

Syrian Refugees in Canada: A Security Issue?
A Qualitative Content Analysis of the Conservative Party Rhetoric

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ABSTRACT

In August 2015, the Syrian crisis reached an all-time high in terms of number of refugees fleeing violence. The displaced sought asylum in numerous neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). Eventually, some resettled in Canada. At the same time, Canada called for a federal election to be held in October 2015. The overlap of these two major events sets the political environment of this major research paper. As a wave of hatred against immigrants reaches all corners of the world, it is interesting to see if it also reached Canada. Following a deductive approach and testing securitization theory, the rhetoric of three main political actors from the Conservative Party of Canada during the 2015 election campaign will be analyzed. This paper argues that, according to the theory of securitization, the Conservative Party tried to link the concepts of refugees and security, but did not perform a securitization attempt per se.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migration is a phenomenon as old as the hills, and refugees “have knocked on other people’s doors since the beginnings of modern times” (Bauman, 2016, 8). With the process of globalization, migration became a global phenomenon (Adamson, 2006; Ibrahim, 2005). Numerous political, economic and demographic factors continue to incite or force migration, and receiving countries are at times hostile towards it (Castles, 2014), mostly because they consider it hard to define which migrants to let in and which to keep out (Adamson, 2006). In fact, the perception of international migration has changed since the end of the Cold War (Bourbeau, 2013b; Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). What was previously perceived as an economic question is now a security matter, especially for OECD countries (Bourbeau, 2013b). Migration now often causes controversy, uncertainty and unease in many Western countries for reasons such as terrorism and organized crimes (Esses, Medianu and Lawson, 2013; Watson, 2007). However, in this “age of migration” (Castles and Miller, 2003 cited in Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006, 70), not all have the same choice on their mobility (Scherrer, 2013). While some can move freely, others are forced to move, blocked from moving or anchored (Scherrer, 2013). When managing immigration, countries have to consider their role in maintaining national security for their citizens as well as their humanitarian responsibility towards immigrants (Watson, 2007). According to Bourbeau (2013b), it is a relatively new notion to consider migration as a whole (as opposed to only certain individuals) as a national security threat. International migration arose on the security agenda of many states, especially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States (Adamson, 2006; Castles, 2014; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, Humphrey, 2013, Huot et al., 2015). Internationally,

particularly in times of war or crisis, the link between migrants and national security threats is strong, because of a fear that immigrants may “possess dual political loyalties” to both their sending and receiving countries (Adamson, 2006, 166). Nonetheless, many authors agree that securitization of migration - the process of turning a policy issue into a security issue (Faist, 2004 as cited in Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, 4) - existed long before 9/11 (Adamson, 2006; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006; Freitas, 2002). Indeed, Adamson specifies that the end of the Cold War and bipolarity “has helped to transform both the nature and the function of national boundaries in ways that increasingly securitize migration and lead to a greater policing of national borders” (2006, 166).

In recent years, some world leaders have defended loudly and proudly their intention to keep immigrants out of their country. In the United States, for example, President Trump promised to deport undocumented immigrants and build a wall to keep Mexicans from entering the country (BBC, 2017). In Europe, the defeated French presidential candidate Marine Le Pen declared “l’immigration n’est pas une chance, c’est un fardeau” [“immigration is not a fortune, it is a burden”] (Faye, 2015, September 6, para.4). In Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán repeatedly mentioned that “all terrorists are migrants” (Bauman, 2016, 31). This negative rhetoric towards refugees and migrants may install fear that will eventually be cemented in our societies. Authors classify the fear of migrants in many different categories; threats to jobs, livelihoods, cultural identity (Castles, 2014), threat to “economic stability or physical integrity of the state and its individuals” (Watson, 2007, 99), and threat to the physical, economic and cultural society wellbeing (Esses et al., 2013), to name a few.

When it comes to Canada, we see a different phenomenon, at least on the surface. The immigration report from the 2016 census promotes immigration by saying “[i]n addition to contributing to the social and economic development of the country, immigrants and their descendants play a significant role in shaping and enriching the ethnic, cultural and linguistic composition of the Canadian population” (Statistics Canada, October 25 2017, para.7). In theory this might be the case but in practice, is that really how immigrants are seen in Canada? And is it the case for all types of migrants?

The specific problem to be addressed in this major research paper (MRP) relates to the way political leaders can frame certain policy issues as security issues – that is securitize them - and the impacts that can result from this process. Therefore, the way Syrian refugees were portrayed in political rhetoric will be at the center of this analysis. The literature on this topic has addressed passed securitization attempts when refugees arrived at Canadian borders, such as the Tamil asylum seekers in 1986 (Watson, 2007), the Sikh asylum-seekers in 1987 (Watson, 2007), the Chinese asylum-seekers in 1999 (Bourbeau, 2015) and the Tamil asylum-seekers in 2010 (Esses et al., 2013). However, the Syrian case has yet to be scrutinized through the lenses of securitization theory. Briefly, securitization theory states that a speech act may frame an issue as an “existential” security threat that will require “extraordinary” measures to be managed (Abrahamsen, 2005, 59). In this theory, “security is not an objective condition but the outcome of a specific social process” (Abrahamsen, 2005, 57). The specific ontological and epistemological assumptions of the theory are discussed later in part three of this MRP.

Against this backdrop, this major research paper seeks to answer the following research question: Was there an attempt by the Conservative Party of Canada to securitize the Syrian refugees coming to Canada? The preliminary hypothesis is that the Conservative government did indeed attempt to frame the Syrian refugees as a security threat. This hypothesis will be tested by adopting a deductive methodology, and by applying the theory of securitization to speeches delivered by the former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Christopher Alexander, as well as the former Minister of National Defense Jason Kenney when commenting publicly on the Syrian refugee crisis during the electoral campaign of 2015.

The paper begins with an introduction to important concepts and a presentation of the research design as well as the theoretical framework used for this research. A review of the literature is divided in four sections. The first section explains the refugee-security nexus and what threat refugees may present to host countries. The second section addresses the power of language and rhetoric. It is followed by an overview of past securitization analyses of migration in Canada. The fourth section lists the impacts that securitization may have on refugees. Finally, our own analysis of the speeches and the stemming results shows that securitization is not black or white in this case.

1.1. RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

Studying political discourse related to this type of forced migration will highlight the subtle way leaders can influence policy issues. Moreover, it is appropriate to study the case of Canada for three main reasons. First, when it comes to migration, Canada is physically located far from the southern hemisphere – which is usually where the

majority of refugees come from (Janik, 2004). It is rare that refugees do not pass through Europe or the United States before arriving in Canada (Janik, 2004), thus creating a particular migration model to study. Second, with the recent influx of a great number of Syrian migrants in Canada, this specific topic proves to be timely and pertinent. Third, the study of securitization of migration has been an increasingly dynamic field since the end of the Cold War (Bourbeau, 2013a; Bourbeau, 2013b). Above all, research is scarce on cases outside of the European Union (Watson, 2007). Thus, this research offers both a national and global perspective to better understand the process of securitization in a refugee-receiving country outside of Europe. It thus fills an important gap in the literature. Altogether, this research offers a new perspective on the power of public speeches, especially when coming from political leaders, keeping in mind that this is not a unidirectional influence. Indeed, public opinions could also influence political campaigns as political leaders need to cater to their electorate, to some extent.

1.2. DEFINITIONS

Various terms that seem similar need to be defined and their subtle differences clarified.

Migrants, Emigrants, Immigrants

First, a migrant is defined by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs as

[...] someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more (United Nations, n.d.).

Within the realm of migration, an emigrant is someone that departs or exits from a state to settle in another (Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross, 2011). An immigrant is a non-national that “move[s] into a country for the purpose of settlement” (Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross, 2011, 49). In other words, an individual is considered an emigrant when *leaving* its country of origin, and becomes an immigrant when *entering* another country for settlement. Immigrants and refugees differ in that “[a]n immigrant is a person who chooses to settle permanently in another country. Refugees are forced to flee” (IRCC, 2017e). Indeed, both asylum seekers and refugees are considered “forced” migrants, but there is a nuance between the two terms.

Asylum Seekers and Asylum

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines asylum seekers as “individuals seeking international protection whose claims have not yet been recognized” (Avdan, 2014, 447). As for the term “asylum”, there is no universal definition, but it is described as the total protection offered by a state (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). However, a right to asylum - to escape persecution and violations to seek protection in another country - does not exist per se. Each country has the discretionary power to offer protection or not (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006), and the protection refugees are accorded may vary depending on the type of legal status they receive from their host country (Huot, Bobadilla, Bailliard and Rudman, 2015).

Refugees

For the purpose of this MRP, the definition of a refugee established in the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and modified by the *1967 Protocol* will be adopted. It refers to any person who

[...] owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country [...] (The United Nations, 1951, art 1).

This Convention, which is based on Article 14 of the *1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, is the main protection for international refugees (The United Nations, 1951). The Article 14 of the Convention states: “Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” (The United Nations, 1948, art 14.1). Persecution can incorporate many things, such as human slavery, ethnic cleansing, deportation, etc. (Adamson, 2006). Within the category of forced migrants, refugees form a particularly precarious group. The number of refugees of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reached a disheartening 15.1 million worldwide in 2015 (UNHCR News). The former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, states that “refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world” (UNHCR, 2011, I).

Refugees were viewed for a long time as “worthy of international protection [but] now entry rules have been tightened up to the point where it is virtually impossible to enter most northern countries to make a protection claim” (Castles, 2014, 195). Although applying for asylum is a right granted to persecuted individuals by the UN Declaration of Human Rights (The United Nations, 1948, Art 14.1), countries are not obligated to accept asylum seekers (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). In other words, an asylum seeker is

someone looking to obtain protection from persecution, and a refugee is someone who has officially obtained the protected status.

In Canada, there are two main streams to the refugee system (IRCC, 2017e). First is the in-Canada asylum program, “for people making refugee protection claims form within Canada” (IRCC, 2017e). They may seek asylum once in Canada or make their claim at the border (Osterberg, 2016). Through this program, permanent residency is not automatic. Refugees need to apply after their asylum claim is approved by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRCC, 2017f). For example, the Czech Roma came to Canada through the in-Canada asylum program starting mostly during the Cold War and continuing well into the 2000s (Diop, 2014).

Second, the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program is “for people who need protection from outside Canada” (IRCC, 2017e). Within this stream, there are Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR), Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) and Blended Visa Office Referrals (BVOR) (Osterberg, 2016). As explained on the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website (2017e), “a person cannot apply directly to Canada for resettlement”; they must be identified by the United Nations Refugee Agency. The refugees who get settled from overseas become permanent residents through this program (IRCC, 2017f). The Syrian refugees that were brought to Canada fell within this category. The distinction between these two streams in the Canadian refugee system is key in understanding how the Syrian refugees were portrayed and perceived in Canada.

According to Labman (2016, 68), “[r]esettlement represents the recognition that not all refugees can access asylum and that certain geographic regions face greater

refugee flows than others”. Concretely, Syrian refugees were recommended to Canada by the UNHCR once their status was established abroad (IRCC, 2016). The government declared many times that they were concentrating its efforts on the most vulnerable Syrians, which includes “women at risk, survivors of violence and torture, children and adolescents at risk, those with medical needs or legal and physical protection needs, and those lacking foreseeable durable solutions” (Turner, 2017, 30). The Operation Syrian Refugees, run by the Government of Canada during the crisis, had five phases: (1) identifying Syrian refugees to come to Canada; (2) processing Syrian refugees overseas; (3) transportation to Canada; (4) welcoming in Canada; and (5) settlement and community integration (IRCC, 2017a).

The terms migrants, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers will be used interchangeably throughout this essay, when appropriate.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1. METHODOLOGY

Following Bradimore and Bauder (2011), this analysis is not conducted to determine if a risk exists regarding Syrian refugees. Rather, it is about finding out if a security risk was constructed in the Canadian society during the federal election of 2015. To do this, a content analysis will be performed based on Philipp Mayring’s model (2000). This model tries to “preserve the advantages of quantitative content analysis as developed within communication science and to transfer and further develop them to qualitative-interpretative steps of analysis” (Mayring, 2000, para.5). These advantages include: (1) being able to adapt the analysis to a part of the communication – in this case to the text itself; (2) analyzing the material step by step; and (3) developing the categories

based on the research question and reviewing them throughout the process of analysis (Mayring, 2000, para.7). Mayring (2000) puts a lot of emphasis on developing the categories of analysis as close to the material as possible. This can be done in two ways: inductive category development and deductive category application (Mayring, 2000). Bengtsson (2016) adds that content analysis is unique because it can be either quantitative or qualitative, deductive or inductive, and can concentrate either on manifest or latent analysis. The qualitative, deductive approach is central to our research. However, it is crucial to leave space for the data to speak for itself to complement our findings. Indeed, Kohlbacher argues that “qualitative content analysis claims to synthesize two contradictory methodological principles: openness and theory-guided investigation” (2006, para.40) . Approaching the data set from both angles also offers the advantage of having no leftover data and possibly making new observations of the securitization theory. This paper thus combines deductive and inductive coding techniques to extract as much useful information from the data as possible.

The focus is on manifest content, but context will be considered which might reveal some latent influences. As Bengtsson (2016, 10) notes “[i]n a manifest analysis, the researcher describes what the informants actually say, stays close to the text, uses the words themselves [...]”. This qualitative content analysis was chosen for its flexibility and its ability to combine deductive category application through a qualitative analysis. This being said, some quantitative analysis techniques such as word frequency were included.

The following subsections explain how the data was collected and which themes were applied to the data.

2.2. SPEECH SELECTION

The data selection respected many criteria to correspond with securitization theory. The initial research plan was to find speeches delivered by former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and former Minister of Immigration, Christopher Alexander. These public figures were targeted since political actors are the archetype of securitizing agents (Bourbeau, 2013a). The selected timeline was between August 2, 2015 and October 19, 2015, which represents the campaign period leading to the federal election (Elections Canada, 2016). The main topic of the speeches or passages selected needed to be the Syrian refugee crisis, and speeches delivered both in French and in English were considered.

Many multimedia platforms were consulted, such as Open Parliament, IRCC News, and Global News live, the archived website "www.pm.gc.ca" of the Prime Minister's office, the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website, and McLean's online. The following keywords were used for this primary data search: "Harper speech", "Harper refugee", "Chris Alexander speech", and "Chris Alexander refugees". Finally, an Access to Information Request was sent to the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The request read as follow: *"All records of public announcements, speeches or statements made by the Minister from June 2, 2011 to October 19, 2015. I am looking for finished products only. Please include videos as well."* In response to this request, the Government was only able to provide documents that were already public. Moreover, none of them were statements made directly by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada but instead on behalf of the Department by a communications team. It was finally decided to

leave the IRCC documents outside of the pool of data because the statements were not pronounced directly by our selected orators.

To remedy to a first round of somewhat inconclusive research, it was decided that Jason Kenney, who was Minister of Defense from 9 February 2015 to 4 November 2015, would be included as a third orator. Indeed, Weiner (1992) expresses that refugee issues go beyond immigration concerns, and ministries such as defense and internal security are now part of the conversation. Kenney also preceded Alexander as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration from October 30, 2008 to July 15, 2013, which makes his inclusion even more logical.

Based on many newspaper articles, it was possible to identify the dates of various public appearances by the three political leaders. Online searches revealed many video clips of televised interviews, speeches and statements on Youtube and various news websites. The sections that addressed the Syrian refugee crisis were transcribed and the written format was used for analysis. These transcripts represent the majority of the pool of data used. All the results were based on keywords such as “Stephen Harper”, “Jason Kenney” or “Chris Alexander” combined with “Syria”, “Syrian refugee crisis”, “refugees” or “Syrian crisis”. No importance was given to the number of views on the videos for two reasons. First, because the research question does not focus on the impact or reach of the discourse, and second because the number of online views does not represent the attendance to the live event.

All speeches that pertain to refugees were considered, without regards to connotations - either positive or negative towards refugees - to avoid selection bias. The initial goal was to select approximately twenty-five speeches and the search was

conclusive with twenty texts selected for analysis. This number demanded an acceptable amount of work that respects the length of this MRP while providing a reasonable overview of the way the Conservative Party addressed the issue. The pool of data includes statements, speeches, television and radio interviews, answers to public questions during campaign rallies, media conferences, panels, and election campaign debates. Each allocution was delivered between September 2, 2015 and October 9, 2015, inclusively.

Once the texts were transcribed and carefully revised against the original sources, they were inputted into NVivo. Throughout the research process, NVivo and Excel were used as tools to store, code, track and organize the speeches.

2.3. THEMES AND CODING AGENDA

Briefly, successful securitization requires three things: a securitizing actor, a securitizing move, and the audience acceptance. These elements will be developed in greater details in section 3. The first element – securitizing actor - was controlled in the speech selection by choosing influential heads of governments ministries and the Prime Minister. Also, the third element - the audience acceptance - is outside of the scope of this MRP as it would require a much larger impact research in the public. Therefore, this research concentrates on the second element: identifying if there was a securitization move and the framing of an “existential threat” based on the securitization theory following a deductive research design. In other words, the focus is on intention of the discourse rather than on its consequences (Weaver, 2015).

The goal of a deductive approach is to test an existing theory based on various criteria (Graneheim, Lindgren & Lundman, 2017). To perform a deductive qualitative

content analysis, it is essential to establish words and themes that will become the testing criteria (Bengtsson, 2016). These categories are based on the theory - securitization theory in our case - and presented in a coding agenda with definitions, exemplars and coding rules for each category (Kohlbacher, 2006). The themes are divided into two categories, based on the literature. Williams (2003, 514) refers to the book by Buzan et al. (1998) to define the two categories. The first is “the internal, linguistic-grammatical”. The second is “the external, contextual and social”. Interestingly, Ritsert (1972 as cited in Kholbaher, 2006) criticized quantitative content analysis for not sufficiently considering the context surrounding the texts. In the same vein, securitization theory, as presented by Balzacq (2011), has been criticized for not considering context. For Fairclough and Wodak (1997 as cited in Balzacq, 2011, 37), “discourse is not produced without taking context into consideration”. In our case, many external and contextual elements might influence the analysis. Therefore, it is essential to integrate context into our qualitative analysis. Three criteria were identified for each category to test the theory. The categories and criteria were reviewed during the analysis process to ensure that it represented and respected the theory to a maximum. The six final elements listed below are considered as the core elements of the theory to evaluate if there was a securitization attempt. The coding agenda below, based on the Mayring (2000) model, presents the way the texts were coded.

Internal (within the rhetoric)

Category	Description	Typical Exemplar	Coding Rules
A)	A discourse that	“We’re living in an era	Texts that include the

Construction of a threat	carries negative connotation concerning refugees to an extent that makes them a threat to Canada based on the three categories of threats presented in section 4.1.2.	where people are fleeing a terrorist war zone, and we obviously must have security screening” Stephen Harper, 2015, September 28, Debate.	words dangerous, illegal, threat, risky or hint at security concerns when speaking of Syrian refugees specifically will be coded under this category. Each text will be coded “YES” or “NO” if the general tone of a text points to refugees as security threat.
B) Existential threat	Not only should the security threat be identified but it needs to be presented as a priority above other issues (Humphrey, 2013).	Canada is the “world’s largest exporter of Sikh terrorism” (Indian envoy, as cited in Watson, 2007, 110).	If the security threat is given a sense of urgency and priority, it will be coded as “existential threat”.
C) Speaking of extraordinary measures	When a credible actor speaks of the measures that will be taken to deal with the existential security threat. This measure should be out of the ordinary.	“Nous savons que, si un processus accéléré des demandes d’immigration est une partie de la solution, une politique de mise en détention de ces individus l’est également” (Eleanor Caplan, in Bourbeau, 2013a, 142-143).	All passages that address concrete measures that politicians speak of as a response to the crisis will be coded, and then examined to determine if it is an extraordinary measure or not.

External (context surrounding rhetoric)

D) Event. As previously indicated, an appropriate space - or opportunity - must be made available through a change in a certain order for an issue to be reframed

(Bourbeau, 2013a). An event on its own may not securitize migrants, it is only a contextual factor that must then be interpreted (Bourbeau, 2013a). Coding for this element will consist of the word “event”.

E) Unity in rhetoric. This criterion refers to the fact that the speeches as a whole have to compose a securitization attempt, thus if only one speech out of all the ones analyzed addresses the refugees as a security threat, the issue cannot be seen as securitized. This will be determined at the end of the analysis, based on the tone of every speech. It will first be determined if each actor had a continuity in their speech, and then by comparing the actors between each other it will be possible to see if they are all speaking in one voice, as it is essential for securitization, or if the discourse presents contradictions (Bourbeau, 2013b).

F) Government action on extraordinary measures. An “existential threat” becomes a justification for “extraordinary legal, policing and policy measures to manage it” (Leonard, 2007 as cited in Humphrey, 2013, 179). Floyd (2016, 678) refers to “the situation when (1) *new* laws are passed, or (2) (new) emergency powers are granted (all of which seek to govern the insecurity/crisis situation, and all of which are deemed permissible, including in some states by an independent judiciary, only in the context of the threat), or (3) when a state’s existing security apparatus and/or existing emergency legislation is employed to deal with issues that are new or that it has not dealt with previously”. This would include measures put in place to protect Canada from Syrian refugees. Overall, the action must be out of the ordinary for an issue of this scope. Finally, the difference between this criterion and (C) is *acting* on it rather than simply *talking* about an extraordinary measure. For this criterion, Floyd (2016) emphasizes the

importance of the actor that performs the extraordinary measure. To have the power to securitize, the orator should be the one implementing the extraordinary measure, or directly designate someone who will, in order to maintain credibility. Many authors question the value of an extraordinary measure to determine a successful securitization (Floyd, 2016), but it was decided to include it as a criterion to respect the theory.

As for the coding itself, it was decided to allow the speeches to “speak” through inductive coding before reviewing them again through the deductive themes. This means that before even developing the themes and codes based on the theory, the speeches were analyzed and coded based on word frequency, surprising or recurrent themes, and general tones of speeches. This was done first to have as little bias of the data as possible and to allow for a more open-minded perception of the texts.

For the deductive coding, the six themes developed from the theory were the guidelines when reviewing the texts. The speeches were scrutinized multiple times to note the parts of the speeches that pertained to each criterion. The internal criteria – construction of threat, existential threat, and speaking of extraordinary measures – sections of the speeches were directly highlighted in NVivo and annotated according to the coding rules in the coding agenda. For the external criteria – event, unity in rhetoric, and government action on extraordinary measure – the texts were not coded per se since the themes pertain to external context. For these, the evaluation was done as a whole after having analyzed the entire pool of data several times. With both the inductive and deductive coding method, it is believed that the essential messages of the Conservative discourse were considered and included in this research.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Security research has been a very dynamic field since the end of the Cold War (Bourbeau, 2013a). For a while, the social construction of security was contested, but it is now broadly supported by many authors (Bourbeau, 2013a). This means that security is not seen as an objective matter, but rather as a concept constructed socially (Bourbeau, 2013a). A society might develop a definition of national security and insecurity based on their interests or identity (Adamson, 2006). This section will present the theory of securitization, and how security can be framed by public actors.

3.1. SECURITIZATION THEORY

Securitization of migration has become “an accepted component of international politics” (Watson, 2007, 101). The literature presents two main streams to conceptualize securitization. The first conception can be perceived as more concrete and frames securitization as the “gouvernementalité par l’inquiétude” (Bourbeau, 2013b, 132). In this sense, securitization is not presented as a sense of urgency and survival (Bourbeau, 2013b). It pertains to the daily practice of professionals working in the field of security (Bourbeau, 2013b). According to this interpretation, the actors (i.e. police officers and customs agents) create and reproduce a diffuse system of fear and anxiety in the population through their daily actions (Bourbeau, 2013b, 25). By including some and excluding others, professionals working in the security field offer constant reminders of possible threats to the society (Bourbeau, 2013b). This can also include the creation of security agencies, such as the border control agency FRONTEX in Europe (Iov and Bogdan, 2017).

The second conceptualization of securitization is slightly more abstract, and is based on language and discourse (Iov and Bogdan, 2017; Bourbeau, 2013a). In this school of thought, known as the Copenhagen School (Williams, 2003) in the field of international relations, Austin explores the “performative” discourse, or speech-act (Bourbeau, 2013b). A typical example for this is the sentence “Je vous declare mari et femme” [“I pronounce you husband and wife”] (Bourbeau, 2013a, 132). In other words, a new reality is established through words. This second conceptualization of securitization informs the theoretical framework used for this project.

This type of discourse is more than descriptive; it can be used to re-qualify a given situation into a security issue (Williams, 2003). Buzan and Waever (as cited in Watson, 2007) identify different actors that can take part in the securitization process: political leaders, military, police and intelligence agencies. The media can also play a major role in this process (Watson, 2007), and can rapidly degrade any positive perception of immigrants (Esses et al., 2013). In fact, the media has portrayed migrants with an increasingly negative image over the past decade (Esses et al., 2013). Esses et al. (2013) explain that since immigration information is rarely available to the public, the media and political elites can take advantage of the uncertainty of the population to present immigrants and refugees as “invaders” and “enemies”, because these stories get more attention for their respective platforms. If the government does not contradict this information, it is hard for the public to determine real from false threats (Janik, 2004). In addition, the securitization process is often based on opportunity, occurring when an event changes a certain cultural, political, or security order, and a space is available to reframe a policy issue (Bourbeau, 2013a). This will be referred to as a social break. Very

important, the way to reframe an issue in the securitization process is usually as an “existential threat” to the state or society (Bourbeau, 2013a; Humphrey, 2013; Salter and Piché, 2011; Watson, 2007; Williams, 2003). Vultee describes an existential threat as “an imminent peril to the physical, cultural, or social health of the community” (2010, 33). By becoming an existential threat, it becomes a policy priority over other issues, and requires extraordinary measures to deal with it (Vultee, 2010). Overall, the securitization of an issue related to liberty or security questions can “mobilize opinion and constitute legitimacy and authority for dealing with that ‘threat’” (Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012, 39). Furthermore, not only does a situation need to be defined as a security threat to become securitized; the audience to which this discourse is presented also has to accept the proposed security framing of the issue (Williams, 2003). This implies that an orator must hold a trusted position for the words to be socially influential and to affect the framing of said issue (Bourbeau, 2013a; Williams, 2003). Finally, as Bourbeau (2013a) mentions, the process of securitization is not based solely on one person’s discourse - however powerful it can be - rather it is a collection of speeches that can have an impact on a social issue. Consequently, multiple audiences may be involved in accepting securitization over a period of time (Salter and Piché, 2011). As mentioned, the audience acceptance will not be part of this research. Studying the effect of speeches on the Canadian population would require a much larger research project. In sum, securitization is described, in its simplest form, as “the overall process of turning a policy issue (such as [...] international migration) into a security issue” (Faist, 2004 as cited in Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, 4). Thus, the question of securitization is subjective (Bourbeau, 2013a; Williams, 2003); a social construction that depends on the interactions between the

actors, the audience and the context (Bourbeau, 2013a; Salter and Piché, 2011). The context includes social norms, national laws, power hierarchies, and much more (Bourbeau, 2013a). Finally, securitization is not about identifying real risks, but identifying what is framed as one (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Political leaders have often used the securitization of migration and the promotion a “threat-free society” to build their campaigns (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, 4).

Floyd (2016) adds that this theory is one of the most popular in security studies. It should also be mentioned that securitization can be seen as a positive process in specific contexts. Abrahamsen (2005, 60), for example, explains in a slightly different context that “the process of securitizing Africa and underdevelopment could be a potent weapon against the marginalization of the continent and a way of justifying increased development assistance [...]”. However, she warns that addressing situations through security creates a dichotomy between the “us” and “them” (Abrahamsen, 2005).

Finally, Bourbeau (2013a) distinguishes between simply recognizing the challenges of welcoming refugees - such as access to integration services, over representation of migrants in large cities, and barriers to credential recognition - and blatantly declaring them as a national security threat. Through this statement, Bourbeau (2013a) shows that there is a way to speak about refugees without spreading fear.

3.2. LIMITATIONS OF THEORY

Certain authors have shared their critiques of the securitization theory based on the Copenhagen School’s model. Balzacq (2011), for example, questions the inherent power of a speech-act in the securitization process if, according to the Copenhagen

School, it requires the audience acceptance to truly be discursive. Similarly, Floyd (2016) shows that audience acceptance does not have a decisive impact on the success of securitization and should not be an integral part of the theory. Some also say that the acceptance process of securitization has been under-researched (Salter and Piché, 2011). For this project too, researching the success of securitization process is unrealistic. This would require an audience impact study and evaluation of election results - endeavors that are too large for this project.

Williams (2003) also warns against the modernization of technology and the increasing role of televisual images in creating threats and fears. According to him, this format will expend the process of securitization well beyond speech-act and discourse (Williams, 2003). This suggestion echoes other concerns of the theory's narrow focus on linguistics (Salter and Piché, 2011).

In sum, securitization is “one of the most innovative, productive and yet controversial avenues of research in contemporary security studies” (Williams, 2003, 511). It is thus fascinating to study contemporary events through this lens.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this “age of migration” (Castles and Miller, 2003 as cited in Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006, 70), much ink has been spilled over securitization of migration. Some refer to it in more negative terms, such as the “global migration crisis” (Ibrahim, 2005, 167). In this section, we discuss the literature to establish the main links between the concepts of refugee and security. The power of language will be presented, especially in the media and public speeches. Finally, past securitization studies will be presented followed by potential impacts that such securitization can have.

4.1. REFUGEE-SECURITY NEXUS

The link between refugees and security concerns is not inherent. As stated earlier, immigrants were not always seen as a threat; they were in fact very useful in the development of the capitalist system through migrant labour (Ibrahim, 2005). However, over the years, the tables have turned and security concerns overpowered the benefits of migrant labour in our society (Ibrahim, 2005). This subsection examines where and how the concepts of refugees and security meet.

4.1.1. SECURITY: A CHANGING CONCEPT

The concept of security can be ambiguous (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). The initial concept of national security emerged in the field of foreign policy analysis, pertaining to territory and population (Freitas, 2002), based on a nation's particular interests and identity (Adamson, 2006). It includes features such as capacity, autonomy, and sovereignty (Adamson, 2006). Although the widespread conception of national security and the responsibility of national defense has long been perceived as an outside threat to a state by other states, this conception of security is now changing to include non-state and non-military actors (Humphrey, 2013; Adamson, 2006; Ibrahim, 2005; Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012). The broadening of the concept of security - which happened after the Cold War (Williams and Balaz, 2015; Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012; Ibrahim, 2005; Abrahamsen, 2005) - includes terrorism, drug traffickers and illegal migrants as part of these modern-day threats (Iov and Bogdan, 2017). States moved from the sole protection of territory to the management of individuals and their fears (Ibrahim, 2005). National

security, international security and individual security are now viewed as interdependent (Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012).

4.1.2. MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES AS SECURITY THREATS

As mentioned, migrants used to be seen as beneficial to the development of the Canadian capitalist system, but the benefits of migrant labour are mentioned less and less (Ibrahim, 2005). As for refugees specifically, they slowly went from people in dire need of protection to illegal economic migrants and criminals (Osterberg, 2016). The public is increasingly concerned with the “strangers”, the “different”, the “refugees” (Bauman, 2016; Williams and Balaz, 2015). In the twenty-first century, migration is viewed mainly as a security concern (Castles, 2014). This is true mostly - although not only - in destination countries such as the European countries and Canada (Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012).

Across the globe, migration and security are increasingly intertwined. The 2010 election in Australia was a platform for securitization of migration through border security against terrorism (Humphrey, 2013). The European Union also established that migration and refugees were security concerns early in the 1990s and the label has only been reinforced over the years resulting from various wars and terrorist attacks worldwide (Humphrey, 2013). The United Nations even listed transboundary challenges such as narcotics trafficking, excessive international migration, and international terrorism as new threats to populations (Ibrahim, 2005). Ibrahim (2005, 69) believes that “the categorizing of migration as a human security threat, alongside other threats such as narcotics, is unsettling”. There is also a perception that legitimate refugees are the ones

declared as such under the 1951 Convention, and that refugees who ask for asylum at the border are fraudulent and bogus (Huot et al., 2015; Diop, 2014).

Seeing refugees as security threats is not an inherent representation, thus it is important to examine how they are framed as such. Based on Huysmans' (2000) design, the threats will be presented in three categories: national security, cultural security and welfare security.

National Security

Huysmans' (2000) model of "internal security" refers to the countries of the European Union wanting to harmonize the control of the external borders to allow free movement over the internal borders of the Union. Although the model is built around the European case, what Huysmans calls "internal security" may nonetheless be adapted to our research to represent a desire to protect a territory against exterior threats. In this case, Canada is a single country, and thus the notion of "national security" was considered more appropriate. The threats in this first category include terrorism, criminality, and clandestine immigration.

Terrorism is for many a major reason to fear migration (Huot et al., 2015). Although terrorism is still difficult to define (Whitaker, 1998), for this paper Enders and Sandler's definition will be used: "the premeditated or threatened use of extra-normal violence by nonstate actors against noncombatant targets in order to obtain a political, religious, or ideological objective through the intimidation of a large audience" (2002, 145 cited in Avdan, 2014, 452). The *International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE)* database defines a terrorist event as one that involves "victims and perpetrators of different nationalities" (Avdan, 2014, 452). From a national security

perspective, immigration can represent a channel for international terrorism (Adamson, 2006). The fear lies in the fact that immigrants or refugees could activate sleeper cells in their host country, or affiliate with other migrants to create terrorist groups (Avdan, 2014; Ibrahim, 2005). Multiple events brought these risks to light. For example, an incident at the US-Canada border in 1999 created controversy regarding cross border migrants and terrorism. The “Millennium bomber” was intercepted with explosives meant to detonate at the Los Angeles airport. Ahmed Ressam was a refugee in Canada and was able to obtain a Canadian passport using forged documents (Salter and Piché, 2011). Following this event, the US accused Canada of being “soft on terrorism” (Andreas, 2005 as cited in Salter and Piché, 2011, 930). Furthermore, the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, the 2004 Madrid and 2005 London bombings all contributed to engrain this fear in receiving countries (Castles, 2014; Williams and Balaz, 2015). In the case of the 9/11 attacks, the situation of emergency that it created had significant impact on the refugee policies and perception all around the world (Humphrey, 2013; Freitas, 2002). Specifically, these events were an important incentive for states to implement stricter border security and migration policies (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006; Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Since then, there was also an increase in the level of protection against migrants that were deemed undesirable (Humphrey, 2013; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). Currently, terrorists are the best exemplar of undesirable individuals (Scherrer, 2013). A report by the Nixon Center further feeds into this nexus by stating that “[i]mmigration and terrorism are linked—not because all immigrants are terrorists but because all, or nearly all, terrorists in the West have been immigrants” (as cited in Adamson, 2006, 195). In an article in a UNHCR periodical written shortly after the New

York attack, Ray Wilkinson (2001) highlights the resulting reality for refugees being dismissed by Western nations. For Canada and many other countries, the 9/11 attack was the precursor of anti-terrorism measures and closing borders (Wilkinson, 2001; Pécoud and Guchteneire, 2006; Crépeau et al., 2007; Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012), and the cross-border movements became utterly securitized (Watson, 2007). The goal of these measures was to reduce the risk of terrorist activities (Pécoud and Guchteneire, 2006). Whitaker (1998, 423) suggests that refugees coming from “areas known to produce active terrorist movements” face more skepticism and doubt than others. In the same vein, there is a fear that political unrest and violence would spill over to the nations hosting refugees (Abrahamsen, 2005; Whitaker, 1998). One important element of securitization that Salter and Piché (2011) have identified is the extrapolation of threats. In the past, securitizing actors have addressed terrorist attacks without considering the specific social, economic, political or historical context in which they took place, and - wrongfully - claimed that these attacks could happen anywhere (Salter and Piché, 2011). All these fears have become very real in Canada even if “none of the perpetrators of 9/11 entered the United States as asylum seekers, and none had even been to Canada” (Macklin, 2005, 412). These violent and terrorist events have changed the way of addressing immigration regulations (Crépeau et al., 2007; Adamson, 2006), and made the scission between responsibilities of national security and humanitarianism even more apparent when it comes to refugees (Freitas, 2002). Although the issue of terrorism dominates the discourse of border security (Salter and Piché, 2012), there are in fact other threats on the list that are worth mentioning, such as crime and diseases.

Indeed, organized crime and criminality are other related concerns when it comes to immigration (Huot et al., 2015; Adamson, 2006; Ibrahim, 2005). This can be encompassed as a fear that false asylum seekers and refugees would intentionally work against their host country (Avdan, 2014; Adamson, 2006; Freitas, 2002). Movements of forced migrants have also been said to threaten the integrity of the Canadian refugee system (Osterberg, 2016). The fear links back to a concern that the Canadian asylum and immigration system is too lax and would let potential “bogus” refugees or terrorists in the country (Macklin, 2005). Macklin (2005, 414) reports that a former Canadian ambassador described the country’s refugee system as “the greatest threat to North American security”. It is now a relatively widespread belief that people use the asylum channel over other immigration streams because it is easier - these are referred to as queue-jumpers (Esses et al., 2013) - and that Canada is at risk of exploitation by terrorists because of it (Macklin, 2005).

Finally, immigrants with communicable diseases can represent a fear for host communities (Esses et al., 2013; Watson, 2007; Ibrahim, 2005). Although these might represent the more “classic” security concerns, two other types of threats are to be considered.

Cultural Security

This category of threat relates to cultural security. The fear of losing or transforming a country’s identity has been raised as a reason to fear newcomers (Williams and Balaz, 2015; Diop, 2014; Ibrahim, 2005). Identity can include “traditions, culture, systems of justice, and rights” (Ibrahim, 2005, 166). Ole Weaver (1993 as cited in Ibrahim, 2005, 170) describes these values as “societal security”, in contrast with state security, which

includes political and economic values. Identity usually defines the “us” and “them” (Vultee, 2010). The fear is that immigrants carry with them new traditions, cultures and religions that would eventually alter the host country’s identity (Ibrahim, 2005). The fear is magnified when newcomers are adamant about maintaining their identity and culture rather than adapting to their new environment (Ibrahim 2005). Furthermore, at the societal level, a higher number of foreign newcomers can be seen as a threat to social cohesion (Iov and Bogdan, 2017; Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006; Freitas, 2002). Stemming from this, cultural arguments have been used to justify the exclusion of some groups. Humphrey describes some cases where states aim to govern people “by managing their feelings of insecurity which in turn becomes the basis of unity through exclusion of the other” (2013, 181). Even though “survival of a society is a question of identity” (Weaver, 1993 as cited in Ibrahim, 2005, 170), this attitude of exclusion based on social membership is a form of racism according to Ibrahim (2005).

Welfare Security

The third category of threat is against the welfare state. A good welfare state might represent a pull factor for migrants looking for social and economic rights (Yuksel, 2014). However, there are a variety of concerns linked to refugees and immigrants that are linked to the welfare state. The local population might feel like they are sharing their rights and benefits with foreigners (Yukel, 2014). The migrants who will be economically dependent on the state or the ones who will take the local residents’ jobs are also often seen as threats to social stability and financial security (Osterberg, 2016; Williams and Balaz, 2015; Watson, 2007; Adamson, 2006). Indeed, some picture the “good” and “bad” refugees in terms of costs and benefits that they represent for the taxpayers (Bradimore

and Bauder, 2011). On other occasions, the “good” are portrayed as educated, hard workers, and the “bad” as requiring government assistance and unwilling to adapt to a new culture (Osterberg, 2016). This divides refugees in “useful” or “harmful” (Ibrahim, 2005). Additionally, a large number of refugees can be overwhelming for states’ capacities and reduces their ability to offer public services and resources to all, which can lead to conflict (Iov and Bogdan, 2017; Adamson, 2006). In this sense, refugees can be perceived as a threat if “their massive presence destabilizes the host society” (Freitas, 2002, 38; Bourbeau, 2013a). Adamson (2006) reminds the public that the state does not necessarily lose control when a large number of migrants arrive. It definitely depends on each state's capacity to control their borders, which Adamson (2006) notes differs significantly between failing states and non-failing states. States with high institutional capacity have proven to adapt relatively well to high levels of mobility (Adamson, 2006).

States may also see immigration as a concern for their sovereignty. For instance, transnational movements of people, capital, goods and ideas challenge the control over territory and affect states’ sovereignty (Adamson, 2006). Through these ever-growing networks, Abrahamsen (2005, 66) claims that there is no way to isolate “zones of chaos” and “zones of peace”. Adamson (2006) qualifies a states’ sovereignty as the basis of their security and Dauvergne identifies border control as the “last bastion of territorial sovereignty” (2004 as cited in Crépeau et al., 2007, 312). The more irregular migrants and false asylum seekers arrive, the more states seem like they are losing control as sovereigns (Williams and Balaz, 2015; Diop, 2014; Adamson, 2006). International migration also defies states’ autonomy since effective migration management requires a high level of interstate cooperation and communication (Adamson, 2006).

Each of the above-mentioned threats on its own is detrimental enough for any legitimate immigrant, but the intersectionality of many of these threats often converge on immigrants. This layering of threats often happens in the media, and it reinforces the negative image that the public has of newcomers (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011; Ibrahim, 2005). This being said, this section is not an attempt to determine whether the threats, fears and risks are legitimate or not, but rather to show that migrants and refugees are not always the cause of them - sometimes they are simply their embodiment. An interesting concept, that of “folk devil”, explains that folk devils are targets because they “embody society’s fears or anxieties at a particular point in time” (Cohen, 1972 as cited in Bradimore and Bauder, 2011, 642). However, folk devils are not the source of said anxieties. Rather, they awake pre-existing concerns in the community (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). This idea can definitely be linked to certain reactions towards refugees (Osterberg, 2016). Rutherford (as cited in Bauman, 2016, 16) notes that refugees unwillingly “transport the bad news from a far corner of the world onto our doorsteps”. Securitization of migration is perhaps one way for leaders to protect national security since many elements that states identify as threats “coalesce in the image of the migrant” (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, 4).

To conclude, the control of borders and immigration have multiple purposes, such as manifesting sovereignty, and limiting the access to labor markets and various public services while maintaining national security and identity (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006; Adamson, 2006).

4.2. THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

The choice to study language was made because it is a subtle but powerful way of influencing society. Humans live mostly metaphorically, and thoughts, feelings and language are closely linked to actions (Hardy, 2003 as cited in Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Whether deliberate or not, language can have material consequences (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011); it is social and political (Hansen, 2006). Not only is language a channel for information and communication; Jørgensen and Phillips (2011) also see it as a means to construct the social world, which in turn influences identities and relations. By constructing these realities, discourse has the power to shape people's place in the world (Diop, 2014), which can also create inequities between groups (Huot et al., 2015). Based on Foucault's work, Ibrahim (2005, 164) explains that "the creation of knowledge through discourse [...] is an exercise of power". Language has the power of constructing a "risk" - whether the risk is real or not (Williams and Balaz, 2015). Bauman (2016, 17) is of the opinion that "[c]apitalizing on the anxiety caused by the influx of strangers [...] is a temptation which very few politicians already in office, or aspiring to an office, would be able to resist". In fact, political speeches have been used for centuries to influence public opinion (Iov and Bogdan, 2017; Klebanov et al., 2008). Various strategies may be used to persuade the public: repetition, transformation, reactivation (Ibrahim, 2005).

In the case of refugees, the specific term with which they are identified has underlying connotations. In Britain for example, Williams and Balaz (2015) report that for a long time the term "refugees" was widely used to describe foreigners in dire need of protection. However, in the 1980s, there was a shift in the media describing them more and more as "asylum seekers". It might seem harmless at the surface, but the new

designation in fact carries prejudice. Increasingly, the burden is put on the foreigners to prove the persecution they face before providing them with the required help and protection. This attitude and the “new” term hint at “undeserving and fraudulent” newcomers (Collyer and de Haas, 2010 as cited in Williams and Balaz, 2015, 185). A large proportion of stories on asylum seekers and refugees in the western media have been navigating in a frame of “invasion”, “criminality” and “loss of control” (Williams and Balaz, 2015, 176). Macklin (2005 as cited in Winter and Sauvageau, 2015, 81) notes that discourse is often immediately preceded or followed by legislative change. Therefore, considering that language about asylum and refugees either represents or influences the legislature gives studies on discourse even more value.

As much as speaking of refugees negatively can have consequences, not mentioning refugees at all can also cause them prejudice (Macklin, 2005). Macklin (2005, 369), for example, argues that “refugees are increasingly being erased from our discourse, and further, that this erasure performs a crucial preparatory step toward legitimating actual laws and practices that attempt to make them vanish in reality”. Refugees and asylum seekers, by definition, are already in extremely precarious situations. Janet Dench (Context, 2013) from the Canadian Council for Refugees explains how words can impact refugees:

[...] it does enormous damage to refugees, to how they are viewed in Canada. It does enormous damage to Canada’s reputation internationally when we sink to these kinds of depth of throwing names around. Refugees, we have to remember, are people who have been forced to leave their countries because they are despised in their countries, they are mistreated, they are treated as less than fully human. [...] And when you start using language like “bogus”, unfortunately we are siding with the persecutors really.

Before looking at the concrete impacts language can have on refugees, it is beneficial to look at the way language has been used around refugees in Canada over the last few decades.

4.3. PAST SECURITIZATION ANALYSES

As indicated above, the case of Canada is particular when it comes to refugees. In this section, past studies of securitizing refugees by the Canadian media are summarized.

Watson's (2007) first analysis goes back to when 152 Tamil asylum seekers arrived in Canada in 1986. From the very beginning, the Tamils were described in newspapers and magazines as "refugees", which is a terminology that puts emphasis on them being victims (Watson, 2007). Qualifying them as refugees, before proper determination had been done, respected the humanitarian discourse as it assumed that the refugees presented genuine claims for Canadian protection (Watson, 2007). The Tamil refugees were treated like any other refugees and they were allowed to seek work while their claims were processed. However, when the media released to the public that the Tamil refugees had in fact come from Germany, where they had already received protection, the public perception of the Tamils changed (Watson, 2007). This new element played as a break in the social order and gave an opportunity to the securitizing actors to portray the migrants as "shopping" for host countries, rather than being in urgent need of protection (Watson, 2007). Watson (2007) proposes that the way the media portrayed the situation increased the controversy and suspicion among the Canadian population towards these asylum seekers, and questions arose concerning the

Canadian government's quick acceptance of the refugees without previous extensive screening. The government defended its position by assuring to the public that there were no terrorists in the group and that security checks had been performed (Watson, 2007). The public seemed unhappy with the situation and they communicated their sentiments to various newspapers, "many claimed that the refugees were 'bogus' or 'illegal' and depicted Canada as 'a dumping ground', a 'soft touch', as 'suckers' or as 'gullible'" (Vancouver Star, Toronto Star and Globe and Mail, as cited in Watson, 2007, 106). Contrary to public opinion, the government's and then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's response still upheld the role of Canada as humanitarian, and did not ask the migrants to be sent back, opposing the public opinion. However, the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, John Turner, took the situation to his advantage to ally himself with the public, and questioned the conservative government's actions. Without explicitly classifying the asylum seekers as security threats, Turner declared that the refugee policies were not available to the public and this, according to him, was the reason for the public backlash against the refugees (Watson, 2007). Overall, the speeches pertaining to these events showed general humanitarianism from Canadian officials.

The second case analyzed by Watson (2007) occurred in the summer of 1987. One hundred and seventy-two Sikh asylum seekers arrived by boat in Canada, and received a much colder welcome than the Tamils initially did the previous year. Once again, the media had a major influence in the negative framing of the Sikh asylum seekers (Watson, 2007). Major Canadian newspapers highlighted that Canada did not consider Indians to be religiously oppressed, thus not deserving of protection. As for the terminology, the term "refugees" was barely used to describe this group of Sikhs, perhaps to avoid that the

population would perceive them as victims (Watson, 2007). Moreover, the RCMP, the media and the government, all possible securitizing actors, often assessed the Sikh asylum seekers as security threats both to Canada and India, mostly based on the Air India bombing that had happened two years earlier (Watson, 2007). In this situation, the RCMP in particular had a considerable impact on the attempted securitization of the asylum seekers. Because of its respected position in the security field and its rare statements relating to similar events, the comments made by the RCMP were taken seriously when they described the Sikhs as threats. Although some of the remarks made by Canadian leaders were subsequently proven to be untrue or unfounded, the RCMP and the media succeeded in depicting the asylum seekers as a security threat (Watson, 2007).

Other Canadian actors had also tried to securitize the asylum seekers. Once more, Turner spoke up to declare that if he had been Prime Minister, he would have denied the boat carrying the asylum seekers (Watson, 2007). He went as far as accusing them of “destroying the humane and open way our country deals with visitors and refugees” and of “underhanded cutting of queues or the jumping of the line” (Toronto Star News, as cited in Watson, 2007).

On another note, the Indian Prime Minister had planned to visit Canada shortly after these events. More securitizing discourses, from the Indian government this time, claimed that the Sikh asylum seekers had planned to attack their Prime Minister on Canadian territory. An Indian envoy described Canada as the “world’s largest exporter of Sikh terrorism”, a statement which was widely reported in the media without being disputed (Edward, 1987 as cited in Watson, 2007, 110). Detaining migrants for two weeks, releasing all the asylum seekers information to their home government, and using

the military to detect other boats were all extreme measures enforced by the Canadian government (Watson, 2007). In this case, though many attempts of securitization were identified, securitization ultimately failed, because the Sikh asylum seekers were determined to have no affiliation with any terrorist groups, and because there were no more threats of further asylum seekers arriving by boat. The lack of coherence between different actors and discourses surely helped to further de-securitize the issue (Watson, 2007).

The third case to be examined took place in the summer of 1999. Approximately 600 Chinese citizens arrived on the west coast of Canada on four separate boats between mid-July and early September (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). The majority of the group applied for their refugee status, although few had official papers with them. Bourbeau (2015) observes that the controversy surrounding the questions of immigration law and refugee status reached a new high and that the media had, once more, a large role in the securitization of refugees during this event. Indeed, the event was qualified of “crisis”, despite the small number of arrivals (Esses et al., 2013; Bradimore and Bauder, 2011; Ibrahim, 2005). Ibrahim (2005) points out that the migrants were treated as “illegals” and the RCMP designated the event as “criminal”. Government representatives’ responses were diverse. Lloyd Axworthy, Canada’s former Minister of Foreign Affairs, stayed far from any securitization discourse. He claimed that the threat was rather for the asylum seekers themselves, who had to flee their homes, face uncertainty at the borders, and were sometimes victims of physical abuse (Bourbeau, 2013a). Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada from 1993 to 2003, even sought to promote the benefits of immigration and multiculturalism for the Canadian society (Bourbeau, 2013a, Bourbeau,

2013b). In contrast, Elinor Caplan, former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, supported the detention of asylum seekers on their arrival in Canada, claiming that a quicker immigration system also required the detention of those who arrive by boat (Bourbeau, 2013a). Ibrahim (2005) highlights that “expert opinions” - such as the Immigration Minister and RCMP - are very influential in legitimizing the migrants’ criminal and illegal reputation. Overall, Mahtani and Mountz (as cited in Esses et al., 2013) emphasize the power of the media, in this case to create feelings of anxiety and panic in the community, especially when speaking of refugees as “invaders”, “bogus” or “terrorists”. Bradimore and Bauder (2011) add that these terms depersonalize the migrants and leave the public confused on what the correct approach of the state should be. This depiction of the asylum claimants and the link between them and security concerns were so strong that “Canada’s immigration and refugee system were called into question” (Ibrahim, 2005, 173).

A fourth case worth mentioning concerns two boat arrivals of Tamils. The first group of 76 arrived in summer of 2009. There was a general negative feeling about this in the press (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). One exception to this trend seemed to be a *Vancouver Sun* article calling for compassion from Canadian officials. In fact, the article used neutral and even positive terminology such as “persons”, “newcomers”, and “hope”, and framed the story with historical facts of the relation between Canada and Sri Lanka and information on the Canadian refugee system (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011, 651). However, the Minister of Immigration, Jason Kenney, spoke out only two days after the *Vancouver Sun*’s article (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011), calling the asylum claimants “false” and “illegal”. He took advantage of this event to reaffirm his dissatisfaction with

the immigration system and said that in the following months he would act to prevent similar events from happening again (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). This resulted in the *Vancouver Sun* changing their position regarding the event, and their following articles on the topic reflected a much more skeptical attitude towards the asylum seekers (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). A change of opinion is thus possible during these situations.

A second ship carrying 492 Tamils was intercepted on the coast of British Columbia just one year later, in August 2010. The passengers claimed refuge but were instantly detained. The media quickly portrayed their group as “bogus refugees trying to take advantage of Canada’s lax system” and asserted that the group included some members of the Tamil Tigers, a terrorist organization (Esses et al., 2013, 528). Some media also warned against infectious diseases carried by the group, and promoted the fact that armed security services were being deployed at the hospital where asylum seekers were examined (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Considering the small number of refugees, this labeling was qualified of excessive by Mahtani and Mountz (2002 as cited in Esses et al., 2013), and was said to be used to spread the feeling of distrust and anxiety in the community (Esses et al., 2013).

In this series of boat arrivals, it is undeniable that their unannounced appearances spread a wave of anxiety in the country (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Ibrahim (2005) points out that boats were not seen as regular immigration channels and added to the criminal image of the events. Furthermore, the irregular arrivals are considered more of a threat because their identity cannot be easily confirmed (Huot et al., 2015). A set of steps were thus taken to manage the potential risk: “the boat is seized, refugees are detained,

terrorism experts are consulted, policies are scrutinized, and new legislation is drafted” (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011, 656).

Although these only represent a handful of Canadian discourses relating to asylum seekers and refugees, this retrospect offers some insight on the types of discourses presented when trying to securitize a policy issue. These examples support many principles of securitization. One event or one securitizing actor cannot securitize an issue by itself; an interaction between agents and context is necessary (Bourbeau, 2013a). Although these cases vary in many ways from the Syrian case, the logic behind this section was to present how securitization has taken place in the past, and how these events could be seen as points of references for this research on Syrian refugees.

4.4. IMPACTS OF SECURITIZATION

If framed in a security lens, the refugees may face various consequences that can impact their lives concretely. Abrahamsen (2005, 61) speaks of securitization on a “threat-vulnerability-defence” axis where policies are developed to repel or eliminate the threat. This perception of growing non-state threats encourages states to direct policies toward individuals rather than states (Avdan, 2014). At the same time, policies dealing with security and immigration have become stricter and have reduced the rights and freedoms of noncitizens through harsh immigration policies (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). These impacts include stricter immigration laws, dangerous migration journeys and social exclusion.

Stricter immigration laws

Buzan et al. (1998 as cited in Williams and Balaz, 2015) explain that the process of securitization creates the sentiment that an “existential threat” exists. That conceptualization may justify extraordinary and immediate actions to counteract the threat and protect national security (Williams and Balaz, 2015), such as “legal, policing and policy measures” (Leonard, 2007 as cited in Humphrey, 2013, 179). Border control is one of the main and most evident responses to the fear of migration (Scherrer, 2013). Restricting movement is used to separate or watch the “dangerous people” (Scherrer, 2013). It becomes a risk management exercise against migrants (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006; Humphrey, 2013). When a national border service intercepts an unwelcomed group, such as when the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) intercepted a group of Tamils in a cargo ship in 2010, the successful mission is usually used by such agencies to promote and display publicly their efficiency against illegal migrants (Scherrer, 2013). Visa impositions, refugee screening and international information sharing on migrants complement the list of strategies for management of people flow (Scherrer, 2013; Macklin, 2005). Linking migrants or refugees to threats such as the ones listed earlier will create a sense of crisis that allows and even requires the implementation of measures to protect the population (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Considering all these elements, Pécoud and Guchteneire (2006) suggest that securitization has become more than risk management; it is now a mode of governance. While preventing immigration completely is nearly impossible, strategies to hinder immigration revolve around following, tracking and anticipating migration trajectories (Scherrer, 2013). National security can be controlled through policies and concrete measures that include some and exclude others (Adamson, 2006). Crépeau and Nakache

(2006) identify two sets of measures used to maintain undesirable migrants outside a country. *Preventive* measures are used to keep immigrants from setting foot on the territory (i.e. visa regimes). *Deterrent* measures “allow for such rash treatment of undesirable foreigners that other foreigners in a similar situation will think twice before trying to reach the territory” (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006, 12).

Dangerous migration journeys

Through the strengthening of immigration controls, the asylum principle may be negatively affected if it prevents people from obtaining protection (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). In some cases, strict immigration policies may lead to dangerous and costly migration journeys. Indeed, a lack of legal immigration options or unsuccessful asylum requests can make migrants take more risks and spend more money by turning to smuggling or falling into trafficking (Huot et al., 2015; Castles, 2014; Crépeau et al., 2007; Adamson, 2006; Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). However, countries continuously reinforce their immigration measures to fight trafficking and smuggling, which in turn increases the probability of migrants using smugglers (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Refugees are affected because of their vulnerability and the risks of being exploited and having their rights violated, by smugglers for example (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Pécoud and de Guchteneire (2006) offer an unfortunate reminder that certain migrants can succumb to such dangerous migration journeys. In addition, immigrants facing challenges to enter a country through legal channels can pretend to seek asylum (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). In this situation, the attempts of host countries to differentiate “real” and “false” asylum seekers in order to identify those abusing the system, reinforces a system of exclusion that diminishes the chances of

genuine asylum seekers to find protection due to the suspicion of host countries (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Their right to seek protection under the UN Declaration of Human Rights is thus impeded. In sum, this difficulty in obtaining the refugee status can be a source of different human rights violations. However, many countries do not recognize that their attempts to control immigration can be at the origin of such consequences (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006).

Dehumanization and social exclusion

In addition, for asylum seekers especially, their relationship with the host country can be affected by these measures since they are depicted by securitizing actors as the security threat rather than the victims of threats in their country of origin (Watson, 2007). On a very human level of securitization, Esses et al. (2013) speak of the concept of dehumanization. They claim that the dehumanization of immigrants and refugees may be the result of them constantly being portrayed as a threat in the media (Esses et al., 2013). This happens especially when the object of dehumanization is portrayed as having no morals, no self-control and no civility (Esses et al., 2013). Furthermore, “[b]y perceiving immigrants and refugees as not completely part of the human ingroup, one can more easily believe that they deserve negative outcomes” (Esses et al., 2013, 531). This process of dehumanizing immigrants leaves a host community feeling distant and suspicious, and can leave a general uncertainty of how to treat newcomers (Esses et al. 2013; Huot et al., 2015). This can extend as far as reducing the migrants’ rights (Pécoud and Guchteneire, 2006). Finally, when states use their immigration policies and border controls to support some migrants and not others (Adamson, 2006), they indirectly promote racism and reinforce “the idea that foreigners and foreign-looking people are

undesirable” (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006, 79). This might result in problems of integration and multiculturalism (Pinyol-Jimenez, 2012; Ibrahim, 2005). The paradox of this situation lies in the fact that signatory states of the 1951 Refugee Convention have to protect refugees, and thus should not punish them for attempting to escape persecution, even if they enter a country in an irregular fashion (Watson, 2007).

As shown, a securitization discourse can definitely influence concrete policies and laws, which in turn may change immigration habits and even increase irregular practices. In sum, the impacts of securitization for immigrants are manifold and may include racism and social exclusion (Abrahamsen, 2005). If the rhetoric is transferred into actions, the consequences have the possibility of being greatly harmful. Bigo (2002 as cited in Avdan, 2014) points to the fact that the process of securitization and the implementation of security measures might not even be related to immigrants. Rather, it is a means to convince and reassure the host population that something is being done to protect them from serious threats, such as terrorism. Nonetheless, these strategies of creating fear have certainly helped to justify the rash treatment of immigrants and refugees (Diop, 2014). This management of fear through the concept of “us” and “them” can even become a perverted way to unite a population (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Writing in 2013, Humphrey forecasts the securitization of migration will intensify in this century. Over the years, it has also morphed from the securitization of migration to the securitization of migrants making individuals the carriers of bad news (Pécoud and Guchteneire, 2006).

In sum, this literature review shows the impact that public leaders and media can have on the perception of refugees and on refugees themselves. In the following sections, the case of the Canadian Conservative rhetoric is explored vis-à-vis Syrian refugees.

5. CONTEXT

As Balzacq (2011) highlights, the theory of securitization should integrate the context to a higher degree. In fact, context “empowers or disempowers securitizing actors” (Balzacq, 2011, 35). In other words, outside elements can influence the audience to see an issue one way or another, independently of the actors’ discourse. This section presents the nature of the global migration situation, the chronology of the events in Syria with the resulting global refugee movement, as well as the refugee policy background in Canada. Linking the social and historical contexts of both countries will offer a deeper understanding of the political reactions and comments when discussing Syrian refugees.

5.1. GLOBAL CONTEXT

Affected by different national and international events, refugee movements have changed throughout history. The Cold War produced a large number of refugees at a time when international refugee acceptance was high (Whitaker, 1998). With the end of the Cold War also came the end of the generous tendency to accept refugees (Whitaker, 1998). However, the number of refugees did not stop growing. Over an eight-year span, from 1984 to 1992, the number of refugees worldwide doubled to 18 million (Bourbeau, 2015). In the early 1990s, the number of refugees increased considerably as a result of the resurgence of many civil wars, especially in Africa, as well as the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia (Bourbeau, 2015). The number of people involuntarily displaced kept growing, and in 2009 reached the highest level since 1995 (Castles, 2014). Concurrently, “the number of refugees voluntarily returning to their home countries had fallen to its lowest level in 20 years” (Castles, 2014, 195). For a few years, a large proportion of

asylum seekers were soliciting protection in developed countries (Castles, 2014; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006), but that trend has since shifted (Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006). Indeed, the number of asylum applications decreased considerably in developed countries (Crépeau et al., 2007; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). Influxes of refugees increased in “new” receiving countries such as Egypt, Kenya, and Thailand (Castles, 2014). By 2009, developing countries were receiving eighty per cent of all refugees, while wealthier countries were less and less willing to admit asylum seekers (Castles, 2014). This tendency was illustrated following the most recent conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo and Haiti where the international community chose “containment over protection and temporary solution over durable solutions” (Mertus, 1998 as cited in Aras and Mencutec 2015, 195) for the resulting refugee flows. Whitaker (1998) adds that the closer a conflict is to a receiving country, the more hesitant the receiving country will be to accept refugees from either of the parties involved. Neighboring countries often share foreign policy interests or various commitments that influence the political decision of accepting refugees (Whitaker, 1998).

Migration now touches every single country in the world, either as a sending, receiving or transit country (Pécoud et Guchteneire, 2006). Huot et al. (2015 as cited in Osterberg, 2016, 9) argues that it is “timely to critically examine how forced migrants are constructed in particular ways through discourses of neoliberalism and security”.

5.2. SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

At the basis of this research is the Syrian civil war and the resulting refugee crisis. This uprising was part of the larger Arab Spring covering Northern Africa and the

Middle-East where protests against governments were multiplying (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). The events leading to the refugee movement started in 2011. As Slim and Trombetta (2014, 32) put it, there was a “first phase of protest and violent repression, followed by a second phase of extreme armed conflict”. The population had been demanding a “regime change and an end to structural violence and inequality within Syria” (Gleick, 2014 as cited in Musarurwa, 2016, 34). Syria had been under the same authoritarian rule for 40 years with President Bashar al-Assad succeeding his father in 2000 (Musarurwa, 2016). In the midst of a pro-democracy demonstration in 2011, a group of teenagers were tortured for writing anti-al-Assad graffiti on a wall (Musarurwa, 2016). Thus, thousands took to the streets to protest the teens’ rash treatment. However, the government violently opposed the protest, leading to the death of civilians (Musarurwa, 2016). Starting from these events, the tensions escalated and the number of actors involved multiplied (Musarurwa, 2016). The government’s strategy against the demonstrations included detention, torture and murder for opposition activists and their families (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). Despite many attempts to resolve the conflict over the years, the violence persisted and, in 2012, the movement of millions fleeing the horror of Syria began (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). Moreover, it has been reported that the Government used forced displacement as a sort of demographic cleansing method (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). During the events, human rights were continuously violated through detention, torture and sexual violence (Slim and Trombetta, 2014).

In a country that was home to approximately 22 million people before the conflict - including hundreds of thousands of refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq (Slim and Trombetta, 2014) - “an estimated 4.3 million are now refugees with 6.6 million [...]

internally displaced” (Musarurwa, 2016, 36). The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs also suggests the Syrian crisis caused over 250 000 casualties (Musarurwa, 2016, 36). The displaced first found refuge in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt and over time some made their way to Europe and Canada, amongst other destinations (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). Out of those, 40,081 found safety in Canada as of January 29, 2017 (IRCC, 2017b).

Finally, it is significant to study the year of 2015 because the number of refugees kept increasing and reached an incredible 190,000 Syrians fleeing the country between July, August and September of that year (Heisbourg, 2015) - just when the Canadian federal election was called. This number represents three times the amount that fled the previous year for the same period (Heisbourg, 2015). It is also the reason for why we chose to limit the focus of our analysis to that relatively short time period.

Many more factors were relevant to explaining the outbreak of the civil war in Syria and the resulting refugee crisis, while different groups have varying theories on the causes and development of the events in Syria (Slim and Trombetta, 2014). For the purpose of this paper, however, the goal was to offer a quick understanding of the crisis.

5.3. CANADIAN CONTEXT

Canada has a long-standing history of generosity towards newcomers (Bourbeau, 2013a). Officially, Canada ratified the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol in 1969 (Labman, 2016). The delay was partly due to Canada not viewing itself as a country of first asylum, and a fear of losing control of its borders (Labman, 2016). In those years, there was certainly an interest in the value and benefits that immigrants carried for the

labour market (Ibrahim, 2005). Regardless of the leading party, Canada maintained its tradition of resettlement ever since (Casasola, 2016). In 1979, the Canadian government stepped up to welcome 60,000 refugees from Vietnam - the “boat people” - over the course of two years (Ibrahim, 2005). Canada was in fact the first country to see its population as a whole awarded with the Nansen Medal by the UNHCR for this act of generosity (Labman, 2016; Ibrahim, 2005; Watson, 2007). Recent data released by Statistics Canada indicates that 1,212,075 recent immigrants established themselves in Canada between 2011 and 2016, representing 3,5% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2017). Out of this number, 11,6% arrived in the country as refugees (Statistics Canada, 2017). Refugee arrivals peaked between January and May of 2016 because of the Operation Syrian Refugees that was run by the Government of Canada. Syria is in 7th place in terms of country of birth of recent immigrants to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017).

While the unfortunate events unfolded in the Middle-East, the Conservative Party was in power in Canada. Stephen Harper had been at the head of Government since February 2006. He completed two mandates at the head of a minority government, while his third mandate as Prime Minister, which started in 2011, was a majority government (Carver, 2016). In January 2015, the Conservative government committed to bring 10,000 Syrian refugees over three years to Canada with more than half being privately sponsored by willing groups of Canadians and organizations (Labman, 2010). However, like other refugee crises that Canada has gone through, there was a government change during the resettlement process (Labman, 2016). Even before the election campaign was called on 2 August 2015, resettlement was taking more and more space in the political

arena (Casasola, 2016), and the refugee topic eventually became one of the main issues of the Canadian election (Carver, 2016; Labman, 2016). While some authors recognize the outstanding generosity of Canada towards asylum seekers (Avdan, 2004), others believe the country is far from having a perfect record in terms of refugee policy (Diop, 2014).

Recent reform propositions in Canada were mainly responses to irregular arrivals, such as the Tamil asylum seekers that arrived on the coast of British Columbia in 2009 and 2010 (see section 5.4) (Carver, 2016). Huot et al. (2015) state that these policy reforms point to shortcomings in the previous system that perhaps threatened Canada's national security. The Minister of Immigration at the time, Jason Kenney, described the refugee determination system as broken and crippled (Diop 2014). Diop (2014) adds that there is a hardening of attitude towards refugees in Canada. During the discussions surrounding these bills, refugees were portrayed as a threat and called "bogus" and "queue jumpers" (Diop, 2014). In fact, just before the election period, Prime Minister Harper mentioned that "[...] we've streamlined our refugee determination system to provide faster service to real refugees and a faster exit for bogus ones" (Government of Canada, 2015). Not only did the rhetoric of certain political leaders around some of the bills contribute to the framing of refugees as "bogus" and "abusers" (Diop, 2014); Carver (2016) suggests that even the title of the bills are discursive efforts to spread this opinion to the public. In all of the four titles examined by Carver (2016), there is a reference to foreigners being a threat: "the *Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act*; the *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act*; the *Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals Act*; and the *Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act*" (Carver, 2016, 212).

As seen in this section and in section 4.3, most of the controversy around refugees in Canada in the past decade regarded the in-Canada asylum program. Although the Syrian refugees were not part of the asylum program, this contextual review was essential to present the previous stance of the Conservative Government regarding the refugee system in Canada. With these important pieces of context exposed, the following section presents the analysis of the data selected.

6. ANALYSIS

In this section, the results of the deductive analysis are presented first followed by the inductive findings that manifested themselves throughout the coding and analysis process. Again, the role of the analyst in this exercise is not to determine if the statements are right or wrong, but to examine what was said and analyze the patterns (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011; Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002).

6.1. DEDUCTIVE ANALYSIS

The deductive analysis of the six criteria revealed the following information.

Internal

The elements analyzed in this subsection concern the language and words themselves.

A. Construction of a threat

After analyzing each discourse, it was determined if the orator had warned against or talked about a threat to Canadian security coming from Syrian refugees. As seen in past securitization analyses in section 4.3, the way refugees are named in public can transform how they are perceived in society. In this case, the orators in our dataset never used the

term “asylum-seekers”. In each of the 20 texts, they were referred to as “refugees”, which indirectly refers to them as victims and genuine claimants. This certainly is a legitimate depiction of the Syrians. Other terms were used to describe the refugees during the electoral campaign. The following table shows the number of times each orator uttered the words listed when referring to the Syrian refugees.

Table 1. Words used to describe Syrian refugees coming to Canada

	Alexander	Harper	Kenney	Total
Threat	0	1	1	2
Risk	0	2	1	3
Bogus	0	0	0	0
Illegal	0	0	0	0
Dangerous	0	0	0	0
Victim	3	0	6	9
Vulnerable	5	14	14	33

The word “bogus” was pronounced twice by Prime Minister Harper in this sample, but it was directed at the previous bills presented by the government that reduced health care coverage for certain new arrivals. It was not used to directly describe the Syrian refugees. When speaking of “risk” and “threat” Kenney and Harper did recognize

the risks involved with bringing in thousands of refugees. Kenney was mostly speaking of health risks while Harper referred to security risks without specifying further.

Table 1 shows that the politicians acknowledged the plight of refugees. The Conservatives reiterated many times that their government's efforts focused on minority and vulnerable refugees. Indeed, the Conservatives used the term “vulnerable” 33 times when describing refugees as opposed to terms such as “dangerous”, “bogus” or “illegal” that were not used. This suggests that the Conservatives considered the refugees as victims more than as threats. However, in 13 instances the Conservatives added that the security of Canada would nonetheless be maintained through the screening of refugees. They expressed on multiple occasions that “ [...] we prioritize the most vulnerable and ethnic and religious groups and that we do security screening and protect our country” (Harper, 2015, September 15). Jason Kenney noted in a press conference that “ [...] we have to have a manageable number so that we can apply the appropriate screening” (2015, September 16).

Table 2. Main concerns during refugee resettlement

	Alexander	Harper	Kenney	Total
Security screening	0	6	8	14
Terrorism	8	0	3	11
ISIS/ISIL	3	16	11	30

In the few times that the refugees were explicitly linked to security concerns, it was linked to terrorism and ISIS/ISIL. The two topics were addressed multiple times by the orator as shown in table two. The link between refugees and terrorism was vague, and referred mostly to terrorism being the cause of the refugee crisis. Despite the fact that they did not frame refugees as terrorists, the tone of some of the speeches were definitely more negative because the topic of terrorism was part of the speeches or discussions.

On another note, the Vietnamese boat people were a point of comparison during the Syrian refugee crisis, as it appears to be the most similar instance of large refugee influx in Canada (Casasola, 2016). In the conceptualization of threats, the example of the Vietnamese boat people was used in five speeches. It was to indicate that although Canada had accepted 60,000 refugees decades ago, those refugees were not coming from areas where terrorist organizations were located, contrary to the Syrians. The tone of these warnings certainly seemed to inform the population that the current situation is more dangerous. The following quote by Kenney also characterizes the Vietnamese refugees as victims, but not the Syrian refugees:

[...] this is not the Vietnamese Indochinese boat person situation of 1979. This is a radically different situation. Those folks were typically victims of political imprisonment and re-education camps, they were not in the midst of a civil war. And they were none of them who were directly or indirectly affiliated with organizations of the nature of ISIS [...] I mean it is unspeakably naïve to suggest that this is the same situation as we were facing in south east Asia in 1979. There are organizations involved in this conflict who declared their hostility to Canada and that are illegal terrorist organizations (2015, September 12).

The simple fact that Jason Kenney, minister of National Defense at the time, is addressing this topic in public settings could lead the public to believe that they too should look at the issue through a defense and national security lens. A CTV interviewer started a segment with Jason Kenney by saying that “I realize you are the Minister of National Defense here but this is also a defense portfolio according to Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper [...]” (Kenney, 2015, September 9). It is possible that Kenney was involved in the discussion because of his knowledge and experience as the former Minister of Immigration, but his presence as Defense Minister could lead to believe that refugees were seen as mainly a question of national security.

Overall, out of the 20 discourses, seven texts linked refugees and security concerns. Stephen Harper was the speaker for five of them, and Jason Kenney for two. With statements like “we cannot pretend there are no security risks”, Stephen Harper makes it clear that security is a priority. He decides to speak for Canadians when he notes that “[...] I think the public generally does not take much to figure out... given the nature of the conflict in the Syrian-Iraqi region, the nature of the very serious security threats that disposes” (2015, September 10).

Many links were made between refugees and security concerns during the various public appearances. What needs to be determined now is if the refugees were framed as an existential threat.

B. Existential threat.

As this criterion is built on the previous one, only the seven discourses that framed refugees as security threats were examined. The goal was to see if this threat was a priority over any other for Canada.

In five speeches Stephen Harper mentioned that possible threats to Canada stemmed from the terrorist activities the refugees were fleeing. However, he does not elaborate on the concrete examples of threats. In one interview, he even refused to expand on the security threat that refugees pose for the Canadian population (2015, September 10). In other words, even when given the opportunity to frame the refugees as a security threat, Harper avoided going too far, and simply reminded the public that necessary security screenings would be conducted.

Kenney went a little further and warned Canadians that “[...] there are terrorist organizations that have declared hostility to Canada, that are active in this civil war and we need to ensure that the people we welcome to Canada have no connection to those organizations” (2015, September 13). Although he only made this claim once, he called for prudence a few times regarding the refugee resettlement. On another note, Jason Kenney kept reminding the public to not forget about the other refugees and crises around the world. To him, this situation did not take priority over other issues. In fact, he encouraged the public to keep helping other refugees that were not in the media spotlight (2015, September 9).

In sum, although Jason Kenney and Stephen Harper considered that the link between refugees and security could not be ignored, they did not emphasize the threat beyond measures.

C. Speaking of extraordinary measures

When looking at the measures promoted by the Conservative Party of Canada regarding the Syrian crisis, three pillars were mentioned: helping refugees (there were even hints of accelerating the intake process), humanitarian aid in terms of dollars, and the military

coalition to go fight the problem of terrorist wars at the source. While the first two pillars are obviously elements to help the refugees, and thus not to securitize them, the third element seemed to have a negative connotation. Although it seemed at first glance that military intervention could be an extraordinary measure, it was not directed at refugees, but rather presented as helping refugees in the long run by eliminating the violence in the Middle-East. The topic of the Syrian refugees' resettlement to Canada and that of the Middle-East conflict were often combined during interviews and panel discussions analyzed here. In many of these discourses, there are talks of getting militarily involved on the field, but that is not directed towards the refugees. This could thus not be considered as an extraordinary measure against refugees. This Conservative triple-pillar plan was never described as a way to stop refugees from coming to Canada or reduce the threat that they represent.

External

The elements evaluated here concern the context as well as the Conservatives' discourse.

D) Unity in rhetoric.

The three men mostly defended positions that were related to their political role. Harper and Kenney were more focused on security concerns and Alexander on the number of refugees sponsored, while they all intermittently defended their party's humanitarian generosity. As seen in the criterion A), only Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney explicitly framed the refugees as a security threat. Meanwhile, the same two politicians spoke a total of six times to the fact that the refugees were victims of war, persecution, ISIS or terrorism. Jason Kenney expressed that "people who are victims of terrorism are by definition not supporting it" (2015, September 16). Overall, not only did the three

speakers defend slightly different positions; the discourse was at times contradictory, and not united.

E) Event

A break in the social norm was caused by calling the 2015 election. This created an open environment for the Parties to defend their ideas and opinions and possibly change the framing of certain social issues. Comparing the texts selected to the context and past decisions of the Conservative government presented in section 3.3., the goal here is to see if the party used this “break” to frame the refugees as security threats. Before and during the election period, the Conservatives were being very careful with - and perhaps suspicious of - refugees coming to Canada. Nonetheless, the terms “bogus” and “queue-jumpers” that were used previously to describe irregular refugees was used a few times during the election. However, it was not used to describe the Syrian refugees specifically, perhaps because of the well-structured selection and screening done in collaboration with the UN (IRCC, 2016). Before the election, it seems like the Conservatives’ generosity towards refugees was slowly declining over the years. Once the campaign started, there was a shift in the party’s position and throughout the campaign the Conservatives committed to bringing more refugees in and showed much compassion, perhaps in response to the Canadian population’s feedback. Therefore, if the election campaign had an effect on the Conservatives’ position, it was certainly beneficial for Syrian refugees.

Furthermore, within the refugee crisis and the related public conversation in Canada, another break in time can be identified. On September 2, on the other side of the world, a young boy by the name of Alan Kurdi died trying to cross from Turkey to Greece - just a part of his journey that was supposed to bring him from Syria to Canada

(Laurent, 2015). The Kurdi family was trying to come to Canada to join an aunt living on the West coast (Alexander, 2015, September 3). The publication of the picture of his dead body on the beach inflamed the media and touched people's hearts all over the world. But did this event influence the position of politicians here in Canada? All three politicians were questioned about the event and they had similar responses. In total, the topic was brought up in five of the 20 speeches. The government certainly did not portray this as a security issue, but in fact showed compassion for the Kurdi family and the million other families hit by tragedy. Alexander expressed that “[t]here can be nothing more horrific than a tragedy like this” (2015, September 3). In terms of the social break, James Cudmore (2015) from CBC News wrote that “[...] the issue did not arise as an important campaign question until the photos of Alan Kurdi's lifeless body found their way onto the internet”. This event made the government more sensitive to the Syrian refugee crisis and they agreed many times that they should do more for the refugees.

F) Implementing extraordinary measures

One political measure was deemed worthy of attention in this analysis. In a statement made on October 9, 2015, Harper speaks of an audit that his party had requested in June 2015 to ensure policies were followed during OSR. The interviewer said that the audit had temporarily stopped the resettlement project and was detrimental to the refugees. Internal audits are not exceptional for the Ministry of Immigration, according to the lengthy list of audits on the department's website (IRCC, 2017d). Research has uncovered that two audits were published in 2017 concerning the 2015 OSR. One examined identification and processing (IRCC, 2017c), and the other focused on settlement (IRCC, 2017a). However, both reports claim that the period studied is 4

November 2015 to 29 February 2016, which fell under the mandate of the Liberal Government. The Canadian Border Services Agency also conducted an audit for the same period to evaluate the security screening of the Syrian resettlement (CBSA, 2017). Even if the audit was considered an extraordinary measure, it was not conducted during the election period, and it is clear that Stephen Harper was trying to keep the story out of the public eye since it is only talked about in one of his appearances. In accordance with the theory of securitization, it would appear that a securitizing agent would want to promote the work done to protect the population from a security threat.

Later on, the media talked a lot about the fact that the Canadian government was refusing single refugee men. This could have been studied through the securitization theory. However, this measure was initiated in late November 2015 at a time when the new Liberal Government had taken office. Therefore, this falls out of the period studied in this paper and will not be examined further.

To conclude, timing is important for this aspect and no exceptional measures were indeed implemented during this period.

6.2. INDUCTIVE ANALYSIS

The inductive analysis, although secondary in this testing of the securitization theory, was in fact started before the deductive phase. This was to avoid as much as possible a bias that a reading of the speeches through the deductive themes could have possibly created. This way, the articles were read through three times to code themes that seemed relevant and/or recurrent. They were then linked and assembled in larger categories that are described below.

Proving authority and generosity

More than once, the speakers have mentioned during the interviews their level of knowledge of the situation on the ground. Kenney reminded the public three times that he is the only Minister in 40 years to have visited Syria. This need for authority concurs with the theory of securitization, as the public must trust the orator's capacity to deal with the issue. As for Harper and Alexander, they did not lose a chance to state Canada's generous role in refugee resettlement. Examples of this include: "We take one in ten resettled refugees annually" (Alexander, 2015, September 2); "[...] government of Canada is providing very generous amounts of international aid" (Harper, 2015, September 11); "I suspect we are the largest per capita donor of aid in the world [...] in this part of the planet" (Harper, 2015, September 4). They certainly spent more time talking about their accomplishments in refugee resettlement than they did framing refugees as threats.

External influences

Considering the fact that nine elocutions are interviews or debates, and another eight were answers to public questions during campaign rallies, the three orators studied here did not have full control on the direction of the conversations. Furthermore, the sequence in which interviewers ask their questions may impact the tone of the message. For example, addressing the topic of refugees directly after talking of terrorism might have a negative impact on the way people view the Syrian refugees. This occurred in the electoral debate of September 28 when the topic of the Syrian refugee crisis was addressed directly after the discussion on ISIS, and directly before the debate on the controversial anti-terrorism legislation Bill-51. Esses et al. (2013, 529) have found that "the uncertainty surrounding immigration, paired with the media's proclivity to focus on

negative rather than positive news stories, can lead to extreme negative reactions to immigrants and refugees”. For viewers, the terrorism theme surrounding refugees might have lingered in their minds and became associated to the refugee topic especially since the politicians did not actively try to dissociate the two issues during these debates.

Tone of the elocutions

The tone of the statements were examined and this is what transpired.

1. Descriptive

A trend that was consistent was the descriptive aspect of the texts. A lot of the information found in the texts is explanatory of the Government’s effort. Perhaps because of the inquisitive nature of media interviews, the politicians had to go over the number of refugees being brought in and the reason for their strategy multiple times. Descriptions and clarifications were also required for the various refugee streams, as well as to distinguish refugees coming from Iraq from those coming from Syria. These sections carried neutral language, simply describing facts and figures, and did not explicitly translate a party’s opinion for or against the refugees.

2. Defensive

The three orators took a defensive stance a few times when being challenged by the journalists or during debates with representatives from other parties. For one thing, the Conservative Government was criticized for its slow response (Carver, 2016), and spent many of these public appearances clarifying the number of refugees coming to Canada and defending their position on the subject. They also avoided answering questions directly (Harper, 2015, September 10), or responded to questions with other questions (Harper, 2015, September 11). Perhaps this defensive stance is linked to the media’s

control of the interviews with the politicians. Nonetheless, this tone does not carry a particular opinion towards refugees and remains generally neutral.

3. Compassionate

The Conservative government did show compassion throughout this crisis. The reaction of the leaders was compassionate towards the Kurdi family and other victims of such tragedies. The three men also often reiterated their focus on vulnerable and minority populations. These reactions stayed far from constructing them as fearful. Talking about the human tragedy in this way leads to seeing refugees as victims rather than as sources of threats or risks.

Many aspects were examined during this content analysis and at first glance, no poignant securitization attempts appear.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing both deductive and inductive themes, it was determined that there was no attempt of securitization from the Conservative leaders, as per the Copenhagen theory of securitization. Out of the six predetermined criteria examined in section six – construction of threat, existential threat, unity in rhetoric, speaking of extraordinary measures, event, and implementing extraordinary measures - only the first one was conclusive. Indeed, the refugees were seen as a threat, but only to a certain extent and that tendency slowed down after the Kurdi tragedy and the resulting public emotion. The other criteria were not fulfilled in line with the Copenhagen school of critical security studies.

As shown previously, the government defended two strategies in regards to the refugee crisis: (1) assisting the most vulnerable refugees, and (2) performing all necessary security screenings to protect Canada. Although these two missions are not necessarily contradictory, they do send two different messages about the refugees. One encourages to bring refugees to the country to protect them, while the other encourages to keep refugees out of the country to protect the Canadian population. This quick turnaround in discourse does not leave much room for the public to integrate the fact that refugees are vulnerable. Although they showed compassion to the plight of refugees, they did frame the issue in terms of security.

One member of the public stated that “Justin Trudeau said that past Prime Ministers never let security concerns get in the way of reaching out and helping refugees and people who needed refuge” (2015, September 9). In a different appearance, Kenney mentioned what changed the most in this regard was the nature of the crisis. According to him, the fact that the Syrian refugees were fleeing terrorist violence is what distinguishes them from past refugees that were welcomed into Canada. Based on this as well as the literature review, it seems that the refugees themselves were not the source of the fears, but rather the scapegoats of the terrorism threat (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). By reassuring people in almost every announcement that security would be respected when screening refugees, it could be argued that the Conservatives’ priority was to gain the population’s trust rather than frame refugees as an existential threat to Canadian security. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that the terms refugees and security are linked in this sample. This being said, it was determined that they were never framed as an “existential” threat, nor did the Conservatives plan to implement extraordinary measures

to keep the Syrian refugees out of the country. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, refugees coming from camps and selected by the United Nations are seen as more legitimate than inland asylum claimants (Huot et al, 2015; Diop, 2014). Although the most vulnerable refugees do not all reside in camps, as Kenney stated (2015, September 12), the fact that the refugees were pre-selected to come to Canada certainly helped tame hostility toward the Syrians.

An important contextual aspect to acknowledge is the ongoing federal election campaign. It has been observed that securitization actors are power holders and may frame an issue a certain way to gain status or control (Floyd, 2016; Yuksel, 2014). In this case, the Syrian refugee file was central in the election and parties had varying strategies in their electoral platforms to address the situation (Debate, 2015, September 28). On a similar note, Floyd (2016) advances the possibility that securitizing actors might not be sincere in their statements in the hopes of obtaining status or funding. In the context of a federal election, it is plausible that an underlying strategy guided the Conservative's rhetoric. Although this is an important point to keep in mind when considering securitization, it was determined early on that only the manifest content would be examined in this project. Therefore, the latent context would have to be analyzed separately to speak on Floyd's theory.

In sum, the findings echo what Abrahamsen (2005) describes as a continuum of securitization. As she explains, evaluating an issue only as either a normal social issue or an existential threat misses a lot of transitional stages of security concerns (Abrahamsen, 2005). She adds that “[t]he process of securitization is thus better understood as gradual and incremental, and importantly an issue can be placed on the security continuum

without necessarily ever reaching the category of existential threat (Abrahamsen, 2005, 59). Although it is not as poignant as other securitization attempts, it is undeniable that the Syrian refugees were linked to the concept of “security” and the Conservatives were certainly managing risk. However, to say that the Conservative government framed it as an existential threat would be an exaggeration. Just as Abrahamsen (2005, 73) concludes in her research on the securitization of Africa, the Syrian refugees have “moved increasingly from a category of ‘development/humanitarian’ toward one of potential risk, threat, danger”. A humanitarian intention remained noticeable throughout the speeches, but the fact that the refugees came from a territory occupied by terrorists did move the issue on the security spectrum. Based on their pre-existing discourse of refugees as bogus, it is difficult to say if the Conservative leaders were involved in creating a new discourse or perpetuating an existing one. Perhaps, the transition from normalcy (humanitarian action) to emergency (refugees as threat) started before the elections, as shown by the various bills introduced by the Conservative Party over the previous decade. Indeed, the framing of asylum seekers as bogus before the electoral campaign might have lingered in the minds of the population. However, the issue never reached the stage of “existential threat” in the sample of texts analyzed above. It is also doubtful that the issue continued further toward securitization since the Liberals were elected in November 2015 and had an agenda of resettling even more refugees than the Conservatives.

To summarize, in this study of the Canadian resettlement of Syrian refugees in 2015, the theory of securitization was tested against 20 public speeches pronounced by three political leaders to see if the refugees were framed as security threats. Out of the six

predetermined criteria – construction of threat, existential threat, unity in rhetoric, speaking of extraordinary measures, event, and implementing extraordinary measures - only one was truly respected. The refugee resettlement operations were indeed embedded in security concerns, but it was neither spoken of as an existential threat to Canada nor were there talks of extraordinary measures to combat the threat. Some important elements of the context surrounding the speeches were also considered to come to these conclusions. Although the speakers had generally the same rhetoric, they spoke from different angles respecting their professional positions. Only two of them spoke of refugees as security threats, and overall the conversation went back and forth between refugees being the most vulnerable and requiring security screening. No special event justified a change in rhetoric from the Conservatives, and they did not put special measures in place during the time examined to keep refugees away. Securitization is a complex process and the many elements required to succeed in framing an issue as a security question are all equally important in the process. It is undeniable that the international flow of people has been framed with security concerns, especially with the rise of terrorist attacks worldwide. However, when it comes to Canada, there was no successful attempt to securitize the arrival of the Syrian refugees by the Conservative Government during the 2015 electoral campaign. There was a special focus on security, but it remained a reasonable approach to the large number of arrivals and Canadians were never presented with refugees being an existential threat to them. The way it was framed is in accordance with Abrahamsen's (2005) continuum of security. The issue did enter the security realm, without being a full securitization attempt.

These results may be explained through two main arguments. First, Syrian refugees resettled in Canada, having been selected and examined overseas, were not feared as much as the asylum seekers that arrived by boat, as demonstrated in section 4.3. The difference in the process between the settlement program and the in-Canada program can play a big role in the way the public views the individuals. Indeed, the detailed process of Operation Syrian Refugees possibly reassured the public on the legitimacy of the refugees. The second reason why the securitization attempt was minimal is perhaps because of the public investment and emotional response following the news of the death of Alan Kurdi. Government parties in the running to be elected were certainly influenced by the societal response of sadness and empathy and must have felt pressure to align their response with the public's, staying away from a securitization attempt.

In all cases, an attempt of securitization would not necessarily mean a successfully securitized issue (Bourbeau, 2013a). The third element of securitization, audience acceptance, although out of scope, can be hinted at. In this case, it can be argued that if the Conservatives had made a complete attempt of securitizing refugees, it would not have succeeded in convincing the public. The main clue for this statement being the loss of the Conservatives to the Liberals on election day. With Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's announcement of welcoming 25,000 Syrian refugees over just a few months (Labman, 2016), Carver sees it as the "most emphatic rejections of a previous government's policy discourse in Canadian history" (2016, 233). Over the years, the Conservative government's legislative reform on the refugee determination system perhaps left a sour taste in the mouth of the population regarding the Conservatives' general commitment to refugees and possibly impacted their perception of the

Conservative Government in the crisis and eventually in the election (Carver, 2016) and did not correspond to what Canadians wanted. Without claiming results that were not researched here, it is possible that the public opinion on the refugee issue was reflected in the election results which would signify a failure of any securitization attempt on the Conservative's part. Hansen (2006) even suggests that once an issue enters the security realm, it has to be addressed to be de-securitized. Similarly, the Liberals could not possibly ignore the refugee issue since it had entered the security realm - although not successfully securitized. With a completely different platform than the Conservatives, the Liberals promoted an approach focused on multiculturalism and immigration (Carver, 2016). By electing them, the Canadian population rejected the Conservative discourse and made clear that the political decisions on immigration in years to come will have to support their generous and open perception of refugees (Carver, 2016).

As mentioned in the introduction, this analysis also sought to see if there were any tensions between Canada's national security responsibility and humanitarian tradition towards refugees. After having reviewed the literature and analyzed the data, the Conservative Party showed through their three-pillar plan (refugee resettlement, financial aid and military intervention) their intention to balance the Canadian population's request and tradition of aiding refugees and their party's conviction that national security is a priority. Simultaneously embracing security and humanitarianism concerns brings governments to respect both their engagement towards their citizens and to noncitizens in need of protection (Watson, 2007).

It is also important to remember that the number of people living outside their country of birth will continue to rise (Esses et al., 2013). Diversity brought by immigrants

and refugees is an integral part of human history, and host countries often benefited from it (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). Humphrey (2013) adds that the securitization of migration will increase. Thus, addressing the perception and the reactions towards human immigration is important because it will become a widely spread reality. Johnson (2003 as cited in Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2006, 81) adds that “open borders are entirely consistent with efforts to prevent terrorism. More liberal migration would allow for full attention to be paid to the true dangers to public safety and national security”. It is also important to focus on the core reason of migration: global insecurities and inequalities (Castles, 2014; Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). Crépeau and Nakache note that people have always emigrated from harmful environments, therefore, “as long as there are global inequities in wealth and prosperity on the planet, the migratory pressure on wealthier and more democratic zones will remain” (2006, 5). Therefore, they encourage the promotion of migration and the benefits of pluralism (Crépeau and Nakache, 2006). Esses et al. (2013) propose that this promotion should first be visible in the media with the collaboration of governments, ultimately refraining from turning the uncertainty of immigration into crises. Bradimore and Bauder (2011) underline another related issue. In the process of reporting the crises, the refugees’ voices are absent, leaving room for media and politicians to frame the issue (Bradimore and Bauder, 2011). Migrants that seem weak or dangerous are already, and will perhaps be even more, left out in the future. All in all, the literature review did uncover that if refugees feel unwelcomed and the host societies are unwelcoming, there will be a division that will certainly be a lot more detrimental to social cohesion than heterogeneity and multiculturalism could ever be. Crépeau and Nakache (2006, 5) present that “[...] heterogeneity has always been the

norm in human history. The resulting diversity has enriched numerous societies, and host countries have benefited immeasurably from the contributions made by immigrants and refugees”.

To conclude, the image of migration as a threat is a social construct (Bourbeau, 2013b). In the case of Canada, the Syrian refugees were situated on the security continuum by the Conservatives, but not in the sense that the Copenhagen School theory would have predicted. As for our secondary subject of interest - the balance between humanitarian and security - the Conservatives did promote a balanced platform to perform both, but were not given the power to turn their plan into action.

As Bourbeau (2013b) encourages, a great future project would be to study the discourse on a longer period of time to strengthen the empirical and systematic database of the theory of securitization. Another interesting field to systematically test securitization would be to compare refugees from war zones such as Syrians and climate or political refugees, to see if there is a bigger trend of securitizing war refugees.

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