The remote securitisation of Islam in the US post-9/11: euphemisation, metaphors and the "logic of expected consequences" in counter-radicalisation discourse

Clara Eroukhmanoff

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

ARTICLE

The remote securitisation of Islam in the US post-9/11: euphemisation, metaphors and the "logic of expected consequences" in counter-radicalisation discourse

Clara Eroukhmanoff*

Department of International Relations, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, United Kingdom

This article critically analyses the securitisation of Islam post-9/11 in the US and argues that this securitisation is a remote securitisation whereby the securitis*ers* – the security practitioners – are placed at a distance from the securitis*ees* – the Muslim community. This is achieved through two processes of security practice: linguistically by euphemising language and using metaphors, and analytically by understanding radicalisation through a rationalist perspective, which follows the "logic of expected consequences". This article further problematises the rationalist view of radicalisation in the counterterrorism sector in the US and concludes by introducing a Bourdieusan concept of relationality to critical counter-radicalisation studies.

Keywords: (counter)-radicalisation; securitisation; Islam; rationalism; logic of expected consequences; remoteness; euphemisation

Introduction

Within the context of the War on Terror and the discourse of Islamic terrorism, "Muslim communities" have been associated with a threatening Other (Mamdani 2002; Jackson 2007) and have been securitised in most "Western" societies. Whilst critical approaches to the securitisation of Islam are significantly documented at the academic level in the case of Europe,[1] they have been more silent in the American context and in American scholarship. This may be because securitisation theory, it has been argued, has limited effects beyond Western Europe (Peoples and Nick 2010) and remains within a "Westphalian straight jacket" (Wilkinson 2007), or perhaps because critical security approaches "have arguably gained momentum and density in Europe" (CASE collective 2006, 444). Yet, there is no obvious reason why this critical framework cannot work in other contexts than Western Europe; scholars have used securitisation theory in Turkey (Bilgin 2011), in regard to African policy in the US (Walker and Seegers 2012), and in relation to Canadian civil aviation security (Salter 2008), amongst others. Given that "self-radicalisation" is not limited to the European context and is considered a challenge in the US (Coolsaet 2011b, 2), this provides an engaging research ground for critical perspectives.

Neumann and Kleinmann (2013, 360) note that "radicalisation is one of the great buzzwords of our time." Yet, radicalisation research is too often grounded in assumptions and intuitions (Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010, 889), and is poorly understood (Borum

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*Email: Ce25@st-andrews.ac.uk

2011, 15). According to Githens-Mazer and Lambert (2010, 889–890), the "conventional wisdom" of radicalisation can be summarised as

> a sense of Islamic difference (variously explained in terms of a lack of integration, a lack of secularism, the existential threat posed by Islam to the West, or external Islamic influences from Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East) among Muslim communities has the dangerous potential to mutate issues of differing identities into support for violent "Islamo-fascism."

Problematically, the term "radicalisation" is viewed as a "container concept" where virtually all disparate signs of radical beliefs can be put into a box labelled "symbols of radicalisation" (Coolsaet 2011a, 261). The traditional approaches[2] to radicalisation bring to the fore the deficiencies of this discourse with empirical testing, by showing that cultural differences and marginalisation have not led Muslim individuals to turn to terrorism, for example (Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010). In relation to an inaccurate portrayal of empirical reality, this literature thus demonstrates the many failures of the "conventional wisdom." Instead, for critical approaches, the concept of "radicalisation" is an "essentially contested concept" (ECC)[3] (Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 6). Critical approaches focus on making "strange" the very idea of radicalisation (De Goede and Simon 2013, 316). Indeed, critical (counter)-radicalisation studies do not seek to know whether radicalisation "really" exists (Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 1). Rather, they examine "*how* the 'radicalisation' discourse is deployed as a technique of governance, one that operates through frames of the risky and the unknown" (Heath-Kelly 2013, 396; original emphasis).

By building on the existing critical (counter)-radicalisation literature, the aim of this article is to critique the concept of radicalisation and its response in the US. By analysing reports on counter-radicalisation in the field of counterterrorism in the US at the institutional level and at the everyday level, I seek to reveal the role of euphemisation, metaphors and the "logic of expected consequences" in the practices of counter-radicalisation, through a Bourdieusan and relationality lens. Following rational choice theory, a consequential frame views the world as consisting of rational actors negotiating their preferences and interests and where individual actions can be fully "explained" by identifying consequential reasons for them (March and Olsen 1998, 949–950). This article will show how this logic conflates and transforms cognitive radicalised subjects into behavioural terrorists.[4] The empirical research is supplemented by an account of interviews conducted in the cities of New York and Washington, DC, in early 2013 with two civil liberty organisations, Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM) and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR); two former representatives of the New York Police Department (NYPD) Counterterrorism Office and Intelligence Bureau;[5] Leonard Levitt, a police reporter; and John Cohen, the lead on the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programme at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

My concern here is that counter-radicalisation is constructed as "rational," within a consequential framework. Based on this logic, radicalisation is a process that is seen as *independent* of the interactions of the security sector with the Muslim community. In other words, the securitisers (or the observers) – the security sector in the US – are placed *remotely* from the securitisees (or the observed) – the Muslim community. To demonstrate this argument, this study first unpacks the idea of "remote securitisation" and shows how this is achieved through the use of metaphors, euphemisation and the logic of consequences. Building on the literature on the discourse of evil and cruelty (Baumeister 2001), I then demonstrate the impact of placing the Muslim community "at a distance." The

article concludes by advancing the concept of relationality (Bourdieu 1998, [1980] 1992) in critical counter-radicalisation studies.

Remote securitisation: rational and distant securitising practices

The securitisation of Islam and the construction of the secular subject rest on a dual logic of normalisation and exception (Mavelli 2013, 161). The (Schmittian) view of exceptional politics inherent in the Copenhagen School's theory has been criticised by a wide array of scholars (Huysmans 2011; Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Rens 2008; Guillaume 2011; Bigo 2006; Brasset and Vaughan-Williams 2012), which has created space for the reinterpretation of securitisation as a sociological process (Balzacq 2011). This article seeks to understand how Islam is securitised in the US at the local level, with everyday interventions conducted by the police (here the NYPD), and at the exceptional level, with the discursive strategies of the political elite and governmental institutions such as the DHS. Whilst we can observe a normalisation of security practices, counter-radicalisation discourse may also reflect remoteness, which constitutes a gap, or distance, between the security sector and the Muslim community. This is not to say that Islam is not securitised by other processes such as secularism, Orientalism or the association of Islam with terrorism,[6] amongst others. Rather, I suggest that euphemisations, the use of metaphors and a consequential framework, the focus of this article, are essential features of the remote securitisation of Islam.

The notion of "remote securitisation" speaks to Croft's (2012, 91) "range of Otherness." Croft's post-Copenhagen approach to securitisation is committed to understanding the performatives and performances of diverse identity formations. Croft (2012, 89) argues that "[s]o far, conceptions of Otherness that affect work on securitisation, and hence on ontological security,[7] seem to be limited to the category of the Radical Other." There are, however, other categories of Otherness that securitisations produce, from "Temporal Other," to "Abject Other," to "Oriental Other," or "Connected Other," amongst others (Croft 2012, 91). In effect, there are always "degrees of difference and Otherness" (Hansen 2006, 37).

What this article hopes to show is that this securitisation produces a Remote Other, not only in the spatial or temporal sense, but as ontologically distant beings, as Others that are *unconnected* (ontologically again) to the Self. Whilst identity is always relationally constituted (Hansen 2006, 37), the security sector in the US (re)affirms identity in objective and unitary terms. It is *as if* "they" (radicalised Muslims) could be observable, defined and analysed for what they "really" are. The construction of a Remote Other is necessary for Islam to be securitised. In other words, the (re)production of a Remote Other in counter-radicalisation discourse permits certain securitising measures, such as sting operations, as will be demonstrated later in this article. Since Croft's post-Copenhagen approach to securitisation is concerned with multiple identity constructions, the Remote Other is neither opposed nor exclusive to the Oriental and/or Abject Other, which this securitisation also produces.

Whilst distance and rationalisation may be general features of securitisation,[8] they are usually implicit in the literature. Moreover, distance is usually referred to in geographic terms and rationalisation is often linked to the idea of the Weberian state. For example, Bigo and Tsoukala (2008, 5) contend that everyday security now reflects "Weberian roots of rationalisation." In effect, the securitisation of Islam reflects what Huysmans (2011) has called "little security nothings," mundane and banal acts of securitisation, which depoliticises security. But this article will observe that the rationalism taking place in this remote

securitisation differs from the latter in that it is concerned with a specific reasoning, the logic of expected consequences, following the positivist rational choice theory.

Furthermore, Bigo (2008, 17; emphasis added) argues that policing activities such as surveillance "now take place at a *distance*, beyond national borders." Again, Bigo (2008, 21; emphasis added) writes that one type of policing is conducted by highly qualified people and is "characterized by discretion and *distance*" and that the "management of unease[9] [...] takes place at a *distance*" (Bigo 2008, 27; emphasis added). Here, Bigo is concerned with a *geographical* distancing between the "security experts" and what is threatening. Although spatial distancing is an important aspect of securitisations, the distance discussed here relates more to an ontological distance which is enacted through euphemisation, the use of metaphors and the logic of expected consequences in the context of counter-radicalisation. Hence, the problem is not whether the security sector is in "close contact" with the Muslim community, but rather that their very *beings* are viewed as *independent* and *unconnected* to Muslim beings. Indeed, interactions between security experts and the Muslim community take place on a daily basis at airports, custom borders and when the police conduct their operations. However, the securitising actors can be *both*, in proximity to *and* remote from the Muslim community, that is, if "remoteness" is defined ontologically, not geographically. The securitisation of Islam is thus distinct from other securitisations in that it is by constructing a Remote Other that counter-radicalisation measures are made possible.

Remoteness occurs at two levels of security practice: at the linguistic level when security practitioners "describe" the process of radicalisation, and at the analytical level of understanding "the threat." A deeper look at the counter-radicalisation and the "home-grown threat" reports in the federal and local branches of security can perhaps make this argument apparent. Policies emanating from federal institutions are prudent in the language they use. They reflect the idea that care must be taken in the choice of words. Indeed, the DHS (Cohen, interview for fieldwork, 2013) had the view that referring too often to "*Islamic* extremism" was actually alienating the very community they were trying to form a partnership with. According to Cohen (interview for fieldwork, 2013), the lead on the CVE Programme at the DHS, "words are very important and you have to be precise in how to use them."

In *Language and Symbolic Power*, the sociologist Bourdieu (2001, 70) writes that the "langue légitime" (legitimate language) is not only a grammatical competence of speakers but it is also associated with the lingua of the State (l'Etat), institutionalised through time and *recognised as* the official language. The capacity to produce appropriate speeches depends therefore on the position of the speaker and of his or her skills in being precise with words. At times, speeches need to be adjusted to the social context they are placed in, by considering the linguistic market of their production, just as parents modify their intonation and language when speaking to children (Thompson 2001, 34). This is what Bourdieu calls a "euphemisation of language," a speech strategy shaping utterances according to their field, and which tend to make sure that they produce symbolic profit, respective of the social position of the speaker (Bourdieu 2001, 343–344). This grammatical competence is the result of a linguistic habitus. Hanks (2005, 76) observes that "to euphemise one speech, consciously or not, is to self-regulate: the individual is fitted ever more closely to his or her position in the field." The higher the position of the speaker in the field, the higher the chances of euphemisation, for the symbolic power to lose or gain may be higher than for a speaker at the bottom of the hierarchy. Speech-acts only receive their "value" in relation to the linguistic market (or field) they are spoken from (Bourdieu

2001, 100). Therefore, it would make sense for the "security experts" (Bigo 2008) at the exceptional level to euphemise their speech.

Euphemisms in national reports on (counter)-radicalisation tend to take the form of a sanitised vocabulary and a language never "slipping" into inappropriate sentences, words, adjectives or nouns. This does not mean that what they say contains no underlying assumptions; on the contrary, the discourse of Islamic terrorism is loaded with assumptions about the violence inherent in Islam (Jackson 2007). However, to gain symbolic power, utterances are euphemised. If security practitioners in this field securitise the Muslim community directly by using the grammar of security and existential threat, as originally defined by the Copenhagen School (Buzan, Wæver, and De Wilde. 1998, 33), this may cause a loss of symbolic power. With euphemisms, the security experts and political leaders can securitise without *directly* securitising, in the conventional Copenhagen School sense.

In effect, a distinction between the "extremist fringe" of radical Muslims who "hijack" Islam and the "peaceful moderates" is carefully placed in political discourse at this level. Bosco (2014, 4) contends that post-9/11, the Western state discourse on religion focused on a narrative of a war *within* Islam between those who distort the peaceful essence of Islam and the "moderates," rather than a conflict between Islam and the West. For example, G.W. Bush (20 September 2001; emphasis added) declared that "[t]he terrorists practise a *fringe* form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics, a *fringe* movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam," and that "those who commit evil in the name of Allah *blaspheme* the name of Allah." Fierke (2007, 88) argues that apart from Bush's misguided reference to a "crusade," the US address explicitly avoided reference to the Islamic identity of the attackers and a discourse of a clash with Islam. Recently, Obama (2013; emphasis added) reiterated that "the United States is *not* at war with Islam." Instead, he stated that "we are at war with people who have *perverted* Islam" (Obama 2015; emphasis added). The purpose of this discursive strategy is perhaps to dismantle the religious character of the terrorists' political agenda in order to erase the possibility of a religious war (Jackson 2005, 64). However, securitising speech acts that dehumanise "terrorists" are not lacking.[10] Yet, these speeches often make terrorists "traitors" of their own faith (Jackson 2005, 64) and are thus not directed at the Muslim community as a whole.

Euphemisms help speakers remove themselves from the reality of the securitising work. In other words, without "saying the words," Islam is securitised. What is distinct in this securitisation, therefore, is the ability of speakers at the exceptional level to avoid the "grammar of existential threat" in regard to the Muslim population as a whole, but to speak in euphemisms. By euphemising speech, speakers not only construct a Remote Other but also reaffirm their own identity as unconnected and distant from "them," the Radicalised Others.

In her analysis of American defence intellectuals, Cohn (1987, 688) observed that the specialized or "technostrategic" language the strategists used played a central role in removing them from a reality of destruction, in this case the advent of nuclear war. In effect, for Cohn (1987, 690):

> In this early stage, I was gripped by the extraordinary language used to discuss nuclear war. What hit me first was the elaborate use of abstraction and euphemism, of words so bland that they never forced the speaker or enabled the listener to touch the realities of nuclear holocaust that lay behind the words.

Nuclear wars and (counter)-radicalisation are not the same phenomena, but the "technos-trategic" language used at the DHS may have the same function as in Cohn's defence world. When analysing the "homegrown threat," the vocabulary often relies on a bureau-cratic and clean language that is often removed from the daily experiences of the security practitioners on the ground and from the daily experiences of the individuals being securitised. For an outsider looking in, it is very difficult to grasp what constitutes counterterrorism and what is done to counter-radicalisation.

The underlying principle for countering extremism in the US rests on the 2011 Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Extremism in the United States (US Government 2011, 2), which focuses on three core areas of activity:

> (1) enhancing engagement with and support to local communities that may be targeted by violent extremists; (2) building government and law enforcement expertise for preventing violent extremism; and (3) countering violent extremist propaganda while promoting our ideals.

To do this, the DHS highlights the need for the creation of "fusion centres," and "partner-ships" with local communities, in order to "bring awareness" about the process of radicalisation. The goal is to "share information" and to prepare the population to be "resilient." The meaning of these guidelines for the people on the ground and for the recipients of that security narrative, however, may be quite puzzling. Viewed as a separate reality, the security experts can detach themselves from "anything emotional, concrete, particular or having to do with the vulnerability of human lives" (Fierke 2015, 82).

In contrast to federal agencies who publish reports every year about the various ways to make the US "safe," the NYPD is not particularly concerned about the writing up of policies on counter-radicalisation; official reports are rare. The NYPD is also less vigilant towards their language, as a result of the symbolic power they hold relatively to the institutional level. Their speech acts are thus less euphemised. One instance of official counter-radicalisation policy by the NYPD was formulated in 2007 by Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, two senior intelligence analysts at the NYPD, in "Radicalization in the West: the homegrown threat". This report reveals an extensive use of metaphors. According to Chilton (1996, 71), the application of metaphors in policy documents plays two essential roles, one cognitive and one interactive. In its cognitive function, metaphors work as an apparatus facilitating the comprehension of new, complex or *remote* situations. In its interactive capacity, metaphors help in "*avoiding direct reference*, of creating common ground, or of maintaining contextual continuity and cohesion" (Chilton 1996, 71; emphasis added). By avoiding direct reference to what is perceived as a remote process, the use of metaphors creates a distant, Remote Other.

According to the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 22), "enclaves of ethnic populations that are largely Muslim often serve as ideological sanctuaries for the *seeds* of radical thought," and "middle class families and students appear to provide the *most fertile ground of the seeds* of radicalisation." The metaphors used by the NYPD perhaps can be identified as "ontological metaphors," that is, "ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., as entities and substances" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 25), but they also work outside of our conventional conceptual system, as creative forces (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 139). In the quote above, the metaphor uses the idea of radicalisation as an organism, here as a growing seed. Following Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 141), the metaphor of the bad seed highlights certain features of radicalisation whilst silencing others. The metaphor gives radicalisation a new meaning. The latter is one unfortunately

associated with a spreading danger to be avoided or rooted out. Here, a Remote and Radical Other are constructed. Problematically, the metaphor has a considerable power in making "all Muslims" securitised, because metaphors can "sanction actions, justify inferences, and help us set goals" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 142). Hence, the metaphor of the bad seed functions as a legitimising force to "contain its growth."

Since 2001 in New York, the NYPD has mapped out and monitored the daily life of American Muslims, sometimes outside of the NYPD's jurisdiction (Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition, The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund and Project 2012, 4). Although an illegal practice, according to the NYPD Counterterrorism Office (Interviewee 2, interview for fieldwork, 2013), "the entire police department is a listening department." Most importantly, the concept of radicalisation interpreted as a growing bad seed dehumanises the individuals in the process of radicalisation and the individuals that are already "radicalised." Since the radicalised subjects are seen as less than human, the securitisers are placed not only separately, but above. With the use of metaphors, the security practitioners place the Muslim community and their inherent potential for "growing" at a distance, where their "growth" is independent of the practices of the security sector or with the order they are living in.

The remote securitisation of Islam occurs through a second process, that is, by analysing radicalisation with a rationalist approach. As early as 2005/2006, the US government was "aware" of the "new trend" of homegrown terrorism by radicalised individuals who had been educated in the US (Cohen, interview for fieldwork, 2013). Consequently, the US counterterrorism strategy not only relied on intercepting threats abroad but had to prepare for attacks planned by US residents (Cohen, interview for fieldwork, 2013). Without leaving the international terrorism threat aside, the federal branches "adapted" their counterterrorist practices to the new "homegrown" terrorist threat. This meant that the 4D strategy (US Government 2003, 15) previously centred around understanding Islamist transnational networks abroad had to pay attention to Islamic terrorist networks on US territory, which brought the intelligence community to the forefront of operations (Cohen, interview for fieldwork, 2013). The intelligence community had the belief that counterterrorism efforts should concentrate on understanding thoroughly the process of radicalisation as it represented an unknown threat. The process of radicalisation, according to the FBI (Hunter and Heinke 2011), is "the process by which individuals come to believe their engagement in or facilitation of nonstate violence to achieve social and political change is necessary and justified." Radicalised terrorists however start their lives as "unremarkable" citizens but may be "pre-wired" to carry out violence on the basis of radical beliefs of Jihad (Silber and Bhatt 2007; Cohen, interview for fieldwork, 2013). Therefore, the task of the government is to understand the *indicators and behaviours* of radicalised Muslims before potential attacks (Bjelopera 2014). With the help of these indicators and behaviours, the forces on the ground must intervene before the criminal/terrorist act occurs.

In advancing countering strategies the security practitioners follow a rationalist model, or in March and Olsen's (1998, 949) famous words, the "logic of expected consequences." March and Olsen (1998) explore international political orders and focus on understanding their formation, durability and/or possible changes. They propose an institutional approach to political orders, one that emphasises the role of institutions in understanding the actions of human beings in society (March and Olsen 1998, 948). Whilst the authors focus on international political orders, this article seeks to apply their findings to the ways counter-radicalisation discourse is constructed. Here, the logic of expected consequences,

often associated with rational choice theory, and one out of the two logics discussed by March and Olsen,[11] needs closer examination.

Following rational choice theory, a consequential frame views the world as consisting of rational actors negotiating their preferences and interests and where individual actions can be fully "explained" by identifying consequential reasons for them (March and Olsen 1998, 949–950). According to Fearon and Wendt (2002, 54), rationalism is about a pattern of action that can be explained, a set of actors taking steps to fulfil their motivations and a sequence of choices for the actors in question. Further, rationalism makes an argument about the actors' preferences under various outcomes and shows the circumstances for which that pattern of actions would arise if the actors were acting rationally (Fearon and Wendt 2002, 54).

In "Radicalization in the West: the homegrown threat", the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007) follows this logic by looking for the consequential reasons of radicalisation and by interpreting the outcomes expected from radicalisation. From a comparative analysis of five different homegrown terrorist groups/plots around the world, the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 15) has "been able to identify common pathways and characteristics among these otherwise different groups and plots." The NYPD can thus shape the "archetype" of what a radicalised terrorist appears to be, to like and to eat. In addition, according to the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 82; emphasis added), radicalisation in the West "is a phenomenon that occurs *because* the individual is looking for an identity and a cause and unfortunately, often finds them in the extremist Islam." Radicalisation is thus "fully explained": the search for an identity and a cause change Muslim subjects' interests and preferences in the world, and lead them to the final stage of radicalisation.

Moreover, the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 6) finds a common pattern of actions: pre-radicalisation, self-identification, indoctrination and Jihadization. Although the intelligence officers state that individuals may abandon the process at different points, if an individual has passed through the four stages, it is likely that they will be involved in committing a terrorist act (outcome of the pattern of actions) (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 6). Thus, the consequence of passing these four stages is a terrorist act. As a result of these rationalist predictions, individuals must be arrested before this occurs.

However, the model of counter-radicalisation in the US acts on what Neumann (2013) has called "behavioural radicalisation," a focus on the behaviours and the violent action *departing from* extremist beliefs, as opposed to "cognitive radicalisation" which acts on the belief/ideology itself. This means that legally, the police are not able to interfere at the level of individuals' radical beliefs but only on the individual's intention to commit an illegal crime (Neumann 2013, 885). Theoretically therefore, the American model intervenes on the question of *how* extremists' beliefs transform individuals into terrorists, rather than on the question of *why* individuals hold these beliefs, which is more reflective of the European model.[12] The problem with the European approach is that it puts severe limits on free speech (Neumann 2013, 892) when being a radical is not a crime, nor it is necessarily negative (Coolsaet 2011a, 260; Fraihi 2011, 209; Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 5). In effect, it can often be legitimate.[13]

Yet, as Neumann (2013, 891) observes, in the American case, "the potential risk involved in allowing cognitively radicalised people to roam free, leaves law enforcement with no choice but to 'create' illegal behaviours where none had previously existed." In the face of threats from "sleeper cells," the FBI and the NYPD have mounted many "sting operations" where an undercover officer or an informant enters what is perceived as a suspicious community to "listen" and to "test" people to see if they will carry out their intention (Interviewee 1, interview for fieldwork, 2013). For the NYPD Intelligence

Bureau (Interviewee 1, interview for fieldwork, 2013), "you just watch, watch, watch and watch, and wait until you believe that this individual will cross the line." Once it is believed that the actors have chosen a certain pathway, the police intervene with sting operations and give the individuals the resources to carry out the attack (Interviewee 1, interview for fieldwork, 2013).

The unpredictability of terrorist attacks makes uncertainty a pervasive and essential feature of the post-9/11 environment (Mythen and Walklate 2008, 225). Drawing on Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society* (1992), approaches to the technologies of risk[14] have highlighted how the notion of "risk" increasingly deals with premediating what may happen next (De Goede 2008, 158). According to Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Rens (2008, 148),

> [r]isk refers to the probability of an undesirable event happening in the future. As an attempt to tame uncertainty and contingency, our general understanding of risks builds on the premise that they can be classified, quantified and to some extent predicted.

In this context, security practitioners should therefore anticipate such scenarios and pre-emptively arrest "dangerous" individuals. As Martin (2014) points out in the case of the UK's Prevent Strategy, these pre-emptive stances represent an ambition to tame an unknowable future by governing the present.

One highly publicised sting operation and "foiled plot" occurred in 2004 when two individuals, Shahawar Matin Siraj and James Elshafay, were arrested for conspiring to place explosives at the 34th Street Subway station prior to the start of the Republican National Convention nearby Madison Square Garden. According to the NYPD (2014), "[i]n recorded conversations, Siraj expressed the desire to bomb bridges and subway stations, and cited misdeeds by American forces in Iraq as a motivating factor." Siraj and Elshafay were part of the NYPD's illegal "watch list," which contains private information about individuals' family history such as the schools attended, their immigration details, an international travel history, the locations of their religious centre and even details about their Halal butchers (Levitt 2013, personal communication). Siraj and Elshafay were thus identified as "cognitively radicalised" individuals by the police and were on the pathway to reach the last stages of radicalisation. According to Leonard Levitt (2013), the well-known facts that Siraj had an "IQ of 78" and that Elshafay was "depressive and schizophrenic" were omitted from the "watch-list" details. Moreover, the trial revealed that an informant had been paid $100,000 by the police to gain Siraj's and Elshafay's trust to encourage the plot (Levitt 2013). "Create and capture" – "creating a conversation about Jihad and terrorism, then capturing the response to send to the NYPD," for which informants earned $1000 every month (Goldman and Apuzzo 2012) – has indeed often led to entrapment cases which were leaked by the Associated Press (2011) in the course of 2011. Informants such as Mr Rahman recalls the police asking him to "pretend to be one of them" and that this was "street theater" (Goldman and Apuzzo 2012).

One of the consequences of the behavioural radicalisation model has thus led to damning accusations of the FBI and the NYPD as "manufacturers" of illegality by the American Civil Liberties Union (Neumann 2013, 890). For Ahmed (interview for fieldwork, 2013), the legal and policy director of the organisation Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), a South Asian organisation fighting against illegal police practice, "entrapment" cases have been created in order to "produce a sense of hysteria," legitimising and funding surveillance itself.

The problem with the logic of expected consequences is that it tends to ignore problems of exogenous uncertainties (Fearon and Wendt 2002, 54; March and Olsen

1998, 950), thereby erasing the possibility of contingency and change. This is because the behaviour, that is, the rational one, is deduced when one assumes to know the desires of individuals (their preferences) and their beliefs about how to realise them (Guzzini 2000, 163). Thus, once the security practitioners (assume to) know the desires of radicalised Muslims and (assume to) understand how these desires can be realised, the security practitioners have thus the ability, and duty, to predict the behaviour of radicalised Muslims (following rational choice). Problematically, the consequence of certain outcomes becomes inevitable. Contingency is removed from the map of possibilities. As Levitt (2013, personal communication) and Ahmed (interview for fieldwork, 2013) ask, what would happen if the NYPD did not interfere? What if the police did not give the resources to carry out attacks? Just as in neorealist theory, which follows the logic of consequences, anarchy causes states to act in a self-help system, a common pathway causes second- and third-generation Muslim immigrants to radicalise and plan terrorist attacks, according to this view.

March and Olsen (1998, 950) assert that "from this perspective, history is seen as the consequence of the interaction of wilful actors and is fully understood when it is related to expectations of its consequences and to the interests (preferences) and resources of the actor." Therefore, terrorist acts by radicalised individuals who have followed a common trajectory become *inevitable*, just as war becomes inevitable under conditions of anarchy, following the consequential logic. So whilst the analysis of radicalisation may be termed "rational," the only "solution" for security experts using this logic is to monitor "suspicious" individuals and create illegality where none had previously existed. The consequential framework makes cognitively radicalised subjects into behavioural terrorists leaving no possibilities for contingency for subjects who hold radical beliefs but do not aspire to violent political action. Where Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis (2015, 1) argue that the discursive apparatus of the radicalisation discourse designates that radicalisation always precedes violence, I contend here that the rationalist framework makes violence an *expected consequence* of radicalisation.

The second problem with this logic, as March and Olsen (1998, 950; emphasis added) observe, is that it "simplif[ies] problems of preference complexity and endogeneity by seeing politics as decomposing complex systems into relatively *autonomous* subsystems." According to rational choice theory, social outcomes are the result of the decisions by *unitary* actors (Lynn-Jones 2000, x). Indeed, for the NYPD (Silber and Bhatt 2007, 85), the individuals who follow radicalisation "act autonomously." As rationalism entails an individualist theory of action (Guzzini 2000, 162), actors are viewed as autonomous agents in the world, and their practices are thus *disconnected* from each other. Since Muslim individuals "choose on their own" to radicalise, their choice is *separate* from the choices and the actions of people around them, including the police. The choices of the Muslim community are thus *remote* from the choices of the NYPD.

In addition, this model assumes that "the threat" can be observed un-reflexively by describing it for what it "really is." In this sense, the US response to the threat does not change the nature or the practices of the threat; the threat (or the "cell") is either eliminated or active. In other words, the identity, the methods and the goals of the threat are fixed regardless of how the security experts interact with "it." It is as if "the threat" was an objectifiable (and rational) entity that was free of constraints or influences, ready to be eliminated. Analysing radicalisation through the logic of consequences is therefore deeply problematic as it shapes the securitisation of Islam as rational.

Impact of the remote securitisation of Islam

The disconnected outlook to practices and a unitary view of human life is fundamentally linked to a "modern" conception of actors in the social world. This perspective shares the same ontology and logic with the modern liberal assumption of the autonomous self that sees actors as free individuals and proprietor of their own decisions (Lebow 2005, 292). As Lebow (2005, 293) contends, "[a]s products of this ideology, we tend to take for granted that our desires, feelings and choices are spontaneous and self-generated, but there is good reason to believe that they are in large part socially constituted." The choices of individuals only exist as part of a broader network incorporating other individuals' choices. The modern rationalist framework of analysis is difficult as it allows the security experts to create a separation between themselves and the securitisees, instead of placing themselves *in relation* to them. According to this view, identity can be observable and analysed objectively.

However, the Self is always articulated through a process of differentiation with the Other (whether it is negatively or positively) and is thus always constituted relationally (Hansen 2006, 44). In this discursive identity formation, the (counter-)radicalisation discourse produces multiple identity constructions, one of which is a Remote Other, essential in separating "our practices" from "their practices." Croft (2012, 87) contends that the more we malign the Other, the more secure our identity feels and is expressed. By constructing a Remote Other, the securitisation of Islam places the identity of "radicalised" Muslims remotely from "Western" identity where the latter becomes exempt from any political reflections. Yet, to view the world in terms of individual choices is misunderstanding the role of agents, contends Taylor (1993, 52), as "human action happens only insofar as the agent understands and constitutes him or herself as an integral part of 'we.' " In other words, the "I" only exists insofar as there is a "we." Hence, to identify choices and practices as autonomous and unrelated to other practices is to forget that human actions are the product of interactions *between* people. By putting the Muslim community and radicalised subjects at a distance, "their" choices become unimaginable.

There is a sense, to a certain extent, that the security experts "could never do that." When situations are viewed from a high and absolutist moral stance – that is "this is just wrong" – the possibility of viewing the Other in other ways than abject becomes difficult (Cameron 2012, 11). As Baumeister (2001, ix) contends, "the hardest part of understanding the nature of evil is to first recognize that you or I *could*, under certain circumstances, commit many of the acts that the world has come to regard as evil." Or, in the Arendtian view, ordinary people can commit evil acts (Arendt 1963). What is essential is to understand the conditions under which violence becomes possible, and viewing actors and their practices as disconnected from each other may be one of these.

The rational ordering of individuals rests on difficult ontological assumptions about the existence of a collective and fixed identity. Moreover, the metaphor of the bad seed is close to the idea of the rationally designed society, the "*causa finalis* of the modern state," that Bauman (1991, 20) has so famously written about. The image of the modern "gardening" state as a social engineering project in which society can be "designed" and cultivated was a necessary condition for the Holocaust (Bauman 1989, 13). Gardening and medical imageries have existed in different contexts to justify certain policies in the past. As part of human beings' everyday lives, the use of metaphor of the bad seed to define radicalisation has the power to dehumanise the Muslim community, who may be "pre-wired" to radicalisation. Cognitive radicalisation is thus conflated and transformed

into behavioural terrorism, which will be prevented by sting operations. Radical thinking is in the end, illegal.

Dehumanisation does not solely arise under circumstances of violent conflict but is a phenomenon of everyday life; it has been analysed in relation to ethnicity and race, to gender and pornography and to technology (Haslam 2006). Haslam (2006, 256) distinguishes two senses of humanness that dehumanisation affects: the "uniquely human (UH)" characteristics which mark the separation between animals and humans, and the human characteristics exclusively relating to "human nature (HN)" in a non-comparative sense. Thus, there are two distinct forms of dehumanisation. One sees individuals as animal-like; this is the "animalist" dehumanisation. The other one denies "emotionality, warmth, cognitive openness and individual agency," and is called "mechanistic" dehumanisation, relating to automata (Haslam 2006, 258). In other words, individuals are either represented as unrefined animals or as soulless machines. Under the logic of expected consequences, radical Muslims become related to machines with only one possible trajectory, the act of terrorism.

The euphemisation and sanitisation of language in policy reports at the exceptional level allow the securitisers to describe a reality that is abstract and remote. "Not naming" or speaking in euphemism enabled the numbing of violence in Auschwitz by "rendering murder nonmurderous" (Lifton 1986, 445). In effect, Arendt (1963, 85) notes that all correspondence between the officials of the Nazi regime was subject to rigid "language rules" and that it is rare to find documents with words such as "killing" or "extermination." Thus, aside from the word *Einsatzgruppen*, the words describing killing were "final solution," "evacuation" and "special treatment" (Arendt 1963, 85). The euphemisation of language, as a linguistic practice, puts the securitisees "at a distance" in reality. Examining how Nazi doctors became perpetrators of violence, Lifton (1986, 15) observed that the doctors separated themselves from their victims, which alleviated their psychological problems and enabled them to move from being healers to murderers.

This is not to suggest that the two contexts are the same. Rather, the point is to understand the circumstances by which individuals commit acts of violence, a point that has been made most explicit in relation to the extreme case of the Holocaust (Arendt 1963; Baumeister 2001; Lifton 1986). Acts of violence pertain as much to acts of terrorism as well as to acts of violence directed against the Muslim community. Remote securitisations which see security practices and identity as disconnected from the practices and identity of the securitisees can feed the narrative of evil and go a long way in achieving human insecurity.

Introducing a relationality approach to critical counter-radicalisation studies

The previous sections explained the impact of the remote securitisation of Islam and how this is achieved. I contend in what follows that whilst counter-radicalisation may be termed "rational," this view is severely limited if we conceive actors in the field *in relation* to one other. To question the very idea of "radicalisation," I contend that we must come to terms with the concept of *relationality*, which sees practice as ontologically relational. Seeing the field of practice relationally renders the concept of radicalisation not only unwarranted, but it also reveals its problematic assumptions. In the same light as critical (counter)-radicalisation studies, I do not wish to verify through empirical testing whether radicalised Muslims are "really" threatening "Western subjects." This would be asking the wrong question (Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 1). My intent here

is somewhat different in that I hope to make an argument that delegitimises the assumptions through which "counter-radicalisation" is made possible. These assumptions relate to the objectivist viewpoint of practice and identity that the radicalisation discourse is grounded on. Here, the identities are exogenously given and practices are objectively analysed.

According to Bourdieu (1998, vii), the logic of practice is one that accords primacy to the *relations* of actors in the world. In summary, the domain of practice is concerned with relations *between* agents and "its cornerstone is a two-way relationship between objective structures (those of social fields) and incorporated structures (those of habitus)" (Bourdieu 1998, vii). As such, it is opposed to the narrow rationalist account of practices that reduce agents to autonomous individuals fully conscious of their motivations, and which considers irrational anything that is not explicitly posed by reasons (Bourdieu 1998, viii). The problem with the disconnected view of practices held by the counterterrorism field is that radicalisation becomes the product of self-maximising actors. According to this model, actors are autonomous and political outcomes are the product of individual choices. This creates a distance between the observer (security field) and the observed (Muslim community), as if the Muslim communities could be described objectively for what "they really are" without examining the relation of the observer to his object. This objectivist viewpoint constitutes the social world as a spectacle (theatrical representation) where practices are seen as no-more than actors performing roles and acting out on their motivations (Bourdieu [1980] 1992, 52). The securitisers can thus describe the process of radicalisation and analyse the securitisees from an elevated, god-like position, breaking the inescapable relation between the observer and the observed.

However, the so-called objective relation to the object, which indicates distance and externality, "comes into contradiction in a quite practical way with the practical relationship which it has to deny in order to constitute itself and by the same token constitute the objective representation of practice" (Bourdieu [1980] 1992, 36). To deny that relation is forgetting that these objective structures are the product of past historical practices and interactions between people, and in the end, one is doomed to reduce the relationship between social agents to an ahistorical and dissociate logical formula (Bourdieu 1977, 83). In other words, in the objectivist position, the practices of actors result from their autonomous preferences and motivations, instead of being the product of relations between actors.

To break away from the tendency to view objectifiable actors and practices, Bourdieu develops the notion of *field*, or space. For Bourdieu (1998, 31; italics in original),

> The notion of *space* contains, in itself, the principle of a *relational* understanding of the social world. It affirms that every "reality" it designates resides in the *mutual exteriority* of its composite elements. Apparent, directly visible beings, whether individuals or groups, exist and subsist in and through *difference*; that is, they occupy *relative positions* in a space of relations which, although invisible and always difficult to show empirically, is the most real reality (the *ens realissimum*, as scholasticism would say) and the real principle of the behaviour of individuals and groups.

Therefore, Bourdieu defines a field of practice that is ontologically constituted as *relational*. In the field, there can be no autonomous practices, no autonomous identity and no autonomous agents, but only a relation between agents and a relation between practices. Practices are thus the product of the encounter between a habitus and a field, or between dispositions and positions (Pouliot and Frédéric 2013, 29).

In the securitisation of Islam, Muslim individuals and security experts are viewed as two separate ontological categories independently performing their self-maximising choices. This securitisation produces a Remote Other that is necessary in legitimising security measures such as sting operations. This is because, through the use of metaphors, euphemisations and the logic of expected consequences, remoteness makes "radicalisation" an independent process that can be effectively "tackled." To counter this modern objectivist viewpoint, one has to return to the dialectic between *opus operatum* and *modus operandi*, of structures and habitus (Bourdieu [1980] 1992, 52), in which "The crucial aspect of this equation is 'relationship,' because neither habitus nor field has the capacity to unilaterally determine social action" (Wacquant in Adler-Nissen 2013, 8). This relational ontology may be where Bourdieu is most innovative; because of the mutually constituted relationship that unites agents and structures, as a "socialized subjectivity" (Pouliot and Frédéric 2013, 29). With a Bourdieusan and relationality lens in which the logic of practice is ontologically relational, counter-radicalisation is not merely "counter-productive" (Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 11), but it is also theoretically flawed. There can be no "radicalised" identities or "radicalisation" that is the product of individual "Muslim choices." Hence, it makes little sense to argue that Muslim individuals are more "vulnerable" or may be "pre-wired" to radicalisation if the field of practice is defined relationally.

Conclusion

This paper critically discussed the securitisation of Islam in the US post-9/11. It first unravelled the meaning of the securitisation as remote and how this is achieved. Drawing on Croft's "range of Otherness," the first section contended that this securitisation constructs a Remote Other, which is essential in legitimising security practices against the Muslim population. Remoteness occurs through euphemisation, metaphors and the logic of expected consequences. At the exceptional level, the DHS and political leaders use euphemisation strategies by employing a sanitised and technostrategic vocabulary that allows them to describe a reality that is abstract from the realm of everyday lives. At the everyday level, the NYPD uses the metaphor of a growing bad seed to describe radicalisation and constructs a new meaning for that process as something that needs to be rooted out. Linguistically, euphemisms and metaphors create a distance between the securitisers and the securitisees. Analytically, the consequential framework automatically transforms "cognitive radicalised" individuals into potential terrorists. Whilst "radical thinking" is not a crime nor is it negative, the logic of expected consequences makes violence an expected consequence of radicalisation.

Therefore, as the US model of counter-radicalisation acts on the individual's intention to commit a crime, the security experts create illegality where there is none, pre-emptively arresting what they see as fully formed terrorists. The difficulty is that as much as "vulnerability to radicalisation cannot be pre-determined" (Aly 2015, 77), violence following radicalisation also cannot be predetermined. Hence, I pointed out at the weakness of the rationalist view of radicalisation in the second section, which highlights the impact of these three processes with the idea of dehumanisation which constitutes further acts of violence. Drawing on Bourdieu, the final section explained how the concept of relationality could challenge the assumption behind the discourse of radicalisation. By constructing a Remote Other, security practitioners can distance themselves from the identity and the practices of their securitisees and can perpetuate the narrative of evil. In this context, the essentially contested nature of "radicalisation" becomes apparent.

Notes

1. See, for example, Croft (2012), Cesari (2009), Mavelli (2013) and Edmunds (2012). Critical approaches to the concept of (counter)-radicalisation have also blossomed; see De Goede and Simon (2013), Heath-Kelly (2013), Martin (2014) and Baker-Beall, Heath-Kelly, and Jarvis (2015).
2. Although traditional, or non-critical, approaches to radicalisation are "a heterogeneous and fluid group" (Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, and Jarvis 2015, 3).
3. An ECC, according to Fierke (2015, 35), "is a concept that generates debates that cannot be resolved by reference to empirical evidence because the concept contains a clear ideological or moral element and defies precise, generally accepted definition."
4. Neumann (2013) defines studies on "cognitive radicalisation" as studies focusing on the extremist belief itself, whilst "behavioural radicalisation" refers to the acts of violence and political action departing from extremist beliefs. This will be further discussed in this article.
5. Two former representatives of the New York Police Department's (NYPD) Intelligence Bureau and Counterterrorism Office asked for anonymity; this article marks them as Interviewee 1 (interview for fieldwork, 2013) and Interviewee 2 (interview for fieldwork, 2013), respectively.
6. The notions of Orientalism, secularisation and the association of Islam with terrorism have been significantly discussed in academic literature. In regard to Orientalism, see Amin-Khan (2012). In regard to Orientalism and new forms of governmentality, see Edmunds (2012). In relation to the discourse of the Clash of Civilisations in the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis, see Hansen (2011). In concerns to secularisation, see Mavelli (2013). The association of Islam with terrorism is also discussed by Croft (2012), Jackson (2007), Mamdani (2002) and briefly in Ahmed (2003, 76) when she argues that by metonymy, the word "terrorist" sticks to the bodies of "Muslims," without necessarily requiring an explicit statement.
7. The concept of ontological security was developed by the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991) in *Modernity and Self Identity*. Ontological security can be defined as "a security of being, a sense of confidence and trust that the world is what it appears to be" (Kinnvall 2004, 746).
8. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for pointing this out. I would however argue that the idea of remoteness and rationalisation are never explicitly stated in the literature or are referred to in a different way. This article aims to make distance and rationalism explicit in securitisation processes.
9. Bigo (2008,10) defines the "management of unease" as the "contemporary convergence of defence and internal security into interconnected networks, or into a 'field' of professionals." He continues, "this form of governmentality of unease, or ban, is characterized by three criteria: practices of exceptionalism, acts of profiling and containing foreigners, and a normative imperative of mobility" (Bigo 2008,10).

10. See for example, Dick Cheney's (2009) assertion that Guantanamo prisoners are "the worst of the worst" and that the only alternative to Guantanamo naval prison was to kill terror suspects incarcerated there; see also his defence of waterboarding and torture at Guantanamo (Cheney 2014). See also Bush's (11 September 2001 and 20 September 2001) reference to terrorists as "evil" and as "the worst of human nature."

11. The other logic explaining the basis of human action coined by March and Olsen (1998) is the logic of appropriateness. The latter has often been defined associated with Constructivism (or a weak version of constructivism at least).

12. However, Neumann (2013, 886) argues that the European model deals with both cognitive *and* behavioural radicalisation.

13. Coolsaet (2011a, 260) argues that "most democratic states would not exist but for some radicals who took it upon themselves to organise the revolt against a foreign yoke or an autocratic regime." Radical thinking has led often to positive change, including ending slavery, the civil rights movement, women's suffrage, and so on.

14. The critical field of technologies of risk and the idea of "precaution" and "pre-emption" have blossomed in the last decade. For an excellent critical introduction on "Security, Technology of Risk, and the Political," see the 2008 special issue edited by Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Van Munster in *Security Dialogue*, vol. 39, nos. 2–3. For more literature on critical approaches to risk and the War on Terror, see Amoore and De Goede (2008), and Heng and Kenneth (2011). On risk and resilience, see Neocleous (2012).

Notes on contributor

Clara Eroukhmanoff is a PhD candidate in the Department of International Relations at the University of St Andrews. Her research interests focus empirically on the security practices directed at the Muslim population in the US in counterterrorism, and theoretically on securitisation theory, critical terrorism studies, speech act theory and broadly critical security studies.

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