The Sound of Silence: Voice, Security and the Mundane [v0.4 October 2013][1]

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Notes:
§ intersubjectivity? Meaning can arise without any intention; how do I integrate this in the argument? AN: I should make it CSS problem, I am only buying it into + I tend to put forth single entity as producer of meaning/what silence means intersubjectively (XG: the way in which it is constructed is a rapport de force)
§ Wilkinson on Kyrgyzstan and gestures
§ Booth quote on p. 187
§ tightening up the vocabulary: speaking, voicing, etc.
§ integrate Hansen 2012
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Note This manuscript is far from complete and the argument still sketchy (especially towards the end; apologies to whoever ventures to read this paper this far). It lacks its first section (but the argument there is really straightforward) and the last section is still a work in progress (lots of moving parts and many intuitions that need some solid grounding in the future). All elements in **boldface** are either thing that need to be addressed or developed (references, developments, etc.) or thing that need to be explored conceptually or theoretically. Note also that this manuscript will end up being two distinct contributions (one setting the stage of the argument, up to the end of section 2; and one putting forward the more theoretical argument that will be teased out in the former), but I wanted to keep the two together to build up fully the whole argument. Thank you for your understanding and apologies for the patchy and lengthy quality of this paper.

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Social and political life, even life itself, is almost universally premised on the ability to speak, to utter, on the sheer act of using the voice in order to establish this life on the first place. The voice is also essential in the constitution of social and political boundaries, identities and communities, or to express pleasures, desires, and sufferings (see Le Breton 2011). Since the so-called linguistic turn (REF), language has had a similar centrality in many approaches to social sciences and, by extension for this contribution, to security studies especially since the emergence of the so-called Copenhagen "school" (see Wæver 1989, 1995; on the inadequacy of the "school" terminology, see c.a.s.e. collective 2006). Accordingly, social and political realities are constituted through acts of language possessing a performative capability. This has translated for a (broadly understood) constructivist security studies in an emphasis on security as resulting from the ability by certain actors to speak (in)security; that is to say to define what a threat is (see Weldes et al. 1999), to define a specific situation as requiring extraordinary measures (see Buzan et al. 1998), or to (de)limit the conditions of possibility of the good life in a society (see Huysmans 1998, Booth REF). Even among more practice-oriented approaches to security (Bigo 1996, 2006), for which security emerges from the competition among security professionals in their engagement with/in a specific field, language remains an important factor in understanding what security, as a *dispositif*, does in making those subjected to it unable to voice their disagreement or alternative conceptions of the good life, as populations are pushed to exit their inherent right, through contestation or simply political participation, to define what the good life is (see Bigo and Tsoukala 2008).

This reliance on language, whether in terms of an ontology of security, its epistemology or its normative consequences has been criticized for largely excluding individuals or groups who could not be able to speak security for their own safety or protection because of gender power relations, or because their identification via gender has to be understood in complex inter-relations with other forms of potentially conflicting identifications (see Hansen 2000). Some agents are facing an almost structural inability or at least are restrained in their ability to speak and therefore have to remain silent, or are being silenced. This conceptualisation of silence, however, is still largely predicated on speech and reduces silence to the absence of speech, or to the inability to speak, which here is adequated to the

ability to voice, i.e. to show a form of resistance or at least political participation. The ontological, epistemic and normative premises to understand what security is or what security does are entirely premised on language, or the lack thereof. To paraphrase Roland Barthes, critical security studies are running the risk to take something that may not have been expressly produced to be a sign, silence, into one, that is the absence of speech/voice (see Barthes 2002: 54). Silence and speech are generally considered to be mutually exclusive, they cannot coexist alongside one another; more, one is ontologically, epistemologically and normatively prime to the other. The philosophical, rhetorical, sociological and political literature about silence however has clearly shown that silence and speech are at least co-constitutive and that silence has also an ontological, epistemic and normative autonomy in this co-constitution that one has to take into account (Ferguson 2003, Glenn 2004, **REFs**). In the words of Cheryl Glenn (2004: 7), speaking from the perspective of rhetorics,

"[Silence and speech] are inextricably linked and often interchangeably, simultaneously meaningful. Speech and silence depend upon each other: behind all speech is a silence, and silence surrounds all speech. ... The spoken and the unspoken reciprocate as they deliver often complementary rhetorical significance."

The aim of this contribution is to re-situate ontologically, epistemically and normatively silence in light of critical security studies reliance on speech. In doing so, I hope to open up the question of the mundane in security studies beyond the tropes of *active* participation, subjection and passivity, or even resistance, which have all been thus far premised on the ability to answer, to speak, to utter, and therefore to have, to be denied, or to reject to have a voice. To integrate the question of the mundane, through a theoretical engagement with silence, is a first step to open up the larger question of what is the political meaning of security for critical security studies. In this contribution, I not only contend that critical security studies are limited to a politics of hope when producing knowledge about security thus limiting in their theorizing or analytics the mundane disruption of security to a spectre, a haunting but nonetheless absent presence (see Huysmans and Guillaume 2013). I also contend that critical security studies are ultimately taking the "side of order" when engaging with security as an ontological, epistemic and normative phenomenon since they are abiding to a

conception of the social and the political which primarily is logocentric[2], hence privileging the "masters of the reality" (Boltanski 2012: 66) like the state.

Ultimately, therefore, critical security studies risks to abide to a form of unilateral recognition of the state as the only "master of the reality", and thus face the inability to engage with the mundane from the later's own situatedness (Haraway 1988). The argument presented in this paper first starts by a presentation of how one can map the primacy of language and voice in critical security studies. It then turn to silence and how it has been conceptualised within the field to show how silence is premised on the ability to voice, even though not on the primacy to (verbally) speak. I finally turn to silence as an event that is not necessarily to be conceptualised as the lack of voice, and relate it to considerations about everyday resistance in order to see what consequences this move has for our political understanding of security beyond its current logocentric conceptualisation.

1) The primacy of voicing: mapping critical security studies

[Note: this section is "just" a literature review section to highlight how speech and voice are central in critical security studies whether one is concerned about ontological, epistemological or normative considerations]

a The Copenhagen school and speech act

The constitution of referent objects of security through securitization that is to say that to become something worthy of protection from the state is conditioned on the success of a speech act; ergo the quality of being of a right to protection is co-extensive to a discourse about a) security and b) the referent object; it is what connect them together. Add something on the security continuum

[2] I am not using Jacques Derrida's concept of logocentrism *per se* (see Derrida 1967: 11-13, 23, 65-66, 104-106) but I would like to retain here one of its primary impetus which is to underline the absolute primacy of the voice, and hence of the activity of voicing, to inscribe a presence. Moreover, and more in line with Derrida, logocentrism reflects as well the lack of "ontological" difference between speech and writing when it comes to represent something, and hence to an inability to understand beyond what is expressed phonetically.

(Bigo) which can only happen also through their discursive linkage (media, reports, policy brief), even though a large part of the actual connection might happen via specific practical interactions among practitioners.

Question who can securitize? Elites → political process of convincing an audience that something is threatening and thus need to be taken care of beyond "normal rules" (those normal rules are debates, etc.) the exception is the momentaneous bracketing of speech

b Huysmans and the empty signifier

[language of (in)security is central in defining the limits of the political]

c performativity and security: implicit assumptions (include "Paris" and "Welsh")

What are the implications of this reliance of critical security studies on the performative power of the word or the normative necessity of the word? Jef Huysmans (2002) already attracted our attention to the normative dilemma existing when, as scholars or as practitioners, we write about security. In his words, "The normative dilemma thus consists of how to write or speak about security when the security knowledge risks the production of what one tries to avoid, what one criticizes: that is, the securitization of migration, drugs, and so forth" (Huysmans 2002: 43).

Security can be performed for an emancipatory purpose and it is in relation to this ability, or lack thereof, that silence has really came to be understood in critical security studies.

2) Silence and security: the song remains the same

I have shown that speech or voice whether at an ontological, epistemic or normative level is at the centre of critical approaches to security. We now turn to one of the most thorough engagement with this primacy. Lene Hansen's (2000) article is a fundamental critic of the theoretical and constitutive inability of securitization theory to

account for gender in its theorizing precisely because the later only offers a partial account of the ability or disability to speak security. Hansen rightly criticizes securitization theory for being premised on "a situation in which speech is indeed possible", while she puts to the fore the necessity to understand whether social actors have an "ability to speak security" on the first place as they might be "prevented from becoming subjects worthy of consideration and protection" (Hansen 2000: 285). For Hansen, in order to show how speech acts can be successful it is first necessary to understand how certain categories of population are reduced to silence in their identity *qua* political subject. In other words, securitization theory should first take into account the processes by which subjects are constituted *qua* subjects worthy or not of "consideration and protection". Taking the example of honour killings in Pakistan, Hansen highlights how women there are facing what she terms a "silent security dilemma" (Hansen 2000: 286).

This "silent security dilemma" possesses two components. On the one hand, the dilemma is that of "security as silence" (Hansen 2000: 294-297), which means that even though women might want or need to speak security in order to become a referent object, in securitization theory terminology, they are socially and politically unable to do so, or even would face even more insecurity would they do so. The second component of the dilemma is what Hansen (2000: 297-299) terms "subsuming security", which means that there is an impossibility for these women to fully become a referent object because this would mean that gender has to be distinct from other objects and should be located as a specific community within the societal sphere, without overlapping with "national, religious, and racial referent objects" (Hansen 2000: 298). Yet, Hansen (2000: 299) rightly points out that there is an inter-linkage between gender and other forms of identification such as the nation, state, religion, and so on, that cannot be undone in practice. Before exploring in more detail how Hansen engages ontologically and epistemically securitization theory in light of this "silent security dilemma", it is important to concentrate on its first dimension as it already presents an indication of the actual onto-epistemic and normative places silence actually occupies in her reasoning.

Taking as an example the difficulty, and even impossibility, women face in reporting their insecurity and to try to become referent objects of security by speaking security, Hansen notes that they can be considered to be in a situation of "security as silence", that is to say "a situation where the potential subject of security has no, or

limited, possibility of speaking its security problem" (Hansen 2000: 294). This impossibility is linked to a specific context of oppression (see Young 1990: 38-65) that is not taken into account by securitization theory because of its implicit and explicit expectation that potential securitizing actors are living in a condition in which speech is indeed possible (Hansen 2000: 285). Even though it is striking that Hansen has to go to a non-western case or, elsewhere, to a case pertaining to the realm of war (Hansen 2001), thus highlighting gender oppression (and implicitly the possibility to curb it) rather than gender domination (Butler 1999[1990]: 6-7), as pervasive in the west as elsewhere, in order to build up her argument, her reasoning is especially potent. This is more so when Hansen stresses another point, which is that Pakistani women facing or contesting honour killings are subjected to even more risks if they try to raise the issue a way or another. "The security strategies chosen by Pakistani women have, *as a consequence*, often been silence, denial, or if the incident has become known, flight" (Hansen 2000: 295, my emphasis).

Clearly in these situations, "the verbal act of speech" (Hansen 2000: 294) is disabled for these women. Even worst it is a potential factor to make their existential security even more at risk. In other words, and to mobilise the classical distinction laid out by Albert Hirschman (1970) for its intuitive heuristic, in terms of security, these women are left out with only the choice to *exit* the political field which in this context signifies that they decide to opt out from speaking security. *Voice* is not an option for its potential deadly consequences, yet *loyalty* is not to be assumed either. By remaining silent, as they are silenced, these women do not necessarily express an agreement about their situation or the specific social norms linked to honour killing. Hansen thus assumes that silence is a lack, it is an absence that is negatively connoted. At this stage of her account, it seems that these women are deprived from the sole strategy, voicing through speech acts, which, from the perspective of critical security studies, would enable them to potentially become security referent objects and thus become worthy of protection by the state.

However, this lack of voice leads Hansen to analytically engage with securitization theory on the level of the production of discourses rather than limiting oneself to "identifying instances of securitizations" (Hansen 2000: 300). Hansen points out to the verbal limitations of speech act theory as inspirited by J. L. Austin (1975[1962]) and to the necessity to integrate the body and the visual in an analysis of this production (Hansen 2000: 300-304).

More particularly, Hansen mobilises Judith Butler's [**performative, body**]. Yet even in invoking Butler's body performativity, Hansen's questioning ultimately remains attached to a form of voicing that should not be assimilated to silence, as her question now becomes: "*Can the body speak security* even when the word/text does not?" (Hansen 2000: 301, my emphasis). This is even more clearly apparent in the following:

"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'." (Hansen 2000: 302, my emphasis)

In other words, even in situation when it is [**Derrida undecidability**], the apparent silence that might result from the absence of verbal speech can be compensated by the "*excessive speech of the body*" (Hansen 2000: 302, my emphasis). Speech/Voice retains its primacy, here epistemic and normative, as Hansen is reclaiming a potential and actual voice for these women, though not conveyed verbally but corporeally. Silence is not an option. Would voice be abandoned then the only options left are exit or, worst in this implicit liberal normative framework, loyalty.

This turn to body and more specifically to the undecidability between speech and body enables Hansen to open up, via Butler, the question of the constitution of subjects, both speakers and those spoken to, in their performative co-constitution. Whereas securitization theory, via Austin, would assume already pre-existing subjects, a turn to the body shifts our understanding of the ability to speak security from speech act to "a practice which *constructs* subjects at both 'ends' of the speech act ..., we open our theory to a consideration of the discursive and bodily practices involved in the formation of subjects" (Hansen 2000: 303, original empahsis). [**unpack a bit**] Turning back to the question of silence, this has two different but related consequences for Hansen's approach to security and silence.

On the one hand, *verbal* silence is not necessarily to be taken as the absolute absence of speech and therefore of a capability to speak security. The ability to speak security *should* not be premised on the sole ability to verbally speak for forms of oppression disabling speech from certain categories of the population, such as women, in specific

socio-economic and cultural contexts would evade critical security studies (see below for more on this point). This means however that silence *qua* silence is normatively to be avoided for this would mean an irreducible inability to speak security, which seems to be the primary solution to the situation at hand. On the other hand, silence is a technology of power (see Hansen 2000: 304) in the sense that silence is an effect of silenc*ing*, whether by harming, threatening, not listening or not addressing those who are *de jure* or *de facto* silenced. Even more, for Hansen, securitization theory, if it remains predicated on Austinian speech acts, is in effect participating in this technology of power for "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" (Hansen 2000: 306). Unlike her approach inspired by Butler to a more corporeal understanding of performativity, securitization theory *qua* speech act is normatively condemning subaltern individuals and groups to exit or loyalty for speech is here comprehended within a single homogeneous public sphere not taking into account its constraining effects on dominated groups, especially women (see for instance Fraser 1990, Glenn 2004: 10-11, 20-48).

Yet, Hansen's engagement with silence is still primarily premised on the normative assumption that voicing, and hence a form of "speaking", is preferable and is something that ought to emerge from the subaltern. The anxiety here is that silence, in any forms, is a "threat to politics" and henceforth to community and society (Ferguson 2003: 53). Moreover, Hansen's engagement is also premised on another important assumption that "a person cannot *not* communicate", that is produce signs and meanings, and hence that silence should thus constitute in any case a form of communication, whatever the intent or lack thereof might be, which is up for grab by the observer (Glenn 2004: 15-16, original emphasis, see also Ferguson 2003: 50-54). In the normative framework presented by Hansen, (verbal) silence can only mean a form of acknowledgement and subordination of women to male dominated norms and violence. That is why silence is an impossibility, even beyond Butler framework and the excess of speech through the body, because silence would then mean what is unthinkable for Hansen. The body has to be what make the subaltern speak because the subaltern should be speaking. While it might seems that Hansen is echoing Gavatri Chakravorty Spivak (1994[1988]) questioning about the ability for the subaltern to speak, it is worth remembering that Spivak problematization has more to do whether *we* are listening to what and how it is said. And I

would suggest this is also a question as to whether we are able to listen to what is *not* said and the consequences this might have for conceptualizing security. Before turning to this point in the next section, however, it is important to unpack Hansen's understanding of silence as a form of oppression in light of speech act theory. To do so enables us to identify why Hansen cannot afford not to have signs and needs to retrieve them from the body.

To re-engage with speech act theory at this point is not to promote a return to a solely linguistic understanding of security via speech act, as Austin himself acknowledges admittedly limited but nonetheless possible non-verbal acts (e.g. Austin 1975[1962]: 121-122), but to show from the perspective of speech act theory how Hansen's conceptualisation of silence, even when mobilising the bodily performative, is limited in scope and thus invites to not only rethink what silence can do in terms of oppression and domination, but also what universalist premises are actually informing critical security studies. In order to do so, I follow her steps in mobilising a feminist standpoint in regard to speech acts by engaging with a feminist critique of pornography as a silencing speech for women (see Langton 1993, Hornsby and Langton 1998; for a counter-argument see Bird 2002). To recall, Hansen's conception of silence in a nutshell is the following: "Silence is a powerful political strategy that internalises and individualises threats thereby making resistance and political mobilisation difficult" (Hansen 2000: 306). In other words, when women are silenced they are facing the impossibility to even speak, and when they dare doing so they are threatened or even killed so they remain silent. They are altogether excluded from speaking/voicing.

In her analysis of whether pornography constitutes a speech act and the silencing effects speech acts may have onto dominated groups, Rae Langton identifies three of such effects: (1) *locutionary exclusion* (my words), that is when "members of a powerless group may be silent because they are intimidated, or because they believe that no one will listen" (Langton 1993: 315); (2) *perlocutionary frustration*, that is the situation when "people will speak, but what they say will fail to achieve the effects that they intend" (Langton 1993: 315); and finally (3) *illocutionary disablement*, that is a

"kind of silencing that happens when one speaks, one utters words, and fails not simply to achieve the effects one aims at, but fails to perform the very action one intends. ... [A]lthough the appropriate words are uttered, with the appropriate intention, the speaker fails to

perform the intended illocutionary act" (Langton 1993: 315).

For Langton (1993: 321), pornography as a speech act creates a context, a convention (see Sbisà 2002), of illocutionary disablement because it creates a convention whereby a woman's speech cannot even count as such as the question become not even one as to whether she can achieve something *by* saying it (perlocution), but whether *in* saying "no" to sexual advances (illocution) she can even utter meaningful words. In other words, the situation is not one in which her words do not achieve perlocution *by* saying "no", but one in which her words does not even come across as meaning what they do *in* saying it and thus are not even producing their own force. The conventional force and meaning that should reside in an illocution are not there because "uptake is not secured" (Langton 1993: 321, see Austin 1975[1962]: 117-118), because her words do not have any effects; they literally do not take effect when they are uttered. By not securing uptake, inviting a response or taking effect, her words do not even have any illocutionary presence (Austin 1975[1962]: 118). What are the implications of these three forms of silencing for Hansen's own conception.

It is clear that Hansen's conception of silence is limited to (1) locutionary exclusion and to an extent (2) perlocutionary frustration because she can only envision that these women are in a situation where they cannot speak/voice because they are essentially forbidden to do so. Their silence is the result of a physical and/or discursive act*ion* excluding them from speaking or of a convention, such as in a patriarchal dominated society, by which they cannot have the perlocutionary effects that are intended (security in this context). Hansen's turn to the body is once again justified as a way to restore, more so rescue, speech/voice as something that is not unhinged by some actions or that can transform conventions. Yet, (3) illocutionary disablement is something that is not thinkable for Hansen because in this circumstance one is even denied the ability to produce any signification at all and, as I have shown, Hansen cannot afford not to have signs, that is why she has to retrieve them from the body. Despite her move then, Hansen's conception of security is still largely premised on (verbal *and* non-verbal) speech/voice and the necessity for individuals and groups to be able to produce signs that one can retrieve. But what if silence was not a sign that is to be retrieved from the perspective of speech/voice? What if silence was not the absence of speech? Or, to paraphrase Barthes (2002: 54), what if one refrained from retrieving as a sign (the absence of speech/voice) what is not necessarily produced to be a sign of an absence (silence)?

More fundamentally, what if silence was not deviant (Ferguson 2003: 54)?

3) The sound of silence

In Latin, a distinction was made between *tacere*, verbal silence, and *silere*, which meant "tranquillity, the absence of movement and of noise". While *silere* has become the most common root to things related to silence (though think of "tacit"), it has taken on the meaning of *tacere*, which means in other words that "silence is now only speech" (Barthes 2002: 49-50). *Silere* is disturbing for social sciences, and by extension critical security studies, because it ultimately means an absence of signs (Barthes 2002: 49). What is more, I argue, this absence of sign is an indicator of the inability for critical security studies to engage with the mundane, with the "familiar, taken-for-granted, common sense and trivial – in short, the unnoticed" (Hviid Jacobsen 2009: 2). In effect, the everyday has in common with silence, if the latter is taken as more than solely an absence, to share this trait identified by Maurice Blanchot (in Hviid Jacobsen 2009: 2): "it allows no hold. It escapes". As such, whether silence or the mundane are prey to the fact that they are "overloaded with meaning" (Hviid Jacobsen 2009: 9), they have an excess that invite an overinvestment of meaning onto them. Silence, and the mundane, is interpreted "in accordance with [one's] own 'horizon of expectation'" (Block de Behar 1995: 7). As I have shown, critical security studies premised primacy of the spoken, of voice, whether ontologically, epistemologically or normatively, is prone to overinvest what silence should mean from this standpoint: as voice is this "horizon of expectation", silence can only *mean* submission, acknowledgment, and/or oppression.

Speaking, in critical security studies, is epistemologically *and* normatively premised on the assumption of a direct access interpreters have to what is voiced, or what is not voiced. More so, what is voiced is assumed to mean what is uttered. While Hansen (2000: 285) is thus right to point out that securitization theory is premised on an ideal situation where speech is physically possible, yet she, and with her I would suggest critical security studies altogether, also assumes that *if* speech is indeed possible then speech is what is said. Speech, especially in the democratic west (Ferguson 2003: 50-54), cannot be taken as multi-layered. It cannot be akin to an Aesopian language, a type of language in which nothing of what is

said or written necessarily is straightforward; it cannot be a place where speakers and writers use "linguistic devices ... to communicate with audiences in situation where their words are either overtly or covertly restricted" (Allen 2001: 111). This restriction, as Michel de Certeau reminds us, is not necessarily censorship or actual surveillance like was the case in nineteenth-century Russia where the concept of Aesopian language took roots. In effect, according to him, the

"[act of speaking] *operates* in the field of a linguistic system; it puts in play [met en jeu][3] an *appropriation*, or a re-appropriation of language by locutors; it institutes a *present* relative to a moment and a place; and it posits a *contract with the other* (the interlocutor) in a network of situations and relations" (de Certeau 1990[1980]: xxxviii-xxxix, 56-57; original emphasis; see also Scott 1990: chapter 6).

In other words, when one speaks, one enters in a specific (usually asymmetric) contract with other interlocutors in terms of what and how things can be said, yet most locutors, and even more so locutors not possessing the capital to delimit what are the contours of the "field of a linguistic system", are simply operating within a field that other define and delimit for them. Locutors, however, also possess an ability to (re-)appropriate this field and make it their own for a fleeting instant, the present, while remaining unable to altogether modify or transform it. In de Certeau's term, and to transcribe this movement to security, this contract is actually a polemology between those who can articulate the field in which security can be spoken and how, and those who are, or are not, uttering security and why (see de Certeau 1990[1980]: 56-57, 62-63). In this situation, and from the perspective of the primacy of speech/voice, silence should not be taken as a straightforward sign as it might equally and simultaneously be read as acknowledgement, defiance, indifference, resistance, contemplation, and so on. It is worth also mentioning that, in everyday life, this asymmetry does not only affect silence, but also speech. Bell hooks reminds us that "for black women, our struggle has not been to emerge from silence into speech but to change the nature and direction of our speech, to make a speech that compels listeners, one that is heard", it is to make heard the type of speech which "could be tuned out, could become a kind of background music, audible but not acknowledged as significant speech" by males (as quoted in Glenn 2004: 26-27).

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[3] See note 5.

Of course, one may argue that this asymmetry in meaning is limited to how silence is "delivered", the absence of sound (Glenn 2004: 9), but can be compensated by visual artefacts or specific bodily gestures (see for instance Edkins and Pin-Fat 2005) – one only need to think of a silent demonstration with people waving posters. This would already mean however leaving the mundane, because the mundane ultimately escapes the eventful (see Sheringham 2006: 360), as a demonstration necessarily is. The key point here is that when we situate ourselves in the mundane there is no established and secured meaning because silence, or speech, for the subaltern is only meaningful in light of the contexts of expression (see **de Certeau, Guillaume**) in which it takes place and not necessarily in light of the intent behind silence, or speech, for on the one hand this intent cannot really be ascertained, and on the other, the subaltern does not possess the ability in an intersubjective relation to equally determine what this meaning is. To concentrate on silence, however, and from the perspective of those defining the field in which it is enacted, what is *left* unsaid is read as the absence of what *should* have been said.[4]

Let's now turn to silence as possibly enacting more than absence. As noted, while the meaning of (a) silence will rarely if ever be ascertained *in abstracto*, the literature on silence is putting forth that silence is more than just a lack. Silence, while generally associated with oppression, can as well be constitutive of a community and/or be resistance (see Ferguson 2003). For the sake of clarity and to continue on the trope of voicing and the mundane, I will however concentrate on resistance as it has been an important trope in the critical literature in International Relations and has suffered from the same inability to address the mundane (see Guillaume 2011).

A first possible step in taking into account silence *qua silere* would be to consider that if silence is an absence then it is an absence "with a function" (Glenn 2004: 4). A dimension that is important to dispel before discussing what silence can be in term of the mundane, and in linking it to resistance, is that silence is not (necessarily) passivity. As Glenn (2004: xi, 18) shows, silence can be a form of rhetoric; something is actuated (not necessarily enacted) through silence in certain rhetorical contexts, as silence and speech are concomitant. Silence is not the absence of speech; the absence of speech is what makes silence more apparent, as silence is what makes speech more apparent (see Picard 15 in Glenn 2004: 4). Silence and speech are

[4] To be clear, I also refer by "those defining the field" those researching it (Huysmans 2002).

"simultaneously meaningful", they "depend upon each other: behind all speech is silence, and silence surrounds all speech" (Glenn 2004: 7). Glenn's interest however is about silence as a rhetorical tactic. Ultimately a situation where/when silence can somewhat be, yet with difficulty, recorded (Glenn 2004: 2) and in which silence take meaning because of a "rhetorical situation" (Glenn 2004: 9). This rhetorical situation is a "voice" situation in which silence can be a strategic choice or an enforced position (Glenn 2004: 13-15) which can determine "rhetorical success" of someone that is/remain silent because such success is dependent on the "the rhetorical situation" (Glenn 2004: 13).

Glenn's story, thus, largely remains within the purview of intention: "ever sensitive ... to the appropriateness and timeliness of the occasion, of words, or of silence, we attempt to fashion our communication successfully" (Glenn 2004: 13, original emphasis). The main issue, as we have seen in the case of Hansen, behind attempting to salvage intentionality behind silence, or even to ascribe an unintended intention behind silence through its relevance and impact in/on a larger rhetorical situation, is that it relies on a need for silence to be straightforwardly meaningful. Yet, even if most of her account is still premised on intentionality, Glenn also acknowledges, "this is not to say that silence is always strategic, empowering, or patently engaging" (Glenn 2004: 18). Silence primary characteristic is in effect its ambiguity. It can either mean deference to power or it can "deploy power", it can also mean neither. This is well captured by Michel Foucault analysis of sexuality as multi-layered constellations of utterances, or lack thereof, that cannot simply be either coherent blocs (re)affirming the dominant discourse or blocs undermining it. For Foucault,

"Discourses, or silences, are never once for all subjugated to or up against power. One has to acknowledge the complex and fleeting game in which discourse can be at the same time the instrument and an effect of power, but also an obstacle, an hillock, a point of resistance and thus a starting point for an opposite strategy. Discourse vehicles and produces power; the former reinforces the later, but it also undermines it, it exposes it, makes it fragile and enables to block it. Similarly, silence and secret shelter power, anchor its interdicts; but they also loosen power's grips and spare more or less obscure tolerances". (Foucault 1976: 133)

Silence's ambiguity is first of all linked to the extreme difficulty to document it because it rarely is possible to attach it securely, or even

fleetingly, to the wilful expression of an intent, or even to a sign. Silence can be "self- or other-initiated, self- or other-derived. ... But the function of silence–that is, its effects upon people–varies according to the social context in which it occurs" (Glenn 2004: xii). This functionalist reading provided by Glenn, however, should be re-situated from a political perspective as "the politics of silence ... are not reducible to any particular political functionality" precisely because it operates "in multiplicitous, fragmentary, even paradoxical ways" (Ferguson 2003: 58, see also Block de Behar 1995: 7). Silence's multiplicity, fragmentation, ambiguity and even paradox echo how the mundane is a site and moment of indeterminacy (Sheringham 2006) and how resistance as a mundane non-event has been conceptualised by scholars like Michel de Certeau or James Scott (see **de Certeau, Scott, see also REF**).

Another dimension of the ambiguity of silence, connecting it to the mundane, is that silence possesses an unsettling quality that it is important to explore in order to re-engage with the concept of security from the perspective of the mundane. It is important to stress that this is not a call to further research what security does in the realm of the everyday or how security is experienced whether in terms of individuals or groups submission, indifference, resistance, and so on to it (**see REF on surveillance and everyday**), but rather to show how by shifting our situatedness (Haraway 1988) from the perspective of the state to the perspective of the mundane[5] we can provide a different outlook about security and show how basically critical security studies' own situatedness actually is, to a large extent, the state's own by their reaffirmation of the state's primacy as the master of reality (see **Boltanski 2009, 2012 [more precise ref]**). In other words, the emphasis is always put on the ability by the state, or related agencies or (para-)agents, to establish "a series of regularities maintaining themselves whatever the situation is and framing every event, however singular". Critical security studies are interested in these regularities because they "enable to trace the boundary between the possible and the impossible and offer to action a general framework enabling a certain predictability or, if you want, an order" (Boltanski 2012: 30-31). Hence the difficulty critical security studies face in regard to

[5] A note of caution is necessary here. As Michael Sheringham (2006: 360) rightly point out, once we make the everyday an "object of scrutiny" it dissolves into something else because it becomes something that it treated as an event (which it is not). The move to engage with the everyday is to shift our focal point, our situatedness, when thinking about what security is.

understanding silence *qua silere* precisely because it is unsettling to that order.

The unsettling quality of silence has been noted by Glenn (2004: 4), for instance, when she notes the difference between "expected silences" and "unexpected" ones, the later "often making us anxious about the specific meaning". Silence in effect is often considered in the west as a "disruptive gap", for "ideally, there should be no gaps and no overlaps, no competition for speaking, no worries about silences". Silence breaks the expectation of a flow of words that "fill up social space and compress silence" (Glenn 2004: 6). Ultimately, silence breaks the stream of words (Glenn 2004: 8). This break is an irruption in the logocentric order set by the state. Silence *qua silere* therefore is something that put stress on the logocentric outlook of critical security studies because it forces us to look anew to the relations that exist between the state and individuals/groups. Critical security studies, in its conceptualisation of this relation via an (implicitly or explicitly) premised ontological, epistemic and normative primacy of voice and speech, has largely concentrated into the asymmetric relations between the state and individuals and groups from the pole of government. In other words, to get back to the realm of the everyday, what critical security studies are usually concentrating on is the polemology of the strong.

In paying attention to the "power relations [rapports de forces] defining the networks in which [verbal and non-verbal operations] inscribe themselves and delimit the circumstances they can take advantage of" only from the perspective of the state (or the elites), critical security studies has fore mostly highlighted how the struggle or the game is *set* from the perspective of the strong rather than paying attention to how the game is *played* from the perspective of the weak (de Certeau 1980: 56-57). And it is at this juncture that the spectre of ambiguity re-emerges as one key characteristics of everyday resistance is that it has to be read alongside the conformity of people to dominant rules and norms (Scott 1985: 284-285). This makes the determination of an intention behind everyday "acts of resistance", as remaining silent can be, ultimately futile or void (Scott 1985: 290-291).

Yet, silence creates an anxiety for the state, and by extension for critical security studies; otherwise why should silence be re-situated to a situation of either *intending* not to speak or being *unable* to do so? The state in effect is not only positing an order – social, economic, political – but also, through this definition of an order,

positing what disorder is and mean. In other words, the state also defines the parameters of what is transgressive *within* the parameters of that order (Boltanski 2012: 42-43, see also de Certeau 1980: 60-61, Nandy 2009[1983]: 2-3, 11, 24-25, 52). This somewhat echoes Scott's analysis of resistance which is delimited in its forms and scopes by "the institution of repression" and, in light of his analysis of everyday resistance, "To the extent that such institutions do their work effectively, they may all but preclude any forms of resistance other than the individual, the informal, and the clandestine" (Scott 1985: 299). Of course, Scott speaks of repressive institutions which might not take similar direct and obvious forms where the rule of law is respected but the general point hold especially when turning to the question of what is reality for the state, and how it operates to manage its establishment and maintenance.

[1-2§ on réalité and réel/monde for Boltanski] At this juncture, it is important to distinguish, with Luc boltanski (2009; 2012), between what he calls reality and the real/world. Reality, for Boltanski (2012: 22), is "a network of causal relations enabling the events to which any experience is confronted with to hold together". While the real refers to "'everything that happens' ... and even to everything that may happen, and [thus] to the impossibility to know it and to master it in totality" (Boltanski 2012: 22); reality is on the contrary a totalising attempt to probabilistically rely on a "set of regularities holding on together whatever a situation might be, structuring every event, however singular it might be" (Boltanski 2012: 30). These regularities constitute a specific order, a reality therefore is:

"a project of description of the human milieu as an organised totality, possessing a specific logic and obeying to its own laws, independent from every single particular individual's motives or wills." (Boltanski 2012: 31)

[Jef about security + transition]

I argue that silence *qua silere* is an irruption in the order *and* the disorder that is set by reality to the extent that it not only uncovers the logocentric premises of this order, but also of the possibility of disorder. As such, silence unveils the quotidian pole of the asymmetry between the state and individuals/groups that are constituted, from the pole of government of this asymmetry, as a population (Foucault). We are then turning back to the polemology of the weak, that is to the "struggles or the games between the strong and

the weak, and the 'actions' that remain possible for the weak" (De Certeau 1980: 57, see also 60-63). Within this polemology, the weak is only able to manoeuvre by deploying certain tactics. In effect, for de Certeau while strategies reflects the ability by certain actors to define the contours within which one can be, act, speak, tactics on the contrary reflects an ability, by actors who do not possess the necessary means to deploy strategies, to divert and appropriate these contours even though it only can be so for a limited moment, thus never able to actually re-define or re-design these contours.

As we have seen, de Certeau is still setting the parameters of tactics within the ability to enunciate, even if this enunciation is a (re-)appropriation of language as a way to play the game differently than it is supposed to be. This thus enables, by establishing an art of saying, a redistribution of the space that is defined by those who have the ability to define a "proper", in de Certeau's terms or what Boltanski would call reality (De Certeau 1980: 35; **Boltanski**). [**unpack a bit on concept of space**] In other words, an art of saying, or as a matter of fact an art of doing, "creates [in this space, in Boltanski's reality] at least a bit of game/play, that is a bit of a gap, [6] to enable manoeuvres between unequal forces as well as utopian landmarks and hideouts [*repères*]" (De Certeau 1980: 35). Yet, as Scott has shown about the weapons of the weak, the polemology of the weak still is an accommodation to reality, the weak still participates to the reproduction of this order, and the possibility of disorder (Scott 1985: 292).

Even though forms of accommodation are involved in everyday forms of resistance to reality, the later nonetheless prove to be a form of irruption of the real into reality. Acts of saying or doing are not radical irruptions because they do not have a transformative potential yet they nonetheless constitute forms of irruption because the strong is compelled to react to it. Abstractly, an irruption is a situation in which there is a mismatch, a discordance, between a certain state of affair [état de choses] and the "symbolic forms that are officially associated to them, in order to qualify them". Such mismatch and discordance are bearing the mark of the unpredictable character of things and the fact that they can get out of hands

[6] In French, Michel de Certeau writes "elle [i.e. an art of saying/doing] y [inside that space] crée au moins du jeu" (De Certeau 1980: 35), which is a play on word as while the sentence literally means that some form of game or play is created, "du jeu" also refers to something loose. In other words, arts of saying/doing are enabling spaces, by their use of temporality, which literally are gaps, interstices (on interstitial politics, see Huysmans and Guillaume 2013).

(Boltanski 2012: 110). [irruption and link to the mundane]

So why is silence *qua silere* an irruption? If we refer back to De Certeau's understanding of enunciation, which he applies both to verbal and non-verbal acts, any enunciation is an effectuation of a linguistic system, a system of meaning, through the act of speaking, through a verbal or non-verbal speech act if you wish. In the case of arts of saying/doing, they also constitute a (re-)appropriation of reality. Through this (re-)appropriation there is a shift in the game from a polemology of the strong to a polemology of the weak by playing on the contract that is established between inter-locutors through the fleeting and momentary deployment of an alternative present from the present of reality. However, within this alternative present, arts of saying and doing can only but constitute limited contrapunctual situatedness (Said) as even in analysing their *mētis* (practical cunning) (Detienne and Vernant), the researcher's emphasis is still put on the primacy of the state, of logocentrism. [to unpack]

Silence *qua silere* however can be said to be a radical irruption for it does not constitute an effectuation of any "linguistic system" as there is no actuation through an "act of speaking"; silence thus radically destabilises logocentrism. One could argue however that silence is a specific manoeuvre and thus would constitute an art of (not-)saying (Glenn). [unpack]. Yet remaining silent in situations when/where it is allowed or assumed still remains an effectuation of the borders within which reality is working. Silence however does not constitute a (re-)appropriation because it de-centre and de-concentre the place of voice in the polemological relations between strong and weak. In saying or doing, even within the situatedness of the arts of the weak, one is still taking part in the establishment of the contract between inter-locutors. [=Scott's public transcripts]

[last § opening up on the idea of – social, political – contract that is put forth implicitly (Copenhagen, Welsh, Paris?) or explicitly (Huysmans) in critical security studies | [De Certeau (through Boltanski) the contract is one that defines what the proper is and what are the power relations and the room for manoeuvres within the proper; but it is also a political contract (Hobbes thourgh Mike Williams' reading), the contract only exist if it is enacted through an act of language]

4) Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to open up a reflexion on the implications silence qua silere has for re-situating this social and political contract from the perspective of the weak. A first consequence of silence *qua silere* is to make this *political* contract void. [**unpack**]

The political nullity that result from silence has another consequence in terms of the polemology between the weak and the strong because it constitutes a probation [*mise à l'épreuve*] of reality as silence *qua silere* results in the co-existence of two presents, the one of reality and the one of silence, whereas only one *should* be there as reality can only account for a single present. [**to unpack what's the difference between silence as silere and arts of doing and saying in this case**] [**Larger question: What is security if we de-centre/de-concentre it from logocentrism**]

[**Non-players** (**Nandy**, see **Barras and Guillaume, manuscript**)?]

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