


The politics of studying securitization? The Copenhagen School in Turkey

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Abstract

Copenhagen School securitization theory has made significant inroads into the study of security in Western Europe. In recent years, it has also begun to gain a presence elsewhere. This is somewhat unanticipated. Given the worldwide prevalence of mainstream approaches to security, the nature of peripheral international relations, and the Western European origins and focus of the theory, there is no obvious reason to expect securitization theory to have a significant presence outside Western Europe. Adopting a reflexive notion of theory allows, the article argues, inquiry into the politics of studying security, which in turn reveals how the Western European origins and focus of securitization theory may be a factor enhancing its potential for adoption by others depending on the historico-political context. Focusing on the case of Turkey, the article locates the security literature of that country in the context of debates on accession to the European Union and highlights how securitization theory is utilized by Turkey's authors as a 'Western European approach' to security.

Keywords

Copenhagen School, securitization, Turkey, security, Eurocentrism, periphery

Copenhagen School securitization theory (Buzan et al., 1998; Wæver, 1995) has made significant inroads into the study of security in Western Europe. In recent years, it has also begun to gain a presence elsewhere. This is somewhat unanticipated. Given the worldwide prevalence of mainstream approaches to security, the nature of peripheral international relations, and the Western European origins and focus of the theory, there is no obvious reason to expect that securitization theory will have a significant presence outside Western Europe. Then again, such considerations, valuable as they may be, do not inquire into the politics of studying security. Taking a reflexive look at the nexus between scholarship and politics, this article argues, reveals how the Western European origins and focus of securitization theory may be a factor enhancing its potential for adoption by others depending on the given historico-political context.

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In offering this argument, the article builds upon data and findings from Turkey. In recent years, securitization theory has come to exhibit a not-so-insignificant presence in the international publications of Turkey's scholars. This development has taken place against the general background of the state of the international relations field in Turkey, which exhibits characteristics similar to those of other peripheral international relations locales in terms of the prevalence of realist-inspired concepts and the dearth of theory-informed studies (Bilgin and Tanrisever, 2009; see also Tickner and Wæver, 2009b). Turkey is also not atypical of peripheral contexts in terms of the relatively weak condition of its civil society vis-à-vis the state in shaping security dynamics (Bilgin, 2007a; see also Pasha, 1996).

Drawing upon reflexive notions of theory as political practice (Murphy, 2001; Oren, 2003; Williams, 2009), the article locates Turkey's security literature in the context of debates on the country's accession to the European Union. It is argued that *utilizing securitization theory as a Western European approach to security* in the study of Turkey's dynamics: (1) *underscores the appropriateness of current policymaking* by way of framing it in terms of a struggle against securitization – which is appropriate because this is how 'Europe' resolved its past problems; and (2) *locates Turkey in Europe* by way of highlighting how it presently exhibits a 'proper European way of behaviour'.

The article is organized as follows: The first section offers a brief discussion of why there is no obvious reason to expect securitization theory to gain a significant presence outside Western Europe. The second section then outlines the extent of the presence of securitization theory within Turkey's security literature. The third section discusses the possible reasons for the current utilizations of securitization theory in Turkey by considering existing accounts of how international relations is studied in the peripheries of the world. The fourth section begins to offer an alternative account that underscores the politics of studying securitization through drawing on reflexive notions of theory and the nexus between scholarship and politics. In the fifth section, the article offers a reflexive reading of those analyses that utilize securitization theory to look at the case of Turkey and argues that the presence of the theory outside Western Europe should also be considered in terms of the political role of theories, theorists and theorizing.

Securitization theory beyond Western Europe?

Given the global pervasiveness of 'a state-centric ontology that in most cases is manifest in the internalization of realist-based ideas concerning concepts such as power, security, and the national interest' (Tickner and Wæver, 2009a: 334), there is good reason not to expect securitization theory to have a significant presence worldwide. Even as Copenhagen School scholars yield to the state the central role in the security field, they diverge radically from mainstream approaches insofar as they handle as social constructs key notions such as 'power', 'security' and 'the national interest' (Wæver, 1995; compare with Walt, 1991).

A second reason why there is very little reason to expect securitization theory to have a presence elsewhere in the world has to do with the state of peripheral international relations. For it is not only critical approaches as such but theory-informed studies¹ in general that are in short supply in international relations studies outside the Western European and North American core (Acharya and Buzan, 2009; Tickner and Wæver, 2009b). More often than not, peripheral scholars' treatises on the international invoke concepts and arguments drawn from international history, area studies and international law, as well as international relations – often in no systematic fashion and without any explicit attempt to advance existing knowledge about a case/theory. Given this 'amalgamate nature' (Inoguchi, 2007) of the study of international relations outside the core, securitization theory, whose methodical application demands a commitment to critical discourse analysis, should indeed not be expected to have any worldwide appeal.

A third reason, highlighted by scholars of a critical persuasion, is that, like mainstream approaches to security, securitization theory has limited analytical purchase beyond Western Europe and North America by virtue of its Eurocentric ethnocentrism (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 2010; Wilkinson, 2007) and therefore should not be expected to have worldwide appeal.² Indeed, the concepts of securitization and desecuritization have their origins in Ole Wæver's (1995, 1998) analysis of the Cold War's ending in Europe; the concept of 'societal security' was developed in making sense of Western European societies' responses to the challenges of European integration (Wæver et al., 1993). Furthermore, over the years, securitization theory has been developed mostly through the study of empirical cases drawn from European experiences.³ Highlighting these factors, critics have argued that securitization theory is slanted in favour of state-society relations in Western Europe and therefore should not be expected to be able to account for contexts that are characterized by different configurations of state-society dynamics.

It is against such odds that, in recent years, Copenhagen School securitization theory has begun to exhibit a presence in places as diverse as Hong Kong (Curley and Wong, 2008; Emmers et al., 2008; Lo Yuk-ping and Thomas, 2010), India (Upadhyaya, 2006), Indonesia (Panggabean, 2006), Singapore (Caballero-Anthony et al., 2006; Emmers et al., 2006; Liow, 2006; Mak, 2006), South Korea (Hyun et al., 2006), Bangladesh (Siddiqui, 2006) and Turkey (Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2008; Kaliber, 2005; Kaliber and Tocci, 2010; Karakaya Polat, 2008).⁴

At a first glance, this list may come across as too short to deserve critical scrutiny. Then again, when viewed against the background of the 'invisibility of theory in much of the world' (Tickner and Wæver, 2009a: 335), the presence of Copenhagen School securitization theory outside of Western Europe does deserve critical scrutiny. For while the number of works that utilize securitization theory may be insignificant within the universe of all studies on security produced in the peripheries of international relations, they nevertheless constitute a not-too-insignificant fraction of theory-informed studies. Non-core scholars often lament the diminutive size of the latter.⁵

Securitization theory in Turkey

Arlene Tickner and Monica Herz's (forthcoming) overview of security studies in Latin America is titled 'No room for theory?' The authors' finding is that the study of security, like the study of international relations in Latin America, has been a 'practical and applied field' with few theory-informed analyses. They write:

Even in those cases in which scholars explicitly set out to explore security 'concepts' and 'theories,' what emerges in their stead are descriptive reflections on Latin American security dynamics and prescriptive policy recommendations.

Turkey's setting is similar to that of Latin America insofar as it is also characterized by a dearth of theory-informed studies. Yet, it is also different in that the literature is distinguished by a dual storyline in Turkey's international relations scholarship in general, 'telling Turkey about the world, telling the world about Turkey' (Bilgin and Tanrisever, 2009):

This duality has crystallized in both student training and scholarly research. University students have been instructed on Turkey's needs vis-à-vis world politics as captured by the ostensibly 'theory-free facts' of History and Law (and more recently, Geopolitics)... Scholarly literature, in turn, has either reported on the state of world politics or Turkey's domestic and foreign policy dynamics (Bilgin and Tanrisever, 2009: 174).

Table 1. Security and securitization articles published in Turkey (2002–11) and internationally (1980–2011) by scholars based in Turkey

Type of article	No. published in Turkey	No. published internationally
Policy analysis	26	24
Theory, state-of-the-art	13	
Theory-informed	2	28
Meta-theory		1
Total	41	53

Note: The Social Science index compiled by ULAKBIM (Turkish Academic Network and Information Center) covers all journals published in Turkey (in Turkish and other languages) since 2002. International publications as reported by Thomson Scientific's Web of Science Social Science Citation index (SSCI), available since 1980. Search criteria: address includes 'Turkey'; article title/keywords includes 'security/securitization'.

Table 2. Breakdown of theory-informed articles from Web of Science (see right-hand column of Table 1)

Type of theory-informed article	No.
Copenhagen School securitization theory	4
Security sector reform	4
Rational choice theory	1
Conflict resolution	1
Other critical (constructivism, globalization studies, critical geopolitics)	13
Other mainstream (terrorism studies)	5

The survey conducted for the purposes of this article further clarifies the nature of this duality in terms of scholarly publications. As shown in Table 1, theory-informed studies on security have a negligible presence in the security literature published in Turkey, whereas they make up more than half of those articles published internationally. The remainder of the publications in international journals are policy-analysis articles that report on various aspects of Turkey's international relations. In contrast, the literature published in Turkey mostly consists of policy-analysis pieces and state-of-the-art accounts of security studies in Europe and North America.

These findings confirm that Turkey's security studies is characterized by a 'dual storyline'. Articles published in Turkey tell Turkey about the world – both the state of and the study of world politics. Articles published internationally tell the world about Turkey.⁶

Space does not allow inquiring into the factors that allow such a dual storyline to occur.⁷ What is significant to highlight is that those studies that utilize securitization theory have been published internationally, the point being that studies utilizing securitization theory have constituted a not-too-insignificant fraction of theory-informed analyses of Turkey's security.

Here, a caveat is in order: International publications provide a somewhat imprecise picture of a country's international relations scene; their production may have as much to do with 'pure' scholarly inquiry as with the demands of the international policy world for up-to-date analyses of a particular country, along with the career ambitions of scholars who advance rapidly when they publish in high-impact journals. While a survey that focuses on Turkish journal publications would do away with these complications, it would still produce an incomplete picture in that scholars

employed at academic institutions that place publications in international peer-reviewed journals at the top of their promotion criteria publish internationally in an almost exclusive fashion. Hence my preference for taking the presence of securitization theory in the international publications of Turkey's scholars as the starting point for an analysis of the politics of studying security – as opposed to explaining it away as an aberration.

How is it that securitization theory has begun to acquire a presence outside Western Europe? Existing accounts

The literature on the study of international relations in the peripheries of the world offers three sets of answers that may help us to understand securitization theory's presence in Turkey – namely, the trajectory of international relations' development worldwide; the training that peripheral international relations scholars receive; and how some theories may be tackling the challenge of Eurocentric ethnocentrism better than others.

To begin with, there may be little that begs an explanation here. International relations has had a global presence for years, notwithstanding its widely acknowledged limits in accounting for the international outside of its point of origin. The limits of disciplinary international relations – such as parochialism (whether US or 'Western'), Eurocentric ethnocentrism, or its gendered and hegemonic outlook – have been identified by various authors (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004; Inayatollah and Blaney, 2004; Pasha and Murphy, 2002), and alternatives have been sought elsewhere (Behera, 2008; Chan et al., 2001; Jones, 2002; Pasha, 2006; Tickner, 2003). It could be argued that securitization theory constitutes yet another 'Western' approach that has acquired a presence outside its place of origin.

As a second explanation it has been argued that scholars in the periphery are 'social science socialized products of American graduate schools' (Puchala, 1998) who, upon their return home, reproduce what they learned abroad. There is an element of truth in this characterization insofar as one's training leaves its mark on both one's thinking and one's professional practices. That said, it is important to recognize scholars' agency in the shaping of their research orientation and agendas. Recognizing the agency of scholars in choosing what, where and how to study, albeit in an environment shaped by local/regional/international scholarly and policy networks, is crucial if we are to understand the mutually constitutive relationship between 'epistemic agents of security' (Tan, 2007: 85) and local/regional/international structures (Bilgin, 2008).

A third explanation may be that securitization theory has begun to acquire a presence outside Western Europe because it fares better than mainstream approaches in addressing the challenge of Eurocentric ethnocentrism. Indeed, two key figures of the Copenhagen School have been at the forefront of cautioning against Eurocentrism in international relations. Buzan has co-edited (with Amitav Acharya) a volume on 'non-Western international relations theory' (Acharya and Buzan, 2009). Wæver is the joint editor (with Arlene B. Tickner) of a comprehensive volume on global international relations scholarship – a book that calls, in its conclusion, for seeing international relations in the periphery for what it is – that is, 'instead of comparing it to IR in the core – and defining peripheral IR in terms of what it is not' (Tickner and Wæver, 2009a: 339).

Addressing the problematique of this article directly, Wæver (2004) argued that securitization theory might have a greater potential for adoption by non-core scholars than some other critical approaches to security. This is because, he argued, very much like European civil societal activists of the 1980s, peripheral scholars may be distrustful of the ways in which 'security arguments are often (mis)used by rulers and elites for domestic purposes'. He wrote:

Especially in Latin America, there is a wide-spread consciousness about the ways security rhetoric has been used repressively in the past, and therefore a wariness about opening a door for this by helping to widen the concept of security (Wæver, 2004: 25; see also Tickner and Herz, forthcoming).

It follows from this quote, however, that what enhances securitization theory's potential for adoption by scholars outside Western Europe may be a matter of how it is utilized in a particular context.

The politics of studying security/securitization

When considering securitization theory's potential for travelling beyond its Western European origins, the literature has offered arguments that are built on an understanding of theory as a tool for making sense of the world. This is a rather narrow understanding of theory and its relationship to practice; it is also at odds with the notion of theory/practice on which securitization theory rests. From the perspective of Copenhagen School scholars, the security 'analyst' is also a security 'actor' insofar as he or she engages in securitization as a 'speech act' by identifying 'this' but not 'that' set of issues as 'security' concerns. That said, even as they concede the actual/potential 'actorness' of security analysts, Copenhagen School scholars express their preference for security analysts to limit their task to 'analysis'. Buzan et al. (1998: 33), for example, write that

although analysts unavoidably play a role in the construction (or deconstruction) of security issues ... it is not their primary task to determine whether some threat represents a 'real' security problem.

This is not because the Copenhagen School considers the political role of theories, theorists and theorizing as diminishing the 'pure' scholarly value of the overall exercise. Rather, their reservations have to do with defining a narrow role for the 'analyst' while remaining aware of and reflecting upon his/her 'actorness'.

From a critical perspective, the distinction to be made is not between theories that play a political role and other theories that (ostensibly) do not. Critical approaches distinguish between reflexive theories that recognize and reflect upon their own politics and those that do not (Neufeld, 1993). In what follows, the article draws upon the writings of three authors who show how reflexive readings can uncover the politics of scholarship. These writings are Ido Oren's (2003) reading of the 'Americanness' of political science in the USA, Michael C. Williams' (2009) reading of Kenneth Waltz's scholarship as making room for democratic foreign policy decisionmaking, and Craig N. Murphy's (2001, 2007) reading of the trajectory of international relations scholarship as exhibiting the 'democratic impulse' at work in world politics.

Ido Oren's (2003: 5) analysis of political science scholarship in the USA highlights how 'politics and scholarship constitute a single nexus' in the writings of US scholars, including authors as diverse as Woodrow Wilson, Gabriel Almond and Samuel P. Huntington. This is because these authors' writings reflect a distinctively US perspective on the study of politics – albeit not explicitly and/or intentionally. While some did take part in the national security projects of the US government, those who did not nonetheless reflected a US point of view in their writings even as their own image as scholars remained one of engaging in 'objective science'. As evidence, Oren points to the changes in 'enemy' portrayals in the writings of US scholars before and after a conflict with the USA (i.e. portrayals changed from benign to malign) and links up this finding to his analysis of the contemporary democratic peace literature:

The democratic peace proposition has a tautological quality. Political scientists' classification of countries as 'democracies' is as much a product of the (past) peacefulness of these democracies in relation to one another as the peacefulness of these countries is a product of their shared democratic character (Oren, 2003: 179).

While social scientists cannot help but be shaped by the historical context in which they write, concludes Oren, they can try to be reflexive about the ways in which concepts and theories are political products, as opposed to treating them as mere neutral tools.

Michael Williams' (2009) reading of Kenneth Waltz uncovers the politics/scholarship nexus by way of historicizing and contextualizing Waltz's writings, in particular his rather neglected study on foreign policy (Waltz, 1967). Waltz's studies, argues Williams, could be read as a contribution to the debates on the need for and the possibility of democratic foreign policy decisionmaking. The context Williams highlights is when the USA was habitually portrayed as being in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the non-democratic USSR owing to the presumed ineffectiveness of foreign policy decisionmaking in democracies. In view of this presumed weakness, some in the USA called for the setting aside of democratic concerns in the making of foreign policy decisions. Waltz's work, argues Williams, could be read as a response to the anti-democratic impulse embedded in such calls. A key contribution of Waltz, writes Williams (2009: 329–30), rests in his

providing a basis for the field's development as an apparently neutral social science by setting it apart from the highly controversial and deeply politicized debates concerning liberalism, democracy and the future of Western civilization.

Accordingly, Williams' reading of Waltz underscores the politics of a scholar whose very framework overlooks the need for reflexive analysis.

While Oren and Williams point to the politics of scholarship in the absence of an explicit political agenda, Murphy's account of international relations points to the discipline's origins as an instance of a similar democratic impulse, but with a specific agenda. Pre-World War I authors, argues Murphy (2001: 63), sought to make the study of world politics a scholarly discipline of its own in the attempt to bring an end to 'the capture of diplomatic and military policy by self-interested political minorities'. Murphy considers interwar-era realists, post-World War II behaviourism and critical international theory as instances of the same 'democratic impulse' at work. Notwithstanding their differences, the author argues, these writings concur that 'science, rather than the much less accountable policy expertise, is the road to truth about international affairs, in large part simply because science is democratic' (Murphy, 2001: 68).

To recap, of these three readings, only Murphy's looks at writings that recognize and seek to capitalize upon the politics of scholarship. Yet, all three sets of scholarship are embedded historically and politically – whether their authors are aware of this and/or reflect upon it or not. In each of these readings, scholarship does not merely help make sense of political practice but is also shaped by the political context of which it seeks to make sense.

It is on the basis of this reflexive understanding of the nexus between scholarship and politics that Wæver's above-quoted statement regarding securitization theory's potential to be adopted outside Western Europe should be interpreted. Wæver (2004) expects securitization theory to be embraced in Latin America *not only* because of his confidence that the theory can better account for security dynamics there *but also* because he expects Latin American scholars to reflect upon their 'actorness' even as they act as 'analysts'.

The next section looks at the uses of securitization theory in Turkey to highlight the workings of the nexus between scholarship and politics. The section begins by presenting a brief overview of Turkey's historico-political context during the late 1990s and 2000s. It is against this backdrop that the utilization of securitization theory by Turkish authors is analysed.

The politics of studying securitization in Turkey⁸

Turkey is one of those places where Wæver would expect securitization theory to do well by virtue of the ways in which the language of geopolitics and security has been utilized by elites to justify statist practices and limit civil society's room for manoeuvre. Since 1923, when the Republic of Turkey was established, four military interventions have taken place (in 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1997). Beginning from the mid-1960s onwards, civilian and military elites have joined in cautioning against further liberalization, arguing that 'only strong states can survive in Turkey's geography'.⁹ To spell out the obvious, state 'strength' has been defined in military-focused terms and not in terms of the quality of state–society relations.

Following the so-called postmodern coup of 1997, those seeking to liberalize Turkey increasingly turned to the European Union as an anchor for reform. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Turkey's accession to the European Union became the foremost issue around which debates on domestic and foreign policy were shaped. Whereas Turkey's pro-EU actors mobilized notions of democracy and prosperity in efforts to make the case for Turkey's integration within Europe, the sceptics invoked geopolitical and security 'truths' to make the case against (Bilgin, 2005, 2007b). Given the power of security-speak in shaping political processes, Turkey's pro-EU actors have found it difficult to push through the Turkish Parliament the changes demanded by EU conditionality.

The 1999 decision by the European Union to recognize Turkey as an EU candidate created a degree of momentum for Turkey's reformists. In the run-up to the December 2002 EU summit, significant steps were taken. The Justice and Development Party (JDP), which came to power in November 2002 by running on the EU ticket, kept up the reformist momentum. Although much remains to be done, a notable amount of progress has been achieved. Turkey's progress was acknowledged by the EU with the opening of accession negotiations in 2004. That said, not even the prospect of EU membership has enabled much-longed-for transformations in the complex conflicts in Cyprus and Turkey's southeast.

It is against the backdrop of the debates on Turkey's integration within Europe that the literature utilizing securitization theory to analyse Turkey's dynamics has evolved. Space does not allow going into the details of the arguments presented in the relevant texts. What is significant to highlight, however, is the two premises they share: (1) desecuritization is preferable to securitization, and (2) European integration/EU accession facilitates desecuritization. Furthermore, both premises are considered by the authors to be valid across time and space. Leaving aside the question of whether these premises could indeed be derived from Copenhagen School texts,¹⁰ what is important for the purposes of this article is how utilizing securitization theory allows explaining Turkey's problems as trials of securitization and recent developments in Turkey's domestic and international politics as desecuritization.

To start with the first premise ('desecuritization is preferable to securitization across time and space'), Kaliber (2005: 334) suggests the following:

I am convinced that every attempt to desecuritize ... will substantially contribute both to finding a just and viable solution to the dispute and to the democratic transformation of the political regime in Turkey.

Kaliber's article looks at the Cyprus conflict as an instance of the Turkish civilian–military bureaucratic elite's securitization of a particular issue. The author argues that it was through the securitization of the Cyprus conflict that civil society's room for manoeuvre in Turkey's politics has been restricted – by way of limiting the number of foreign policy and domestic politics issues on which civil societal actors can express their views. Writing against the background of the referendum on the Annan Plan (2004), the author argues that the civilian–military bureaucratic elite's portrayal of the conflict as a security issue has not only rendered the Cyprus problem intractable but also served to entrench the elite's central position in Turkey's political processes.

The premise that 'desecuritization is preferable to securitization across time and space' is also shared by Aras and Karakaya Polat's analysis of recent progress in Turkey's relations with its southeastern neighbours. The authors portray desecuritization as a process of 'emancipating' policymaking from 'ideational barriers' and allowing 'a substantial increase in the flexibility of foreign policy attitudes and the ability of foreign policymakers to maneuver in regional policy' (Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2008: 495). They identify two interrelated processes of desecuritization in Turkey: recent liberalization of domestic political processes, on the one hand, and improvements in relations with Syria and Iran, on the other.

Consequently, presenting securitization as the source of Turkey's ills and desecuritization as a panacea for those ills allows making a case for weakening the grip of the civilian–military elite over various issues in Turkey. Arguing explicitly against the inclusion of issues such as the Cyprus conflict, political Islam and/or the Kurdish dispute (Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2008; Kaliber, 2005; Kaliber and Tocci, 2010; Karakaya Polat, 2008) in the security agenda, the authors amplify the calls for marginalizing the role played by the civilian–military bureaucratic elite, whom they identify as Turkey's foremost securitizing actor. Whereas Kaliber and Tocci consider the desecuritization of Cyprus and the Kurdish dispute as crucial for opening up space for civil society to gain a voice both in domestic and in foreign policy spheres, Aras and Karakaya Polat look at the issue from the perspective of civil–military dynamics and consider desecuritization as empowering JDP politicians vis-à-vis the military.

A second premise shared by Turkish authors is that 'European integration/EU accession facilitates desecuritization across time and space'. Consider the following quote from Karakaya Polat (2008: 134):

The EU serves to desecuritize various issues since putative member states must focus on issues such as their integration into the economic and political games of Europe.

Recent steps taken in Turkey in terms of addressing various domestic and foreign policy issues are accordingly presented as 'results of the European Union accession process and concomitant steps toward democratization at the domestic level (Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2008: 496). Accordingly, JDP policymakers are portrayed as having made a choice in favour of desecuritization as 'proper' European actors would. To quote Aras and Karakaya Polat (2008: 511):

The remarkable softening of Turkey's foreign policy toward Syria and Iran since the beginning of this decade can best be explained by looking at changes at the domestic level, particularly with reference to the desecuritization process that has been taking place in Turkey. Among other things, this development is the result of the EU accession process and the associated democratization, transformation of the political landscape, and appropriation of EU norms and principles in regional politics.

Conflating desecuritization with Europeanization as such allows the authors to portray Turkey as a Europeanizing (if not yet European) country whose civil society (Kaliber, 2005; Kaliber and Tocci, 2010) and/or politicians (Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2008; Karakaya Polat, 2008) diagnose Turkey's problems as securitization and seek to address them through desecuritization as 'proper' European actors would.

To recapitulate, a reflexive reading of those texts that utilize securitization theory to look at Turkey's case reveal a double move: First, the texts *underscore the appropriateness of current policymaking*. Through offering securitization theory's reading of how the Cold War was brought to an end in Western Europe (securitization was the source of the ills of the European Union and desecuritization was the method through which they were addressed), these texts assure readers as to the appropriateness of the solutions adopted by Turkey's policymakers. Accordingly, controversial policies that (re)calibrate civil–military balances come across as entirely appropriate policies to be adopted by an EU candidate country. Second, viewed through the lens of securitization theory as such, Turkey comes across as being able to address its problems because it is following in the footsteps of EU actors. This second move *locates Turkey in Europe* by way of highlighting how it presently exhibits a 'proper European way of behaviour' at a time when sceptics at home and abroad question the likelihood of Turkey's accession to the European Union.

Conclusion

This article set out to explore how it is that Copenhagen School securitization theory has begun to acquire a presence in Turkey. Securitization theory is currently the most prevalent among the security theories utilized by Turkey's scholars (including realism). The article suggested an explanation that underscores the politics of studying security, whereby the Western European origins and focus of securitization theory emerge as a factor that enhances the theory's potential for being adopted by Turkey's authors. The broader point is that the presence of theories outside of their point of origin should also be considered in a reflexive manner, taking into account the political role of theories, theorists and theorizing.

In offering this argument, the article drew upon the literature on the nexus between scholarship and politics, thereby underscoring how a reflexive reading that situates scholarship in its historicopolitical context can highlight the politics of that scholarship, regardless of whether the authors themselves are aware of and/or open about such politics or not. Adopting a notion of theory as a form of political practice is also in tune with the Copenhagen School's own notion of theory, which expects analysts to reflect upon their own role as security 'actors' even as it seeks to limit the analyst's role to one of analysis alone.

The article's reading of the utilizations of securitization theory in Turkey by locating them in the context of Turkey's accession to the European Union revealed an unacknowledged and unrecognized politics to the literature. This politics underscores the appropriateness of Turkey's policies as following in the footsteps of European actors, and locates Turkey in Europe by way of highlighting how it diagnoses its problems and seeks to address them in 'the EU way'. Against the background of embedded statism in Turkey's political life, and given the difficult nature of the JDP's relations with the civilian–military bureaucratic elite, the significance of 'the securitization theory warranty' that the literature stamps on recent policymaking cannot be underestimated. For utilizing securitization theory as a Western European security theory in explaining Turkey's dynamics underscores the significance of what has been achieved and assures audiences that the future promises well. Somewhat paradoxically, the case Turkey's authors make for desecuritization has a depoliticizing effect insofar as the rationale for choosing desecuritization is justified on scholarly (and not political) grounds.

Finally, the account offered here has implications for our understanding of how some theories travel and acquire a presence outside of their point of origin. Seeking insight into how and why some concepts travel through studying the character of nations/regions or theories should be complemented with reflexive studies that look into the politics of studying security. As Edward W. Said (2000: 205) argued, it is ‘perfectly possible to judge misreadings (as they occur) as part of a historical transfer of ideas and theories from one setting to another’. When the securitization theory ‘turns up for use’ (Said, 2000: 211) in various settings, the specific historical and political context from where it emerged and to where it travelled could be treated as a research agenda on its own – that is, as opposed to being explained away as an instance of international relations’ ethnocentrism or as an outcome of peripheral international relations scholars’ socialization. The reason why scholars make a choice in favour of adopting one body of concepts and theories over another may have to do not only with the job description of a theory but also with the historico-political context. Scholars are shaped by their context as they seek to understand/explain a particular moment in time.

Notes

1. Theory-informed studies are understood as those that explicitly and systematically adopt a theoretical perspective to inquire into a case in an attempt to shed new light on the case and/or contribute to theory development.
2. I do not seek to counter criticisms regarding the Eurocentrism of Copenhagen School securitization theory. The point here is not to condone Eurocentric frameworks of analysis but to point to their ubiquity even among critical scholars; see Hobson (2007).
3. See, for example Balzacq (2008); Boswell (2007); c.a.s.e. collective (2006); Huysmans (2006); Matti (2006); Roe (2004, 2008). For exceptions, see Collins (2005); Curley and Wong (2008); Haacke and Williams (2008); Herington (2010); Vuori (2008); Wilkinson (2007); Wishnick (2010).
4. Distinguishing between scholars located in ‘the West’ and those in the ‘non-West’ has proven challenging given the characteristic mobility of academic life, whether for reasons of graduate studies, study leave or job opportunities. For the purposes of this article, decisions regarding the ‘placement’ of scholars were made on the basis of their current location checked against their location at the time of publication.
5. See, for example, Bilgin (forthcoming); Tickner and Herz (forthcoming).
6. Not only policy-analysis articles but also theory-informed studies focus mostly but not exclusively on Turkey’s international relations.
7. See Bilgin and Tanrisever (2009); see also Drulak et al. (2009); Tickner and Wæver (2009b).
8. The following focuses on four articles published in journals covered by Thomson Scientific’s Web of Science; see Table II.
9. The quote is from retired general Suat İlhan (2000), a public intellectual and Turkey’s foremost geopolitican. For a discussion, see Bilgin (2007b).
10. See, for example, Wæver (1995) on a qualifier, and Huysmans (2006) on European integration as a decisive factor in the securitization of migration.

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