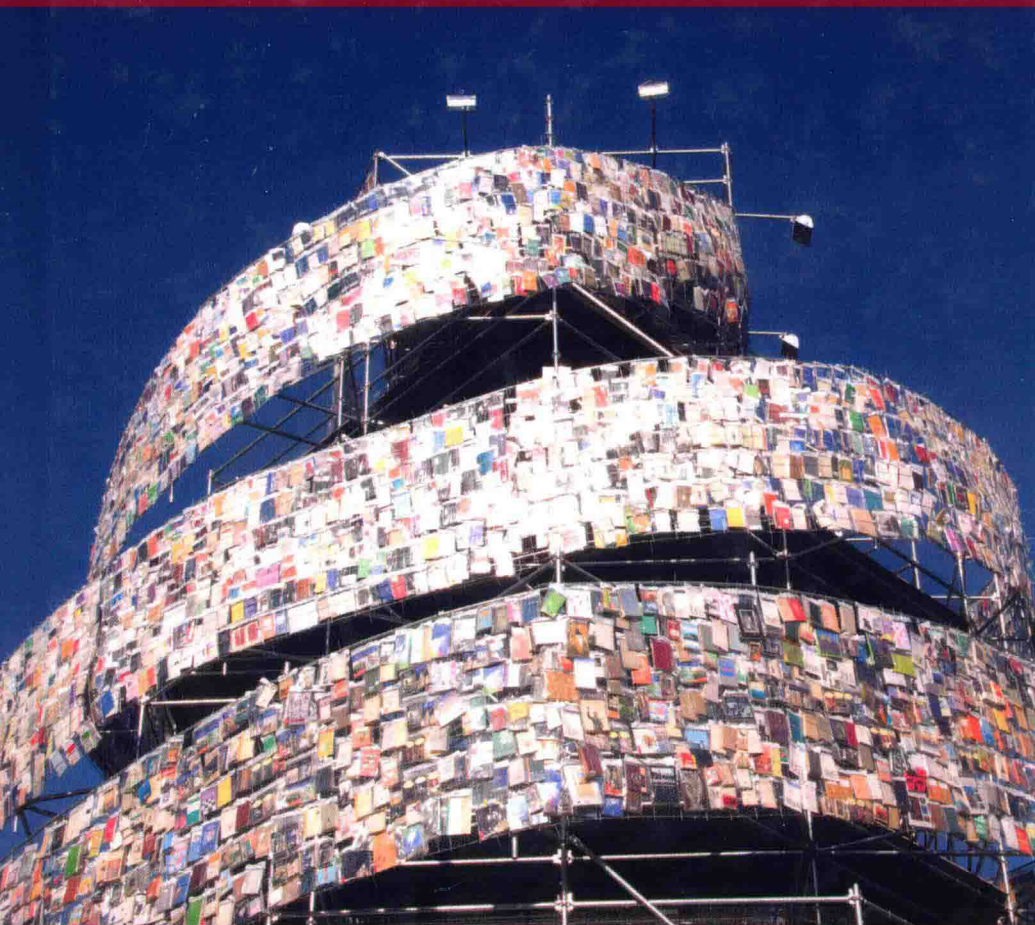


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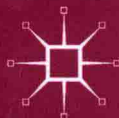


## Security in Translation

Securitization Theory and the

Localization of Threat

*Holger Stritzel*





# Security in Translation

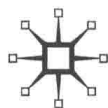
## Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat

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# Abbreviations

ABM	anti-ballistic missile
AdG	Archiv der Gegenwart
AG Kripo	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriminalpolizei
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
AK	Arbeitskreis
BDI	Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie
BDK	Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter
BAK	Bundeskriminalamt
BMVg	Bundesministerium der Verteidigung
BT	Deutscher Bundestag
CANF	Cuban American National Foundation
CDA	critical discourse analysis
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COPRI	Copenhagen Peace Research Institute
CPRC	Counterproliferation Program Review Committee
CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
DCI	Defense Counterproliferation Initiative
DGAP	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FBN	Federal Bureau of Narcotics
GAO	General Accounting Office
GdP	Gewerkschaft der Polizei
HSFK	Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung
IAEO	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMK	Innenministerkonferenz
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
MP	member of parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NMD	National Missile Defense
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty



OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus
PFA	Polizei-Führungsakademie
RAF	Rote Armee Fraktion
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SWP	Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

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# Introduction

The evolution of collective interpretations of perceived threats such as 'organized crime' or 'rogue states' often transcends time and space: once established as a relatively stable interpretation in one locale, typically initially at the national level, their further genesis will extend beyond the geographical locations and time periods of their initial invention. Accepted interpretations of threats thus have the potential to travel between locales, be they national, regional or global, and in this way potentially encounter a great variety of different local discourses on their way. Each encounter may then transform the initial interpretation and adapt it to the particularities of the new locale. It is the purpose of this book to explore these processes of evolution, travel and transformation in a discourse and to suggest an analytical framework which allows one to think about them more systematically.

How, precisely, can we conceptualize this process of evolution, spread and local transformation? For example, what happens when the collective interpretation of a perceived threat created and temporarily established in one discursive locale encounters a new one? How does the 'foreign' meaning become incorporated into the new locale or not, and with what effects? And what are the driving forces of this process? Specifically, how can one make sense of the evolution, spread and attempted localization of 'organized crime' and 'rogue states' in the US and Germany and from the US to Germany? What happened when these two collective interpretations created in the US locale encountered the particularities of the new German one? How did they become productively appropriated, incorporated and/or discursively transformed in Germany, and with what effects? Finally, how can this process be theorized within *and* beyond the various idiosyncrasies of German and German-American security affairs? Does the nature of German security

discourse and German-American affairs differ with regard to perceived 'internal' as opposed to perceived 'external' security threats?

This book attempts to establish two major claims in addressing these questions. First, this book argues that second-generation securitization theory post-Copenhagen offers a useful initial framework for analysis to think systematically about the evolution of threats and processes of discursive transformation. Second, based on reading articulations of security as translations, this book then explores more specifically how collective interpretations of threats, stabilized and temporarily fixed by specific 'names', travel across discourse communities through processes of localization. The book holds that it is through these processes of translation and localization that collective interpretations of threats become globally accepted and potentially hegemonic.

These two general arguments will be illustrated with case studies on the processes of translating organized crime into *Organisierte Kriminalität* and rogue states into *Schurkenstaaten* as they travelled from their origin in the US to their new discursive locale in Germany. Organized crime and rogue states are generally portrayed to be among the most important security challenges since the end of the Cold War. They appear in various security documents at the national, regional and global levels. These include: the EU Security Strategy of 2003 (according to which organized crime is one of the five main security challenges facing EU member states) and various documents in the context of the development of an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) in Europe, including the EU Action Plans in 1997 and 2000 as well as the 1999 Tampere Conclusions and its Hague successors (see Behrenskoetter and Stritzel, 2007); the German security *Weißbücher*; US and UK National Security Strategies up to the most recent one in the UK, 'A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty' of 2010; and various security documents at the UN level, including the 1995 Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Transnational Organized Crime, the 2004 UN Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and the 2000 UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Analytically, the two perceived threats arguably reflect two central poles of a perceived new spectrum of internal-hybrid-external security threats that are currently thought to be 'increasingly merging' (see e.g. Bigo, 2000; 2001; Werkner, 2010; 2011). In addition to the two main arguments of this book, a comparative perspective on processes of translating organized crime and rogue states thus also offers insights into the so-called internal-external security nexus in contemporary security affairs (see Eriksson and Rhinard, 2009).

Both the empirical phenomenon of processes of international spread and domestic localization of threat discourses and the theoretical claim to describe this phenomenon in terms of translations are new in security studies. There is currently no specific theory or specific empirical study which discusses these issues in any detail and could thus be used as a precursor. By choosing securitization theory as an intellectual starting point, the reflections of this book ultimately fall within the broader context of discursive approaches to international security which examine and theorize discursive 'productions of security' in domestic and international affairs (for overviews, see e.g. Milliken, 1999; c.a.s.e. collective, 2006; Fierke, 2007; Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 2010). Yet, this body of literature is typically only concerned with the (domestic) evolution rather than the international spread of threat discourse, and the vast majority of empirical studies also typically analyse only a single discourse, often that of the US (see e.g. Weldes, 1996; 1999; Doty, 1993; 1996; Barnett, 1999; Campbell, 1998; Jackson, 2005; Croft, 2006; Neal, 2010; see also Hansen, 2006; Herschinger, 2011; Croft, 2012). Currently, only very few studies take a comparative perspective, and no study currently theorizes respective dynamics in terms of processes of translation and localization.

The position of this book is here closest to a reading of discourse in the tradition of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (see in particular Fairclough, 1992; see also Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Weiss and Wodak, 2002; Wodak, 1989; 1996; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001), which stands in a longer tradition of neo-Marxist readings of discourse (see Purvis and Hunt, 1993) that resembles earlier works by Jutta Weldes on discursive constructivism in security studies (see in particular Weldes, 1996; 1999; Weldes and Saco, 1996). From the perspective of CDA, discourse appears as 'a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral and written tokens' (Wodak, 2001: 66).

A second major debate to which this book hopes to contribute is the ongoing controversy over the concept of securitization which was originally proposed by Ole Wæver, then extended in collaboration with Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde and the so-called Copenhagen School of security studies, and recently significantly modified by various critics of (traditional) securitization theory (see in particular Wæver, 1989a; 1995; 2003; Buzan et al., 1998; Stritzel, 2007; 2012; Balzacq, 2005; Vuori, 2008; Floyd, 2010; Wilkinson, 2007; Williams, 2003; Huysmans, 2006; Croft, 2012; Bourbeau, 2013; for a recent overview, see Balzacq,

2011). This book stands in the tradition of a critical second generation of securitization theory post-Copenhagen School, which conceptualizes securitization not as a 'self-referential practice' but as an intersubjective process (see also Balzacq, 2011: 3). Securitization can thereby be defined as a discursive process through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed to treat something as an existential threat, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat, which typically involves sociolinguistic as well as sociopolitical processes of production/genesis, diffusion/transfer and reception/translation in a discourse.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, the book develops, operationalizes and illustrates specifically the concept of translation for security and securitization studies. While securitization theory typically describes the discursive process of construction of an existential threat as an act of successfully attaching the meaning of 'security' to a particular object, case or development, the notion of translation claims that security is contextualized in terms of local political histories and practices and that processes of production always entail actions of transformation of past and related meanings in a discourse. Specifically, while traditional securitization theory claims that a modus of security is produced through illocutionary speech acts, the notion of translation suggests analysing the production of security through notions of passage and encounter. It thus provides a localized and processual understanding of attaching meanings of security to an issue which opens securitization theory empirically to reconstructions of the travel, localization and gradual transformation of intersubjective representations of perceived threats across discursive locales.

Finally, on the basis of such a securitization theory post-Copenhagen School, this study also provides an alternative empirical perspective on the security policies of Germany and German-American security affairs. The vast majority of the existing literature here develops a social constructivist perspective and argues that Germany's security policy is defined by historically and culturally determined principles of self-restraint, multilateralism, respect for international law and loyalty to allies (see e.g. Maull, 2001; Berger, 1998; Duffield, 1998; 1999), while only very few scholars sufficiently acknowledge the role of (securitizing or desecuritizing) agents (for reflections on the role of agents, see e.g. Longhurst, 2004; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2006) or discourse (for exceptions, see e.g. Hellmann et al., 2008; Bach, 1999), which is particularly striking with regard to the scarce literature on the social construction of internal security threats (see e.g. Kinzig, 2004; Luczak, 2004; Flormann,

1995; Paoli and Fijnaut, 2006; Kunz, 2005; Pary Baban, 2013; Hülse and Spencer, 2008; Spencer, 2010). This problem is arguably even more severe with regard to German-American security affairs, as scholars here predominantly tend to apply broad structural concepts such as 'transatlantic security community' and 'common identity', 'international institutional webs' or 'soft balancing' (see e.g. Risse-Kappen, 1995; Duffield, 2001; Pape, 2005) at the expense of more specific theorizations of process and actors/agency in transatlantic affairs (for an exception, see e.g. Hellmann, 2008).

Overall, in developing its argument this book deliberately concentrates on processes of translation and localization with regard to organized crime and rogue states in the German discursive locale. As a result, less emphasis is placed on relevant debates within multilateral contexts such as the EU, NATO or the UN. This book also does not try to comprehensively reconstruct the genealogy of organized crime or rogue states, or the multiple specific channels of diffusion from the US to Germany. The focus is on the sociolinguistic practices of translation and localization in the German locale, which is also why aspects of controversy, ambiguity and undecidability in the discourse are not the central focus of this study.

The next three chapters discuss the main concepts and theoretical debates of the book. Chapter 1 starts with a detailed engagement with the Copenhagen School reading of securitization. However, the chapter argues that the way the idea of securitization has been articulated by Ole Wæver and the Copenhagen School is too undertheorized and contradictory to define a comprehensive theory of processes of securitization or to provide clear guidance for detailed empirical analyses. Specifically, the Copenhagen School approach to securitization suffers from three main sets of problems: (1) construction problems of the theory itself; (2) insufficient explication of the theoretical background of the theory; and (3) insufficient reflection on problems of empirical application. Chapter 2, therefore, suggests an alternative reading of processes of securitization by theorizing securitization as a specific conceptualization of discourse dynamics. The chapter argues that securitization theory can best be grounded in a neo- or post-Marxist reading of discourse theory which is characterized by a consistent incorporation of a distinctly social space of discursive productions. Methodologically, this will ultimately lead to a two-fold theorization of structuration dynamics in relation to discourse marked by processes of authorization/authority in discourse and discursive articulations. Chapter 3 then specifies and tailors this suggested general securitization theory post-Copenhagen



School to the specific research interest of this book: the spread and localization of securitizations that are condensed in specific threat images such as organized crime or rogue states. For this purpose, the chapter conceptualizes the notion of 'threat image' in relation to securitization theory, explicates securitizations as translations and suggests a way to operationalize this notion in relation to the localization of threat images in new discursive locales, the German discursive locale of internal and external security in particular.

Chapter 4 is the first of three empirical chapters which reconstruct the genesis, securitization and translation of the threat image of 'organized crime' into *Organisierte Kriminalität* as a process of successful localization. This first chapter thereby specifically explores aspects of the rich imagery of organized crime in Italian and US discourses, which continue to be visible in contemporary practices of securitizing organized crime, before Chapter 5 turns to the securitization of organized crime in the US, marked by a gradual intensification in the discourse that started with several political committee initiatives to define organized crime in the US since the 1950s. Chapter 6 examines the encounter of this initial securitization and temporary stabilization in the US with German security discourse since the late 1960s/early 1970s. From the early 1970s to 1990, the notion of organized crime here first entered German expert discourse and became part of a process of technocratic redefinition in which 'US organized crime' was gradually translated into a more distinctly German concept of *Organisierte Kriminalität*. During a second stage, after 1990, the securitization as translation of organized crime then entered the public sphere and temporarily concluded a process of securitization of organized crime in Germany.

The following two chapters compare these processes with the translation of 'rogue states' into *Schurkenstaaten* as a process of attempted but failed localization in Germany. Again, Chapter 7 first explores the origins of the threat image in US cultural and political discourse, and then reconstructs the process of securitization in the US from the presidencies of George H.W. Bush to George W. Bush. Chapter 8 then reconstructs the German security discourse in relation to the US rogue states narrative and examines discursive strategies in Germany to localize the threat image of rogue states in a different discursive setting. While securitizing moves of translation and localization can be found that use similar discursive strategies as in the case of organized crime, these moves did not successfully adapt the US rogue states narrative for the German locale, so that 'rogue states' remained a 'foreign', distinctly US threat text that was not emotionally potent and convincing in the