

Name of the student:	Mathias Finn Thisted Hierl
Title of the thesis:	Securitization Theory and Danish Discourse during the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2021)
Reviewer:	Tomáš Weiss

### 1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

This is a very well focused thesis that contributes to the current research on securitisation and narratives. The literature review introduces the existing research on securitisation succinctly and in a readable manner. It orients the reader in the academic debate and explains the research objectives and how they help fill the gap in our understanding of the securitisation dynamics very well.

### 2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The narrow focus on the concept of counter-securitisation helps focusing the theoretical and methodological framework for the research very well. The argument for critical discourse theory is made persuasively and the thesis explains well how the research has been conducted and why this approach was selected. The data is limited to the selected press conferences by the prime minister and the manifesto of the Men in Black group. This choice is explained in the text and seems to be sufficient for reaching relevant conclusions. In fact, other sources of discourse are incorporated in the analysis implicitly, primarily the visual presentation of the Men in Black movement during the demonstrations. The work with sources is appropriate.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

The thesis delivers an answer that is both limited and persuasive at the same time. It achieves its research objectives and identifies how the counter-securitising narrative of Men in Black altered the primary securitisation narrative by prime minister Frederiksen. The link between data and conclusions is clear and the thesis, while recognising the limitations, does a good job in arguing that it was indeed the public opposition that changed the prime minister's rhetoric. With all the limitations related to the generalisability of the results (recognised in the text), the thesis contributes to the securitisation research in an original and valuable manner. I would have appreciated a more extensive discussion about what the findings mean for our understanding of counter-securitisation and what additional research paths they offer.

### 4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The language is appropriate. While anti-plagiarism check reports a high similarity, this is mainly due to the appendix where the original transcriptions of the prime minister's press conferences in Danish are included. The layout could have been improved: there is a number of arrows and other graphic items that do not necessarily help the readers to orient themselves better in the narrative. Academic standards are observed, the citation style is without any problems. The text is an original contribution to the knowledge in the field.

## 5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

Matthias Hierl has written a very good thesis, which constitutes an original contribution to the scholarship on securitisation and helps fill a relevant research gap. It is limited in its scope but that allows a detailed discussion of the available material and a persuasive conclusion.

- Do both narratives analysed in the text target the same audience and only differ in the construction of the threat, i.e. virus vs. tyranny of the government. Or, do you see any other potential audiences?
- Does your work tell us anything about the nature of counter-securitisation beyond the fact that it affects the primary securitisation? What new research paths does it open in this respect, if any?

<b>Grade (A-F):</b>	A
Date:	Signature:
11/01/2023	