Editors’ introduction to the first EJIS Junior-Senior Dialogue feature.

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EJIS Junior-Senior Dialogue: Editors’ introduction

The European Journal of International Security is pleased to introduce the Junior-Senior Dialogue, a feature designed to showcase the excellent work being produced by early career researchers in Security Studies. The Junior-Senior Dialogue seeks to recognise and highlight the many ways in which new scholars raise new questions, attack old questions in innovative ways, and generally inspire Security Studies to innovate and evolve.

The Junior-Senior Dialogue seeks to foster lively intellectual debate between new and established security scholars. We invite early career researchers, including advanced PhD students, to submit provocative, discipline-extending work to EJIS for consideration for the Dialogue. We also invite supervisors and colleagues to identify such cutting-edge work by early career researchers and advanced PhD students and to encourage them to submit that work to the Dialogue.

The Dialogue comprises an anchoring article, a critical engagement, and a response. The anchoring article submission by the junior scholar can be identified in one of two ways: it may be explicitly submitted as a potential candidate for the Dialogue by its author through the EJIS online submission portal, or it may be spotted as the potentially fruitful basis for a Dialogue by one of the journal’s editors. The latter mechanism discovered Sarah Bertrand’s (PhD Candidate in International Relations, London School of Economics) fascinating analysis. With input from the junior scholar, the editors approach a senior scholar whose work, or type of work, is at stake, to act both as a reviewer and as a respondent for the Dialogue. In this case, Claudia Aradau (Professor of International Politics, King’s College London) thus agreed both to review Bertrand’s submission and to engage her in debate. Based on an exchange of anchoring article (8,000 words) and response (3,000 words), the junior scholar gets the last word, with a final rejoinder (2,000 words).

In this, our inaugural Junior-Senior Dialogue, we are delighted to present a postcolonial and feminist critique of securitization theory by Bertrand, who exposes a significant ‘colonial moment’ in securitization theory. In re-examining securitization theory’s ‘silence problem’, Bertrand demonstrates how that theory actively silences the subaltern, preventing her, through mechanisms of ‘locutionary silencing, illocutionary frustration and illocutionary disablement’, from acting as a securitizing agent. Aradau builds on and contests Bertrand’s focus on speaking and silencing, on binaries of the visible/invisible, heard/unheard, legible/illegible, directing our attention to ‘disputes, controversies and struggles’ as productive analytical foci and to ‘modes of non-knowing’ as fruitful avenues for developing critical epistemologies of in/security. This
dialogue between Bertrand and Aradau challenges Security Studies scholars to think more carefully about practices of ‘speaking and silencing’, to interrogate more rigorously epistemologies of in/security, and to reflect more deeply on the nature of criticality in Security Studies.

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