

# Same Old (Macro-) Securitization? A Comparison of Political Reactions to Major Terrorist Attacks in the United States and France

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## Abstract

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*After the November 2015 terror attacks in Paris, the French government reacted swiftly by declaring a state of emergency. This state of emergency remained in place for over two years before it was ended in November 2017, only after being replaced by the new anti-terror legislation. The attacks as well as the government's reactions evoked parallels to 9/11 and its aftermath. This is a puzzling observation when taking into consideration that the Bush administration's reactions have been criticized harshly and that the US 'War on Terror' (WoT) was initially considered a serious failure in France. We can assume that this adaptation of the discourse and practices stems from a successful establishment of the WoT macro-securitization. By using Securitization Theory, we outline the development of this macro-securitization by comparing its current manifestation in France against the backdrop of its origins in the US after 9/11. We analysed securitizing moves in the discourses, as well as domestic and international emergency measure policies. We find extensive similarities with view of both; yet there are differing degrees of securitizing terrorism and the institutionalisation of the WoT in the two states. This suggests that the WoT narrative is still dominant internationally to frame the risk of terrorism as an existential threat, thus enabling repressive actions and the obstruction of a meaningful debate about the underlying problems causing terrorism in the first place.*

## Introduction

The beginning of 2015 was overshadowed by terror in France, as two Al-Qaeda linked gunmen killed twelve people in an attack on the French satire magazine “Charlie Hebdo” on 7 January in Paris. The following day, another attacker murdered four people and held fifteen hostages in a Jewish supermarket. That same year in November, the French capital was struck again: 130 people were killed and 350 injured as a result of bombings and shootings taking place across Paris. The French government reacted swiftly by declaring a state of emergency, which was renewed five times before it was replaced by new anti-terror legislation in November 2017. The day after the terrorist acts, President Hollande announced that he considered the attacks not as crimes, but as acts of war (Hollande 2015<sub>a</sub>).

The reactions evoked parallels to 11 September 2001 and its aftermath. The discourse of ‘a French 9/11’ (cf. Libération 2015) was picked up by the media, as well as by academic analysts such as Christian Lequesne, who claimed that “[s]imilar to the 9/11 events in the USA, the Paris terrorist attacks [...] have changed the relationship between French society and security” (2016: 306). Especially the drastic restriction of civil liberties in the state of emergency is remindful of the “USA PARTIOT Act”. Moreover, the increased number of airstrikes in Syria invokes parallels to the US global ‘War on Terror’ (WoT), as does President Hollande’s rhetoric. This indicates the establishment of a shared understanding of (global) threat and how to deal with it, or in analytical terms, macro-securitization.

Drawing on the assumption that “danger is not an objective condition” (Campbell 1992: 2), but rather an interpretation of risk allowing for certain actions to be taken; neither the reading of, nor the measures taken after a “terrorist” attack are universally predetermined. Thus, the reactions that we can observe in the US and France are the result of linking and interpreting the events as an essential threat to their own imagined community, i.e. the state. However, alternative interpretations and actions would have been possible. One such alternative would have been criminal prosecution, instead of taking the path of the so-called WoT. Buzan (2008: 560) comments on this alternative, stating that “[i]f the response to terrorism is constructed in terms of criminality rather than war, then open civil societies

will have to adjust to terrorism by accepting a certain level of disruption and casualties as the price of freedom<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, the US and its allies' reactions to 9/11 are widely regarded as a military failure. Thus, one should expect the French reactions to differ from those of the US regarding the attacks on 9/11 particularly with the hindsight of over a decade. While these similarities seem puzzling at first, our hypothesis is that they are the result of the acceptance of the WoT as macro-securitization: a global framework and "overarching conflict" (Buzan and Waeber 2009: 253) which structures international as well as domestic security. Initially, France contested the establishment of the WoT as a macro-securitization, especially in the case of the Iraq War 2003. However, it has since started to link its own security issues to the WoT securitization. This encompasses the characterisation of terrorist attacks as 'acts of war' and the willingness to accept them as legitimisation for military action abroad. Moreover, political challenges, such as the integration of migrants from former colonies and their descents, are moved into the realm of security. In contrast to the US, France's securitizing actors will have to address their countries security within the EU framework, potentially leading to a spill-over of security measures to other EU countries. To examine this hypothesis and explore the reactions in a focused and structured manner, we apply the Securitization Theory, analysing speech acts and emergency measures. This allows us to uncover linkages between state-level and macro-level securitization, thus shedding light on the interpretations and practices that follow from linking the attacks to the WoT. The article's emphasis is placed on securitizing moves, identified by employing a discourse analysis, and emergency measures, analysed through the screening of new legal prescriptions (domestic level) as well as foreign policy decisions.

### **Methodology and structure of the article**

Based on our theoretical framework, we conducted a discourse analysis (cf. Buzan et al. 1998: 176). The selection of texts as primary sources for our analysis follows Buzan et al.'s requirements, which state that "if a security discourse is operative in this community, it should be expected to materialize in this text because this occasion is sufficiently

1 A concrete example of a government 'resisting' a politically tempting macro-securitization is demonstrated by Watson (2013).

important” (1998: 177). Texts were selected based on our heuristic judgment concerning the importance of each text for the public discourse. We define the US and the French government as the securitizing actors. Dealing with a presidential and a semi-presidential system in our cases, we prioritized presidential statements by George W. Bush and Francois Hollande. Furthermore, in the US case, we focused on statements by Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld. Accordingly, in the case of France we included speeches by Prime Minister Manuel Valls, Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius and Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian. The period of analysis encompasses 14 November 2015 to 15 July 2016. The cited passages represent only a sample of the analysed material, i.e. illustrations of arguments made in the texts. In light of the well-documented case of the Bush administration, we drew on the existing literature (cf. Jackson 2005; Buzan 2006; Hodges 2011; Donnelly 2013; Oren and Solomon 2015; van Rythoven 2016), whereas in the French case we used mostly primary sources.

The texts were read, scanned and coded for security moves. We looked at each case separately and, rather than creating categories a priori, we chose an inductive approach to avoid the reproduction of preformed ideas of how ‘securitization’ would unfold in the cases at hand. In doing so, we avoided co-determining the results by using deductive categories or by applying the categories derived in one case to the other. Thus, we generated independent results for each case, which we compared afterwards. In the subsequent section, we provide an overview of our theoretical framework. We then move on to the empirical part of this paper, firstly addressing the case of the US, secondly the French one, which is followed by a discussion of our findings. We chose to compare the Paris attacks and the attacks on 9/11, as we see the later one as the hour of birth of the current macro-securitization of the WoT<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, we used it as a methodological anchor point against which to assess the adaptation of the macro-securitization in the recent case of France.

2 During the last 17 years, the US WoT securitization itself has shifted, as the Obama administration promised a new approach to counterterrorism. However, research suggests that the WoT priorities and practices remained in place (or were even intensified, like targeted killings with drones) (cf. Cutler 2017) and so did the main frameworks and narratives of the WoT (cf. McCrisken 2011; Jackson 2013; Hodges 2013).

## Securitization and macro-securitization

Since the theory's explicit composition in *Buzan et al. 1998*, the model has been continuously applied and further developed. The subject of terrorism, in particular the so-called WoT, (e.g. Buzan 2006; Roe 2008; Salter 2011, Aradau and van Munster 2009; Bright 2012) and the topic of migration (e.g. Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006) formed the empirical centre of the securitization debate. Apart from the concrete application of the theory, there are numerous works concerned with the theoretical framework and the theory's development (e.g.: Williams 2011; Stritzel 2011; Roe 2008; Huysmans 2011; Albert and Buzan 2011; Wæver 1995, 1999, 2011; Floyd 2016).

Buzan et al. define issues as *politicised* if they are part of regular public policy and debate and require actions by the government. Issues are defined as *securitized* if they are depicted and accepted as posing an existential threat requiring emergency measures (Buzan et al. 1998: 21). Following the logic of existential threats and survival, every other problem loses its significance if this issue cannot be solved first and foremost (Buzan et al. 1998: 24). The *referent objects* are the collectives that can be depicted as being existentially threatened (Buzan et al. 1998: 21). While states or nations are the most common, the theory allows for a variety of potential referent objects (Buzan et al 1998: 21). *Securitizing actors* are those entities who declare a referent object as existentially threatened:

*A securitizing actor is s.o., or a group, who performs the securitizing speech act. Common players in this role are political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups. (Buzan et al 1998: 21)*

The *audience* is the entity at whom the securitizing move is directed. While the role of audience acceptance for a successful securitization is a much-debated subject (cf. Balzacq 2011: 8; Bright 2012; Floyd 2016), we assume that in order for a securitization to be successful, the audience has to at least partially accept the security measures, i.e. "it is accepted that some rules must be broken" (Bright 2012: 871). Roe (2008: 620) convincingly makes the case of a duality of the audience. In addition to the 'standard'-audience of the general public,

governmental securitizing moves are, in many cases, also directed at national representatives of the parliament. If only one of the audiences can be convinced, this process of partial securitization is coined as “rhetorical securitization” (Roe 2008: 633), full approval of the threat as well as the emergency measures poses an “active securitization” (Roe 2008:633).

Having successfully securitized an issue, the securitizing actor can take extraordinary measures. Examples are the absence of democratic rules and procedures and the restriction of certain rights. Following Bright, we assume that securitization measures might also be channelled into the legislative process, hence altering “the very structure of the legal system in the country” (Bright 2012: 875). The laws and legal structures (such as the new anti-terror legislation and the Department of Homeland Security) emerging from this channelling is what we refer to as the institutionalisation of securitization. Even though they were introduced following the formal rules, their material content would not be imaginable without the ‘exceptional threat’ (cf. Aradau and van Munster 2009: 698). Besides, these legal institutions also lead to everyday practices, such as policing certain individuals (Aradau and van Munster 2009), which would formerly have been considered exceptional.

The speech act constitutes the *securitizing move*. “[S]peech acts [...] do not ‘report on things,’ but rather ‘do things’” (Léonard and Kaunert 2011: 57). Thus, the “performative nature of language” (Huysmans 2011: 372) is the important characteristic of the act. It is the “specific rhetorical structure (survival, priority of action ‘because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy our failure’)” (Buzan et al. 1998: 26) that distinguishes regular political talk from securitizing moves. Balzacq (2011: 9) notes that the specific language used by securitizing actors is adjusted to the audience's experience of the particular issue. One thing all speech acts have in common is “a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return, and a possible way out” (Buzan et al. 1998: 33). In order to assess the success of securitizing moves, the analysis needs to take into account both the audience(s) and the *facilitating conditions*. “Facilitating conditions are the conditions under which the speech act works, in contrast to cases in which the act misfires or is abused” (Buzan et al. 1998: 32). After all, the centrality of the speech act for securitization “does not mean a study of the features of the threat itself is irrelevant. On the contrary, these

features rank high among the 'facilitating conditions' of the security speech act" (1998: 32).

### *Macro- vs. micro-securitization*

The idea of the so-called *macro-securitization*, presented by Buzan (2006; 2008; see also Buzan and Waever 2009), argues that there are securitizations on the international level, as opposed to the classic case of securitizations on the state level, that have an umbrella-like function. They can 'structure' international security (Buzan 2006: 1102) by enabling securitizing actors on lower levels to fit their securitizing moves into the larger picture painted by the overarching macro-securitization. Actors can "link their own local problems" (Buzan 2006: 1104) to the prevailing macro-securitization. The prime example, according to Buzan, is the Cold War, when several national and regional securitizations took place within the larger framework of the macro-securitizations of capitalism and communism.

As macro-securitizations work on the international and the state level, there are

*permanent tensions across the levels, and [the macro-securitisations] are vulnerable to breakdowns not just by desecuritisation of the macro-threat (or referent object) [...], but also by the middle level securitisation becoming disaffected with, or pulling away from, subordination to the higher level one [...] (Buzan and Waever 2009: 257).*

For instance, the WoT macro-securitization could be destabilised if other states came to perceive that the alleged joint fight against terrorism has more to do with particular US interests than with some global concern (Buzan and Waever 2009: 257).

While macro-securitizations in general proceed like state-level ones and should thus be studied "in terms of actors, audiences, speech acts and synergy with other actors and their securitisations [...]" (Buzan and Waever 2009: 257), they benefit from a certain vagueness. This allows them to function as an empty signifier. Hence, they can tie together various lower level and niche securitizations more easily.

Their referent objects are broader in nature than those of lower-level securitizations, thus they are suitable for a variety of audiences. In our case, while in a micro-securitization the nation is a common referent object, in the WoT macro-securitization civilisation itself is threatened. Accordingly, in this case, the security move might be directed at a regional or global audience, not just at a national one.

We propose looking at the two empirical cases of 9/11 and the terrorist attacks in France as part of a continuum. Can we regard the French reactions as continuation of the WoT? Buzan claims:

*The explicit 'long war' framing of the GWOt [Global War on Terror] is a securitizing move of potentially great significance. If it succeeds as a widely accepted, world-organizing macro-securitization it could structure global security for some decades, in the process helping to legitimize US primacy. (Buzan 2006: 1102).*

While the latter assertion must be questioned (the WoT has probably hurt 'US primacy' more than it helped to sustain it), the argument that a global anti-terror-securitization has an all-encompassing quality is still valid. Under the 'umbrella' of the macro-securitization, numerous governments all over the world have defended 'anti-terror' measures by resorting to the logic and rhetoric that has been at work in the US since 9/11. Thus, it seems that the idea has indeed 'succeeded'.

One more argument stands out with view to the US *and* the French case, as will be shown in the analysis below: the WoT "is mainly about the state versus *uncivil* society" (Buzan 2006: 1116). In a globalized world, the "traditional Hobbesian domestic security agenda gets pushed up to the international level" (Buzan 2006: 1116). Buzan claims that, due to the nature of the threat and of liberal society; every possible reaction to counter this threat necessarily constitutes a securitization. "In each case, the necessary action requires serious compromising of liberal values" (Buzan 2006: 1116.). Our analysis contributes to answering the question of whether the anti-terror-narrative "is pervasive and dynamic enough and whether the other necessary factors are in place to make the GWOt a durable macro-securitisation" (Buzan and Wæver 2009: 266).



## Securitization in the US after 9/11

The securitization that took place in the US in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks (is widely accepted as a prime example of the Copenhagen School's approach (cf. Buzan 2006; Donnelly 2013; Oren and Solomon 2015; van Rythoven 2016). A range of emergency actions were enacted in the subsequent weeks and months after the attacks, which had been carried out by 19 hijackers (among them 15 Saudi-Arabians) and cost the lives of 2,977 people. On the legislative level, the USA PATRIOT Act was adopted by an overwhelming majority in the US Congress. It was signed into law by President Bush on 26 October 2001, just three days after it had been introduced at the House of Representatives. This anti-terror legislative package included measures to restrict civil liberties, introduce additional surveillance, increase border controls, as well as measures for a widely increased authority for intelligence agencies. It also enabled the US to detain suspects of terrorism without due process at the US military's Guantanamo Bay camp. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security, under which several domestic anti-terror authorities were bundled, is directly linked to the events of 9/11 and constitutes an important element of the Bush administration's institutionalization of the WoT. The department still exists and, as of 2016, employs 240.000 people (Department of Homeland Security 2016).

In view of the securitizing moves there are four distinct types stand out. Firstly, the Bush administration categorized the *terrorist attacks as acts of war*. On 15 September 2001, President Bush, at Camp David, declared:

*I am going to describe to our leadership what I saw: the wreckage of New York City, the signs of the first battle of war. Make no mistake about it: underneath our tears is the strong determination of America to win this war. [...] We're at war. There has been an act of war declared upon America by terrorists, and we will respond accordingly. (Bush 2001<sub>o</sub>).*

On 9 October 2001, the President stated, "[t]he first shot of the new war of the 21st century was fired September the 11th. The first battle is being waged; but it's only one of a long series of battles" (Bush 2001<sub>p</sub>). On another occasion, he noted that the WoT would not be a war in the common meaning of the term: "[t]

he mind-set of war must change. It is a different type of battle. It's a different type of battlefield. It's a different type of war" (Bush 2001<sub>d</sub>). Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld, picked up on this argument in an Op-Ed in the New York Times on 27 September 2001, noting that "this will be a war like none other our nation has faced. [...] Even the vocabulary of this war will be different" (Rumsfeld 2001). The domestic consequences of such a war were foreshadowed by Bush, when he declared:

*This is a different war from any our nation has ever faced, a war on many fronts, against terrorists who operate in more than 60 different countries. And this is a war that must be fought not only overseas, but also here at home. [...] We've added a new era, and this new era requires new responsibilities, both for the government and for our people. (Bush 2001<sub>d</sub>)*

This classification has far-reaching consequences. During times of war, everything is subordinate to the goal of prevailing over the enemy. In the domestic field, the rally-round-the-flag effect often closes the ranks between the opposition and the government in power. After the 9/11, Bush benefited enormously from this effect, as well as from the omnipresent call for presidential leadership (Rudolf 2005: 10). On an administrative level, the focus of anti-terrorism measures shifted from the predominantly civilian sphere to primarily military means.

The second strand of argument concerns the *orientation towards worst-case scenarios*. On 26 October 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell, in remarks to NGO leaders at a conference hosted at the State Department, described the danger resulting from global terrorism as a "threat to civilization" and as a "threat to the very essence of what you do" (Powell 2001). President Bush, in his special address to Congress on 20 September 2001, spoke of a "threat to our way of life" (Bush 2001<sub>d</sub>). On 8 November 2001, he declared in a speech that "[w]e are the target of enemies who boast they want to kill, kill all Americans, kill all Jews and kill all Christians" (Bush 2001<sub>d</sub>). The terrorists are, thus, not only fighting against America, but also against Judaism and Christianity. As Jackson points out, Colin Powell on several occasions called Osama Bin Laden "unfaithful" (Powell 2001, cited from Jackson 2005: 65) and even went as far as claiming that the terrorists "[...] believe in no faith. They have adherence to no religion" (Powell 2001, cited from Jackson 2005: 65). Jackson

also highlights the parallel between this element of the WoT and the Cold War (Jackson 2005: 65.), in which the communists were depicted as godless atheists. Hence, well established elements from the old macro-securitization are reused to build the new one.

Furthermore, Bush alleged that “[t]housands of dangerous killers, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning” (Bush 2002<sub>a</sub>). Vice President Cheney (2003), in referring to the ‘weapons’ used on 9/11, explained:

*The attack on our country forced us to come to grips with the possibility that the next time terrorists strike, they may well be armed with more than just plane tickets and box cutters. The next time, they might direct chemical agents or diseases at our population or attempt to detonate a nuclear weapon in one of our cities. These are not abstract matters to ponder. They are very real dangers that we must guard against and confront before it's too late. (Cheney 2003)*

The uncertainty which was connected to the alleged threats and to what might happen if these menaces were not eliminated, contributed to the elevation of the threat perception. In the case of the WoT, some points stood out in that regard: one argument claims that terrorists would destroy liberty and the (Western) ‘way of living’; another mentioned the fear of the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which could have devastating consequences; and the third strand of argument, prevalent in the discourse of the Bush administration post-9/11, is the *construction of a link between terrorism and so-called “rogue states”*. Even asymmetric conflicts take place in the territories of states; whether the training of fighters or suicide killers in so-called terror camps, as was the case in Afghanistan and Pakistan, or the planning and execution of terror plots. Establishing a link between terrorist organizations and their ‘host’ countries, was one way to justify the missions conducted by the US in these countries.

Already on 11 September 2001, Bush declared in his address to the nation, “[w]e will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them” (Bush 2001<sub>f</sub>). At a press conference on 11 October 2001, Bush made

clear that the WoT would also be targeted at the governments of other states, a “war against all those who seek to export terror and a war against those governments that support or shelter them” (Bush 2001<sub>g</sub>). The argument culminated in the assertion of the Bush administration that certain countries formed the “axis of evil” by supporting terrorism and striving for WMD (Bush 2002<sub>a</sub>). This served as a major securitizing move in the securitization of Iraq as an existential threat and was crucial for justifying the Iraq War of 2003.

A fourth strand of argument constitutes the *assertion of the necessity for ‘pre-emptive strikes’*; menaces must be countered before they materialize because the gravity of the threat does not allow for a wait-and-see approach. Especially in conjunction with the argument on the potential use of WMD by terrorists or states forming the “axis of evil,” this strand of argument, which became known as the “Bush Doctrine”, served to further justify the invasion of Iraq. In a speech at the West Point military academy on 1 June 2002, Bush declared that:

*[d]eterrence [...] means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies (Bush 2002<sub>v</sub>).*

In summary, the Bush administrations’ securitizing moves were characterised by the classification of the attacks as acts of war, the orientation towards worst case scenarios, a link between terrorism and so-called rouge states and the necessity for pre-emptive strikes. At the same time, terrorists were depicted as uncivilised, unfaithful barbarians. We now turn to the French case to analyse similarities and discontinuities of this case of securitizing terrorism.

### **Securitization in France after the November 2015 terror attacks**

In a series of terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 and 14 November 2015, 130 people were killed, while 350 more were injured (FIDH 2016). The nine perpetrators belonged to a terrorist cell in Brussels; they were EU citizens with either French or Belgian nationality.

In addition to some instant measures, directed at the immediate threat during the attacks (i.a. closing of the airport Paris-Orly, shut-down of parts of the Paris subway system), President Hollande declared the state of emergency by decree in the whole country (cf. Legifrance 2015). This happened for the first time in this all-encompassing form since the Algerian War over 50 years ago, constituting a historic event. The state of emergency became active at midnight, merely two and a half hours after the first detonations at the football stadium *Stade de France* (cf. Reuters 2015). Historically, the French state of emergency was envisioned to have an option between the normal state and the state of siege. It needs to be upheld by parliament if it is in place for more than 12 days (cf. Le Monde 2015) and is intended in case of an 'immediate threat resulting from severe attacks on the public order, which due to their nature and their severity, can be characterized as public imminence'<sup>3</sup> (Loi n° 55-385 1955). The promulgation of the state of emergency granted the authorities extraordinary rights to restrict certain civil liberties.

Overall, the state of emergency was prolonged by the parliament five times, before it finally ended in November 2017 and was replaced by new anti-terrorism legislation. Facilitating conditions for the continuous prolongation were the terror attack in Nice on 14 July 2015 and the presidential elections in 2016. The new bill transferred parts of the extended executive rights during the state of emergency into regular legislation.

During the state of emergency, the government had advocated for a law that would have made it possible to take away French citizenship from "people with dual citizenship who have been convicted of terrorism-related crimes" (The New York Times 2016). However, the attempt was strongly contested in the legislative process and ultimately abandoned. However, new laws that were adopted grant police and other law enforcement more competences including: the use of deadly force when encountering terror suspects; the possibility to put suspects under house arrest after their return from conflict areas in Syria and Iraq; and additional use of surveillance technology "that had been available only to intelligence agencies" (The New York Times 2016). A human rights report conducted by

3 "L'état d'urgence peut être déclaré sur tout ou partie du territoire métropolitain, des départements d'outre-mer, des collectivités d'outre-mer régies par l'article 74 de la Constitution et en Nouvelle-Calédonie, soit en cas de péril imminent résultant d'atteintes graves à l'ordre public, soit en cas d'événements présentant, par leur nature et leur gravité, le caractère de calamité publique" (Loi n° 55-385).

international experts on the practices of the state of emergency for the period between 14 November and 13 May 2016, found that the authorities heavily used their extended scope (cf. FIDH 2016). Albeit, the effects were meagre; “some 3,600 warrantless searches and 400 house arrests have resulted in a mere six terrorism-related criminal investigations” (The New York Times 2016). Only one of them resulted in a prosecution (cf. The New York Times 2016). Nevertheless, the new legislation adopted the possibility of preventive house searches and interrogations (cf. Rescan 2017).

Under the new law, authorities can declare certain places or events ‘security areas’, as well as frisk individuals and their belongings. House arrests based on executive demand are no longer legal, but suspects can be ordered to stay within their community. Finally, executive authorities can shut down religious institutions for up to six months if hate, violence or discrimination is encouraged in those places. The law is applicable until 2020, when parliament will decide anew about the expanded executive competences. (cf. Le Monde 2017). Critics of the new law see it as a ‘permanent state of emergency’<sup>4</sup> (Le Monde 2017).

Further emergency measures included the temporal reintroduction of border controls; in accordance with the Schengen agreement which grants the possibility to do so in emergency situations. In April 2018, the border controls were prolonged and are now to end in October 2018. Besides, on 17 November 2015, France was the first EU member state to requested support by invoking the mutual assistance clause of the EU treaty which states that “[i]f a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power [...]” (Treaty on the European Union, Art. 42: 7). Thus, the terrorist attacks were defined as an armed aggression on its territory. Answering this call for EU solidarity does not have to come in form of direct military assistance. In this way, the EU treaty gives more leeway than NATO’s Article 5. Rather than triggering an automated response, the affected country can request aid in bilateral negotiations. France was granted support from its European partners in other missions to free the resources, deemed necessary to fight the terrorist

4 “L’état d’urgence permanent”.

threat. Germany, for instance, pledged to increase its military presence in Mali in order to disburden France.

On the foreign policy level, France intensified its military commitment against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, escalating its air campaign to Syrian targets and striking the terrorist organization's capital, Raqqa (cf. The Guardian 2015). In his speech to both houses of parliament on 16 November 2015, President Hollande announced that "France will step up its operations in Syria. [...]" (Hollande 2015.).

The range and scope of measures adopted and enacted since the Paris terror attacks constitute extraordinary measures in the understanding of the Securitization Theory. The condition of substance is thus met. It must be acknowledged that, apart from the very first declaration of the state of emergency, all emergency measures were duly approved by democratic means through the *Assemblée nationale* and the French Senate. However, the speed and unanimity in which new laws and the state of emergency were adopted indicates that securitization took place. For instance, the prolongation of the *état d'urgence* after the attack in Nice only took five days (cf. Reuters 2016). This clearly poses a case of "actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure" (Buzan et al. 1998: 24). The fact that the decision was taken with vast majority in both chambers of parliament suggests strong political will or even pressure to affirm the executive's standpoint. Strong parallels between the French and the US case can be observed in regard to this point (see above, adoption of the USA PATRIOT Act). Yet, the fact that the government's plans to change the constitution ultimately failed, due to resistance in parliament, shows that the government was not handed a *carte blanche* to do whatever it deemed appropriate. The interpretation of the parliament's role in granting emergency measures is further complicated by the fact that the country's major opposition party, *Les Républicains*, is generally regarded as more hawkish with view to national security than the socialists. For example, former President and contender for the presidential elections 2017 Nicolas Sarkozy made headlines in 2016 by calling for even more drastic counter-terrorism measures, such as mandatory electronic tags for "anyone showing signs of being radicalized" (The Guardian 2016). The measures were not uncontested and subjected to international criticism in the media. The *New York Times* editorial board stated that "[t]hese changes will

do nothing to help France fight terrorism — it already has sweeping counterterrorism laws — and may do permanent damage to the very things the Islamic State wishes to destroy: France’s democratic freedoms and its social cohesion” (The New York Times 2016). The newspaper was also concerned by the alleged misuse of police authority, as “[t]he state of emergency has been abusively used to put environmental and labor-law activists under house arrest” (The New York Times 2016).

Nevertheless, the French public seems to have widely accepted the measures taken by the government. Two months after the first proclamation of the state of emergency, 77 percent of the French agreed that it was justified (cf. Clavel 2016). In a different study published in June 2016, only 14 percent were in favour of ending the state of emergency, while 48 percent supported *tightening* it (cf. Institut d’Études Opinion et Marketing en France et à l’International 2016: 9). The military commitment in Syria was supported by the French public even before the attacks in November 2015. In a poll published in September 2015, 56 percent of the respondents were in favour of deploying ground troops (cf. L’express 2015). After the attacks, 62 percent of the respondents in a different poll approved the military intervention in Syria (cf. Le Parisien 2015). However, the form of the intervention (ground troops or airstrikes) was not specified and the respondents were most likely referring to the airstrikes that Hollande had announced.

With view to Roe’s classification, the French case amounts to a full “active securitization” (2008: 633), which is supported by both the public as well as the legislative. Moreover, in the case of macro-securitization, one also has to consider the international audience. The fact that security acts, such as the reintroduction of border controls, were approved by the other members of the European Union indicates that the WoT framing was accepted, hence legitimatising the measures. In the subsequent section, we will illustrate how the dual audience’s acceptance has been obtained discursively.

#### *Securitizing moves in the French discourse*

The analysis of the French discourse, after the Paris attacks of November 2015, reveals a clear attempt by the French government to securitize the issue. All in all, the speech acts communicate an extreme urgency that is stressed many times.



The “way out” (Buzan et al. 1998: 33) is presented in detail by the various concrete emergency measures that are announced in the statements. A few strands of arguments stand out when we take a closer look at the securitizing moves performed by the French securitizing actors. The first one is the striking presentation of the terrorist attacks as acts of war (see also Bogain 2017). President Hollande went on national TV the first time while the attacks were still on-going. When he informed the public about the state of emergency, on this occasion, he spoke of the terrorists as “criminals” (Hollande 2015b).

In a statement issued just one day after the attacks, President Hollande introduced the WoT rhetoric:

*...what happened yesterday in Paris at Stain-Denis near the Stade de France is an act of war and faced with war, the country has to take the appropriate action. It's an act of war committed by a terrorist army, Daesh, a jihadist army, against France, against the values that we defend in the entire world, against who we are, a free country that speaks to the whole world. It's an act of war that was prepared, organised, planned from the exterior, with internal collusion. (Hollande 2015<sub>a</sub>).*

In his speech before both houses of parliament two days later, Hollande (2015b) repeated this claim, which Prime Minister Valls also supported in a TV interview the day after the attacks (cf. Valls 2015<sub>a</sub>).

Faced with these “acts of war,” President Hollande (2015<sub>c</sub>) as well as Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius (2015) called for unity and calm (“sang-froid”). Like Bush in 2001, Hollande draws the conclusion that France is facing a new type of war and enemy and calls for new ways of dealing with this “emergency”:

*But this is a different kind of war; we are facing a new kind of adversary. A constitutional scheme is needed to deal with this emergency. (Hollande 2015<sub>c</sub>)*

However, it remains unclear how this “war” is different from the one that — purportedly — started fourteen years ago, with 11 September 2001. Even though France had not been struck by terror on such a large scale before, the phenomenon of Islamic Terrorism is hardly new, considering France experienced

different forms of Islamic terrorism from the 1980s onward (cf. Rieker 2017: 134). It is, therefore, remarkable that the French president chose to describe it in such a way.

The second strand of argument is related to the depiction of the securitizing subject, the entity that (allegedly) poses an existential threat to the referent object. Unlike in the WoT discourse surrounding the Bush administration, in which the enemy remained diffuse, the French administration explicitly and repeatedly names ISIS as the enemy that needs to be fought and eliminated (cf. Hollande 2015c; Valls 2015b). On the one hand, the state-like qualities of ISIS are stressed when speaking about a “jihadist army” (Hollande 2015c). The terrorist threat is linked to certain regions such as Iraq and Syria, which Hollande calls “the largest breeding ground for terrorists that the world has ever known” (Hollande 2015c; see also Valls 2015b), but also to the Sahel and Central Africa (cf. Le Drian 2016). Yet, the states themselves are *not* described as ‘rogue states’, but as victims of terrorism themselves. Thus, terrorism can be interpreted as the enemy of statehood itself. Therefore, according to Hollande, the interventions in Mali and Iraq became necessary to fight the terrorists’ destruction of state sovereignty (cf. Hollande 2015c). On the other hand, analogous to the US discourse following 9/11, the enemy is described as essentially barbaric and uncivilised, thus fundamentally different from the Self. This essentialisation is represented in Hollande’s statement that “[i]t cannot be said that we are engaged in a war of civilizations, for these assassins do not represent one” (Hollande 2015c). The terrorists are contemptuously depicted as “coward murderers” and “barbarians” (Hollande 2015c).

While Hollande portrayed France as existentially threatened, he added a global dimension by declaring: “[w]e are in a war against jihadist terrorism that threatens the entire world, not just France (Hollande 2015c.; see also Fabius 2015). The reactions to the attacks, such as the illumination of many European landmarks in the colour of the French flag as well as the statements of world leader, highlighted the (perceived) international dimension of the attacks. US President Obama strengthened this perception on an international level by stating:

*This is an attack not just on Paris, it's an attack not just on the people of France, but this is an attack on all of humanity*

*and the universal values that we share. (Obama 2015)*

This notion was repeated by President Hollande three days later, with a stronger emphasis on France's exceptionalism:

*And the 'Tricolor' of the French flag has adorned the most famous landmarks, reminding us that France has always been a beacon of humankind. And that when it is attacked, the whole world is thrown for a while into a shadow. (Hollande 2015.)*

France has been attacked because it embodies certain values, "[w]hat we are defending is our homeland, but it's much more than that. It's the values of humanity" (Hollande 2015a); France and its whole way of life, its *l'art de vivre*, its love of culture, sport and celebrations, its diversity, are at stake:

*On Friday, the terrorists' target was France as a whole. France, which values life, culture, sports, celebrations. France, which makes no distinction as to color, origin, background, religion. The France that the assassins wanted to kill was that of its young people in all their diversity. [...] What the terrorists were attacking was the France that is open to the world. Among the victims were several dozen of our foreign friends, representing 19 different nationalities. (Hollande 2015.)*

Prime Minister Manuel Valls used the same rhetorical patterns when he addressed the French Senat on 20 November 2015 and the parliament on 25 November 2015. His statement also repeated other strands of arguments described above, as he called the conflict a 'war' the terrorists 'barbarians' (Valls 2015c).

The rhetoric and argumentation used by the French actors fits perfectly into the macro-securitization of the WoT: No country is alone in the war against jihadist terrorism. Moreover, "the GWoT tries to embrace in its self-understanding 99.9 per cent of the global population: all civilised or wanting-to-be-civilised people (all but the terrorists themselves)" (Buzan and Wæver 2009: 264-265). The young, open-minded and sophisticated France described by Hollande and Valls is the complete opposite of the uncivilised barbarism which is ascribed to the terrorists. The assassins are linked to ISIS, which itself is described as being centred in Syria, and can, thus, be characterized as an

external threat. Nevertheless, Hollande concedes that at least some of the perpetrators were French nationals: "It hurts to say it, but we know that these were French people who killed other French people on Friday" (Hollande 2015c). However, the French President did not use this remark as a starting point to dwell on political or social reasons (such as the failed integration policy in France) or structures that might lead to the radicalisation of young French citizens, instead depicting them as isolated cases of criminal minds who do not really belong to France. "Living here in our land are individuals who start out by committing crimes, become radicalized, and go on to become terrorists" (Hollande 2015c). Consequently, Hollande called for the possibility to strip terrorists of their French nationality, even if they were born in France. While the description of the enemy as a well-organised army on the one hand and uncivilised on the other seems contradictory, in the context of securitization it permits the construction of a highly dangerous foe which needs to be eliminated at all costs (cf. Jackson 2005: 67). The construction of ISIS as a "foreign other" paves the way for counterterror measures on foreign territory with military means. The ascribed high degree of organisation multiplies the threat, and the term "army" perfectly fits into the narrative of the WoT; the depiction of the enemy as "barbaric" and devoid of any culture is necessary to fundamentally separate the enemy from the referent object that represents liberal values. In this context, the proclaimed necessity for *total destruction of the foe* (and far-reaching emergency measures) in order to ensure the survival of the referent object becomes clear. In his address to both chambers of the French parliament on 16 November 2015, Hollande made use of this kind of argument in a very pronounced manner. Several times during his speech, he spoke of the necessity "to destroy ISIS" (Hollande 2015c). Renouncing the possibility to contain ISIS, he declared "[t]here is no question of containing it. This organization must be destroyed" (Hollande 2015c). This resembles Bush's argument that containment is not an option in the WoT. In the following section, we will summarise our findings and discuss the similarities and differences between the US and the French case.

## Discussion

Overall, we note that there is indeed a list of measures taken by France that can be subsumed under the Copenhagen School's theoretical term of 'emergency or extraordinary measures'. With regard to the French discourse after the November 2015 attacks in Paris, there are various speech acts that constitute securitizing moves. Thus, like the Bush administration, the French government defined the situation as a 'war' and points to the conflict as posing a new, unprecedented kind of war.

This result indicates that the element of 'war' is adopted from the macro-securitization. However, even though the total destruction of the enemy is announced in both cases, there is little orientation toward 'worst-case scenarios' in the French case. While the enemy is still portrayed as foreign, with a clear geographical centre in the war zones of Syria and Iraq, the foes of the Bush administration are more diffuse, but also more broad, encompassing 'terrorists' as well as 'rogue states' in different world regions. While both governments proclaim to 'destroy' the enemies and thus eliminate all danger emanating from them, the Bush administration's securitizing moves go further by extremely dramatizing the situation, mostly by way of using worst-case scenarios that function to elevate the perceived level of threat. Correspondingly, the enacted emergency measures that are justified through each securitization differ in a substantial way: while Bush conducts a foreign policy of 'regime change' (the Iraq War 2003), the French military actions enacted in the process of the securitization in France amount to little more than symbolic bombings in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, the strengthening of the executive power at the expense of the legislative is much more profound in the US than in France. While the (institutionally much stronger) US Congress relinquished its power early on with the "use of force resolution" in 2002 and handed the Bush administration a *carte blanche* to break international law by starting the Iraq war, the French *Assemblée nationale* (which is usually weaker) held its own by opposing the constitutional changes that might have damaged international law.

Regarding the institutionalisation of securitizations, the repeatedly extended state of emergency and the new anti-terror laws in France show a parallel development to the US. The

institutionalisation, however, is not as far reaching as in the US, where securitization became permanent by way of creating the Department of Homeland Security. France's new law, in contrast, has a built-in 'expiration date', thus showing more reluctance to completely institutionalise its state of emergency.

On a macro-level, it shows that, against all odds, politicians in 2015, 14 years after 9/11, still proclaim to 'destroy' their terrorist enemies once and for all. Overall, the temptation of using the WoT narrative in order to stabilize the own identity and to justify violence against the out-group is strong (cf. Podvornaia 2013:78). Reacting in this way to Islamist terrorism is not limited to a particular country or bound to a particular national culture, but rather widespread. The narrative draws on well-established conceptions of the other, thus making the logic of the narrative easily accessible for a broad audience. By witnessing the events of 9/11 and the reactions in its aftermath, audiences seem to have been primed and new instances of terrorism can initiate a cascade all too familiar from past occasions; successful securitizing moves and emergency measures in the area of domestic politics as well as with view to security and foreign policies. The institutionalisation of the WoT and the embedment of national and/or regional securitizations of different forms of terrorism that can be observed today fit quite well into the macro-securitization framework that has been outlined above.

However, comparing the two cases also shows shifts in the macro-securitization itself. While the 'original' war on terror was also coined in religious terms and emphasized violent foreign policy actions, the French securitization did not include a dominant depiction of terrorists as unfaithful, nor was the foreign policy response as strong as in the US case. The debate focused less on pre-emptive strikes and more on dealing with the alien terrorist within and, hence, the surveillance inside the country. This shows the adaptation, as well as, the re-interpretation and re-construction of the macro-framework in the specific French circumstances. While one can observe these adaptations to the domestic context on the one hand, on the other hand, the findings indicate that given the facilitating conditions of the attacks in the own country, it was easy to link them to the macro-framework of the WoT. This indicates a strong, international allure of this specific macro-securitization.

## Conclusion

What follows from these findings? First of all, it shows the dangers of securitizing terrorism on the domestic level. The use of the narrative allows denying certain individuals to be “real French citizens” and, in the end, of being fully human (cf. Podvornaia 2013: 89). The self-other relations are reinforced and due to the ongoing state of emergency, racist practices resulting from this discourse are facilitated. Thus, a meaningful debate about underlying problems leading to terrorist actions (as well as about structural violence that might precede the terrorist one) is made impossible. The French case adds to the dangerous precedents of blurring the sensitive line between ‘emergency measures’ and ‘normal politics’.

On a theoretical level, it shows that the macro-securitization framework disposes over certain flexibility, as it allows linking other securitizations, such as migration and open borders in the French case, to the macro-level. Further research on macro-securitization should focus on which domestic securitizations are linked to the macro-framework of the WoT, and how. Similarly, investigation into the translation of the macro- to the micro-level framework would be fruitful. One aspect that could be especially productive in this context is; how dependent on historical domestic securitizations and concepts of terrorism is the successful implementation of the WoT? In other words, could the fact the terrorism in France has been seen as a threat stemming from Northern Africa, since the Algerian War, act as a facilitating condition in the adaption of the macro-securitization of the WoT? Furthermore, are countries that have established different narratives about what terrorism is (like German with the Red Army Fraction or Spain with ETA), more resilient to this framing? We think that investigating and comparing the European reactions to attacks in these ways might produce benefits on two levels. On the empirical level, it will add to our insight of the different securitization and hence reactions of European states to ‘terrorist’ attacks. On the theoretical level, it allows for further integrating more recent theoretical approaches, such as Stritzel (2011), with the Copenhagen School, contributing to our understanding of securitization on the domestic, as well as, on the international level.

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