rape are more often a problem in private surroundings,⁸³ but that when they do happen in the public space such as during big public events like the Oktoberfest or carnival, they are to a large extent carried out by white German men.⁸⁴ Within the securitization framework, pointing to these events would turn the observer into a securitizing actor whose reference to objective 'facts' then constitutes an attempted securitization 'for' a marginalised group. As such they would have to make claims, for instance, about 'white German women' as not endangered, and 'male Muslim migrants' as not threatening – or, conversely, about 'female Muslim migrants' as endangered and 'white male Germans' as threatening – thereby leading to silencing effects similar to those described above. Because the sympathetic critics who become securitizing actors probably only do so in the first place in order to remedy the silencing effects of a securitization. They would run into the same type of problem they are trying to solve in the first place. The possibility to exercise critique is thereby effectively disabled. The result of this is that an application of securitization theory to the case of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year's Eve events would congeal the construction of 'male Muslim migrants' as a security threat to 'white German women' into its current use, thereby reproducing the power dynamics leading to its construction in the first place.

Finally, an analysis of the Cologne New Year's Eve events through the securitization lens also illustrates some of the colonial dynamics involved in deploying the theory. There are two different moments here. The first moment derives from the double dynamic of silencing and then speaking 'for' that makes up securitization theory's colonial structure. As shown earlier, the mechanism of illocutionary disablement effectively silenced 'German women' by drawing on the disabling frames of racism and sexism. They were then spoken for, in particular by conservative positions keen on advancing their own politics. It is in that sense that the situation of the 'German women' is comparable to that of Spivak's sati widows: the multiplicity of their voices and the complexity of their positions is lost between competing re-presentations mobilised for their own political purposes. The second colonial moment involved in deploying securitization theory derives from the way in which it taps into historically loaded legacies of colonialism. Historically, 'white women' have played an important role in justifying colonial practices. They were necessary in order to cast 'black men' as sexual predators and hence, as uncivilised.⁸⁵ In the case of the Cologne New Year's Eve events, the securitizations 'for' German women reproduce these dynamics and thus also acquire a colonial dimension in this second, historical sense.

Conclusion: Can the subaltern securitize?

Can the subaltern securitize? The postcolonial rereading of securitization theory offered in this article foregrounds three different angles to answer this rhetorical question. First, and most obviously, the subaltern cannot securitize because they are structurally excluded from the concept of security – by locutionary silencing, illocutionary disablement, and illocutionary frustration. Second, the subaltern cannot securitize because they are always already being securitized and spoken for – as in this case by the 'well-intentioned intellectual[s]'⁸⁶ trying to highlight and

⁸² 'Sex education: Europe is trying to teach its gender norms to refugees', *The Economist* (15 October 2016), available at: {<https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/10/15/europe-is-trying-to-teach-its-gender-norms-to-refugees>} accessed 27 May 2018.

⁸³ Beitzer, 'Silvesternacht in Köln'.

⁸⁴ Ibid.; Rossmann, 'Interview mit Monika Hauser'; Stokowski, 'Des Rudels Kern'.

⁸⁵ An important element here is the myth of the 'black rapist'. See, for example, Angela Davis, *Women, Race & Class* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1983), pp. 172–201; Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997); Kent A. Ono, *Contemporary Media Culture and the Remnants of a Colonial Past* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2009), pp. 53–4.

⁸⁶ Maggio, "'Can the subaltern be heard?'" p. 427. Maggio uses this term to show that, however well intentioned, it is impossible to intervene benevolently. The intervention presented in this article, for example, falls into this category.

remediate the subaltern predicament. Finally, I would like to suggest in this conclusion, the subaltern cannot securitize because the popular rendering of securitization theory as critical obfuscates and rationalises their marginalisation. Ultimately, it perhaps does not matter that much whether securitization theory truly is critical or not. What matters, however, is its official labelling as such and its inclusion into the critical security studies canon. This inclusion is not innocent: by presenting the subaltern marginalisation as part of a 'critical' project, they are truly silenced and critical security studies becomes complicit in this move.

One insight gained from re-examining the existing critiques of securitization theory's 'silence-problem' concerns the question of whether securitization theory is salvageable or not. The existing critiques have assumed that a solution to the 'silence-problem' is feasible and a critique of it indeed possible. Where silence and marginalisation are conceived as a problem of listening, they have encouraged listening more, for example, by creating or 'awakening audiences'.⁸⁷ Where silence and marginalisation are conceived as a problem of speech, they have suggested enabling more speech, for example, by bringing in the body and images as forms of non-verbal communication.⁸⁸ Such efforts, however, are limited because they have not taken into account the full range of mechanisms through which the subaltern are prevented from completing securitizing speech acts. Bringing in visuality, for example, as a way to increase the range of expression available to the subaltern, at best only remediates forms of locutionary silencing, but does not help in situations of illocutionary frustration or illocutionary disablement where the problem lies either with the audience or with a distortion of the securitizing message. This is where an understanding of the full range of securitization theory's marginalising effects might be of help: when all three mechanisms of silence are considered at the same time and understood as working together in marginalising the subaltern, then perhaps the problem of silence resulting from speech act failure can be addressed. Despite this carefully optimistic note, the potential solutions for each type of silence remain limited in their own way. In cases of locutionary silencing, a focus on the body and on images is of no help when speech is not possible either verbally or non-verbally.⁸⁹ In cases of illocutionary frustration, creating and awakening new audiences might remain ineffective in those cases where only a particular audience could complete the securitizing speech act.⁹⁰ In cases of illocutionary disablement where silence is the result of a problem of hearing, one might consider translation as a possible solution.⁹¹ As the abundant postcolonial

⁸⁷Booth, *Theory of World Security*, p. 168.

⁸⁸Hansen, 'The *Little Mermaid's* silent security dilemma'; Hansen, 'The politics of securitization and the Muhammad cartoon crisis'; Lene Hansen, 'Theorizing the image for security studies: Visual securitization and the Muhammad cartoon crisis', *European Journal of International Relations*, 17 (2011), pp. 51–74; Lene Hansen, 'How images make world politics: International icons and the case of Abu Ghraib', *Review of International Studies*, 41 (2015), pp. 263–88.

⁸⁹These problems are partly discussed by Hansen in her work on the body and the image, see Hansen, 'The *Little Mermaid's* silent security dilemma'; Hansen, 'The politics of securitization and the Muhammad cartoon crisis'; Hansen, 'Theorizing the image for security studies'; Hansen, 'How images make world politics'.

⁹⁰This, of course, raises the question about which audience matters. Generally speaking, the study of publics has remained 'undertheorised and underproblematized' in security studies. See William Walters and Anne Marie D'Aoust, 'Bringing publics into critical security studies: Notes for a research strategy', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 44 (2015), pp. 45–68 (p. 47). The securitization literature addressing the concept of the audience has mostly focused on the lack of specification about who or what constitutes a 'sufficient audience': Barthwal-Datta, 'Securitizing threats without the state', p. 278; Odysseas Christou and Constantinos Adamides, 'Energy securitization and desecuritization in the New Middle East', *Security Dialogue*, 44 (2013), pp. 507–22 (p. 510), the lack of conceptualisation of the relationship between the audience and the securitizing actor: Sarah Leonard and Christian Kaunert, 'Reconceptualizing the audience in securitization theory', in Thierry Balzacq (ed.), *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* (London Routledge, 2011), pp. 57–76 (p. 58), and the lack of awareness to the possibility of existence of different and parallel audiences: Christou and Adamides, 'Energy securitization and desecuritization in the New Middle East', p. 510; Juha A. 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 (2008), pp. 65–99 (p. 72).

⁹¹The solution to problems of hearing and understanding the culturally 'other' is usually found in the notion of 'translation', which – unlike the act of representation/re-presentation – is described as an ethical encounter that acknowledges the

literature on translation suggests, however, acts of translations remain necessarily limited and are interwoven with difficult power dynamics.⁹² A translation can only ever be an imperfect account of the original. This is particularly problematic when the translation is from a subaltern to a hegemonic position: here the translation can only be understood by the hegemon if it is framed and phrased in the logic of its own language, thereby violently transforming and adapting the subaltern position. Conversely, if the translation remains too close to the original, it runs the risk of failing to make it intelligible at all. In addition to those limitations, trying to salvage securitization theory in this way is also problematic: not only does it fail to address forms of silence resulting from superimposing security speech onto others, but it runs the risk of reinforcing these dynamics. Any attempt at recuperating securitization theory must acknowledge this problem and find a way to deal with it.

Finally, the re-examination of securitization theory's 'silence-problem' in this article also complicates superficial assumptions about the relations between philosophy of science and criticality that still pervade the disciplines of security studies and International Relations more generally. These likely derive from International Relations' specific disciplinary history. Indeed, in the context of a discipline deeply concerned with its scientific status,⁹³ turning to the philosophy of science and interrogating the foundations and origins of the discipline's knowledge has been an effective tool of critique in the past. By asking the 'how do you know what you know' question, critical approaches to International Relations have used epistemology as a powerful angle of attack against the mainstream. Much of the critical work in IR has therefore been articulated in opposition to and rejection of the discipline's mainstream objectivism, tightly building critical IR around epistemological self-reflection,⁹⁴ thereby leading to a common equation of radical epistemology with criticality.⁹⁵

The rereading of securitization theory offered in this article complicates this assumption by showing that the relation between a radical epistemology and criticality is an ambivalent one, where no clear connection can be drawn between the two. On the one hand, the analysis in this article has shown that the main reason behind securitization theory's 'silence-problem' lies in its specific epistemological choice to locate security within speech act theory. Regarding this move, it is important to note that speech act theory per se is not the culprit here. The idea of speech acts or subaltern speech can be used to critical effect.⁹⁶ When a female resistance agent commits suicide while menstruating,⁹⁷ or when peasants use strategies such as 'foot dragging,

impossibility to 'accurately signify the other' and the inaccessibility of knowledge. See Maggio, "Can the subaltern be heard?", p. 434.

⁹²Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'The politics of translation', in Lawrence Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 397–416; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Translation as culture', *Parallax*, 6 (2000), pp. 13–24; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Translating into English', in Sandra Bermann and Michael Wood (eds), *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader*. For an overview, see Simon Sherry, 'Translation, postcolonialism and cultural studies', *Meta*, 42 (1997), pp. 462–77.

⁹³Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 9.

⁹⁴Matthew Fluck, 'The best there is? Communication, objectivity and the future of critical International Relations theory', *European Journal of International Relations*, 20 (2014), pp. 56–79 (pp. 62–3).

⁹⁵For a similar argument about the way in which 'reflexive theory' has been equated with critical and emancipatory theory, see Inanna Hamati-Ataya, 'Reflectivity, reflexivity, reflexivism: IR's "reflexive turn" – and beyond', *European Journal of International Relations*, 19 (2012), pp. 669–94.

⁹⁶See, in particular, Judith Butler's work on speech acts and performativity, for example: Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999).

⁹⁷Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* In her example, Spivak draws on the case of Bhuvanewari Bhaduri who committed suicide in 1926 at the age of 16 or 17. The reasons for her suicide remained mysterious at the time: since she hanged herself while menstruating, she could not have done so because of an illicit pregnancy. In fact, and unbeknownst at the time, she was part of an Indian resistance group and had been tasked to commit a political murder she could not face the courage to carry

dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on⁹⁸ as forms of everyday resistance, then these acts carry a political significance. They can be read as the subaltern ‘voice’ and doing so can serve a critical purpose. These forms of ‘speech’, however, are very different from the securitizing speech acts examined in this article. By locking the very existence of security into a specific type of speech acts, ‘security speech’ becomes unattainable for the subaltern. At the same time it makes their own forms of speech and resistance available to academics, activists, and politicians alike to re-present it for their own purposes by securitizing ‘for’ them. While the problems of silence I highlight in this article therefore derive from speech act theory, they do so because securitization theory mobilises it in a very particular way by casting the epistemology of *security* into that specific mould, not because speech act theory is in and of itself problematic.

On the other hand, however, these same ontological and epistemological choices to locate security within speech act theory have also led to its inclusion in the canon of critical security studies. Indeed, it is securitization theory’s move to discourse that has led to its inclusion into that canon because it helps reveal ‘the politics of security’ and thus enables potential desecuritizations.⁹⁹ While the application of securitization theory onto the example of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year’s Eve events illustrated some of its politically debilitating effects, such an application could also be used to show some of its ‘critical’ aspects. Applying securitization theory to the case of the 2015/16 Cologne New Year’s Eve events could help denaturalise the obviousness of ‘male Muslim migrants’ as threats and ‘white German women’ as endangered objects. It would highlight the socially constructed nature of these categories, focus on the historically contingent political process underwriting their construction and explore some political consequences of that move, thus potentially enabling their desecuritization.

Securitization theory’s choice for a radical security epistemology therefore provides the grounds for its inclusion into the critical security canon while also causing the problematic dynamics of marginalisation and silencing highlighted in this article. Paradoxically enough, securitization theory’s philosophy of science position thus gives the theory its ‘critical’ edge, while simultaneously also undermining this same ‘critical’ potential. This paradox derives to a certain extent from competing understandings of the meaning of ‘criticality’, with proponents of securitization theory’s critical nature implicitly adopting a wide interpretation of the term¹⁰⁰ while contestations of its

out. Spivak rereads her act of suicide while menstruating as a form of resistance that displaced dominant legitimations of female suicide.

⁹⁸James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. xvi.

⁹⁹See, for example, Nunes, ‘Reclaiming the political’; Browning and McDonald, ‘The future of critical security studies’. Exposing the politics of security is considered a critical move because it shows that ‘security’ is not an innocent category but in fact deeply entrenched in political struggles and carries political power. The space this opens for potential desecuritizations has variously been described as a progressive, critical, or at least normative element of the theory. See, for example, Lene Hansen, ‘Reconstructing desecuritization: the normative-political in the Copenhagen School and directions for how to apply it’, *Review of International Studies*, 38 (2012), pp. 525–46. The political impulse behind desecuritizations came directly from the ‘extraordinary’ context of Cold War Ostpolitik in the 1980s. Thus the original impulse behind desecuritizations (and securitization theory) originated from a desire to theoretically undermine the ‘Cold War logic of “Clausewitz reversed” where all politics had just become the prolongation of war by other means’: Thierry Balzacq and Stefano Guzzini, ‘Introduction: “What kind of theory – if any – is securitization?”’, *International Relations*, 29 (2015), pp. 97–102.

¹⁰⁰Following its foundation in the 1990s and an initial debate around the meaning and scope of the term ‘critical’, critical security studies has since settled on a very broad understanding of the term. In their 1997 landmark volume, Krause and Williams for example explicitly do not ‘define a precise meaning of the term critical in either a methodological or political sense’ because ‘part of the development of a broader conception of security studies (and critical security studies) requires that its growth not be straitjacketed by the imposition of criteria of inclusion and exclusion or by a renewed call for definitive answers’. See Keith Krause and Michael Williams, *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. viii. Current critical security studies textbooks still follow their example, see, for example, Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, p. 1.

'critical' dimension rely on a much narrower tradition of understanding.¹⁰¹ However, this does not diminish the paradox's power to draw attention to the ambivalent relation between radical epistemology and criticality, showing that no clear connection can be drawn between the two. Just as forms of objectivism can be mobilised for critical purposes,¹⁰² more radical epistemologies can work against it: a particular epistemological stance or philosophy of science position therefore does not in and of itself make a theory critical.¹⁰³

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¹⁰¹Historically, the more narrow definitions of the term 'critical' have been articulated and defended by emancipation-oriented Critical Theorists of Frankfurt School lineage, the most notable of whom is Booth, *Theory of World Security*. As both the thinness and Eurocentrism of these approaches have since been critiqued (Beate Jahn, 'One step forward, two steps back: Critical theory as the latest edition of liberal idealism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 27 (1998), pp. 613–41; Barkawi and Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies'), I suggest it is more fruitful instead to turn towards a broader neo-Marxist understanding of the term, such as the one defended by Nancy Fraser. Following this, a critical theory needs to reveal relations of dominance and subordination between dominant and marginal groups and reveal the ideological character of the alternate approaches that obfuscate, justify, or rationalise these power relations. See Nancy Fraser, 'What's critical about critical theory? The case of Habermas and gender', in Nancy Fraser (ed.), *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

While the arguments for securitization theory's critical dimension most easily fit the wider understanding of criticality put forward by critical security studies, a case can be made for the way in which exposing the politics of security and thus opening up an agenda for desecuritization might even almost fit the more narrow definition of criticality put forward here.

¹⁰²In a similar vein, see, for example, the way in which Barkin and Sjoberg recuperate traditionally positivist methods for interpretive and critical purposes: Samuel Barkin and Laura Sjoberg (eds), *Interpretive Quantification: Methodological Explorations for Critical and Constructivist IR* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017).

¹⁰³With this statement, I echo Fraser's assertion that 'there is no philosophically interesting difference between a critical theory of society and an uncritical one': Fraser, 'What's critical about critical theory?', p. 113.