7.3 Potentials, Limits, Outlook

This thesis applied theories of International Relations to the study of history and equally related a historiographical perspective to current problems in International Relations. It is precisely at this point of intersection that the selected case falls on fertile ground.

In the spirit of Frederick Cooper's call to focus on reclaiming paths not taken in history,[12] the recent conflict over Western Togoland invited to a study with theories of International Relations to revisit and rethink the history of the Togoland question. As a historical case, the Togoland question offers insights into blind spots of Critical Security Studies, namely what can be learned from failed securitization.[13] In the process, a key aim of the study was to showcase the potential of postcolonial approaches for Critical Security Studies in general and theories of securitisation in particular. A postcolonial perspective was taken to examine subjectivities and standpoints of actors vis-à-vis the colonial structures and power dynamics in international organizations. There is undoubtedly still a lot of need and potential to bring perspectives from the Global South more strongly into Western knowledge production, even if this is ultimately hampered by publishing practices. To test the developed theoretical framework of a postcolonial perspective on security in other contexts as well, a comparative design would be further useful. The latter could refer to other trusteeship territories, the most similar of which is Cameroon, but also to other cases, including the Global North.

Thus, it should be emphasized that the postcolonial-inspired analysis of security speech not only provided the impetus to look more closely at the Trusteeship System's petitioning system in the first place, but also to examine the practice more critically for counterintuitive silencing effects. It has been shown that the accountability mechanisms, which are provided by international organizations as an instrument to securitize grievances can be intentionally silenced by *locutionary silencing* and *illocutionary frustration*, or unintentionally silenced by *illocutionary disablement* – all three of which need to be highlighted by a decolonising critique. A limitation in the developed theoretical framework of a postcolonial perspective on security is the problem that disabling frames are difficult to grasp empirically. They can be interpreted in the data material, but rarely clearly identified.

Unfortunately, this work has not been able to analyse the debates and discussions within the Standing Committee on Petitions, as Cowan, Pedersen, or van Ginneken have done regarding the League of Nations' petitioning system.[14] The present study dealt only with the 'products' of the Standing Committee. Since the Standing Committee on Petitions, where petitions were first examined, was composed in parity by Administering and non-Administering Authorities, an analysis of the Committee's verbatim records would likely shed light on the fault lines and silencing effects, which securitising petitions were exposed to.

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12   Frederick Cooper, "Possibility and Constraint," *The Journal of African History* 49, no. 2 (2008): 196

13   Ruzicka, "Failed Securitization"

14   Cowan, "Who's Afraid of Violent Language?"; Pedersen, *The guardians*, pp. 77–95; van Ginneken, "Volkenbondsvoogdij"

It has also been shown that not only the historiography of international organizations, but also the discussion of theories of international relations benefit from the much-underutilized methods of historical and archival research. Archival research can inform debates of International Relations, both in relation to the debate on statebuilding and in the theoretical dimension, that is, the theories of Critical Security Studies, insofar as it can encourage interrogation of concepts and foster a more contextualised understanding of security dynamics in decolonising contexts. Yet, the theorized arguments remain, as usual in qualitative studies, limited to the situational context. Even though extensive material was collected, the conclusions must remain strongly case specific. Documents from seven archives were used, but mainly the colonial and not the anticolonial point of view was expressed. It remains to be hoped that with the eventual opening of the French archival holdings, a more detailed picture will emerge.