Extraordinary or ordinary emergency measures

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Extraordinary or Ordinary Emergency Measures: What, and Who, Defines the 'Success' of Securitization?

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Abstract   *This paper is concerned with two interrelated problems in the Copenhagen School's (CS) securitization theory. The first is the challenge non-exceptional security polices pose to the theory, which starts from the assumption that securitization is 'successful' only when extraordinary emergency measures are adopted. The second arises not from what factors define securitization's 'success', but rather from who does so. Securitization theory suffers from a constructivist deficit because the criterion for the 'success' of securitization is set by scholars, when a more 'radically constructivist [theory] regarding security' (Buzan et al., 1998: 204) would require practitioners to be in charge of defining the 'success' of securitization. The paper offers a solution to both of these problems by suggesting that securitization is 'successful' only when (1) the identification of a threat that justifies a response (securitizing move) is followed by (2) a change of behaviour (action) by a relevant agent (that is, the securitizing actor or someone instructed by the same), and also (3) the action taken is justified by the securitizing actor with reference to the threat he/she identified and declared in the securitizing move. It goes on to reject the ideas of a sanctioning audience and of the insistence on existential threats as also set by the CS.*

Introduction

Securitization theory, which aims to capture the process whereby issues become framed as threatened in their existence and are subsequently lifted out of ordinary democratic politics and into the realm of emergency politics, is one of the most popular security theories. Among the many scholars that have critically engaged with securitization theory are those who focus on whether recourse to extraordinary emergency measures[1] is, or should be, decisive of 'successful' securitization (Huysmans, 2011; Salter, 2011; Williams, 2011; Roe, 2012; Trombetta, 2008). 'Successful' is placed in inverted commas here because it does *not* refer to the conditions or circumstances that define when securitization accomplishes its aim or purpose and successfully averts a threat. Instead it captures the Copenhagen school's (CS) assertion that only when securitization takes a specific form and consists of 'existential threats, emergency action, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules' can we recognize it as distinct from politicization (Buzan et al., 1998: 26; cf. Williams, 2011: 217; Wæver, 2011: 469–70).

Scholars take issue with this formulation because they have realized that, in liberal democracies, securitizing actors do not always revert to exceptional security policies when they address a threat. The question, then, is what constitutes the exception? The CS's view of the exception is one of executive unilateralism propagated by Carl Schmitt (Williams, 2003; Neal 2009). Executive unilateralism holds that the executive 'has an inherent authority to decide both that there is an emergency and what measures are appropriate in responding to it' (Dyzenhaus, 2010: 45). Williams has labelled this Schmitt's 'decisionist theory of sovereignty' (2003: 516) and has argued that this line of thought is clearly present in the process of securitization, where a securitizing actor is at its most efficient exactly because of operating 'legitimately' beyond otherwise binding rules and regulations. Yet in our own time few securitizations take the form of executive unilateralism and a more accurate view of the exception has been proposed by legal and security scholars in the context of the War on Terror. Austin Sarat, for example, argues thus: 'In order to overrule common law in a period of emergency, Parliament must pass new laws explicitly stating what the government can do. In this way, the rule of law is preserved, rather than suspended' (Sarat, 2010:7; Cf. Neal, 2013; Dyzenhaus, 2010; Bright, 2012, Neocleous, 2008:

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[1] The terms 'extraordinary emergency measures' and 'exceptional security policy' are used interchangeably in this article. The same applies to 'ordinary emergency measures' and 'non-exceptional security policy'.

71). Consequently, we might say that – as far as liberal democratic states are concerned – the exception refers not to the suspension of law altogether, but rather to the situation when 1) *new* laws are passed, or 2) (new) emergency powers are granted (all of which seek to govern the insecurity/crisis situation, and all of which are deemed permissible, including in some states by an independent judiciary, only in the context of the threat), or 3) when a state's existing security apparatus and/or existing emergency legislation is employed to deal with issues that are either new, or that it has not dealt with previously. Non-exceptional, in turn, refers to those measures possible within existing (non-emergency) legislation. This distinction is adopted throughout this paper.

As far as non-state actors and autocracies are concerned, outside of concrete empirical cases it is harder to say what counts as the exception. In the end the exception here might be whatever most reasonable persons would agree constitutes exceptional measures mostly in terms of the harm, risked, caused or intended, and/or the level of violence employed. While this definition might be rather equivocal what matters is that exceptional action is not solely reserved for states, and securitization theory is, or should be, applicable beyond liberal democratic states.

In contrast especially to what has been written on the procedure of securitization, contributions to the debate on what defines the 'success' of securitization remain somewhat piecemeal and, to my knowledge, no full-length research paper focusing on this topic exists. The absence of a comprehensive treatment of this issue is especially surprising because whatever renders securitization 'successful' also has implications for the substantial scholarly literature on the procedure of securitization. Importantly, a revision of securitization theory so that it can account for non-exceptional security policy is also a chance to remedy what could be called 'the constructivist deficit' in original securitization theory. This issue was – if not by that label – identified by Felix Ciută in 2009, who argued the fact that scholars and not actors decide when securitization is "successful" undermines the CS's claim that 'our securitization approach is *radically constructivist* regarding security […] Security issues are made security issues by acts of securitization.' (Buzan et. al, 1998: 204, emphasis added). Accordingly, my intention with this paper is more than to simply fill this gap in the literature on securitization. In particular I argue that scholars should not rely on arbitrary benchmarks set by other scholars concerning when securitization is 'successful', but look instead at what practitioners of security do when they securitize. Specifically I suggest that securitization is 'successful' only when (1) the identification of a threat that justifies a response (securitizing move) is followed by (2) a change of behaviour (action) by a relevant agent (that is, the securitizing actor or someone instructed by the same); and also (3) the action taken is justified by the securitizing actor with reference to the threat he/she identified and declared in the securitizing move.

My revision is necessary because, as it stands, the theory is logically flawed on two interrelated counts: it suffers from a constructivist deficit and as a result cannot adequately account for how security plays out empirically. My intention is to address the latter, and in the process render the theory logically intact. Of course, my motivation for doing this is informed by the opinion that securitization theory is inherently useful. After all, it is the only security theory that can account for distinct referent objects and providers of security. As such the benefits of an adequately revised securitization theory are significant for the academic study of security.

The article is structured as follows. Section one reviews what the CS have said about the necessity of extraordinary emergency measures for 'successful' securitization, revealing a tension in the argument. The second section offers a review of what other securitization scholars have said on this subject. It demonstrates why existing revisions of securitization theory that aim to accommodate non-exceptional security policies either do not work, or remain much too basic. Section three develops a new definition of successful securitization, one that simultaneously addresses the constructivist deficit regarding security and that accommodates non-exceptional security policies. Section four moves the argument one step further and argues that both the idea of a sanctioning audience and the notion of existential threats are–like the meaning of security--

stipulated by scholars of the CS and for this reason do not feature in the proposed revision of securitization theory. The paper concludes by contemplating possible objections against the argument advanced and in the process discusses the advantages, feasibility and limitations of revising securitization theory.

Original securitization theory and the necessity of extraordinary emergency measures

At the heart of original securitization theory is a tension with regard to the exact nature of, and necessity of, extraordinary emergency measures in securitization. Thus, on the one hand, a securitization is defined by 'three components (or steps): existential threats, emergency action, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules' (Buzan et al., 1998: 26), suggesting that extraordinary emergency measures are a necessary part of securitization, because following rules is tantamount to 'the normal way' (ibid.). On the other hand, some passages of the CS's seminal *Security: A New Framework for Analysis (SANFA)* (1998) suggest that securitization is not determined by the use of extraordinary emergency measures in that same way. Instead, 'we do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued…' (Buzan et al., 1998i 25). In this conception, 'existential threats […] *legitimize* the breaking of rules' (ibid 25). And elsewhere, 'The security act is negotiated between the securitizer and the audience […] but the securitizing agent can obtain permission to override rules that would otherwise bind it. *Typically*, the agent will override such rules, because by depicting a threat the securitizing agent often says someone cannot be dealt with in the normal way' (ibid., 26, emphasis added). These references present a slightly different picture with regards to the relationship between extraordinary emergency measures and securitization, for 'legitimizing' is simply not the same as 'necessitating', while 'typically' is different from 'categorically'.

This tension results from the fact that while securitization theory is practically orientated (ibid, 27), the CS clearly believes that in practice security policies take too many forms, to distinguish securitization from mere politicization (see Williams, 2011: 217). Thus, tellingly, Wæver challenges a recent piece by Huysmans (2011) that raises precisely this point. 'If the securitization form is the definition that allows us to "observe" security, how does he [Huysmans] then see these new forms of security and know that they are security?' (Wæver, 2011: 473).[2] Consequently the CS has found it necessary to stipulate that only certain types of security policies (that is, those of an exceptional nature) constitute 'successful' securitization. Confusion does not stop here however, and just a few pages further on from this statement the CS writes that 'successful' securitization is 'not decided by the securitizer but by the audience' (Buzan et al., 1998: 31), suggesting that audience acceptance alone defines the 'success' of securitization. In the context of the wider argument advanced by the CS, it is feasible to suggest, however, that what they mean here is that there is a difference between the securitizing move and the existence of securitization, and the existence of securitization and the 'success' of securitization (see Collins, 2005). That is: the securitizing move is the speech act only, and by itself does not constitute securitization; an issue is securitized only at the point when a relevant audience accepts the existential threat identification. Many issues are securitized (that is, many securitizations exist), but only when extraordinary measures are implemented to deal with the threat that gave rise to the speech act in the first place does securitization 'succeed'. Analytically, the CS justifies this move on the grounds that securitization *typically* takes this form. In other words, although this requirement is stipulated by the scholars of the CS, it still *aims* at capturing what goes on in practice. There are at least two problems with all this. The first is the already mentioned constructivist deficit. Ciută has shown that the CS's logic, whereby scholars both

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[2] To be sure however he does recognize that if some securitizing acts do not take this form then this poses a challenge to securitization theory and needs to be studied.

'interpret[s] political actors' actions and sort out when these actions fulfil the security criteria' (Buzan et al., 1998: 34), conflicts with the CS's view that security is 'what actors make of it' (Ciutǎ, 2009: 316). That is, if it is true that the CS's theory is 'radically constructivist regarding security' (Buzan et al., 1998, 204) then scholars cannot at the same time declare that a particular incident of securitization was 'unsuccessful', just because it does not concur with the scholar's fixed view of security. In my view then[3], a theory of securitization that addresses this constructivist deficit regarding security ought to let practitioners[4] decide when something is successfully securitized, as opposed to advancing a fixed view of when this is the case.

Second, the school's criteria for 'successful' securitization fail to capture the empirical reality of securitization; the latter can only be achieved if practitioners' responses to a threat are considered decisive of securitization. This is related to Huysmans' (1998) longstanding critique that as far as constructivism is concerned, the concept of security is too rigid in securitization theory (see also Trombetta, 2009), and that this leads to the inability of scholars to recognize if and when the world is changing, as they are forever limited to seeing the world through their own fixed concept of security. In other words, securitization theory will not be able to account for changes in the logic of security.

Securitization studies and the necessity of extraordinary emergency measures

In security studies the argument that securitization has not resulted in exceptional security policies has been advanced concerning a number of empirical contexts, including: migration (Bigo, 2000; Huysmans, 2006), environmental security (Trombetta, 2008); climate security (Corry, 2012; Wæver, 2009); the war on terrorism (Salter, 2011; Aradau and van Muenster, 2007; Bright, 2012); European Union border security (Léonard, 2012); and HIV/AIDS (Sjöstedt, 2011). If then security policies are increasingly moving away from the exception, the logic of the exception decisive of 'successful' securitization in original securitization theory has been found wanting by many security scholars.

In securitization studies there has been a diverse response to addressing theoretically the phenomenon of ordinary emergency measures. Three trends in particular are distinguishable. First, risk security scholars take the hard line and argue that the change in security policy means that the logic of securitization is increasingly replaced by the logic of risk, and that the two are distinct concepts (Corry, 2012; Aradau and van Muenster, 2008; De Goede, 2008; Rasmussen, 2006). Risk, or, as one analyst calls it 'riskification', is 'not characterised by an existential threat to a valued referent object leading to exceptional measures against external ungovernable threatening others. Rather, it posits risks (understood as conditions of possibility for harm) to a referent object leading to programmes for permanent changes aimed at reducing vulnerability and boosting governance-capacity of the valued referent object itself' (Corry, 2012: 248). While attributing non-exceptional security policies to a different logic than securitization might appear a neat solution, it is to be rejected for the same reasons that I have earlier rejected the CS's criterion for 'successful' securitizations. Thus, risk or 'riskification' sees the analyst arbitrarily define at what point practitioners 'do' either security or risk, without any consideration as to how practitioners perceive their own actions (see Ciutǎ, 2009). To put this differently, just because

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[3] At this point Ciutǎ and I part company. It is not Ciutǎ's intention to offer a revision of securitization theory. He merely suggests that securitization theory 'must have a thicker and more consistent understanding of its key argument that 'security is constructed. [….] to argue that security is constructed is to argue for the importance of context (Ciutǎ, 2009, 317).' This would require analysts to empirically examine the construction of threats, referent objects, securitization actors, security measures and the meaning of security specifically, 'the categories of meaning that circumscribe the actor's interactions (Ciutǎ, 2009: 317).' In short, Ciutǎ's aim is not to make securitization theory more constructivist; rather that theory's inherent constructivist deficit enables him to develop a new meaning of security as context dependent.

[4] Security practitioners here refers to anyone involved in making and delivering security policy (including non-state actors) and is not restricted to security professionals

practitioners of security do not address a threat with extraordinary emergency measures does not mean that they do not *consider* their response a security policy.

A second group of scholars remains closer to the logic of 'successful' securitization as advanced by the CS, insofar as they argue that non-exceptional security policy can – at times – take an exceptional form. In a recent article Paul Roe, for example, shows that the legislative process, especially through mechanisms such as fast-tracking, can become part of extraordinary politics (Roe, 2012; see also Neal, 2012). While a valid claim, this observation does not offer a revision of CS's view, but simply reproduces the same logic, that is, that something is 'successfully' securitized when extraordinary measures are adopted.

A more progressive engagement with the problem comes from those scholars who have argued that securitization theory needs to be revised in the light of non-exceptional security policies (see, for example, Bright, 2012; Trombetta, 2009; Huysmans 2011). Andrew Neal who – similar to Ciută – has criticized the CS for their selective constructivism and suggests that we ought to work with Foucault's method of 'archaeology' in order to understand a multitude of security discourses and practices (2010: 115). Considering that Neal is clearly motivated by rescuing the concept of security from Schmittian exceptionalism and thus sovereign power, as opposed to a desire to revise securitization theory, he does not advance a step-by-step alternative to securitization theory. The revision of securitization is the forte of what Thierry Balzacq has called the sociological model of securitization, which sees proponents focus on context, the audience and routine security practices (Balzacq, 2010 63). It is not precisely clear who is and who is not part of the sociological strand of securitization theory, but if one goes by Balzacq's 2010 edited book *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* then the most comprehensive attempt to theorize non-exceptional securitizations within that strand is that by Mark Salter. Curiously, however, Salter was motivated not by the fact that the CS insists on exception for 'successful' securitization, but by the observation that the CS argues that securitization *legitimizes* emergency measures, and as such has no clear concept of when securitization fails (Salter, 2011: 121). Salter suggests that, in addition to public debate on the issue to be securitized and audience acceptance of both the securitizing move and emergency measures, new executive policies are decisive of 'successful' securitization. In more detail, he argues, 'the policy solution to the existential threat must be new or emergency powers accorded to the securitizing agent. It is not enough for governments or agencies to propose that policies be continued – *new executive powers are evidence of securitization,* even if it is the dispersion or deputization of previously-centralized powers of decision-making' (Salter, 2011: 121, emphasis added).

This means that he, like the CS (a fact that Salter does not seem to realize), ends up distinguishing between securitizations that simply exist at the point of audience acceptance and those that are 'successful'. The difference is that by requiring new policies as his criterion for the 'success' of securitization, he wants to be able to include non-exceptional security policies. Michael C. Williams foresees problems with this proposal when it comes to scale. 'When does a policy change constitute securitization? And when do the rules [that are] broken […] comprise securitization?' (Williams, 2011: 217) He also foresees problems as regards agency. 'Do minor regulatory changes (or a series of them) even if they are made within an explicit language of "security" constitute successful securitization or is this to be reserved for more spectacular decisions within traditional elite structures and security institutions?' (ibid: 217) Arguably, however, neither objection is entirely warranted. Not only does Salter specify quite clearly that for a policy change to constitute securitization it needs to be a 'new' policy, he also argues that this new power must be bestowed on the securitizing actor, thus dealing with the issue of agency. While Williams' objections then do not hold, it is possible to raise three further objections to Salter's proposal. First, using Salter's definition, we cannot be sure that the new policies enacted by securitizing actors really are a response to the threat, as opposed to policies actors would have launched regardless. Second, like the CS and other securitization scholars, Salter stipulates what

is decisive of securitization from the outside, thus ignoring the perceptions of securitizing actors and that security is (supposed to be) a radical political and social construction. Third, Salter's definition of non-exceptional holds true only if we take Schmitt's view of executive unilateralism as definitive of the meaning of the exception, but not if we use the less demanding but more accurate version of the exception advanced by legal scholars, and adopted in this paper, in the context of the war on terror (see introduction). In other words, Salter himself ends up concerned with the exception.

According to Huysmans the same thing is true also of work by Louise Amoore and Marieke de Goede on European and US counterterrorism, who seek to move away from the decisive security act and instead wish to identify 'little security nothings' (that is, non-exceptional routine procedures) that together add up to securitization, but who inadvertently reintroduce exceptional acts by focusing on decisive power-holders (Huysmans, 2011: 379-80). Huysmans uses this case to show that his own proposal of moving away from the security act as decisive of securitization towards understanding the security act as rupture that contests existing orders not through 'an actualization of a critical decision [but] more a continuous process of assembling objects, subjects and practices' (ibid: 377) is though desirable insofar as in can account for securitization by routine measures, actually quite difficult to achieve. Indeed, as Wæver says 'securitization analysis is challenged by Huysmans' observed change from clearly pronounced exception and emergency towards less dramatic management drift, but his own attempt to mobilize critical reflections on justification implicitly reintroduces a logic of acts [even] if the acts he refers to 'do not take the form of justifying extreme measures by reference to threats' (Wæver, 2011: 474). Aware of this I intend what I propose here as a third way between Wæver's need for decisive acts and Huysmans' proposal to allow for 'little security nothings'. Thus my framework retains a decisive moment at which securitization ensues, namely when securitizing actors (or someone else they are in a position of power over) act/change their behaviour in response to the securitizing speech act they themselves uttered, while it does not matter whether that action/behavioural change is exceptional.

A proposal for the revision of securitization theory

So far I have engaged with scholars' existing attempts at revising securitization theory to address the issue of non-exceptional security policies. I have shown that many existing attempts at revision fall short, most often because many of these scholars continue to stipulate criteria for when securitization is 'successful', undermining the theory's radical constructivist aspirations regarding security.

As a solution, I suggest that the 'success' of securitization must prioritize the actions and behaviour of practitioners of security as key. To this end I propose that securitization is 'successful' only when (1) the identification of a threat that justifies a response (securitizing move), is followed by (2) a change of behaviour (action) by a relevant agent (that is, the securitizing actor or someone instructed by the same); and also (3) the action taken is justified by the securitizing actor with reference to the threat he/she identified and declared in the securitizing move. Although any requirement invariably – as all concepts in security theory (see Ciută, 2009: 321) – originates from the scholar's pen and not from what practitioners do, mine – by being conceptually so flexible that it simply captures what practitioners are doing – avoids stipulating a meaning on security rendering the theory 'radically constructivist regarding security' (Buzan et al., 1998: 2004) in the way the CS intended. Given Ciută's observation, however, it is perhaps more accurate to say that my theory is as radically constructivist as logically possible, thus – in my view – the undoubtedly more radical constructivism of Ciută is possible only at the expense of the ability to advance a theory of securitization, which incidentally is not his aim (CF FN3).

In what follows my revision for the 'success' of securitization is presented in a series of interrelated sections concerning: the importance of behaviour as opposed to simply security language; the issue of agency, or better, who should act; the importance of the justification for the action taken; and, finally the methods scholars should use to identify the occurrence of securitization.

<u>Action and behaviour as opposed to simply security language</u>

In order to account for the fact that security policies are sometimes non-exceptional, securitization theory should be revised so that the securitizing actor's actions taken in response to the securitizing move are considered decisive of 'successful' securitization. It is important to understand that it is not the scholar who decides what counts as relevant action; what matters is that there is a causal connection between the securitizing move (the speech act) and the action taken. The action itself could be subtle and it does not necessarily need to result in new institutions; instead existing institutions and policies may simply gain new dimensions.[5]

Action is necessary because there is an important distinction to be made between behaviour[6] on the one hand and language on the other. The former, as leading exponents of 'the practice turn' in IR have argued, 'evokes the material dimension of doing, a deed in and on the world' (Adler and Pouliot, 2011: 7). The latter might lack this material dimension, yet we cannot make sense of the former without the latter (ibid.: 8, 14). In securitization theory this distinction is often not made, because the ontology informing this theory is of course that security is a discursive practice where 'saying' security is 'doing' security, and that 'it is the utterance itself that is the act' (Buzan et al, 1998: 26). As proponents of the sociological strand of securitization theory (notably Balzacq, 2005 and Stritzel, 2007) have convincingly argued, however, the idea that the audience has to sanction the speech-act, throws doubt onto the performative power of language. The idea that security is a self-referential practice/ an illocutionary speech act is undermined further by the fact that securitizations are 'unsuccessful' unless the speech act plus audience acceptance are followed by extraordinary emergency measures. In other words, even from the point of view of the CS, performativity of language is limited insofar as it does not, by itself, contain a material dimension.

I do not deny that securitizing actors are, to paraphrase Austin, 'doing something with words' when they declare some thing or some groups (existentially) threatened and in need of protection. What they are doing, however, is not security as such, and instead – as Wæver once argued – they utter a *warning* to the aggressor and/or they make a *promise* to protect and defend a designated referent object (Wæver, 1989: 42–3). Securitizing moves of agent-intended threats are usually a combination of a warning to an aggressor[7] and a promise for protection of a threatened referent object. In cases where the securitizing actor is also the referent object of security, however, securitizing moves, may take the form of warnings only. Securitizing moves of intent-

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[5] Securitizing actors might consider the action taken exceptional/extraordinary because they have not acted in this way before (i.e. the action taken is extraordinary for them), while we as scholars might consider that same action ordinary/non-exceptional because it remains within an existing legal framework or perhaps even because it is standard procedure for other actors. Moreover, views of what is exceptional/non-exceptional can also change over time within the same social setting. Whilst these are important considerations, they do not concern us here, because the whole point of the revision is that security policy does not have to be extraordinary to count towards 'successful' securitization. What matters in short is that there is an action/ observable change of behaviour connected to the securitizing move.

[6] According to Adler and Pouliot: 'Action is behaviour imbued with meaning. Running in the streets aimlessly is mere behaviour, running after a thief is an action endowed with meaning' (2011: 6).

[7] I use the word aggressor to designate any actor at the source of agent-intended threats including terrorists etc.

lacking threats[8] are promises of protection only. The promise and/or warning part of the procedure that is securitization are statements of intent (or in other words policies), but these policies are implemented only when a relevant actor (i.e. the securitizing actor, or someone or some group instructed to act by the same) changes his or her behaviour in response to them. To repeat, the action taken does not have to be extraordinary, which the CS believes would be the standard procedure for addressing threats. Instead, what matters is that securitizing actors consider whatever they are *doing* in response to the threat as security policy. We might therefore say that 'successful' securitization is the implementation of security policy into practice.

Agency

One of the advantages of original securitization theory is that it is conceptually open as regards which actors can securitize, and it is important that a revised securitization theory retains this conceptual openness; in particular, a focus on action and behaviour should not result in a focus on security professionals and exclude other actors in the way, for example, the Paris School does (Bigo, 2002). So talk of relevant actors here does not refer to security professionals, but concerns *who* utters the securitizing speech act in relation to the action taken. Specifically I hold that only those agents whose actions or behavioural changes directly constitute securitization, or, who are in a position of power over security practitioners (for example, a state's executive over the police and military or a militia leader over his henchmen), whose – when accordingly instructed - action/behavioural change constitute securitization, are meaningfully called securitizing actors. Likewise I hold that only securitizing speech acts by (would-be) securitizing actors are correctly labelled as securitizing moves.[9] This formulation has the advantage that it enables us to conceive of securitizing moves as either a warning to an aggressor and/or a promise for protection to the referent object only, which – as I will show below - has important ramifications for our understanding of the audience in securitization theory. Some might be uneasy about the fact that this formulation undermines some scholars within the influential sociological strand of securitization theory who theorize securitization as a perlocutionary speech act whereby it is the aim of the securitizing actor to get the audience to take action on the threat (see, for example, Vuori, 2011: 198). I accept that all manner of actors can utilize the language of security (i.e. utter securitizing requests as opposed to securitizing moves), most likely because they would like to see an issue at the top of the policymaking agenda, often with the intention that something is done about it. While there is logically no limit on the number and nature of actors who can utter securitizing requests, and consequently great merit in, for example, analysing how securitizing requests by pressure groups can end up on the agendas of power holders and subsequently securitized, I consider it unhelpful to use the labels of audience and securitizing actor in this way. We need to have conceptual clarity on key concepts within securitization studies that do not change from case study to case study: surely the securitizing *actor* is the one who *acts* on the threat, or who is in a position of power to instruct others to *act*, whereas the audience is the addressee of the speech act (cf below). It is of course possible – even likely – that the impetus for securitization comes from a source external to the securitizing actor – for example, executive leaders consult professional advice all the time) –but that does not turn the executive into the audience, provided they act on the threat meaning, put policy into practice. It is not securitization, for example, if a government declares a political grouping a threat to national security, and an independent militia group that was *not* explicitly instructed to do so by the securitizing actor (in this case the government) sets out to kill individuals belonging to that

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[8] This category includes agent-lacking and agent-caused threats, in which the former refer to threats lacking human involvement (for example. truly natural disasters) while the latter refer to threats caused by humans, but not intended by them (such as climate change, for example).

[9] I include 'would-be' here, because in accordance with my own formulation an actor achieves the status of securitizing actor technically only when securitization succeeds, in cases where securitization fails, for whatever reason, they remain prospective or would-be securitizing actors.

group. That kind of action is one thing only, a crime. Of course the militia could securitize the same issue for itself, but this then would be a separate securitization from the one initiated by the national government.

To summarize, just as much as it matters that action is taken in response to the speech act, it matters *who* acts. An issue is not 'successfully' securitized unless a *relevant* actor acts. The only relevant actors in any given securitization are the securitizing actor, or someone or some group instructed to act by the same.[10]

Justification of actions

The definition of "successful" securitization that is advanced here poses an epistemological challenge to security/securitization scholars. That is, how can scholars be sure that the speech act and the action taken by relevant actors are connected and, second, how can they know – in situations where there is more than one action – which matter and which don't? I propose that in order to deal with this problem, what scholars need to look for is the justification for the action taken in response to the threat that relevant actors provide. Justifications are expected to take one of two forms: either 'in case X, we do Y to deal with Z', or 'in case X, Y is the right thing to do to deal with Z'. In non-democratic settings this justification may not always be made public, but given that one person is likely to be unable to execute security policy on their own (Wæver, 2003), there will be communication between the securitizing actor and executors of security policy, and this communication will involve statements to the effect of why something is done and/or why it is the right course of action in that situation. Thus, even though a belligerent securitizing actor might not explain in detailed and open dialogue to subordinates why Y is necessary to deal with Z, there will be orders, and these are likely to contain within them justifications insofar as they take the form of 'do Y in order to deal with (problem) Z'.

Locating the justification for the action taken is important for another reason altogether. We cannot assume that the securitizing actor is sincere in his or her stated intention of wanting to safeguard the referent object. Securitizing actors have been known to do so because it gives them status, identity, something to do, and funding (Campbell, 2002). Securitizing actors, as I have argued elsewhere, can be insincere and securitization can be primarily agent-benefiting as opposed to referent-object-benefiting (Floyd, 2010: 56). One consequence of their insincerity will be that the security measures taken will not adequately address the threat they themselves identified and declared. If successful securitization is defined in its common meaning of achieving an aim or a purpose we could say that here securitization fails, insofar as the referent object ends up unprotected. However, when 'successful' is defined in the way it is in this paper, where it effectively refers to completed securitization, securitization fails only when the would-be securitizing actor, or another relevant actor, does not act in response to the threat. Empirical evidence has shown that even in cases where securitizing actors act in discord with the original securitizing move and primarily benefit themselves as opposed to the referent object, they still consider their actions securitization (Floyd, 2010). And securitization is 'what actors make of it' then the actor's own view must be the guiding principle, and not whether securitization succeeds in the sense of achieving its aim of addressing a threat. In summary, the justification actors give for the action they take in response to the threat enables scholars to locate securitization even in agent-benefiting securitizations, where the response is unlikely to be the best (that is, most effective) response possible.

Method
My revision suggests that securitization is best understood as a causal process that places heavy emphasis on observable action/behavioural change. This means that discourse analysis as a lone

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[10] This is not to suggest that utterers of securitizing requests are not relevant, only that they are not necessarily relevant for the success of securitization.

method for identifying 'successful' securitization does not suffice, regardless of whether securitization is exceptional or non-exceptional. Yet it would also not be appropriate to refer to the method used as behaviouralism, which prioritizes observable behaviour. After all, I do not commence from the question, 'why [in securitizing] do people behave in the way they do' (Sanders, 2010: 23), but instead specify that securitization is successful only if relevant actors act in response to the speech act, and that the scholar must aim to trace the justification of the action/behavioural change. As such, the justification needs to be observable. This is not, however, because an action/change of behaviour that cannot be observed does not count, but purely because scholars otherwise – will not easily be able to locate securitization. So, what is it that scholars using this approach will have to do? In short, they need to trace the process of securitization in three steps. First, they need to locate the securitizing move (that is, the speech act aspect of securitization), which is to be done in accordance with original securitization theory through discourse analysis of relevant documents. Unlike the CS specifies, however, – wherever possible- discourse analysis should not be limited to official/widely available documents; as the latter is likely to limit securitization analysis to liberal democratic states. Second, they need to examine the extent and nature of the action/behavioural change following on from the speech act. This can be done utilizing a variety of methods popularized by the sociological strand of securitization theory including interviews, participant observation, ethnographic research, and qualitative and quantitative policy analysis. Third, in order to locate the justification for the measures taken to address the threat (that is, the action or behavioural change), they need to again utilize discourse analysis.

Finally, while the method used is the same for researching exceptional or non-exceptional securitizations, the onus on scholars tracing the former is expected to be higher as they will – as part of their analysis - have to demonstrate that they are researching policies that are exceptional in accordance with the definition advanced in the introduction of the paper.

Where are the audience and the requirement of existential threats?

Despite widespread uncertainty over who or what the audience is, or should be, it is widely accepted that securitization's 'success' greatly depends on the role of a *sanctioning audience*. Some scholars have gone so far as to argue that the audience not only has to agree to the securitizing move but also to the measures used to combat the threat (Salter, 2011; Roe, 2008). This raises the question: why does the audience not feature in the revision of securitization theory proposed here? I begin with the observation that in the philosophy of language there is no uncertainty at all over either who or what the audience of speech acts is: it is simply the *addressee of the speech act*. It was argued above that the speech act part of securitization by (would-be) securitizing actors, or, in other words the securitizing move, is best understood as one of two things: (1) a warning to an aggressor; or (2) a promise for protection of a referent object. Defined as such, there can be two[11] distinct audiences as addressees for securitizing moves in one instance of securitization: (1) the aggressor and/or (2) the referent object in need of protection.

Figure 1 depicts six different scenarios for speech acts and audience acceptance with eleven different outcomes. As far as securitizing moves as warnings (that is, 'I/we are warning you that unless you stop what you are doing there will be serious consequences') are concerned the first scenario shows that the relationship between audience acceptance and the 'success' of securitization is the inverse of what is generally assumed in securitization studies. Thus here, if the aggressor accepts the speech act and acts or changes his or her behaviour in response to the speech act (the perlocutionary effect), then there is no need for the would-be securitizing actor to act on the warning, because the problem has gone away already. At this point the securitizing

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[11] One audience for securitizing moves of intent-lacking threats, two audiences for securitizing moves of agent-intended threats.

move was successful in the general sense of the word, but because nothing further needs to be done to avert the threat the security policy will not have to be implemented. In other words, securitization fails. Conversely, the second scenario shows that if the aggressor rejects the warning then securitization becomes likely, unless, that is, the would-be securitizing actor does not have the necessary capabilities to act, in which case securitization fails.

Scenario three captures the fact that more often than not securitizing actors do substantiate warnings by actions. That is, the issue is already 'successfully' securitized *before* the aggressor is approached. Actions may include the withdrawal of all diplomatic personnel, trade embargoes, sanctions, raising the issue with the UN Security Council, military drills, and similar actions. An empirical example of scenario three is offered by a recent dispute between the United States and North Korea. In March 2013 the US government warned Pyongyang 'that it will face "the full range of our capabilities" if it were to carry out its threat of a nuclear attack' (McGreal, 2013). This warning was substantiated by a sizable joint US and South Korean military exercise.

Scenarios four and five depict the relationship between audience acceptance/rejection of the securitizing move as a promise for protection. Scenario four shows that audience acceptance, which would take the form of the relevant referent object accepting both (a) we are threatened and (b) we agree that you, meaning the securitizing actor are the right 'person' for the job, can have three different outcomes. First – straightforwardly – the securitizing actor true to his or her word keeps his or her promise and acts in order to safeguard the referent object. Second, the securitizing actor acts, but the action taken ends up benefiting the securitizing actor significantly more than the referent object. In this case securitization is 'successful', but the promise is not kept. Third, the actor decides not to act after all. Non-action is not necessarily driven by malign reasons. For example, in securitizations of agent-intended threats the would-be securitizing actor does not need to act on the promise for protection of the referent object if the aggressor has accepted the warning and stopped the behaviour that occasioned the warning. Either way, in this case securitization fails.

Scenario five shows what can happen if the referent object rejects the promise of protection, which could take one of two forms: either (a) we are perfectly safe and not threatened at all, or (b) we might be threatened but we don't think that you,: the would-be securitizing actor, are the right 'person' to protect us. There are two possible outcomes. First, the would-be securitizing actor accepts the rejection and drops the issue. This might happen, for example, if the would-be securitizing actor is a democratically elected government that seeks re-election. Second, the securitizing actor ignores the referent object's rejection and acts anyway. The latter is commonly described by the label 'paternalism'. With the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 in mind, Jeff McMahan offers an example. He argues that 'there was no evidence that ordinary Iraqis wanted to be freed from the Ba'athist dictatorship by *the United States* – a country that a little more than a decade earlier, and under the leadership of the current president's father, had bombed their capital [and] decimated their civilian infrastructure [etc.]' (McMahan, 2005: 13).

Finally scenario six captures what happens when the referent object of securitization is a non-human (made) entity and thus incapable of accepting or rejecting the promise for protection.[12] This scenario is interesting because it shows that the inability of the audience respond does not automatically lead to the failure of securitization instead the number of possible outcomes mirrors those displayed in scenario 4.

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[12] It is to be expected that this kind of a securitization is largely hypothetical. This is so because most non-human entities are (by humans) valued in instrumental terms. The natural environment, for example, is generally valued instrumentally i.e. for the eco-system services it offers human beings. In other words, a securitization that seemingly seeks to preserve the biosphere does so for the benefit it has for human beings not for the biosphere itself. In other words, there is a human referent object at the heart of most such securitizations. Nevertheless for the sake of completeness we need to list this possibility here.

Figure 1: Different scenarios depicting the relationship between audience acceptance and non-acceptance and the 'success' of securitization

1) WARNING → AGGRESSOR → ACCEPT → PROBLEM SOLVED, NO NEED TO ACT= SECURITIZATION

FAILS

2) WARNING →AGRESSOR → REJECT → ACT ON WARNING = SECURITIZATION

↘ DON'T/CAN'T ACT = SECURITIZATION FAILS

3) WARNING + ACTION= SECURITIZATION → AGGRESSOR

↗ ACT TO FULFIL PROMISE = SECURITIZATION

4) PROMISE → REFERENT →ACCEPT→ACT DOESN'T FULFIL PROMISE = SECURITIZATION

↘ DON'T ACT, BREAK PROMISE = SECURITIZATION FAILS

5) PROMISE → REFERENT →REJECT → DON'T ACT = SECURITIZATION FAILS

↘ ACT, PATERNALISM = SECURITIZATION

↗ ACT TO FULFILL PROMISE= SECURITIZATION

6) PROMISE → REFERENT → CAN'T RESPOND →ACT DOESN'T FULFILL PROMISE = SECURITIZATION

↘DON'T ACT, BREAK PROMISE = SECURITIZATION FAILS

The point of depicting these different scenarios is to show that there simply is no *conclusive* relationship between audience acceptance and the 'success' of securitization; sometimes the audience's response to the securitizing move matters, sometimes it does not. This inconclusiveness means that a sanctioning audience *cannot* and thus *ought not* to play a decisive role in the 'existence' and consequently the 'success' of securitization, and a corresponding securitization theory. While this might seem against the spirit of securitization theory as an intersubjective process (that is, decided between securitizing actor and audience), it is to be remembered that intersubjectivity has come to the forefront in securitization theory only with SANFA, with the audience not mentioned in any previous publications (Stritzel 2007: 363), and also that intersubjectivity is actually at odds with the idea that securitization is an illocutionary speech act (see above). In my judgement the rise of the audience has to be understood in light of the fact that the majority of securitization scholars – led by Wæver – object to securitization and advocate desecuritization as the preferred long-term option on normative grounds. Hence by insisting on audience acceptance securitization scholars are seemingly able to further reduce the number of securitizations we can recognize in the world. In other words, the idea of a sanctioning audience - like the meaning of security – is stipulated by the CS and does not adequately capture how securitization actually plays out.

The same is true of the CS's requirement that issues need to be framed as existentially threatening to qualify for securitization as opposed to simply harmful or dangerous. These 'lesser threats' (Buzan, 1991: 115) are excluded from original securitization theory because the CS ties the severity of the threat to the 'success' of securitization. Wæver argues: 'it is made possible to overrule normal procedures only with arguments that these normal procedures will lead to a result that is not only bad but disastrous' (Wæver, 2009b: 22). However, given that not all securitizations involve extraordinary emergency measures, it ought to be the case, at a minimum, that non-exceptional securitizations can refer to threats that are non-existential in nature. And indeed, securitizing actors regularly securitize issues that are not existentially threatening; the United States, for example, securitizes not only issues that threaten its survival but also issues that threaten 'to drastically reduce the welfare of the nation in a fashion that requires a centrally coordinated national mobilization of resources to mitigate and reverse' (Goldstone, 1996: 66). But more is at stake here. By insisting that threats need to be cast in existential terms, the CS yet again stipulate what security means, in this case by imposing that the condition of being secure deals with survival and not welfare or specific interests. A more flexible view of security would allow them to recognize that what matters for the 'success' of securitization is not whether or not threats are existential, and conversely that the security response is extraordinary, but instead that practitioners believe the danger/harm a threat to their security (however defined), and regard what they do in response to the threat they themselves identified to be an implemented security policy.

Conclusion

Empirical evidence suggests that security policy sometimes takes non-exceptional forms. If this is so, then any theory of security that is concerned with studying and explaining the emergence and implementation of security policy – as in original securitization theory – needs to be able to theoretically account for such securitizations, or else it becomes redundant. The suggested revision of securitization here, that prioritises and theoretically captures the actions of securitizing actors as pivotal in 'successful' securitization, renders securitization theory relevant beyond exceptional security policies by enabling scholars to identify cases of non-exceptional securitizations. My revision also serves to address the constructivist deficit in original

securitization theory. One objection to what I have proposed here is that by not differentiating between securitization as exception and non-exception, securitization becomes indistinguishable from politicization. The research argument makes clear, however, that this is a problem only if we, as scholars, believe that we know the meaning of securitization better than practitioners of security, whose conduct we allegedly seek to study with the use of securitization theory.

A second objection might be that too much is lost from the idea of securitization if we lose intersubjectivity in the form of the audience as decisive of securitization's existence and success. Three things can be said in response to this. First, as the six scenarios above show the audience is not always irrelevant and scholars can still examine whether or not an audience influenced securitization in a particular case. Second, intersubjectivity features in my revision of securitization theory insofar as securitization is likely to be carried out by more than one person and thus requires justification of action to those acting on the threat. Third, the intersubjective establishment of a threat, which sees, for example, a pressure group raise an issue on top of a government's agenda can and should still be studied, even if this is quite separate from studying an incident of successful securitization.

A third major objection to what is proposed here is that no theory is forever adaptable or changeable, and indeed that it is quite legitimate for a theory to have its limitations (Wæver, 2011: 477). If the short history of securitization theory is anything to go on, however, it appears that a change to how security policy plays out empirically is well within the theory's realm of adaptability. Thus, since the end of the cold war securitization theory has changed from an almost exclusive concern with states to 'a state dominated field of analysis' (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 71). However, there is a serious point to this objection, and even a conceptually open theory has a fixed core – indeed without fixation of core ideas we could not speak in a meaningful sense of a 'theory' (Wæver, 2011: 477). Securitization studies suggest that this core rests with the twin ideas that (a) security is a social and political construction, and (b) there is a functional distinction between the scholar and the securitizing actor. Everything else, including, as we have seen, *how exactly* security is socially and politically constructed, and what the roles of actors vis-à-vis scholars are, is up for discussion and theorization.

Notes on contributor

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