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What is This?

# The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School

Lene Hansen

Before Barry Buzan descended on Copenhagen the town's most famous attraction was the Little Mermaid, located less than a ten minute stroll from the home of the Copenhagen School.[1] Her story, in Hans Christian Andersen's pre-Disney original, is one of self-inflicted silence and pain: to get close to her object of desire, the earthly prince, she sacrificed her voice knowing that if the prince married someone else she would die on the next morning. Moving elegantly around the castle, the prince, being perhaps ahead of his time, nevertheless failed to think of a silent woman as proper marriage material, and the Little Mermaid met her destiny as foam on the water and a life amongst the Air Spirits. The tale of the Little Mermaid highlights the importance of voice and body for the construction of subjectivity, and it speaks about the chances, even deadly ones, one might take in the pursuit of desire and happiness. It shows that in the absence of speech, the prince fails to see who the Little Mermaid really is. Her silence prevents her from ever fully materialising as an embodied subject, and it prevents her from letting him know how his construction of her subjectivity fundamentally endangers her.

It never occurred to the prince that the Little Mermaid might have a security problem, nor would the Copenhagen School, had they been present, have run to her rescue. Their latest book, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* argues strongly in favour of grounding the definition of security problems within speech; their epistemological reliance on speech act theory presupposes the existence of a situation in which speech is indeed possible. Those who like the Little Mermaid are constrained in their ability to speak security are therefore prevented from becoming subjects worthy of consideration and protection. But the silent subject is not the only hindrance for a proper reading of the Little Mermaid's plight, a second set of

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1. The article by Bill McSweeney which coined the term 'Copenhagen School' had 'Buzan in Copenhagen' as its top header. See 'Identity and security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School', *Review of International Studies* 22, no. 1 (1996): 81-93.

problems concern the emotional complexity of the Little Mermaid's security dilemma. The Little Mermaid did in fact get the chance to kill the prince right before the deadly sunrise, yet even as her own survival was at stake she refused to use the weapon provided by her family and sacrificed herself out of her love for him.

The Copenhagen School makes a self-confident claim to have tackled the conceptual security debate,[2] and this confidence has been affirmed by others. Jef Huysmans argues, for example, that '[t]hey constitute possibly the most thorough and continuous exploration of the significance and the implications of a widening security agenda for security studies'.[3] But confidence and praise naturally call for critical scrutiny; if this is the most thorough exploration of the wider security agenda, we should ask if there are important security problematiques excluded from the gaze of the Copenhagen School. Several critics have debated the Copenhagen School's conceptualisation of society and identity, the responsibility of the analyst, and the potential conservative nature of the theory of securitization.[4] Yet the striking absence of gender has not been a subject of discussion.[5] The lack of even a consideration of the possible inclusion of a concept of gendered security is particularly noteworthy as post-structuralists and those associated with critical security studies have favoured making gender an indispensable part of security analysis.[6]

The aim of this article is not, however, simply to point out that the Copenhagen School has no concept of gender-based insecurity, but to show through a critical discussion of this absence where the barriers for their construction of a security

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2. Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

3. Jef Huysmans, 'Revisiting Copenhagen: Or, On the Creative Development of a Security Studies Agenda in Europe', *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 4 (1998): 480.

4. McSweeney, 'Identity and Security'; Huysmans, 'Revisiting Copenhagen'; and Johan Eriksson, 'Observers or Advocates?: On the Political Role of Security Analysts', *Cooperation and Conflict* 34, no. 3 (1999): 311-30.

5. The only places in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* where gender is mentioned are in a footnote on how feminists have tried to politicise the private, and in the chapter on societal security which discusses the case of contemporary America arguing that there is a 'trend toward a redefinition of cultural and societal categories in terms of distinct racial and gender groups'. See Buzan, *Security*, 46 and 130.

6. As argued by Ken Booth, 'To talk about security without thinking about gender is simply to account for the surface reflections without examining what is happening deep down below the surface'. See 'Security and Self: Reflections of a Fallen Realist', in *Critical Security Studies*, eds. Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 101. See also David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and Politics of Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 237-39; Simon Dalby, 'Contesting an Essential Concept: Reading the Dilemmas in Contemporary Security Discourse', in *Critical Security Studies*, 3-31; R.B.J. Walker, 'Gender and Critique in the Theory of International Relations', in *Gendered States,* ed. V. Spike Peterson (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992); Steve Smith, '"Unacceptable Conclusions" and the "Man" Question: Masculinity, Gender, and International Relations', in *The 'Man' Question in International Relations*, eds. Marysia Zalewski and Jane Parpart (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998); and Craig Murphy, 'Six Masculine Roles in International Relations and Their Interconnection: A Personal Investigation', in *The 'Man' Question in International Relations.*

theory which includes gender lie.[7] I will argue that the silent security dilemma of the Little Mermaid is indicative of two blank spots in the Copenhagen School's 'speech act' framework which prevent the inclusion of gender. These can be characterised as the 'security as silence' and the 'subsuming security' problems. 'Security as silence' occurs when insecurity cannot be voiced, when raising something as a security problem is impossible or might even aggravate the threat being faced. 'Subsuming security' arises because gendered security problems often involve an intimate inter-linkage between the subject's gendered identity and other aspects of the subject's identity, for example national and religious. As a consequence, 'gender' rarely produces the kind of collective, self-contained referent objects required by the Copenhagen School, and to the extent that gender is included it is mostly as an individual—and less important—security problem.

The article proceeds in three parts, the first introduces the Copenhagen School's theory of securitization and security as a speech act in more detail. The second part argues the importance of the 'security as silence' and 'subsuming security' problems. It confronts the common response to calls for the inclusion of gender in security analysis: that it falls under the category of social security, not 'proper' national security, and that it concerns individual, not collective security. Through a discussion of the case of honour killings in Pakistan, both of these claims are countered, and it is shown that gender insecurity concerns not only social redistribution but fundamental questions of survival, and that the security of particular individuals is deeply embedded in collective constructions of subjectivity and security.[8] Drawing on the work of Judith Butler, the third part suggests that a theory of gender and security should consider the importance of the body within the speech act. Second, that the focus on whether to expand the concept of security should be supplemented with a theory of what conditions the construction of 'security problems'. This involves an approach to security which foregrounds the role of practice, in particular how political practices depend upon

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7. The paper does not carry out a chronological analysis of the development of the School as has been done by Bill McSweeney, 'Identity and Security', and Huysmans, 'Revisiting Copenhagen'. Nor does it engage another key element of the School, namely the concept of security complexes which is central to the forthcoming book by Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*; for a discussion see Huysmans, 'Revisiting Copenhagen', 494-99.

8. This is not an argument in favour of limiting the study of gender and security to the question of deathly threats. As for example Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Women and War* convincingly shows a complete study of gender and security must include a thorough consideration of the gendered subjectivities mobilized in and against war. See *Women and War* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987). Secondly, this should not be taken to imply that only threats to women are at stake in feminist security studies, or as suggested by Adam Jones to make it a body count contest between men and women. See 'Gender and Ethnic Conflict in ex-Yugoslavia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17, no. 1 (1994): 115-34. The purpose of a feminist/gender analysis is not to measure up which gender has suffered most casualties, but to explore how the killings draw on and reinforce particular political constructions of gendered subjectivity. See Terrell Carver, Molly Cochran, and Judith Squires, 'Gendering Jones: Feminisms, IRs, Masculinities', *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998): 296; Marysia Zalewski, 'Well, What is the Feminist Perspective on Bosnia?', *International Affairs* 71, no. 2 (1995): 339-56; and Lene Hansen, 'Gender, Nation, Rape: Bosnia and the Construction of Security', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, forthcoming.

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and reinforce subjectivity, and how practices of security might strive to individualise security problems thereby taking them out of the public and political domain.

## The Copenhagen School: Securitization, Referent Objects, and Society

The success of the Copenhagen School stems in part from its willingness and ability to engage the widening-deepening debate in security studies, that is whether the concept of security should be expanded to cover other issues or sectors than the military and secondly, whether entities other than the state should be able to make the claim to have its threats located under the security rubric.[9] While numerous scholars have been involved in this now familiar debate, the extraordinary impact of the Copenhagen School has been achieved through the formulation of a 'solution'. This allows for widening as well as deepening 'security' without opening it up to an unlimited expansion which would render the concept meaningless for academic and political purposes.

The decisive move, captured by Ole Wæver's concept of 'securitization', is to permit a possible expansion of the concept, but to make the actual definition of security dependent on its successful construction in discourse. Securitization refers to the process of presenting an issue in security terms, in other words as an existential threat:

> The way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations: When does an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed? If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing a case of securitization.[10]

It is the discursive power of securitization which brings together actors and objects: *securitizing actors* are defined as 'actors who securitize issues by declaring something—a referent object—existentially threatened'; *referent objects* as 'things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival'.[11] The constitution of referent objects, is in other words, closely linked to the practice of securitization; they do not exist independently of discursive articulation, it is through discourse that security is defined, and where actors successfully manifest their position and capacity.

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9. The widening-deepening distinction was introduced by Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, 'Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies? Politics and Method', *Mershon International Studies Review* 40, no. 2 (1996): 229-54.
10. Buzan, *Security*, 25.
11. Ibid., 36.

This apparently makes for a very open conceptualisation of security, however, the criteria for who can become securitizing actors and what constitutes a successful case of securitization establish the restrictive side of the Copenhagen School's approach. On the crucial question of how to define securitizing actors, the theory is less specific; it is argued that common securitizing actors are 'political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups', and that their identification depends less on 'who performs the speech than of what logic shapes the action'.[12] The definition of securitizing actors depends in other words on their ability to perform a successful securitization, to get a sufficient acceptance of the threat in question from the relevant audience.[13]

The act of securitization is always related to the claim of the presence of an existential threat, and this leads the Copenhagen School to make a distinction between 'international security' and 'social security'. Within the former, it is argued, 'security is about survival. It is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated object (traditionally, but not necessarily, the state, incorporating government, territory, and society)'.[14] In contrast, 'social security' concerns questions of 'entitlement and social justice', and problems within this field are not located within the same rhetoric of danger, urgency and survival.[15] Unemployment and crime, for example, 'are threats primarily to individuals (threats *in* society); only if they threaten the breakdown of society do they become societal security issues'.[16] The distinction between social and international security relies less on whether an issue, or potential security problem, is located at the national or the international level, than on the extent to which the situation is successfully presented as one of *collective* survival. The Copenhagen School argues that what constitutes the field of security studies is the concern with 'international security'; problems falling within the realm of 'social security' might be worthy of political consideration and important in their own right, but they should not be confused with those of 'international security'. The key point is not, however, that particular problems carry a certain essential security character, but that they are located within different modes of reasoning.

The differentiation between the two modes of reasoning found within 'international security' and 'social security', and the restriction of security studies to the concern with the former, leads the Copenhagen School to argue that the concept of security can be expanded to areas other than the military, as long as the mode of reasoning resembles the one of 'international security'. The concept of security should therefore be expanded and widened beyond the military sector into the political, environmental, economic, and societal sectors, whereas other sectors, or 'lenses of security' could become politically salient and added to this list in the

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12. Ibid., 40-41
13. The relevant audience need not be the entire population; especially in non-democratic countries the audience might well be much smaller and restricted to the power elite.
14. Ibid., 21.
15. Ibid., 21.
16. Ibid., 121.

future.[17] The inclusion of the environmental sector stems for example from a combination of environmental degradation and growing political awareness and mobilisation in the 1970s and 1980s.

'Security', as defined by the Copenhagen School, is not only about survival, it is, as a general rule, about *collective* survival, and to argue that something threatens a group's survival is to engage in a political process: one has to convincingly state that this particular threat is of such a magnitude that action needs to be initiated and 'normal rules' suspended. By its very nature, even in the rare cases where the threat to a particular individual is securitized, one has to engage in a collective process where the relevant audience needs to be convinced—or coerced—into recognising the 'threat' in question. The need for threats to be argued at the collective level has previously led Buzan and Wæver to be very direct in their refusal of conceptualising security in individual terms. In 1993 they wrote that

> [w]henever security is defined via individual security there is a high risk that the core of the classical security problematique which one is allegedly trying to redefine, not forget, will be missed...This classical logic can neither be studied nor avoided by measuring how secure individuals are.[18]

Wæver was even more outspoken in his launching of the concept of securitization in 1995 when he claimed that 'as concepts, *neither individual security nor international security exist*'.[19] This position was softened somewhat in 1998. In terms of the expansion of the list of referent objects, of *deepening* the concept, the Copenhagen School has moved away from the traditional state-focus to

> the middle scale of limited collectivities...A main criterion of this type of referent is that it forms an interpretative community—it is the context in which principles of legitimacy and valuation circulate and within which the individual constructs an interpretation of events.[20]

*Security: A New Framework for Analysis* is thus more open than previous works to the possibility that systemic and individual referent objects *could* become politically mobilised; however, 'traditionally, the middle level has been the most fruitful generator of referent objects'.[21]

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17. For a discussion of the concept of sectors, see Eriksson, 'Observers or Advocates?', and Ole Wæver, 'Securitizing Sectors?: Reply to Eriksson', *Cooperation and Conflict* 34, no. 3 (1999): 334-40.

18. Ole Wæver, 'Societal Security: The Concept', in *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, eds. Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, and Pierre Lemaitre (London: Pinter, 1993), 24.

19. Ole Wæver, 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 48 emphasis in original.

20. Buzan, *Security*, 36-37.

21. Ibid., 39.

## Gender Insecurity: Honour Killings in Pakistan

Keeping this outline of the key elements of the Copenhagen School's theory of security in mind, I now turn to a case which illustrates the complexities of how to identify (potential) gender insecurity: honour killings of girls and women in Pakistan.[22] The purpose of discussing this case is not to reinstall an objective concept of security outside of discursive and political practice, but to point at one particular instance where gender-related security problems present themselves with great urgency. We might begin by pointing out that the case of Pakistani honour killings does seem to confirm to the delineation of 'international security' as argued by the Copenhagen School; honour killings concern existential threats to women's (and to a lesser extent men's) *survival*, not 'only' the question of equality of 'social security'. Although honour killings target individuals, these individuals become targets because of their transgression of particular gendered norms. This inter-linkage of threat and gender implies that one cannot appropriately identify this as a case of individual security: the targeting of *individual* Pakistani women is deeply connected to their inscription within an inferior gendered *collectivity*. Or, put differently, a decision to locate this case within the realm of individual security would seriously diminish our possibilities of grasping its collective aspects.

Recent statistics for 1998, collected by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, identify 286 women killed in Punjab, and 255 deaths (including men and women) in Sindh (the two out of three main regions). The actual number is expected to be much higher and Amnesty International's recent report argues further that the number of honour killings appears to be increasing due to the combination of a widened conception of honour, a growing awareness of women's rights (or resistance to the absence thereof), and the limited, if any, sanctions brought upon the perpetrators.[23] There is, in other words, a polarisation between the forces of Islamic conservatism on the one hand and resistance on the other.

Honour killings should be understood as part of a rigid, patriarchal definition of female transgressive behaviour articulated and sustained by the legal-religious-political establishment.[24] The most important legal document, the *Zina* ordinance, which was adopted in 1979 as part of Zia-ul-Haq's Islamification of Pakistan, bans sexual intercourse outside of a properly sanctioned marriage and allows for stoning to death in the case of transgression by married women and one hundred lashes in

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22. The article does not make any claim to present a detailed empirical analysis of Pakistani honour killings, nor does it pretend to engage the numerous and complex political, religious, and economic issues involved.

23. Amnesty International, *Pakistan: Honour Killings of Girls and Women*, Report ASA 33/18/99, September 1999. The 255 deaths in 196 *karo-kari* killings in 1998 would seem to imply that 196 women and 59 men were killed.

24. For a general account of feminism and fundamentalism in Pakistan, see Khawar Mumtaz, 'Identity Politics and Women: "Fundamentalism" and Women in Pakistan', in *Identity Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective*, ed. Valentine M. Moghadam (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994).

public in the case of unmarried ones.[25] Since *zina* is applicable regardless of the parties' consent, it can be aimed at couples whose family succeed in declaring the marriage void. It even functions in the prevention of prosecution of rape: when a woman accuses a man of rape, she is simultaneously 'admitting' she had sexual intercourse with him, thus if the man is acquitted she can be prosecuted for *zina*. As the burden of proof is further complicated—and gendered—by the requirement that for the maximal punishment to be imposed, four Muslim men of good reputation must have witnessed the actual act of rape, rape is very difficult to prosecute.[26]

The women's position is exacerbated by the fact that while the judiciary have made rulings to the effect that women might, for example, marry men of their own choice, there are still areas of life which are not part of formal legislation, but left either to local legal systems, or regulated through informal practice.[27] This contributes to a lack of transparency in terms of separating the legal and political from the religious, and often facilitates the lenient treatment of those perpetrating honour killings. Human rights activists consistently argue that the police are reluctant in their investigation and prosecution of these crimes.[28]

While men in illicit relationships in principle face identical consequences—in Sindh, the couple is described as *kari-karo* ('black women' and 'black man')—the persecution is itself gendered in that the woman is murdered first, giving the man the possibility to flee.[29] Women's opportunities to flee are also constrained compared to those of men because of their higher level of illiteracy and their lack of access to economic funds, which are usually controlled by the male members of the family. Furthermore, while in hiding the *karo* has the opportunity to strike a deal with the man whose honour has been injured thereby rescuing himself. Compensation might come in the form of money or material assets and/or a woman from the *karo's* family. This possibility of trading women as part of 'solving' the crisis illustrates a commodification of women as objects which can be priced and circulated, and it inscribes female subjectivity as fundamentally different from that of men.

The unpredictable character of many accusations and the status of facts and evidence are important elements for understanding the mode of insecurity produced through the threat of honour killings. As argued by Amnesty International, suspicion might be enough to claim a violated honour; whether the

25. Hina Jilani, 'Whose Laws?: Human Rights and Violence Against Women in Pakistan', in *Freedom From Violence: Women's Strategies From Around The World*, ed. Margaret Schuler (New York: United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1992), 71.

26. Amnesty International, *Pakistan: Women's Human Rights Remain a Dead Letter*, Report ASA 33/07/97, March 1997.

27. Farida Shaheed, 'Controlled or Autonomous: Identity and the Experience of the Network, Women Living under Muslim Laws', *Signs* 19, no. 4 (1994): 1000-1003. It is still too early to assess any possible consequences of the change of leadership in October 1999 when general Parvez Musharraf replaced Nawaz Sharif.

28. Amnesty International, *Pakistan: Honour Killings*.

29. Ibid.

accusation is true or not is often of less importance.[30] The consequence is an environment where many women live in terror, not only because of the tight regulations they are exposed to, but because of the potentially random nature of the threats directed against them. Another characteristic of honour killings is the premeditation with which they are often conducted. The testimonies, actions, and justifications available suggest that these murders are often legitimated within a discourse of reason rather than emotion, that they are based on the calculation of long-term effects rather than momentary outburst, and that they involve a public enactment rather than the secrecy of the private sphere.

Adopting a security terminology, the situation can be described as one where one group of private actors ('women') are being abused by another group of private actors, but where the state fails, or refuses to protect the formers security. The passive stance of the Pakistani government is criticised by mainly non-governmental organisations that invoke the international level; they argue that Pakistan should be held internationally responsible for not complying with human rights conventions that it has signed.

Women in Pakistan are exposed to honour killings, attacks with acid, and burning (often explained as caused by exploding stoves): it would thus seem justified to argue that 'they' are facing a security problem which is about 'survival' and which is not solely a question of individual threats. Yet, one needs also to qualify the 'they' constructing 'Pakistani women' as one coherent entity, since some women also voice support for the hegemonic discourse and since differences do exist as to the exposure experienced by different groups of women. Women belonging to the Pakistani elite are less exposed than poor, rural women; as Asma Jahangir, a prominent lawyer and women's rights activist argues, 'I would have been silenced long ago if I did not come from a privileged family'.[31] One should also be careful not to totalise the 'Pakistani' element either. 'Pakistan' is composed of a set of different political forces, for example women's rights activists like Jahangir and her sister Hina Jilani who is also a lawyer, and groups like Shirkat Gat, who are as much part of 'Pakistan' as are the religious and political right.[32] To construct Pakistan as a uniform, repressive entity rather than as a site of contestation would paradoxically be to write out those forces who fight these very currents within their 'own' society.

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30. Ibid.

31. Quoted from Jan Goodwin, *Price of Honor: Muslim Women Lift the Veil of Silence on the Islamic World* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1994), 70. Some suggest, however, that honour killings are becoming an increasing urban phenomenon. See Ulrikke Moustgaard, 'Æresdrab i Pakistan Skifter Karakter' (Honour Killings in Pakistan are Changing Character), *Information*, 24 May 2000, 6.

32. Durre Sameen Ahmed, 'Changing Faces of Tradition', in *Women's Lifeworlds: Women's Narratives on Shaping their Realities*, ed. Edith Sizoo (London: Routledge, 1997); Shaheed, 'Controlled or Autonomous'; and Mumtaz, 'Identity Politics and Women'.

## The Two Problems of the Copenhagen School

It is sometimes suggested that gender security falls outside of 'proper security' and into the category of individual security.[33] But if we take the Copenhagen School's own definition of 'international security', it would seem quite justified to argue that the Pakistani honour killings 'exceed' social and individual security. 'International security' is concerned with survival, 'social security' with entitlement and social justice; 'international security' requires threats to a larger collectivity, 'social security' only to individuals. The case of honour killings would appear to qualify on both accounts: even if the survival of the entire Pakistani female collectivity is not at stake, individuals are being systematically threatened because of their location within a particular gendered collective. Examining the absence of gender within the Copenhagen School, and adopting the School's own definition of individual and collective security it would, in other words, be misleading to explain this absence as a consequence of gender being located under the rubric of individual security. The absence of gender is not simply a matter of oversight, or of misplacing it at the level of individual security, but stems from two theoretical decisions which lead to the 'security as silence' and 'subsuming security' problems.

### Security as Silence

The first theoretical delineation of relevance for understanding the absence of gender in the Copenhagen School concerns the securitization approach's speech act epistemology. The focus on the verbal act of speech causes difficulties in coming to terms with what can be called 'security as silence': a situation where the potential subject of security has no, or limited, possibility of speaking its security problem. As the case of Pakistani rapes leading to *zina* convictions, or even honour killings shows, by discursively acknowledging the rape, the woman in question runs a risk of being penalised herself.[34] An attempt to securitize one's situation would in these cases, paradoxically, activate another threat posed to these women by their 'own' society. For instance, those who choose to fight the current legal and cultural practices might become subjected to threats. Asma Jahangir and Hina Jilani, were counselling Samia Sarwar, a woman who was shot and killed in Jilani's office on the initiative of her father for seeking a divorce from an abusive

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33. Paradoxically, this is a position which is supported indirectly by those within feminist security studies who argue that one 'should take the individual as the basic unit of analysis', as well as by Critical Security Studies. See J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 92, and 'You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists', *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1997): 611-32; Buzan, *Security*, 203-7; Ken Booth, 'Strategy and Emancipation', *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 4 (1991): 313-26; and Richard Wyn Jones, '"Message in a Bottle"?: Theory and Praxis in Critical Security Studies', *Contemporary Security Studies* 16, no. 3 (1995): 299-319.

34. Shaheed, 'Controlled or Autonomous', 1012.

husband. Jilani was shot at, but survived; later, however, the local *ulema* (religious authority) issued a *fatwa* against her and her sister, a threat against which the political authorities have failed to react.[35] The security strategies chosen by Pakistani women have, as a consequence, often been silence, denial, or if the incident has become known, flight.

I propose to begin the analysis of the absence of gender within the Copenhagen School by asking to what extent these cases could be accounted for inside the School's own framework, or, in other words, how they might read them. The crucial question is whether we are confronting a successful case of securitization, more specifically: to what extent have the honour killings 'the priority and urgency of an existential threat [where] the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by'?[36]

The first and most obvious option would be to consider the case a securitization due to the protest of Pakistani individuals and women's groups. While the Copenhagen School framework abstains from an objective—or quantifiable— definition as to when securitization is successful, I would argue that the answer in this case should be a negative one. It would require quite a stretch of the definition of securitizing actors and successful securitization to argue that those relatively few groups and individuals active in the campaign for women's rights fall into the group of 'political leaders' or that they have gained a sufficiently supporting audience to have managed to 'break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by'. It should be remembered that the prevention of unlimited expansion of the concept of security is located in some fairly strict demands on what counts as successful securitization. To consider the Pakistani case as successfully securitized would make it difficult to see precisely how the Copenhagen School had limited the concept of security to the extent they argue is necessary.

Another option for recognising honour killings as a securitized problem would be to move to the international level, where one might argue that organisations like Amnesty International are speaking security on behalf of the threatened Pakistani women. In this case a more complicated picture appears involving a larger set of actors: Pakistani women, the Pakistani government, Amnesty International, and potentially the international community of states. A successful securitization would in this situation presumably involve an international threat issued against the Pakistani government stipulating that if no improvements were made, economic, political, or military sanctions would follow. The problem, however, is that Amnesty International is unable to muster these sanctions on its own, that a *successful* securitization would require the support of a sufficiently powerful group of states. Not discounting the importance of the work of institutions such as

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35. Amnesty International, *Pakistan: Government Indifference as Lawyers Defending Women's Rights are Threatened with Death*, News Release ASA 33/06/99, 15 April 1999.
36. Buzan, *Security*, 25.

Amnesty International, we must conclude that they only rarely, and then indirectly, qualify as securitizing actors within the Copenhagen School framework.

Stretching the possibility of including gender-based security problems further, one might point to the adoption of gender as a ground for seeking political asylum in Canada, the US, New Zealand, and Australia and argue that this constitutes an acknowledgement, at least by some states, of the security problems experienced by women, including those in Pakistan.[37] It would, however, only be when an international norm at the state-level started to develop that we could clearly determine that we have a *successful* case of securitization. For 'women' to become a referent object for security they need to find a way into international discourse; as a consequence, the Copenhagen School framework can only identify the threats aimed towards them ex-post facto, not as long as they are 'silent security problems'. Furthermore, while the adoption of gender based prosecution as a ground for asylum is of course to be applauded, it is also an impossible option for many poor women who lack the economic and social resources to organise a flight, and asylum granting is, ultimately, a less ambitious strategy than securitizing the policy of the Pakistani government to the point where more severe actions were brought against it.

Finally, one might suggest that the discourse of the Pakistani government, or the political-religious-military establishment, could provide the foundation for identifying a securitization of 'women' of a particular (norm-breaking) behaviour. Instead of searching for cases where women securitize their situation, one would, in short, search for the state's construction of 'women' as threats. But this would lead one back to the very problem associated with state security which the Copenhagen School tried to solve by introducing the concept of societal security. They argued that staying with the state was untenable because it 'creates an excessive concern with state stability and largely removes any common sense idea about the security of societies in their own right'.[38] Second, even if one took this route, it would not fundamentally solve the silence problem. It is a possibility that the discourse of the establishment securitizes 'women' but it is equally possible that it stays within the realm of a legal discourse which in a non-securitized rhetorical mode lays out the consequences of particular actions. While the official discourse might allow for the identification of gendered security problems, we cannot rely on this being the case.[39]

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37. Pernille Stensgaard, 'Mænds Private Ejendom Søger Asyl' (Men's Private Property Seek Asylum), *Weekendavisen*, 28 August–3 September 1998, 3.

38. Wæver, 'Societal Security', 25

39. A related methodological problem not dealt with explicitly concerns the difference between the word ('security', or 'threat') and the modality; Jacques Derrida argues that 'the so-called "presence" of a quite relative verbal unit—the word—while not being a contingent accident worthy of no attention, nevertheless does not constitute the ultimate criterion and the utmost pertinence'. See *Dissemination* (London: Athlone Press, 1981), 130, quoted in Christopher Norris, *Derrida* (London: Fontana Press, 1987), 44. If one takes Derrida's advice, which the case study on the EU at the end of *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* seems to indicate, the question arises of how to identify securitization in the absence of 'security words'.

In sum, even if a number of possibilities at different levels are considered one does not find that the honour killings have been securitized as defined by the Copenhagen School. This, however, leaves a final question to be considered: the Copenhagen School argues that although one might find tactical advantages in a particular securitization, 'desecuritization is the optimal long-range option'.[40] It could therefore be argued that searching for a securitization in the Pakistani case implies a positive view of securitization as the solution to the security problems of the women involved, and that this view runs counter to the largely negative connotations associated with the concept inside the Copenhagen School's own framework. This raises complicated questions concerning how to evaluate different strategies: is securitization, or, desecuritization the best choice, and within what particular time horizon? Even if desecuritization is the ultimate goal, should one opt for a securitization of a present situation which one finds manifestly oppressive? My point in this section is not to engage in this normative discussion, but to simply point out that the use of the concept of securitization as the *analytical* criteria for the identification of security problems cannot elucidate the case of the Pakistani honour killings.

### Subsuming Security: Society and the Gendered Subject

The inability of the Copenhagen School to account for gender-based insecurities does not, however, only depend on the 'security as silence' problem. The theory of the Copenhagen School argues that securitization takes place only when a referent object is declared existentially threatened. As a consequence, the definition of the referent object becomes crucial: it can block, or severely limit the qualification of issues as security problems. This section will argue that the second hindrance for the inclusion of gender security in the Copenhagen School framework concerns the delineation of the referent object.[41]

The most logical sector to expect gender to figure would be within the societal one, as it is concerned with issues related to the construction of identity, and with collectivities whose security questions are often distinct from, or in opposition to, the political security of the state.

> Definitionally, societal security is about large, self-sustaining identity groups; what these are empirically varies in both time and place. In contemporary Europe these groups are mainly national, but in other regions religious or racial groups have more relevance. The concept could also be understood as 'identity security'.[42]

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40. Buzan, *Security*, 29.

41. The choice of Pakistani honour killings as the illustration of a possible gendered security problem might run the risk of presented gender insecurity as a non-Western problem. While the 'silence problem' is probably less outspoken in the West, the problems concerning the delineation of the referent object apply.

42. Buzan, *Security*, 119-20.

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More specifically, the referent object is defined as

> whatever larger groups carry the loyalties and devotion of subjects in a form and to a degree that can create a socially powerful argument that this 'we' is threatened. Since we are talking about the societal sector, this 'we' has to be threatened *as to its identity*.[43]

These definitions imply that the referent object of security needs to be carefully separated from other referent objects, and gender-based insecurity therefore only comes into the security optic if articulated around a 'self-sustained' gendered community. It needs, in other words, to set itself aside from national, religious, and racial referent objects.

The Copenhagen School mentions briefly that feminists have tried to politicise the private, and that the contemporary US has witnessed a move towards groups defined on the basis of gender: first, radical feminists in the Brownmiller tradition who argue that women are threatened by an essential male proclivity to violence and rape, and second, right-wing groups militantly opposed to homosexuals and homosexuality.[44] Both of these cases involve clearly distinguished referent objects: Brownmiller feminism pitches, in a dichotomised fashion, 'women' against 'men', and right-wing anti-gay forces argue the radical threat of the homosexual Other.[45] Radical feminism attempts a securitization building on a 'clear' gendered referent object, namely 'women', but, I would argue, with very limited success.[46] It offers a political programme which insists on the existence of a feminine, romantic, 'pure voice'.[47] As a consequence, argues Jean Bethke Elshtain, '[t]he repudiated masculine aspect is projected outwards as a piece of negative identity. As such it becomes a screen behind which the fearsome images of *them* appears, and is then internalized as external reality'.[48] This is in other words an attempted securitization

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43. Ibid., 123 emphasis in original.

44. Ibid., 46, 130, and lecture by Ole Wæver, 'Københavnerskolen gør Status' (The Copenhagen School Takes Stock), Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, Copenhagen, 18 November 1999. Also Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1975).

45. I am not going into a detailed discussion of the homosexual case as the Copenhagen School uses it to point at a situation where a gendered and sexual group is constructed as a threat. What my discussion focuses on are the limits for registering the security problems of those being threatened. See, however, Judith Butler, 'Contagious Word: Paranoia and "Homosexuality" in the Military', in *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London: Routledge, 1997) and Carol Cohn, 'Gays in the Military: Texts and Subtexts', in *The 'Man' Question*. When even Demi Moore movies feature sympathetic lesbians (*G.I. Jane,* directed by Ridley Scott, 1997) and *International Security* runs articles on the issue, (see Elizabeth Kier, 'Homosexuals in the U.S. Military: Open Integration and Combat Effectiveness', *International Security* 23, no. 2 (1998): 5-39) it seems safe to say that the issue has gained a certain saliency within the American cultural/security mainstream.

46. See, for example, how Elizabeth Wurtzel's recent 'post-radical' feminist bestseller, *Bitch: In Praise of Difficult Women* (London: Quartet Books, 1998) avoids the romanticism and essentialism of Brownmiller.

47. Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman*, 225.

48. Ibid., 217 emphasis in original.

which articulates gendered identity as the unambiguously privileged category, but the problem is in the words of Butler that:

> If one 'is' a woman, that is surely not all one is; *the term fails to be exhaustive*, not because a pregendered 'person' transcends the specific paraphernalia of its gender, but because gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained.[49]

Yet, looking to security studies, there is a difference between gender identity on the one hand, and other collective identities such as ethnic, religious, national, and class on the other. Religion, race, and nationality can form the foundation for self-reproducing political communities; gender as exclusivity, that is a 'women's community', cannot to nearly the same extent. The identity groups that come into focus in the societal security theory are constituted through a *demarcation* from either the state or other competing identity-groups. But gender-based security threats are more often characterised by their *inseparability* from 'national' or 'religious' security, than by a clearly delineated gendered referent object. The Pakistani honour killings, for example, illustrate a case of gender insecurity characterised by an *inter-linkage* with national, state, and religious security. The construction of appropriate gendered norms of behaviour within a highly religious discourse functions to link gender and religion in a way which prevents the articulation of 'gender insecurity', because it would be in opposition to the (constructed) foundational essence of the religious community. The mass rapes in Bosnia provide another good illustration of the inter-linkage between national and gender security: the rapes were subsumed by the Bosnian and Serbian governments in a security debate centred on the nation.[50] Gender was deemed highly important, but read through a national optic which silenced threats to raped Muslim women coming from their own society.[51] To understand the complexities of these cases we need to take the inter-linkage and ambiguity of the gendered security problem seriously.

## Beyond Copenhagen: Butler and the Conditions for Security

I have so far argued that two elements prevent possible gendered security problems from registering within a Copenhagen School analysis: the focus on speech

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49. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990), 3 emphasis added.
50. It is the construction of 'women' as an integral, although often inferior, element of the national, the religious, and the racial community which provides the basis for the ambiguous location of the gendered subject between national and gendered community. For an introduction to the relationship between gender and nation, see Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation* (London: Sage, 1997).
51. Hansen, 'Gender, Nation, Rape'.

produces problems in situations where the possibilities of speaking security are constrained, and the conditions for becoming a referent object are such that gender security is almost excluded from qualifying. An engagement with those blind spots within the Copenhagen School requires that we shift our analytical attention from identifying instances of securitizations and towards the question of how security discourses are produced. Why is it, for example, that Pakistani honour killings are not successfully securitized, and what are the constraints involved? Providing a full-fledged theory of the conditions for security would clearly be beyond the scope of this paper. However, by introducing Butler's work on the bodily performance taking place within the speech act, two suggestions for how to investigate gendered security dynamics further can be offered: to include the body as an additional epistemological focus, and to examine the individualising strategies employed in keeping security problems from appearing at the collective level.[52]

The Copenhagen School defines security according to what is successfully put into language. Yet, one might ask more specifically how 'speech' is defined within this framework; is it a relatively narrow definition equating speech with oral or written words, or is it a broader definition encompassing non-verbal forms of speech/communication? The Copenhagen School's explicit reliance on J.L. Austin's speech act theory as well as the concrete example of an empirical analysis offered at the end of the book points to a narrow definition. Their empirical analysis examines constructions of security within EU institutions, that is the Commission, the Council, and the European Parliament, and the empirical material consists of speeches, declarations, and debates. The identification of securitization is not, however, necessarily dependent upon an explicit articulation of the words 'security' or 'threat'.[53]

This delineation of discourse is verbal and relatively easily identifiable in its textual form. But it is also a delineation which excludes the potential importance of non-verbal communication. In the context of security politics two forms of non-verbal communication are particularly central: the visual and the bodily. Visual representation has historically involved drawings, photography, and television, but the growth of mass media and real time transmission as well as the advent of the Internet and its interactive possibilities have added to the relative importance of the

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52. A somewhat similar concern is present in Iver Neumann's argument that a concept of violisation should be included in the Copenhagen School terminology in order to grasp the aspects of action and bodily harm inflicted in warfare which 'exceeds' the speech act. See 'Identity and the Outbreak of War: Or Why the Copenhagen School of Security Studies Should Include the Idea of "Violisation" in its Framework of Analysis', *International Journal of Peace Studies* 3, no. 1 (1998): 18. My argument is, however, aimed at a different situation: the situation of warfare, which is Neumann's focus, is most often accompanied by a speech act declaring the opponent to be an essential threat to ones society.

53. Buzan, *Security*, 179-89. Wouter G. Werner argues, however, that it is doubtful whether this case conforms to the definition of securitization in that 'nowhere in the speeches the alleged need for further integration is related to the need for emergency measures which would free the agents from rules they would otherwise be bound by'. See *Securitisation and Legal Theory*, Working Paper no. 27 (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, 1998), 6.

visual.[54] Yet, while the 'language' of the visual cannot be reduced to that of the text, and while the relationship between text and image is worthy of serious reflection,[55] it is the question of the body which pushes the discursive approach most fully to its limits.[56]

If the 'silence problem' of the Copenhagen School is connected to the silence of the written or spoken word, then one possible question to be pursued is whether speech and the body line up unproblematically. Can the body speak security even when the word/text does not? To answer this question we might turn to Judith Butler who, drawing on Shoshana Felman, argues that speech involves a bodily act:

> In speaking, the act that the body is performing is never fully understood; the body is the blindspot of speech, that which acts in excess of what is said, but which also acts in and through what is said. That the speech is a bodily act means that the act is redoubled in the moment of speech: there is what is said, and then there is a kind of saying that the bodily 'instrument' of the utterance performs.[57]

It is important to situate Butler's conception of the acting body within her theory of performativity.[58] When Butler says that the body acts 'in excess of', 'in' and 'through' speech she does not imply a pre-constituted body which is given prior to speech. There is no ontologically privileged 'pure body' which is or can be invoked, nor is there an intentional body which comes before or determines 'its'

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54. Ronald J. Deibert, *Parchment, Printing, and Hypermedia: Communication in World Order Transformation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), especially 113-36 and 187-94; Jerry Everard, *Virtual States: The Internet and the Boundaries of the Nation-state* (London: Routledge, 2000). To take an example from the field of security politics, NATO has now included a 'virtual visits' possibility to its multimedia link on its homepage. Yet, this is currently limited to two Quicktime VR clips of an empty North Atlantic Council meeting room with no interactive possibilities. See [http://www.nato.int/multi/] (7 August 2000).

55. Within IR the two most sustained attempts to theorise the visual and its relationship to text have taken place in the works of Michael J. Shapiro and James Der Derian, see for example Michael J. Shapiro, *The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography, and Policy Analysis* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988) and 'From the Halls of Montezuma to the Tube and Silver Screen', in *Violent Cartographies: Mapping Cultures of War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); and James Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy: Spies, Terror, Speed, and War* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), especially chap. 8.

56. The visual eases the move towards the inclusion of the body in that it allows a depiction of the body which the text does not. A 'complete' analysis should thus consider the relationship between the word, the visual, and the body. See also William A. Callahan, 'Visions of Gender and Democracy: Revolutionary Photo Albums in Asia', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27, no. 4 (1998): 1031-60.

57. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 11.

58. For an excellent introduction to Butler's understanding of performativity and its relevance to the study of state sovereignty, see Cynthia Weber, 'Performative States', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27, no. 1 (1998): 77-95.

speech.[59] Rather, the notion of performativity underlines that the actions of the body are integral to the constitution of 'its' identity; in her words, 'identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results'.[60] To say that identity is performatively constituted implies that the same body which acts 'in excess' of the speech act is also simultaneously—due to its performative actions—constituted through the same speech act. The relationship between speech and body, both of which are understood within a logic of performative identity constitution, can thus, to borrow an apt, Derrida-inspired, phrase from Cynthia Weber, be characterised as one of *undecidability*: speech can never fully convey the body, and the body is never constituted outside of speech.[61]

The importance of these insights for security studies, in particular the Copenhagen School, is twofold. First, the undecidability between speech and body implies that even in the cases of verbal silence, security might be spoken through the body, so that the 'none-security speech' of Pakistani women might be complemented by the excessive speech of the body. Furthermore, if insecurity can be spoken through the body, it becomes obvious why the body often is a crucial target for those seeking to discipline 'deviant behaviour'.

Secondly, the introduction of the bodily aspect of the speech act allows us to theorise those situations where speech act and state performance do not line up so unproblematically as implicitly assumed by the Copenhagen School. As Butler points out:

> a statement may be made that, on the basis of a grammatical analysis alone, appears to be no threat. But the threat emerges precisely through the act that the body performs in the speaking act. Or the threat emerges as the apparent effect of a performative act only to be rendered harmless through the bodily demeanor of the act (any theory of acting knows this).[62]

Although Butler's focus is primarily on the individual, her observations are of relevance to the case of securitization where the speech act is performed on the behalf of a collective group. Paradoxically, one might in fact argue that the performance of the bodily instrument is particularly clear in the case of state security: as the state 'speaks security' it gives words to performances already undertaken or which will be undertaken in the future.[63] But deeds and words do not necessarily communicate the same message as in the situation where 'enemy' tanks cross the border under declarations of 'protecting' the population of the invaded

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59. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (London: Routledge, 1993), 10-11.

60. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 25.

61. As Weber nicely puts it: 'A performative understanding of state sovereignty suggests that sovereignty is undecidable because its meaning cannot be fixed, for whenever the meaning of sovereignty is stabilised one finds that the meaning of sovereignty has already moved on to something else'. See 'Performative States', 90.

62. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 11.

63. Ibid., 16.

country.[64] The point here is not to institutionalise tanks as an objective criteria for identifying security, but to argue that if 'security' consists both of what is said and what is bodily performed, then we need to refocus our discussion in the direction of the potential slip between the two.

The undecidable relationship between speech and body and the performative view of identity highlight the importance of the constitution of the subject. In Austin's speech act theory, the starting-point of the Copenhagen School, 'the subject who speaks precedes the speech in question', and thus it cannot account for how the speaking subject is constituted.[65] Butler turns, therefore, to Louis Althusser's theory of interpellation, which argues that the speech act interpellates the subject into a particular subject formation. Butler's aim is to combine the two in a theory of 'how the subject constituted through the address of the Other becomes then a subject capable of addressing others'.[66] The key is to consider the subject 'neither a sovereign agent with a purely instrumental relation to language, nor a mere effect whose agency is pure complicity with prior operations of power'.[67] The advantage of pointing to the constitution of the subject, rather than assuming its existence, is first and foremost that it allows a more explicit concern with the politics of security. If 'security' is no longer considered a speech act taking place between given subjects—usually the state and 'its' citizens—but a practice which *constructs* subjects at both 'ends' of the speech act (the speaker and those spoken to), we open our theory to a consideration of the discursive and bodily practices involved in the formation of subjects.[68] As argued by Butler, '[e]ven when gender seems to congeal into the most reified forms, the "congealing" is itself an insistent and insidious practice, sustained and regulated by various social means'.[69] Crucial in terms of explicating the content of 'various social means' are the notions of reiteration, recognition, and authority: the first points to 'the historicity of convention that exceeds and enables the moment of its enunciation', in other words, those discursive structures of a certain permanence which are reproduced and often naturalised through rearticulation.[70] But reiteration notwithstanding, the interpellation of the speech act does not always work: the

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64. Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). The analytical difficulty of providing standards in the case of a non-foundationalist epistemology is illustrated by Buzan's argument that it is unclear how an objectivist approach could be applied, 'except in cases where the threat is unambiguous and immediate (hostile tanks crossing the border)'. See Barry Buzan, 'Rethinking Security after the Cold War', *Cooperation and Conflict* 32, no. 1 (1997): 18.

65. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 24.

66. For an introduction to the concept of interpellation in an IR context see Jutta Weldes, 'Constructing National Interests', *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 3 (1996): 275-318.

67. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 26.

68. This involves, as Butler points out, a revision of Althusser's structuralist understanding of the subject as passively conforming to the subject position which it is interpellated into. See ibid., 32-34.

69. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 33.

70. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 33.

subject needs to recognise itself in the interpellation and accept the authority of the interpellating voice.

A focus on how successful speech acts *construct* subjects allows us to return to the question of silence. 'Security, the speech act' relies upon and reinforces a particular demarcation of the political subject, but this demarcation only works through a simultaneous silencing; as Butler notes, 'one can be interpellated, put in place, given a place, through silence, through not being addressed'.[71] If we combine the inclusion of the body with an understanding of the subjects of security as constructed through speech as well as through silence, we arrive at a theory that seeks to understand security as a practice which through discursive and bodily acts inscribe particular subjects as threats or as being threatened.

It should be emphasised that the inclusion of the body and the concern with the construction of subjectivity do not amount to an argument in favour of a concept of individual security. While each individual dies alone, not every death is inscribed within a collective optic and the question within the specific field of security is therefore not the threat of death itself, but the *signification of death.* The crucial question becomes not whether 'something' is an individual or a collective security problem, but *how* certain deaths are endowed with a collective signification while others are read 'only' as individual.[72] Even if one speaks security in the name of the individual, claiming the rights, threats, or concern of the individual constitutes an engagement in the public and political field, and 'individual security' is in this respect always collective and political. The security debate would in other words benefit from changing its concern with whether the individual or the collective concept should be privileged to a focus on how political practices *individualises* certain threats, thereby locating them outside of the public, political realm while others are viewed as collective concerns.[73]

## Conclusion

Although a full-fledged analysis of the Pakistani case cannot be accomplished within this article, let me, finally, illustrate how the theoretical insights from Butler's work might be applied more concretely in a security analysis. If we begin by asking what is being embodied through the speech act, not 'to say that there is discursive construction on the one hand and a lived body on the other', but to investigate the discursive constructions of bodies, and the bodily enactment of discourses, there are at least two sets of practices that would be of importance: the dominant political-legal-religious discourse on women and the practices of

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71. Ibid., 27.
72. On individuality and death, see William E. Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 16-19.
73. See also Michael C. Williams, 'Identity and the Politics of Identity', *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 2 (1998): 204-25 and Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman*.

punishment.[74] The former discourse is not necessarily what we would describe as a security discourse within the vocabulary of the Copenhagen School. It is quite possible to draft legal documents without resorting to the drama of existential threats, survival, and extra-ordinary measures of security discourses; in other words, reading these texts might not in and of themselves allow us to identify instances of securitization. But if we change the focus to ask how this discourse inscribes subjectivity, we get quite a different picture. While the texts in question might not securitize 'women', they have significant effects in terms of the proscription of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, and through this proscription they constitute, or arrest the meaning of being a 'woman'. One might, therefore, see this as an instance of how identity is congealed through a particular legal-religious-political practice.

But this discourse does not 'only' operate at the textual level. Although this is perhaps a banal point, practices of punishment such as stoning to death, flogging, bride burning, and various forms of honour killings are targeted against the body. Seen in a larger, societal context the textual discourse is accompanied by bodily threats which 'exceed' the speech act while being connected to it at the same time. The result is a discourse, identifiable at the level of legal-political-religious texts as well as in the formally and informally sanctioned practices, which simultaneously constitutes and endangers female bodies through the construction of a particular 'proper-improper' subjectivity.

In the case of honour killings in Pakistan, it might be tempting to interpret the gender-based insecurities in individual terms precisely because the strategy chosen by the women themselves appears in most cases to be individual: keeping what occurred 'to oneself', or, constructing oneself as responsible for the situation. But if we approach the security discourse and the bodily threats as instances of *individualising practices*, we see that while these practices are directed at particular individuals they are simultaneously producing, and relying upon, collective fear. The arbitrary nature surrounding these practices implies that numerous women in principle could be targeted, that the women at risk constitute a much larger group than the ones actually punished. Targeting individuals, rather than a collectivity produces not only an environment of fear, it internalises this fear within the individual.[75] The political-legal-religious establishment's successful construction of women's security in individual terms renders the formulation of a collective response exceedingly difficult. To conclude from this that what we have is a matter of 'individual security' would be to bow to the practices which produce this individualisation in the first place and to fail to see how the 'strategic response' of the silent women is located within a broader social structure.

Current security debate has identity written all over it. Yet it is surprising to find so little engagement with gender outside of the feminist literature. The absence of

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74. Irene Costera Meijer and Baukje Prins, 'How Bodies Come to Matter: An Interview with Judith Butler', *Signs* 23, no. 2 (1998): 282.

75. Campbell, *Writing Security*, 253-56.

gender in the Copenhagen School's recent work is symptomatic of this pattern, but it also provides us with a good starting point for an investigation of why even those willing to expand the concept of security do not seem compelled to explore gender-based security conceptually or politically. If we situate this absence within the larger security studies debate, however, it becomes apparent that what is at stake is not simply the question of whether the concept of security should be expanded or not, but how certain threats achieve such a political saliency that they become the subject of security policies.[76]

I have argued that an understanding of gender-based security problems requires a more thorough and critical investigation of the speech act than carried out by the Copenhagen School. 'Security' is not only a speech act, but embedded in the production of particular subjectivities which then form the basis for what can be articulated as threat and threatened. It has to be acknowledged that if security is a speech act, then it is simultaneously deeply implicated in the production of silence: all speech involves an attempt to fix meaning, to define a particular situation and the subjects within it, and any successful speech act implies as a consequence the exclusion of other possible constructions of meaning. Silence is a powerful political strategy that internalises and individualises threats thereby making resistance and political mobilisation difficult. The turn to security as a practice rather than as a concept facilitates a *political* analysis of the way in which security discourses come to gain the authority necessary to define threats and strategies to counter them.

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76. See also Michael C. Williams, 'Modernity, Identity, and Security: A Comment on the Copenhagen Controversy', *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (1998): 435-39.