pending terrorist attack. This must be distinguished from taking measures against an alleged terrorist threat that may be a theoretical possibility, but for which there is no valid evidence present. Therefore, decision-makers in homeland security must be able to distinguish between scientific and pseudoscientific claims."[54]

In contrast, essential understandings of security, such as the Aberystwyth School's, provide a basis for how to conduct international diplomacy. Yet, as outlined above, these are problematic in another way. Thus, though this study draws from securitisation, it is careful not to call it a 'theory' because its state of 'theoricity,' as seen by Popper, is controversial.

However, the argument at hand is not to revive the positivism controversy of the 1960s – on the contrary, as described at the beginning of the chapter, the merit of constructivism is to elaborate the processualism of security – but, to put it succinctly, the argument at hand is that studies using securitisation tend to analyse past events to 'predict the present.' For example, Vuori pointed out that securitising moves are frequently used to legitimise past events.[55] In consequence, securitisation seems to be a mainly backward-looking framework that should be well-suited for historical analysis. Ironically, however, applying securitisation to historical analysis has only been a case of the recent past.

3.1.4   Historicisation of Security & Securitisation of History

A common criticism directed toward International Relations concerns its ahistorical tendencies since it focuses its attention predominantly on the immediate political context of direct-physical and directly observable violent events. Securitisation is also frequently subject to the same criticism, that is, concrete structures and practices of governance (as well as the possibility of mobilising opposition and resistance against them) are commonly regarded to be more decisive for the emergence and course of (de)securitisation dynamics than the historical constellation.[56]

Aglaya Snetkov noted that for this reason there are only few long-term perspectives for securitisation so far. Snetkov, who understands issues of security not as isolated, self-contained events, but as simultaneous processes that are part of a larger dynamic and therefore only become visible in a long-term perspective, contends that "Little empirical work has been conducted on the way in which securitizations, initially constructed across multiple spatially bounded referent objects, subsequently evolved over the full life cycle of (de)securitization processes and the political effect this has had on security politics."[57] Considering this with the aforementioned, this observation seems surpris-

---

54   Suissa, "The Scientific Status of New Security Studies: A Critical Search for Epistemic Identity of Homeland and Civil Security Research," p. 233.

55   Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitization," p. 83.

56   Maria Ketzmerick and Werner Distler, "The 'Politics of Protection' and Elections in Trusteeship and International Administration. The Cases of Cameroun and Kosovo," in Bonacker; Distler; Ketzmerick, *Securitization in Statebuilding and Intervention*, Vol:

57   Aglaya Snetkov, "Theories, Methods and Practices," *Security Dialogue* 48, no. 3 (2017): 260, https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010617701676.

ing, since Wilde, Buzan and Wæver even underline in their seminal work *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*:

> "The major new opening is probably an ability to historicize security, to study transformations in the units of security affairs. Traditional security studies defines the units (states) and the instruments (military) that by definition make any security phenomena elsewhere invisible."543F[58]

Therefore, it is important not to understand the activity of writing history of security as examining, understanding, and judging the past with reference to the standards of the present. In this sense, history would be reduced to a ratification of the present. The quest to historicise security involves examining the changes of its meaning in relation to the historical context.[59] Providing an illustrative example, Stefano Guzzini holds that...

> "the understanding of (de)securitization is historical. The strong emphasis on an allegedly realist reading of security (connected to war, exceptional measures, done by foreign policy elites, etc.) is not to be understood as the 'essence' of security, but rather as the effect of a historical development in which certain actors have come to be authorized to talk and effect war and peace in a 'realist' way."[60]

Thus, the advantage of the securitisation is its capacity to function as a historical meta-explanation, that is, by analysing security speech acts and identifying moments of change, continuity and discontinuity in history, securitisation allows to explain other understandings of security as derived concepts, such as realist understanding of security located within the specific historical post-war constellation of the Cold War.

Indeed, today it is commonplace that conceptions of security "derive from different underlying understandings of the character and purpose of politics."546F[61] Thus, as with other such 'derivate concepts', understandings of security depend on one's political outlook and philosophical worldview.547F[62] Securitisation's emphasis on the mutability of security discourses and practices, underscore that contemporary understandings of security are rather the product of historical contingencies and thus not hardwired. Therefore, in this study, security will be treated as a historically contingent social construction.

While an important innovation of the securitisation approach is probably the ability to historicise security, that is, to study the historical transformations of affairs of security concern, history in itself may constitute a facilitating or hindering condition for securitisation moves in the present. Matti Jutila pointed out that history, or a certain interpretation of it, can be the reference object of securitisation or a facilitating condition

---

58   Emphasis added, Buzan, Wæver and Wilde, *Security*, p. 206.

59   Ketzmerick, *Staat, Sicherheit und Gewalt in Kamerun*, p. 84.

60   Stefano Guzzini, "Securitization as a Causal Mechanism," *Security Dialogue* 42, 4–5 (2011): 335, https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010611419000.

61   Emphasis added, Booth, *Theory of world security*, p. 119.

62   Booth, *Theory of world security*, p. 150.

for it,[63] since securitisation moves almost inevitably mobilise references to the past. This is the advantage of securitisation: even abstract referent objects such as history or interpretations thereof can be securitised. Past violent conflicts can facilitate current securitisation moves, for example. But, for history to be a facilitating condition, it must be assumed that audience and securitising actor share the same historical frame of reference. History may become a hindering condition when two interpretations of history clash: "Sometimes particular interpretations of history are so deeply embedded in politics that an interpretation becomes a referent object in its own right; defending it might seem to justify measures that are extraordinary in the academic field or popular history."[64] Therefore Jutila cautions to securitise history:

> "Academic history writing and education have been key mediums of this transmission. Historians were often involved in various 'national awakenings' writing Whig histories of how we came to be who we are. When nations were imagined, history had to be imagined anew. 'National memory' is preserved through history writing and other presentations of history."[65]

This points toward the particular sensitivity that historians using securitisation must consider the longevity of historical securitisation. For example, a historian who argues that a historical actor had 'good reasons' to securitise a past danger, which eventually did not materialise, unwittingly reproduces the legitimacy of extraordinary measures. The historian's dilemma is that this also applies to the reverse case, in which threats that were desecuritised eventually turned out to be true.

Furthermore, Jutila points out that at times, certain groups hope to purge the historical inventory of thinkers they deem for example too racist to consider. An illustrative example is the outcry to 'erase history' when statues of historical figures are demolished or names of institutions or streets are changed, though not least it is often the subaltern's experience of insecurity that is excluded from history.[66] Ironically, because of its recourse to Arendt or Carl Schmitt, the Copenhagen School itself became the victim of such controversy,[67] underscoring the leading role of the securitisation of history in the current debate on identity politics.[68]

---

63   Matti Jutila, "Securitization, History, and Identity," *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 6 (2015), https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2015.1065402.

64   Jutila, "Securitization, history, and identity," p. 933.

65   Jutila, "Securitization, history, and identity," p. 936.

66   Jutila, "Securitization, history, and identity," p. 938; Gayatri C. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory: A reader*, ed. Patrick Williams (New York, NY: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), http://planetarities.web.unc.edu/files/2015/01/spivak-subaltern-speak.pdf

67   Howell and Richter-Montpetit, "Is securitization theory racist?"; Lene Hansen, "Are 'Core' Feminist Critiques of Securitization Theory Racist?," *Security Dialogue*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010620907198; Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, "Racism and Responsibility," *Security Dialogue* 51, no. 4 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010620916153.

68   Christopher S. Browning and Pertti Joenniemi, "Ontological Security, Self-Articulation and the Securitization of Identity," *Cooperation and Conflict* 52, no. 1 (2017), https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836716653161; Uliana Hellberg, "Securitization as a Modern Strategy of Constructing Identity 'Negative

Discussing Wæver's conceptualisation of *societal security*,[69] which actually preceded the development of securitisation, Jutila also raises awareness to the distinct role, which history plays in the securitisation of national identities, and respectively, in the securitisation of history to consolidate national identities. Usually, history and myths, which are not infrequently collective traumas, are mobilised by securitising actors to construct or reinforce identity or to point to historic narratives to identify threats to this identity.[70] In times of uncertainty, family history can serve as a coping mechanism and politicians often invoke a nation's history to reinforce a country's national identity. But Jutila cautions that a security-centred history of identity is only a short way from othering and producing divisions into friends and enemies, which might transform "pluralist communities into two opposing camps: 'If you're not for us, you're against us!'."[71] As a possible form of resistance to such a securitisation of national identities, Jutila bets on 'responsible studies of history' that lead to a complex and nuanced picture of the past that is ill-suited for nationalist purposes. In other words, it is the responsibility of the historian not to render history itself a repertoire against a securitised Other. Because of this inherent relationship between othering and securitisation of history, postcolonial critique is not far away.

3.1.5 Securitisation in a Postcolonial Reading

Silence Dilemma

In principle, post- and decolonial historiographies drew attention to two types of silence: on the one hand, attention is drawn to those narratives of the past that did not correspond to the scope of action imaginable at the time and which now must be laboriously excavated or else be lost forever. On the other hand, attention is drawn to the silencing of contemporary, yet marginalized interpretations of history.

Lene Hansen referenced first to the silence problem within the securitisation framework, by dealing with the dilemma of Pakistani women who are prevented from publicly speaking about the threats they face (e.g., rape, honour killings, etc.) because if they did, they would provoke the very threats they try to address in the first place. Thus, the women are forced to remain silent. Ken Booth critiqued this blind spot of securitisation concisely: "If security is always a speech act, insecurity is frequently a zipped lip."[72]

Sarah Bertrand extends Hansen's notion of the silence dilemma by shifting attention to the audience. Bertrand shows that silence, and hence insecurity, is not exclusively due to the muteness of the subaltern but also due to the audience. In the Copenhagen School, or more specifically, within the dramaturgy of the *grammar of security*, the success or failure of a securitising move ultimately depends on the audience. However, the

Proof Identity' in the European Union," Malmö University Electronic Publishing, available from http://muep.mau.se/handle/2043/14368.

69   Ole Wæver, "Identity, Integration and Security," *Journal of International Affairs* 48, no. 2 (1995), available from https://www.jstor.org/stable/24357597.

70   Ketzmerick, *Staat, Sicherheit und Gewalt in Kamerun*, p. 199; Jutila, "Securitization, history, and identity," p. 927.

71   Jutila, "Securitization, history, and identity," p. 938.

72   Booth, *Theory of world security*, p. 168.