Racism, Reading and Responsibility: Securitization Theory, Systemic Racism in Security Studies and Methodologies for Excavating Foundational Flaws in Theories

Online-only documentation to back-up our shorter piece:

Racism and Responsibility – The Critical Limits of Deep-Fake Methodology in Security Studies: A reply to Howell and Richter-Montpetit

Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan

The present document is an online-only backup for the 4.000 word version by a related title in *Security Dialogue*. It is a long text - for three reasons. First, the article by Howell & Richter-Montpetit, which we reply to, contains an extraordinary amount of mistakes and falsehoods; second, we want to go beyond the negative task of responding to suggest some more constructive avenues for what could and should have been done in relation to racism and security studies as well as some more general methodological concerns raised by this affair, and thirdly, the issue we raise in the document about accusations of racism being hurtful and harmful (and in our view therefore libellous if - as in this case - unfounded) is not an abstract and rhetorical statement on our behalf, it has been an actual personal pain and professional disappointment that called forth a need to process this disheartening experience thoroughly.

Introduction

Security Dialogue has published an article "Is Securitization Theory Racist? Civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School" by Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit (online 7th of August 2019; print Feb 2020, vol. 51:1, 3-22; doi:10.1177/0967010619862921); hereafter H&RM. This article makes strong claims about the "foundational role of racist thought in securitisation theory". Allegedly, the theory is "structured not only by Eurocentrism but also by civilisationalism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack racism". As the main architects behind Securitization Theory (ST), we are concerned to read about "the foundations of securitization theory in racist thought". We are widely held to be responsible for founding this theory, and thus we must also be the ones who have placed this racist thought at the theory's foundations.[1]

We are appalled by this on four grounds:

1. the toxic, libellous, and as we will show unsubstantiated, charge of racism that has been made against Securitization Theory (ST), and by close implication, us;
2. the deeply flawed, and at times pernicious, 'methodology' that purports to sustain this charge; and
3. the fact that what we have always thought of as a very good journal, has not only published such a questionable piece of 'scholarship', but also has failed to differentiate between the normal forms of academic critique on the one hand, and potentially libellous political accusations on the other, and not seen it as its duty to inform us beforehand, and/or give us a right of reply alongside the original article; and
4. the disastrous abdication of political responsibility involved in devaluating the concept of racism to something that 99% of the discipline can be charged with on the basis of bizarre conceptual and rhetorical manoeuvres, and thereby evacuating this important critical category of force at a time when racism is politically gaining power in diverse and destructive ways.

We are, of course, concerned about the implications of this charge for ourselves, our students, our institutions and our colleagues. But we are also concerned about the implications for our discipline that an article of such poor academic quality and problematic political content can be published in one of our leading journals. This has implications not only for the academic integrity of IR, but also for the type and quality of debates that will define the discipline for the next decade and more. We are frankly resentful at having to waste our time and energy debunking accusations that, since they have no firm foundation, should never have been published in the first place. We have better academic things to be doing with our time and energy. But such toxic and unsupported charges cannot be left to stand unanswered, and if there is any benefit in this whole sorry affair, it might be to give a wake-up call to the discipline about the dangers it faces in the post-truth world. Charges like this have traction regardless of whether they are true or not. Ironically, in a very securitisation-like logic of all-means-justified, we have met arguments in the current context where other scholars don't believe that the critique is valid, and yet think it is good that it is made because of the importance of fighting racism. The case therefore raises questions of the ethics of reading and writing – and how to address a challenge like racism that cuts across our object of study and our own scholarly community. Is the challenge of racism of such a special nature that it demands sacrifice of academia's traditional rationale, its dedication to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding through the use of clear and systematic methods of analysis and argument? A license for personal

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[1] Strangely, this observation has been highly controversial. *Security Dialogue* has tried to prevent us from saying that we were accused of racism, because only our theory was. We address this in section 5. (The persistence of this effort from the journal can be quickly observed in the lengthy correspondence between us and the editors, which we believe should be made publicly available. The editorial team of *Security Dialogue*, however, does not agree to this transparency.)

defamation in the name of a higher cause is, in our view, likely both to make academia a much more unpleasant and dysfunctional place for all parties[2], and to make it less able to intervene effectively in the public sphere on important matters like racism.

In what follows we look first at the H&RM article itself, exposing it as a catalogue of methodological and conceptual errors so grievous and blatant as to void its claims. As separate sections (2 and 3), we address specifically their two main claims: that the theory is structured around a call for 'progress' from African anarchic securitizations to European, civilised, liberal and reasoned de-securitization; and that it builds on 'social contract' theory anchored in Hobbes and 'state of nature' thinking. Then, we ask some serious questions about the responsibilities of academic journals like *Security Dialogue* when they publish unsubstantiated accusations like this. Next, we present a few of the studies that have actually applied ST to racism and suggest a few more possible avenues for research. And finally, we ask how can and should IR take on the problem of structural or systemic racism? We conclude that H&RM's article opens a false and dangerous path for IR, and that it will do much more harm than good in addressing the problem of structural racism in the discipline.

While some sections (4, 6 and parts of 5) go beyond a reply to H&RM, the other sections are mostly refuting their 'analysis'. Therefore, the division of labor should be clarified: Section 1 is about specific illegitimate techniques such as guilt by association, errors of citation, and reasoning excessively from absences in a text, i.e. roughly logical and formal errors. Sections 2 and 3 are about their two most substantial arguments, the two clearest lines of reasoning, i.e. substance. As part of section 5 about methodology, we show how they hide behind an analysis of 'systemic racism' that isn't there and violate principles for 'excavating' what is constitutive of a theory. Section 7 demonstrates mistaken readings and misleading writing, and because discussed in terms of responsibility, this section points to their political failure in relation to the very real menace of racism. Our short reply in SD is structured differently, so readers who have read that first, will find familiar passages in different parts here, but mostly in sections 1, 2 and 5

Catch-22 x 3

Responding to H&RM's attack is complicated by three ways in which our defence almost unavoidably will be used against us for further criticism:

First, critical scholars in general, and anti-racists in particular, are very conscious of practices of marginalisation and exclusion – often real, but by now also a well-established figure easily awakened. Unfortunately, there are numerous cases of even arguments being seen as repression. To defend ourselves will predicably be construed as silencing and exercise of our power of rank, gender, age and race. It is hard to abstain in a situation like this from making your case, just because those attacking you have privileged access to the role of victim. (Please note, we are naturally not accusing H&RM in advance of playing this card themselves; only we expect –based on similar cases- to meet this frequently on social media and even future academic publications.[3]) Even if it will backfire on us,

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[2] We are very much aware that academia currently feels a much more welcoming environment to some than others, and that we talk about this from a highly privileged perspective. Therefore, we are going to address both the question of how to change the aggregate accessibility of the field for students and scholars of non-white backgrounds, and we will show how the procedure suggested by H&RM will lead to an intolerable regime of terror, where we are all tautologically guilty of and open to accusation of crimes that in the wider public are seriously disqualifying.

[3] This factor seems the best possible (or rather: the most generous) explanation for the otherwise mysterious reaction of *Security Dialogue's* editorial team who have been very worried about our response being hurtful to H&RM, while at no point acknowledging that the original article could be a problem for us.

we believe it is our obligation towards the general community to correct some very serious mis-representations of a theory which as its authors, we are uniquely positioned to do.

Secondly, our response is likely to be picked up by people who are (in contrast to us) generally critical of anti-racism (probably mostly rightwing, but potentially also 'free speech fundamentalists' on the left). They will use this case to prove the excesses and absurdities of anti-racist 'cancel culture'.[4] Actually, we heard from several security scholars who thought the H&RM article was a hoax – written to expose the alleged absurdity of anti-racists and *Security Dialogue* for falling into the trap of publishing it. When we in this response demonstrate that the H&RM article indeed is a parody of serious scholarship, although unfortunately unintended, we can't prevent others from misusing our analysis to make more general, ideological conclusions that we do not support. These uninvited bedfellows will be counted as proof of our racism. If this mechanism is allowed free reign it means that only conservatives can push back when criticised, but amongst critical scholars, you have to leave unfounded and misguided attacks unanswered.

Thirdly, we know we will meet the argument: "How can they complain about the pain inflicted by being accused of racism? What about the much bigger suffering of the victims of racism?" We have absolutely no doubt that racism has caused and is causing incomparably worse harm. However, the comparison is not a valid argument. It is also worse to be the victim of paedophilia compared to being called out as a paedophile. Still, you are not allowed to call the Kindergarten teacher of your kid a paedophile – just in order to raise the general attention to an important issue. These are strong words that call for careful consideration before throwing them at colleagues or their work; quite independently of the much bigger price paid by the victims of actual racism. Especially on social media, however, this counter-argument is a common staple, and we will meet it.[5]

These three are serious catch-22 moments and point to the deep difficulties for the field in how to organise and accomplish a productive discussion on this painful subject.

1. How Not to Make an Academic Argument

In this section, we will first list relatively briefly H&RM's most extreme methodological faults that amount to scientific misconduct, then some conceptual and theoretical flaws, and because of the severity of their citational mispractices, we will end this section with documenting these in more detail. These violations of academic principles alone are enough that Security Dialogue in our view ought to retract the article.

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[4] We are aware that the label 'cancel culture' has increasingly become a problematic denigration, and often a way for privileged groups to reject the legitimacy of valid complaints from less privileged groups. (No, we are not unable to distinguish between ourselves and Taylor Swift, for the record. The need for this weird sentence will become clear later in this text.) Nevertheless, we do think the reference is relevant here both because it seems like H&RM or the publication of their article get some of their momentum from this 'movement' (this is based also on conversations with unnamed sources within the editorial team of Security Dialogue) and because their conclusion actually is that people should: cancel Securitization Theory. Their conclusion is not that the theory is unsuited for analysing racism, but that it should be driven out of security studies altogether – even the word securitization should be forgotten – because it is all 'racist'. Their decree does seem to be: cancel!

[5] Maybe, we are getting too pessimistic from reading H&RM's strange article, but we could imagine a fourth catch22, which we sincerely hope not to meet. An element of white racism is denial – together with 'white ignorance' and 'white fragility'. Thus, it will be very easy to write an additional critique where the fact that we claim to not be racists is the final proof that we are, because it is racist to deny your racism. Obviously, this is a 'logic' with a venerable history (Kafka 1999 [1925]).

<u>Outright errors in Citation and Attribution</u>

The three longest quotes on which H&RM base a considerable part of their argumentation are violations of established conventions for citations. Two are from a passage in Buzan et al 1998 where we construct a possible (traditionalist) *counter* position to challenge our own, and we end that discussion by distancing ourselves from this position. This counter position they quote as if it was our own argument. The third – and longest – is from a text by Marina Sbisà, which they falsely cite as if it was written by Ole Wæver. It is the epigraph over Wæver 2015. To cite this as "Wæver 2015: 121" is a clear violation of standard codes of scholarly conduct. Especially given that they build a large part of their argumentation on interpretation of even the 'hidden' connotations of this passage, they are misleading readers (and the journal's peer reviewers), who must assume that the text is written by Ole Wæver and not Marina Sbisà.

What is most worrying is that these are clearly not just cases of incompetence and 'honest error' – these citations appear at crucial places in the article, where H&RM have tried to develop an argument which they lack backing for in our published texts. Thus, it becomes scientific misconduct in the overarching sense that they have faced overwhelming evidence against their hypotheses and then fabricate citations to bridge the gaps in their argumentation. Without these quotes, their main lines of argumentation collapse. Their desperate use of obviously illegitimate practices is their own indirect admission of the falsity of their more general arguments.

Beyond these quite extreme cases of fabricated citations -- of which we have never seen the like in the field -- the H&RM article attributes positions to ST in several other unacceptable ways. For instance, they write that we cite "frequently and favourably (…) Huntington's racist 'clash of civilizations' theory (…) and Robert Kaplan (…) infamous for his theory of 'the coming anarchy' (…)" (HRM 2020: 7 [5]). H&RM make a shockingly basic mistake here, because in most of the instances they point to, we are making reference to these authors as cases of securitization, i.e. we demonstrate in our empirical analyses of eg. US security discourse or exactly of emerging civilizationism how this is represented by these scholars.[6] Obviously, we should all be able to distinguish between citations of practices analysed empirically, and citations of academic work that one draws on. That we study a securitization performed in a quasi-academic publication like Huntington's does not signify our agreement with his thesis – on the contrary, we are critically

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[6] Kaplan is cited in the Africa section of Buzan & Wæver 2003, and in both cases presented as "extreme scenarios", i.e. not as an analysis that we subscribe to, but which is part of the discourse on Africa. In the Framework book, we make reference to Kaplan in relation to the possibility that securitization condenses around other referent objects than states, including rich and poor neighbourhoods in mega-cities. This seems to us still a valid and legitimate observation, and writing in the mid 1990's it would indeed be strange not to reference Kaplan, whose 1994 article was the most widely circulated text on this scenario. It is very hard to see how citing him in this context makes us guilty of every critique that has been made of his text. Our main discussion of his text in the Framework book (Buzan et al 1998:127f) ends out in an analysis of how a discourse like his could contribute to increasing investments in Atlantic and Mediterranean 'walls' against Africa and ensuing security dynamics in Africa in relation to these Western policies. Thus, we actually read Kaplan also as 'symptom', not authority; and the prediction of especially the violent Mediterranean 'walling' does not seem to be one we should be embarrassed about today. These passages, H&RM actually devote more than a page to (14-16 [12-14]), but their reading is quite incomprehensible. They do not really argue what is wrong; just postulate that we subscribe to a White Man's burden view. Probably, the explanation is that they also here conflate our analysis of possible securitizations with us subscribing to these. Also, they interpret a passage about the floating identities in mega-cities (which have been asserted by many radical scholars as well) as a racist discourse about people without identities. We admit that we should have written 'political identity' not 'identity' in this passage, but the whole interpretation is still far-fetched.

analysing its political performance of securitization. To write that we cite Huntington 'favourably' is a demonstrably false claim.[7]

Their general practice of citations is to use quotations totally out of context. They show absolutely no interest in *what is done* in the texts they are 'reading'. Without just a plain minimum of such effort to understand what a text is doing and how it hangs together, their work amounts to cutting some 1000 pages of published work into small fragments to be retro-fitted to their made-up story. They do not discuss methodology at any point, and they clearly do not follow any standards for how to read texts and especially not for how to find what is 'foundational' for or 'structures' a theory. If there is a methodology at play, it is *deep fake* in the sense that if you break a corpus of text down into small fragments, you can upon re-assembly make it say anything you want. *Deepfake* as analogy does not imply any claim about intentional falsehood. The analogy is to the *technique*: making something 'speak' by using splinters from them reassembled to produce meaning disconnected from the original texts.

Unsupported Assertions

H&RM make numerous unfounded or misleading assertions in addition to inserting loaded terms in summaries of our position that give the reader the impression that we reason in those terms, when we don't. To correct all these false claims would take far too long, and we will focus on three main assertions (and along the way point out many other mistakes). One assertion is an over-arching argument that seems central to their article given that it takes up most of the abstract: They claim that the concepts of securitization and desecuritization are distributed in time and space in such a way that securitization is a threatening re-regression lurking in a backward black Africa, while de-securitization is a reasoned, liberal, civilized dialogue characteristic of Europe (and the future we prescribe). The key to this reading is the concept of 'normal politics', which they misunderstand and combine with an absurdly selective and mis-leading use of cases from different parts of the world. The second main section of our reply will deal with this assertion.

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[7] In addition to our citing of Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' as instance of securitization, we also cite very critically his follow on article 'Robust nationalism' as a securitization by 'radical whites' who depict multiculturalism and increasing diversity in the US as a threat to their ideal of a white-universalist US (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 294). If H&RM have done a 'search' of Huntington in the text, they must have come across this passage. Would it then have been fair to discuss it – given that it is actually an analysis of explicit white racism by way of securitization; and maybe an early 00s observation that has proven quite relevant to what has happened since? Under the heading of 'race/culture', we conclude from this discussion that this white racial securitization is particularly likely to lead to 'serious violent action' (ibid.).

Finally, we actually discuss Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' *thesis* at length in Buzan & Wæver 2003: 40f, because Regional Security Complex Theory could at first seem to operate on a scale similar to Huntington's, and we note that our theory is "almost the reverse", because Huntington's theory is centred on civilizations as 'natural enemies', whereas our theory is built around the primacy of security dynamics within each region. We criticize both the culturalist ontology of his theory and its ideological attractiveness to US angle of observation on the world. Implied in this is an explicit distancing from one of the features that have led to the criticism of Huntington for racism: that he makes the difference between civilizations both an objectively given starting point and the natural faultline for conflicts. How can H&RM ignore this explicit discussion and flatly claim that "classical securitization theory favorably cites Huntington's racist (…) clash of civilizations thesis"?

Just for the record, Buzan also published a highly critical review of Huntington's 'Clash of Civilization' book, warning against its dangerous and potentially self-fulfilling 'polemic' (Buzan 1997). Wæver published a longer article in Danish with a deeper theoretical critique of Huntington's understandings of identity and conflict (Wæver 2002). Naturally, we don't expect H&RM to read these, but they back up the implausibility of our "citing favorably" Huntington's thesis.

The shorter section three addresses the other more convoluted argument they are making: that ST is based on a Hobbesian rationale of 'state of nature' and social contract, which makes the famous criticism of contract theory by Charles W. Mills (1997) applicable to our theory by extension. This assertion rests on falsified evidence.

The third assertion that we will pay special attention to is the claim that their observations somehow capture what is 'foundational' of the theory, 'structures it' and is 'baked into' its conceptual apparatus. These are quite specific and demanding assertions. It is not enough to vaguely associate some passage, maybe an empirical example, in the writings by its key authors with some potentially racist figure of thought – you actually have to treat the theory as a theory, look at its structure, how the key concepts are defined and how the theory operates when used empirically. We will return to this in section 5, and potentially one of the most productive outcomes of this affair is that H&RM by so clearly demonstrating what is not a valid way of drawing such conclusions could open a discussion on how it should be done. What is important at this point is to take note of how very far-reaching the conclusions are. In contrast to many other articles on ST, this one does not conclude in terms of how it should be amended or where to draw the lines around its applicability; no it should be cancelled – the theory is not to be used by anybody on any issue, because if you do so, you produce more racism in the world.

In relation to capturing what is 'foundational' to ST, a particular mystery is that H&RM base much of their argumentation on our 2003 book, *Regions and Powers* (Buzan & Wæver 2003), that appeared ten years after the foundational texts. An examination of the debates we were actually intervening in when creating ST would support a very different reading, as we show in the next section. The use of the 2003 book is further problematic because it is actually not a book about ST but about another theory, *Regional Security Complex Theory*, and even more intriguing is the methodological issue raised in relation to the assertion about what is 'foundational', because what or who is the target of their critique? How can a text ten years later reveal something 'foundational' about a theory launched without those elements? Can a theory have hidden racist inclinations that it reveals in later 'slips'? What is the 'theory' they are writing about if not either the texts or the authors? Either you look at a theory step by step as it takes shape *in texts* and you can ascertain what is 'foundational' by the architecture of the construct. The theory only exists as a textual artefact. Or you openly claim that it is *Buzan and Wæver* who are personally racists, and then you would have to look at all our other writings unrelated to ST that have engaged with eg. post-colonial concerns and scientific racism in ways that should trouble this interpretation (e.g. Acharya and Buzan, 2019; Buzan, 2014; Buzan and Lawson, 2015; Tickner and Wæver, 2009; Wæver, 2017). Instead of these two logical possibilities, H&RM treat ST as a quasi-human subject that has attitudes and reveal these across texts. Only by reading ST as a person, does it make sense that any sentence anywhere in any 'ST' book can be seen as expression of the true nature of the theory – irrespective of that passage being in a section about defining core concepts or in some empirical application. Given that H&RM show no interest in what the theory is designed to do, they can't capture its inner logic. If passages picked randomly across time and place can reveal something 'foundational' about the theory, the theory must have a racist personality separate from the published texts (and from its authors)? We will explore this in more detail below in a methodology sub-section of the part about how to study racism, but we want to just register here that their repeated assertions about something being 'foundational' to ST is without any criteria – and on the contrary violate both common-sense and the principles presented in thorough and classical analyses from IR and other social sciences engaged in ascertaining what is foundational to some theory (e.g. Derrida 1988; Jameson 2011; Stoler 1995; Guzzini 1998; Zehfuss 2002).

We isolate these three assertions in order to keep the discussion focused. Especially at future stages, when surely there will be a rebuttal to our present piece – by H&RM or others – it is important to keep the logic of their 'analysis' in mind. The discussion is likely to diverge into some corner, where

arguments can be made both ways – e.g. our discussion of Kaplan[8] which they quote on p. 15-16 [13-14] and devote several pages to discussion of, does that contain an element of 'civilizationism' and stereotyping of Africa? Possibly. That would be embarrassing for us – Buzan and Wæver – but not for ST.[9] In order to assess whether H&RM have demonstrated what they claim to have, it is important to focus on these three assertions.

The first assertion is privileged in their own presentation of the article and it is the most important for us beyond the issue of racism, because it involves a more general issue about how to understand 'normal politics'. This first assertions totally collapses several times – misunderstanding the key concept, misconstruing our Europe analysis and placing Africa in an unjustified role – and while just one of these three would be enough to break the chain of reasoning, it actually breaks three times, making the publication of this article embarrassing to H&RM as well as SD. The second assertion is much less clearly presented in H&RM's article, but when digging into the literatures they draw upon (especially Mills and Henderson), it becomes clear that this is quite central, even if poorly presented. The fact that they gamble their three worst scientific malpractices on this line demonstrates how important this argument is to them. The third assertion is crucial because the far-reaching implications – ditch Securitization Theory and the very concept of 'securitization' – rests on their claim that their analysis tells us something deep and foundational about the key concepts of the theory, flaws that are inevitable, beyond repair and totally limits what can be done with the theory including in the form of analysing racism with the help of securitization theory. Remember: they do not at all examine the real existing analyses of racism from ST; their strategy is to resolve the matter in a much more deductive way: ST is racist in its foundations and therefore one should not try to use it on racism, and even if somehow succeeding to do so, it is not helpful, because: the theory is racist. Obviously, this third assertion is seriously undermined by the fact that their two primary routes at getting there – assertion one and assertion two – are misguided, but it derails once more because they actually never as much as try to show systematically that their criticisms are constitutive of the key concepts.

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[8] Readers of the piece by H&RM might get the impression that this is what our Africa chapter in Buzan & Wæver (2003) is about. This is not the case. It is one small element in a wide-ranging unfolding of a *Regional Security Complex* Analysis of Africa – across time, sub-regions and types of security issues. It is not clear from the critique by H&RM whether they think the correct thing would have been to ignore the influential essay by Kaplan 1994 (which would have been quite strange at the time) or to have thrown a given amount of negative words in his direction. In any case, readers should be aware how much we are off on a tangent here. A discussion that should be about ST's foundational concepts has moved to a 10 year later book partly about something else; within that it moves into the Africa chapter specifically; but even then: H&RM offer no summary or overview of what our Africa analysis actually is. They pick out one passage at the end of the chapter on a 'scenario' by Kaplan. This becomes then probably the third most 'foundational' for their own analysis of ST, only overshadowed by the two falsified ones (Sbisà and the traditionalist counter case).

[9] H&RM are actually aware in one spot of something close to this distinction between a more isolated problem with one passage and a critique applying to ST: "Civilizationism is not just a collateral, detachable, part of securitization theory's imaginary, or a sadly unattended-to implication of its Kaplanesque view of anarchy or its Arendtian model of politics. The idea that there has been (white) civilizational progress away from (racialized) primal anarchy is omnipresent in securitization theory because it is fundamental to securitization theory's opposition between politicization and securitization." (2020: 10-11 [8-9]) These few lines – as almost any passage in the article – contain an incredible number of mistakes in such short space. They have not shown that it is part of the theory's "imaginary". It is a lot to say that the theory in general has "a Kaplanesque view of anarchy". We discuss Kaplan's theory (in its terms of anarchy in a few places), while their phrasing indicates what it generally has this kind of view of anarchy. The theory even is (in contrast to much IR theory) not rooted in the concept of anarchy at all as explained in detailed in a later footnote. Their use of Arendt here is bizarre. Most importantly the last sentence about the civilizationism being ever-present in the theory is anchored in a misreading we take down below. So, here they are aware that the Kaplan discussion in isolation would be of little significance, and therefore they try to make it so by linking it to a number of their other points that all are false.

The aggregate effect is that there is no basis for the overarching charge of the theory being racist. This is important at two levels. First it presumably matters in academic debate whether a claim about the nature of a theory turns out to be wrong (i.e. stands as convincing or can conclusively be rebutted); it should matter what stands as the most reasonable interpretation after this exchange and should form the basis for future research for those who care about understanding and possibly using the theory, e.g. to critically analyse racism. Second, given that it is a very strong accusation that H&RM de facto level at us for having performed the racist deed of launching a racist theory, it is important whether it is correct or not. It is a kind of accusation that should not be made lightly, because it obviously has severe human and social costs to be deemed guilty of this in a leading peer-reviewed journal. To actually decide to accuse peers in the discipline of racism, should therefore be a difficult decision, strongly influenced by on the one hand the solidity of the evidence (of which they have none) and on the other hand ideally some reasoning about the wider purposes served by making the claim in this particular form (which is strangely absent from the article as well). The H&RM article does not involve the reader in any politico-academic reasoning that leads to their decision to cross what is usually a clear line for the form of academic debate. On the contrary, they write in a straightforward, declaratory/authoritative style as if their article simply presents 'how it really is', not a complex strategic decision involving concerns about responsibility and effects.

The combination of these two features – the claims are unfounded, and they are damaging to their targets – are two of the main factors in defamation lawsuits. We do not want to make a legal case about whether the publication of the H&RM article is a crime or a tort. However, we do want to point out that at least there seems to be a *prima facie* probability that this could be deemed to be the case, and it is therefore puzzling that *Security Dialogue* did not send the article by H&RM to a legal assessment (they only did so with our response to it, which had to clear several hurdles of censoring to ensure that it was not malign, delaying our response by several months[10]). To accuse somebody of racism, clearly fulfils the first criteria in such legal cases: that it does harm to the personal and professional reputation of the accused – and if secondly the statement is unfounded, this makes it defamation. This in turn imposes obligations on *Security Dialogue* regarding right of reply, that they have failed to live up to. More importantly, this legal status is a symptom of something more substantial: what lines we professionally and collegially find it reasonable and justified to cross in what cases and for what reasons. We hope that readers will follow us into contemplating the personal choices and thus the responsibility at stake when deciding whether to write and publish in this dramatic format of making such harmful accusations against fellow scholars.

Guilt by Association

If H&RM deem various classical authors (Arendt, Schmitt, Hobbes, Durkheim, Foucault) as being racist, then we and ST are racist too for citing them. This destructive tactic is the main basis for their charge against us of civilizationism (pp. 7-11 [5-9]). By this standard it would be hard to find anyone in IR who did not qualify as racist. If H&RM follow the logic of this tactic, they need to target IR, and probably the social sciences as a whole. That might be an interesting, useful, and intellectually coherent thing to do, but it is not what they do in the SD article. Aside from the considerable room for contesting whether some of these authors (e.g. Arendt) should be classed as racist, there is the question as to whether tinges of racism, or even wholesale embracing of it, should disqualify a thinker's work in toto. The implication of such broad-brush condemnation is that we should ignore in their entirety the works of thinkers who lived in times when racism was a widely accepted norm in most societies, and who did not go out of their way to contest that norm. Since racism was the norm

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[10] Again, we would be very happy to document this by making the whole correspondence between the journal and us public, but they do not allow us to do so.

in most societies, both Western and non-Western, up to 1945, this requirement would eliminate most of the intellectual legacy of the humanities and social sciences.

In the case of Arendt, the judgment is that she "drew on racist German anthropology". We are here talking 3 steps removed guilt by association: we draw on Arendt who allegedly drew on racist German anthropology, ergo: we are racists. Most readers probably now ponder: have I ever cited anybody who might have been inspired by someone who can be seen as racist? If so, be prepared for your turn in the dock as accused! (We return to Arendt below in the section about reading.)

They cite Wæver 2011 in several places, but unless they want to claim that Wæver is lying about his own trajectory, it is strange to repeat for instance that ST is "derived from the German philosopher – and 'Crown Jurist of the Third Reich' (…) – Carl Schmitt" (H&RM 2020: 7 [5]). As spelled out in Wæver 2011 and actually also in the texts by Huysmans and Neal that they cite in this place, ST is not "derived" from Schmitt, but it has an important mix of similarities and differences that have been explored at length and often in great sophistication (notably by Jef Huysmans[11]) in debates that H&RM totally short-circuit into a hint of Nazi-guilt to top up the racism one. Their proposition about 'derived' is simply false; and they should know it. Furthermore, the observation is not used or developed in their article, so the purpose of its inclusions seems simply to be as a nasty insinuation, a character assassination – of a theory, a theory with a bad character.

At one point, H&RM mobilise Foucauldian security studies as source of authority against us, but their own previous round of racism busting take-down as racist was exactly targeted at – Foucauldian security studies! (Howell & Richter-Montpetit 2019b). Now the scene gets not only absurd but authoritarian. You become a racist if you use any source that H&RM deem to be racist. They themselves draw on something they have themselves deemed racist in the previous installation. Since they are not self-labelling as racists (see section below on why this would be more interesting), the logic seems to be that power is with the accuser. H&RM (and presumably other scholars speaking from the same anti-racist platform) can charge or exonerate scholars as they want.

If you want to discuss methodological individualism and methodological collectivism, you should do so without mentioning Durkheim, because if you do, your theory becomes racist? This anti-intellectualist dictum would impoverish scholarly debates. Frankly, we would be more worried by writings that do *not* appreciate the formative role of Hobbes for all modern political thought than those that do (Walker 1993; Epstein 2013). As Siba Grovogui has argued "deploying Hegel was merely an instance of vehicular language, allowing me to explore certain predicates, certain precepts and assumptions, and that is all. In this way, I can use Kant, or Hegel, or Hobbes, or Locke, and my problem when I do this is not with those thinkers—I can ignore the limitations of their thinking which was conditioned by the realities of their time—my problem is with those people who think they own traditions originating from long dead European thinkers. Thus, my problem today is less with Kant than with Kantians." (Grovogui interviewed by Creuzfeldt 2013)

It is hard to see how as a discipline we become better at analysing politics if everybody from now on leaves out references to Hobbes, because if they cite him, their writings become racist. Basically, all pre-1900 philosophy is no-go now. Not only the European ones. Philosophical classics in Chinese, Indian or Islamic philosophy were racist too. So: don't read classics. Don't develop your argument through engagement with the tradition. Start anew every time. A presentist and anti-intellectual future looms large.

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[11] Huysmans' influential 1998 article, reprinted as ch 8 in Huysmans 2006, is quite clear about *introducing* Schmitt to the discussion of securitization and desecuritization with the argument that the less sophisticated writings by Wæver can be deepened by engaging with Schmitt. The argument is categorically not that Schmitt was the source of Wæver's concept.

<u>Failure to Consult the Relevant Sources</u>

The obvious book to look carefully at, if interested in the place of racism in relation to the constitution and formation of the theory, would be our 1993 book, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (Wæver et al 1993). H&RM note it as a key text of ST, but do not discuss it at all. As shown in its index, the book deals with racism in several chapters. In the first lines it sets out the context for thinking about Europe's new security agenda in relation to "four enormous political forces" of which one is "the releasing and/or revival of nationalism and xenophobia". The book generally places the birth of ST squarely in the context of a concern about escalating new forms of securitization in Europe, contra the image created by H&RM that Europe is the continent of civilised de/securitization threatened by securitization from a dangerous Africa. Finally, the book is theoretically about the dynamics of securitization in defense of or against large-scale identity groups, including race, religion and – given the situation at the time – especially ethno-national identities. Thus, it would have been the natural place to anchor an investigation of racism and ST.

ST and the Copenhagen School have – as others have discussed, and H&RM ignore – their basis at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) in a project group on 'Non-Military Aspects of European Security'. ST is first flagged in a footnote in the first collective book, Wæver et al 1989 (pp. 300, 321), the book where also Buzan first joined with a chapter. While Buzan had until then written mostly about security outside Europe (Buzan & Rizvi 1986) and as pure theory (Buzan 1983), the project group was tasked to write about Europe, and our first truly joint book was exactly an attempt to structure thinking about the future for European security after the end of the Cold War (Buzan et al 1990). Then, Wæver et al. 1993 – the book that triggered the label 'Copenhagen School' (McSweeney 1996) took the decisive step to include security with other referent objects than the state, specifically identity based ones, and thereby merge with Wæver's ideas about securitization that had previously developed on a somewhat parallel track (Wæver 1989d, 1995). Wæver at the time was transitioning from being mostly a specialist on 'West Germany' to writing about 'Europe'. This all explains why Europe was the foundational empirical substrate for ST.

Ironically, this is by post-colonial critics usually held as a problem for the theory (Wilkinson 2007; Bilgin 2011; Vuori 2011; Holbraad and Pedersen 2012; Ezeokafor and Kaunert 2018; Pratt and Rezk 2019), but in H&RM's attack, this is downplayed because they want to create a plot where it is Africa that is the dangerous other for the theory. An innocent reader of H&RM will get the impression that we do not worry about securitization in Europe, despite this being overwhelmingly the context and rationale for the theory. That ST was developed in relation to securitizations in and around Europe, other critics have with much more accuracy pinpointed as a problematic euro-centrism[12], certainly not a whitewashing of Europe as devoid of securitizations. By the 1998 book, the agenda was to set out a general theory of securitization (partly as a precursor to the global analysis of security in the 2003 book).

An analysis of ST in relation to racism would first have to start from the 1993 book, secondly it would reasonably be explicit about how to 'define' ST, i.e. what status to allocate to different layers of work (Wæver 1995 and Buzan et al 1998 as the two texts people usually quote as foundational) in relation to other texts by Buzan and Wæver (which they include at will) or by other authors (which they exclude), and then thirdly, it is impressive that H&RM manages to totally exclude all empirical analyses based on ST that actually deal with racism as well as the question what kinds of studies could or could not be made (we return in section 6 to these empirical applications.)

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[12] In any case, the literature on ST quickly expanded to take in non-Western and specifically authoritarian cases (Vuori 2011a,b; Wilkinson 2007; Bilgin 2011; Holbraad Petersen 2012; Ezeokafor and Kaunert 2018, Pratt and Rezk 2019) and thus tackle any possible limitations from the theory being too dependent on liberal-democratic cases. However, this is strangely not the discussion we are to have here – because H&RM creatively depicts our work as under-playing securitization in Europe.

<u>Not Understanding the Difference between What the Theory Does Not Do, and What it Cannot Do</u>

The article by H&RM manages to write about anything but that which is actually Securitization Theory. In addition to the invidious technique of guilt by association that 'imports' racism by thin and indirect routes, a lot of their argumentation is about what they deem to be missing from the theory. This takes either the form of ignoring what is the nature and function of theory (this sub-section) or a demand for the constant mention of racism in every single sentence (next subsection). All such passages, no matter where they find them, they trace back to the acting subject "securitization theory", which they then deem *unable* to address these issues. *They pay no attention to the difference between theory and application, nor to the difference between 'not done' and 'cannot be done'.*

Strangely, they note briefly that actually the primary, foundational texts do make observations about racism based on ST, which H&RM somehow quickly discard – not by investigating these analyses but deductively by the argument that the theory is so tainted in its deep structure ("racist political thought is integral to" ST) that these actually existing analyses somehow don't count. The argument about ST being racist in the way its core concepts are constituted overrules an actual examination of the analyses done with it. As we will show, this argument about the constitution is deeply flawed – mostly hyperbolic presentation of observations that have nothing to do with constitution. Thus, they have no justification for ignoring both our observations nor the many other existing analyses by others (see later section) that actually do what they say can't be done with the theory. They do not show in concrete engagement that these analyses are wrong or racist.

We return in section 6 to the question how one might deploy or even develop ST to analyse racism. Given that this takes us beyond our rebuttal of H&RM (who do not care for such concerns), we will for now concentrate on the two more glaring problems in their critique: that they do not distinguish a) between what is in the *theory* from what the theory is able to do; b) between what in our books form the construction of the *theory*, and what are (more or less successful) attempts to illustrate typologies or apply the theory to cases, which might often be improved upon from the same theoretical core.

H&RM accuse (pp. 4-5) ST of neglecting the impact of colonialism on the present world and the intrinsic violence of liberalism. Up to a point this is true for *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, but so what? Anyone who has written a book knows that difficult choices have to be made about what to include and what to exclude. Those choices have to be made on the basis of what is most relevant to the subject under discussion. The legacies of colonialism, and the violence of liberalism are not in themselves central to setting up ST. The same could be said about the histories of war, dynasticism, Marxism, religion, and dozens of other elements of the background of world history, which also do not get discussed. These histories, and the causal tracks they represent, may well be highly relevant to specific instances of securitization, and nothing in the theory prevents them from being mobilised in that way as appropriate to the case under study. H&RM fail to note that *Regions and Powers*, which they do discuss, features the impact of colonization/decolonization in quite a big way. *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, which they do not discuss, addresses one consequence of decolonization in depth. In numerous other works we have addressed racism, liberalism, colonialism and its consequences, and the 'standard of civilization', in considerable detail (e.g. Buzan, 2014; Buzan and Lawson, 2015; Buzan and Schouenborg, 2018; Acharya and Buzan, 2019; Tickner & Wæver 2009; Wæver 2017).

H&RM make the basic (and unfortunately common) error of conflating theory as analytical tool with theory as total description. The theory "overlooks the power politics of social security", "cannot see how Western welfare state social security systems support white (settler) heteropatriarchal forms of life, such as the nuclear family" etc. We agree that this theory as any theory is better at highlighting

some things than others. It is a theory of securitization. It captures dynamics of securitization and desecuritization. Some analysts might be able to use this to do a critical analysis of welfare state programs or of the politics of normalising the nuclear family. This actually seems quite doable. But surely, there are other aspects of these phenomena that you will get at better by using other theories, exactly because ST is a theory that foregrounds securitization and fortunately (as we have often written) there is much else in the world that is not structured by securitization so we have never advised anybody to go through life looking at the world only through the lens of securitization theory. Again, the better question is not whether this features prominently in the theory, but whether the theory enables you to analyse it.

The article by H&RM is completely devoid of any attempt to understand the inner logic or structure of the theory. When, for instance, we write about the relationship between 'social security' and 'international security', this is at the beginning of the book as an introduction to the 'conceptual history' of security and the emergence of the 'field' that our theory is meant as an intervention into. We explain there (Buzan et al 1998: 21) and earlier (Wæver et al 1993; Wæver 1990, 1995, 2012), why we find it analytically and politically important to identify a distinct meaning of 'security' that emerged in relation to international security and then spread to 'new security issues'. The issue is partly empirical, partly a question of theory construction; it is certainly not about the relative importance of social and international security. Our argument is empirical as to the relative distinctiveness of a socio-political usage that has evolved historically, which is then what enables the creation of the analytical category of 'securitization' to critically analyse this space.

How exactly this relates to the history of 'social security' as concept and field is a complicated issue that we are still struggling with especially regarding U.S. history in the 1920s and 1930s (Wæver 2012), but H&RM again do violence to our project by not acknowledging the context in which we introduce the distinction between international and social security, and instead deducing from this that we somehow don't care about social security or that we assume that there is no power politics and no violence in social security. They get to this by first ignoring totally that our argument is one about the emergence of concepts and fields and second by sliding from our statement about "the *traditions* of power politics" (that is: IR and all that) to implying that we rule out the presence of power politics in social security, i.e. that social security should be 'power free'. This is one more *non sequitur* to the sizable collection in this article. This is simply not what our paragraph says, and anybody who reads it in the flow of the book's argument will find this obvious, but as always it is possible to cut and paste fragments to create a made-up target of critique.

H&RM then tell us that social and national security are imbricated and give examples from the use of social services in Islamophobic counter-terrorism programs. Exactly! And then you can analyse this by using ST! That's kind of the whole point. With a theory.

To some degree, this misunderstanding by H&RM is similar to (although an extreme case of) a critique that Securitization Theory is often exposed to, as are other theories, especially those that try to have a precise and distinct conceptual core: Securitization Theory has been criticised for its failure to 'include' the role of media, gender, interest groups, images, history, emotions, and much else. As we have pointed out before, some of these might be promising suggestions for further theory development, but in most cases the critics are not careful enough in distinguishing what has to go into the *theory* as such, and what could better be seen as part of the research program and possibly become systematic observations *from* the theory[13]. This has to do with our view of theory as *not*

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[13] As we have hinted at elsewhere, getting such discussions on productive terms has to some extent been hampered for 'sociology of science' reasons: the standard format of the research article has under the increasing pressure from a neo-liberal oversupply of publications moved from accepting usage of theory producing novel empirical findings to a demand for always calling for a revision to theory. Therefore articles that actually demonstrate the usefulness of a theory for generating systematic insights increasingly get

constituting generalisations as such (theory is not law-like regularities) but being the conceptual apparatus from which it is possible to do analysis (Wæver 2009, 2011, 2015). Therefore, we find that many elements of the world are extremely important and also important to include in a securitization analysis among the historical conditions, part of the struggle over securitizations or among the effects, but it takes a more focused argument to justify its inclusion in the theory as such (i.e. among the defining concepts together with 'securitizing actor', 'referent object', 'threat', 'facilitating conditions', sectors and political effects). Ironically, we have actually offered *political* reasons for this 'minimalist' conception of theory (primarily to preserve the de-naturalising power of the theory and to enable its combination with other theories, eg of racism).

However, other criticisms of ST for such omissions are usually much more precise in relating their criticism to the actual structure of the theory and for instance argue why some specific factor should be a 'facilitating condition', why one should pay special attention to the media through which securitizations take place, or how the audience needs to be conceptualised differently in order to get its proper place. Even in these more careful critiques, we tend to be more restrictive than the critics as to what to include in the theory as such versus what to 'learn' more broadly, but at least critics make their claim in relation to the theory as it is actually shaped.

H&RM is a parody of such critiques by not at all engaging with the *theory* in Securitization Theory, and thus not discussing what it can do or not. Their criticism in relation to racism at no point becomes concrete enough to show that something in the structure or conceptualisations of the theory prevents it from observing or properly acknowledging the significance of racism. Instead they make the most extreme case we have ever seen of a total conflation of theory and description: every empirical observation or discussion of specifications in any part of any of our (more or less) ST-related writings are treated as 'the theory'. This gives us both too much and too little of a role. Too little in the sense that they do not respect what we present as 'the theory', but treat any part of our ST writings as a legitimate place to conclude how the key concepts are constituted or 'what the theory thinks' and thus proving its racism (which again would make sense if one was discussing the personal prejudices of a person, but not when discussing a theory). Too much of a role is also allocated to these writings in the sense that an empirical illustration somewhere in our books, say of how to do a securitization analysis of the Taiwan/China question or of Osama bin Laden's statements should not be given more theory status than those of other ST analysts. Actually, these issues have probably been analysed much better by others using ST than by us, and therefore to judge any piece of our ST writings as authoritative in that sense is to allocate a too defining role to us. It would be more reasonable to respect our construction of the theory as main target and then try to make the racism critique in relation to what is actually the theory; and if moving out to applications or discussions of, say, patterns of securitization in different sectors, one should be clear about how the theory is implicated in these analyses, in which case it would be more reasonable to include applications by other authors on par with ours.[14]

As an absolute minimum, critics of a theory should be expected to present their quotes with a declaration about where they are picked from: is it part of the definition of a concept, is it in the Africa chapter of *Regions and Powers*, is it in the military sector chapter of the Framework book, or is it part of our presentation of a contrasting theory like critical security studies? In no case do H&RM

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phrased as a defect of the theory – it is 'underspecified' and need to 'include' X. For useful overviews of findings and lacunae, see Balzacq et al 2016 and Sjöstedt 2019.

[14] The exception to this differentiation between theory and applications would be if one had a very careful analysis of the foundational texts where one actually traced an instability in key concepts out into their 'resolution' in surprising corners of these same texts. This has most famously been done by Derrida especially in *On Grammatology* where the analysis of Rousseau in particular finds evidence in surprising passages, but this is decidedly not done by 'flattening' the texts analysed into one hotchpotch of fragments but by retracing inner lines in a very careful reading.

offer such context to quotes – they are all just expressions of 'Securitization Theory'. This is a 'constitutive' feature of *deepfake* methodology, because this total unmooring of citations from any textual location allows the critic to compose their new story unrestrained by any meaning established within the original texts.

When discussing a theory, the most important questions are 'what can it do' and 'what happens when you use it'? In relation to racism, it would therefore to be primary to look at first what *has* been done by the theory empirically of relevance to racism, and secondly to ask if there are built-in limitations or structurations of the theory that skews in unfortunate ways what can be done and how results will come out. While H&RM are clear about not doing the first of these things, they might give the impression that they do the second, that they look at how the theory is 'loaded'.

They don't. Because they do not look at the theory as a theory and ask these questions in relation to what happens when you use it; they look at the empirical pronunciations in the books where the theory is presented, and they then interpret all of this text as if this somehow was the theory.

Either you are with us, or you are with the racists

A major part of H&RM's use of quotations to prove the racism in securitization theory takes the form of demonstrating that particular passages do not mention settler colonialism, slavery or racism –

which H&RM deem as to 'occlude' and whitewash those practices, whether or not they were particularly relevant for the argument made or were mentioned elsewhere in the same book.

For instance, passages on how policing work (in contrast to militaries) are taken to imply that we white-wash policing of any role in negative operations in class or race contexts, simply by the fact that we don't mention these things in the few lines on policing (in the military sector chapter). We present the historically evolved distinction between police and military (actually making a point along the way that even in societies that think this is a solid and well-established distinction, it is more 'recent' and 'shallow' than often assumed; and not fully implemented in a country like the US). It is not clear from H&RM's critique how many bad things we needed to say about police – misdeeds from all parts of the world of all kinds of different kinds – to make these few lines pass, or whether it is as such problematic to present the institutional rationality of police at all, because the reader should be expected to take this as an actual description of how it works everywhere.

Similarly, they quote (HRM p. 9 [7]) our characterization of the war on drugs as a 'niche securitization' (Buzan & Wæver 2003, 2009) to imply that the war on drugs is *not important*, when it actually only means that it has not been generalized to become the over-arching interpretative frame in global security. They write that we "ignore American covert and counterinsurgency action globally". H&RM fail to mention that we actually write about exactly this elsewhere, most fully in the Latin America section of Buzan & Wæver 2003. There it is relevant, but the macro-securitization article which they quote is about constructing a conceptual typology, and we use a handful of primary examples to show how large-scale securitization vary across three dimensions: the East-West conflict during the Cold War, the nuclear threat during the Cold War, Climate Change, the Global War on Terror, and the War on Drugs. Probably, we give the War on Drugs more prominence than many would have done in a discussion like this. Using the term 'niche securitization' does not imply that the war on drug is unimportant, unproblematic or 'small'. We don't think anybody reading our article will get this impression, but reading the lines by H&RM one surely get this understanding. They don't explain that 'niche securitization' is a *concept* we are developing, which we give a precise meaning (and illustrate with the war on drug as example) – they quote us as if it is just a belittling characterisation. In addition to their highly manipulative citing of the term 'niche securitization', their criticism seems to be that we don't tell the reader about the bad things done as

part of the war on drugs, but nor do we actually tell the reader whether we liked the cold war or are supportive of the Global War on Terror; it did not seem to us relevant to prime the reader to making particular historical judgements about these large scale phenomena when they are mainly illustrations in an article developing new concepts.

To observe that the war on drugs – in contrast to the global war on terror or the cold war – is not a matrix for re-organising all security concerns is not the same as neglecting it. And again, the main criticism seems to be that we write about it without in every sentence explicitly stating how it is – especially domestically in the US[15] – deeply implicated in racial politics; in an article about macro-securitizations, i.e. at what takes place roughly at the level between regional and global.

In all of these examples, the power of their argument hinges not on what we write, but absences in our texts. As they spell out, it is not enough to write about euro-centrism or work from a post-colonial perspective; these are not radical and specific enough. *Only, if you adopt the particular terminology of 'methodological whiteness', 'white supremacy' and 'anti-black racism' do you qualify as not racist*. Ultimately, this form of academic criticism becomes totalitarian. Only one strand is legitimate, and if you do not follow it, you will be branded not just insufficiently radical, but actually: racist.

We find it much more productive here to heed the call by Meera Sabaratnam (2011: 4) – in her much-cited discussion of 'decolonising strategies' – to pay "attention to the necessarily limited and incomplete nature of our conceptual endeavours. These are not shortcomings of our work but its constitutive features – it is grounded in a particular conceptual vocabulary or register, and has a particular focus or target. As such, when thinking about how we analyse complex social phenomena, such as patriarchy, political violence or racism, given a wide acceptance that these are manifested and can be explained at various levels, no single mode of analysis is likely to be completely satisfactory." Because Meera Sabaratnam is right that even the most de-colonising strategies can only be partial, they will by implication all be able to criticise each other. Actually, if we follow the procedures of H&RM's article, they could all denounce each other as racist. However, such modesty is not part of the approach of H&RM's analysis: to them there is one true and complete approach which could and should call out all other approaches as racist.

In the world of H&RM, you are only off the hook, if you sign up to one particular version of theorising 'methodological whiteness' and 'anti-black racism' – all others, including post-colonial scholars, are: racists. In addition to signing up for team H&RM, you also have to ensure that every single sentence contains the attribution of main historical blame to colonial violence. It is not enough that you write this somewhere else in your text, you are guilty if it is possible to isolate a

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[15] To make their claim even more problematic, we actually do point to the domestic centre of the securitiza-tion of drugs by the US (and even in a passage with the word 'niche' in it, so if searching electronically for either drugs or niche, this would come up): In the North America chapter of *Regions and Powers*, we write: "*Drugs* were declared a national security threat in 1974 by President Ford, but the Reagan administration lifted the issue to prominence and started to organise a 'war on drugs' (Campbell 1992: 198). Much of this 'war' is a domestic – moral and police – effort. Internationally the war focuses on Latin America (see ch. 10). Drugs constitute one of the few issues to be securitised in the otherwise notoriously upbeat annual 'state of the union' message by the president (see years 1994,1996, 1998, 1999), and a large institutional apparatus is geared to dealing with different dimensions of the problem, often in a militarized form. Still, it is the ideal type example of a niche security issue. It is intensely and consistently securitised, but it is not a serious candidate for taking top rank and defining overall policy." (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 296) It feels a bit silly to point this out, because the main issue is that in the main article about niche securitization (Buzan and Wæver 2009), it was not important to point to the domestic US anchor of the war on drugs. But actually, we *do* write about this as well. As so often in the article, this is not at all about what we write but that by plucking the word 'niche' securitization' out of context and ignore what we mean by it, H&RM can redeploy it with their own effect: that we downplay things that we actually do write critically about.

sentence that eg. spells out the promise of rule of law and separation between military and police (as activists all over the Global South call for), because you have in each sentence to remind the reader that policing is often part of colonial and racist policies. Similarly, you can't talk about 'social security', without – in each sentence – critiquing the racial policies of social security. Unfortunately, most social movements ín the global South fighting for social justice, human rights and even against racism, will be guilty on this account of racism. Every scholar in IR will be vulnerable to being proven a racist with techniques like this. If fragments can be pulled out of texts and interpreted for their absences like this, probably even the most hard-core anti-racists can be attacked as well. The result is likely to be an unproductive race for safety into the fold of the certified anti-racists who decide who are to be called out and who not.

Their demand for constant mention is most clearly seen in the way they dismiss the pervasive role we actually attribute to colonialism in Buzan & Wæver 2003. H&RM accuse us of not paying sufficient attention to the centrality of colonialism and racism. The Framework book (Buzan et al 1998) sets out the theory in mostly abstract terms and does little to contextualise the theory in terms of the historical emergence of the conditions under which the theory could be formulated, although each sector chapter has some history of military, economic, environmental etc security issues. In this context, racism is covered in the sectors where it is most relevant. However, in the other main book, *Regions and Powers* (Buzan and Wæver 2003), the whole analysis is framed by a historical arch centred on colonialism and decolonisation (with the rise and fall of the Cold War as the second most important factor).[16] The overall structure of 'global' and 'regional' is developed around the history of colonialism, and we argue how the forms of state in different regions are primarily a product of this history and thus the most important condition to take into account when understanding how security dynamics unfold in the different regions. Thus, the theory actually foregrounds colonialism as the only factor allowed to systematically be included in the regional analyses that otherwise centre on the categories anchored in Regional Security Complex Theory as such, notably the structure of complexes. It is therefore quite surprising to be told that we underestimate the role of Western colonialism in shaping security dynamics.[17] The logic of recurrent mention is particularly clear here, because we have enveloped the whole book by this frame, and yet it is deemed absent. Thus, you have to assume readers forget how you set up your story and repeat a major point like this in every sentence.[18]

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[16] For instance, we write (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 16): "Neorealists see this period primarily through the lens of the shift from multipolarity to bipolarity after 1945. We more or less accept that premise (see chapter 2), but want to raise decolonisation to equal status in defining the world politics of this era. Globalists rightly focus on the astounding intensification of the global economy despite the obstructions of the Cold War, but for our purposes the territorialising impact of decolonisation is equally significant." We are actively trying to correct the then dominant view in security studies in the direction of foregrounding colonisation and decolonisation. This is at the beginning of our book, setting out the framework.

[17] In some places H&RM put their critique like this, faulting us for not foregrounding the role of colonialism, and then the critique is wrong; in other places they distance themselves from post-colonial approaches and insist that it is not enough to understand colonial/post-colonial dynamics, one has explicitly to use their kind of theory centred on methodological whiteness etc, and then the critique is obviously true but absurd for other reasons, and totalitarian.

[18] Or as Charles Mills puts it in *The Racial Contract* (1997, note 3, page 137-138): "In speaking generally of 'whites,' I am not, of course, denying that there are gender relations of domination and subordination or, for that matter, class relations of domination and subordination within the white population. I am not claiming that race is the only axis of social oppression. But race is what I want to focus on; so in the absence of that chimerical entity, a unifying theory of race, class, and gender oppression, it seems to me that *one has to make generalizations that it would be stylistically cumbersome to qualify at every point. So these should just be taken as read*" (emphasis added). Mills is doing it in an endnote, and yet assuming that the reader accepts the general qualification throughout. We do it as part of the theoretical framework, and yet it does not count in the single instances where it is not mentioned?

A particularly bizarre case of critique for 'absences' is that they want us to denounce speech acts as such (note: not speech act *theory*, but speech acts as such). In relation to our use of speech act theory, their main argument is that ST "does not challenge the ways in which structures of speech acts (like law, civil hierarchy, or international treaties) are and have been central to enforcing a colonial system of global inequality". First, our usage of speech act theory is to conceptualise *securitization*, so the insert about "law, civil hierarchy, or international treaties" is hard to make sense of; are those necessarily speech acts? According to whom? And second, what does it mean to "challenge" speech acts? Should we shout at the law? At securitization as a speech act? We have tried to develop a theory of securitization in order to enable specific forms of critical analysis, and we found speech act theory useful for this purpose. Therefore, a critical engagement with our work ought to focus on ways we have failed or succeeded to do so, but to attack the use of speech act theory, because we do not 'challenge' how – other – speech acts like 'law' have enforced colonial systems, that becomes truly bizarre. Their argument seems to be that the fact that we try to conceptualise securitization in the *form* of a speech act is problematic because *other* speech acts have been used for problematic purposes. So you can't make a critical analysis of one discourse without 'challenging' all other discourses? You can't analyse something as 'practice' without challenging all other practices? This is truly mind-boggling in its implications. You can't use words, because some other words have been used for nasty purposes?[19] The kind of academic debates we are headed for if arguments like this are deemed valid/publishable seem to threaten the whole enterprise of academia, and therefore to be profoundly troubling.

If you are to protect yourself against this kind of criticism for what is absent from your sentences, the only remedy is to overload every single sentence with all the right words to prove your faithful anti-racism, again and again.

Silence is an important theme especially in relation to racism, and this makes it the more imperative to handle responsibly – and not to squander this important agenda by isolated sentences being mis-read in ways that are false, far-fetched or absurd (more on responsibility in section 6, more about possible ways forward in section 5). The solution is not that gender scholars are called racists because they have lines without mention or race, and race scholars called sexists because they have lines without mention of gender. There are three productive ways of addressing silences:

a/ Some large, steady silences are reproduced through social conventions or discursive structures that make them seem 'inappropriate', 'irrelevant' or 'unspeakable' – one of the most important is that race has been and is a fundamental ordering principle in international relations (Vitalis 2000, 2015; Shilian 2015; Anieva et al 2014) and more generally it is 'a political system' (Du Bois 1903; Mills 1997). Robert Vitalis (2000) has elegantly pinned this as a "norm against noticing race"; Vincent and Vucetic have talked about a 'taboo' (Vincent 1982; Vucetic 2014, 2011:7). Finding ways of researching, writing and teaching this will take creativity (Rutazibwa 2020). Whether securitization analysis has a chance to contribute here is an open question – unfortunately one that H&RM has not brought us any closer to answering; we will offer a few thoughts later. Fortunately, many others have tried already to use the theory to demonstrate the nature and power of racism.

b/ Some theoretical constructs can be held responsible for *silencing*, especially when they produce terms that make it more difficult to articulate the missing observations (cf. a). To re-use the example of Mills' 'Racial Contract' (1997), a good case can be made that the theory of the 'social contract' by near-necessity postulates an equality and voluntariness that stands in the way of articulating

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[19] Some readers might think we are driving a *reductio ad absurdum* argument here, but the absurdity is there in the H&RM article. Please re-read their critique. We did not write about 'law, civil hierarchy or international treaties'; we write about securitization as a speech act. Yet they find ST to be racist, because it "does not challenge the ways in which structures of speech acts (like law, civil hierarchy, or international treaties) are and have been central to enforcing a colonial system of global inequality".

important critical insights about race; this theory has a legitimating, 'ideological' function that makes it helpful to discuss whether it is silencing in a specific and active sense. The specificity here is that key categories are defined in ways that predetermine what can be said or not, and at least in a mainstream social contract universe, subjects and society/polity are defined in ways that makes it more difficult to show deep differences in who are allowed to acquire what subjectivities and how power and repression can be addressed. Charles Mills (1997, 2017) has written about the 'epistemology of ignorance' at work, and in good Foucauldian manner, it is highly relevant to study how certain 'problematizations' structure conceptual spaces in ways that make other questions strange. The invisibility of race is probably most closely linked to the way that most mainstream (ultimately: liberal!) approaches reify 'the individual' (as ironically, Critical Security Studies tends to do; one of the reasons for Securitization Theory to carve a different route, to avoid essentialising security as individual, as argued above). Scholars of 'human rights' might also be called upon to self-reflect on how their 'human' systematically blinds us to seeing race; although surely important academic and political work can be done on the basis of human rights given their political power and the constant possibility of re-articulation (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). *Silencing* is a helpful way of phrasing a politically powerful anti-racist research agenda, so we definitely do not resist the attempt of H&RM on the basis of denying the relevance of silence. However, it will be so much more academically valid and practically helpful if it is done on the basis of a structured and systematic attempts to trace what ideological figures are particularly powerful obstacles to 'seeing race' (and of course also if you don't falsify your data). If you target a specific theory or strand of research, emphasis should be on showing how the basic categories of this approach *prevents* the articulation of race as power as a crucial category for understanding our world.

c/ In specific passages it is meaningful to look for absences, especially when you can against that particular statement say that it is not valid, because it ignores race. You should then address the statement that is actually made, who it targets (statements are always against someone else!) and what is at stake; then point out why this statement is problematic because it should be different if race was part of the picture. We (Buzan & Wæver) are guilty of this on several occasions, and these statements should be challenged – but they should not be attributed to that Godzilla-like subject of 'securitization theory', and they should address what is going on in the text at hand.

Three ways that do *not* work are: 1) to demand very specific and contextually unlike qualifications, and for instance use the occasion of *any* mention of police to demand a denunciation of police violence in the US or any reference to one specific speech act to say that you have to denounce all speech acts in the world; 2) to twist text into what it doesn't say or ignore what is actually found elsewhere in the same book but not exactly in this particular passage, and 3) to randomly insert your own agenda in any line found anywhere in the universe of text.

As we will discuss more systematically below, H&RM have a fall-back position of making this not about 'securitization theory' or 'Buzan and Wæver', but about the aggregate effect of 'security theory' or 'international relations'. Anyone who has participated in this collective practice (the discipline, the field) for many years is responsible for where we are at now. And the more 'effective' you have been, the more responsibility you carry for the aggregate effect; that much is reasonable. Still: we also have a collective responsibility (as authors and editors) regarding how we channel this debate. Do we want to create a fratricide among critical scholars – or make an individual career out of academic parricide? Especially *silences* is a trope too powerful and too easy to be used lightly. For any given sentence, there is so much it does not include. We the 99.99% are responsible of not focusing enough on race, and then it is on so many levels counterproductive to present this in terms of an analysis of one specific theory (and 2 or 3 specific authors) as distinctly racist. It is both unnecessarily harmful at a human level, and politically unproductive because it misses the target. To then in addition build your analysis on several dozens of lies is even more unhelpful. It might move the cause forward a small step on the short term (and help your publication record and citation

score; maybe even the impact factor for the journal), but what a bleak outlook for a life in academia if this is how we are going to go about our mutual relationships in the future!

Twisting of Concepts to Serve the Charge of Racism – and destroying distinctions

H&RM refer to the concept of 'primal anarchy' nineteen times[20], characterizing it as 'racial discourse' (H&RM, 2020: 10 [8]), twisting its meaning away from an empirical differentiation of type, towards an emotive, normative classification of race hierarchy. The distinction between anarchy at the level of individuals (Hobbessian[21], primary) and at the level of political collectivities (international) is not only extremely well established, but arguably foundational to much of the discipline of IR. The differences and similarities between these two levels of anarchic structure are a central point of theorization in IR, and the basis for its inside/outside problematique. Buzan (2004: xvii-xviii) uses the designations *first-* and *second-order societies* to capture it. H&RM characterise this differentiation as 'racist discourse' on the grounds that most of the contemporary examples of primal/Hobbessian anarchy given (including our altogether three usages of the term 'primal') are from non-white countries. It would certainly be possible to give 'white' examples of this, from post-Cold War Bosnia through to the more chaotic aspects of the Thirty Years War. History is full of white barbarians (Huns, Franks, Goths, Avars, Vikings, etc.) attacking white civilizations, and indeed non-white ones (the Franks/crusaders invasion of the Islamic world).

But that is not the key point. H&RM's sweeping allegation brings into question *any* form of classification that happens to correlate with race in any way. There are more contemporary examples of primal anarchy in Africa than in Europe because strong states consolidated early in Europe (for better and worse!), and have not currently consolidated effectively in some parts of Africa. That is just an empirical fact.[22] On the basis of H&RM's reasoning, noticing that wealth and poverty, or vulnerability to climate change, correlate significantly with race in some respects would also count as racist discourse. More people will suffer from climate change in the range of a 1-2 degrees Celsius increase in Africa than in Europe: it is racist to say so. Therefore, we shouldn't say it. The unrestrained use of this charge in such a casual way threatens the entire methodology of classificatory differentiation in the social sciences.

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[20] We notice the number because it says something about their project. As far as we can see, we use the term 'primal anarchy' three times in the 1500 pages they mainly draw on (the three main books and a handful of articles). So in addition to the problem that they miss that it is a technical, established concept, they clearly also make a misleading representation of its place in the theory. We don't use the phrase in the Africa section of Buzan & Wæver 2003, only to make one specific point in the Framework book as part of a discussion of military security, where it mainly functions as a kind of boundary reservation for what escapes the main pattern in the military sector, which is otherwise quite state-centric. Thus, even there it does not play the role that H&RM imply, i.e. as the ultimate picture of securitization. It is neither in sections on Africa, nor in any of our theory chapters, only in the chapter on military security. The point we are making in the Framework book about 'Hobbesian' or 'primal' anarchy in relation to Africa, is furthermore clearly presented as a product of European "colonial impositions" (Buzan et al 1998: 69). We use the term 'Hobbesian anarchy' in many cases – which we happily defend in the text here – but it is striking that H&RM pick the term 'primal anarchy', which we use three times (and in quite specific contexts), and repeat it throughout their article.

[21] The use of the label 'Hobbesian anarchy' they also use as evidence of our dependence on Hobbes. This we discuss in section 3.

[22] Africa features as an example of primal/Hobbesian anarchy in both the *Framework* book and *Regions and Powers*, because regional security complex theory focuses specifically on territorial states, and is not able to handle well situations in which such states are weak or absent. That limitation does not apply to ST, whose inner logic does not require states but can apply to a wide variety of actors and referent objects, and we discuss this in the military sector chapter of the Framework book, because it leads into some (at least at the time) unconventional discussions of referent objects.

The story that H&RM creates is fascinating, but it has so little to do with our writings, that it would be better if they had presented it as a critique of some (openly) imaginary target. The idea that 'primal anarchy' lurking in Africa, threatening Europe with escalating securitizations, should be the real animating engine of securitization theory is totally contrived. H&RM use the concept on an average once per page, while we use it once for each 500 pages, and they move it into a foundational relationship to key concepts, which is not justified at all by the actual location and content of the places where we use the concept.

H&RM are shocked by our "refusal" to "distinguish" between white nationalist and racial justice movements (2020: 13 [11]). The context of the texts they quote to prove that we treat these as 'equivalent' are places where we are going systematically through different referent objects for securitization (that which is defended) and different threats. They quote at length from our 1998 book a passage where we note how radical white categorizations can form a synergy with (what they call) 'racial justice movements' to shift the format towards 'identity politics'. When we wrote this in 1998, it was an important discussion also on the left, whether this form of identity politics was a productive or counterproductive turn. However, our aim in the passage is to point out how the categories around which mutual securitizations converge have been shifting, and in this context it matters to note the parallels and synergies between – obviously – otherwise very different groups. What does it mean to deduce from this that we "refuse to distinguish"? Refuse, in what sense? Is this the same as making an analytical observation, in this case even as part of a de-coding a political constellation in ways that might prove politically useful for interventions by various actors. It goes without saying that the political agendas are very different and not to be equalised normatively. Do H&RM really think that by writing like this, we have made our readers think that 'white nationalists' are morally equal to 'racial justice movements'? Really? Are you only allowed to make analytical observations like this, if you every time accompany it with declarations about your own moral and political evaluation? How often do these have to be made? Judging from H&RM, you have to make your protestations at least once in every sentence, otherwise you should expect to see sentences quoted in isolation to prove your racism.

Although our agenda is analytical and systematizing in this passage, and their critique therefore misplaced, we actually give quite a strong hint about what side one should be concerned about. We open the section (right before their quote, but naturally edited out of H&RM's summary): "As the Oklahoma City bombing and the growth of militias have shown, fairly violent action can be deduced from an argument that defends the 'true America' against what is seen as a coalition of all kinds of decadent racial and sexual minorities and liberal state lovers who curb the autonomy of straight, white Americans to live a 'real' American life." (Buzan et al 1998: 130) We give no hint at all that 'the other side' could be violent and dangerous, so actually we do 'distinguish' in the sense that H&RM ask for. But of course that was 10 lines away, so it doesn't count. More importantly: you are not allowed in their logic to point out that two politically opposed movements can be analytically categorized as having any logical similarity, as in this case securitizing on behalf of referent objects in "cultural and racial categories". When mapping and comparing to securitization with reference to eg. the separate states or regions, they do fall in the same analytical category. You are not allowed to say so, because they should never be put side by side, even if there is absolutely no tone of moral and political equation.

H&RM continue from this discussion into backing it up with another similar example, i.e. another discussion where we map different kinds of referent objects. Here they attribute to us a rhetoric about "the threat of radical feminism" – as if *we* depict radical feminism as a threat. We are not even here writing about others seeing 'radical feminists' as a threat. What we write about is actually

how 'radical feminists'[23] *securitize* in order to *defend* against male aggression. H&RM attribute to us a view of 'radical feminism' as a threat which is unfounded in the text they cite here; one more mis-citation. We write about feminists securitizing the threat from violence of men against women (to simplify the argument a bit). This does not mean that 'radical feminism' is a threat. Naturally, it follows from ST that to point out that any actor (in this case 'radical feminists') securitize something posits a question about the gains and costs by doing so (in contrast to only politicizing it), but ST generally presents it as an open question when and whether a securitization proves to be justified and we certainly *do not claim that being a securitizing actor makes you 'a threat'*.[24] It is depressing, but it seems like H&RM fail to distinguish between: 1/ Buzan & Wæver depicts X as a threat; 2/ Buzan and Wæver writes about how Y depicts X as a threat; 3/ Buzan & Wæver writes about the potentially dangerous effects of Y depicting X as a threat. To say that we depict 'radical feminism' as a threat is far-fetched; to present it as a quote from our works is invalid citation practices, again. This category error is so basic that we find it shocking that *Security Dialogue* (with an editor whose published work makes him familiar with securitization theory) finds the article publishable.

It is characteristic of the article by H&RM to use gradual slippages of terminology like this. To show that something is a securitization is the same as presenting this act as a threat (no it is not); to point to one parallel between two phenomena is the same as 'refusing to distinguish' between them (no it is not).

H&RM use throughout formulations like the theory's "inabililty to ask questions about …". They don't show at all that it is *impossible* with the theory in hand exactly to ask those questions. They don't even try to explore this question about 'ability'; about what they theory can or can't do. They read into passages about something else, through the absences there, that because in one particular sentence we do not mention this, you can't use the theory to study this. This is an anti-theoretical and authoritarian attitude to analysis. The proper question is: if a researcher uses ST, can s/he then do a powerful, critical analysis of x (eg racism in relation to the case I am interested in), but instead H&RM ask, do *Buzan and Wæver* mention racism in every sentence in their book? This is an excessive focus on 'foundational texts' as delineating the realm of the possible rather than something to be evaluated in terms of what they enable and prevent. It demonstrates a general lack of attention to the question what a theory is; which is problematic for an article that purports to assess precisely a theory.

As Tzvetan Todorov once wrote (in an article on racism): "Concepts are a little bit like workers: in order to measure their real value, one has to know what they can do, not where they come from" (Todorov 1986: 376)[25]

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[23] Actually 'radical feminists' appear in quotation marks in H&RM's article (2020: 13 [11]) but not in the page of ours that they make reference to (Buzan et al 1998: 54). We have no problem with using the phrase, so we might have done so elsewhere, but it is still an odd way of citing.

[24] This conflation is central to H&RM's article, because most of their absolutely central argument about Africa hangs on a claim that we depict Africa as dangerous, while they mostly point only to us writing about securitizations there, as if securitization was the same as danger. First, it is wrong that we depict Africa as having more securitization than other regions (different yes, because every region is different according to RSCT, but not worse), and second they generally operate a complete mix-up of categories in the theory here, more fundamental than we are used to among misunderstandings.

25 Quoting Todorov makes us hostage to fortune. In IR he is currently mostly quoted as a good guy, especially because of his great book, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (1984). Also, the English translation of his book on racism in French thought (Todorov 1993) was published in a book series edited by Edward Said. Still, he has become un-quotable in certain anti-racist circles. The story is maybe instructive. At first some critical remarks were made by Greenblatt in a book, generally very favourable to Todorov. As this filtered down through increasingly derivative readings, Todorov became simply a racist, that you quote only at your own risk. Anybody who reads Todorov's *Conquest*, which strongly self-presents as an 'exemplary history' meant to warn and help us in the present to deal with otherness, will be surprised to see it read as an

We can find in their own text many places where they go for many lines, sometimes pages, without acknowledging the role of gender in relation to both x and y. Each of these passages could be pulled out of context to prove their "inability to see" or how they "preclude" attention to the role of gender.[26] This will generate a highly unproductive and unpleasant form of debate in the discipline.

Their destruction of *distinctions* takes other forms as well. They claim that ST uses operations that "reify a stark division between 'West' and 'non-West'". Please document! We have often been accused of the opposite, i.e. of claiming too much of a universal theory applicable everywhere, and it is possible to trace the formative cases that triggered key ideas (South Asia in the case of Regional Security Complex Theory: the dynamics of Cold War politics in Western and especially Eastern Europe in the case of securitization and desecuritization) and thus claim that the theory imports more from some regions than others which it universalises, but "a stark division between 'West' and 'non-West'", and even more strongly: a 'reified' one? The authors do not back that postulate up by anything. Their method seems to be to add hyperbole freely. If you identify a distinction, feel free to call it "reifying a stark division", as if that followed from all distinctions. It does not. We can hardly work intellectually without making distinctions. We should be careful about when to make these into 'stark divisions', and probably we should never 'reify' them. However, H&RM jump immediately from observing a distinction to calling it a reified stark division. With no justification. If in scholarly debates, we want to criticise when theories make 'stark divisions' or 'reify' such, we should reserve these terms for cases where this can be demonstrated, not use them as synonyms for 'distinguish'. Generally, H&RM's carelessness in their own use of language both corrode the critical lexicon available to us collectively, and empty their own argument of validity.

We use occasionally the terms 'Western' and 'non-Western' in empirical observations and generalisations (although not in the theoretical apparatus) – as do H&RM and many others. Their argument however demands that we have built the distinction into the analytical apparatus and even reified it. This is simply and plainly one more false statement by H&RM.

There are theories out there that start out with a distinction like 'Western' and 'non-Western' and then built the theoretical apparatus around this distinction, but this simply is not the case in ST; and not even in RSCT either. In Buzan & Wæver 2003, we even explicitly discuss the distinction between West and non–West and conclude against a "two worlds" view as it was often called at the time (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 477).

A final irony in this context is that the argument of H&RM themselves seems to rest on a stark dichotomy between West and non-West, because in their view you become guilty of racism if you make empirical observations about cases A, B and C in different parts of the world, without acknowledging the role of 'white settler colonialism' and 'racism' in conditioning these cases. Thus, in H&RM's world, you should treat cases on opposite sides of colonial history and 'the race line' *differently*, and to treat them equally makes you a racist. Yet, we are somehow guilty of making and reifying "a stark division" exactly along those lines. Logically, they really ought to criticise us if we did not distinguish.

Our argument is not that 'distinctions' are ever innocent. "Categorization is pregnant with knowledge as it is with oppression" (Colette Guillaumin, quoted by Balibar 1991: 27). Therefore, it is important to discuss the ones we use. It does not work to pretend that we can do without

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apologetic treatise in linear continuity of those Spanish conquest and genocide that he writes about. Surely, the book can be criticised at various levels, but it is a remarkable new 'truth' about it that has consolidated in certain circles.

[26] Alison Howell who is also interested in ableism fails to mention this in most of the article despite its potential relevance to many of the issues. To us this demonstrates that when you want to develop one argument, you can't at the same time pay attention to all other dimensions. In a H&RM-world this makes H&RM ableist.

distinctions (ultimately, this means: without language, which is after all a system of differences). We have to pay attention to the difference between distinctions, dichotomies, stark divisions, and reified divisions. Is it productive to make a stark division between theories as either racist or anti-racist? As we discuss in a later section, we support a discussion of theories in relation to racism, but maybe it is not productive to operate a simple either-or division viewed from one vantage point only (H&RM's); nor is it productive to treat our use of the terms 'West' and 'non-West' as automatically constituting 'a stark division' with no evidence hereof, only a terminological escalation for the sake of rhetorical force. Words matter. Even if H&RM think that one of the flaws of securitization theory is to pay too much attention to language, to be this negligent about your own use of it does run serious risks as well.

Quoting against all principles [27]

H&RM are keen to characterise ST as based on 'state of nature' thinking and thereby being racist through an affinity to Hobbes (see further in section 3). Also, they want to saddle us with a historicist vision of de-securitization linked to Western/European 'progress'. The longest quote in their article is exactly one on the Hobbesian state to back up their interpretation on this point. Their citation practice is deceitful. This quote appears in the final chapter of the Framework book where we as a self-critical exercise about the weaknesses and limitations of our own approach contrast it to a more Aberystwyth/Booth style Critical Security Studies on the one hand and on the other "Traditional Security Studies". As part of constructing the strongest possible version of a traditionalist position to challenge us, we introduce the argument (inspired by earlier interventions on ST by Mike Williams; Williams 1998a, 1998b) that the Hobbesian state could be seen as a form of de-securitization of much of society by condensating securitization around the sovereign state. This is not an argument we present as part of the construction of our own theory. On the contrary, it is presented as part of a hypothetical *critique* of it, as part of an alternative position that would challenge ours. When H&RM search around to find a passage to back their otherwise totally speculative attribution to us of an evolutionist conception tying desecuritization to European/Western progress, they deploy this one, long quote, which is clearly marked in our book as part of a development of another position. This is scientific mal-practice.

Surely, we do not in academia accept attributing to authors a text they explicitly present as a summary of another position (or as in this case a hypothetical attempt to construct an improved version of an *opponent*). Anyone who has written critically about, say, neorealism would be surprised to find their own summary of neorealism attacked as if it was their own view. Serious conversation breaks down if this principle is violated.

We could write "Howell and Richter-Montpetit write 'white Western superiority is therefore precarious: it must be protected'" (2020: 12 [10]). This would not be technically incorrect, but it would be very misleading, because the full passage goes like this: "For securitization theory, white Western superiority is therefore precarious: it must be protected from (excessive) securitization that risks a 'regression' to a lower level of civilization or a fully uncivilized 'state of nature'." Their statement is preposterous, but that is another matter. The point here is that you can't quote someone's representation of other's positions as if it was their own, even if you manage to isolate a

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[27] This section returns to the quotes we opened part 1 with. The reason for this circular movement is simply that we find those falsifications to be such blatant violation of principles for valid scholarship that we wanted to list them first. Those who are not interested in ST or racism as such but only the 'incident' then need read no longer, because this proves that the article is in breach of standards that we have to uphold in the discipline, and that it should be retracted for this reason alone. However, we want to document this misdeed thoroughly as well, and therefore we return to these quotes in this the last subsection of section one.

passage that can look like this. Whether it is done over a few lines as in our example or over 2 pages from our book as quoted by H&RM, it is invalid.

In addition to providing H&RM with the 'documentation' for their attribution to us of a Hobbesian 'state of nature' conception and a view of Western international society as 'progress', they also get one of their few instances of us talking about values in a 'liberal project' (Buzan et al 1998: 209). However, all of this we write (in a way that should be clear to the reader) as part of the attempt to build up a case for traditionalism – against us – and we conclude (Buzan et al 1998: 210):

> "This liberal approach has costs as well as benefits. It is one way of understanding desecuritization but arguably not the best and certainly not the most appropriate in current circumstances."

Furthermore, the next paragraph spells out how

> the "liberal desecuritization legitimized the post-1945 U.S.-Western imperium (…). It made economic penetration by the strong legitimate and threw political obstacles in the way of the weak, who viewed their security in much wider terms than just military relations. For many states and peoples on the periphery of the international system, the attempted liberal desecuritization of the political economy was itself a security issue. The self-serving qualities of liberal choices about defining the security agenda were seen as invidious, whatever their merits elsewhere. Liberal states were able to delegitimize the nonmilitary security claims of other actors, in the process subordinating them to the 'normal' politics of the market economy and pluralist politics. By itself, this situation justified a wider perspective on security, but only the voices of the weak calling for a new international economic order supported it, and it was largely drowned out by the titanic military confrontation of the superpowers". (Buzan et al 1998: 201-211).

This long quote hopefully illustrates how the word 'liberal' is not something we embrace for our own position or promote as description of an idealized, innocent form of politics but a critical term we use on an ideological, dominant Western-capitalist project; and that 'normal' politics is not meant as an ideal we hope to spread from Europe to the rest, but on the contrary: we try to show the politics at stake whenever someone plays the card of 'this is a security issue' (securitization) or 'no you can't securitize that; it should stay non-security, i.e. normal politics'. This must come as a surprise to readers who know ST only from the H&RM article.

In relation to citational practices: how can you overlook that a discussion ends like this? How can you then take the preceding page as what ST 'thinks'? How can you equate "ST's view" with that which we end denouncing so clearly?

Absurdly, H&RM not only present one long quote from these pages to document our use of Hobbes and our locating "progress in the West, particularly Europe" (H&RM 2020: 8 [6]), they return to the same pages once more (p 12-13 [10-11]) to offer an even longer quote; these two quotes from our presentation of a counter position only rivalled in length by the quote from Sbisà, falsely attributed to Wæver.

In the case of Hobbes, H&RM seems to imply something more substantial than just "don't mention the baddies" (guilt by association), because they claim that we draw on "social contract thinkers such as Hobbes" for [our] 'state of nature' concept". If this was true, it would be more relevant and valid than their general guilt by association. Probably, because they follow the analysis by Mills (1997), it would be a clincher argument for them to nail us as using 'state of nature' and 'social contract'. We return to their reading of Mills and Hobbes later; in the present section, the question is whether we have actually based our theory on 'state of nature' and 'social contract'. We haven't. However, this is so important to their operation, that they can't accept coming up empty handed,

and therefore they on specifically this point go far beyond their usual misunderstandings, free-floating chains of connotations and guilt by association into outright falsification.

The first time they claim that ST is based in 'state of nature' reasoning, H&RM make reference to Buzan et al 1998: 69, 209 and Wæver 1995: 54. Here our guilt is just to mention Hobbes or actually just the more metaphorical 'Hobbesian': as discussed above we use 'Hobbesian' as a way to characterise individual-level anarchy, not much Hobbes there. Then the one and only reference backing for the claim that we on this basis construct our own "'state of nature' concept" is Wæver 2011: 121. There is no page 121 in Wæver 2011. They must mean p 121 in Wæver 2015, and there the text does indeed include a long quote from Marina Sbisà, which is placed as epigraph above the article. When have we started to treat epigraphs placed above a book or article as something the author is quoted as author of? Often you find a literary quote there or one from popular culture. H&RM make a very specific claim here, that we make use of a "'state of nature' concept". Typically, one then looks for quotes and for the inner logic in a work. The only backing they can find in the texts is an epigraph; and it goes against our mode of reasoning in so many ways. It would actually be an interesting question to ask: does securitization theory represent a form of 'social contract' theory, but serious scholars would then look at the structure of the theory and study how the theory hangs together and all the things, H&RM do not do. They prefer to go for false quotes and incriminating references to bad guys from previous centuries.

The reference treating Sbisà as Wæver appears first in the references as the actual locus of their 'state of nature' attribution. Already this is unacceptable. Later in the article, they actually *quote* this passage at length, presenting Wæver, not Sbisà, as its author. This is fraud.

Hopefully, there is no question that you should not quote deceptively like that. Full stop. We might get into a discussion to what extent you are implying support by what you quote. But it was an epigraph. The original Wæver 1995 article that launched ST had a *Talking Heads* quote as epigraph, which was unfortunately removed in the published version (but it can still be seen in the version reprinted in Wæver 1997). We do not stand literally by the words from that song. Nor from everything expressed in their albums, such as "Don't worry about the government". We *do* worry about the government. In a close textual reading (which H&RM exactly is not), one can certainly enter into an analysis of what an author is quoting and also what (s)he uses as epigraph, when analysed *as such*. But you simply cannot present a long quote and reference it as "(Wæver, 2015: 121)" – when it is authored by Marina Sbisà and figure as epigraph in "Wæver 2015".[28]

In their wild over-interpretation of this passage (by Sbisà), they reach the interpretation that ST invests in protecting "white Western superiority". That is a preposterous claim. "For securitization theory, white Western superiority (…) must be protected". Please read that again. This is a very strong statement. It is a harsh critique of ST – to say that 'for' the theory (whatever that can mean; but in the manner the article is constructed, this does implicate our agency one way or the other), "white Western superiority (…) must be protected". We are somehow involved in a project that not only has the *effect* of shoring up white Western superiority, but that has somehow an *agenda* of "protecting" it. The hyperbolic writing style of H&RM probably has an effect on readers a bit like Trump's rhetoric – along the way you get numb. Even we read this at first just as normal text – and then stopped. This is really a strong claim. Intentionally plotting *in order to* defend white Western

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[28] When *Security Dialogue* received (early November) our submission of a response that pointed out this false quotation, the journal produced a corrigendum (despite our protestations against their usage of our critique to sanitize the article by H&RM from its worst transgressions). In the original corrigendum and the printed version of the article, they only corrected the first instance, the citation, not the much more serious long quote. Presumably, there will be a second corrigendum to address the second Sbisà falsification. Given that the authors of the article must have been consulted on the first corrigendum, it is surprising that they did not point out that the second mistake should be corrected as well. It is a mystery how they can assume that we will not point out the falsehoods.

superiority. Really? The theory is designed (by whom?) *in order to* protect white Western superiority. In another passage they similarly talk about the theory *seeking* to "excuse and reinforce a white liberal status quo" (H&RM 2010: 13 [11]).

This passage thus condenses the two major problems of the article: it makes outrageously far-reaching and demeaning statements about us and our theory; and it does so based on a mixture of creative imaginations and outright falsifications.

2. An evolutionary theory contrasting European desecuritization and African anarchy?

What comes closest to a coherent and meaningful argument in the article is the following (which also figures prominently in the abstract):

1: ST "advances a conceptualization of 'normal politics' as reasoned, civilized dialogue".

2: Europe is privileged as the apex of civilized desecuritization.

3: This privileging of Europe as the morally superior model to emulate is established by contrasting an antiblack depiction of Africa as the home of an oversecuritized primal anarchy.

4: The relationship between the securitized primal anarchy in Africa and the de-securitized nirvana of Europe is presented as a historicist and evolutionary model of progress.

This argument is further bolstered by two moves that we will deal with more separately in other sections: a claim that we "sanitize" the picture of Europe by ignoring its violent colonial projects and the racial violence of normal liberal politics and that our thinking is 'civilizational', 'normatively white' and 'anti-black racist' through the scholarship it cites and/or draws on. These raise primarily methodological issues and therefore they are dealt with separately, while the problem with the argument summarised in the four steps is more about its accuracy vis-à-vis our writings and this is what we focus on in this section.

All four elements are without foundations in the actual Copenhagen School publications.

'Normal Politics' – letting possible connotations overwrite actual text and theoretical structure

The foundational misunderstanding in H&RM on which their whole 'argument' hangs is an alleged "conceptualization of 'normal politics' as reasoned, civilized dialogue". In the Framework book (Buzan et al 1998), we write:

> "Of course, places do exist where secrecy or violation of rights is the rule and where security arguments are not needed to legitimize such acts. The earlier illustrations were for a liberal-democratic society; in other societies there will also be "rules," as there are in any society, and *when a securitizing actor uses a rhetoric of existential threat and thereby takes an issue out of what under those conditions is "normal politics," we have a case of securitization*" (1998: 24-25; emphasis added)

Thus, quite explicitly, 'normal politics' is *not* a politics with some specific attributes (like 'liberal', 'rational', 'enlightened' or 'reasoned'); it is whatever passed as normal until an exception was installed through securitization.

Later (because H&RM are not the first to make this mis-reading), we clarified "whether it celebrates some kind of 'normal politics' as an idyllized contrast to emergency measures." (Wæver 2011: 466f). "(T)he most common [argument], which is based on a misreading of the theory, is that the theory

presupposes liberal democratic conditions. This overlooks the fact that the depoliticizing effect of securitization is understood in relative terms, and therefore can be observed in both democratic and undemocratic societies." (Greenwood & Wæver 2013: 485-486)

We are not using 'normal politics' as anything tied to liberal, democratic or idealised societies; the point of the theory is to study *what happens when you through an exceptionalist logic of threat and defense take an issue out of whatever used to be normal, moving it to the specific state of being securitized*. The whole idea that the theory has a substantialist notion of 'normal politics' is a misunderstanding. We can see how the phrase 'normal politics' enables this misunderstanding. However, the 'correction' is out there for the interested scholar to read. Thus, we are not surprised if a casual reader gets the wrong idea at first. We are, however, surprised that scholars who publish a whole article on ST are able to build it on this misunderstanding, not notice that there is no textual basis for their interpretation (only their own connotations) and the more you look, the more the counter-evidence to this interpretation piles up. To then fill the gaps with false quotations flips the whole exercise into academic fraud. Even more importantly: If one really cared to understand the inner logic of the theory, it should be quite clear which of the alternative readings makes sense. ST is *a theory of what difference securitization makes*. It is therefore by its inner structure driven towards giving content to only the securitization side of that distinction – it is about securitization in contrast to the non-securitized. Naturally, the concept of that-which-is-not-securitized is kept unspecified. This is spelled out with more clarity in Wæver 2011 and 2015, but inherent in the rationale from the beginning. Explanations as the one cited above about the situation not demanding democratic conditions and the move being relative, also implies that the whole point is to be able to isolate the importance of the transformation that happens if something is constituted on the figure of the exception with reference to a threat. Securitized situations are those constituted on this figure and the purpose of the theory is to enable analyses of who can get away with this under what conditions on what kinds of subjects, who can resist it or undo it how, and not least: what happens – what difference does it make – when something is securitized. As explained numerous times (and as proven by the widespread adoption of the theory around the world), securitization is a transformation that can be performed in all kinds of societies, whether democratic or not, and thus in these very different instances it takes off from situations that vary enormously as to how 'civil' or 'liberal' they are, and the event is that in each of these cases, what was previously 'normal' is then changed by an argument about the necessity to deal with an existential threat that justified extraordinary measures. It is therefore inherent in the structure of the theory, that the nature of the exception is explored and fleshed out, while the 'normal' is the intentionally unspecified backdrop for this.[29] Therefore, the hunt by H&RM for a quote where we characterise the normal as liberal, civil or reasoned has left them empty-handed, because this is not how the theory is built, because then the theory could not do what it is intended to do.

That the 'normal' (empty) backdrop to securitization is not conceptually positivized but exactly thematised in terms of the difference securitization makes, can be seen in two additional ways. In the respective chapters of Buzan et al 1998, securitization is contrasted to economic issues being treated economically, environmental problems in terms of environmental rationality and so forth. This was central to the original debates that spurred securitization theory – the worries among eg. environmentalists about the cost to be paid by treating environmental problems in a security mode (Deudney 1990; Huysmans 2006). For instance in the first major article on religion and ST (Laustsen

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[29] One place where this logic has been clarified further is in a debate that generated many publications over the nature of *desecuritization*. We, in the original texts equated too simplistically de-securitization with politicization, but critics like Claudia Aradau (2004) pointed out that de-securitization could equally well happen through eg. a scientist, de-politicizing, expert-based rationality of managerial risk practices. This, we admitted (Wæver 2011: 472; and elsewhere), and it thereby became further clarified that not only the 'before securitization' of 'normal politics, but also the 'after' of 'de-securitization' should be approached as an unspecified space of many possible forms of non-securitization, not any specific form of politics.

& Wæver 2000), the central argument is that attempts to 'defend religion' in a securitized manner actually jar against some essential features of religion itself. Thus, it is quite clear here that the alternative to 'securitization' is not 'reasoned enlightened dialogue' but actually religious practices. Secondly, there have been discussions in the field about when securitization might be a reasonable choice in a concrete situation (eg. Floyd 2011, 2019). Maybe most clearly spelled out in Wæver 2011, we argue that actors have to make a concrete political analysis of the situation they are in, and all the theory can say is that securitization has some inherent negative effects including being as a tendency de-democratizing through its logic of necessity and silencing of dissent, but whether the urgency gained is worth it and how nice or not the non-securitized situation is, that is an empirical question for the concrete analysis.[30] Again, it should be sufficiently clear to any interested reader that we do not have a substantial definition of 'normal politics' as reasoned, civil, liberal, Habermasian and European.

Of course, it is not always enough for an author to declare something to be the case – you are not necessarily the authority on your own text.[31] Maybe the text actually *does* work through assumptions of 'normal politics' as "reasoned, civilized dialogue", and then this criticism would still be valid, even if we, the authors, claim that this is not what we mean. However, given that we write this in the key reference text, that there has been quite an extensive debate on this and that we have tried previously to clarify how we intended the concept to be understood and the theory to be applied, it does not seem in line with good scholarly practice to ignore all of this and just relapse to your first impression that happens to serve your argumentative purpose. To be a state-of-the-art article worth publication in *Security Dialogue*, it should make its case on this terrain; or at least acknowledge that this goes against explicit arguments in the other direction. H&RM do not even reflect on the pros and cons of different possible interpretations. Without qualifications, without allowing for contradictory indications in the material, they present one, unqualified and thoroughly misguided interpretation.

H&RM do not engage with any of these debates or responses, they simply repeat the misunderstanding that "normal politics" means reasoned, liberal, civil dialogue. And from there,

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[30] Wæver 2011: 469: "Second, the theory has a 'bias' for desecuritization, although a careful one (more on this below). Desecuritization is not always better than securitization. On this point, the text in 'the Framework book' (Buzan et al., 1998: 29) is actually quite precise: desecuritization is preferable in the abstract, but concrete situations might call for securitization. A vote for desecuritization comes directly from the theory, since key causal mechanisms emphasize the unavoidable negative effects of securitization, but the analytical set-up allows empirical analysis of the possible advantages of handling a particular challenge within the format of both security and non-security. Some inevitable negative effects of any securitization – the logic of necessity, the narrowing of choice, the empowerment of a smaller elite – are always highlighted whenever this theory is used. The 'preference' for desecuritization is not of the 'political stance' type, but an effect produced by the kinds of analysis that securitization theory spurs: it fosters critical attention to the costs of securitization but allows for the possibility that securitization might help society to deal with important challenges through focusing and mobilizing attention and resources."

[31] Ironically, in the drawn-out process since August 2019, a very strong version of authors' authority to define the proper reading of their text has been asserted by the journal. Already before Covid-19 added weeks, our reply was delayed by several months, and the main reason was that *Security Dialogue* and Sage's lawyers claimed that we could not say that we had been accused of a racist deed, because H&RM write that their critique is about "not merely a failure of individual scholarship" but primarily about racism as "a system of power". Strangely, a very thin disclaimer in their article is the final word on how to read it (even when we in our critique presented explicit arguments for a different reading of their actual textual doings), whereas our numerous statements about our own theory (which contradicts their interpretation of it) are not only dethroned as final authority (good!), but allowed to be ignored (not so good). We believe that it is a both normal and sound principle for discussion of texts that if there is an "official" self-presentation, this is acknowledged and if one wants to challenge it, one argues how and why. To just write the opposite without mentioning that one does so, will create many problems for readers and authors alike.

they associate creatively into this being "a teleological hierarchy of civilizational achievement from securitization towards politicization" (2020: 8 [6]); this characterization they back up with a reference to pp 53 and 69 in the Framework book (Buzan et al 1998). It can look damning when H&RM write this and back it with a reference, but if you read those pages, there is absolutely no hint of securitization-to-politicization being cast in evolutionary or civilizational terms[32]. Their article contains dozens of references like this, where they throw in a reference to one of our texts, but what you find there is not what they claim but at best some of the words, saying something completely different.

Europe

The second step in their argument is that ST "privileges Europe as the apex of civilised 'desecuritization', sanitizing its violent (settler-)colonial projects and the racial violence of normal liberal politics". A reader of this line will get the impression that we essentialise Europe as inherently alien to securitization and violence. The rest of the H&RM article builds on (and repeats many times) this image, i.e. that we construct desecuritization as characteristic of Europe. This is blatantly false for two very solid and important reasons.

First, because the desecuritization case they refer to actually depicts Europe as uniquely violent, not the opposite (as they imply). Second, because H&RM edit out of the picture that our analyses of Europe consistently depict Europe as distinctly prone to an explosion of new securitizations (of identity, migration, environment, economics, etc).

The latter is particularly misleading and dishonest, because if any empirical context should be seen as constitutive and shaping for the theory, it is this one. The central manipulation of H&RM is to erase completely the empirical cases we both write (quantitatively) most about and (qualitatively) place centrally in launching the theoretical concepts. On the empty spot from this manipulative concealment, they place instead a claim that Africa provides the underlying image of securitization. This, despite Africa being absent from those key formative passages of the texts presenting the theory, so they pick random empirical observations mostly from a book 10 years later that develops another theory (Buzan & Wæver 2003), which they with no justification treat as 'constitutive' of the mid 1990s texts; more on this below.

As to the first Europe mistake: The Framework book contains one empirical case study, European identity and security (Buzan et al 1998: 179-189), where a major point follows Wæver 1996[33]. The key argument – that has been picked up quite widely by other scholars and therefore should be difficult for scholars to overlook – is that exactly the disastrous nature of Europe's violent history is mobilised in a securitization of 'Europeanness' being dangerous, thus justifying European integration (an argument anchored all the way back in the first collective Copenhagen School book: Buzan et al 1990)[34]. H&RM provide a misleading representation of this case by leaving out the most important

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[32] Those pages contain phrasings that can trigger a discussion of 'civilizationism' in general, but H&RM cite them as if they anchor the concepts of 'securitization' and 'politicization' in such a historicist mechanic. Their statement is thus at best almost true if you take any empirical statements in these books as pronounced by the mysterious subject 'securitization theory' (and thereby by implication retro-defining what its key concepts mean). If, however, you read what H&RM actually write, the reference is not a valid documentation for this, because it is simply not true that 'politicized' and 'securitized' is organised in this racial, evolutionary hierarchy – this is not what you find in those pages of ours that they make reference to.

[33] In both Wæver 1996 and Buzan et al 1998 we credit Helle Rytkønen (1995) with the original version of this analysis, but unfairly we have since then often been treated as the original source. H&RM's interpretation of this argument probably would be equally surprising to this dedicated anti-racist scholar and to Thomas Diez who has most consistently assessed the thesis at later stages of European history (Diez 2004; see also Cooley 2019).

[34] Here Pierre Lemaitre should be credited as the original force for installing this dialectical argument at the heart of 'the Copenhagen School' analysis.

feature – securitizing one's own past – and instead make it look as if desecuritization is Europe's natural state of being; i.e. a precarious attempted *negation* is treated as essentialised *continuity*[35]. This is not a minor omission; it takes a disciplined manipulation to get this history out upside-down.

We do present a particular empirical interpretation of an interesting de-securitization as part of the European security constellation, but it is not one that makes de-securitization or peacefulness inherently linked to Europeanness, on the contrary. Also, we do make an argument throughout many of our books (Buzan et al 1990: Wæver et al 1003: Buzan et al 1998; Buzan & Wæver 2003) and articles (Wæver 1995, 1998) for the unique features of the European integration project as a regional security strategy. If this would make us racist, it will apply similarly to Ernst Haas, Karl Deutsch, Peter Katzenstein, Jacques Derrida, Edgar Morin, Vaclac Havel and all the other people who have attempted to understand this peace project. The tone of the criticism suggests that our crime is bigger – that somehow we impute the successes and qualities of this project to some inherent Europeanness or whiteness, and that we wash away all negative aspects of European history, but obviously neither is the case. So it is actually simply the fact of finding something interesting, valuable and potentially inspiring in the way Europe has attempted to break with its own dark history to chart a new course that makes us 'racist'.

There is an alternative way to make sense of H&RM's seemingly incomprehensible Europe 'analysis':

> When proof-reading this long document, we suddenly realise that we might have been too generous to H&RM in assuming – also in our short response – that their (mis)reading of "Securitization Theory's Europe" was based on the section of the Framework book about this and/or the Europe chapters in *Regions and Powers*. We assumed this to be the case because it is the closest we come to any kind of European 'exceptionalism'; although presented as a way Europe tries to mobilise its uniquely violent history, it *is* also a 'positive' story about a European (and EU building) project to de-securitize relations among states by a meta-securitization with Europe as a referent object and as threat. The actual references in their article could indicate that they actually chose to ignore the Europe sections of both books as well as the numerous articles written by Wæver about Europe around the time of the launch of the theory (eg. Wæver 1996, 1997b, 1998, 2000) and also this element of their 'reading' hangs on the one passage that they also use to make us Hobbesian, social contract theorists, the passage at the end of the *Framework* book where we construct a possible traditionalist critique of our theory. They quote this passage about "the liberals' project" (which we clearly denounce a few lines later as not ours) and what we say there about Europe.

> Even in their quote from us, we talk about 'progress as desecuritization' as inherent in the liberals' *project*. I.e. the argument we are making here is related to a particular 'model' for desecuritization (which we eventually denounce), where security is consolidated in a strong but minimalist state and reduced to objectivist, military security and thereby freeing up the largest possible spaces for desecuritization). Then we add that this *project* has been taken the furthest in the 'zone of peace' (our quotation marks in original) and we continue into the post-cold war dissolving of borders that implies a desecuritization of 'most kinds of political, social and economic interaction', and the latter development we note is "most advanced within the EU". We italicize '*project*' here – H&RM instead italicize '*furthest*' and '*most advanced*'. H&RM manage to read into this that we characterise the period in general as one of 'progress', when we are discussing a specific progress in relation to a

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[35] One could probably criticise us for the opposite: for overdoing the negative side of the European desecuritization project, probably driven by Wæver's early history as a Germany scholar and thus reading the European project in the light of Germany's rejection of its own history (Wæver 1989b). But to read these pages as a celebration of inherent European peacefulness, anti-securitization and non-violence, that is unsustainable.

particular vision of desecuritization, and they then lecture us about this actually being a period of violent imperialism, which we have pointed out in numerous other places. What matters to H&RM here seems only to get a rhetorical ploy where they can pretend that we made a general characterisation of this period as 'progress', which is a violent misreading of the passage. It gets really crude when they then emphasize with no explanation 'most advanced' – presumably in order to lend some credibility to their several unfounded attributions to us of views of some civilisations being more politically and morally(!) advanced than others. Otherwise it is meaningless why 'most advanced' should be italicized here. If reading closely, our text has nothing to do with this sense of 'advanced': it is a very specific statement using 'most advanced' in the sense of having advanced along a line – in this case about the EU having advanced along one particular trajectory, not that it is more 'advanced', but even the italicizing practices of H&RM are polemical and manipulative.

IF this is actually where they get their idea of Europe as desecuritization from, it is even more embarrassing. Then it is a misreading within a misreading: the whole page is about a hypothetical argument to challenge our own; and within this argument we are discussing a liberal 'project', where desecuritization happens in a particular way, not a description of actual history; and a project which we eventually distance ourselves from on the following page. If this is really their basis for the argument which so much of their article hangs on – that we equate Europe with desecuritization and 'peacefulness' – it turns out that almost all of their article is based on these two pages at the end of the Framework book. The general understanding of the theory, they do not get from the theory chapter (or Wæver's theoretical articles; 1995, 2011, 2015) but from a passage at the end of the book which they load with 'contract theory' and historical evolutionism. The analysis of Europe they take neither from the case study in the same book of Europe, nor from the Europe chapter in the other book or the preceding books that were all about Europe, or from the many articles published at the same time. For H&RM the true place of Europe in Securitization Theory is anchored in basically one paragraph about something else. We have never seen anything like this in any other social science analysis, nor do we hope to ever do so.

We include both possible readings of their 'sources' for the weird reading of Europe in Securitization Theory because the first (that it is the particular 'Europe securitizing its own past' project) because it at first seems most plausible, and it is the one we make reference to in our short reply and therefore we need to unfold it here; the second possible reading is pathetic and therefore much less interesting, but unfortunately it does upon closer reading of H&RM's article seem the most plausible. These were two different takes on their first Europe problem: that they construct some kind of specific link between Europe and desecuritization; this still leaves the second problem, that they ignore the volume and centrality of our numerous analyses of *securitization* in Europe.

We now turn to their second Europe-mistake which is even more important and more obviously scientific malpractice because what they edit out here is impossible to overlook (the dialectics of Europe's securitization of its own history might be too complex to catch quickly; this second point not). Thus it is a hard not to see it as a wilful act of misrepresentation by H&RM. We make a very strong case for Europe actually being the location of an explosion of new forms of securitization. This is in many ways the framing plot of already Wæver et al 1993: that the dynamic of securitizing identity (societal security) has found particularly strong and dangerous and politically significant expressions in Europe because of the post-Cold War changes to European security. Also, the chapter on EU-Europe in Buzan & Wæver 2003 argues that new securitizations multiply in Europe with ambiguous effects (partly because the classical inter-state state-on-state securitizations have been

pushed more into the background here)[36] (Wæver 1996, 1998; 2005) It is hard for us to see how any reader of texts like these can get the impression that we equate Europe with de-securitization given the place of Europe as the arena for many of the new securitizations. The misrepresentation performed by H&RM is not a matter of degree. It is not that they mention both sides and then present a case for emphasising more the minor part about desecuritization in relation to the major part about European securitizations. No. It is a complete and uniform presentation of one element (misrepresented), European desecuritization, and a complete leaving out of the other elements that are both quantitatively far larger *and* qualitatively more foundational to the theory because it was constructed to address these emerging, 'widening' securitizations. Readers less familiar with the theory don't even get a warning that this is a 'reading' and that there is also the 99,9% that is deselected; they simply get the 0,1% as if this is it. Are we really ready to accept publications that mis-represent their subject matter like this? Can you do it in an empirical analysis too: pick one atypical element or event and ignore the overwhelming, countervailing evidence without explaining that and why you do so?

Foreshadowing an issue of methodology in section 5, it is worth looking specifically at the article 'securitization and desecuritization' (Wæver 1995) that is commonly referenced as the public launch of the concept and theory of securitization (for those who do not go all the way back to its earlier incarnation as a 1989 working paper). The article develops the concept in relation to four 'cases'. All of these are centred on Europe: change and détente in Europe 1960-1990, environmental security, societal security and European security after the Cold War. They all show the dangers in securitization, the ambivalent gains attracting some actors to the use of securitization and the difficulties of achieving some more creative political openings through desecuritization. The overarching theoretical reason for introducing 'securitization' and the speech act approach is in this article very clearly that scholars and activists mostly in Europe were pushing an agenda of 'widening security' that would lead to a counter-productive securitization of more and more issues. The 'danger' of securitization that the theory is shaped by its opposition to is thus a Western and mostly 'progressive' attempt to shift security from a narrow military to a wider usage (and this is backed up by a history showing the use by the two – 'Northern' – power centres in the Cold War employing securitization and desecuritization to limit social change).[37]

The first Copenhagen School book where the securitization perspective played a role was the 1993 one, "Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe". This book is all about the risks involved in European security turning towards security policies on behalf of 'identities' and against supra-national integration, other national and ethnic identities and against migrants. The explicit

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[36] "After 1989, several new elements were added to the security discourse in Europe: environment, immigrants, ethnic conflict, organized crime, and terrorism. The list in Europe achieved maximum breadth covering all sectors and almost all levels (…). Of the ten securitizations listed below, the first two increasingly came to dominate the whole field." (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 356). This is in a sub-section on the EU core; later sections look at 'Eastern Europe' and beyond; the next chapter on the Balkans and Turkey, so even more elements, including traditional security also enter the picture for Europe. The main point, however, is that EU Europe is presented as the part of the world 'most advanced' in multiplying new forms of securitization. In their article, H&RM equate the degree of securitization with the degree of danger (if we say that radical feminists securitize something, we depict them as a danger; Africa is the source of danger because this is where we locate securitization; etc), so in this light the only consistent conclusion would be that our image of Europe is as the most dangerous, a machine of novel forms of securitization. But no: not mentioned at all.

[37] Buzan et al 1998 is less strongly structured by an *opposition* to widening, than the article was. It addresses instead how to articulate an analytical framework for manoeuvring an age of widening. Still, the whole plot clearly is an attention to the 'dark side' of securitizations presented by others as progressive (by wideners) or necessary (by traditionalists). Clearly, still in Buzan et al 1998, the 'danger' stemming from securitization is not located in an irrational racialized Africa, but from exactly rationalistic attempts in the West to depict security threats as objective and thus uncontestable.

formulation of ST grew out of its largely implicit role in this book. If a subterranean dark force of threatening securitizations loom under the theory, that force is in Europe, not Africa.

Thus, H&RM mislead their readers when linking Europe only to securitization/desecuritization on one point, the specific de-securitization at stake in one project for shaping Europe's identity, integration and security through a particular attack on its own violence, giving the reader the impression that there is a kind of equation between 'Europe' and this one de-securitization (which they misrepresent as well). The widening of security that forms the main context and rationale for the development of the theory was very much a European affair, academically and politically. H&RM ignores both the quantitatively biggest part of the foundational texts and qualitatively the passages where constitutive moments should be searched out. They don't offer any justification for their choice – they simply deselect an enormous amount of text in order to make a few strangely selected passages on something else take the allegedly decisive place, i.e. turning Africa into the foundational image of securitization. Had this been a 'normal' empirical analysis, and the authors treated their data like this, the article would be retracted for falsification of data. That the 'data' in this kind is a theory should not change the injunction against gross mis-representations.

Africa

The third step in H&RM's argument is that our anti-black image of Africa plays a constitutive role for the construction of securitization/desecuritization. This is a very important question, because that is indeed all too often what happens in (Western) theory building that orientalist or other geographically othering images plays such a role. However, if this should be the case for our categories the way H&RM claim, one should expect them to be at play in the foundational texts of ST like Wæver et al 1993, Wæver 1995 and Buzan et al 1998 – by their presences or absences, as metaphors or illustrations, H&RM should be able to demonstrate this on the texts that actually were foundational. However, they draw their main references from a later text, Buzan & Wæver 2003 (*Regions and Powers*), which is not even strictly speaking a securitization analysis, but as explained in its methodology section actually a more big-picture global analysis that only in designated 'deep looks' goes into proper securitization analysis. In addition to *Regions and Powers*, H&RM make references to a few mentions of Africa in the Framework book (Buzan et al 1998), but in no case closely connected to the constitution of the core concepts of securitization, de-securitization and politicization, but mostly in discussions of a sub-set of a sub-set of issues, i.e. within the military sector chapter as the challenge of analysing military security dynamics in situations where the state is not the dominant centre. They offer no justification as seeing these passages as particularly defining for the key concepts. Note: it is not that their reasons are unconvincing – they don't even try to present any reason why these passages should be the key to the deep meaning of the central concepts. None.

The usage of *Regions and Powers* (Buzan & Wæver 2003) is problematic for two reasons. First, it is not part of constructing ST. The key concepts of ST were first presented in Wæver 1995 and Buzan et al 1998; and parts of this can be traced through Buzan et al 1990 and Wæver et al 1993. Buzan & Wæver 2003 is clearly presented as primarily the development of *another theory*: Regional Security Complex Theory (that theory is not mentioned in H&RM). We explain in that book carefully how it draws on some points on ST, but also why the global analysis cannot be built through securitization analysis in a rigorous sense but has to use approximations and indicators (ST purists therefore often ignore or criticise the book; to use it as the almost quintessential guide to ST is to put it mildly: unconventional).[38] The book's project clearly is to present, apply and analyse a framework for the

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[38] Both theories belong to the larger 'Copenhagen School' project according to most observers and ourselves, but we are very clear in both of the two main books that there are important tensions between the two theories, and we actually explain how that tension was what animated the 1998 book.

study of regional security. For instance, the concluding chapter opens "This chapter reflects on a number of points about regional security complex theory (RSCT) and its application" (p461).

Second, Buzan & Wæver 2003 covers all regions of the world with roughly 50 pages on each. H&RM pick out passages from the Africa analysis and with no justification whatsoever not only transpose these a decade back in time to the constitution of another theory, ST, they also claim that the Africa passages have some particular status for the theoretical categories of ST. They make no mention of the analysis of say South East Asia or Latin America.

Even if they had found problematic passages in this Africa chapter, this would at best be a case of actually the two of us having written passages deserving an anti-racist push-back. This would not in itself constitute any evidence of Securitization *Theory* being racist. H&RM offer no reason why the Africa section in our book on RSCT should mysteriously be 'constitutive' of the meaning of key categories in that other theory, ST, we put forward a decade earlier. The idea that somehow these observations on securitizations in Africa reveal the essence of the categories of the theory is not backed by any argument, it is just asserted as a fact by H&RM.

In the chapters on each region of the world, the book does make each region a particularly grave and problematic instance of some particular features of security dynamics. So surely there are also some forms of security that are 'worst' in Africa (and others in Europe, and yet others in the Middle East etc).

They could with equal justification pick out, say, the most negative features from North America and the most positive from East Asia and claim ours was an evolutionary story moving from a US-American past to a Chinese future. It is one problem that they pick two arbitrary 'data points' and draw a line between those two; another is that they interpret this line as some kind of mechanism. With zero basis in our publications, they treat their line between empirical sentences about Africa to an equally selective subset of our observations about Europe as a linear evolutionist, teleological story with progress towards the European model.

It is a very explicit – and actually a major – point in the book that the four regions with the world's dominant powers – East Asia, North America, post-Soviet Space and Europe – have taken structurally very different routes; there is not one prescribed evolutionary pathway. One of the main conclusions to Buzan & Wæver 2003 was the "particular distinctiveness of each RSC in its own right" (p 448). For years, the working title of the project was 'Regions set free' to capture the increasing post-Cold War diversity of path-ways. Both at the surface level that H&RM prefer, finding bits of text to splice into new meanings, they have no texts to back up the evolutionary, pre-determined picture of historical relationship between regions; and: the bigger plot of the book strongly speaks against the claim they make numerous times in their article.

A historicist, evolutionary, teleological line drawn between two arbitrarily selected data points

H&RM write numerous times that 'normal politics' is in ST "an achievement of civilized people capable of resisting violence (securitization) through reasoned dialogue (politicization)." We explain in several places, what we mean by politicization – and it is explicitly not "reasoned dialogue". It is equally wrong to equate securitization with violence. In addition to this mis-representation of our argument, the claim that we allocate desecuritization to "civilized people" and securitization to lesser peoples is simply absurd. Any reader who trawls through Buzan et al 1998 and Buzan & Wæver 2003 will see that the thousands of different instances of securitization and desecuritization are spread out across the world, not distributed as they claim. Their only basis for claiming that one is anchored in the West or Europe and the other in the non-West and especially Africa is a totally unjustified selectivity of picking a few cases out and with no discussion or justification presenting these as the full story (or at least somehow most central), while not as much as mentioning that they

ignore the vast majority of our cases and illustrations -- this then backed up with bizarre routes of guilt by association linking us to racist authors, a mis-understanding of 'normal politics' and an unfounded teleological, evolutionary reading of a scaffolding around progress that is imposed on the theory by them partly through a fraudulent citation, but certainly not built into the theoretical categories.

Especially in follow up debates (like Wæver 2011, 2015), we have been keen to defend the theory against 'improvers' who wanted to equip the theory with some underlying causal mechanisms explaining when securitization happens.[39] Up against this, we have insisted on fine-tuning the theoretical framework to be able to expose each and every instance of securitization in the world to the contingency of being a political choice where practitioners and scholars have responsibility for declaring a security threat and thus producing the distinct effects of securitization. To saddle the whole theory on a large historicist, evolutionary, teleological framework would be the most counter-productive move one could imagine to make in relation to the project the theory constitutes. This again shows that it is hard to make a meaningful critique of a theory if you pay absolutely zero attention to its inner logic, what it is created to be able to do and what battles it was born into. (No, we do not ask that they *buy* the self-presentation, but especially if going against both the self-presentation by its authors and the prevailing interpretation in the secondary literature, you ought to justify your surprising reading and acknowledge where it is controversial. Probably, the most influential guideline for how to read a theory is Quentin Skinner's [2002] where you try to re-construct what a theory is trying to do especially vis-à-vis previously dominant theories, and on the basis of this agenda you make sense out of the moves made. H&RM follow neither one nor the other principle, and offer no rationale for going off on totally idiosyncratic readings against the grain.)

To sum up this section, H&RM achieve their contrived construction of ST through on the one hand misleading selectivity of empirical cases and on the other unfounded theoretical moves. Empirically, they depict Europe as somehow the home of desecuritization, and Africa as the essence of securitization. In addition to ignoring the rest of the world, they edit out all instances from these two regions that don't fit the story, and they offer no reason why Africa should be seen as constitutive for the theory. At the theoretical level, they go against the inner logic of the theory, which is to keep securitization/desecuritization as acts available to actors to be fought over politically in every possible situation and try instead to create a deep societal, mechanical anchoring (which we have always refuted), in this case by tying desecuritization to an invented link to liberal, democractic, Western politics and securitization to 'primal anarchy'. These links have no foundations in our texts.

3. Mimicking Mills

Most of the H&RM article is a messy collection of insinuations and strange indirect accusations, like the guilt by association and the 'missing disclaimers' in our writings. However, they do have two relatively distinct routes to arrive at their conclusions. The first is the one discussed in section 2,

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[39] Please note, we are not saying here that texts like Wæver 2011, 2015 are 'foundational' to the theory and should be read as if published in the mid 1990s, nor that we have authority to define how the early texts should be read. Our argument is simply that given various debates and ambiguities, we have tried to explicate the inner structure of the theory. Our claim is that this is how the theory hangs together already in the early version, even if not always spelled out sufficiently. Whether this is a plausible self-reading or not could and should naturally be contested. However, serious scholarship does not ignore interventions like this and flatly present the opposite reading without discussing or at least acknowledging that the theorists themselves understand the nature and structure of the theory in a manner that precludes such historicism. (H&RM does not have an obligation to look up each and every obscure article of ours on ST. But the articles we point to here as important keys to how to understand 'what kind of theory' ST is, they actually do cite several times – but only when it serves their purpose, like picking out the Sbisà quote and present it several times as authored by Wæver. That the same articles undermine their interpretation on so many other points, they simply ignore.)

which was relatively easy to identify given that it dominates the abstract. Their second line of reaching their conclusions is less clearly spelled out (eg absent from the abstract), but it actually takes up a major part of the article, only presented very incoherently. It is an attempt to pin us down as building ST on Hobbes, state of nature and social contract. This basically means latching on to arguments made by others, trying to deem us guilty of the same as has been proven elsewhere. The original inspiration here seems to be Charles W. Mills and his ''The Racial Contract' (1997). Mills demonstrates how 'the social contract' is racist –and he does so convincingly. It is misuse of his work to go hunting for any mention of Hobbes or the social contract and label work racist on this basis – after all he constructs his own 'positive' theory of the racial contract exactly on this theoretical lineage. Some IR scholars (Hobson, Henderson, and others) have found inspiration here and looked at major IR theories through this lens. This is sometimes done more convincingly than other, i.e. sometimes actually looking at the work these concepts do in the examined IR theories, sometimes mostly looking for the terms. In the case of H&RM this line of work goes completely off the rails. They are keen to show that we draw on Hobbes, state of nature and social contract. However, they do not then look at Securitization Theory to see whether it is actually structured around a 'social contract' logic. Not at all. They only look for the words Hobbes, state of nature and social contract.

They write 'state of nature' 13 times (in addition to the 2 in their quotes), while they have actually zero backing for this in our writings. *They had one quote to back it up, and this is the one that we have now demonstrated was actually by Sbisà and quoted by Wæver in 2015*. Similarly, we do not base our work on Hobbes – but we use the word 'Hobbesian' to characterize individual level anarchy. The closest we get to actually mobilize Hobbes is a passage they quote at length (and cite several times), and this is the one we have demonstrated actually comes from a passage where we construct the strongest possible *critique* from 'traditional security studies' against ST.[40] We find it suspicious that their worst offenses against basic rules for citation are found at these highly strategic places. Had these malpractices been to get just one more quote for something they had ample evidence of, it would make less of a difference. However, without these fabricated quotations, they have no backing at all for their second line of argumentation (nor for the Europe part of the first line).

When alerted by us to this problem, the reaction of *Security Dialogue* was to correct the Sbisà/Wæver citation in H&RM's article, while refusing to see any issue about validity of their analysis. This is more than a 'typographical' error, it is the one, final piece of evidence disappearing.

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[40] We have done a search of the two books they treat as core texts, Buzan et al 1998 and Buzan & Wæver 2003. In the first, the Framework book, a search for 'Hobbes' provides zero hits. 'Hobbesian' appears 4 times. Two of these are 'Hobbesian anarchy' which usually is not taken to imply any serious reference to Hobbes' work but as discussed above (in relation to 'primal anarchy') a way to characterise individual level anarchy in contrast to an anarchy among states. The last two occurrences of 'Hobbesian' are exactly the discussion of the 'Hobbesian state' and 'Hobbesian Leviathan' that we have pointed out are put as a hypothetical challenge to our theory which we end up denouncing. In *Regions and Powers*, 'Hobbes' is mentioned two times – in discussion of the three traditions in the English School and Wendt's three types of anarchy. 'Hobbesian' appears 11 times in the 600 pages, and of these the first 4 are also in the discussion of Wendt, while the other seven are in relation to 'Hobbesian anarchy'. One of these is more than the trivial, metaphorical use. This one is at the beginning of the Africa chapter and makes reference to "the Hobbesian hypothesis that in the absence of a political Leviathan life for individuals will be nasty, brutish, and short" (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 219). Naturally, H&RM cite this passage at length. This particular passage can legitimately be criticised for its depiction of Africa – and we will return to this in the proper section. However, there is absolutely no way to conclude from this isolated usage of Hobbes' image of life in a state-less situation *that our general theory is Hobbesian, based on state or nature and social contract*. The point Mills is making about Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant is that they construct their concept of a social contract with racial distinctions at play to enable this operation. We do not use images of Africa in our construction of key concepts, and Hobbes, social contract and state of nature do not figure at all in our theory chapters or in relation to the introduction of the key concepts like securitization and de-securitization.

How can you legitimately still present a significant claim when all backing for it has been proven to be mis-attributions?

As the mistakes gradually get corrected in corrigendum after corrigendum to the article by H&RM, the observant reader gets a chance to see how documentation-free the strong claims are. However, the article was *reviewed* with the false quotes. To a reviewer well versed in race studies, the Mills line of argument will be familiar, so even if H&RM present their argument poorly, a reviewer will know the weight of us being connected to this criticism, and with the (false) quotations in the original version, there appear to be backing for this. A reviewer cannot be expected to fact check and discover that there are no other passages in our work to replace these non-quotes. But it would seem plausible that a reviewer would be less convinced by a submission, where the strongest and longest quote was from "Sbisà 1997 quoted by Wæver 2015" rather than by "Wæver 2015". The reviewer might then stop to wonder: don't H&RM have actual quotes of this from the attacked authors themselves? No they don't. But the article got published, based on the reviewing of a manuscript with mis-attributed quotes. Is this a problem? Not according to the editors of *Security Dialogue*.

The whole exercise of latching on to Mills like this is problematic. The weight of 'racism' does not work the same way when 1) applied to the social contract theorist themselves (by Mills) or 2) when transferred (by Henderson especially) to IR theories like neorealism or neo-liberal institutionalism that build strongly and directly on contract theory or when 3) rubbed off on theories that at most has a marginal contact to contract theory (as would be the case even if the quotes offered by H&RM were valid, which then even they are not). This seems to us to be an important point for future scholarship. It would be such a waste if anti-racist scholars were to spend their energy on trying to find Hobbes citations in various kinds of IR scholarship to deem theory after theory racist. To what extent most is gained by studying racist practices outside academia or inside it is one discussion (to which we return), but to do the internal side in such an indirect way is definitely not productive. At least one should show the work of race in the constitution of the theories in case, not import it by indirect routes like this.

In a sense the article by H&RM copies Mills twice. First H&RM tries (as discussed in section 2) to do a direct reading of the target literature and its key concepts like securitization and desecuritization, only they get key concepts totally wrong (mis-understanding both securitization and 'normal politics'), misrepresents the main empirical case, Europe, and does not as Mills have actual textual backing in the relevant conceptual and theoretical parts of the foundational texts for claiming that 'Africa' plays a constitutive role (in his case for the articulation in Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau of 'the state of nature'; in the case of ST not in the theory parts at all). Then secondly, they import Mills' analysis in the sense that his conclusion about social contract theory is deemed to infect every theory that has any contact to the theorists, he analysed. After decoding H&RM's article in the light of Mills, it would have been possible to make a much clearer presentation of its theoretical basis than the one in the published version; except it would probably also have shown quite clearly how the article fails.

Errol A. Henderson's influential 2013 article "Hidden in plain sight: racism in international relations theory" is an important point of comparison. He too draws on Mills in a major way to conclude that especially realism and liberalism but also in some respects constructivism are racist, notably via the role of 'anarchy'[41]. His argument is much more convincing than H&RM's for five reasons:

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[41] The role of 'anarchy' in securitization theory would be a slightly complicated issue. It is explicitly invoked in regional security complex theory (and thus primarily in Buzan & Wæver 2003, but also in the brief passages on RSCT in Buzan et al 1998). Securitization theory in contrast does not base itself in an anarchic conception of the state-system. On the contrary, it is an attempt to navigate a borderland between traditional IR concerns and a post-sovereign approach. As explained probably most clearly in (Wæver 1997: ch 11 and note 7 in Buzan

1) It is actually correct that Waltz, Keohane and Wendt draw explicitly and self-consciously on state of nature and social contract to various degrees and in different forms, probably neo-liberal institutionalism most strongly. Also, the role of Kant in both Mills' analysis and in contemporary liberalism and constructivism provides an important link. (This in itself does not settle the question what implications to draw, but there is a radical difference between writing about theorists that actually do base their work on this tradition and some where you have to make up the link.)

2) Henderson is careful to trace his transferral (from Mills' analysis of the original contract theorists to the IR writers) through intermediate steps. He both tracks the explicitly racist elements in early IR and also how the *specific* conception of anarchic structure in Waltz is shaped by a problematic anthropologist model of 'primitive society'. He is not just looking for mentions of Hobbes. History of the field is integrated with the analysis.

3) Henderson does some effort to spell out what the implications of these contract theoretical elements are, i.e. to show that the problems that Mills identified in the original contract theorists actually impact these IR theories when used as IR theories. He argues how these precepts "have an enduring effect on IR theory and influence contemporary theses".[42]

4) The phrasing he adopts is in terms of the *role of racism* in IR theory (and its 'centrality', and how the theories are oriented by white supremacist precepts, etc), but he does not use the format of "Waltz's theory is racist", "Neo-liberal institutionalism is anti-black" or "Wendtian constructivism aims to uphold a violent order of white supremacism". "[R]eliance on a racist conception of anarchy" is naturally a strong claim as well, but it certainly differs markedly in tone from the accusations of H&RM against our theory for *being* racist, anti-black, white supremacist – and for being designed with the purpose to uphold a violent, white order. The headlines and tweets become different. So do the implications for the people criticised.

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et al 1998: 47), it tries to find a way onwards from the critique of sovereignty-derived IR without falling into the liberal, reductionist trap which ultimately threatens to always end up as methodological individualism and essentialising individuals and thus another anarchy model (cf Buzan and Wæver 1997). Securitization theory holds a potential to forge a middle-way where 'unitness' is neither pre-given from anarchy, nor dissolved, i.e. a universe larger than that of states but still limited to those referent objects able to constitute themselves self-referentially with 'security quality'. Thereby, it becomes possible to include state-to-state relations as part of a larger analytical universe and to make state-centrism empirically contingent: "We have constructed a wider conceptual net within which the state-centric position is a possible but not a predetermined outcome. In using this scheme, one may still find that the state is the most important security referent; if so, this finding would carry much more force than if it were made true by definition and would also remain open to change." (Buzan et al 1998: 37). Please note that the clear distinction between two of the main theories of the Copenhagen School, securitization theory and regional security complex is not something we are trying to create now; it is very explicit from the preface of the 1998 book and onwards.

[42] This part could be stronger in his analysis as well, and it might be an important part of the research agenda for this kind of work in the future to show the actual link between 'deep theory' and specific analyses. Henderson does show (A) that racist categories and texts are at play in the founding texts of these IR theories, and (B) that contemporary analyses display figures with some similarity, but the case is not clearcut for seeing B as caused by A. For example: contemporary policy ideas from mainstream IR scholars anchored in neo-realism, NLI and constructivism will often contain paternalistic visions of Western guidance for policy in the Global South. Is this due to (A)? A more plausible explanation would be that these ideas circulate in Western elite circles today and the theories do not prevent the articulation of such ideas. Do the basic categories of these theories (as partly shaped by their problematic sources) condition and constrain *what can be done with them*, so that scholars working from these theories *have to* come up with racially hierarchized analyses and policies today – or at least are more likely to do so? Or is it only that these theories do not prevent such contemporary analyses? Henderson concludes that "the dualism at the broad theoretical level of paradigms underscores, guides and informs the more specific dichotomies at the level of theories, models and theses that are derived from these paradigms (…) (2013:88). These links are not fleshed out much in the article, but Henderson's articles are exemplary in trying to substantiate all the links in the chain.

5) His conclusion is not that we should immediately burn all books by Waltz, Keohane and Wendt and the rest of mainstream IR. Actually, his own second strand of work – parallel to his work on racism in IR theory – is in quantitative conflict studies, which can hardly be seen as totally free of debt to the theoretical traditions that he has criticised in his anti-racist writings. H&RM conclude that it is important to totally stop using securitization theory and preferably expel even the word 'securitization'.

But first of all: Through the anarchy concept (and Kantian ideals), the three mainstream IR theories *do* build directly and explicitly on the theorists analysed by Mills and others; securitization theory does not, and H&RM postulate a lineage that simply isn't there, neither in actual inspiration nor in the publications that they (mis)cite.

Here it is worth recalling how and why Mills' analysis is so important:

1: 'the social contract' has a crucial legitimating function in our society today and therefore it is important to show how it often obfuscates "the ugly realities of group power and domination" (1997: 3) through its image of a voluntary agreement among equals. Mainstream political theory is today based on "an *idealizing* abstraction that abstracts *away* from the crucial realities of the racial polity" (1997: 76). This might be rephrased as a three-step argument: the hypothesized abstract individual was critiqued already by Hegel, and secondly Marx demonstrated what concrete conflicts were papered over by this, and thirdly Mills centres this critique on race. When Mills focuses the historical part of his analysis on Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant, it is not because "they are the worst", but because of the crucial role that contract theory plays in contemporary political philosophy – and the role contemporary political philosophy plays in (especially Anglo-American) political imaginaries today.

2: Mills develops his own theory of 'the racial contract' through a combination of inspiration from and critique of social contract theory: To re-present the actual contract as one among white able-bodied males instituting a relationship of domination vis-à-vis others, is a powerful move.

3: He represents an interesting strategy for how to engage the mainstream. Already in the 1997 book itself, Mills is clear that he judges 'social contract theory' to be an ideal meeting point to initiate a missing conversation between race studies and mainstream political philosophy in the US, and therefore he picks the dominant strand and invites them to the show. As he put it more recently (Mills 2017), "Seeking a respectable mainstream philosophy framework into which they [race and white racial domination as topics] could be 'translated', I hit on social contract theory."

Notably, Mills demonstrates how and why these origins continue to have effects through contemporary manifestations in contract theory, especially that of Rawls and the Rawlsian tradition. Even in his short 1997 book, Mills does not rest satisfied with a deductive or 'genetic' argument where the original sin of the founders of contract theory taints contemporary theorists simply through the guilt of finding inspiration there (in which case he would commit intellectual suicide, given that he builds his theory of the racial contract explicitly on this inspiration). No, Mills actually places contemporary contract theory at the centre of the story. This is spelled out much more fully in Mills 2009.

H&RM are plain and simply wrong when they write "securitization theory draws on social contract thinkers such as Hobbes (see Buzan et al., 1998: 69, 209; Wæver, 1995: 54) for their 'state of nature' concept"; and elsewhere "Securitization theory extends social contract theory". No we do not draw on[43] social contract thinkers, and we do not develop or have a "'state of nature" concept". False! In

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[43] As in so many other places, the writing of H&RM is slippery. Taken in isolation, they only write that we 'draw on' contract theorists, and this would be correct if it was only to imply that we have read them and they are therefore part of our general baggage. In the same way one could write that we draw on Marx, Morgenthau, Butler, Luhmann, the Bible, the Sagas, Spengler, Elias, Lyotard, Hobsbawn, and thousands of other texts.

the conclusion – as part of the final dismissal of ST – they list among what is left: "its faith in the social contract"; with no backing for this assertion. Faith? We hope that we at some point will be able to finally get a reply from *Security Dialogue*, as to whether the journal is still happy to have this printed; whether such total lack of accuracy really doesn't matter? Crucially, they have no basis for their claim about 'acting as foil' here: "'Primal anarchy' and the 'state of nature' act as the foils to this 'normal politics' in a teleological hierarchy of civilizational advancement from securitization towards politicization" (2020:). We never write about 'state of nature'; and the claim about 'foil' gives the impression that such images are at work to fill out the meaning of 'normal politics'. This proposition by H&RM is false. Such 'foil' search is the kind of analysis that Mills and Stoler and other powerful anti-racist authors carry out successfully. Mills looks *at the places* where Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau introduce, define or develop their concept and demonstrates what role images of 'indians', 'savages' etc play *in those passages*. H&RM copy the rhetoric, but they do not deliver the analysis. And the reason why they don't is that they try to map someone else's successful analysis onto a theory that simply does not share these features.

We are ambivalent about making our case so strongly, because we do not want to contribute to the impression that it *would* have been this damning *if* we had used Hobbes more, discussed state of nature or even social contract theory. We do believe that a lot of good work can be done by reference to these classics (such as the one by Mills himself), and we can even imagine that further development of the speech act element in securitization theory (Wæver 2018) could benefit from a stronger engagement with Hobbes' radical and challenging thoughts about political constitution, language and action (Epstein 2020). We would be sad to see the tone of our correction here lead to other scholars conclude that they better avoid engaging with this literature. However, it is important in the present context to a) correct as *completely baseless* H&RM's presentation of securitization theory as dependent on a lineages from Hobbes, state of nature and contract theory; there are simply a series of statements in the article that are false and need to be corrected; ideally the journal should take action to ensure this (by more corrigenda or a retraction), but as a minimum the story should be set straight for further scholarship, not only in relation to racism but for the general understanding of securitization theory (we have to our surprise already seen H&RM's article cited as general reference on securitization theory, independent of the racism issue, and this kind of cascading of misunderstandings ought to be stopped); b) to demonstrate that the second semi-coherent line of reasoning in the accusation of racism collapses as dramatically as the first; it is simply not possible to attach the Mills-Henderson line of critique to Securitization Theory; c) demonstrate just *how* problematic the seemingly technical mistakes about quotations (documented above) really are – these false citations cannot be replaced by other ones to back up their claims, they are the only 'evidence' presented, and they are false, which makes the mis-citing much more consequential and thereby more disgraceful; d) challenge *Security Dialogue* to take action to correct this content which is incorrect, and notably this is not open for interpretation (such as for instance discussions whether Kenneth Waltz really is a positivist, a scientific realist or an instrumentalist as to philosophy of science) - H&RM are simply wrong and demonstrably so. Presumably, a journal would not be indifferent if they had printed factually incorrect statements of an empirical nature (World War One lasted from 1957 to 1964; Hillary Clinton was elected president of the USA in 2016); is it less problematic if they are about a theory or a book? A very high number of sentences in this article are demonstrably and conclusively untrue.

To avoid any misunderstandings (we apologise for being so elaborate, but after the experience of being misunderstood and misrepresented on this scale, we imagine new instances all the time): When we talk about untrue sentences, we are not talking about statements of the type

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Obviously, this is not what H&RM are writing or implying, because then it could not carry the weight it does in their reasoning. Their claim *has to be* that this is somehow important for securitization theory to an extent where criticisms of social contract theory transfers to securitization theory. Nobody reading the article by H&RM will get the impression that we are accused only of having read or touched a book by Hobbes.

"securitization theory is racist", because surely that can mean so many different things that it can be true or untrue. (We strongly believe that H&RM have not delivered evidence or reasoning to back the statement up, but this only means that it is unproven, not that it could not be true. Whether a statement of that kind should be retracted will involve the libel dimension: can you say *this* without evidence? There is a difference between this and those statements that are demonstrably wrong. Both kinds are problematic but in different ways.) When we point to untrue statements/sentences/propositions in the article, we mean the numerous very precise claims that something is in our texts that isn't, or that something isn't that is, or that present citations or concepts with a postulate about what they mean that violates any possible reading of the passage from where they picked these textual pieces.

We can imagine H&RM's excitement, when they first read at the end of the Framework book the passage about the Hobbesian state, which obviously could trigger the idea of mobilizing the Mills-argument. However, even if it was an honest mistake to overlook that this passage was a counter-position which we denounced (an oversight that *could* happen, for instance if you don't *read* the book, but only ctrl-f for 'Hobbes'), serious scholarship would usually imply that one after a while would wonder: why does this not show up anywhere else in their work? Why is it only in the final pages and not in the theory chapter? Ideally, one would then have a second try: maybe they don't use that *terminology* of state of nature and social contract as such, but is this *logic* actually at play? People who engaged with the theory would be able to evaluate this; to judge whether the theory does assume a 'state of nature' as starting point only phrased differently, and whether it uses mechanisms equivalent to 'social contract'. However, H&RM do not get even near to being able to discuss this, because they have not outlined the theory in more than one sentence (which contains two major mistakes).

They chose instead to operate at a totally superficial level of searching for words – Hobbes(ian), state of nature and social contract – and when they only find them in places that cannot be attributed to us, they do it nevertheless.

Finally, moving beyond what H&RM could be expected to notice, but just adding to the absurdity: From the beginning of ST, a *critique* of Social Contract theory was actually at work, by and for the theory. The formative debates out of which 'the Copenhagen School' came to be named and seen as a school were first with Bill McSweeney (who named it; 1996) and then with early Critical Security Studies, both the specific Boothian/Welsh emancipatory branch and the more inclusive Krause and Williams type, which often was and is seen as including securitization theory (eg. using the term securitization); Krause & Williams 1997a. One of the most defining features of the Copenhagen approach was that we were keen to avoid reifying individual-level security and thereby 'the individual'.

Powerful arguments were made at the time by both Emma Rothschild (1995) and Krause and Williams (1996, 1997b: especially pages 46-47) to the effect that it was not viable to distance oneself from state security simply by naturalising 'the individual', because then it was only a question of time before we would come full circle constituting a new contract and a new Leviathan to provide security to these individuals. This might even possibly become one that was more problematic than Hobbes' because as argued especially by Rothschild, liberal do-gooders risk recreating a neo-colonial protective format where Western progressives protect 'humans' in the Global South; a risk that was increased if a de-politicised conception of 'individuals' or 'human security' was allowed to float freely without new political structures. Our 1997 reply to McSweeney was centred on a critique of methodological individualism, and from then on we picked up the argument from Rothschild and Krause/Williams, that a naturalised 'individual' was possibly the most likely route to problematic

forms of 'protection', importing the worst of the social contract tradition.[44] In later pieces by Wæver (2011, 2015, and a forthcoming article), this is articulated even more clearly by spelling out how the most important feature of securitization is that it constitutes politics in a specific form: that of protection. To develop a critique of that mode of politics demonstrates exactly the affinity to critiques of liberalism and most contemporary forms of social contract theorising.

Wæver struggled from the beginning with a Derrida inspired challenge of how to articulate a way out of repressive traditional state security without any of those 'easy negations' that always mean a return (Derrida 1977; Walker 1993). His first attempt was to say that one should stick to state security (Wæver 1989, 1990, 1995) only in a destabilised and decentered way. The next step was to move on to a non-foundationalist theory of a self-referential performativity-based open-ended world of multiple kinds of 'referent objects' as units. This was done through a theory that delineated only the *form* (securitization the speech act) and thereby leaving it open who manages to become the units of security. All of this was exactly to avoid the easy move from state to individual, which actually would mean to stay in the liberal order of abstract individuals in a contract.

Aberystwyth-style CSS might be the more radical in some ways, but especially in the Ken Booth version its Habermasian mode of emancipation also made it ultimately more 'liberal' than securitization theory which was (and to some extent is) more inspired by both realism and post-structuralism.

The superficiality of H&RM is again astonishing. They go hunting with Mills in hand, trying to find this liberal figure. They settle with the very few instances of us mentioning Hobbes(ian) or 'state of nature' (and the one falsified quote with the social contract) – none linked to our theory chapters. They ignore that we don't self-identify as liberal or rationalistic. Had they actually taken Mills seriously, the translation into security studies would point to the centrality of *abstract individuals* (as pre-given, like units, with such a deep ontological status that qualities like race and gender can only be secondary, not constitutive). This is arguably the conceptual anchor within security studies – mainstream as well as critical – today, where the dominant liberal figure most powerfully blocks articulation of race. So, when this does not figure in H&RM's article is it because they haven't understood that 'the individual' is such a critical category in analysis like this? Or – more likely – is it because they are not trying to actually deepen anybody's understanding of anything, they just want to pile up arguments and vitriol in support of their pre-established agenda: Yes, securitization theory is racist; or we will make it so, whatever it takes.

4. *Security Dialogue*: Some Serious Questions about Editorial Responsibility

We address more generally the question of 'responsibility' in a later section below – regarding both our responsibility as the creators of ST and the responsibility of H&RM in writing the article the way they did. Scholarship involves a particular complicated set of questions about responsibility. Some of these later arguments are relevant for a complete assessment of also the decisions by *Security Dialogue*. However, we would like to raise up-front the specific issues relating to the editorial responsibility of an academic journal.

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[44] Wæver used for decades to convey this argument in his lectures when presenting ST. Due to Corona lockdown, it is not possible to check the relevant articles from the late 1990s. Surely, it figures somewhere. However, this is not very important, because the argument here is (as we have said) not about something we fault H&RM for having overlooked; it is clearly too esoteric for that. However, when trying to set the record straight, we want to point any interested reader in the direction of the actual link between ST and critique of the social contract theory, where ironically the actual story is not only an absence of the link H&RM make, but a presence of the opposite link.

Five issues:

1. A reviewing process that let through something that is not only of extremely poor academic quality, but also in our view libellous.
2. Distinguishing between academic critique and political/personal critique and treating them differently.
3. Having clear rules about notification for authors who are criticized in a personal/political way, and about right of reply to be included in the same issue as the critical article.
4. To think hard about how to review responses, when the journal and its editors are a substantial part of what is being targeted. Is it right for the journal editors to be not only among the accused, but also judge and jury on the case?
5. Having a procedure for retractions.

Regarding the first and most important question: Why did SD publish a piece that is both crossing the lines from normal debate into hurtful and harmful accusations of racism in a form that is libellous if (as in this case) not documented *and* at the same time absurdly weak in terms of its modes of reasoning, reading and documentation to the point of committing outright scientific malpractice? The confluence of these two is a puzzle in its own right and resolving this puzzle does introduce a possible interpretation that raises alarming perspectives for the field. At first, one should think that the two sets of problems with the article should work against each other, i.e. that if you review and as editors ultimately decide on a piece that makes these stark and hurtful claims – and generally contributes to a dramatic change of tone in debates in the field – you would be extra careful in checking that the article is on solid ground. This has clearly not been the case.

Worse: given that the article is of such poor academic quality, the opposite possibility presents itself: that the nature of their project has somehow *lowered* the quality barrier. Any empirical piece that treated its data the way H&RM do, and reasoned in such unsustainable and at points outright silly ways, would be rejected. A theory piece that does not engage with the theory it criticises, usually does not get published either. Ironically, the 'affair' might be explained by using securitization theory on the case of racism and anti-racism, which H&RM claims it can't do. In contrast to H&RM we are not going to pretend to have evidence for something we don't, so we freely admit that this is just a hypothesis, only supported very indirectly by social media and some conversations we have had:

In anti-racist circles, one often hears arguments about the exceptional nature of racism as an all-pervasive structure that is so hard to break that it cannot be done by normal means. The very format of social science is imbricated with racism, so a normal academic exchange is by definition not a viable pathway, and dramatic measures are therefore necessary. This is exactly the kind of 'the end justifies the means' rationale that securitization theory can explain. Concretely, reasoning like this might have been at play not only for those interlocutors and twitterati from which we heard it, but possibly also with reviewers and/or editors at SD. Based on this logic, the H&RM criticism of ST does not have to be correct, and it is not a problem – maybe even an advantage – that the article oversteps normal professional norms and does visible harm to known scholars because this is a way to gain attention. By implication, ST and its authors are to be *sacrificed* for the higher cause of anti-racism, guilty or not. Again: we naturally do not want to claim (yet) that arguments like this were decisive to the decision-making; proof hereof might come forth later or not[45]. We offer this as a possible – and worrying – interpretation that at least makes sense of the otherwise deeply mysterious combination of an explosive article being published despite its extreme scholarly weaknesses.

As we will discuss below in greater detail, it is a possible line to take – with some caution – that racism is such a special problem that we maybe should publish pieces that operate in different

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[45] The word 'sacrificed' has literally been used to us in defense of the decision – as a reason for us to accept our fate and not make a fuss out of it. This was argued by someone centrally involved in the decision-making.

formats and look at scholarship according to new criteria. It would be possible and valuable to attack the way security studies (including us) participates in racist structures. This would mean truly analysing 'structural racism' in security studies. It is regrettable if SD in their wish to publish such work – and presumably lacking of such submissions – chose to publish in its place a piece that de facto does not perform any structural analysis and instead makes a series of unfounded claims about ST – and by implication us – that give the impression that they have carried out an analysis of the constitutive concepts in the theory, which they haven't. Such a personal attack through sub-standard scholarship is a poor replacement for the structural analyses we need, and we fear that work like H&RM unnecessarily sets back the engagement of security studies with the very serious problem of racism.

The article itself strangely does not present a justification for its choice of such an unconventional format, for imposing personal and professional harm and hurt on peers and for circumventing normal standards for scholarship. Unfortunately, the editorial team of Security Dialogue has – despite numerous attempts from us to engage them in a dialogue – not been willing either to offer any rationale for this, actually not even for admitting that there is anything to explain, i.e. not admitting that this article is unusual and that it raises questions specifically related to the fact that we are accused of racism. Security Dialogue insists to treat this as a wholly normal intellectual debate.

Security Dialogue needs to face up to the problem that they have published an article that ought to have been stopped in the reviewing process, because it fails on numerous scholarly criteria. We are unable to imagine that SD will defend the article when presented with documentation for the malpractices involved. This leaves two options: to present a rationale for such unusual publications due to the special nature of the anti-racist course, or to admit a failure of reviewing and decision-making, retract the article and tighten procedures to prevent future incidents.

In addition to potentially changing reviewing procedures, SD ought to introduce procedures for cases like these when an article has been accepted. This implies to acknowledge the difference between normal scholarly debate and cases involving charges like racism. National and international conventions and laws establish quite clear obligations on publishers in such cases. At least at the time when an article has passed reviewing and been accepted, the journal ought to offer a right of reply to those attacked and ensure that the reply appears in the same issue as the attack. In the present case, SD has taken the position that they did not see the difference between being accused of say positivism or lack of historical depth on the one hand, and racism on the other hand, a term with powerful standing in the general public and generally held to be a defamation of character and therefore unacceptable if unfounded. This "inability to distinguish" is not a one-off remark by Security Dialogue, but their determined position throughout numerous rounds of exchange.

Later in the truly astonishing process that we had to go through with the editorial team in order to have our short response accepted (conditioned by a number of changes to protect H&RM), SD hid mostly behind the equally unsustainable claim that this was only about 'securitization theory', not us. (We return later to the issue why these deflections are unacceptable, but for the matter of the journal's procedures, it should be enough to observe that given how a term like racism plays in public, persons deemed doers of racist deeds should have their response printed next to the article in case.)

Replies in such cases should not follow the normal rules for replies, eg. regarding length or decision-making. Some form of reviewing is appropriate, but it ought not be the same as for normal replies,

nor should the decision making be vested solely with the editor, given that the editor is part of the controversy. In a reply regarding defamation, the editor will by necessity be under attack.[46]

In our case, the process evolved into pure Kafka, because despite the fact that the article by H&RM had not been sent to check by Sage's lawyers for possible defamation, our response was! After very clear recommendations by two reviewers of acceptance of our reply, the process dragged out several more months, because *Security Dialogue* objected to formulations characterising a particular rhetorical move by H&RM as 'blackmail', a description as 'deceptive' or asserting that they "systematically quote out of context". Given the heavy-handed rhetoric in H&RM's article, this process seemed to us to confirm our suspicion that it was problematic to entrust the assessment of a response in a case like this to the editor of the journal who stands accused too. Rather than ensuring a balanced treatment, the editor deployed legal advice as pretext far beyond what is properly legal questions.[47] (Again, we would be happy to make this process public, but *Security Dialogue* does not agree to this.) Therefore, the journal ought to think about a different process for situations like this, rather than take on simultaneously the roles as accused and judge.

Security Dialogue needs to get a process for deciding on retractions.[48] Please note that we are not talking about a retraction due to the possibly defamatory nature of the accusations about racism – that damage has been done, and this is ultimately the moral and political choice of H&RM. Addressing this would take a legal case about defamation, which we have no interest in wasting time on. The article should be retracted because a) it is wrong; it contains an inexplicably large number of statements that are demonstrably false (not matters of opinion or interpretation, but factually wrong statements mostly about what is found in our works); and b) it violates central procedures in the world of scholarship and academic publications.

When we wrote the editor(s) to tell that in addition to the problem of being accused of racism, we saw serious problems of misrepresentation and citational malpractice, the editors did not ask for us to substantiate this in order to check for any possible quality problems with the article. On the

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[46] Indeed, as we had warned the editorial team, the short piece we submitted to SD was immediately met by demands from SD's/Sage's lawyers(!) that we changed a sentence that they found to misrepresent their offer regarding possible forms of reply. SD did not consult lawyers when they decided to publish the original piece despite its potentially libellous character, but when criticism became addressed at themselves, the lawyers entered. Nor did SD care about the hundreds of false statements in the H&RM piece, but they were quite insistent that the one sentence about themselves accorded with how *they* understood the situation, rather than letting the authors – us – write our understanding of the process.

[47] Later we were told that now the lawyers had looked at the H&RM article as well, and they did not raise objections. It is, however, not clear to us what standing this has. As far as we understand, these were not neutral judges, but the lawyers of Sage. We do not in any way to question the professionalism of these lawyers – on the contrary. It seems logical that if asked ahead of publication to assess whether an article could lead to those attacked suing for defamation, the lawyers of a publisher will identify any passage that could potentially be problematic under any stretch of imagination, and they suddenly did for our response. If, in contrast, they are asked about an article *already published*, they will (unless specifically asked to) not present the case for the publisher's opponent but rather the best possible defense of why the already published article can be defended against accusations of libel. Unfortunately, we don't know exactly what questions the lawyers responded to. We asked to see their full statements or be put in direct contact. This was denied.

[48] Security Dialogue states on its homepage that "This journal is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). COPE guidelines state that journals "must have mechanisms for correcting, revising or retracting articles after publication" (https://publicationethics.org/postpublication). We asked specifically to be told who processed our request for a retraction how and never got a precise answer. The more elaborate "COPE Council. COPE Guidelines: Retraction Guidelines. November 2019" say: "Publications should be retracted as soon as possible after the editor is convinced that the publication is seriously flawed, misleading, or falls into any of the categories described above [which it does]. Prompt retraction should minimise the number of researchers who cite the erroneous work, act on its findings, or draw incorrect conclusions (…)" https://publicationethics.org/files/retraction-guidelines.pdf; DOI: https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.4

contrary, they added injury to insult by accusing us of pulling rank, presenting our proposition about the rights of anybody accused of racism as if it was a demand for special treatment. When later, we mentioned the question of retraction, the response was that they only thought this was rhetorical flourish, not something we actually meant. And then finally, we were told that the lawyers of Sage did not deem the article to have formal problems justifying retraction. However, this can never be a legal question alone. Take the possibly most famous retraction from recent decades, the Lancet article linking vaccines and autism.[49] This was not primarily a legal decision, but a matter for medical expertise.[50] Similarly, you have to be an expert in security theory to judge the nature of the misrepresentations, mis-quotations, methodological misdeeds, and invalid deductions in this case.

Hundreds of articles are retracted every year. This is probably complicated decisions in most cases, and more difficult for social sciences and humanities than natural sciences. Still, it is hard to imagine that a journal like *Security Dialogue* has the policy that no degree of falsehood or violation of scholarly standards would necessitate a withdrawal. We hope the editors will take the time to read through the present document, possibly invite a response from H&RM, and then make a decision informed by social science expertise, not only legal advice from the publisher.

Had the article been, say, an opinion piece, everything had been different. However, this is published as a normal journal article, implying that its content has the status that one associates with a journal like *Security Dialogue*.

A final aspect of publishers' responsibility regards a forthcoming book by H&RM, 'Racism and Security Studies', which both authors announce as under contract with Oxford University Press. From some presentations, it looks like this is meant to include as chapters their articles attacking Foucauldian security studies in IPS (Howell and Richter-Montpetit 2019), attacking us in Security Dialogue and a forthcoming parallel piece on feminist security studies. If H&RM and OUP continue with the plan to publish this book despite the evident problems with quality and responsibility, we take for granted that they will now on the basis of the present paper correct all factual mistakes and unsupported assertions in the book version of their 'analysis'.

5. Systemic racism and methods for attributing racism to a theory

Racism is a powerful, malignant force in world politics, and our discipline, IR, has deeply problematic entanglements with it. It is a serious matter both to come intellectually to grips with this and to find the most effective strategies to act on it. We worry that more serious problems and possibilities are marginalised by an ultimately very inward-looking and scholastic exercise where a particular definition of racism and a specific theoretical perspective makes it possible to deem the vast majority of scholarship in IR 'racist', 'methodologically white' and 'antiblack'- every work that does not explicitly follow one exact version of anti-racist scholarship. Especially, the role played in H&RM's argumentation by our sins of omission does ultimately seem to rest on the premise that only *their* distinct form of scholarship can be redeemed, because even post-colonial scholarship and critiques of euro-centrism are not enough; you are a racist if you do not follow exactly this particular route. It is not important whether your scholarship actually supports or hinders anti-racist analysis or political engagement; it is all about who you cite and what declarations you make. Here, a theory is not judged by what can be done with it, but by the question whether self-appointed anti-racists can

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[49] In this new climate of having to state the obvious: yes we are able to distinguish between the Lancet and Security Dialogue; no we do not claim that everything about the Wakefield article applies to H&RM; we are making some observations about retractions using the probably most familiar example.

[50] In this context also a comment on the length of the current memo: it is not necessarily a simpler and shorter task to refute flawed research than it is to present it in the first instance. The eventual retraction of that article by Andrew Wakefield took several rounds of research to check the postulated relationships as well as investigation by the relevant body of professional misconduct (and in that case even investigative journalism).

find supposedly problematic sentences somewhere in its key texts. In this section, we will first point out that the H&RM article is a personal attack on us for racism, despite their reassurances about the opposite. Then, we discuss what an analysis of structural racism (systems of power) could amount to, given that they claim to do one but utterly fail to do so, resorting instead to a pretend examination of the foundations of ST. Next, we discuss what could be methodological guidelines for actually proving whether or not a theory like ST is racist.

H&RM's usage of the term racism for all scholarship that does not foreground race as the primary theme, means that 99% of IR will be 'racist'. There will be no room for any other scholarship (unless you will live with the moniker of being racist). Not only does this seem very unproductive in terms of disciplinary conversations, not to talk of diversity and pluralism, it also means that it becomes very hard to use the category of 'racism' for critical purposes for those cases where it *actually* is at stake in a sense closer to what the rest of the discipline, and indeed the public discourse, means by it. It has been watered down by the fact that everyone but those in critical whiteness studies have been deemed racist, one by one, where we just happened to get the special honour of being among the first. H&RM might protest that this is not their plan, but we fail to see how this can be avoided when the logic they apply is that the term racist can be based primarily on sins of omission in the sense of a theory being focused around other categories.

As documented above, they claim numerous times that ST 'occludes' or 'refuses' various dynamics relating to race that they find important, but they never offer any basis for concluding that the theory makes it harder to see these things, only that it does not as such zoom in on them. This does not have to do with a choice particularly regarding race but the structure and nature of the theory as a general analytical apparatus that can be applied to all instances where actors try to securitize or desecuritize something, and the user is free then to include race more or less in this analysis, just as the theory is not deciding how important nationalism is or gender[51], but it enables the analysis of the way different categories and distinctions become politically mobilised in security struggles.

H&RM will probably argue that if you do not mention race in these contexts, you 'hide' it. Three answers: 1) no, there is a difference between not mentioning and hiding, it takes a step more of the critic to show that the theory <u>prevents</u> something from being articulated or that it uses abstractions that stand in the way of articulating race; that certainly is the case for some theories, so it is a legitimate avenue of critique, but they haven't shown this, 2) the theory is intentionally (as we have explained numerous times) minimalist in having a clear conceptual core and then not putting all kinds of factors like the role of media or populism into the theory – not because we haven't noticed these factors but because they belong in applications, and the theory exactly allows you to study these phenomena, 3) we are very explicit that one of the advantages of a minimalist theory is the ability to combine it with other theories especially general theories about the nature and structures of society; one should not build out ST to become a general theory of society or international relations, better in any specific usage of the theory combine it with the theories one finds productive for the particular research project. (Wæver 2011, 2015) The latter point has come up in replies to the 'sociological' version of ST (Balzacq), which has more of a tendency to add all relevant factors to the theory, while the classical Copenhagen version is tight and invites combination with theories that complement it, which could exactly be theories of race and racism. Our ultimate concern here is: how do we actually get to study racism in world politics in a practically and politically helpful way?

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[51] The fact that one of our books (Wæver et al 1993) foregrounds nationalism does not mean that *the theory* privileges this. To conclude so is to conflate theory and author. There were political reasons to focus at the time on conflicts over nationalism, Europeanization and migration, and we developed our analytical categories in this context, but this does not necessarily mean that they can't be used equally well on other issues. We haven't written a book on the securitization of climate change (yet), but others have. Does this mean then that the theory ignores climate change?

When developing our own framework, ST, we took care to make sure it could do critical work in concrete analyses, in our view on racism as well, and H&RM fail to show that this is not the case. In addition, we have then on a more mundane, human level engaged ourselves in various ways to foster non-Western scholarship and theories in IR (Tickner & Wæver 2009; Acharya & Buzan 2010, 2019). One has for instance co-founded a book-series with the aim to identify "alternatives for thinking about the 'international' that are more in tune with local concerns and traditions outside the West" and "provincializing the West" (quoting from the Routledge homepage of the book series); the other has amongst many other things re-written this history of the IR discipline to show both that it has ignored non-Western contributions and that the Western part of it is indebted to 'scientific racism' (Buzan & Lawson 2015; Acharya and Buzan 2019). Closer to ST, the project in Buzan & Wæver 2003 was to a large extent to challenge the euro-centrism enshrined in dominant conceptions of polarity and of the relationship between global and regional, to enable theories to be more attentive to actual security dynamics in 'most of the world'.

Surely, all of these efforts can be critically assessed as to what has been helpful and what hasn't. But we find it strange that H&RM choose to ignore completely the possibility of assessing the ability of ST to form the basis for helpful analyses of racism. They neither look at those analyses that have actually been done, nor do they show systematically why it would be impossible to do so. On the contrary, they limit themselves to highly abstract and indirect attributions of racism to the theory as such through various unconvincing routes. From this they *deduce* (without any discussion) that ST can't inform studies of racism (and when it has actually done it, they presumably are able to magically make those publications go away) (see section 6 below).

H&RM offer no explanation as to how *their* type of analysis helps in combating racism. It is unclear if it is a kind of ground clearing operation to be followed up by new and better theories after getting us out of the way. Or whether they believe that we are so much a part of the oppressive structures that attacking us is in itself liberating. Or – as we will consider below in more detail – the whole exercise is more about making universities more inclusive and hospitable to students and scholars of colour. Closely linked to the latter option, their rationale could be that the attack is meant more as a kind of 'happening' drawing attention to the question of race. Especially in the latter case, it would be intentional that the article plays ambiguously with making a very personal attack while pretending not to.

Do they accuse us of racism?

H&RM write that the argument "is not a personal indictment of any particular author"[52]. However, they consistently talk about "classic securitization theory" which invariably is backed by references to books and articles by the two of us (sometimes with co-authors). It is hypocritical to pretend that this is not an indictment of us. ST did not fall from the sky. If a theory is racist, it is a racist deed to produce this theory.

Also, in numerous formulations they actually end up saying that *we* are racist. Eg.: "We can see here, finally, how little separates this contemporary school of security analysis from the openly black racist of its Victorian predecessors" (p. 14). The 'predecessors' are persons (because there were no Victorian theories of security, presumably), so 'school' must be meant also in the sense of persons, i.e. us. So we are "openly black racist" at the level of Victorian writers.

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[52] Actually, they write (2010: 4 [2]) that this is "not *merely* a failure of individual scholarship (…) not *simply* the effect of intentionally racist individuals, (…) not *simply* the result of bad or flawed individual theorists" (emphasis added) – presumably we are *also* guilty of being intentionally racist individuals and bad or flawed theorists, as implied by these formulations, but reassuringly part of the guilt rests with bigger structures.

The title is about 'securitization theory', but the subtitle is "Civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School". The term 'school' is notoriously ambiguous as to being a theoretical orientation or a collective of scholars. The Wikipedia page on the Copenhagen School listed (when we last looked) prominent *members* of the school.

Their defence for using the term racism draws a contrast between only two possible usages: either it is reduced "to interpersonal prejudices of openly bigoted individuals" or it is treated as "systems of power". This framing is insufficient for three reasons. First, individual responsibility should not be limited to "interpersonal prejudices of openly bigoted individuals"; we can hold each other individually responsible for racism in a much wider sense, and it is clear that H&RM direct an accusation of racism that should be assessed for its validity. It is a trivializing simplification to equate individual responsibility only with interpersonal bigoted prejudices; as if anything beyond this would be systemic or structural only. Second, their dichotomy is unhelpful because the category of 'system of power' is left empty in their analysis, and while they give no indication of what a presumably structural analysis could actually be, we will suggest some possible directions, and thereby we show that the 'structural' side is actually quite diverse. Thirdly, H&RM take a third route themselves, because their analysis – not structural or systemic at all – essentialises a human-like subject called 'ST', which they do not analyse *as a theory* but as a person with racist views. Given that we are the ones who put this monster into the world, obviously we stand accused, even if the route is this strange one.

Ironically, their actual analysis is anything but systemic. Not only does it lack any concept of structure as a systemic analysis would usually need, it ends up being essentialist, attributing prejudices to an anthropomorphised subject called 'ST'. As argued above, they do not treat ST *as theory*, because that would mean to study its performance of the specific functions of a theory in relation to applications and having an inner structure, but they treat ST as a flat collection of texts, from which they pick and choose (and cut into small pieces and re-combine), deeming any sentence no matter where they find it to be 'foundational'. Their language is revealing. They numerous times attribute thoughts and inclinations to ST, i.e. treat it as a as subject with a racist personality.

Even IF they had found racist content here, it would still be wrong to attribute this to 'ST' as a theory. Now, their findings are actually empty, but that should not prevent us from noting the methodological flaw involved in assessing a theory this way. H&RM is presumably a whole article about a theory, yet it shows no interest in or understanding of what a theory is or does. There is no distinction between statements from the 1000 or so pages they presumably read that constitute the core of the theory – any statement is attributed to 'ST'. Given that they have paid no attention to the inner structure of the theory, they feel free to decide themselves what is foundational or essential to the theory, and thus pick words randomly across our works and fit them together into a made-up core for the theory.

The anthropomorphisation of ST is the only way to make sense of their usage of Buzan and Wæver 2003 as a key text. Given that the theory was constructed in the mid-1990s, statements from an empirical analysis 10 years later (ignoring that it is not primarily based on ST but RSCT) can't reveal how the theoretical categories are constructed. At best they could reveal something about the authors' personal outlook, but this is allegedly not their focus. Thus, they define their object of analysis as "ST", ignore that it is a theory, and read it as if it was a person revealing its personality in its various writings over time.

As a half-hearted defense against making personalised accusations of racism, their article has two pretend delinkings. 1) We do not mean racist in *that* sense (that ordinary people mean), only in our sense, 2) it is not about those authors (who we cite as 'evidence'), only about 'the theory' (that they begat).

Racism is a word too powerful to control by brief declarations of intent. Ironically, there is a parallel here to ST. The original idea in ST is that the word 'security' is so powerful that you unavoidably import a lot of baggage if using it. For instance, the concept of 'environmental security' does not only do the 'good' of raising attention for new security issues, it also frames these concerns in a way that might skew them in problematic directions due to the heritage of 'security' (Deudney 1990; Wæver 1995). Even more strongly, the term 'racism' has a force of its own. If you use it, these effects are let loose. H&RM write briefly that they want to use 'racism' as systemic, and not about the individual responsibility of scholars (or rather: not *merely* …). And they make brief references to some scholars who use racism in ways that differ from the conventional, but they do little to explicate this. Especially when using a strong and loaded word like 'racism', you have to be very insistent if you want to use unconventional language; you have to at least reflect on how it is going to play out in different circles. Yes, some around them will understand what 'white supremacy' means in this context, even if they actually do not explain it in the article. But most readers will read terms in their more normal meaning. Courts have consistently taken the latter line in libel cases, that to be branded as 'a racist' is detrimental to your personal and professional standing. It is irresponsible to use the term 'racism' without any attention to prevent the most likely reading. As with so many other elements of this article, incompetence is a less plausible explanation than intentional ambiguity. H&RM achieve by their under-explained concepts and theories to both stand on solid theoretical ground (if attacked) – assuming the reader does the work herself of tracking all references and reading up on the theories they draw on without presenting them *and* to get the attention-grabbing effect of calling an influential theory and its authors racist.

More than 90% of people we have talked to refer to "that article which attacks you for racism" (or some similar formulation), not "not that article criticizing securitization theory". There is a logical problem with their disclaimer, because we are guilty if the theory is racist, because we created it, but more straightforwardly, one has to take responsibility for the most likely effects of one's writings (more on this below). It is extremely implausible to assume that an article like this will not be taken as implicating us as practising racist theorising.

It is a serious act to lob a grenade like that at fellow academics. Surely, this could be the price to be paid, if a bigger purpose could be served. But this does not seem to be the case. The power of racism in the world today in general and the ways it is implicated in our discipline are far too serious issues for being side-tracked into polemics against made-up targets. (We return later to the question of possible larger purpose served, and how this concern could be channelled better.)

Systemic analysis? Yes, please!

H&RM do not offer their readers much help in understanding the nature of their exercise. The impression one gets from reading their article is that it is specifically about ST and about racist features that they locate *in* our texts. However, allegedly their perspective is anchored in an understanding of racism as a 'system of power'. It is a pity they don't do anything with this framing. As it stands, this becomes just a vague excuse for attributing yet more racist operations to us, transferring insights from other scholars' analysis to the case of ST. In contrast, we can see at least two possible routes that could have been taken (and that possibly play in the background, even if underdeveloped in their article as it stands):

One possibility would be to actually unfold an analysis of this system, to name the structure, follow it and show it at work, eg. in ST. "Epistemic racism is intrinsic to Western knowledge structures" they write. This means either that we are all racists by participating in these structures – H&RM too, by publishing in SD, which clearly must be an element of 'Western knowledge structures' – or it must be important to find out what are the main mechanisms, intellectual and social, that uphold this racism as a system and then show these at work. However, they do no such thing.

A body of work in IR is beginning to do this job (Anievas et al 2015; Barkawi 2017; Bell 2019; Henderson 2013, 2017; Hobson 2012; Long & Schmidt 2005; Vitalis 2000). However, there seems to be still quite some work to be done in getting this analysis together – important and promising work. And then to specify how specific problematic scholarship fits in here. Just as scholars working from a global system of class or gender will usually present their analysis of these structures, and then show how specific actors contribute to this, it would be extremely valuable to have an analysis of the global, racist system developed to the point where the place of IR in the system could be specified.

This should include analysis of the actual social structures we participate in, including the procedures that regulate hiring and careers (cf the brilliant piece by Agathangelou and Ling 2002) and the other institutions of our discipline like journals and their editorial practices. However, H&RM do none of this. They say nothing about the 'system' and they do not specify any of the mechanisms that make academia complicit in reproducing this system – except for a purely intellectualist exercise in critiquing scholarship for its lack of radicalism. The result is a depressingly linear conception of the relationship between scholarship and politics: the most political thing you can do is to optimise your own theoretical position to be even more politically radical. This is a strangely disembodied, non-practical conception of research and writing where you do not look at texts as actual products and what they do, not at theories for what research they enable and prevent, not at analyses for how they play into concrete struggles; no it is all about 'saying the right thing'.[53]

The most 'political' you can do is to shoot at some academic theory, without any explication of why this actually helps any actual political struggles. It is eerily reminiscent of generations of leftist hyper-radicalism where 'symbolic competition' for being more radical than the other takes the place of theoretical-political analysis attached to actual struggles.

In contrast, we believe that there is a major space for developing understandings of exactly racism as a system of power. Then, we have to be explicit about how we conceptualise this system – the relative merits of different theories, like critical race theory (eg Crenshaw 2011) and for instance the debate between 'racial formation' theory and 'systemic racism' (Omi & Winant 2013, 2015; Feagin 2006; Feagin & Elias 2013). For instance, Fred Lee has recently made an inspiring suggestion for how to study 'extraordinary racial politics' (in his book of that title) based on a theoretical set-up with a productive tension between more 'reproducing' theories with an emphasis on the everyday on the one hand (Omi & Winant plus Mills) and theories of extraordinary politics on the other hand (Schmitt plus Arendt) (Lee 2018). It seems promising to create an interplay between this analysis and ST. However, H&RM tell us very little about what theories they find helpful and de facto leave the category of racism as 'system of power' empty. This emptiness does more to their text than just weaken it – it also shapes the whole critique of the CS, because absent any such system, the impression given by the article is that ST is in itself racist if properly read (not due to its place in some systemic analysis) while at the same time avoiding explicitly calling personal racism.

A text is performed, it is not pure logic. Thus, when the non-personal nature of the critique is covered by one, short and slightly ambiguous ('not merely') disclaimer, and the systemic analysis is absent, the reader is confronted with a body of text which consists 95% of alleged paraphrasing of texts by us which are deemed racist. The difficult question of how a responsible scholar has to face up to their texts actually doing something different from what the authors logically write, is actually something that has been discussed in and around Securitization Theory (Huysmans 2002; Wæver 1999). H&RM's text de facto *does* a targeted critique of ST in a free-standing manner. Then it becomes a statement about the problems *in* this theory. If, in contrast, the systemic analysis was

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[53] Ironically, H&RM denounce ST for over-focusing on the power of language, allegedly an insufficient approach to challenging the structures of racism. Yet, the impression one gets from H&RM's article is that the most progressive and critical you can do in relation to racism is to criticise texts, treated in isolation as statements, and not placed into the context of their accompanying text.

developed, it would be extremely interesting and important to analyse what role security studies plays and within this various critical schools, including the Copenhagen School. (We return later to the predicate by H&RM that the theory is 'avowedly conservative', and take the liberty preliminarily here of placing it among critical approaches as it is normally done in the literature.)

A second possible approach that would be equally systemic but in a very different way, is worth considering, because some of the comments we have heard so far in relation to this affair indicate that it could be this agenda that is seen to justify the publication of this strange article, even if it unfortunately does not develop this argument itself. Security Studies as well as IR in general is experienced as inhospitable and irrelevant to many students who have experienced discrimination on the basis of race or gender and find it impossible to articulate these issues within the existing frameworks. Especially on US campuses, it is an increasingly important movement among students to articulate this, where 'calling out' individual professors for their teaching for instance is often justified in relation to the total scene confronted by students, not the individual lecture or course as such. Similarly, we should be brought to examine the total picture of the world produced by security studies (or IR), especially when experienced from the specific angle of say a student of indigenous background (first nations, aboriginal peoples).

H&RM do not take this more general route. The article is made up of lengthy and seemingly specific arguments about ST with quotes and references, leading to the conclusion that the theory is racist in its foundational texts and concepts, i.e. adopting a format that gives the impression that the theory has been examined in accordance with normal principles for reading and interpretation.

If one really took seriously the idea of systemic racism and the problems for non-white students meeting Security Studies, what would then be an appropriate method? Then it would have to be an explicitly perspectival and experiential reading, where surely our texts could be interrogated critically as part of the total body of security literature as presented in teaching. If this was the framing, for instance some of the passages from the Africa chapter in Buzan & Wæver 2003 could legitimately be cited in a critical analysis – if it is made clear that it is in this respect that it is deemed problematic. If in contrast, one tries to prove that racism is built into the concepts of ST, one has to read differently.

Concepts like 'White Fragility' (DiAngelo 2018) would be highly relevant in this context: White people have strong defence mechanisms against acknowledging how they are actually involved in reproducing racial inequality. The authoritative assessment here is that of those who experience the racism, and when challenged, white people should be very careful about putting up misguided defences. However, the proper context of discussions like this are exactly those about how this is experienced by non-whites *and* the structures that one participate in (as it is actually clear in DiAngelo's book), whereas it would be destructive for the scholarly world if the same principle was applied to claims about what 'constitutes' a theory. If correcting mis-readings of theory is met with the charge of 'white fragility', this is both a misunderstanding of theory and of white fragility. Therefore, it is a crucial task ahead for security studies to articulate much more clearly those distinct agendas that are truly systemic/structural, and different from what really is or isn't at the roots of one or another theory.

An unacceptable double-dealing is at play. On the one hand, H&RM align themselves with an approach that looks at racism as systemic, omni-present and tied into the practice of eg. a field like security studies as a total effect. On the other hand, they write about our theory and texts as if they show that they are founded on constitutive gestures that built racism into the categories. Both approaches are legitimate, only there are methodological demands for how to carry them out. And if you do one, you should not pretend to have done the other.

If the analysis is that as a whole, security studies functions so as to uphold a space structured by racial categories and producing barriers of entry for students with other experiences and agendas,

this is very important. Then, a reasonable strategy to show this could be to look at the field as a whole, and preferably be explicit about looking from the perspective of a person who finds this unrepresentative of their experiences.

If this is the analysis, it is very strange to pick out a specific authorship and make very hard claims about it in isolation. When they actually do that, they give the reader the impression, that they are able to demonstrate that racist and methodologically white moves are integral to the constitution of the theory, and that it is impossible to use the theory analytically to investigate racism. Sentences like that "ST protects white superiority .." have a specificity to the claim that will be read as implying much more than the systemic positionality-oriented interpretation.

They could write: we do not offer quotes as a way to demonstrate how ST hangs together. These quotes are floating around in the larger sea of texts and statements, and we intentionally produce a collage of citations to show how this can look from a particular angle of observation. Then we should just be flattered that they have chosen our books to apply their scissors and glue to when making the collage. If their framing of the story was to show that it is possible to put things together and then get this picture, and how this matters for eg. students coming from minority backgrounds, this would be a relevant and helpful analysis. However, this is not at all the presentation offered by H&RM. On the contrary, they write many passages where the tone is that they have gotten to a deeper truth about how ST is constituted and constructed, what is built into it. Mostly, they steer free of assertions about intentions (although on some cases, they do make such), but the theory is charged with something much more specific than the collage interpretation. H&RM do not self-present as those who produce a very particular picture – on the contrary they write as if this is a reasonable (in fact: the correct, given their terminology) reading of how the theory is actually constituted, and what are the limits on using it analytically. H&RM are not articulated as subjects of their own article; they make no strategic choices that create a particular take, only choices dictated by necessity and reality; their tone is that of 'telling it as it really is'.

We are aware that there is a larger scholarship (and a social movement on campuses, mostly in the US) that uses concept like racism in ways that others find unconventional; and associated with this also different ideas of what it means to cite a text. It would have been a completely different situation if H&RM had carefully explained that they were going to cite texts and read our work in that very different sense, and written about it so that this was clear to the reader. This would go some way to preventing others reading this as 'the deep and objective truth' of how our theory *really* is constituted in and by itself; which is how the article now comes across. H&RM write in a style and phrasing that at face value corresponds with the normal way of finding deeper structures *in* a theory, assessing what its capacities and blinds spots are – and even in many points so that readers will hear something about intent. It is socially irresponsible to set sentences like this in circulation without taking care to avoid them being read 'the normal way'. When the attack is furthermore published in an academic, peer-reviewed journal as a normal article, the reader must take it as being a valid and textually justified analysis of the theory as such. Now peer reviewed, and so sanctioned as social science.

Finding out how a theory is constituted

The article by H&RM contains no methodology, no principles for interpretation. Not only do they not define racism (cf response by Lene Hansen 2020), they don't discuss at all what it means to read a theory and judge whether it is racist. Given that this is the theme of the article, it is surprising that SD has published an article that does not reflect on its own methodology, its research question and the criteria on which it is answered, or for that matter the selection of data.

Not that a text can be read in only one way; you can get to different interpretations, and explain how you get there. But if you have *no* method, you don't have an interpretation at all. When assessing a theory, the most important issue is not the intention of the authors, but the intention of the text, that is its inner logic. What is it constructed to do, and how does it do it? (Skinner 2002; Wæver 2011b)

H&RM in contrast starts from a one sentence presentation of the concept and theory of securitization, where they manage to make two major mistakes of which one has consequences. They offer not one single sentence to present the project, the animating agenda, the political or academic setting in which the texts were launched. If they had explained what the theory and the key texts were designed to achieve, it would become clear how much they do violence to the theory.

They use in their one sentence summary 'referent objects' about that which is depicted as threat, where it has been our experience so far that almost all readers do pick up that 'referent object' is "that which is to be defended".[54] This has no implications for the argument, but it is a worrying sign. They *really* don't care about ST. The second half of the same sentence mis-quotes the key idea in a more important way. H&RM states that the theory has been attractive, because "it provides a clear set of steps and standards for (…) deciding whether they [the referent objects] should indeed be 'securitized'". No, the theory does not aim to guide when something "should be securitized". It is a framework for analysing what happens, when something is securitized and the politics of struggles over this act. It is argued systematically in all the major works (and has been a major target of criticism) that the theory exactly can't and will not *prescribe* when something "should be securitized".

This mis-understanding of something so truly basic in the theory leads to some of the later mistakes, where the authors conflate the analysis of securitization with the performance or endorsement of it. (This is seen eg. in their inability to see that citing Huntington in a discussion of the evolution of patterns of securitization in the US amounts not to an endorsement of it but a critical analysis of the politics around this move.) They return on p. 9 [7], to this misunderstanding and write the strikingly misguided sentence: "we argue that since securitization theory aspires to describe not just 'what is but 'what should be', its methodological whiteness also becomes normative whiteness." It is a very strong accusation to claim that the theory is based on 'normative whiteness' – and they base this on an incomprehensibly basic misunderstanding of the theory: that it should be about what *ought* to be securitized. Every textbook presentation we have ever seen on securitization theory gets this right, and the editorial team of SD contains renowned scholars who have published on ST at length. This is a mystery.

H&RM do not just say that our writings include problematic sentences about, say, 'Europe' or 'the West'. No, their claim is a strong one, that "civilizationist thought underpins securitization theory's concepts of politics and security" and "racist political thought" is integral and fundamental to the theory. That is, key *concepts* in ST are structured/infused by 'civilizationism'. To back this up, H&RM need to show that the meaning of 'politics' and 'security' in the theory are impacted, but they don't because they don't engage with the theory at all; do not enter *into* it. The burden is upon them to show that whenever these concepts show up, they carry a baggage; that the key concepts in ST import civilizationist assumptions into their usage and applications in all other contexts. Normally, a critical article about a theory would first analyse the central passages where they key concepts are introduced or defined. H&RM in contrast don't as much as mention how we define or construct our categories, and move directly to their own interpretation based on passages picked from all kinds of other contexts without ever justifying that a passage has a specific relationship to the key concepts.

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[54] *Regions and Powers* has a glossary at the end. Reading the entry about 'securitization' there would be enough to avoid this misunderstanding of what 'referent object' means (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 491).

Secondly, a critical analysis would show how deployment of these tainted concepts is conditioned by these problematic roots. Not to be found in this article either.

It is not valid to make such a reading of a theory where one does not at all try to understand its structure. One cannot move on the surface and pick quotes randomly across texts – from theory chapters to applications – and draw out words with no interest how they are used in those particular texts and contexts. Not only does the resulting narrative float totally freely, disconnected from the actual texts, this interpretation is not checked for plausibility vis-à-vis the theory.

H&RM are completely unconcerned with reflecting on how these accelerated chains of association and interpretation of the theory fit to its inner logic. Given that the whole idea of securitization theory is to create a general framework that can be applied to all societies and all kinds of issues, why *would* its constructors then "identify (…) securitization with a return to (racialized) primal anarchy"? (H&RM 2010: 10 [8]) That clearly would weaken the theory's ability to do what it tries to do. To be a meaningful critique, it would have be the case that somehow we needed these racial operations to give meaning to key categories; then racism would be constitutive of the concepts and the theory. The opposite is very strongly and clearly the case: the theory *needs* (for it to do what it tries to do) to *not* be tied to any overriding organisation in time or space pre-determining securitizations.

As we demonstrated above, their alleged sense of 'normal politics' *could not* work for ST, because the theory 'needs' an abstract concept of securitization as a distinct operation that is contrasted simply to the non-securitized (called 'normal politics'), not a substantial concept of 'normal politics' as holding particular (e.g. liberal democratic) qualities; and the theory needs (as argued very strongly in Wæver 2011 and 2015) a non-deterministic concept of securitization and therefore it can't be built into a larger historicist scheme of 'progress' and 'Europeanization': securitization is an 'operation' that is available for deployment and contestation in all societies at all times. The un-professional citation practices of H&RM are therefore ultimately the smaller problem; the big one is that they don't *read*. They inject elements into the theory that both aren't there and *couldn't be there*. Methodology matters.

It is illustrative here to compare their article with one of the books they cite as examples of the kind of race studies, they allegedly are inspired by: Ann Laura Stoler's "Race and the education of desire: Foucault's history of sexuality and the colonial order of things" (Stoler 1995). Stoler demonstrates how race and colonialism play an often hidden role in Foucault's work. She does a very careful reading work-by-work (and lecture-by-lecture) of Foucault, that shows how race is much more present in the story than previously assumed – sometimes by small passages that play a crucial role, sometimes as absences, but always she does so by understanding how the project hangs together, how it tries to move and act, and thereby what race does in it. Stoler thereby simultaneously makes Foucault's work say new things, and speaks back to it.

We are not asking for empathic readings, nor for critics to define their own project as improvement rather than rejection. However, we do believe that it is meaningless to criticise a theory you haven't tried to understand. Understand means to get at the inner logic. This is not about the intention of its authors. It is the intentionality of the theory that matters. You can criticize it; you can't ignore it in an article allegedly examining that theory.

The irony is that a powerful critique often nails a theory exactly this way. It is when you carefully trace how a theory or a text struggles to become able to do something that you can show how this entails problematic operations (Wæver 1990; re-printed as ch. 5 of Wæver 1997). Simply because the world does not have one harmonious structure of meaning, every text has to perform operations to achieve its own coherence (Derrida 1976 [1967]). It would be compelling and very relevant if a careful reading of our 'foundational' texts showed that these texts were only able to achieve what

they did by bridging gaps and pretending cohesion *through the use of race and colonialism*. Stoler does this kind of careful reading of Foucault. Mills does it. H&RM do nothing of the kind on our work.

We showed above how their primary argument rested on heavy usage of the Africa chapter in Buzan & Wæver 2003. How can this reveal something constitutive or foundational about ST, when the original launch of ST (Wæver 1995) has no references to Africa, race, 'primal anarchy' or barbarians, but developed the argument up against the dangers of what happens if – mostly *Western* – projects succeed to securitize a range of new issues related to ethnic identity (in Europe), migration, environmental security and European integration?

H&RM give a vague impression that only by invoking images of 'Africa' and 'Europe' at key places, could key concepts of securitization and desecuritization be established. But their quotes do not refer to those places where the categories are established, and H&RM present no argument to the effect that the theory is actually dependent on operations like this, that it imports them as necessary to constitute its categories. That is what it means in serious scholarship when one identifies implicit racism in theories. (We showed this above in relation to Mills 1997 on social contract theory, too.) In H&RM's analysis, they continue out along long chains of association whereby they manage to *add* regional and civilizational destinations to our key concepts. The associations follow from their own operations, not ours.[55] It is grossly misleading to claim that this is part of how the theory is *constituted*. Their use of the terms 'constituted' and 'constructed' is among the most treacherous elements in the article. They seem to have no criteria for when to deem a (usually totally made up) chain of associations (based on a cross-clipping of citations) 'foundational', 'constitutive' and 'built-into' the theory.

A final step in their argument about the theory being racially constituted, is their judgement that this is so irredeemably and thoroughly the case that the theory *cannot be saved*. Naturally, this save-or-not question is a purely hypothetical question now, given that we have shown all the mistakes they make on their way to their conclusion about how the theory is constituted, but in case their reading *had* been sound, it would still take an actual discussion of the key concepts to examine whether they could be redefined in ways that shred this baggage. They do no such thing. It is an unspoken assumption, it seems, that the key concepts of securitization and desecuritization are not only established through racial reasoning (which they are not), but that they can only be constituted this way. They don't even try to argue this. Thus, their final step of concluding that it is not even worth trying to save the theory rests on just the momentum of their own rhetoric, no actual arguments.

6. Doing Securitization Studies of Racism: Actually Existing Analyses and Future Possibilities

If one is interested in ST and racism, three approaches seem more productive and promising than the one adopted by H&RM, and it seems not unreasonable to expect of an article claiming to be about ST and racism, that its authors at least to some extent looked at these, especially the first: 1) what work has been done on racism based on ST?, 2) critical debates around possible or necessary modifications to the theory in order to make it better able to analyse cases relating to racism (not just 'including race', but changes to its structure and mode of application), and 3) types of research questions, i.e. a typology for a research agenda.

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[55] Even *if* such problematic connotations were actually found in our texts and not violently inserted by H&RM, this would still be far from showing a 'built in' racism in ST. It would 'only' show racism by the authors (us) on these specific points. To substantiate their claims about *the theory*, they would have to show that the concepts *depend* on this. They don't even articulate the question necessary for such findings.

Racism analysed with the help of Securitization Theory

Securitization Theory has been used to analyse racism, and in the light of recent developments, new modes of using and possibly developing the theory should be considered as well. In this section, we will first present three kinds of already existing usages: first those found in the foundational texts themselves, then applications that aim to analyse racism with ST as part of the analytical apparatus, and thirdly applications that 'find' racism more 'unintentionally' as part of some other or more general analysis. The distinction between the two latter is interesting because ideally ST should be able to do both if it 'works' in relation to racism: in some cases you decide to study racism with it, in other cases the theory can 'spot' racism when you asked another question. The first, 'foundational texts' part placed before those two is in a sense the least interesting, because as we argued above, it is not particularly significant what empirical usages we included in our own books, where the focus should be on the theory and what it *can* do, not what 'it' has done. Nevertheless, given the strange approach by H&RM, we will briefly start with this level:

H&RM mention in passing in their intro, that there are examples even in our own texts of analyses of racism, but somehow they make this irrelevant through their route of allegedly going to the roots of the theory (which they actually don't do at all) and then deductively conclude that the existing analyses don't count; this without examining these analyses concretely. Usually one would expect from a serious analysis that it demonstrated this by looking at these existing analyses and showed that they were somehow wrong, twisted or constrained, because the theory prevents analysis of racism. But no, H&RM just leave the existing texts as something that is true in reality but can't be true in theory, so they deem it away. Of the instances they mention from our texts, the most interesting might be the discussion of securitization on behalf of a "white male U.S. culture" (Buzan et al 1998: 129) that depicts 'the new particularism' as a security threat.[56] This analysis is not exactly 'brief' as H&RM write; actually given the general proportions of the Framework book, we write so much that we end up apologizing for why it was given 'extra treatment'; ibid. 131). As security studies looked in 1998, it was probably quite unusual and in some respects foresighted to focus here. Certainly, many studies of 'white nationalism' took similar analyses much further and most often without ST; the point here is simply that there is no sign that the theory was bad at spotting or naming this, and even some of the specific observations do seem highly relevant for understanding what has happened in US politics since. Very few other theoretical approaches in security studies at the time would have been able to conceptualise these phenomena; feminism probably being the strongest candidate.

The theme is further developed in the North America chapter of *Regions and Powers*, but this is not noticed by H&RM, because from that book they almost only reference the Africa chapter.

The second step then is whether scholars have set out, ST in hand, to analyse racism and how well they fared. Let us mention briefly five very different examples:

Tania Saeed's book *Islamophobia and Securitization - Religion, Ethnicity and the Female Voice* (2016) focuses on the everyday realities of young Muslim women in Britain, who are portrayed as antithetical to the British way of life in media and political discourse. ST is deployed systematically throughout in an analysis that demonstrates intriguing articulations between race, ethnicity, gender and religion, including fascinating discussions of 'Pakophobia' and 'hyper-securitization'.

Nikolay Zakhanov's book *Race and Racism in Russia* (2015) is very different. It covers race and racism in Russia from a range of perspectives, however in chapter 6 on how racialized discourses towards migrants are being formed and normalized, Zakharov draws on ST. He explicitly challenges a number of previous studies on securitization in Russia, criticizing their narrow focus on the Russian

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[56] We quoted at length from this analysis above in relation to H&RM's claim that we equated this white militant racism with 'racial justice movements' (see p. 21 of the present paper).

authorities and traditional security discourses, where he points to the centrality of racialization of visually different migrants as one of the main means by which the securitization of migration is achieved and nation-building supported (Zakharov 2015:150-151).

Powell R., van Baar H. (2019) 'The Invisibilization of Anti-Roma Racisms' is a chapter in a book (by van Baar, Ivasiuc and Kreide) called *The Securitization of the Roma in Europe. Human Rights Interventions*. The whole book is an interesting study of how the Roma increasingly are governed though security policy in Europe and draws on ST throughout. The mentioned chapter argues that interrelated processes of neoliberalization and securitization have de-politizised the root causes of the societal problems of the Roma, and has contributed to 'invisibilize' the racial and racializing dimensions of the precarious living condition for many Roma (Powell & van Baar 2019: 91). In an innovative combination with categories from Wacquant and Goldberg, Powell & van Baar argue that in the neoliberal context, practices of securitization enact specific 'regimes of visuality' where marginalization and racialization are concealed while the Roma simultaneously are made hyper-visible through their criminalization (Powell & van Baar 2019: 94).

Burcu Toğral "Convergence of Securitization of Migration and 'New Racism' in Europe: Rise of Culturalism and Disappearance of Politics" (2011). This is a chapter in a book on *security, insecurity and migration in Europe* (Lazaridis 2011). In this chapter Toğral argues that in the construction of migration as a security threat, the security discourse has converged with 'new racism' and that the difference-as-a-threat narrative has become hegemonic and thus structures migration policies (Toğral 2011: 221). She argues that within a rise of culturalist discourses the securitization of migration via culture has become the most prominent discourse and serves to depoliticize structural problems (Toğral 2011: 225).

Hussain & Bagguley (2012) write interestingly about 'Securitized Citizens: Islamophobia, Racism and the 7/7 London Bombings'. Many others have circled around similar themes, but this article argues quite explicitly (in a sociology journal) for "the introduction of the concept of securitization to help understand the changing relationship between British Muslims and non-Muslims and that this usefully synthesizes and encompasses the insights from other literatures associated with the idea of moral panic and suspect communities. We have argued for an approach that treats securitization, racialization and Islamophobia as analytically distinct." (2012: 730-731). This enables them to show how these three processes are coming together in the concrete case "in constructing British South Asian Muslims as an existential threat to British society".

As to examples that arrive the other way, ie. not setting out to study racism but finding it nevertheless, King and Mai 2008 is a book about Albanian migration to Italy during the 1990s. Chapter four is about the shift in the immigration policy from welcome to stigmatisation and how Albanian migrants became a strategically exploited 'constitutive other' within the renegotiation of a viable Italian National Identity. Using ST, King & Mai argue that the shift in the representation of Albanian migrants can be seen as reflecting a repositioning of the Italian national identity facing the perceived existential threat of the Albanian migration (King & Mai 2008: 111-112). The selection of the Albanian migrants as the main constitutive other for the hegemonic Europeanised north-centric Italian national identity is, as King & Mai argues, tied to presumed physical and cultural similarities between the Albanians and primarily *Southern* Italians, whom within this instrumental, racialised and homogeneous national identity are portrayed as backwards and on a 'lower' level of Italianess (King & Mai 2008: 123-124). Thus the study ends up pointing to the crucial role of racialization, which the study did not set out as a study of. And it does with the help of ST.

Many, many more examples could be presented, especially of the second type: studies of securitization of a case delineated by issue, country, policy, controversy or some other focus, and then as part of that analysis, the importance of racism is pointed out. The examples above were picked mainly to give a glimpse of the diversity of existing research.

<u>Developing ST to better address racism – and generally to become a better theory</u>

So far we have demonstrated that ST actually has been at work in relation to racism first in the foundational texts, then in dedicated studies and finally pointing to racism in studies defined with a different research question. Now we will briefly point to some interesting articles that have engaged critically with ST and suggested revisions necessary to fully capture specific features of racism. This is very much in line with the way the theory has developed historically. As previously pointed out by us and others, ST has exactly evolved through periods of engaging with different issues that each present peculiar challenges that trigger more general rethinking of core concepts – roughly: identity, nationalism and migration in the 1990s, terror and religion in the 00s, climate change in the 2010s (not that other issues weren't studied, but these – at least for ourselves – triggered most development of the general theory). Similarly, it will likely prove productive for the theory to engage racism and treat the theory as not static but in constant development, also in the deeper theoretical categories. (After this, we will finally present some ideas for further studies.)

In this middle sub-section, we meet articles that are generally very critical of ST. Some of their critiques even overlap at first sight with those of H&RM – in some cases they make similar mistakes, especially the one about what is 'missing in the theory'; in other cases these articles explore relevant concerns also hinted at by H&RM, and it is done productively in the articles we here discuss. These articles all point to interesting ways to develop ST-inspired analysis of racism – and to do it in ways that will improve the theory more generally.

Moffette and Vadasaria (2016) argue that the continuity and non-exceptional nature of racial violence points to the importance of zooming in on securitization not as justifying exceptional measures but on the contrary "enabling a lift on the prohibition of liberal intolerance" which then produces "uninhibited violence". This is a powerful analysis of how individual violence is enabled. Although largely phrased as a critique of securitization theory, the article shows some promising avenues for development.[57] We have argued before that for any given research project, it will often be productive to pair ST with some theory for larger societal structures (Wæver 2011, 2015), and this is exactly part of the reasoning for not turning ST into a general IR theory or to load it with all the "missing" elements requested. By embedding the analysis of securitization within "a configuration of racial governmentality", Moffette and Vadasaria show how securitization can enable violence without any manifest push in that direction, because "racial desires constitutive of liberalism and colonial modernity" are so to say "let loose" by removing a specific figure that held them at bay. This is a securitization analysis, because securitizing moves – specifically "practices and discourses that problematize migrants and refugees as a threat to civility, national security, cultural identity, or economic well-being" – simultaneously move the limit of tolerance and reproduce the idea/myth of that tolerance and thereby regulate a space for "civilized violence" against migrants: "uninhibited violence". (Moffette and Vadasaria are keen to point out that this is about *claims* to exceptionality, not about actual exceptions; an interpretation which would reinforce the perception

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[57] In their own presentation, they have two critiques. One is that racism is "absent" from the theory. This is the classical mistake of not dealing with 'the theory' in sufficiently basic terms as the core conceptual construct, but asking for specifics to be included (cf discussion above). The second critique is that the theory or existing analyses have not been good at grasping dialectical processes like the one they analyse, where society contains a 'desire' which can become operative by removing the obstacle. Concretely, they point to the potential of combining ST with a specific societal model, in this case from critical race analysis, which is actually totally in line with what we have suggested as well (Wæver 2011, 2015). This critique does point back to deeper problems in the theory, only they should not be phrased as the "absence" of race – the problem is in a sense bigger. It has to do with the basic structure, where it is important to avoid any kind of mechanical, linear image that a securitization produces the "impulse" that leads to extraordinary measures or violence; it is possible that the 'force' for violence is already there and even vested in individuals, so the process of securitization needs only to remove an obstacle. This is a very powerful and productive challenge to the theory, that seems absolutely possible to handle constructively.

that liberal normality *is* civil and un-violent. This is fully in line with classical securitization theory. It never postulated that illiberal practices actually were unusual in formally liberal societies. Securitization theory is all about moving the boundary – wherever it was – through arguments about threats and an ensuing 'necessity' of extraordinary measures.) Theirs is an elegant analysis of how racial violence is "anything but exceptional" – and yet can be assisted by rhetorical moves in the form of "claims to exceptionality". Installing "limits on tolerance" simultaneously reproduce "the fantasy of liberal tolerance and white civility". We have given this article much attention here because it introduces two important elements to be developed in ST: ways to combine with models of societal structures and the complex play between universality and particularly in racist practices. The second element becomes clearer by including a second article in the discussion:

Short & Kambouri (2010) argue why Etienne Balibar's concept of neo-racism is particularly helpful for understanding the new forms of racism that claim not to be racist – especially those that centre on an intolerance of cultural difference and a thoroughly ambiguous articulation of universalism and difference, tolerance and threat. Balibar's theorising has had obvious usability on European anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic tendencies, and we drew on it since Wæver et al 1993. However, the article by Short and Kambouri is interesting for bringing the analysis to the US of Huntington and Bush. Also, they make promising links to securitization theory because of the role of 'dangerous migrants' (Europe) or different 'civilizations' (USA). Specifically, the article points to the simultaneity during George W. Bush's presidency of conspicuous public displays of racial inclusivity (including high level appointments) "with distinct external characteristics and the parallel construction of (in principle invisible) cultural difference as a security threat. Indeed, the US government's response to September 11 might be described as activating a balancing act between the antithetical dynamics of visibility/invisibility and tolerance/securitisation rather than simply a process of securitisation of migration" (2010: 287). Ironically, the actual response then continues practices more attuned with biological racism, i.e. racial profiling organised around visible difference. This is facilitated by the seeming anti-racism of official policy vis-a-vis traditional racism. This anti-racism, tolerance and openness becomes part of the conditions of possibility of neo-racist exclusivity.

Balibar's analysis (in Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Balibar 2005) has many interesting features of which we can only emphasise one – the relationship between universality and particularity – while equal attention should be payed to the articulations of race, nation and class. Explicitly racist discourses were delegitimised in the post-war period. Even today when more and more openly racist arguments get articulated closer and closer to centres of power in important Western countries, this usually takes contradictory forms, which does not mean that they are 'confused', but on the contrary those contradictions are central to how they work. The discrediting of traditional racism is often mobilised exactly as a way to produce 'neo-racism'. An ethic of tolerance becomes part of the national project – and the main difference is articulated as cultural and a way to avoid social conflict. Cultural difference harbors conflict, and therefore difference is dangerous, and therefore especially migration – and migrants - get defined as threatening on the basis of a seemingly universalist discourse. Humanist universalism is not in contradiction to neo-racism, but actually serves to make racism appear justifiable in terms of a 'natural' limit to tolerance. This obviously ties in powerfully with securitization analysis, because this form of neo-racism – which typically combines scientific-expert knowledge with local self-evidence – operates on the basis of what is 'dangerous' to society: not a particular other as per se dangerous but the cultural incompatibility between this group and the majority (cf. Gad 2010). The referent object to be defended often is 'social cohesion' or 'social stability', i.e. universal. Yet, the policy ends up making a particular group a threat, because difference is articulated in a space that is not equal but hierarchical. In Europe, this has most often been deployed against Islam in the name of tolerance, feminism or secularism (see also Sheikh & Wæver 2012). In recent years we have even seen a rivalry among nations about being the most perfectly universalist.

These seemingly quite abstract arguments could be crucial in confronting some of the most dangerous and difficult developments today. Many approaches struggle to analyse the politics behind phenomena like the election of Donald Trump as US President and Brexit in the UK. Nation, class, gender and race combine on the content side while the forms are often strikingly unusual, including the persons fronting the movements. The unconventional forms of their statements, often defy established methods for discourse analysis or other textual techniques. Trump's tweets or rallies clearly are bodies of text and can be analysed as such, and the same goes for visual all-white male appearances eg. in the Oval Office. More strongly than is commonly the case, political rhetoric including securitization seems to operate in two parallel codings here: As any political project it speaks to the general good, articulates its version of the national interest and corresponding threats against that kind of "us" – and at the same time, a particular segment is called upon to defend itself against dangers both internal and external, and while distinctions involve culture, religion, gender and class, race probably is the most powerful element.[58] Long ago it was clarified that while the original presentations of ST could sound like there is always only one referent object at play in a given case, actually often several different threats and referent objects are combined in the same discourse. However, more could be done about the way the same discourse can operate simultaneously and differently at different levels vis-à-vis different audiences (and referent objects). This would be important to general development of the theory, and the case of racism in contemporary politics in many Western countries seems particularly well-suited to bringing this out. Its privileged position stems from the particular way that racism and racialization, are, as the ultimate "differentialist" operation, tied in with the most powerful universalist belief systems of the day: liberalism, humanism and (paradoxically) nationalism.

A third important front for developing ST is the so-called 'silence problem' introduced by Lene Hansen (2000) and recently most thoroughly discussed by Sarah Bernard (2018a,b) and Claudia Aradau (2018). Race does not figure prominently in this analysis (or it might be called: this critique of ST), but it should take a prominent place in future discussions, because this debate is about who are able to speak what kind of security concerns with a chance of being heard; and who are structurally prevented from doing so. This is distinct from the general feature of securitization that some (say: presidents, and sometimes experts) are better positioned to securitize than many others; this was central to the theory from the beginning (Buzan et al 1998: 31-33). A particularly vicious version of the silence problem appears when you would endanger yourself by pointing to threats you face (in Hansen's classical text: honour killings in Pakistan[59]). This works in particularly dramatic forms when your immediate degree of dangerousness is treated as directly bodily visible.

Recent examples from the US: shot because "jogging while black" or "shopping while black", where it is obviously in practice only whites who can use their "universal right" to "citizen's arrest" and "stand your ground". Not vice-versa. On the contrary, whites can storm a state capitol armed with semi-automatic weapons, as we have seen during the Corona crisis, without this being threatening, formally. Who are threatening – and who can claim to feel threatened? Society has many hierarchies that can express themselves in regulating the ability to take these different subject positions. Race operates in particular ways, partly because it is in many societies more 'visible' than other

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[58] Similar observations were made about George W. Bush, arguing that his use of phrases riffing off bible quotes common among born-again Christians enabled him to say one thing to this audience, without others even knowing that these particular words were important. Naturally, there are many other examples from other places and times of similar dynamics.

[59] This is part of the critique by H&RM (2020) of Hansen's article (2000) and consequently figures in her response (2020), but this is not worth addressing here given that H&RM do not discuss this at the level of the sizable existing literature (despite having Bertand 2018a in the references). As Hansen (2020) points out, they even misrepresent the article (cf. corrigendum no 1), so readers are advised to pay more attention to this major critique of ST than one should think from the parody of it in H&RM 2020.

differences which also regulate who can speak and who can't. In some societies, religion operates somewhat in the same direction, because sometimes also treated as "visible".

These are possibly the three most important general challenges for ST in the coming years. Race could well be the most productive angle from which to push these debates, and (as summarised briefly above) this work has been started by important critical articles: 1) How to make ST work in tandem with general theories of society or general societal structures and thus include eg systemic racism. 2) To explore the complex interlacing of universalism and particularism, often operating through contradictory constellations of a societal whole and racially constituted communities. 3) To theorise further the dynamics of silence, silencing and securitization, especially as they relate to groups that are treated as bodily readable regarding degree of danger.

In contrast to all the calls for ST to "include" race, these three will be truly theoretical discussions that develop the theory with the aim of learning for limits shown in actual analyses of racism.

We are getting far away from the issues raised by H&RM, but that is exactly the point. If really interested in racism and anti-racism, wouldn't it then be much more productive to actually engage with the theory you have picked out for treatment? Especially given that race and racism seems positioned to become catalyst for possibly the three most important general theoretical enhancements for ST at the present stage. Given that a solid scholarship has already begun to take shape around these debates, it is puzzling why anybody will chose instead to build a whole article on a non-engagement to produce pure polemic with the aim to ban a word (securitization) and banish a theory (ST). If this is the most powerful anti-racist practice you can imagine, then this theory has to be a really consistently evil and powerful force.

An empirical research agenda

Logically, race can figure in a ST based analysis in different positions. This map/typology can surely be improved upon, but let us propose at least a 3x2 fold table for possible inspiration:

	As referent object	As threat
Social group articulated in terms of race	Securitization on behalf of 'us', racially defined (1)	Securitization against the danger of 'them', racially defined (2)
Structures of racial hierarchy at stake in securitizations	Securitizations in defence of referent objects that correlate with racially privileged groups, serving to protect hierarchy (3)	Securitizations naming threats that disproportionally target racially oppressed groups (4)
Racism as aggregate phenomenon articulated directly	Anti-anti-racism: defending racism (5)	Fighting against racism in a securitized mode (6)

- Securitizations that explicitly operate with racial categories in relation to the referent object (that which is held as threatened and deserving of survival) is cell no.1; the most obvious example would be white supremacists (the word here used in the more common denotation where it refers not to Buzan and Wæver but to ultra-right groups in eg. the US or Russia or Scandinavia, who explicitly defend white privileges and power, often violently). While other approaches than ST can of course tell us other important things about this case, it should be interesting to look at their securitizations, especially because (as securitization analysis has

shown in relation to religious 'fundamentalists') these groups combine a depiction of superiority with vulnerability in intriguing ways that might be also strategically relevant. Similarly, inspired by the 'silence' tradition, one can study how other groups are blocked from articulating their defense as a security matter. "Black lives matter" is an important case of politics articulating race explicitly and possibly implying securitization given that the central campaigns are about life-threatening structures and practices, whereas closer analysis probably will show that this is politicization rather than securitization, because the means proposed are usually not extraordinary but actually to make the system live up to its professed principles. (It ought to be unnecessary to spell this out, but it clearly isn't: to treat white supremacists and black lives matter in the same cell of a typology does not amount to a claim about moral equivalence. In an analysis of the build-up to world war two, one would find military security on behalf of states on both sides, and the two sides will therefore in many typologies fall into the same category, which is not the same as expressing indifference to who won the war or attributing guilt equally.)

- Cases where a referent object is *de facto* (but not explicitly) constituted racially, eg through dog whistle politics and unspoken structural patterns, so that a relevant audience is brought to support a policy operating along racial lines (cell no. 3). Such an analysis of US and/or UK in the 2010s would seem worthwhile. This kind of analysis would need a more explicitly structural analysis of how racism organises society, because it will be the racial, social categories that structure the analysis, since the explicit securitizations exactly avoid these categories. ('White supremacy' in the more structural sense from critical race scholars will appear here.) Securitization analyses will explore the most powerful threat discourses and justifications for exceptional measures and what role they play in this social configuration. Further theoretical work is needed to work out this category, which presumably forms a continuum from securitizations very close to cell no 1 – thinly veiled racialized references – to cases where the effects are distributed racially in a way that is mostly visible with the help of a structural analysis. Concrete analyses therefore have to combine in the specific study

- The same two categories as the above can be applied to *threats* instead of referent objects (cells no 2 and 4). Just as securitizations in relation to racially constituted referent objects can be either explicit (directly discursive) or implicit (social and performed through indirect discursive operations), a study can be organised around the same question posed in terms of the threat. Usually, securitization analyses combine investigations of referent objects and threats, but often a concrete research project is *organised* around a study of one or the other, and if we should imagine a study that puts racism at the centre, this can be done through either entry point, after which it in practice typically will find the same category at play "on the other side" as well, i.e both referent object and threat.

- Study securitization of the threat from 'racism' as such (cell 6) – that is: study processes and practices that produce a general understanding of racism as particularly destructive and in need of being attacked by strong means. (An example of such a securitizing move is H&RM 2020, although a very narrow one because it only looks at racism in academia, and strangely underspecified as to what exactly the danger is, but clearly the message is somehow that ST is a dangerous, racist theory that should be expelled by extraordinary means.) On the basis of studies of cases and processes where racism is securitized, it also possible to structure a discussion of the pros and cons of doing this. (In the mis-reading of H&RM, for us to suggest studying the securitization of the threat from racism is the same as depicting anti-racism as a danger [cf. their mis-reading regarding 'radical feminists']. This is a misunderstanding, because as we have written explicitly [quoted above on p. 29 (note 30) of this document] the theory is only a reminder about seeing the dark side of any securitization, not a postulate that securitization is *always* wrong.) An equivalent could be climate change, where scholars increasingly address the question "should climate change be securitized?", i.e. "we know that securitization implies problematic side-effects, but is climate change so serious

and so difficult to handle with normal means that even securitization scholars want to look into this route?". As spelled out above, the theory in its basic format does not tell whether something 'should be' securitized in the sense of "this really is a security threat", because its origins is in a critique of objectivist security theory, and therefore a danger cannot be measured on its own and outside a political analysis be assessed by 'ST' as being or not being something that "should be securitized". But with due attention to this basic structure, it is possible (as we have pointed out often over the years) to use the theory to structure debate on the pros and cons of handling a specific threat in a security mode. As with climate change, this is a way to produce clearer discussion of possible ways to achieve a defined political aim, in this case to fight racism.

- Study cases where 'anti-racism' is depicted as a danger (cell 5). A central element of the new right seems to be a trope about political correctness on the left combined with an alleged 'liberal' disrespect for 'ordinary people'. Here anti-anti-racism increasingly becomes a thing, and it often takes securitization form. That is: if you study the rhetoric of the new right, it is at first surprising how big a place is occupied by seemingly quite 'small' and in larger power terms 'weak' phenomena like movements among academics and students; and how much of the new right's rhetoric is about how they and their freedoms are threatened by this, and how 'ordinary' (read: white) people are disrespected and thereby ultimate denied recognition and existence by anti-racists and other movements. A securitization analysis of the place of these figures in more or less racist political groups on the right would to us seem very valuable. (Special explanation for H&RM: No, it is not *us* who are saying that anti-racism is dangerous. We are suggesting that a *study of* the suppression of anti-racism should include securitization analysis like this, and that this might be helpful for anti-racist struggles.)

This typology with three levels times two sides is just one possible way to structure an empirical research agenda, and we are very open to suggestions for what this leaves out, but it could be a start for systematically mapping dimension of securitization analysis of racism.

The world seems to be replete with instances these years of such phenomena, in many cases getting worse and especially moving back into explicitly and flagrantly racist rhetoric, and we fail to see how the analysis in H&RM 2020 in any way questions the viability and value of such analyses. Naturally, we do not claim that ST will always be the best to analyse a specific case. However, H&RMs article is an appeal to scholars to stop using ST and thus by implication not to analyse racism in ways like these. Why this will be helpful to an anti-racist agenda is not addressed in their article.

For us to show that ST has been used and can be used to study racism is not in itself a rebuttal of H&RM's article. They don't really care about this. Their article is not about how to analyse racism – with or without ST – but to argue that ST should not be used *at all*. On anything. Not on climate change, not on migration, not on Covid-19. If you think you are getting a useful grip on these issues by using ST: don't! To analyse these issues with the help of ST makes your analysis racist. The theory and its key concepts should be driven out of security studies.

7. Responsibility: Ethics of Reading, of Writing – and of Name-calling

We are all responsible for what we write, how we write it and for trying to take into account what our writings will do. There are no simple rules and measurements to regulate this, but we are all under an obligation to *reflect in terms of responsibility* – when we read, when we write, and when we interact with others.

Strangely, H&RM pay no attention to *our* discussions of the ethico-political rationale behind the design of the theory. Nor do they reflect on the pros and cons of their own approach and style.

H&RM write about STs "apparent neutrality" and its "ostensibly neutral terms" (2020: 3, 11, 16 [1, 9, 14]). This is strange. We have never claimed the theory is neutral. Actually, in contrast to most theorist who never address this issue, we have explicitly discussed how the theory is intentionally designed not to be neutral. The two most relevant books (Wæver et al 1993 and Buzan et al 1998) contain explicit discussion of its proposed theorising in terms of what the theory politically does and risks, and this has been spelled out in greater detail especially in Wæver 2011; see also Wæver 1999. H&RM cite Wæver 2011 several times, so they can't have overlooked this; why then claim the opposite repeatedly?

We have not only written about the political rationale behind the shape of the theory, but explicitly engaged with the question *how* to assess the politics of a theory, and made explicit that this can be approached from different angles, and which one we find most powerful. The theory is not neutral; not even neutral about how to discuss being neutral or not:

> "The structure and nature of a theory can have systematic political implications. (…) It means tracking what kinds of analysis the theory can produce and whether such analysis systematically impacts real-life political struggles. Securitization theory is found to 'act politically' through three structural features that systematically shape the political effects of using the theory.(…) Instead of deducing the political quality of the theory from various empirical statements by its proponents, this approach zooms in on the very core of the theory: how does it structurally condition work done with it in systematically political ways?" (Wæver 2011: 465, the abstract; the last sentence eerily challenges H&RM's 'method' ahead of time)

In these places, we do not offer a foolproof way to do good politically. On the contrary, we admit in all cases to difficult dilemmas and risks involved in producing theory and texts that can and will be used for purposes different from our own. However, given that ST came from the beginning with this layer of self-reflections, why then ignore it to the point of claiming it self-presented as neutral?[60] And why does an unusual intervention like H&RM's not cause themselves to confront dilemmas and doubts about the effects of what they are writing? Their article comes across as a self-assured, one-dimensional judgement that involves no *decisions* on their behalf, and thus as simply stating *how it really is*. ST is racist. There is no reflection on this mode of discussing in the discipline, on this form of phrasing. Presumably because this is how it is and therefore it should be said, and there is therefore no speaking subject making decisions and reflecting on its own responsibility.

In this part, we will discuss in sequence the irresponsible practices of H&RM in reading, writing, in attacking us for racism and as a political failure in relation to racism as a massively serious matter.

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[60] Each of our books end with self-critical reflections on how our approach could be challenged, theoretically and politically. That is obviously a bad idea, because it is in these passages that H&RM find sentences they can twist against us (while they themselves write in a tone of moral purity and unquestionable righteousness): Wæver et al 1993 ends in a discussion of risks of a concept like societal security being appropriated by nationalists to lend academic legitimacy to their campaigns (which indeed did happen), which we then discuss up against the advantages of having the analytical tools to analyse such phenomena. Buzan et al 1998 is closed by a triangular discussion among emancipatory Critical Security Studies, Traditional Security Studies and our approach; and this is H&RM's source for possibly half of their key quotes in their article. Finally, Buzan & Wæver 2003 is rounded off with amongst other a self-historicizing where we discuss what ongoing social processes might change the world beyond one where our theory applies. We also teach our students that this kind of critical look from other positions at your own is a sound exercise, and in books like ours that suggest frameworks for others to use, it is even more important to offer pros and cons of adopting it. An intellectual climate like the one H&RM tries to create would make it far too dangerous to write like this in the future.

Any genre of text, be that an appeal or a theory "obeys certain rules; it has its grammar, its rhetoric, its pragmatics. (…) as you did not take these rules into account, you quite simply *did not read* [our] text, in the most elementary and quasi-grammatical sense of what is called *reading*." (Derrida 1986: 356)

Are we trying to police how people read our texts? No, but the discipline surely can't live with an anything goes approach to this. Especially not when statements are made in terms of not "it is our interpretation that this could imply...", but "NN writes...". We could start to speculate that H&RM would like to see us dead, but surely we can't write "H&RM write that we should be shot" and then throw in a reference (Howell & Richter-Montpetit 2020: 12) giving reference to a page where there is no basis for this postulate. How should we be able to have serious scholarly – or for that matter political – discussions if we violate a basic rule like that?

We have given the most principled arguments above in relation to the problems in the reading by H&RM – that they do not relate to the inner structure of the texts but pick phrases and fit them together arbitrarily in a deepfake manner that make the result fully disconnected from anything we have actually written. The meaning they produce is a result of their associations and splicing of fragments. We will now show some more specific examples of bizarre readings.

They claim that the theory is built on a narrative of "world historical progress". The main places to look for a historical meta-narrative would be Buzan et al 1998 and Buzan & Wæver 2003. The nature of the former, as exactly 'the Framework book', the set-up is mostly analytical, but each of the sector chapters contain sections on the historical evolution of 'military security, 'economic security' etc – and none of these are structured through an evolutionist scheme about necessary or preferred progress or any such. The other book, Regions and Powers, is more explicit about its general take on world history, given that it situates the historical formation and transformation of 'global' and 'regional' in a world history of 1500-now – and it even situates our own analyses as bound by a particular epoch and thus RSCT to have an expiry date. Here again, there is no story of 'progress' and certainly not a liberal one, but there is focus on the history of colonialization and de-colonisation as the main shaping forces of the regions of the world.

They consistently depict the theory as 'liberal'. This is surprising. In IR terms, our inspiration at the time was mostly an unconventional mix of realism and post-structuralism – and our co-author Jaap de Wilde represented more of a kind of radical liberalism (cf de Wilde 1991); we even self-declared this in Buzan et al 1998:2. Especially Buzan would later take an interest in the English School (which H&RM in their rough generalisations probably see as 'liberal'). We surely do not fit neatly into the category of liberal and rarely find ourselves read this way. Beyond the IR sense of liberalism, the general philosophical and political traditions are not ours either. As demonstrated in the quote we provided above from the Framework book (p. 25 of this document), we use the term 'liberal' mostly as a critical designation of a particular ideology and organising practice, not as an ideal or a position we align ourselves with, and certainly not as a quality linked to key concepts like de-securitization or politicization. For instance, when we write about the "liberal, missionary idea of security" (Buzan et al 1998: 185) this is intended critically, not as something we promote. H&RM use the term 'liberal' literally 23 times in their article, and almost every time as adjective affixed to our work. Despite the fact that it is not found there, only attributed to it through their misunderstanding of 'normal politics' and their intellectual style of free flow associations.

They claim that we want the theory to protect illocution, i.e. speech acts of this particular kind (H&RM 2020: 12 [10]). It seems like they have read our texts to say that all illocutionary acts are good. That obviously would be ridiculous. To take the paradigmatic illocutionary speech act of a promise, it can't be deemed 'good' or 'bad' just because it takes the form of an illocutionary act. Promises can be made that do good or bad. The illocutionary act of a death sentence does not

become better by being illocutionary. The point in Wæver 2011 and especially 2015 (and 2018) is that it is theoretically and politically important to defend a conception of what happens in speech acts that take seriously the particular nature of illocution (something that can be done via Arendt and Austin and in other ways), because this is a way to insist on there being a political moment, which in turn is important in order to demonstrate the *responsibility* for practitioners and analysts. To avoid all naturalising talk about 'objective threats' and 'necessity', there is a theoretical dimension to be defended against some of our critics who want eg. more causality in modes that will be ultimately politically problematic.[61] The argument is about defending politics in this sense (and it should be quite clear in the articles, actually). These arguments are not about defending *against securitization*, it is absolutely explicit in those pages that it is about defending a conception of politics that preserves responsibility against naturalising and objectifying approaches that erase politics and responsibility. H&RM feel free to take sentences from one context and tie them seamlessly up with completely different arguments in a different context. This has to be against their own better knowledge, because the texts are not that difficult. Is this a legitimate way of cross-tying textual fragments? Usually not. In this context? If they have some political rationale for the justifiability of reading without limits, then they ought to provide this rationale to the reader.

They claim that ST "often (…) treats the entire continent of Africa as a single entity" (2020: 14 [12]). They then quote an – admittedly strong – sentence from the first page of the 60 pages section on Africa in *Regions and Powers*. That book is about regional security, and therefore it first presents a theory and then covers chapter by chapter the world, region by region. Consequently, it is natural that each section starts by approaching the region as a whole – be that North America, East Asia or Africa, making some general observations about what is characteristic or unusual about security dynamics in that region. Then the sections, through several chapters in each case, proceed to be much more specific and look at sub-regions and countries, in the Africa section as in the other sections. It is thus misleading to claim that we "often" treat Africa as a single entity. Or rather present it as if it is something we do *specifically* about Africa. We are all familiar with the tendency by many writers and politicians to talk about Africa in generalised terms – even the 'Africa as a country' fallacy – and many readers will therefore probably find it plausible that we too committed that mistake. However, given the structure of the book and the specific location of their quote, it is a very misleading observation. A book about regions will naturally treat each of the regions "as a single entity" for some purposes. This is the subject matter of the book and it is ultimately a 500 pages examination exactly of the degree to which one can and cannot treat regions as coherent objects of analysis. It is a highly manipulative gesture to present this as a specific feature of ST's treatment of 'Africa'. They write that ST "often (…) treats the entire continent of Africa as a single entity" – and nowhere mention that this is in a book about regions!

H&RM make a big issue out of an argument we have about securitizations in strong and weak states (building on Buzan 1991). H&RM here have some academic literature to point to that deems discourses of state failure as racist. We agree that valuable work has been done to show how discourses of state failure functioned as part of deeply problematic policy programmes and definitely should be interrogated critically. However, this should not mean that any observation about concrete states failing should be judged on the basis of a generalisation from that critique of the 'failed states paradigm' as such. Nor does this mean that you cannot try to probe the difference between security dynamics in different parts of the world. It is a well-established argument introduced to the field by Mohammed Ayoob (1995) that 'third world states' (as he put it) are prone

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[61] Admittedly this is a complicated argument that might not be easy to follow, because you need to know a little about speech act theory. Therefore, we do not complain that H&RM did not understand this, but we do complain about their presentation with much rhetorical flourish of strong accusations that are ultimately based on reading us as making a non-sensical argument like all illocutionary acts being good. Whether or not they know speech act theory, it is not a good idea to assume a stupid reading of people who you must assume do know about it.

to have more of domestic issues treated in a security mode because of what Buzan calls 'weak states' (with the term given a very precise, technical definition in Buzan 1991; and with cases found in all regions of the world).

The result of H&RM's criteria is paradoxically, that you are not allowed to make critical observations about African states, only about all other states. This ultimately becomes both racist and a political denouncement of critical scholars who in an African setting have consistently targeted their own rulers (Fanon 1963 [1961]; Mbembe 2001 [2000]). They quote us (2020: 15 [13]) for the following: "many African elites publicly embraced a negative view of globalization, and took the view that their weak position in the global periphery was a major explanation for their difficulties. This led to a convenient rhetoric of 'neo-colonial' securitization that sought, often successfully, to divert attention

from the indigenous causes of Africa's difficulties. (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 251)" On this basis, H&RM conclude that we have 'exonerated' 'European colonial violence' and made 'Africa'(!) responsible for its own situation. Even in the way they quote us, it is clear that we present a discourse by 'many African elites' and show how this is *used* by them to deflect criticism of their practices. Does this necessarily imply that 'the reality' is 100% the opposite? In H&RM's world it might, because for them there is always only two radically opposed positions, and any sign of being able to reproduce one means that you embrace it and are unable of seeing 'the other view' or even more unimaginable that there could be more than two stories about anything. So we are made to 'exonerate' Europe from responsibility because we point out that some African elites 'misuse' an argument placing all responsibility away from themselves. That there are *also* indigenous causes of Africa's difficulties will be high on the agenda of most African activists struggling against those 'elites' that we try to expose here. To claim that we 'exonerate' European colonial violence from any responsibility for problems in Africa means to ignore numerous statements by us exactly about this, but even in the passage where they claim to draw it from, they simply do violence to basic logic.

We make an empirical observation about the way the state has disintegrated in (at the time) Afghanistan and parts of sub-saharan Africa (this was the time of the greater Congo wars, sometimes described as the third world war) – and this makes us racist? And these empirical observations are treated as if they are somehow inherent to the theory, or somehow these empirical observations 'attach' to the concepts so that these empirical observations somehow come to define a concept like securitization.

At the end of the introduction, H&RM cite a number of examples from the key texts of ST – and there are many more – of racism and colonialism being featured prominently in the analysis. They never return to these observations or explain why this does not matter to their conclusions. They claim that "racist political thought is integral to" ST "even when classical securitization theory texts discuss race or colonialism". However, they do not show that exactly these analyses *are* still hampered by our racist assumptions. Instead they ignored these passages – that would seem the best places to prove their point – and pick other ones that suit their purposes. The actually existing analyses of racism by ST are simply deduced away – they cannot be, so they are not examined.

This is a reading that displays no sign of curiosity; no attempt to find out what a theory can be used for, what has actually shaped it, or whether there are any surprises or paradoxes at work; there is a good/bad dichotomy ready-made and we get negative scores on all points, so the case is clear.

An example of curiosity's importance: It is strange that H&RM don't puzzle over our use of the term 'barbarians' (but then, they never puzzle – they self-assuredly lecture and judge; their article contains not a single moment of doubt, dilemma or openness). Usually, in critical analyses today of contemporary writings of say failed states, religion or civil war, the 'guilty' scholars write in seemingly neutral terms, and critical race scholars then add the terminology of barbarians as a critical tool, pointing out that contemporary writings de facto build on old figures or myths about barbarians and savages, distinguished from each other and from civilized white people. However, we

use ourselves the term 'barbarians' (which H&RM of course cite). Was that just to make the job easier for H&RM, or because we are more stupid than other racists in IR?

No, as one could actually back-track through our references, it is because Buzan's main parallel project at the time was in world history and international systems together with Richard Little (see especially Buzan and Little 2000). As part of this macro-historical work, barbarians were brought into the picture as a much more continuous and powerful force than usually acknowledged; actually there is a strong element of 'revaluating' barbarians in this work. Secondly, the use in our books is meant to have a certain *Verfremdungseffekt*, to get the reader to stop and reflect by meeting an unusual term that points in the direction of seeing the observed groups not as aberrations from a universal norm, but actually contemporary manifestations of a venerable political form. Clearly, you can't do this today – or at least not without being very explicit in your warnings – but writing in the mid to late 1990s, it seemed like a productive move for us. It could be challenged, but the least interesting way of doing this is to overlook what is at play in our terminology and assume that we just self-declare as 19th century racists.

Reading Hobbes (or not)

They write that we base our theory on Hobbes and his conception of state of nature and a social contract. As we have shown above, this link to our work is fabricated. ST is not based on contract theory, and the citations they have for actual mention of the social contract are falsified (Sbisà quoted as Wæver). Also, the historicist usage of 'the Hobbesian state' as actual description of European history comes from a passage we presented as contrary to ours. However, beyond the fact that their criticism does not actually apply to ST, it also demonstrates a problematic idea of reading.

To their credit, their reading is backed by a reference to the central source in this context: Charles W. Mills' "The Racial Contract" (1997). However, their passage illustrates a more general problem with their mode of 'reading' and we will therefore spend a few paragraphs on this; not least because we see an increasing tendency to write like this in the field, which we find problematic.

First, we hopefully can agree that the ultimate reference for interpreting Hobbes's writings is – Hobbes's writings. We are helped by Hobbes scholars, but ultimately the ideal must be that we try to judge which Hobbes scholars to follow based on what is the most plausible and well-argued reading of Hobbes. Mills made a seminal contribution to the study of both social contract theory and systemic racism (white supremacy, more specifically). However, there has been a considerable secondary scholarship around this work, and his actual treatment of each individual philosopher, like Hobbes, is ultimately quite short and in some cases suggestive more than even attempted conclusive.

Their style of drawing on scholarship on especially philosophical and theoretical sources seems to be: 1) Pick the reading that suits the story (at other points this is much more arbitrary and based on far less solid sources than Mills, eg in relation to Arendt), and 2) Push it further than the text actually supports, ultimately leaving a big question as to how thoroughly they have actually read in this case Mills (taking for granted that they did not read Hobbes).

Mills builds his argument on a problematic discussion between a literal and a hypothetical understanding of Hobbes' "state of nature". He resolves this tension mostly through a dubious interpretation of the in IR so famous gladiator paragraph: According to Mills, the state of nature is hypothetical for whites and literal for (many) non-whites; and he even argues that Hobbes implied that whites are too rational to actually stay in the state of nature and therefore they have transitioned out of it. In the light of Hobbes' system as a whole and the deeper logic of the theory, it is much more plausible to see it as predominantly a thought experiment (Epstein 2020), for which he then gropes around for some illustrations for pedagogical reasons.

Even Mills' slightly overstated condemnation of Hobbes, H&RM chose to present as much more heavy-handed than it actually appears in Mills' own text. Mills rightly notes that Hobbes is a borderline case to be included in his analysis of the Social Contract (where Locke is a much more clearcut example supporting the racism analysis). Hobbes is an "awkwardly transitional" character (Mills 1997: 66) for several reasons including that he wrote before colonialism took off and it was mostly later that the actual colonial expansion led to a de-facto rewriting of what the contract meant; a re-reading that he might have enabled, but was not involved with in any sense similar to eg Locke. Mills further writes that Hobbes was so much of a "racial egalitarian" (Mills 1997: 67) that he actually saw whites as prone to the bestial forms of the state of nature if without a sovereign, and that this actually explains a part of the general uproar against his work. When H&RM flatly presents Hobbes as guilty of a racist version of social contract theory and back this with a reference to Mills, they do quite a bit of violence to Mills' actual text.

This unfortunately is a pattern that is seen more and more often. The argument is about Hobbes. Instead of Hobbes, read Mills. Actually, Henderson has applied Mills to IR, so we just read Henderson now. (Then leave out a bit of the complications, because actually Henderson does cite some of these qualifications from Mills about Hobbes.) And in a nightmare scenario future scholars will read H&RM and use this as a source for whether Hobbes, Arendt and others are racist.

An additional problem is that Mills actually draws upon social contract theory himself. His project is intentionally placed as a 'bridge' between social contract theory as the dominant Western mainstream philosophy and a critical philosophy of race. Surely, this is to some extent done tongue in cheek, and clearly with a subversive intent. But there is enough reality to it that Mills' own theory of the racial contract is drawing on (at the same time as it problematizes) social contract theory. This makes it quite ironic to use Mills as a source for condemning any user of contract theory as racist. Mills is more favourable to the positive potentials of contract theory than Pateman's 'Sexual Contract', which he was inspired by (Pateman 1988; cf also Pateman and Mills 2007). Both develop a critical concept of the 'domination contract' that clearly marks it off from classical contract theory, but contract theory plays the dual role in Mills of being both criticised and utilised for his own theory. Why do the rest of us then become racist by the very fact of making reference to contract theory, given that Mills does so too? Mills does not want us to 'forget Hobbes' – on the contrary. It is "Mills's view that contract theory can be modified and used for emancipatory purposes" (Pateson and Mills 2007: 4). Mills procedure seems very similar to the one we cited Siba Grovogui for above, that one should naturally be allowed to draw on classics as long as one is conscious about what one is doing with them.

Finally, in relation to Hobbes and non-reading, we confront a puzzle. H&RM have tried to saddle us with a dependence on Hobbes, and this led them into the invalid quotes, listed above. Actually, there is a Hobbes reference in a very central place in the birth of ST – it almost couldn't be more central: right before the concept of securitization is first introduced in Wæver 1995: 54-55. This, they never make reference to. It is almost as if they have some mysterious methodological principle that in order to understand a theoretical concept you must never quote theory chapters or articles where that concept is actually developed, only far-away places in a corner of a book. More likely, this is a Hobbes that doesn't serve their purpose. Wæver quotes *Leviathan* as the direct lead in to this the first public presentation of securitization to demonstrate the performative, constitutive nature of securitization, and therefore this is not the proto-liberal Hobbes of H&RM's conception of an idyllic social contract – it is the much more interesting and relevant Hobbes of installing both language and political order in a move that is beyond right or wrong, because as the very source of order it can by reference to the need for peace and security define both ends and means immune to questioning. Hobbes remains possibly the most unsettling, 'dangerous' and productive political theorist in the Western tradition, and it pays off for critical scholars to continue to *read* and engage with his work. We must develop analytical tools for our own age that are able to measure up to the paradoxical power at the heart of political action. To flatten his thinking into a "quasi-legal" social contract

"happening once for all in the past" (H&RM 2020: 12 [10]) robs us of critical tools; and to further reduce him to a racist you can be faulted for associating with, is intellectually and politically debilitating.

Certainly not reading Arendt

H&RM have recurrent criticisms of elements of Arendt's theory that we do not draw upon, but do not address those elements of her theory that we actually use. They (incorrectly) claim that Arendt ignores the role of slave labour and women's unpaid reproductive labour in the Greek polis[62], but even if true (which it is not), why would that matter? We agree with H&RM that Arendt's take on the American revolution is problematic. But does this necessarily mean that one cannot find inspiration in Arendt's way of conceptualising politics? The reader is given no sense of why Arendt enters our story – what is at stakes in the question of how to conceptualise politics. This superficiality is poisonous for academic life.

There has been an extensive and complex discussion about Arendt and racism, because she indeed was contradictory on this – from drawing attention to the centrality of racism in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* to highly problematic statements about especially US history. This makes it especially pertinent in the case of Arendt to be very precise about what it is *we* 'import' from her in order to ascertain both whether that element is 'tainted' and also what it is then doing in our theory. There is not even a flicker of such discussion in H&RM's article.

Concretely, H&RM make a big issue out of Arendt's distinction between violence and politics, which they twist into implying that one should ignore violence when interested in politics. A strange reading indeed, given that Arendt wrote a book 'on violence', that she had in her own life to flee the violent Nazi regime and her first major book was 'the origins of totalitarianism' (which they even list in their bibliography[63]). Arendt's famous argument about violence was a *critique* of violence. She holds up a particular quality of politics and shows how violence can never achieve that quality. It is plain silly to interpret this as implying that Arendt (and by implication we) separate violence off as irrelevant to the study of politics (see for instance Bramsen et al 2019). H&RM seem to hold their

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[62] Obviously, the book to read in this context is *The Human Condition* (Arendt 1958), both because it is where Arendt sets out her basic conception of politics, and because it is the one we most consistently reference. It is a mystery how anyone reading this book can overlook the constant discussion of slavery (and a thorough reader will find also Arendt's analysis of the role of women's labour). H&RM back up their claim about Arendt's neglect of slaves and women with references to an article by Joy James (2003). Most of James' article is a more sophisticated argument about what Arendt privileges and marginalises. However, it does contain one sentence about Arendt 'ignoring' slave labour, which given the rest of the James article must mean 'ignores' in the sense of 'does not give it due weight', because Jones herself has acknowledged that Arendt writes about especially slave labour. Unless H&RM only read the first page of Jones's article, it cannot be used as backing for their claim as they write it in. In any case, whatever Jones writes or not, H&RM's proposition is wrong as written. The only Arendt text they have in their bibliography is *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, and although it is an important book, it has very little to do with this question.

[63] In addition to this early book by Arendt, H&RM have a large number of more or less solid publications on Arendt in their bibliography to back up their different claims about her. The Arendt scholarship is enormous, and there are as many articles arguing why she is not racist; or why she can still be used for good purposes. This is a far wider question than we need address here. What bothers us is only that they make demonstrably false statements about Arendt's theory of politics and that they don't at all mention what our usage of her is. Lee 2018 is one interesting – but far from the only – demonstration of how Arendt's work can be mobilised constructively for critical analysis of racism as political and social order and not least of the possibilities for political action against it. Lee is particularly interesting, because it does so in very securitization like terms.

readers in extraordinarily low regard if they believe that arguments of this nature will seem compelling.

The ultimate absurdity is that this distinction between violence and politics is one that we have never used (as far as we recall: not even mentioned). It is *not* one of the elements, we draw inspiration from. In characteristic slippery style, H&RM write: "Elsewhere, Waver (2015: 122) summarizes Arendt's concept of politics: 'politics takes place among people, in-between us, because power only emerges when people act together, it basically consists of action directed to and dependent on the reaction of others, not doing things directly'. Here, he adverts to Arendt's distinction between power (*Macht*) and violence (*Gewalt*), which securitization theory mirrors by dividing politicization from securitization." What does 'adverts to' mean? Do they claim that Wæver makes an implicit reference to the violence/power distinction? Do they imply that the argument by Arendt that Wæver summarizes is one that she developed on top of her distinction between violence and power? Both would be wrong. Arendt made her basic argument about the nature of politics in *The Human Condition* published in 1958 (around a distinction between labor, work and action). Wæver consistently makes reference to this text (and has done so since Wæver 1990), often deepened by reference to Arendt's beautiful 1959 talk 'Thoughts on Lessing' reprinted in *Men in Dark Times*; Arendt 1970b). The distinction between violence and power, Arendt developed in her 1970 essay 'On Violence' (which we do not reference). H&RM further write "Securitization theory also replicates Arendt's evacuation of violence from politics." We neither draw on her distinction, nor is there basis in our general theorizing for claiming that we subtract violence from our analysis of politics. Nor did she; of course.

The formulations of H&RM are exceptionally vague and unclear in these passages, and they don't spell out what is the logic of their argument. We get the impression that the point of their text is to leave the reader with an impression that somehow we don't take violence seriously. This is then achieved by a bizarre reading of a text by Arendt that we do not use – which presumably becomes incriminating for us because we build on other books by Arendt to make a point that H&RM do not engage with.

In their application of this to our work, H&RM make a characteristic slippage from "protect politics in Arendt's sense" to "protect Arendtian 'normal politics'". This is doubly disingenuous. For Arendt this quality is far from 'normal'. Politics in her sense is difficult, vulnerable and to be fought for. It is far from being the normal condition in 'Western' societies. Nor does Arendt's conception of politics contain the qualities H&RM imply in 'normal', i.e. liberal, rational and democratic. Their re-phrasing of Arendt further points back to their prior mis-construction of ST's concept of 'normal politics'. The concept of 'normal politics' is defined in ST as 'non-exception-based'. The discussion in Wæver 2011, which they reference in the Arendt-related passage is not about 'normal politics' in relation to securitization, it is about how to make the theory political, what it means to construct a theory that politicises, that points both practitioners and analysts to the political responsibility in their own actions. These passages do not talk about 'normal politics' – H&RM conflate two discussions and obfuscate our points in both. Just because the word 'politics' appear in two places does not mean that the passages can be scrambled – people in security studies, IR and political science after all do write quite often about politics and one cannot move lines around randomly and splice them together at will just because the word politics is in these sentences.

The reader will not easily notice this because given that H&RM don't introduce our usage of Arendt, but only give a handful of irrelevant critiques of her, the reader must assume that they are discussing the relevant parts of Arendt's work and must get the impression that it relates to H&RMs extensive argument about 'normal politics', where however H&RM's discussion has as little anchorage in Arendt as it has in ST.

H&RM actually spend much of the article on Arendt, which at first seems strange given the superficiality of their interest in Arendt and the non-engagement with our actual usage of her writings. So what is performatively going on – what is Arendt doing for them? It seems that they believe (or believe that their readers will believe) that Arendt is a liberal theorist conceptualising politics as enlightened dialogue. And therefore implicating her, can land us with that charge – which they naturally fail to find backing for in our own writings. The central sentence in their conclusion anchoring their final death sentence on our theory rests it on ST's "conception of politics, borrowed from Arendt, which it defines as a sphere of (white) civilized dialogue where reason triumphs over irrational securitizations" (H&RM 2020: 16 [14]). Arendt's conception of politics certainly isn't one of "civilized dialogue" – it is about action among people, which is something very different. More importantly: they write that ST "defines" politics in a particular way, which sounds very concrete. "Defines" gives the impression that this is a reference to our texts. We have already pointed out that we do not use "civilized" in any sense close to what they hint at here, and there is no reason for attributing it to us either. More specifically: they claim that our concept of politics is defined in terms of *dialogue* and *reason*. Many western theories operate on such assumptions, so the reader is likely to find this plausible. It is untrue in our case. We searched both of the main books for the words "dialogue" and "reason" (and rational[64]). The words are almost totally absent, and in not one instance do they appear as attributes or criteria that characterize politics (or desecuritization) in our theory. The word 'irrational' does not appear in the *Framework* book, and in *Regions and Powers* it figures twice when we critically identify Western depictions of Osama bin Laden and rogue states as 'irrational'. The alleged "definition" goes against our fundamental way of analyzing politics – as realists/post-structuralists – and the theory is absolutely not about securitization as somehow "irrational", nor is it countered by reason and dialogue. It is all one long chain of associations on H&RM's behalf from their misreading of 'normal politics' combined with a false image of what they think, Arendt is about. The passage quoted is central to their argument in the conclusion for the theory being so deeply infected that it can't be adjusted, saved or applied differently.

An ultimate irony for the complicated issue of whether you become racist by drawing upon Arendt, is that actually one of the best discussions of racism in Arendt's work is done by an IR scholar, Patricia Owens (2017), who delivers both a fascinating self-critique (having written extensively on Arendt herself) and an interesting discussion of the question whether a whole authorship should be deemed out or only parts of it. In a more constructive setting, we would be eager to discuss this. One could start from identifying the undoubtedly problematic elements of Arendt's writings and then explore further how they relate to other parts – and then what happens if you draw upon some of her ideas that originally seemed disconnected from these problems. However, the procedure of H&RM is as far as one can imagine from this discussion. They pick parts of Arendt's work that are neither 'the most racist'[65] nor the ones we use – the violence/power distinction and a

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64 One of the few places we write about 'rational' is this from the theory chapter in (Buzan et al 1998: 31): 'In any case, it is neither politically nor analytically helpful to try to define "real security" outside of the world of politics and to teach the actors to understand the term correctly. Such rationalist universalism will easily he "right" on its own terms, but it will be of very little help in political analysts. It is more relevant to grasp the processes and dynamics of securitization, because if one knows who can "do" security on what issue and under what conditions, it will sometimes be possible to maneuver the interaction among actors and thereby curb security dilemmas.'

65 The most strikingly problematic passages can in most cases be linked to her commitment to a very specific version of the American revolution and thus it relates to both her own finding of a place and more importantly her search for contemporary forms of politics with some hope, notably 'the council system'. Second-most important is probably her 'Jewish writings' that have so far been less explored in relation to the racism question in Arendt scholarship. Given that her more principled theorising of politics is mostly found in *The Human Condition* and *The Promise of Politics* (read with reference also to the unfinished *Life of the Mind*), this raises an issue similar to the one in the present paper: on what criteria do you transfer a specific statement (say Arendt on desegregation in Little Rock; Buzan and Wæver on Kaplanesque scenarios for parts of Africa) to

misrepresentation of her view of slavery in ancient Greece – and use weird summaries of these to deem Arendt toxic in general and misread some of our concepts by false analogies to hers.

That Arendt causes so much difficulty for H&RM is possibly revealing of a deep structure in *their* argument. Their world seems dichotomous. There are two groups of people: one very small but saved group of people subscribing to the true kind of anti-racism (using the right words, like settler colonialism, anti-black and methodological whiteness) and then there is a conservative mainstream which can be designated as 'liberal' and responsible for upholding the white, violent order. (As in other similar ideological structures – think Eco, *Name of the Rose* – there is a small relevant group of those who almost get it (post-colonial scholars without the full anti-racist vocabulary), who might be brought around to the true cause.) Therefore, it is not surprising that we against all odds see our theory presented as 'liberal', and that they choke on Arendt. The dominant interpretation in Arendt scholarship is that it is as hopeless to pin her down as 'liberal' as it is to deem her 'anti-liberal'.[66] She is consistently referenced as one of the most idiosyncratic political theorists of the 20th Century. No room for that. No room for thinking. This is all about labels.

Writing

Much of the problem with what they write is obviously that it is based on flawed *readings*. In addition to this, their style of *writing* has distinct problems. They regularly write in a way that looks like paraphrasing ST while injecting their own terminology in ways that it is not transparent to the reader, thus making it sound as if terms like liberal, civilization, order-over-justice etc come from us.

They attribute 'state of nature' thinking to us in several different contexts, including as part of their attribution of 'anti-black racism'. H&RM write 'state of nature' in citation marks as if it came from us, but as shown, we never use the term in the sense they imply, and the one and only quote they found to back it up was from Sbisà and falsely attributed to Wæver. This mistake then echoes throughout their text by the repeated use of 'state of nature' as if it was from us, when actually it is fully on their own account.

They write about a 'tendency towards' primal anarchy and state of nature – while there is no basis for seeing this as a 'tendency'. We make observations in a few places about where (at the time of writing; 1998 and 2003) there were particularly weak state structures and ensuing specific sub-state forms of security dynamics. In H&RM's analysis, it is our fault that these places at the time were mostly Afghanistan and Congo and the Great Lakes region in Africa. This is one thing, another is to invent an argument about 'tendency' that they have absolutely no reference for. For very good reasons. Again: the inner logic of ST is to construct a way to analyse any given situation as a case where politics of securitization and desecuritization play out, and therefore we try to fight against attempts to embed these patterns in larger causal models that determine (and thus de-politicise) what goes on. Larger historical patterns would therefore go against the logic of the theory. Surely, one might with the help of the theory see more short-term tendencies, but we do not posit a "tendency towards primal anarchy and 'state of nature' in many non-Western parts of the world" in the sense that they suggest, i.e. as an inherent feature of specific parts of the world defined by racial

the key categories of a theory? One option clearly is to make it about the author(s) and thus about personal racism. Another is to explore the structure of the texts and trace back specific passages to their dependence on key categories. A third route is represented by eg Burroughs 2015, who tries to demonstrate that Arendt's writings are a product of a systematic epistemology of 'white ignorance' (Mills 2017b), which in turn leaves different possibilities for how to interpret Arendt's key contributions. Much work remains to be done for the specialists here, and IR too needs to develop a much more sophisticated terminology for how to assess the implications of say an (in hindsight) 'racist' policy essay by an author for how to interpret that person's theory.
[66] Her own retrospective clarification late in life (1979 [1972]:334) was: "I never was a liberal. (…) I never believed in liberalism".

categories. We do speculate about different scenarios for consolidation around different referent objects in different parts of the world, but this is a far cry from their picture of a general 'tendency'.

H&RM cite our formulation that the theory should help "managing relations among units", which we clearly in the context develop as a question of how to avoid security dilemmas and other forms of dangerous conflict escalation.[67] It is a familiar argument in security studies and especially peace research that you actually get less of what you fight for if you get a destructive escalation of fear and counter measures on both sides. This, they translate into "maintaining order" as "a higher priority than justice". We say nothing about order vs justice. This is one more totally unfounded attribution to us of things we haven't written. On the basis of this mis-reading H&RM feel entitled to use terms about order and justice in later passages (including the conclusion) where they are even less relevant, but a reader unfamiliar with our texts surely will get the impression that we have somehow used these terms and ranked them with order over justice, which is at best a 'possible' interpretation by H&RM, far from something 'found' in our publications. Again, their mode of citing and representation is totally out of line with normal academic practices and is likely to mislead many readers.

It would be fair enough (but wrong) to say once: this observation to us looks a bit like the familiar English School argument about order over justice. It is a very different thing to write repeatedly about ST as if *we* wrote in terms of order and justice. Neither word appeared in the passage. More importantly: using this familiar distinction misses the point in an important way. Our ultimate aim is *not* to stabilise the status quo. One of the most central arguments behind securitization theory has since the beginning (and before) been to create change through stabilization/desecuritization. Because securitization is the pre-eminent conservative mechanism to prevent change, it is often conducive to change when some securitization scenarios are de-mobilised. This is expressed in Ole Wæver's favorite quote, used as epigraph for his MA-thesis in 1985 and quoted again in Wæver 1996: 126 (and elsewhere), from Arendt(!): "Only if we succeed in ruling out war from politics altogether, can we hope to achieve that minimum of stability and permanence of the body politic without which no political life and no political change are possible. (Arendt 1962, p. 12) Desecuritization enables political change. This is developed not only in many securitization related articles by Wæver but also in the secondary literature on the Copenhagen School and especially around de-securitization (Guzzini 2004; Hansen 2012). Both Hansen and Guzzini point to a continuity from Wæver's 'coming of age' as active in the END wing of the 1980s peace movement inspired by intellectuals like E.P.Thompson and Mary Kaldor, and their strategy for political change in late-Cold War Europe, which he developed further in his research on German social democratic détente strategies (Wæver 1989a,c) (Wæver has written also about the development of 'desecuritization' as a strategy for conflict resolution; Wæver 2009b, Wæver and Bramsen 2019). Our argument is of course not that H&RM should have researched all of this; we flesh it out to substantiate our interpretation of the passage they misunderstand, and we would like to remind the reader that there is absolutely nothing in our passage that points in the direction that they take it – as a general

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[67] Right before the line they cite, we write: "Transformation is one but not always the most reasonable strategy for improving security; in many cases, as analyst one can help more by grasping the patterns of action among units as they are and thereby *help to avoid escalations, to steer vicious circles toward managed security complexes and eventually security communities*" (Buzan et al 1998: 206; emphasis added). The 'transformation' we refer to here is the choice that when confronted with, say, people who fear for the survival of their state, nation or faith, you can opt to tell people that this state/nation/religion is a historically contingent social construct and rather than defend it, they should just see it change; or you can accept that in many situations, it is more realistic at least in the short run to ensure that their worries over this survival does not boil over, and thus you try to avoid escalating securitization on its behalf. This means to manage relations among units ("units as they are") and avoid security dilemmas and other escalations. Exactly because securitization tends to 'freeze' referent objects in an either/or format of survival or not, the avoidance of escalation often enables social change (Laustsen & Wæver 2000; Wæver 2009b; Wæver & Bramsen 2019).

conservative order over justice position. This is one more place where the deepfake nature of H&RM's article becomes clear. They really do not care what animates ST – only what text *they* are able to put together by cuttings from the books. They come across a sentence about "managing relations among units". Reading the whole paragraph, it is possible to see what this sentence is about. Cut out of this setting, it can of course be turned into a general preference for order over justice. But only if one does not look at the larger theoretical project – or just reads the whole passage.

Even if you had misunderstood this and somehow (mis)read us in favour of stability in general, is it then OK to add "white" and "liberal" to this "status quo"? Surely, you can as an observer say that the status quo *is* white and liberal (because this is the world as it is), but this is not how a reader will get a sentence like this over-the-top abusive accusation towards the end of the article: "To summarize: classic securitization theory is fundamentally and avowedly conservative, seeking to excuse and reinforce a white liberal status quo". They write that the theory "seeks" (how can it have intentionality if not from us?) to excuse and reinforce a status quo with the attributes white and liberal. Can you read this in any other way than saying that somebody "seeks" to "excuse and reinforce" *that* the world order is white and liberal. Who?

A particularly explicit claim that something comes from us is their characterization of the theory as "avowedly conservative". Conservative in what sense? It is widely acknowledged that securitization theory is generally a critical approach to security – even one that was catalytic for opening new cracks in what was truly a conservative field, security studies. Securitization theory (and the concept of securitization) helped spur other lines of critical analysis. Many debates followed about whether it was critical enough or other ways of being critical would be better. But to simply put it down as "avowedly conservative" is absurd. What can they be hinting at? All approaches to security are 'conservative' in one way or the other, because they are about protecting something – lives, well-being, sustainability. This can't be it? 'Avowedly' seems to indicate that it is a reference to something we have written. The only passage we can imagine is the discussion at the end of the framework book where we compare to Critical Security Studies of the 'emancipatory' kind and Traditionalists on the other hand. We are here comparing how the theories look seen from each other: seen from the particular form of radicalism of CSS, the Copenhagen School looks 'conservative', while the Copenhagen School will deem CSS objectivist because they don't see the constructedness of security and individuals. (And several other arguments.) We discuss as strategic choices – of both an analytical and political nature – whether to deploy something like a 'strategic essentialisation' and work with the relative sedimentation of certain structures, and we clearly do this as part of a critical agenda. It is disingenuous to simply boil this down to "avowedly conservative" and use this in the conclusion as an overall summary. ST is by now old enough that especially some younger readers will have grown up with ST as being the background normality in security studies which most critical writings were written up against as foils for new moves – which we are grateful for – but this does not mean that the theory was and is conservative; and 'avowedly' is simply manipulative.

They write also about ST's "conservative deployment of speech act theory". We have no idea what that sentence means. Is it speech act theory that is conservative, so it is conservative to use it – or we deploy it in a conservative way? This is in the conclusion, so one should think it had been explained in the body of the article, but they have not delivered any argument to this effect; it is only something they 'conclude'.

The style of H&RM is that having made an observation (in almost all cases, a false one), it is then inserted into all their later formulations, so the mis-identification of 'normal politics' as liberal and civilizationist (that was backed by no citations from us, only their chain of associations) then reappear dozens of times in formulations that the innocent reader could take as ours: ST "occludes the racial violence of normal (liberal) politics" and "ST's civilizationist idealization of 'normal politics' occludes" the power politics of social security. Actually not. There is absolutely nothing in the theory

that prevents the study of these phenomena. It would have been so much more interesting, if H&RM had demonstrated how the theory *in usage* was structured in a way that prevented the study of these things. Instead, they perform disingenuous, tortured and bad-willed readings of passages from completely different contexts without any attempt to understand what these passages do in those paragraphs where they figure, and instead fantasise freely about what possible meaning can be attributed. Saying repeatedly that we have a civilizationist idealization of 'normal politics' does not make it so, though it does have the force of the totalitarian 'big lie' technique that something shouted often enough and loudly enough will come to be believed as true. Normal politics does in the theory not mean what they imply. It is not liberal. It is not idealised. And it has nothing to do with civilizations.

The chosen style of over the top phrasings generates a kind of normalisation as one reads on. A bit like Trump being increasingly not called out on absurd statements, because everybody moves the standard. Reading this article, one similarly becomes blind to the lies. Getting to the 8th page, we stop noticing sentences like "Classical securitization theory is civilizational in that it believes that there are more and less politically and morally developed civilizations". But wait: of course we don't believe that, and of course we haven't written that, and nor is it implied as hidden assumption behind something we have written. It is a gross and offensive statement on their behalf that "the theory believes" this. Given that theories can't believe, it must be us believing. And even allowing for this to be a slip in their phrasing, the theory does not presuppose or imply anything like that. Even if one accepted all their misunderstandings of key concepts like normal politics, it is quite a rhetorical exaggeration to claim that we say that "some civilizations are more politically and [not least] morally developed than others". Yes, that would be racism. And it is quite a strong claim to make about others. And it is unfounded. We honestly worry what happens to scholarly debate if this style of writing becomes seen as acceptable for publication in our journals.

ST "identifies 'normal politics' with (European) civilization and 'securitization' with a return to (racialized) primal anarchy". No, that is simply not true. They might believe that they have created some kind of correlation or thin line of association, where they can connect 'normal politics' to Europe (falsely, we argue, but they might believe so), but that we 'identify' is a much stronger and obviously false claim. And the whole terminology of civilization is purely on the account of H&RM and simply a slur to attribute to us with absolutely no foundation. Reading H&RM, one must get the impression that we generally write in the terminology of civilizations. We don't. We cite Huntington as an instance of securitization – is this their justification for using this terminology when representing our arguments? Or do they feel free to interpret our writings as implying civilizationism (why?) and then write in a style as if it is actually our terminology?

A seemingly innocent term like 'identifies' is even more important than openly loaded ones like 'civilizationism'. It is a sign of their invalid mode of 'analysing'. To back up the conclusion they make so emphatically about Securitization Theory being shot through with racist thought, constituted, baked-in etc, it is necessary that they inject their findings into our concepts – they can't be just about our empirical analyses or problematic phrasings (that would work if writing about an individual to show that he was 'racist'). They don't do the analytical work to actually say anything about the constitution of the key concepts. Instead, they take an observation where concept A is applied to case X, and they write that we identify A with X, but whereas the text observed so to say goes from A to X, the term 'identify' is ambiguous enough that it sounds as if they have shown that case X is what fills A with meaning. Such slippages are found throughout their article and does much of the textual work to generate their 'findings'.

Another specific term to observe is their use of 'inability' – for instance in this passage (H&RM 2020: 13 [11]): "This framing is a result of securitization theory's methodological whiteness, its inability to ask questions about racialized, gendered, and (settler-)colonial orders, and its general preference for order over justice." The term "inability" is common in a discussion of a theory, pointing to an

examination of the 'ability' to ask these questions with the help of the theory, the kind of 'normal' examination they exactly steer free of, so the word seems to be used more in the way one uses it about a person, "wasn't able to bring him- or-her-self to do". What does it mean to say 'inability' in this latter sense about a theory? If this is not a psychologizing of the theory (to find "its" racist personality), what then does it mean? Or to be even more boringly logical: *hasn't been done* is not the same as *can't be done*. If something hasn't been said "by ST", this doesn't mean that the theory is unable to do so. You could investigate this; but they don't. So they must be using inability in that other usage which only applies to human subjects.

The mode of writing is a distinct problem in addition to the flawed reading it represents, because H&RM constantly inflate their conclusions into much more dramatic claims and paraphrase ST in misleading ways, where readers who don't check the original texts will believe they are written with a terminology that actually stems from H&RM, not us. They adopt a style that systematically misleads the reader – especially by inserting words in paraphrasings – without clarifying what is our terminology and what is their own. This rhetorical style is so unlike the normal style in articles in academia in general as well as specifically in *Security Dialogue*, that we are deeply puzzled that the journal decided to publish it (and to do so in the present form). The contrast between the tone here and in all other articles ends up reinforcing in the reader that ST must be *really* bad, why else scream such insults at it? The almost-possible reading of the H&RM article as really being about a general racism in security studies illustrated by a case-study of ST is invalidated by the style, because such exaggerated rhetoric and terminology can only leave the impression that this is about an especially racist theory.

The pyramid of misunderstandings, mis-quotes and omissions in H&RM is so vast that there seems little chance that this can be generated only by 'honest mistakes'. There simply has to be some logic at play that explains why it doesn't matter to them that this is a totally far-fetched and made up interpretation of the theory. It is a pity the H&RM article did not present their argument – be it securitization-based or not – for the necessity of violating normal academic procedures. This argument would both be important for the discipline to discuss and it would have meant that the accusations against us for racism would have had a very different status. Had they been presented as part of an article that self-declared as 'different', this would at least go some way to prevent these statements being perceived in the conventional sense. On the contrary, H&RM write in an objectivist, non-positional style asking "Is securitization theory racist?" with the answer that it *is* structured, constituted etc on the basis of racist thinking and beyond repair in this respect. If, as we suspect, H&RM are actually much more competent than they come across, it is a pity that they do not reveal to the reader their reasoning leading them to this kind of unconventional mode of reading and writing.

Critical Race Theory, maybe

Engaging with the H&RM piece is complicated by the fact that it does not set out its own theoretical framework, nor even reveal explicitly its primary sources of inspiration. We are told in very few lines that racism is systemic, and the terms 'methodological whiteness' 'white supremacy' and 'anti-black racism' are presented as superior to eg. post-colonial terminology but none of these terms are much explained, unfolded not to say defined. Through the references, one might as a reader try to track down, what works and traditions they are drawing on, but normally this would be explicated. This is a problem for four reasons. First, there is a problem that one might think is really none of our business, but it is indirectly. This first problem is that it is an additional point where the article does not live up to the academic standards normally upheld by SD and similar journals, and this is indirectly of importance to our case, because it intensifies the question of why the piece was published. The malpractice displayed by fabricated quotes and false claims about our texts is

naturally a bigger reason why the piece should not have been published (and should now be retracted), but we are aware that these were harder to spot for others, given that one needs to know the actual publications well to spot the falsified citations, but the lack of theory and methodology should be clear to any reviewer, so this feeds into the question if there is some kind of special rationale for publishing this kind of attack piece despite its striking weaknesses as scholarship. If there is some kind of special and different rationality making this publishable, it would be reasonable that the authors and/or the journal explained this, and indirectly this would be of importance to us, because it would give a slightly different status to the accusations. To simplify a bit: as the article stands, the message is that we are racists because we are, i.e. H&RM has told the truth about ST in a straightforward empiricist sense, whereas it would be a different story, if it was part of the presentation that the theory can be viewed as racist from some particular angle, as result of a specific operation or presented as such for a particular purpose. We can't see any recent article in Security Dialogue where the theoretical framework is presented so briefly and indirectly, basically just by introducing the three terms in the sub-title and summarising arguments related to each concept but neither connecting the three, nor explaining how they are used as framework beyond the simple: they are guilty of that too!

Second, it makes their contribution even less productive as a basis for analysing and fighting racism 'as a system of power'; because we learn nothing about that system. Thirdly, their lack of theoretical framework makes key terms open for misunderstandings, most obviously 'white supremacy', which has a very specific meaning in Critical Race Theory and some other traditions, whereas most readers unaware of this will associate it with Ku Klux Klan or Donald Trump.

Finally, there is a vicious performative effect from the a-theoretical presentation: It leaves the reader with the impression that their argument does not derive from some larger encompassing analysis that covers us and more or less everybody else, and instead one gets the impression that ST is distinctly racist when exposed to a close reading of its own texts. As we show in this reply, this is certainly not the case. The lack of theoretical self-presentation becomes a lack of responsibility vis-à-vis readers, anti-racism and the attacked theory.

In relation to the lack of theory, there is also a lack of clarity about purpose (which might be related): At the obvious risk of being quoted out of context "Why is it a problem if the theory is racist?". We are not asking whether, but *exactly why*? Obviously, for everybody who is against racism, it is of course bad if anything is racist – a painting, a joke, a theory, a person, an algorithm in an airport, a law, and so forth. But as the examples indicate: for slightly different reasons. Maybe, it would help in targeting the discussion about whether a particular theory should be called racist to be clear about what kind of negative effects are suspected to follow from *a theory* being racist. Is it because it is hurtful for some students to read these kinds of texts? And/or is it because it skews our understanding when empirical analyses are based on it? And/or is it because the theory serves to legitimise practices that reproduce racial hierarchies? And/or is it because it dominates a discursive space in ways that make it difficult to ask specific other questions that are important to those who try to challenge racism? These different rationales will often go hand in hand, but when out to identify that a theory *is racist*, it would help to have a clear sense of which agenda this question is asked for, because then the criteria for its racism will also be clearer. Without clarity on this, the impression becomes that it is an aim itself to become able to call the theory racist - and that the ultimate purpose is just is to drive it out. One fewer anything is racist then and the world a little better. When operating in the world of theory, as these articles do, one should expect more attention to what it means to analyse a theory as racist, i.e. what it is racist theories do, which most likely will follow from a more general theoretical framework for race studies and anti-racism.

Calling ST and us racist

Whether it is responsible and productive professional practice to (de facto) put labels like 'racist' and 'white supremacist' on people like us, is not a question that causes the authors to reflect on pro and cons. They start a paragraph with the observation that such terminology will "raise eyebrows", but their only reflections on this is a discussion of whether the label Eurocentrist could do the work, and why not. No other questions appear to them. Not whether we think academic and scholarly debates are generally favoured by such naming practices.

Probably, most readers will be reassured in this context by the position of the article as challenging authorities and hierarchies, i.e. the authors are younger, female scholars and the targets are older, white men in positions of power and privilege. However, every writing holds power, and every editorial decision does too.

Other of our critics (Eriksson, Huysmans, Williams) have noted that 'the Copenhagen School' has been unusual in paying much attention to ethical self-reflections on the dilemmas at stake in our own practices of theorising and publishing including the risks of misuse, who it might empower or disempower (Wæver et al 1993: 187-190; Huysmans 2002; Wæver 1999). H&RM too are holding authority. They are publishing an article in a respected journal, and their readers will assume that it is fair and correct in its representation of its target of critique, and that as a peer reviewed journal, SD has ensured this. The ensuing process shows further the power of editors, and how H&RM has had the consistent backing of the journal, who has used its power to minimise and delay our response. We certainly do not want to deny that on some axes, we are the powerful, and it probably is unproductive to try to compare one kind of power with another. Much more important is that when you write and publish, you always exercise power – and you should reflect in terms of responsibility.

At first, we were struck by the strange combination of very strong accusations and incredibly weak foundations. One should think that most editors would think twice about whether to launch an attack of this nature and tone, and therefore check an extra time if the analysis can carry the weight.[68] Actually it might be this combination that explains its publication. We do not want to speculate about the motives of authors or editors, but we can see from the (generally positive) reception of the piece on social media, that many appreciate the value of 'someone taking this position', the 'widening of perspectives' etc. In other words: it is not so important whether the article is exactly correct on ST, it is interesting to have this kind of angle on security studies published in SD. That might be the case. However, this places a serious question on the use of named individuals as foil for this operation.

Surely the fact that named individuals are so clearly and strongly attacked will give the piece increased attention. For months, it has been by far the most viewed on Security Dialogue's website. The likely shock effect can't have passed unnoticed in the decision-making process.

What kind of balancing has been at play in considering the gains for the grander course of anti-racism from a sensationalist format vs the negative effects on the targets and eventually on the intellectual climate in the field?

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[68] The authors, H&RM possibly do not want to understand ST, only to write about it – strange, but possible – but the editor of Security Dialogue, Mark Salter, cannot claim that kind of 'innocence'. He has in his own earlier publications shown that he actually knows the theory (eg. Salter 1998), so in his case – assuming he has read the article, that he publishes – it is hard to see how he could avoid knowing the misrepresentations. (Alison Howell, too, has published on ST before, notably Howell 2014. Although there are many mistakes in this article too, it does demonstrate a level of understanding of the theory that suggests active forgetting as part of the preparation for writing the H&RM piece.)

Did H&RM ask themselves: Do we want to impose this human and social cost on specific colleagues, especially given that we use the term racism in an unconventional sense so that these people in the eyes of all those who don't know this particular usage will take it to mean something far more demeaning? And even if we don't care about the price to be paid by these human beings, which we anyway have no personal relationship to, there could be a further question about what it does to the nature of academic life if we generally move to such modes of interaction? There is especially one place in the article where one gets the impression that finally they are going to address this concern and justify their decision. They observe with a seemingly self-critical note: "That we use the 'r-word' and white supremacy as categories of analysis is sure to raise eyebrows". However, instead of taking this observation into a self-critical reflection on potentially negative effects hereof, the paragraph evolves into a self-congratulatory celebration of their own daring in using such strong words, and a critique of post-colonial scholars for not being radical enough. H&RM simply do not spend one line on possible objections to the prudence of taking the field down this route.

The decision to write and publish an article with such a distinct target for a strongly worded accusation of racism raises questions about responsibility in at least three directions. First and most importantly, responsibility vis-à-vis the very real problem of racism. If the term is watered down to mean every text that does not adopt the terminology of radical anti-racists, it becomes hard to discuss cases of outright racism, and if the question of systemic racism is side-tracked this way into personal attacks, we lose grip of a much more important agenda. Second, the responsibility towards students and other readers of SD. Separately from research on racism, people might read things about ST in this article and take it to be an accurate representation or valid criticism. This will lead future students and scholars astray, because H&RM adopt principles for citing and quoting that are so radically at odds with normal principles, without indicating this clearly. Third, they decide to attack named scholars in a way that might constitute libel and defamation. It is well established that to be deemed a racist constitutes hurt and harm, personally and professionally. That laws and conventions in most countries therefore only allow such statements if they can be documented is only a legal expression of a deeper problem. It is a human act that one ought to think twice before committing, and one should be maybe a little extra certain about the validity of one's argument and documentation. The present case is the opposite: an exceptionally ill-founded article taking debate in the discipline down a highly problematic route. In addition to the impact on those attacked – by implication all who have used ST – it is likely that scholarship will be hampered in the future if we generally all get to worry about what could land ourselves in the situation of being deemed racist in a full-scale scholarly article in a leading journal.

We understand well if many readers think that old, white, male and well-published professors do not make up the social group most in need of protection. However, we ask the reader to think about the consequences of accepting it in some cases. Does it not leave everybody open then to similar attacks? Unless one is able to specify a clear criteria for how old or how well-cited one should be to become fair game for baseless accusations for the sake of the grander cause. We have already heard disturbing stories about and from young scholars who worry about including eg. Todorov or Wæver in applications for PhD projects.

A legitimate and important agenda is de-railed here. Treating racism as systemic is an important opening to a potentially powerful research program with political value. However, then one needs to carry through systematically from these premises and not pick a short-cut through sensationalist name calling. If the focus was on opening security studies to non-white students, then this could have been developed. Then indeed some similarity to the collage image would be relevant. You do meet the discipline in the forms of fragments put together in eg syallabi. This raises issues of responsibility for us as teachers, but also as authors. Informed by this kind of scholarship, we would probably today have written some sentences differently eg. in the section on Africa in Buzan&Wæver 2003. We would not have been offended by having some of those quotes included in

a critical analysis operating consistently on this methodology and making a point at this level of structure. However, it is a big leap from this to singling out ST in isolation and then claim that it is racist. Especially, it is a very strong claim that it is constituted on racist premises.

H&RM is so methodologically imprecise as to make it almost impossible to discuss this. What exactly does it mean when ST "thinks" or "attempts" something? It has to be either the texts or the authors; H&RM can't have some kind of introspection into the 'mind of a theory' in any other way? If you take a textualist approach (which is both the most interesting and in our view methodologically sound), one has to look at how the theory is built through a series of textual moves over the years, and then indeed some are more foundational than others, sometimes a specific debate or operation, gets inscribed into the concepts. Alternatively, they would have had to focus explicitly on us as persons, which they claim not to do (probably partly for legal reasons), and it would take a completely different set of investigations, which they clearly do not carry out either for instance including our work in other contexts on non-Western IR, scientific racism etc.

The ambiguous role of the systemic 'analysis' in relation to the critique of ST makes their claims slippery and our response difficult. Formally, the argument seems to be about something pervasive in the discipline (although nothing is said about how pervasive), and ST is possibly only an illustration. Performatively, the article come across as identifying distinct racist problems with ST. We worry that any rebuttal of our response will retreat to the general argument and claim that we are denying this general nature of racist colouring of the field at large. This would be unreasonable given the nature of H&RM's article.

Imagine that someone at your office circulates a lengthy email arguing with numerous examples, incidents and strong-worded characterisations that Judith is a horrible colleague, creates conflicts and destroys collegiality. Somewhere a side-remark says that the atmosphere in general is bad. When the case is then pursued further, the accuser 'clarifies' that really Judith is not worse than most others – it was not really an email about her; it was just a way to draw attention to the general problem about the climate among colleagues; and this was done most effectively by centering on one person. (When Judith protests against being singled out like this, the accuser claims that she is denying how bad the situation is at the office.)

As always, there is a risk in a discussion like this of getting absorbed into it and forgetting some very basic questions that probably most readers had when reading the title of H&RM 2020 first: why phrase it in terms of the theory *being racist*, instead of – say – that it is not good enough in helping us overcome racism or does not pay sufficient attention to race? The normal mode of discussion is to assume that we are having a scholarly discussion among people who are allowed to be present in academia. If we really were racists (as implied by our allegedly consistent production of racist work over decades), we should be expelled from the community? Naturally, we are aware of the disclaimers (as discussed above) about system and individuals, but in the end: pile up all the accusations about what we have done – to uphold the violent, repressive, anti-black order of white supremacy – and it becomes very hard to see this as a debate among participants in the same scholarly community who are willing to grant each other a right to work there. Why would it not be more productive to argue in normal terms about problems and weaknesses in the theory in relation to race – why is the theory racist? Please note how rare it is to actually do this about contemporary theories (except for psychological theories of race difference in intelligence and a very few similar cases).

To use the same example as before in this piece for simplicity: Carole Pateman publishes *The Sexual Contract* in 1988. Charles Mills gets inspired by the idea of the domination contract and the critique of social contract, and publishes *The Racial Contract* in 1997. Indirectly, this work implies that Pateman's book missed the equal importance of race. Mills did not phrase this in terms of Pateman's book being racist. On the contrary, they went on to write a book together on *Contract and*

Domination (2007). Then various scholars pointed out that abledness was assumed in both theories, and one needed to add a *Capacity Contract* or *Ableist Contract* (Simplican 2015, 2016; Pinheiro 2016). These writers did not attack Pateman and Mills for ableism. Logically, they could have done so on the basis of the logic of H&RM, because clearly by covering the terrain with the first two domination contracts, an impression is easily created that these are the differences that matter. Actually, the interaction evolved into interesting work on how to relate these forms of domination (and that of class; and species hierarchy); Kymlicka 2018. But imagine that these different parties all threw words like racist, sexist and ableist at each other.[69] They could. They didn't. And the agendas of all parties seem to have gained by this.

The best discussion we have seen in the IR literature of the question about using 'the R-word' on contemporary theorists is by Olivia Umurerwa Rutazibwa (2016). She argues that Hobson (2012) is wrong to reserve his use of 'racism' as characterisation for historical writers, and elegantly characterises his decision in relation to current authors as 'strategic reluctance' (in contrast to a 'fundamental reluctance' by others). She argues partly along the same lines as H&RM that one should not be trapped into a liberal conception of racism as reducible to individual prejudices. Also, a concern for how it will be perceived by certain people (i.e. how Keohane would react to having his theory characterised as racist) should not be more important than what is happening to people who are the victims of racism. We agree. It should not be impossible to characterise a contemporary theory as racist – if there is solid basis for it and it is made clear in what sense the characterisation is meant. Even Rutazibwa's nuanced discussion (2016, see also 2020; Hobson 2016) mainly addresses the double negative: why we should not surrender to a ban on naming racism in IR today. The principles for when and how it would be strategically productive remains to be spelled out.

It is fair at this point to ask whether we are over-reacting to the kind of attack mounted by H&RM. Isn't this type of critique normal in IR? The discipline has certainly had its history of pointed polemics and strong-worded critiques, often both painting their targets as 'wrong' in their premises and 'dangerous' in political effects: from Carr's 'Twenty years crisis' and Morgenthau's 'Scientific Man vs Power Politics' to Ashley's 'Poverty of Neorealism', debates between Ann Tickner and Bob Keohane on feminism and John Mearsheimer's colourful, recurring attacks on a series of opponents from dissenters on conventional deterrence to institutionalists. True. But we actually did look at these and other IR take-downs – and none compares to the article by H&RM in either virulence and aggressivity, nor in the number of lies. Surely the targets of prior critiques have felt that their critics "didn't get it": When Øyvind Østerud attacked post-structuralism in *Journal of Peace Research*, many of us felt that he was wrong in both not understanding the philosophical roots and in his picture of the implications of this 'new' approach. However, these various critics (possibly with the exception of Carr!) did not make more than a handful of false attributions of specific viewpoints or quotes to their opponents; they usually just *interpreted* them in problematic ways. H&RM in contrast grossly falsify our works in monumental ways. This is unheard-of. And it is bad for anti-racism, for *Security Dialogue* and for security studies/IR.

It is our impression from discussing the case with others in the discipline, that the article has to be seen in the context of a more general movement. Given its many bizarre features, there seems to be some form of 'ends justifies the means' logic at play. H&RM, and the editors of *Security Dialogue*, disregard not only responsibility towards the persons or the theory attacked, but also to normal procedures. Presumably this violence is justified because ST is not the real subject matter, it is just a

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[69] Some readers might object that we also use strong words about H&RM. However, we do believe that it is responsible and actually necessary to protect standards of scholarship and debate against practices that are truly dangerous and destructive to our collective enterprise (in addition of course to the right to self-defense when threatened de facto with intellectual and possibly social excommunication). It is a different matter whether academic critique should be phrased in terms of highly morally and politically charged categories with general societal power applied directly as alleged qualities of theories per se.

means to raise the wider debate. Thus, it doesn't matter what you inflict on scholars who are really not guilty of what you claim, nor that you disfigure a theory and thus hamper scholarly work; the main thing is you draw attention to the power of structural racism which is otherwise difficult to achieve. Naturally, we do not want to attribute this figure to either authors or editors, but given how this general mode of thought is ascendant, and given that we have seen it in debates around the article on social media and when talking to colleagues, we suspect that this figure could at least have played some role in carrying the article through to publication – for authors, reviewers or editors. Otherwise we are mystified by this total lapse in judgement of the journal and its reviewers. (Ultimately, we are here offering the potentially best defense for the article. It is ironic that neither the article itself, nor the many emails from the editorial team to us have as much as hinted at any rationale like this. They both present the case in simple representational terms: H&RM write about ST being racist because it is, and SD accepted the article because it passed review. This seems like a pretend naivety to us. We have an ongoing debate here about how to best address racism in IR and security studies. Some controversial choices have been made by both H&RM and the editors of SD. They do not offer these decisions up for debate in the discipline.)

The larger social context is then probably the similar tendency where it has become justified on a US campus to eg. attack individual professors for their courses along this tune. The pros and cons of this in the specific context, we are not in a position to judge. However, we doubt that this is the best way forward for security studies to become better at handling racism.

If this context actually is playing a role for this incident, it would be ironic. This would amount to a new generation of US imperialism if US campus politics come to structure an originally Scandinavian journal like SD. It is a heavy price to pay to sacrifice both academic standards and independent research agendas. First, we had to fight the US mainstream to create space for critical voices in security studies, now we have to defend these spaces against a specific branch of US radicalism, equally blind to its own parochialism.

H&RM's import of a particular US-American tradition shows not only in the mode of critique (call out and cancel), also in the understanding of racism. Especially in a North American context there are powerful reasons to foreground slavery, anti-blackness and settler colonialism. However, to demand the loading of every sentence with these words potentially marginalizes issues that are more urgent for people engaged in fighting racism on their home-front. For instance in Europe, it will often be more pertinent to engage with issues of immigration and islamophobia.[70] As we write more about in the section about actual securitization analyses of racism, Etienne Balibar's theory of neo-racism has proven productive for analysis especially in Europe (but also as critique of Huntington and the US; Short & Kambouri 2010). Balibar's work on neoracism was acknowledged in ST classics all the way back to Wæver et al 1993. According to the mechanics of the H&RM critique, if you write an anti-racist critical analysis of European islamophobia and violence against immigrants, you can still be called out for not including the words slavery, anti-black and settler colonialism.

We apologise for presenting this concern in such an old-fashioned way, as parochial or Anglo-centric. Presumably, it would be better if we write that Howell and Richter-Montpetit want to uphold a hyper-imperialistic, exterministic epistemicide.

Reading H&RMs article as a local manifestation in (European?[71]) security studies of a mostly Anglo-American form of campus politics and related forms of scholarship could on the one hand be a

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[70] Wæver is in print denouncing the racism of his own home-country Denmark in its articulation of secularism (Sheikh &Wæver 2012). He and his former students working on these issues are regular targets of abuse on right-wing blogs.

[71] Bueger and Stritzel long ago (2005) pointed out how the new theories in security studies were to some extent a particularly European phenomenon (see also C.A.S.E. 2006 and Wæver 2015b). In practice, *Security Dialogue* has to a large extent been the main journal for this Europe-initiated challenge to a prior American

warning against introducing another repressive hegemony this time as rule through intimidation, but on the other hand it could be misunderstood as implying that this is 'normal' elsewhere in academia and IR is just a late-comer as usual. This is not the case, as far as we can see. Looking through journals of critical race studies, debates in eg. anthropology, literary studies, philosophy etc, it is hard to find similar cases. Even an obvious target like Rawls' contemporary version of contract theory was not called 'racist' as such by Mills (only criticising in very strong terms its absurd evasions regarding race; and elegantly he has talked about "the whiteness of Rawls"; Mills 2017b); and a few papers by others have recently started to be more direct. H&RM's aggressive article is not only the first in our field; it is actually quite unusual even for critical race studies and related fields.

Political Responsibility – and an invitation for rephrasing the disagreement

"On such a grave subject, one must be serious and not say just anything" (Derrida 1986: 355)

One of our main worries in relation to the H&RM article is ultimately its political implications. The most obvious problem is probably that the concept of 'racism' gets watered down – and this exactly at a point in time where more and more powerful actors speak in explicitly racist terms. To then broaden the term so that it captures 99% of social scientists, and probably 99,99% of the population, does not seem helpful. Also, to completely ignore the question whether the theory of ST can or cannot actually do helpful analytical work, and not suggest any alternative either, seems to imply that we should not harness our tools for the ability to intervene in relevant ways in political struggles, but rather make sure to cleanse our own corners of the last remaining problematic sentence.

However, behind this general political problem, a specific one is possibly lurking. The question how we handle the dilemma between designating important transformations, formations and intensifications, versus to point out how various societal ills are deeply embedded in the original foundations of (liberal?) society. Probably, this becomes more clear in a recent article by Alison Howell with a plea to "forget 'militarization'" (Howell 2018; see also MacKenzie et al 2019). The argument here is that we should not use the concept of militarization, because it hides how our societies are "always already" implicated in what she calls 'martial politics', how they are shot through with war-like relations. The concept of militarization falsely creates the image that this only happens from a particular point, and not as part of especially liberal societies' foundation. While the observation is clearly important and valid, it raises worrying questions about whether this change will really help or hinder powerful analysis and not least political interventions. Ole Wæver's primary current research grant is for a project together with HURIPEC, a human rights research centre in the law faculty at the University of Makarere – on militarization in Uganda. Neither the local scholars, nor Wæver were able to generate a powerful research agenda where demonstration of how all (liberal?) societies are 'always already' shot through with war-like relations would be helpful to the current situation in Uganda. Thus, they resorted to the allegedly ideologically tainted concept of militarization in order to do critical research (Namwase &Wæver 2018).

Alison Howell summarises in her article the work of co-author Richter-Montpetit to the effect that "torture is not an aberration from liberal order but forms part of a lineage of anti-Black violence, from the institution of chattel slavery through contemporary law and criminal justice, demonstrating that violence against racialized bodies and the law have existed in mutual relation throughout US history" (Howell 2018: 121). While the articles by Richter-Montpetit (2007, 2014) do not actually

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hegemony (and before that a Scandinavian peace research journal). This makes it even more worrying to see another Anglo-American movement reset research agendas even here.

seem to make a similar call to 'forget torture', the summary by Howell clearly does hint in the direction that one should not use this concept, because it hides the always already existing violence.

H&RM have one valid point (that has been made by others as well). This one could have been made in a completely different manner. Then it would have been helpful. Their decision on how to deploy this one insight is ultimately a decision about political strategy and scholarly modes of interaction.

The point could be put like this: A theory like securitization that emphasises a political turning point runs a risk that is similarly present in theories of militarization, torture, genocide, and rape. These theories risk being read as if *before* this happening, everything was great. A theory of securitization (or militarization, torture, genocide, rape) does not necessarily commit this mistake actively and there might even be a warning against it in its most sophisticated (typically 'original') version, but it is a possible, indirect effect, aggravated if later users are sloppy to not point this out in empirical cases.[72] Given that a theory of this kinds typically is organised around the constitution of 'its' phenomenon, the main burden will be on applications that should point out the violence and oppression present in whatever preceding order, but also the theorists should take care to explain this, at the latest when they become aware of this misunderstanding. Ideally, we should be able to develop theories and modes of analysis *both* for the violence and oppression present in all societies *and* for the potentially crucial difference it makes when situations are securitized (or militarised, use torture in the strict sense, etc). This seems to be the most substantial insight that informs the article (and some of H&RM's other writings). This then presents a strategic choice. Which is the better route:

- Acknowledge that the theory as such does *not* presuppose liberal, ideal politics before securitization, but at worst runs the risk of indirectly creating this image if read too quickly; OR claim that it does presuppose this and then invent false quotations to support this claim
- Develop a theoretical apparatus for the study of *both* the violence and oppression of non-exceptional societies *and* theories to study the specific effects of a distinct political constitution like securitization, *or* banish all critical categories capturing transformations because they sanitise the before, and therefore we should stop using concepts like securitization, militarization, genocide, torture or rape. The violence is always already there, and this is the one and only point that we should insist on making.
- Continue to discuss these different emphases as analytical and political disagreements, *or:* those colleagues who use the criticised concepts should be called racists, militarists, torture-fans, genocidal and rape-apologets.[73]

Any other good points from the article? Yes, we believe H&RM have pointed to some places where we could have expressed ourselves more clearly. In the Framework book on p 127 (Buzan et al., 1998: 127) we should have written "political identities", not "identities" (cf Kaplan discussion

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[72] Note here the difference between a theory like social contract theory or possibly human rights on the one hand, and securitization theory (or theories of militarization, torture, etc) on the other: Both classical and (especially) modern, Rawlsian contract theory presupposes that the contract is entered into voluntarily among equals and therefore most versions of contract theory both denies the relevance of race (and class and gender) and becomes a legitimation of continued de facto oppression. In contrast, theories of securitization, militarization, torture or rape, do not *presuppose* such a race-free 'before'. At worst, the latter theories can be guilty of potentially producing such an image as an un-necessary effect.

[73] The critical reader might wonder why securitization translates into racism, and the other into that they analyse themselves (supporters of torture, rape, etc). Obviously, all the others can be called racists as well, but the primary logic here is that securitization is claimed to *hide* racism, and similarly studies of torture hide that a violence as bad as torture is ever-present in liberal society, and thus scholars of torture contribute to the reproduction of the unseen everyday torture; patriarchy normalises everyday rape which is elided by the use of a narrow concept of rape, and therefore to overfocus on rape is to contribute to rape. Thus, the logic that makes ST racist will make all the other designations justified in the same manner.

above). And the Africa chapter in Regions and Powers (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 219-262) – which still is not part of ST as such, but an empirical analysis built on RSCT – was probably generally too influenced by its times, both the events (especially the 2nd Congo War; 1998-2003) and the academic literature of the time, and thus giving too much attention to some of the more negative and disintegrative scenarios in contrast to consolidations that contain their own problems. However, we are still shocked by both the incredibly small fraction of observations in the H&RM article that actually prove just mildly valid and the length to which they are willing to go in order to draw conclusions from their 'observations'. Given that the H&RM argument is about *Securitization Theory*, these passages don't support their conclusions at all. Still, we are happy to admit that our writings have been conditioned by the times in which they were written, and that were we writing them now we would do some things differently. This is a problem for almost anyone who writes a lot over a span of several decades. Marx is far from the only thinker whose younger and older selves don't always agree. Life is about learning.

Since we are ending on a semi-constructive note here: A real and relevant debate pops up twice in very under-developed form. At the end of the 4th page, they make a brief claim that speech acts is a conception too narrow to understand racism. This issue is not addressed further, until it strangely reappears in the conclusion (as if actually addressed in the article), where they conclude(?) that treating racism as "mere language" (sic!), we fail to grasp the constitutive role of "relations of force and expropriation". Obviously, this is a very brief reference to a huge debate about the general merits and limits of discourse-centred (or other 'linguistic turn') approaches.[74] H&RM surely cannot be naïve enough to think that their 5 lines on this settles that matter. Nor do we think that it has been settled in the opposite direction. This could be an important discussion – and this discussion could have been furthered if they had taken the more conventional approach of assessing the 'usefulness' of ST for critical analyses of racism by looking operationally at what can you do, and what you are prevented from doing. But this is exactly the approach they don't engage with. This seems to be one more missed opportunity.

Conclusion

H&RM's work is profoundly counterproductive to the important task of dealing with systemic racism in IR. By debasing the currency of academic analysis, they steer the discipline into a post-truth direction that is antithetical to both its epistemological integrity and its social purpose.

The authors have set up a machine that will deem any theory racist unless it explicitly foregrounds race. So any theory that is not centred on racism is racist. Terminology matters here. Would it not be more useful to be able to point out that one theory under-estimates the centrality of race and another has a problematic concept of race, without calling them 'racist'? Not least: in order to not water down the concept of racism. This is independent of what ST actually says or does, it mainly hinges on what it does not do.

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[74] When Wæver saw the H&RM piece, he immediately pulled Gates 1986 from his shelf, expecting a re-run of the debate over Derrida and apartheid. What is the power and limits of a textual approach like Derrida's in the face of racism and apartheid? Lene Hansen in her reply quotes extensively from Derrida's powerful response to a critique by McClintock and Nixon. In IR, a similar debate appeared already in the 1990s: Krishna 1993, Der Derian 1994. The recent exchange by Sarah Bertrand (2018a,b) and Claudia Aradau (2018) is a striking contrast to the piece by H&RM. Bertrand's agenda is not far from H&RM's, inspired by post-colonial and feminist work and bent on proving that ST does not deserve to be included among theories deserving of the label 'critical', but – while there is much we disagree with in her presentation and argumentation – she keeps a clear focus on investigating the limits of using speech act theory and how this relates to the famous 'silence problem', discussed in ST since Lene Hansen's classical mermaid article (2000).

When it comes to actually reading ST and demonstrating that the theory is racist due to its conceptualisations, theoretical structure etc, the authors base themselves on an embarrassing mix of mis-understandings, mis-representations and logical errors.

IR needs to engage the question of racism – both as crucial in world politics and as an internal challenge entrenched within the historical constitution of the discipline. An article like H&RM makes this important task more difficult.

We believe the article ought to be retracted. To be clear (because we know this will be misunderstood), this is not because of the attack on us for racism. Whether it was the right decision of authors and editors to publish a piece with this attack hinges on two kinds of assessments. One is the question whether the article is convincing, which we hope to have demonstrated it is not, and the second is the responsibility towards the discipline of the direction to take our debates. For these reasons, we believe that it was a mistake to publish the article, but this is not a reason for retraction. That speech act has been made. However, it should be retracted because it commits scientific misconduct. The false quotes are the most demonstrable cases of this, but the absurd readings against overwhelming evidence are numerous as well. Thus, the ultimate reason for retraction is simply that they have manipulated their data in ways that should not be supported. It is particularly striking that some of the worst misquotes show up exactly where the main principled arguments turn out to otherwise lack 'evidence'. If a natural scientist did that with a failed experiment, the article would be retracted and the authors in serious problems. There need to be clear principles in a journal like *SD* about the unacceptability of manipulations and misrepresentations of data, be that in an empirical analysis or in a discussion of theory.

They associate us with racism through authors we cite (or authors cited by authors we cite), they use citations to our text that when checked turn out do not contain what they claim or be a reference to an epigraph above an article, not to our writings; they take a quote that we present as a construction of a counterposition as if it was ours (without informing the reader of this). Notably, the worst misdeeds happen not in obscure 'corners' of their argument – they sit at the most strategic and 'necessary' places in it, thereby making the article collapse if removed. The specific malpractices are thus doubly damaging: they are in themselves not acceptable and they are the final evidence for the unsustainability of the general argument in the article.

These are operations that in many disciplines would lead an article to be retracted, irrespective of whether it accused colleagues of racism or in other ways was problematic, simply by being scientific malpractice or – wrong. H&RM seems to be of the view that given that this is not a natural science experiment but about theoretical writings, they can read as they please. However, there are actually principles (even if not formalised or easy to agree on) for defensible and indefensible interpretations, there are limits to how much violence you can do on other people's work and then publish as representations of it. This is part of the professional standards of scholars that we uphold through the institutions of our discipline, in this case the responsible work of reviewers and editors, but first of all of authors. We think *Security Dialogue* should retract the article because its deepfake methodology can be used to 'prove' anything. Such flawed work should not warrant publication in a leading academic journal in any discipline.

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