

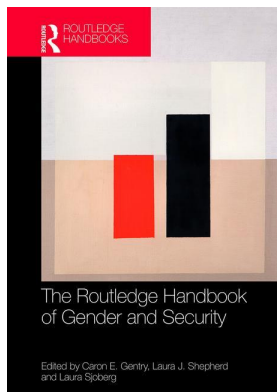
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Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Security

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Gender, Race, and the Insecurity of ‘Security’

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315525099-3>

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Published online on: 22 Aug 2018

How to cite :- Maryam Khalid. 22 Aug 2018, *Gender, Race, and the Insecurity of ‘Security’ from: The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Security* Routledge

Accessed on: 08 Dec 2022

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315525099-3>

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3

GENDER, RACE, AND THE INSECURITY OF ‘SECURITY’

Maryam Khalid

Introduction

‘Security’ is a contested concept in International Relations (IR) and related disciplines. Both in terms of scholarly study and practice, ‘security’ reflects a range of assumptions, knowledges, and concerns about the world and the people in it. Security Studies (SS) emerged as a subfield of IR during the Cold War period, dominated largely by realist understandings of the world. Concerned with what was assumed to be the ‘aggressive’ nature of humans and a state system that was rooted in the anarchical, realists (and later neorealists) were concerned with securing the nation-state from outside the boundaries of the national community. While the field has taken broader approaches to ‘security’ (and other related concerns), the function of the state as protector is largely unproblematized. Engaging with mainstream SS entails acknowledging the field’s relationship with the assumptions and logics of mainstream IR more broadly, and how the logics of SS and security-as-practice interact with broader (historical and contemporary) gendered and racialized discourses of global politics, and ultimately function to enable and perpetuate violence.

To this end, this chapter outlines feminist and postcolonial approaches to SS (in the context of IR more broadly) and key examples of security-as-practice in order to illustrate that both are fundamentally gendered and racialized. Considering how using gender and race can be used as lenses to provide insights into understanding what ‘security’ might entail, the chapter outlines critiques of dominant perspectives and offers insights into the field that would otherwise be overlooked. The first section of the chapter sets out some of the core concerns and assumptions of dominant mainstream approaches to SS, tracing the logics that underscore these approaches. The second section sets out how feminist and postcolonial scholars have analysed and contested dominant meanings of ‘security’ and key events related to the concerns of SS. Gender and race are necessary for thinking about the core issues in SS, for analysing events and phenomena related to ‘security’. The third and fourth sections of the chapter draw on contemporary examples to illustrate how ‘security’ is inextricably linked to broader dominant discourses (such as ‘development’), demonstrating how the gendered and racialized logics of ‘security’ function in practice.

Interrogating mainstream Security Studies

‘Mainstream’ or ‘traditional’ SS refers to the work on security done through the lens of the IR approach of political Realism. Mainstream SS shares with Realism a core set of assumptions, logics, and narratives which are reflected in the work of a range of scholars. Realist thinkers (both classical and neo) take the state as the referent object of ‘security’, and have tended to focus largely on war as the main threat to the security of the state. At the most basic level, this is also reflected in another key tradition of ‘mainstream’ IR (and SS): Liberalism. While allowing for more potential for cooperation between states than Realism, Liberal approaches in SS are, like Realism, also underscored by a concern with states and ‘security’ in terms of a positivist problem-solving focused approach which takes particular power and social relationships as ‘given’ (Cox 1981). In this context, the core issues in mainstream SS tend to overlook individuals as actors, instead focusing on the interaction between militaristic states, analysing inter-state relationships primarily in terms of war within a system in which (inter-state) violence is perceived to be endemic (*inter alia* Walt 1991). This reflects the broader assumptions and logics underscoring ‘mainstream’ IR, in which (state-centric) politics is posited as centred around competition for power among states, with power exerted through coercive capability largely focused on military and economic power. This perspective is illustrative of the focus, in ‘mainstream’ SS (and IR) on particular expressions of masculinity (associated with ‘men’) in terms of understanding the world and engaging with it. Classical Realism, for example, makes assumptions about ‘human nature’ (often extrapolating behaviours commonly associated with ‘men’ and ascribing certain behaviours to non-white ‘Others’) in engaging with concepts such as power and rationality, and functions as a highly gendered and racialized paradigm that overlooks (and indeed obscures) the varied human experiences in which states should be understood (Youngs 2004).

There are a range of approaches that seek to de-centre the state in the study of ‘security’, and in doing so, reconceptualize the idea of ‘security’ as more than “the study of the threat, use and control of military force” (Walt 1991: 212). These approaches have sought to broaden understandings of what ‘security’ encompasses. For example, constructivists go beyond militarism to include the political, social, economic, and environmental (increasing ‘threat’ to include political oppression, poverty, environmental degradation). As Barry Buzan explains it, ‘security’ in this approach

includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence. Quite where this range of concerns ceases to merit the urgency of the “security” label (which identifies threats as significant enough to warrant emergency action and exceptional measures including the use of force) and becomes part of everyday uncertainties of life is one of the difficulties of the concept.

1991: 432–433

The Copenhagen school addresses this by moving away from a normative approach to ‘security’ by using the concept of ‘securitization’ as an analytical tool to identify how and where the concept of ‘security’ is deployed. Feminists and postcolonial scholars share a similar commitment in terms of engaging with ‘security’, critiquing what ‘security’ entails, how the concept has been used, and to what effect, by interrogating the gendered and racialized assumptions and knowledge that underpin its use in scholarship and the way it has operated in practice. Feminist and postcolonial SS scholars have sought to move away from the narrowness of the field by seeking to develop non-state-centric approaches to ‘security’, and

take a variety of approaches to understanding and interrogating the function of gender and race in global politics, and in the field of IR and subfields such as SS. They are broadly concerned with uncovering the assumptions, logics, and power relations that shape the fields (and practice), using gender and race as both analytical categories and empirical units of analysis. Ultimately, these scholars have reconceptualized SS and IR's key assumptions and core concerns. In these perspectives, 'security' can be understood as encompassing myriad political, economic, and social relationships, as well as processes and practices. While not overlooking the nation-state, feminist and postcolonial scholars see 'security' (and thus the realm of SS) more broadly. This means considering key actors in the realm of SS beyond the nation-state, and acknowledging the individual in global politics. For example, a feminist or postcolonial approach to SS asks who is secured by the activities taking place in the name of 'security' (such as military activities and interventions, legislation, military expenditure).

At the most basic level, feminist scholars interrogating SS (and IR) share a commitment to challenging the idea of gender (and, often, sex) as biologically determined, instead understanding gender as "a set of socially constructed characteristics describing what men and women ought to be" (Tickner and Sjoberg 2013: 206). Gaining traction in the 1980s and 1990s, feminist IR scholars have interrogated the masculinist bias in IR, identifying and challenging a series of gendered binaries and hierarchies which privileged the masculine over the feminine, and underscored the analysis of the discipline (e.g., male/female, masculine/feminine, rational/irrational, strong/weak, public/private, perpetrator/victim, protector/protected) (Tickner 1992; Hooper 2001; Sjoberg 2009a). J. Ann Tickner explained, "international relations is a man's world, a world of power and conflict in which warfare is a privileged activity" (1988: 429). Laura Sjoberg (2009b: 1), speaking of international security more specifically, explains that

[w]omen in privileged positions in international security policy-making remain rare (and are often identified primarily by their gender when they do reach those positions), and entire scholarly texts can be found with no reference to women or gender at all.

The key insights of feminist critiques of SS highlight the role of the human subject (as opposed to a state-centric focus) and make clear the importance of identifying and interrogating dominant configurations of masculinity and femininity (and the binary understandings of gender that underpin this worldview). Feminist IR scholars have asked a range of questions about gender, ranging from its function as "an identity-constituting system" that shapes the ways in which states position themselves vis-à-vis state and non-state actors in global politics (Wadley 2010: 54), to empirical analyses that seek to uncover the role women (otherwise largely under-researched in SS) play in 'security' in various contexts (MacKenzie 2010). Indeed, the assumptions of IR and SS, feminists argue, perpetuate the violence that they seek to prevent. Binary understandings of 'men' and 'women', the roles they play, and ultimately, the idea of 'security' have material impacts that perpetuate dominant discourses of gender and security. For example, Laura Shepherd's (2008) work on UN Resolution 1325 illustrates how the Resolution's discursive construction reflects the dominant gendered discourse in which women are passive and peaceful.

Postcolonial scholars (and some feminist scholars) look to race as both an analytical lens and empirical unit of analysis, and have sought to expose the Western-centric nature of SS (in terms of obscuring the function of race in global politics) and of security-as-practice (in enacting and enabling particular events and privileging the rights of some over others in the name of 'security'). They too critique the idea of the state as the central actor in relation to

‘security’ but also as the provider of ‘security’, by analysing the ways in which the state engages in activities that render some peoples ‘insecure’. For example, dominant discourses of ‘security’ feature commonly accepted ‘markers of progress’ which are “part of a chronology where only certain events and dates, such as World War Two, the Cold War, and September 11 2001, matter” in terms of understanding and achieving peace and security (Nayak and Selbin 2010: 125; Krishna 2001). Relatedly, and as feminist scholars argue through a gender lens, mainstream IR and SS take a particular view of what entails ‘secure’ and ‘peace’ and who is able to achieve ‘peace’ and ‘security’ (Nayak and Selbin 2010: 125). This must be understood against the dominant views in the field that are deeply Western-centric (emerging from a Eurocentric history) in some key ways: privileging Anglo-American perspectives on key issues, events, and concepts, deploying racialized (at times orientalist) knowledge of the non-Western world in making sense of events taking place there, and presuming the rational, ethical, and benign character of the Western ‘Self’.

As Pinar Bilgin explains, while there is a research agenda in SS that explores ‘security’ within the “South/Third/developing world, it offers relatively little insight into non-Western insecurities” (2010: 617). Tracing this back to canonical texts in the field, Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey highlight the overwhelmingly Western focus of these, to the extent that even content looking beyond Western states reflects Western interests at the time (for example, one of the two chapters of the 1941 edition of *Makers of Modern Strategy*, a standard text in the field, focused on Japanese naval strategy at a time when this was a pressing concern for the US) (2006: 335). As they explain, these texts “take for granted . . . the point of view of Western great powers in a world they dominate and compete over”; this perspective is reflected in the dominant texts of contemporary SS, which explain violence in non-Western parts of the world through a lack of European institutions rather than drawing on, for example, the role that colonial legacies play in the political landscape of various regions (Barkawi and Laffey 2006: 336, 347).

Gender, race, and (in)security

How, then, do gender and race function to shape dominant ideas about security and insecurity? Understanding security as gendered and racialized means understanding gender and race as ways of ordering the world that are imbued with power to create, legitimize, and naturalize knowledge (for example, knowledge about and for people, places, ideas). For example, Peterson and Runyan point out that mainstream understandings of ‘power’ and relatedly of ‘security’ are gendered in that they privilege aggressive masculinities. In this view, outside masculine and militarized ways of seeing the world, ‘security’ might be understood as “celebrating and sustaining life” but in dominant understandings it is presupposed as “the capacity to be indifferent to ‘others’ and, if necessary, to harm them” (2010: 18). The normalization of gender in this way functions as a dominant logic of security; this not only shapes “who and what is masculinized”, it is also “inextricable from devaluing who and what is feminized” (Peterson and Runyan 2010: 18).

As the next two sections will illustrate, dominant logics of security are refracted through gendered *and* racialized understandings of the world, in which ‘Western’ and ‘masculine’ values (of ‘appropriate’ global governance, order, development, and economic rationality) are privileged over the (feminized) ‘backwardness’ of the ‘underdeveloped Other’. Engaging with this means examining the power of gender and race in global politics more broadly (not just security) in terms of the ways in which certain entities, states, and peoples (within, between, and beyond states) are masculinized and feminized (Peterson and Runyan 2010:

18). Gender and race are “powerful legitimator[s] of war and national security” (Tickner 2002: 336). As Jill Steans explains, there are “deep and profound connections between the construction of masculinities, femininities, and state-sanctioned violence” (2006: 61). One example of this is the protector/protected ‘myth’ (or ‘Man as Warrior’ and ‘Beautiful Souls’), where women (assumed to be weak, vulnerable) are constructed as in need of the (military) protection that is offered by the (masculine) state (e.g., Elshtain 1985). In contemporary politics the operation of race in relation to this is particularly salient in terms of the contemporary expression of the ‘white man’s’ (and woman’s) burden in dominant narratives of security post-9/11, which will be explored in the last section of this chapter.

Security and development since the two world wars

A particularly salient example of the practice and scholarly concerns of security lies at the intersection of ‘development’ and interventionism. In the contemporary context, this finds expression in neoliberal restructuring and related interventions (military, economic, or otherwise) into non-Western states in the name of ‘security’; these are inextricably linked to dominant discourses of ‘development’, which itself is racialized, gendered, and rooted in imperialism. With antecedents in European colonial understandings of the notion of ‘progress’ as defined against ‘backward’, ‘passive’, ‘stagnant’, or ‘declining’ non-Western societies, the project to engage in the political and economic development of these societies along liberal and capitalist lines has been repackaged as a highly gendered and racialized version of the ‘white man’s burden’ that has been used to justify colonialism. While not drawing explicitly on the overtly sexist or racist binaries of the colonial era, dominant development discourses post-1945 have been predicated on the basic logics underscoring colonial discourses. That is, discourses of development/underdevelopment find expression in a series of differences between ‘them’ and ‘us’ (urban/rural, modern/traditional, productive/unproductive), illustrating the interplay between gender and race in determining what constitutes ‘appropriate’ global political order (Khalid 2016).

Analysing this discourse through the lenses of gender and race reveals the ways in which ‘security’ and ‘development’ intersect and the impacts this has; put another way, using race and gender to interrogate mainstream scholarship on, and practices of, ‘security’ and ‘development’ illustrates how intervention is enabled by the securitization of development. To speak of the practice of development as ‘securitized’ means to understand development as being conceptualized and pursued in the context of gendered and racialized understandings of ‘security’ more broadly. For example, the practice of development is aimed specifically at places and peoples that are perceived to threaten ‘our’ ‘security’, and is predicated on and (re)produces racialized and gendered logics (Duffield 2001: 15). As Duffield writes, in the contemporary context there are “pressures to reprioritize development criteria in relation to supporting intervention, reconstructing crisis states and, in order to stem terrorist recruitment, protecting livelihoods and promoting opportunity within strategically important areas of instability” (Duffield 2006: 14).

One way this has been done is through the concept of ‘failed’ states. As Bilgin explains, this concept “finds fault with some states (or their leaders/regimes) but not with the global political-economic structure that allows them to ‘fail’” (2010: 619). In constructing the world as comprised of developed/underdeveloped and effective/failed states, dominant development discourse (re)produces categories of ‘civilized’ (democratic, egalitarian, developed) and ‘barbaric’ (backward, despotic, underdeveloped) (Duffield 2007: 227–228) which are gendered in their privileging of particular kinds of output, effort, and activeness. The ‘barbaric’ is able

to be constructed as such not only by reference to cultural norms ascribed to ‘them’ but also through delineating ‘them’ in ways that draw on gendered behaviours. For example, ‘their’ economic stagnation is the result of ‘feminine’ illogical or irrational economic choices, and is pitted against ‘our’ economic rationality (a ‘masculine’ trait). The very ability to represent the world in this way is predicated on the deployment of gendered and racialized binaries such as “civilized/barbarian, advanced/backward, active/passive, industrious/sensuous”, which are applied to peoples who do not “measure up” to “our” standards of civilization (Duffield 2007: 230).

The Truman Doctrine is a useful historical example of this; the doctrine “set a framework that directed the security policies” of US administrations until the 1990s (Sjöstedt 2007: 236). For example, post-Second World War US foreign aid programmes such as the Marshall Plan were designed to “serve as a global mechanism to maintain international order while promoting economic growth in developing and the newly-emerging countries” (Tschirgi 2006: 47) and as “precursors” of contemporary “development assistance” incorporated aid into a ‘security’ strategy to contain threats from those constructed as ‘Other’ (Duffield 2002: 1065–1066). Dividing the world into spheres of ‘freedom’ and ‘totalitarianism’ embodied in (‘Western’) capitalism and communism was a feature of the Truman doctrine, which illustrated the racialized and gendered logics underlying constructions of ‘them’ and ‘us’ that operate in dominant discourses of ‘security’. In the context of the Truman doctrine, this was reflected in, for example, “the cultivation of imperial masculinity” equating manliness and heroism with physical strength, military service, and uncritical loyalty to the state’ (Dean 2001: 12–18). In terms of Cold War logics, this can be seen in the feminization of communists and homosexuals (for example, through the use of the term ‘pinko’ to describe those accused of being sympathetic to communists). Cold War constructions of US ‘Self’, then, were organized around a desire to project a hypermasculine ‘Self’, against the threatening masculinity posed by an ‘aggressive’ and ‘totalitarian’ ‘Other’, and the ‘homosexual threat’ inside (Weldes 1999: 46; Hooper 2001: 86–87).

This is also reflected in more contemporary discourses of ‘progress’ in relation to ‘failed’ and ‘fragile’ states, a core ‘security’ concern in the field of SS. This illustrates the gendered and racialized nature of mainstream development and security discourse, which has a fixation on ‘us’ (in the West) performing appropriate masculinity (as expressed in particular political and economic behaviours), and a concomitant concern with feminization. Fears of insecurity are centred around vulnerability (as a feminine trait) if assertive or aggressive policies are not pursued to manage these states (Bialasiewicz *et al.* 2007: 412). ‘Failed’ states have failed to perform the ‘Western’ and ‘masculine’ traits of rationality, wealth, and power, failing to achieve ‘progress’ by subscribing to the ideals of neoliberalism. In this scenario, the ‘Other’ embodies “brownness, blackness or yellowness shackled by superstitions or fundamentalisms . . . and exhibits irrationality, poverty, and powerlessness” (Ling 2008: 1, 3). The functions of gender and race in terms of ‘security’ concerns of ‘developed’ states here intersect to enable practices which “promote neo-trusteeship or benign imperialism” and “legitimize these prescriptions as non-racist, technical fixes to failures of governance” (Shilliam 2008: 778–779). In this way, the idea and practice of ‘development’ is securitized and operates a “liberal relation of governance” – speaking of ‘development’ means exercising the power to speak on behalf of particular types of peoples’ “rights, freedoms, and well-being” (Duffield 2007: 230).

The relationship between development and security discourses is captured in the common assertion in security scholarship and political discourse that by promoting ‘their’ development, ‘our’ security and indeed global security might be achieved (Duffield 2007: 225–226). This

concern has historical antecedents that illustrate the central role of 'othering' (both racialized and gendered) in security (as practice and scholarship). As Duffield explains, "[T]he nineteenth-century liberal urge to protect and better has been supplemented by a contemporary developmental need to secure unfamiliar and incomplete life" (2007: 234). Indeed, a demarcation between a civilized 'Self' and underdeveloped 'Other' has been central to the liberal international world order since at least the Wilsonian era, and been used to prescribe the necessity of 'us' bringing 'progress' to 'them'; delivering 'rational' political and economic institutions to supposedly 'backward' societies has functioned as a security strategy in post-First World War liberal internationalism, with integration into the political and economic systems of the 'West' designed to 'lift' non-Western peoples into the realm of the civilized or 'developed' (Hobson 2012: 167–169; Smith 1999: 177–178). While the provision of development aid by wealthy capitalist economies has, in dominant contemporary discourses, been "framed in universalist terms of bringing progress and development to the Third World", the concern with development is focused on 'our' security as much as 'theirs' (McCormack 2011: 246).

'Security' and the 'Eastern Other' in contemporary global politics

The ways in which performances of masculinity and femininity (and the binary relationship between them) have been central to dominant narratives of threat and violence in global politics, and organized into hierarchies structured by both gender and race, is particularly well illustrated by using the Middle East as a case study. A focal point of dominant security discourses since the 1990s, the practice and scholarship of 'security' in relation to this region illustrates well the ways in which gender and race function to shape contemporary mainstream security concerns, particularly in Western scholarship and (foreign) policy. In dominant understandings of contemporary global politics, the Middle East has been viewed as a key site of 'threat' to global 'order' and 'security'. As one of the most significant actors in relation to this, the US's engagements with the Middle East offer insights into the operation of gender and race in relation to 'security' in this context. Both race and gender function to shape understandings of Middle Eastern states and their peoples (largely viewed as a monolithic entity), as well as responses to (and constructions of) threats to 'our' (Western) 'security' emanating from this region. The history of intervention in this region illustrates well how security is linked to other discourses, in particular discourses of development. These function together to enable intervention and often result in the very violence and other insecurities they seek to redress.

Dominant discourses of security focused on states in the Middle East through the 1990s and particularly after the 11 September 2001 Al-Qaeda attacks on the US. In this context, mainstream discourses of security, and the activities carried out within this discursive framework, were closely linked to discourses of development which themselves have led to activities (such as economic restructuring) in many parts of the world. In particular, they have operated in the Middle East to render the region as being in need of economic and military intervention in the name of global 'security' and 'order'. As Meghana Nayak points out, this is reflected in US security prescriptions that have focused on 'appropriate' economic and political development policies that encourage the 'Eastern Other' to subscribe to 'Western' political and economic models in order to make "the world safe for capitalism"; this is inextricably linked to the assertion of 'Western' identity in the racialized and gendered hierarchy of global politics (Nayak 2006: 56).

Of particular importance here is 'democratization' as a 'security concern' as it intersects with development, both in terms of dominant global politics and in US policy toward the

Middle East specifically. The ways in which 'security threats' are identified and acted upon is mediated by traditional understandings of gender and expectations of the behaviours of particular ethnic groups, which shape discourses that posit the Middle East as a 'threat' to those outside the region (and, at times, to those constructed as vulnerable within the region). Of interest here is the ways in which acceptable performances of masculinity and femininity are deployed in relation to both 'them' and 'us'. An example that highlights this well is the operation of US neoconservative foreign policy prescriptions, which have purported that democratization and broader economic 'development' are necessary to avoid leaving the US "'weak', 'helpless', and 'dependent'" on its European allies in the face of security threats emerging from the Middle East (Takacs 2005: 298). For example, in dominant discourses of threat after the attacks of 11 September 2001 (and representations of identity within these discourses) 'security' (as practice and field of research) was configured by racialized and gendered logics in the form of the trope of 'oriental despotism' in relation to Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. The trope, as deployed in dominant narratives of 'security' in relation to the Middle East in service of the 2003 US-led war in Iraq, simultaneously posited the Ba'ath regime as embodying a barbarism specific to the Middle East (expressed through violence inflicted upon the Iraqi population as well as through deviant sexual behaviour), and cast 'ordinary' Iraqis wholly as victims unable to secure their own liberation from despotism (Khalid 2014).

'Security' in this narrative reflected a common concern in dominant discourses of global politics, of (re)affirming 'our' masculine self-image in the face of the uncontrolled masculinity of the 'Other'. In the contemporary context, in relation to the Middle East specifically, orientalism operates as a particular type of racialization that intersects with gender in relation to 'security'. Much like gendered logics, orientalist logics deploy binaries in order to make sense of the world and, in doing so, create dichotomies between a 'civilized West' and a 'backward East'. Organized into a series of hierarchical categories, these logics function to delineate 'Arab/Muslim' 'Other' and 'Western' 'Self' through racialized and gendered characteristics. In contemporary discourses of 'development' and 'security', 'civilization' and 'backwardness' are often identified through particular understandings of 'appropriate' economic strategy and 'development'. Contemporary gendered orientalist representations of the Middle East, both inside and outside academia, draw an explicit link between economic and political development and (in) security in doing this (Tuastad 2003).

In relation to this, in both the practice and study of 'security' (and global politics more broadly), a particular definition of 'progress' is privileged (Saurin 2006: 27). This is captured in the assertion that "'the rest of the world' has benefited and continues to benefit from the spread of the West's civilizing values and institutions" (Jones 2006: 55). These ideas have a long history, and can be identified in various permutations in specific historical and geographical contexts. However, they are made intelligible through continually recognizable (and naturalized) understandings of gender and race. Retaining the basic binary logics shaping 'East'-'West' interactions during the colonial era and earlier, contemporary expressions are seen in the hierarchical categories of 'us'/'them', 'civilized'/'barbaric' that are understood and constructed by reference to lack of 'appropriate' political and economic structures in terms of contemporary 'security' discourse relating to the Middle East and 'the West'. In predicating 'Arab culture' and/or 'Islam' (or the Islamic world) as backward, orientalist discourses simultaneously construct the 'West' as rational and progressive by contrast (Sardar 1999: 55). For example, the limited flourishing of state capitalism in the Middle East after decolonization has been explained as the outcome of cultural peculiarities emerging from the influence of Islam in the region (Sadowski 1993: 15-19). Indeed, the discourse of 'Islam'

(in mainstream media, academic, and political representations) has found a 'security' problem in the (male) Middle Eastern 'Other'. This 'Other' is identifiable through 'his' lack of economic and political 'progress', reflected in the rejection of (Western-but-universalized) values that are purported to ensure 'progress' (Said 1997; Sardar 1999; Samiei 2010). In these ways, gendered and orientalist discourses construct 'the East' as a site of insecurity (for 'us' as much as for the feminized 'ordinary' Middle Easterners in these narratives) precisely because of its failure to adopt 'appropriate' modes and paths of political and economic development.

Conclusion

Ultimately, 'security' as a concept and practice is shaped by the operation of gender and race (two of the most fundamental ways of understanding the world and the people in it). Acknowledging the ways in which gender and race have mediated the concept and practice of 'security' is central to challenging dominant understandings and practices of 'security'. For example, in the context of the Middle East, gender and race (in the form of orientalism) offer insights into how long-standing narratives of the region's 'backwardness' and 'barbarism' are repackaged in the contemporary context, and how violent conflicts here have been enabled and how they have played out. Gender and race function separately but also together, at various points, to organize the world into us/them. This is done by drawing on dominant binary logics in which particular understandings of 'masculinity'/'femininity' and 'West'/'East' are mapped onto various peoples and places. These logics are reflected in both the mainstream research agendas and analyses in the field of SS (and IR) (shaping how the field thinks and works) and in the practice of global politics by states that dominate this sphere of activity. Utilizing the insights of analyses that explore the function of gender and race in relation to 'security' is important because this approach offers ways to challenge the dominant understandings of (in)security that privilege particular political and economic values, enable conflict, silence non-Western concerns about what 'security' entails, and ultimately has gendered and racialized effects.

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