The Securitization of Environmental Migration by the European Political Right

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Abstract

Prevailing assumptions on the environment-migration nexus suggest that environmental change will cause mass migration to the Global North. However, critics point to its poor empirical precision and lack of conceptual clarity (White, 2017; 175) (Boas et al., 2019). Recently, the European political right, often associated with climate skepticism, has increased its engagement with environmental politics. With stronger competition from green parties, numerous news-stories and commentors now speak of the environment as the political right´s new "battleground". Yet, few (if any) have systematically and empirically inquired into the intersection between the political right´s inclination to securitize immigration and the environment-migration nexus. This study intervenes using securitization theory exploring the extent to which the European political right has securitized environmental migration. The discourse analysis of the conservative right (British Conservative Party) and the far right (Rassemblement National [RN]) between the years 2012-2021, results in a focused discovery indicating an increasing tendency to securitize environmental migration among the political right. This tendency is comparatively stronger among the Conservative Party. The conclusion hypothesizes that the political right will adopt securitizing discourses on environmental migration as a strategy in line with a growing demand for environmental engagement by respective audiences. Findings are caveated by securitizing moves occurring less often than expected, generating a discussion on negating factors. This study opens for future inquiry into the security-environment-migration nexus by the European political right.

List of abbreviations:

CS: Copenhagen School

CSS: Critical Security Studies

GHG: Greenhouse Gas

HC: House of Commons

HL: House of Lords

HM: Her Majesty

IR: International Relations

MEP: Member of European Parliament

MP: Member of Parliament

PM: Prime minister

PS: Paris School

UK: United Kingdom

WS: Welsh School

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1 Introduction

In February 2021 Prime Minister (PM) of the United Kingdom (UK) Boris Johnson addressed the UN (United Nations) security council on the menacing security implications of climate change. As he stated, wild-fires, flooding, desertification and crop-failure would exacerbate fragile states, perpetuate radicalization, force people to flee their homeland and contribute to civil war (HM government, 2021). Climate change was framed as a geo-political concern likely to cause a migration crisis in the Global North.

Johnson´s address is interesting because it insinuates that climate change will cause mass migration to the Global North. Of such, narratives speaking of climate change and environmental degradation leading to mass migration is regularly used to promote environmental action. As White (2017;177) explains, migration gives environmental issues a "human face" more tangible to the human imagination than greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and temperature rise. As a result, sensationalist narratives explicating the nexus between environmental change and migration is often found in publications by intergovernmental organizations, NGO´s, politicians and news-stories wanting to draw attention towards environmental degradation (Warner and Boas, 2019) (Boas, 2015) (White, 2011, 2017) (Klepp, 2017) (Laczko and Piguet, 2014) (Piguet et al., 2011; 5) (Bettini, 2014).

However, sensationalist narratives explicating migration as a major consequence of environmental change is also found to serve a different function - securitizing environmental migration (Trombetta, 2008, 2014) (Brzoska, 2008) (Boas, 2015) (Warner and Boas, 2019). Framing environmental migration as a security threat can justify a rationale for tighter control of migration as it provides grounds for channeling environmental action into the management of immigration (White, 2017).

Against this background, Europe is currently facing two major security challenges; liberal-democratic backlash catalyzed by the recent success of the political right, and the ever-increasing challenges of environmental change (Forchtner, 2019; 2). A growing number of studies have thus taken interest in the European right's environmental communication (Forchtner, 2019, 2020) (Shaller and Carius, 2019) (Lubrada, 2020). Yet, few (if any) have systematically and empirically studied the interaction between the right´s restrictive views on immigration as part of their environmental discourses from a security perspective. This study intervenes with an exploration into the extent to which the European political right has securitized environmental migration. Informed by the cases of the British Conservative Party (conservative right) and the French Rassemblement National (hereinafter; National Rally [RN]), this study makes a focused discovery indicating that moves to securitize environmental migration are increasing among the European political right. However, the extent and intensity to which it occurs is lower than expected, suggesting the existence of negating factors.

This study is built into the backgrounds of two coinciding developments in European politics: the growing support for green politics among European electorates and the increasing proclivity for nationalism. This in turn, has brought increasing hostility to

immigration coinciding with the growth of the political right. The next section stipulates the background for this study and justifies the research question.

1.1 Background for Research Question

Support for green politics has surged in Europe in recent years climaxing with green parties achieving unprecedented success in the 2019 European elections (Eurobarometer, 2020) (European Parliament, 2019) (Franklin and Russo, 2020). Developments such as the 2015 Paris Agreement, the 2018 report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "Fridays for future" personified by Gretha Thunberg and the Extinction Rebellion are some factors, among many others, contributing to the growth in environmental sentiment - particularly among younger European electorates. Seeing the success of green parties, some argue that the political right, despite scant environmental records, are forced to reconsider their environmental positions in order to remain politically relevant (Ruser and Machin, 2019). Against this background, abounding news stories and op-eds speak of the environment as the right's new "battleground" (Gardiner, 2019) (Onishi, 2019) (Bourke, 2021) (Dorosz, 2020) (Gilman, 2019) (Arnhoff, 2019) (Farbotko, et al., 2020). Indeed, as late as in 2017 Conservative Party leader Boris Johnson contributed to establishment of the think-tank "Initiate for Free Trade", a think tank frequently downplaying the importance of climate change and with ties to the American based climate-sceptic Heritage foundation (Desmog n.d). Moreover, in 2010 Johnson endorsed the work of British climate skeptic Piers Corbyn, questioning the impact of anthropogenic warming as a dominant factor to climate change (Johnson,

2010). This comes in stark contrast to his recent speech where climate change was framed as an emergency and an existential threat (HM Government, 2021).

Johnson´s sudden shift in sentiment suggests a signpost example of "greenwashing", a popularized term explaining moves to deceive a public audience of one's own environmentally friendly intentions. Yet, apart from populist drifts, the political right also brings another idiosyncratic feature into the mix of environmental politics; namely, restrictive, and at times, hostile positions on immigration. As White (2017; 176) suggests, the political right holds an intrinsic preoccupation with matters of national security where ideological features, such as, conservativism, traditionalism, nationalism and ethno-pluralism inform immigration-restricting agendas (Arzheimer, 2009) (Fischer 2020) (Abdou et al., 2021) (Mudde, 2002).

Within discourses on environmental migration, numerous studies project environmental degradational and climate change to cause mass migration. Environmental degradation is referred to as a "threat multiplier", amplifying already existing social, economic and political issues, stimulating trigger points for conflict and generating "waves" of migration (Warner and Boas, 2019) (Burrows and Kinney, 2016) (Selby et al., 2017) (Kita and Raleigh, 2018: 364). Factors such as land degradation, flooding and soil erosion are commonly used as yard-stick predictions of a fore-coming migration flood (Bettini, 2019) (Perch-Niesen et al., 2008). Oftentimes, these predictions take on (neo)-Malthusian and orientalist undertones (Urdal, 2005) (Hartmann, 2010) (Reuveny and Moore, 2009; 463) (Kollannskog, 2008).

Although not rejecting the link between environmental change and migration, recent scholarship has, however, criticized alarmist narratives for being misleading and guided by over-simplified assumptions. These relate to mono-causal explanations of migration, the victimization of impacted communities (Farbotko and Lazrus, 2011), and the perpetuation of the "myth" of a looming migration crisis (Boas et al., 2019; 902).

Within this critique also lies the consequence of securitizing environmental migration (Trombetta, 2014) (Klepp, 2017) (Oels, 2012) (Boas et al., 2019) (Brzoska, 2009). Securitized interpretations are found to "militarize" environmental issues, generate confrontational attitudes between both countries and peoples, and derailing international cooperation strategies (Trombetta, 2014; 123) (Brzoska, 2009) (White, 2017). Because environmental problems are not confined to state-boundaries there is a consensus that solutions lie in constructive policy dialogue, sustainable development and global environmental cooperation (Biermann, 2014) (Whitmarsh and Corner, 2017) (Eckart Ehlers and Krafft, 2006; 3).

To uncover and make sense of the aforementioned security narratives, this study uses the theoretical framework of securitization theory. Securitization is a theoretical concept with empirical application conceived out of the Copenhagen School of security studies. Securitization theory theorizes how security issues are constructed within discourse (Buzan et al., 1998). Indeed, because the concept of security is elusive and comes with inestimable values for human societies, security utterances, be it written, or spoken, has a special ability to thrust political issues to the top of the policy agenda where it can be dealt with faster, more forcefully and with less oversight (Hughes and Lai, 2011; 1) (Booth, 2007; 108) (Buzan et al., 1998). According to Buzan et al., (1998; 25), security

is constituted by the intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have political implications. Because security is self-referential and not based on threats which objectively exist, its properties can be applied strategically to transmit fears of existential proportions to audiences (Balzacq, 2005; 172-73).

Right-wing political parties are regularly putting securitization into practice through agendas seeking to limit immigration (Huysmans, 2006; 77). Securitized political discourses on migration are found to normalize racialized attitudes towards migration, predicated on an imagined threat to the absorbing nation (Ibrahim, 2005; 163). Immigrants faced with the challenges of arriving in a new country are placed in an unfavorable power-relationship against the locals and become convenient scapegoats for more complex social-economic and security issues (Buonfino, 2004; 24). As Buonfino (2004; 24) argues the constructed boundaries between "us" – the in-group, and "them" – the out-group, allows for the evasion of discourses related to ethics, human rights and solidarity in favor of security discourses framing new-comers as threats to the in-group. Meanwhile, perceptions of individual and societal threats are found to promote values of intolerance, xenophobia and ethno-nationalism and channel support towards strong putative measures against perceived threats (Garcia and Geva, 2016; 31). In the policy domain securitization is found to induce policies of territorial and administrative exclusion of foreign citizens (Huysmans, 2006). Consequently, securitization can adversely manifest at the expense of democratic processes and undermine individual rights and freedoms in the pursuit of security (Garcia and Geva, 2016; 31). In recent years, the European political right has benefited from security framings of migrants, with

Muslims in particular being treated as a threatening "other" to the "European way of life" (Fisher, 2020) (Abdou et al., 2021) (Abou-Chadi et al., 2021) (Gattinara, 2017).

Inquiring into the European political right´s discourses on environmental migration is thus a timely endeavor as it intersects between two of the greatest security concerns pertinent to contemporary European politics. This study fills the research gap by providing an exploratory account of the extent to which the European right (appointed by conservative and far right) securitize environmental migration between 2012-2021. Informed by the background, this the study is guided by the following research question:

To what extent has the European political right securitized environmental migration?

Using the cases of the British Conservative Party and the French National Rally, it is found that moves to securitize environmental migration are increasing among the European right. However, the extent and intensity to which it occurs is less salient than expected. A suggested reason is because the securitization of environmental migration is postulated by a more complex set of factors than the ideological dispositions which prompt the political right to securitize migration more broadly. Factors such as climate skepticism, the polarizing nature of environmental politics, and the preference for alternative environmental discourses are discussed as factors negating a more comprehensive and instructive agenda to securitize environmental migration. The study reflects on these factors as part of the conclusion.

Overall, because the securitization of environmental migration is found to be on an upward trajectory it is hypothesized that the political right will adopt securitizing discourses on environmental migration as a strategy in line with a growing demand for

environmental engagement by respective audiences. This is believed to become more instructive among the center right, as findings suggest they are more inclined to agree with conventional wisdom on environmental change and is therefore less inclined to develop alternative environmental discourses. On the other hand, far-right RN is found to use environmental policy discourse to propagate its own ethno-nationalistic, and anti-immigration agenda symbolic placed within a broader antagonism against "globalist elites". Within these discourses, environmental migration only plays a minor role and is hard to isolate within its broader agenda to securitize immigration. Exceptions are found in discussions on "climate refugees". The study finally concludes by offering horizons for future study.

The coming section cements this study into broader post-Cold-War debates on the broadening and deepening of security. Thereafter, it discusses securitization theory for the purposes of this study juxtaposed insights from second generation securitization discourses and the Paris School of security studies.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The Birth of Securitization Theory; The Widening and Deepening of Security

Most modern scholars of security agree that the concept of security is subjective and can take on different meanings depending on the place and context it is uttered in (Hughes and Lai, 2011; 1). This is a reason for why the different disciplines of International Relations (IR) construct security threats differently. Neo-Realism sees threats from the anarchic international system; Neo-Marxism sees threats within the antagonism between social classes; Democratic Peace-theory sees threats originating from un-democratic states. Securitization theory, on the other hand, views threats as being constructed through the power of security discourse (Balzacq, 2005). The power of securitization lies in the word security itself; it comes with connotations of protecting something of inestimable value for human societies (Booth 2007; 108).

Securitization theory originates in the work "Security: A New Framework for Analysis", written by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde in 1998. Today, the work of Buzan et al., is best known for lying the foundations of the Copenhagen School (CS) of security studies, taking its name from the numerous publications by the former Copenhagen Peace Research Institute throughout the 1990s (Stritzel, 2014). Here, the CS was born out scholarly debates within the discipline of IR on the broadening and deepening versus narrowing of the concept of security (Buzan, 1997).

Debates on the expansion of the concept of security accelerated after the end of the Cold-War. During the Cold War, security had primarily been understood through the

assumptions of Classical and Neo-Realism. Realism assumes defined peoples and boarders, competition for power, anarchy and the balance of power. Security centers on the state and the military, acting as the main reference points of security. Peace is narrowly understood as the absence of threats, and the survival of the state (Buzan et al., 1998; 21. Realism particularly in its classical understanding, adopts a pessimistic view of "human nature", drawing lineage to the philosophical ideas of Hobbes, Thucydides and Machiavelli.

Common to these works are assumptions of fundamental and timeless principles inherent in human nature. Effectively, this supposes a weak ability for humans to cooperate separate from the rule of authority which in turn sets up a vertical power-relationship between rulers and those being ruled. Agency is inextricably linked to power, and security affairs are reserved agents of authority. The world is interpreted in a perpetual state of contestation, where peace is temporary and stability only possible under the assumption that all states are rational with equal interests (Buzan and Hansen, 2009; 31). In other words, security manifests by enhancing one's own power under the assumption that all others to the same. Applied to the international system, threats emerge as challenges to authority, or - sovereignty.

Such assumptions were heavily influential in the works of 20th Realist thinkers E.H Carr and Hans Morgenthau (Buzan and Hansen, 2009). Later, however, these core assumptions of have been criticized, modified and challenged, for instance through Kenneth Waltz´ Structural Realism which shifts the focal point away from human nature and towards the structures of the international system (Waltz, 2000). In the later Cold-War years Realism is also challenged by the more optimistic framework of Liberalism which emphasized the

mutual benefits of cooperation. Yet, the state-centric, militarily focused Realism prevailed within security discourses up until the 1980´s (Wæver, 1995).

Things started to change in the early 1980´s, catalyzed by works such as Richard Ullman´s (1983) "Redefining Security" expanding conceptual reference points to include the quality of life of inhabitants *within* a state (Ullman, 1983;129). This period also sees the influx of philosophical constructivism and critical theories challenging the fundamental ontologies of Realism (Wendt, 1992). Epistemological constructivism does not limit itself to the study of military threats towards the state but rather emphasizes the role of constructed identities and norms (Lebow, 2016; 55).

This comes against the background of two main points of contention to the realist framework. First, as Booth (1991; 313) points out, states do not always behave in the "sharp-edged", rational, procedure-oriented ways the positivistic reflections of realism assume (Booth, 1994) (Krause and Williams, 1996; 229). Secondly, neither does the traditional conceptualizations of security correspond well with a post-Cold War security order. Indeed, the security environment during this period is defined by less inter-state confrontation, more intra-state conflict and increasing prevalence of issues related to terrorism, the environment, migration and humanitarian issues (Onuf, 2016; 37) (Booth, 1991). Consequently, questions of who´s security, from what threats and through which means took grip in security discourses, and a broadening and deepening agenda of security came to life (Krause and Williams, 1996; 230).

Simply explained "broadening" expands the scope of security threats to include non-traditional threats such as politics, society and the environment (Buzan et al., 1998).

"Deepening" concerns the inclusion more non-state referent objects such as humanity or the individual (Huysmans, 2006; 31).

Born out of these debates are three schools of thought which have come to dominate the post-positivistic, post-Cold War research agenda: the Copenhagen School, Paris School (PS) and the Welsh School (WS). From a general point of view, the PS and WS takes a more critical approaches to security. For this reason, PS and the WS are often considered to make up the framework of Critical Security Studies (CSS). To a considerable degree, PS and WS also exist as critiques and expansions to the CS, bringing in elements of political sociology (PS) (Bigo, 2002) and security as emancipation (WS) (Booth, 2007).

The Copenhagen school enters this debate with both a widened and deepened approach to security centering on five distinct sectors; military, political, economic, environmental and societal (Buzan et al., 1998; 8). The aim is to offer a more holistic framework in which the emerging, more complex post-cold war security environment can be systematically and empirically studied (Hughes and Lai, 2011; 2). As Buzan et al., (1998; 8) states, the inclusion of sectors confines the scope of inquiry to more manageable proportions by reducing the number of variables at play. Emerging from the CS is also, and rather significantly, the theoretical framework of securitization examining how threats are born through discourse. Still, in comparison to the PS and the WS, CS is still, to an extent, grounded in the traditional understanding of the state (Wæver, 1995; 93). As Buzan et al., (1998;1) argues, "there are intellectual and political dangers in simply taking the word security onto an ever-wider range of issues".

2.1.1 Securitization

Securitization relates to a process where political issues are elevated to the realm of security where they can be dealt with quicker, more forcefully, and with less oversight (Williams, 2003). Lending to its constructivist assumptions, threats do not objectively exist but are rather constructed intersubjectively through discursive acts which are subsequently accepted or rejected by an audience (Buzan et al., 1998). Central here is the triad between the speech act, actor and audience (Stritzel, 2014; 30).

The speech act was first introduced to security studies by Ole Wæver (1995). The CS equates speech with action - it is what thrusts political issues into that of security (Booth, 2007;108) (Williams, 2003; 513). The linguistic assumptions of the speech act are borrowed from speech act theory and draws on the philosophical insights of John Austin. According to speech act theory, words have an important performative function – it does not simply describe the world but rather seeks to perform actions within it (Austin and Urmson, 1962) (Booth, 2007). According to Austin speech performs three essential functions: (1) the basic production of utterances with meaning; (2) an intention; and (3) a performance or effect. These as are what Austin explains as locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts which together make up a speech act (Austin and Urmson 1962; 101-02) (Balzacq, 2005).

The CS, primarily through the works of Wæver, expands upon this idea and applies it to the study of political discourse. Security threats are constructed through an intersubjective game between the securitizing actor and an audience. The securitizing actor, better understood as the one who utters security, aims to persuade an audience of the need to implement urgent security measures to deal with an existential threat towards a referent

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object. If the security utterance is accepted by the audience, a justification is made to circumvent the "rules" of conventional politics to deal with the issue more urgently (Buzan et al., 1998; 5).

The CS diverges from Realism in that it does not have a positive outlook on security. As Wæver (1995) describes, "security signifies a situation marked by the presence of a security problem and some measure taken in response". This interprets security relatively neutrally. Yet most importantly, the CS aims to critique the notion that more security means a more secure referent object. Again, security utterances do not objectively describe the world, but rather come with motives and intentions which come to life through discourse (Booth, 2007; 108) (Huysmans, 2006; 25) (Balzacq, 2005).

Although, in theory, security pronouncements can come from any social or political actor, in practice, securitizing moves requires the embodiment of someone with a particular societal rank and access to a significant "audience" (Williams, 2003; 514). What sort of power needed is not explicit from a conventional reading of the CS. Nevertheless, the actor should ideally be in an elite position with the ability to convince an audience of the need for emergency measures to protect "something". Still, there is no requirement for the securitizing actor to hold an official rank (Bourbeau, 2017).

What the CS means by audience is less clear and by several accounts under-conceptualized (Bourbeau, 2017) (Jarvis and Legrand, 2017). Addressing this Mark Salter introduces four types of audience: the popular, elite, technocratic and scientific. This provides guidelines but are not exhaustive by any means (Salter, 2008). Simply understood, an audience is the group addressed by the securitizing move. This most often

takes shape as either societal groups or other political actors. To illustrate a speech act in practice, it can be useful to think of a state leader (securitizing actor) proclaiming a need for stricter borders (referent object) to a nations people (audience) due to immigration (threat); or the leader of an opposition party (securitizing actor) addressing the ruling parties (audience) lack of attention towards terrorism (threat). Because not all security pronouncements can be socially effective, and not all actors will be in a sufficient position to make them. Thus, effective securitization needs to adhere to two facilitating conditions (Williams, 2003).

First, the rules of the act must be followed, or the internal, linguistic-grammatical procedure. Secondly, the external, contextual and social conditions must be met. In other words, the securitizing move must be put into action at a relevant time and place, and there must exist a referent object which can be threatened (Buzan et al.,1998; 23-33). This is, in other words, related to the securitizing actor´s ability to identify and frame an issue as an existential threat; the existence of a public audience who can be persuaded by the discursive act; and the acceptance of the mobilization of extraordinary measures to deal with it. For this reason, invoking something as an existential threat alone is insufficient. Because securitization, as mentioned, is an intersubjective process audience acceptance is still essential to transcend the realm of ordinary politics (Williams in. Balzacq et al., 2014). If no such acceptance is found, the issue never leaves the realm of conventional politics, and thereby only constitutes a securitization move (Buzan et al., 1998).

2.1.2 The Paris School and Second-Generation Securitization Theory

Following its conception in the 1990´s, securitization theory has been applied and used in multiple ways. Although the view purported by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver has been

most pervasive, a diverse collection of scholarly literature has challenged, revised and expanded upon the original framework (Balzacq et al., 2014) (Stritzel, 2014). Securitization theory has now become a bourgeoning and literary rich field of study. References to securitization should therefore be accompanied by a discussion on the broader literature, apart from that of the CS. For this study, this also comes with practical importance, particularly concerning the factors determining audience acceptance and locating the transition from the political to the security realm. These factors are also found to be inhibiting for this study and are discussed more here, and in section 3.5 and 3.6.

One of the most comprehensive deviations from the original securitization framework comes from the Paris School (PS). The PS approach to securitization is understood through what Didier Bigo calls a political sociological approach. This approach diverges from the CS in that the process of securitization occurs, not by the speech-act of an elite, but rather through institutionalized and bureaucratized practices (Bigo and McCluskey, 2018). The PS thereby builds on the work of Pierre Bourdieu who theorized that social actors always interact and operate in certain settings which induce actors to produce certain behaviors (Bigo and McCluskey, 2018). Security, as understood through the PS, is just as much about the decisions made by individuals and societal groups as officials of the state or "elites".

The PS approach is well demonstrated in a study by Roxanne Doty on American vigilantes on the US-Mexico border. Doty (2007) found that civilian groups were making security decisions affecting the lives of migrants trying to cross the border. The study challenges the formal process of security as a speech act formulation of security. In addition, the study raises questions to the assumptions of when, and who has the power

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to enact emergency measures (Doty, 2007; 116). When the PS speaks of security it is always bracketed as (in)security to explain that security for one actor or social group can potentially mean danger and cause insecurity for another.

The PS does not necessarily seek to reject the CS (Bigo and McCluskey, 2018; 117). Nevertheless, it points to certain methodological flaws in the original framework relating to who has power to make decisions of (in)security. Addressing the flaws of the CS, other scholars have tried to move beyond the CS in constructing a second-generation approach which combines elements from the CS and PS (Stritzel, 2014; 12) (Bourbeau, 2011) (Boas et al., 2015). These have, as Stritzel argues, grappled with three main problems: (1) construction problems with the theory itself; (2) an insufficient explication of the theory´s theoretical background; and finally (3) an insufficient reflection on how to apply the theory empirically. The aims and scope of this study does not allow for in-depth discussion on point one and two. However, as this is an empirical study some discussion is warranted on point three.

The empirical application of securitization theory usually meets two problems. First, and as alluded to above, the lack of clarity regarding who the "audience" is makes it difficult, if not impossible to empirically demonstrate the intersubjective construction of security (Balzacq, 2005, 2011) (Vuori, 2008). Reading "Security: A framework for Analysis", there is an impression that the audience needs to be "sufficient" (204) or "significant" (27) in some form. However, it is not made explicit what this entails (Stritzel, 2014) (Salter and Piche, 2011) (Balzacq, 2005, 2011) (Vuori, 2008). This under-formulation has caused questions whether a securitizing move, or the speech act, can constitute a securitizing act alone (Salter and Piche, 2011). This would, according to Balzacq (2005)

and Vuori (2008) reduce securitization to a formal conventional or perlocutionary act. As Balzacq reminds us, this formality is rarely found empirically, where successful securitization hinges on an audience´ "readiness to be convinced" (Balzacq, 2005; 192). Balzacq therefore encourages a "strategic pragmatic" view of securitization which emphasizes both the strategic motives of the elite securitizing actor, and the contextual space in which the public audience evaluates the discursive act (Balzacq, 2005;172). Other second-generation scholars such as Bourbeau (2017), Stritzel (2014), and Salter and Piche (2011) further advocate a position which better incorporates the social and contextual conditions in which both the securitizing actor and recipient finds themselves in.

Secondly, the formality of the "speech act" insinuates the existence of a defined moment when security is brought to life. As Salter and Piche (2011; 934) suggests, securitization is perhaps better understood as a process than a "coup de grace". Indeed, politics more often exists as a contestation between different actors who bargain for political, discursive and material resources which ultimately manifest by successful security claims (Salter and Piche, 2011, 934). Because of this Balzacq (2005; 193), among others, proposes research beyond the formal and self-contained process of the speech act.

2.1.3 Part Conclusion

Both the Paris school, which provides an alternative framework for research, and second-generation securitization scholars, who addresses core limitations of CS position on securitization, are important contributions to the study of securitization. Most importantly, they add multiple levels of complexity to the study of how security issues

come to life. For the purposes of this study, however, the speech-act perspective stays adequate for two reasons. First, this study is exploratory in nature and looks to locate indications of securitizing moves within discourse. This is suggestive of a methodological framework using discourse analysis to uncover incidents where environmental migration is framed as a security threat. Secondly, the available research material (discussed more in section 3.4 and 3.6) does not adequately allow the demonstration of audience acceptance and the empirical initiation of emergency measures. Indeed, as Warner and Boas (2019) finds, exceptional measures against environmental issues tend to be more mundane in nature. Nevertheless, securitization is a proven and powerful concept in studying the nexus between security and migration as it captures the process in which the otherwise mundane act of population movements is constructed as a threat to national security (Huysmans, 2006). In examining the extent the European political right securitizes environmental migration, speech act centered securitization theory, despite its many faults and critiques, is still the best point of departure. This is because it offers a framework for analyzing discourse empirically while also providing a framework for contextualizing and interpreting alarming narratives on environmental migration.

Securitization theory lays the conceptual foundation for this study. The coming section focusses on the conceptualization of the political right. Importantly, the aims of the coming section are twofold: First, to establish a non-arbitrary understanding of the political right (broken into the conservative and far right), and, secondly, to reflect upon the positions of the political right on the environment and migration.

2.2 Conceptualizing the Political Right

2.2.1 Introduction to The Political Right

Ideology and political orientation are amongst the most significant influences on attitudes and responses to both the environment and migration (Whitmarsh and Corner, 2017; 122) (Huber, 2020). This section defines the "political right" for the purposes of this study. In addition, general themes on environmental and immigration discourses among the political right are presented, categorized by the center-conservative and far-right.

There is no terminological consensus on what constitutes the political right (Bobbio, 1996; 17) (Gidron and Ziblatt, 2019; 26). Most broadly it covers a dimension of comparative politics on the right side of the left-right political axis (Jahn, 2010) (Gidron and Ziblatt, 2019). According to Bobbio (1996; 1) the political right and left are antithetical, contrasting between movements and ideologies which split the world into camps of political beliefs and engagement. Such rigid contrasts are often found in political discourses involving the political left and right. Yet, in reality this relationship is more dyadic and complex (Bobbio, 1996). The same is true for the political right, which is often understood too narrowly, including more center-oriented conservatives and far right political entities. This study broadens this focus by employing a conceptual focus distinguishing between the conservative and far right (Bobbio, 1996; 17). This excludes the extreme right, often described by ultranationalist neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi beliefs. In contrast to the extreme right which can operate within an anti-democratic spectrum justifying the use of political violence and terrorism to undermine civil discourse, the far

right is commonly described to be more interested in functioning within a democratic system (Forchtner, 2020).

The coming parts of this section aim to substantiate the conservative and far right. In addition, it will examine the general themes within their respective environmental and immigration discourses in accordance with the guiding research question. The purpose is to emphasize the importance of not conflating the conservative right, while also exploring what the respective factions say on migration and the environment (Beckstein and Rampton, 2018).

2.2.2 The Conservative Right

The conservative, center-right, which in this study is presented by the British Conservatives, is often found to hold values of preservativism and conservative views cautious to political change (Lipset and Raab, 1970) (Jost et al., 2009). The idea of conservativism is often rooted in the philosophical conceptualizations of Edmund Burke who famously advocated an organic society guided by intergenerational responsibility (Wills, 2019). From a social and economic point of view, the center right advocates traditionalism and neo-liberal capitalism (Gidron and Ziblatt, 2019). Social traditions are, quite broadly found in religion, or other symbols of national identity. Neo-liberal capitalism is understood as the extension of market mechanisms to spheres of social life through privatization (education, healthcare etc.) (Leitner, et al., 2006; 28). Additionally, the center right expresses various degrees of nationalism, nativism, adherence to naturally informed hierarchies, authoritarianism, patriarchism and politics of identity. In recent years, these attributes, which to some extent also blurs the lines between the conservative

and far right, are to varying degrees made present in right-wing populist movements, as seen in the US, UK, Turkey, Brazil, France and India (Fischer, 2020).

2.2.3 The Conservative Right Environmental Discourses

Conservative views on the environment are to an extent rooted to Burke´s principles of conservation. Most importantly, this is connected to principles of stewardship and conserving the present for future generations (Wills, 2019) (Lubrada, 2020; 714).

The conservative right is commonly portrayed as hesitant towards comprehensive environmental measures. Empirical studies, although emphasizing that there are important nuances, largely support this. Båtstrand (2015) finds that most conservative parties support climate measures, even when they intervene in the free market. Nevertheless, a pro-business position is preferred when strong industries such as coal or petroleum are important to the local economy (Båtstand, 2015; 538). Hess and Renner (2019) make similar findings. Analyzing positions from six European countries, conservative parties are generally found committed to climate mitigation policies and supportive of renewable energies. However, there are variations of support regarding the transitioning out of fossil fuel industries.

On climate change, there is also a perception that conservatives are climate skeptics. Research points out that there are important nuances to this assumption. Although generally accepting climate science (albeit with less concern and urgency than those left of center), studies indicate that the political right, more generally, profess various degrees of disagreement on anthropogenic climate change (Forchtner, 2020) (Shaller and Carius, 2019) (Van Rensburg, 2015; 1). On this point, Van Rensburg, (2015) provides a

taxonomy of climate skepticism, categorizing three types of sceptic critiques and postural characteristics. These are defined as "evidence", "process" and "response" skepticism. Evidence skepticism refers to the dispute over scientific climate change evidence. Process skepticism refers to skepticism to the scientific, bureaucratic and political processes which develop and disseminate mainstream climate science. Finally, response skepticism relates to the idea to which urgent responses are considered needed. Indeed, if the damage of climate responses are seen to be damaging in the short term, the costs of action are viewed too high to warrant comprehensive responses (Van Rensburg, 2015; 3-4). Within this taxonomy the center-right primarily falls within the category of response skepticism.

2.2.4 The Conservative Right Discourses on migration

Conservatives are generally associated with restrictive views on migration finding success with securitized discourses (Huysmans, 2000). Yet just like environmental discourses, there are nuances (Beckstain and Rampton, 2018). Two primary factors inform the center-right´s restrictive attitude: socio-cultural and economic reasons. The socio-cultural reasons materialize in sentiments of "othering". These have increased in recent years, particularly through agendas targeting Muslims (Fischer, 2020) (Abdou et al., 2021). This is partly because of increasing competition from the political far-right, bringing in a more hostile migration-rhetoric following the 2015 European migration "crisis" (Abou-Chadi et al., 2021; 1) (Tabellini, 2019). In the UK, the Conservative Party has been able to fend off competition from more radical right-wing groups by successfully claiming migration as a prominent issue for the party (Abdou et al., 2021; 12). Finally, economic reasons informing views on migration usually materialize in the fear of immigrants taking jobs off the locals, welfare exploitation and the cost of integration.

2.2.5 The Far Right

The far right is best defined through a combination of broad characterizing features (Mudde, 2002). In a macro-study on commonly featured traits used to identify the far right within discourse, Mudde, (2002; 10) finds nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy, ethno-pluralism and the strengthening of the state to be the features most often mentioned. The far right is also identified by anti-communitarianism and the division of social relationships into a hierarchical ordering which inform traits such as anti-equality and anti-democracy. Economically speaking, the far right tends to look for alternative pathways to the traditional socialism versus free-market dichotomy. Consequently, protectionist economic policies are often combined with a laissez-faire approach to the domestic market (Mudde, 2002; 14).

2.2.6 Far Right Environmental Discourse

The nexus between the far right and the environment is a growing yet understudied subject. (Forchtner, 2019, 2020) (Lubrada, 2020) (Kulin et al., 2021) (Turner and Bailey, 2021). Recent studies find that far right environmental communication offers distinctive ethno-nationalist, nativist ideological positions (Forchtner, 2020; 4) (Forchtner, 2019). Studies also find that the far right formulate symbiotic views between nature and the homeland, arranged in national symbols of untouched beauty, nostalgia, and national identity (Forchtner, 2020; 4-5) (Lubrada, 2020). Lubrada, (2020; 718) refers to "rootedness", a concept which assumes beings are rooted to their environment and part of a holistic ecological unit. Within this sentiment, other people or cultures alien to the local habitat become threatening - incapable, without understanding and respect for the

environment (Lubrada, 2020; 719). Hence, environmentalism is used to justify exclusionary policies targeting immigration and fostering more homogeneous societies (Lubrada, 2020; 719). The same is present in what Turner and Bailey call "ecobordering" - a discourse which "seeks to blame immigration for national environmental degradation (…) in order to rationalize further border restrictions and protect national nature" (Turner and Bailey, 2021; 1).

On climate change, casual observations suggest the far right is skeptic and less concerned with climate change initiatives (Lockwood, 2018; 714) (Whitmarsh and Corner, 2016). Such observations are consistent with empirical findings (Lockwood, 2018; 715) (Kulin, et al., 2021) (Jylhä et al., 2020). More specifically, the far-right display attitudes of evidence and process skepticism (van Rensburg, 2015). Lockwood, (2018) offers a structural and an ideological explanation for the far right´s tendency to reject climate change evidence. The structural position relates to using alternative climate change discourse to appeal to voters left behind and marginalized by globalization. The ideological explanation is explained through an antagonistic relationship with mainstream environmental discourse generally thought to be perpetuated by a "globalist elite" (Lockwood, 2018; 712). Within these discourses, fear of the loss of sovereignty is found to be a key theme. International cooperative frameworks are viewed as conspiracies instigated by a corrupt cosmopolitan elite interested in centralizing power transnationally (Forchtner, 2020; 9). Prior work therefore also points to the embroilment of populism, defined by anti-establishment sentiments and the antagonism between the "betrayed people" and "corrupt elites" (Mudde, 2007; 23) (Shaller and Carius, 2019; 7) (Huber, 2020) (Forchtner, 2019). Overall, far right environmental politics often support

environmental conservation locally but reject global, multilateral climate change initiatives (Shaller and Carius, 2019).

2.2.7 The Far-Right Discourses on Migration

The far right is colloquially understood to be anti-immigrant and hold restrictive and hostile views towards potential newcomers. Indeed, the far right has found political success in mobilizing nationalist, racist and xenophobic sentiment through the construction of a threatening and troublesome other (Huysmans, 2006; 77). Mudde (2007;19) attributes this to "nativism", an ideologically informed sentiment which holds "that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group and that non-native elements (persons or ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation state".

The non-native elements here are elusive and subjective. Foreigners or challenging ideas such as religion are not inherently threatening but can be constructed as such through the process of securitization. Thus, narratives prophesizing floods of immigration are frequently found within far-right political communication, inciting feelings of economic insecurity, cultural anxiety and nationalism (Shehaj et al., 2019).

2.2.8 Part Conclusion

This section aimed at conceptualizing and reflecting upon the ideological positions of the political right to prove analytical clarity ahead of the analysis. The main take-away is that the political right is non-homogeneous and profess different and at times conflicting narratives, rhetoric and attitudes. Since this study focuses on the intersection between

environmental and migration discourses, this section reflected on how these views are ideologically informed. The far and conservative right majorly depart on the topic of climate change. Whereas neither category regard climate change as a central issue, the conservative right is more inclined to legitimize mainstream climate science. The far right see less legitimacy in international scientific bodies and have rather channeled environmental discourses into nativist and ethno-nationalist agendas. Both factions view migration as problematic and as something that should be restricted. Yet, the far right is more inclined towards racialized, ethno-centric and exclusionary narratives.

The conceptualizations provided here are not assumed of absolute character. It acknowledges that different studies in different contexts may use different conceptualizations.

Both discourses on the environment and migration suggest that fears of environmental migration can be channeled into a securitizing agenda to limit immigration. Indeed, an orthodoxy within discourses on environmental migration expounds that environmental degradation and climate change will cause mass migration (White, 2017; 179). The numbers of people estimated to become displaced have ranged from prudent projections within the thousands, to tens of millions - to one billion and beyond (Ferris, 2020; 612). The coming section will demonstrate these discourses and the environment-migration-security nexus.

2.3 Unpacking Environmental Migration

Predictions and estimations on the numbers of people who have, and will become, displaced by environmental factors is overshadowed by much controversy. The primary causes are two-fold. First, methodological constraints make the identification of causal driving mechanisms of migration difficult. Secondly, the lack of a terminological and conceptual consensus regarding what constitutes an environmental migrant further complicated the matter. Combined, these two factors have contributed to conflicting and hugely contradictory predictions on the number of people forced to migrate because of environmental issues ranging from the hundreds of thousands to one billion (Gemenne, 2011) (Hastrup and Olwig 2012; 1). Against this background, the transition into talks of environmental migration as a security threat is short, radiating fear of an impending migration crisis (Kollmannskog, 2008) (Boas et al., 2019) (Trombetta, 2014) (White, 2017) (Brzoska, 2009) (Piguet, 2010).

This section first conceptualizes environmental migration for the purpose of this study. Thereafter it delineates the history of the concept and outlines the often controversial and problematic aspects laden in its application. The, at times, problematic link between climate change as driver of mass migration is assessed, arguing that the troubled empirical connection between climate change and mass migration does not qualify a security threat for European states. Drawing on broader literature on migration it is shown that environmental degradation is unlikely to cause mass migration from the Global South to the Global North (Boas et al., 2019). Yet, as Piguet (2010) writes, the concept of environmental migration continues to evoke fantasies of uncontrollable waves of

migration which in turn, runs the risk of stoking xenophobic reactions or serving justifications for extraordinary measures.

2.3.1 Environmental Migration

There is no scholarly or legal terminological consensus explaining the phenomena of people becoming displaced because of environmental factors. This is partly because of the difficulty of isolating the drivers of migration from eachother (Dun and Gemenne, 2008; 10) (Laczko and Piguet, 2014) (Perch-Nielsen and Imboden, 2008) (Castles, et al., 2014; 317). Consequently, terms such as environmental migrant, climate refugee, climate migrant and so on, are both seen and used interchangeably within discourse (White, 2011). For the analytical purposes of this study, however, environmental migration is understood with broad applicability to explain narratives of mass human displacement as caused by anthropogenic environmental factors.

Anthropogenic describes environmental degradation as caused by humans. The word "Anthropocene" intends to describe a climatic epoch, generated by the human species (Biermann, 2014). It exists as a compound of "Anthropo" and "Cene", where, according to the Cambridge Dictionary "anthropo" is a prefix commonly used to explain something which relates back to humans, while the suffix "cene" relates to something of recent. The Anthropocene has a practical function in describing the causal mechanisms demonstrated in human´s impact on Earth´s natural environment. It lets us understand Earth as a system of interacting components which interact and interlock in many ways, either causing stability or inducing change (Ellis, 2018).

Today "Anthropocene" is commonly used in with reference to climate change, the perhaps primary global concern in the present day (Forchtner, 2020). However, the term also includes broader impacts such as human impacts on earths geology, eco-systems and biodiversity. This study adopts the understanding of the environment as understood through anthropologic factors, that being, human impacts on earths ecological system and occurring in the era of the Anthropocene.

When speaking of environmental migration, however, this study is less concerned with questions of whether the material fact of people migrating because of anthropogenic factors occurs. Consistent with epistemological constructivism, this relates back to the constructed narratives, or perceptions in discourse that people will migrate due to environmental reasons. This study emphasizes narratives framing climate migration as a security threat. This usually materializes in one, or both of the following ways. First, that migration, as caused by factors of anthropogenic climate change, (sea-level rise, drought, desertification etc.) will cause mass migration towards the Global North (Europe in this context). And secondly, (neo)-Malthusian and orientalist imaginations connected to human-caused land degradation, often also attributed overpopulation (Hartmann, 2010). This conceptualization looks to exclude migration as caused by rapid-onset weather events unless found to be explicitly contextualized with climate change. It also excludes discourses of human security where displaced persons are viewed "under" threat rather than "as" a threat as this is less relevant to the research question.

2.3.2 The Security – Environment – Migration Nexus

According to Ransan-Cooper et al., (2015; 106), narratives speaking of the environment-migration nexus can be categorized into four; victimhood, security threat, adaptive agent, and political subject. These framings act as filters informing how the figure of the environmental migrant is interpreted and communicated to various audiences. This study focuses on security framings of environmental migration. As this section highlights, security framings are identified by sensationalist and security-oriented language feeding into dramatic imaginations and advocating urgent solutions (Ransan-Cooper et al., 2015; 110).

Discourses explicating links between environmental degradation as a cause of large-scale migration are often said to have originated through various publications by international and non-governmental organizations, media publications and natural science research in the 1980´s. Significant of such is a 1985 United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) by El-Hinnawi (1985) where the term "environmental refugees" is believed to have been used for the first time (Ionesco et al., 2016; 13) (Hastrup and Olwig, 2012; 111). The UNEP paper gathered wide attention and contributed to an orthodoxy on the environment-migration nexus prevailing throughout the 1990´s and 2000´s (White, 2017). This orthodoxy, referred to as "maximalists" projections, describe anthropogenic environmental factors as leading causes for mass migration (Bettini, 2013) (Morrissey, 2012) (Hastrup and Olwig, 2012).

The saliency of the maximalist position is often attributed the works of Norman Myers (1993, 1997, 2001) who estimated that 50 million people would risk displacement by

2010, and 200 by 2050. Myers´ projections have subsequently become a popular source for politicians, government reports and media publications citing migration as consequence of environmental change (Hastrup and Olwig, 2012) (White, 2011, 2017). Another prominent maximalist study is the 2006 "Stern report" predicting that climate change can cause the displacement of "hundreds of millions of people, perhaps billions of people" (cited in Coffino, 2014). Since then, the maximalist position has lost traction and challenged by "minimalists" which is further elucidated bellow. Nevertheless, maximalist projections continue to surface. In 2020, a report by the Institute of Global Economics and Peace (IEP) estimates that 1.2 billion people will risk displacement from human caused environmental within the next 30 years (IEP, 2020).

Accompanying maximalist predictions are often narratives of apocalypse, with hordes of migrants, or refugees (used interchangeably) overwhelming absorbing countries, inciting conflict and continuing a vicious self-perpetuating cycle of land degradation and migration (White, 2017) (Hartman, 2010). Of such, climate change is often understood through the "threat multiplier" hypothesis, suggesting that climate change will exacerbate and worsen sources of insecurity in given areas (White, 2017; 176). One study promoting this position is Reuvey and Moore (2009) who trough a large-N statistical analysis find that environmental degradation plays a statistically significant role in causing out-migration. The authors conclude that the security implications of uncontrollable environmental migration can cause fertile grounds for terrorism and spark antagonisms between people groups (Reuveny and Moore, 2009; 476). The multiplier hypothesis is also commonly referenced within the context of the Syrian civil war (2011) and the Darfur conflict (2003) (Selby, 2017).

The multiplier hypothesis is not disproven and will likely become more relevant as climate change and other environmental issues worsen. However, for important reasons it is still controversial. Most significantly the tracible impacts of climate change, in particular, on conflict and migration has not been demonstrated on the scale often claimed in existing literature (Selby, 2017) (Farbotko and Lazrus, 2011) (Boas et al., 2019) (Kita and Raleigh, 2018). Rather, Selby et al., (2017) argues, "alarmist" maximalist prophesies are friendly to the media and popular literature who profit from sensationalist headlines. Robert Kaplan´s seminal and highly influential "The coming Anarchy" (1994) describing environmental degradation as a pending source of mass migration and conflict illustrates how sensationalist discourses are popularized.

Another narrative often brought up is that of environmental degradation, or as Hartmann (2010; 234) defines it; the "degradation narrative". The degradation narrative draws on colonial stereotypes positing a North-South axis of security where the more rational and reasonable North takes up a controlling position upon the "chaotic" South (Ransan-Cooper, 2015; 110). The narrative goes that people of the South plagued by over-population and poverty degrade their environments and force upon themselves out-ward migration. Environmental migrants are in turn framed as security threats causing strain on local resources of the absorbing country and a source of tensions to the locals (Hartmann, 2010; 234). As Hartmann argues, this narrative has proved highly effective among Western policy circles as it allows migration to be securitized both as an environmental threat, and as a more general "in-group" threat (Hartman, 2010; 234).

Important for this study is the fact that sensationalist, securitized framings make effective political tools for convincing audiences of the imminent dangers of environmental change

(White, 2011) (Buzan et al., 1998). The figure of the environmental migrant embodies and gives a "human face" to more elusive and incremental environmental impacts (Piguet, 2013) (Ferris, 2020) (Browning, 2017) (White, 2017). Imaginations of massive, uncontrollable refugee streams originating in the Global South destined for the Global North can subsequently generate a rationale for targeting migration (Bettini, 2013) (Cooper, et al., 2015). As White (2017; 24) argues, such an imagination is beneficial for political parties wishing stricter border security and the tighter management of refugees. As referred to in section 2.2, the political right possesses ideological inclinations to restrict incoming migration and may thus have interest in securitizing environmental migration.

In summary, the many sensationalist projections – be it intended or not, can perpetuate a sense of paranoia – particularly when interpreted through ideological lenses. The political right´s inclination of interpretating migration through of enmity and transgression makes the securitization of environmental migration a potentially salient instrument supporting the need for emergency measures, such as, the physical erection of walls and other non-physical barriers of entry (White, 2017).

Because of the many uncertainties laden in displacement projections and the inadvertent consequences associated with the securitization of environmental migration, a new strand of researchers has appeared called the "minimalists" (Morrissey, 2012) (Ferris, 2020). Minimalists warn against the perpetuation of a self-referencing narrative which entrench environmental migration as a security threat without an empirical scientific grounding (Boas, et al., 2019; 901-02).

In addition, Minimalists point to the many flaws inherent in the maximalist methodologies and propose a broader multi-dimensional research agenda which goes beyond the limitations of quantitative statistics (Hastrup and Olwig, 2012; 1) (Boas et al., 2019) (Black et a., 2011) (Black, 2001) (Ferris, 2020). This includes challenging strict numerical predictions, pointing to their lack of concern for other social and economic factors that contribute to migration (Hastrup and Olwig, 2012). Instead of narrating those impacted by environmental change as security threats, minimalists rather encourage the empowerment of communities – pointing to their agency in adapting to the changing environmental circumstances (Farbotko and Lazrus, 2011). Overall, much of the criticism raised by minimalist scholars comes in response to what Nielsen et al., (2008; 376) refers to as a "common sense" understanding inherent in maximalist projections. Indeed, maximalist research assess the push-factors of migration (desertification, sea-level rise, crop failure etc.) uncritically assuming they will inevitably cause people to migrate.

2.3.3 Part Conclusion

This section aimed at showing how the construction of mass environmental migration as a security threat provides a powerful narrative which can be used to incite fears of a coming migration crisis. Although it is undeniable that people do and will increase to migrate because of environmental factors such as climate change, recent studies generally agree that it rarely makes up the single driver of migration. In cases where it is, migration more often found at the intercommunal or domestic level (Boas et al., 2019). Because of the difficulties associated with isolating drivers of migration and the controversial assumptions laden in maximalist predictions, the literature points to inadvertent consequences of sensationalist projections. Most importantly, political actors of the

Global North can identify a rationale for targeting immigration (Bettini, 2013) (Cooper, et al., 2015). Knowing that the political right holds restrictive attitudes on migration there is an imperative to inquire into whether this has translated into moves to securitize environmental migration.

The coming section presents the methodological framework and research design for the analysis.

3 Methodology and research design

The research question is answered through a qualitative empirical case study informed by two cases: Rassemblement National (RN) (Formerly Front National), and the British Conservative Party. The methodological framework is divided into six parts; the first part outlines the research strategy; the second discusses the case selection process; the third lays out and justifies the chosen timeframe; the fourth discusses data-collection; the fifth discusses the operationalization of the theoretical framework; finally, the limitations of the methodological framework are discussed.

Overall, the research design aims to establish transparency on methodological choices and pave ways for future research.

3.1 Research design

The research method chosen for this study is discourse analysis. Discourse analysis looks to gain access and interpret the empirical world. As a means of exploration within the research design, it is chosen as the best method to uncover and interpret security narratives within environmental migration discourse. Of such section 2.3 reveals the multiple narratives which frame environmental migration as a security threat. Moreover, section 2.2 shows that the political right for ideological reasons may be ideologically inclined to securitize environmental migration. With reference to the research question, the main aim of this study is to explore the extent to which environmental migration has been securitized over time.

Before presenting the cases, timeframe and analytical framework, it is necessary to provide a deeper methodological grounding. Drawing on the post-cold war debates, this research is embedded in epistemological interpretivism and ontological constructivism. Interpretivism relates to the study of non-subjective human interest which are assumed not to abide by laws of a natural order (Bryman, 2012; 28). It is therefore also assumed that access to reality is primarily enabled through the interpretation of social constructions which in this research is conceived from discourse. The theoretical lens of securitization theory intends to make sense of discourse relating to the environment-migration-security nexus, as shown in the literature review.

The ontological foundation is found in constructivism, and the research henceforth borrows its leading assumptions. Constructivism interprets environmental migration from a relativistic point of view which depending on socio-historical, ideational and contextual factors can be transformed into a security problem (Bourbeau, 2011). Security is not assumed to be an objective state, but rather a self-referential practice emerging from an intertwining mix of history, norms, identities and beliefs which all cement in diverse ways of interpreting the world (Booth, 2007; 152). The, political right, as corroborated by the literature review, is here assumed to possess characteristics, or worldviews, which facilitate a restrictive view on migration and varying degrees of skepticism to environmental politics. This can on the one end materialize in the form of anti-immigration sentiment, while on the other hand transpire into hatred, bigotry and racism (Wodak, 2015) (Liang, 2007) (Mudde, 2002). The cases chosen for this study aim to conform to non-rigid, floating, albeit non-arbitrary spectrum ranging from the center

conservative to the far right. The ontological assumptions of constructivism help trace security agendas back to political assumptions (Booth, 2007;157).

Securitization theory is adopted as the theoretical framework. Primacy is given to the speech act interpretation of the Copenhagen school because it offers the most promising framework of uncovering how political issues are constructed as security threats (Salter and Piche, 2011; 933). Securitization theory provides a well-established and rigorous framework for the study of discourse. Importantly, it allows using discourse analysis to locate speech acts and interpret them through the theoretical lens. The theoretical lens is employed as a method of understanding the intersubjective construction of security, and a means to study the symbiosis between the securitizing actor, the referent object and the public audience. Regarding the securitizing actor, this study stays consistent with the CS focusing on utterances found in official party documents and by (preferably) high ranking party members. For the referent object and audience, the existence of one (or multiple) are considered sufficient. A comprehensive explanation of the operationalization of the theoretical framework is found in section 3.5.

3.2 Case Selection

Within the research question: "To what extent has the European political right securitized environmental migration?" there is an implicit response to Barglowski´s (2016) "where" "what" and "who of empirical qualitative research sampling. The "where" is here refered to Europe; the "what" considers the securitization of environmental migration, while the "who" refers to the political right.

Two European political parties are chosen as case; National Rally, France *(Rassemblement national)* and the Conservative party, UK.

The first stage in the selection process is decided by the need to locate parties ranging from the center-right (Conservative party), and far-right (RN). This decision builds on existing literature illustrating the important nuances within the political right both on the environment and migration. Because both migration and the environment are strongly politicized, it is reflected upon whether differences between the conservative and far right support or negate the securitization of environmental migration. Finally, cross-national examination probes inquiry into generalizability and paves the way for future research on the environment-migration-security nexus in Europe. Overall, the political sentiments of RN and the British Conservatives are found to overlap with literature on the conservative and far right and are therefore chosen as cases for this study.

Consistent with securitization theory, domestic popularity is also key in the selection process as the CS approach to securitization theory requires securitizing actors to hold an elite position with access to public audiences. The parties chosen are therefore either the most, or second most popular party in their respective countries judged by the most recent election. This criterion also serves a second function by narrowing the focal point of the study to the "mainstream" of the political right, excluding extremist fringes. Finally, and for practical reasons, more popular political parties generally pertain a greater availability of information which aids the data-collection process.

3.3 Timeframe

According to Bourbeau (2011; 3), the CS approach to securitization does not have guiding principles to account for varying levels of securitization. To measure the extent the European right securitizes environmental migration the study adopts a systematically chosen two-part timeframe of 2012-2014 and 2018-2021. This selection is informed by two contextual factors relating to European political dynamics.

The first political dynamic centres on political right´s position in relation to the wave of green politics rushing over Europe recently. Such is corroborated by the performance of green parties and the more general growth in environmental concern by the European electorate. According to a 2020 survey by Eurobarometer, 94% of all European citizens said that Environmental politics were important to them (Eurobarometer, 2020). Given the high number of Europeans who find the environment important, it is assumed to be strategically beneficial for all political parties to engage in environmental political discourse. Events which are believed to inform increased environmental awareness include (but are not limited to) the 2015 Paris agreement, the 2018 IPCC report, the increasing saliency of civil environmental activism as seen through movements such as Extinction Rebellion and Fridays for future.

Accompanying these environmental dynamics are factors supporting more hostility towards immigration. Here events (not limited to) the 2015 migration "crisis", the Syrian civil war, and the growth of ISIS has contributed to the popularity of the political right across Europe. The right has subsequently profited by campaigns pushing to strengthen

the national identity and framing foreigners as threats to national security (Sandrin, 2019; 228).

These political dynamics, together with securitization theory carry the core assumptions which are addressed by the research question. The extent to which environmental migration has been securitized is subsequently indicated by shifts in the number and intensity of securitizing moves between the periods. Building on the assumptions of the political dynamics, the analysis expects securitizing moves to increase.

3.4 Collection

The sources of data for this study centres on party manifesto´s, party programs, transcriptions of parliamentary debates, party website publications, news articles, interviews and academic literature.

First, party manifestos and party/election programs published within the timeframes 2012-2014 and 2018-202 are gathered. If no program or manifesto is published within the periods, the closest publication prior is chosen. Party manifestos are an important communicative outlet as they provide authoritative statements of the party's political aims, views and ideological beliefs. As programs/manifestos are usually issued before an election they give insight into possible shifts in view or change in image from the previous electoral period (Janda et al.,1995). Analysis is limited to sections relating to climate change/the environment, migration and security. Sections with less relevance to the research question such as healthcare, economic policy, or education are intentionally excluded. For RN, four party programs from the two periods are analysed. For the British, Conservatives three.

A second source of data comes from transcripts of parliamentary debates. The prime reason for this is that party programs, despite the aforementioned expectations, reveal no explicit mentions of environmental migration. Including parliamentary debates therefore aims to further distil party opinions as expressed by party representatives on the topic of environmental migration. Sessions focusing on the environment, migration or/and security are singled out and key word searches are used to locate instances where environmental migration is framed as a security threat. For the RN, access to transcriptions is only available for the period 2018-2021 as they had not yet in been digitalized in the foregoing period. Also, as RN has less parliamentary representation throughout the period. For RN, two sessions match the criteria. As the British Conservatives has been the governing party in Great Britain since 2010 (present at the time of writing), more information is available. Here, sessions in both the House of Commons and House of Lords are accessed through Hansard[1]. In total, nine sources are gathered for analysis.

A third category, titled "other", included web-site publications, news articles and interviews with party members. Specific searches are conducted through various internet search engines. Key word searches are used seeking out material linking environmental migration with security by chosen parties. WayBack Machine Internet Archive is used to

[1] Hansard can be accessed from: https://hansard.parliament.uk/

access non-present webpage data [2]. For the years 2012-2014 and 2018, RN´s website includes a figure of most searched keywords which is useful for gaining an overview of which topics the party is engaged with during the respective period. These are referenced as appendixes. The figure is discontinued after 2018.

Website data is higher for RN than for the Conservatives. More information is subsequently collected for RN in this category with 11 sources gathered. For the Conservatives, six sources are gathered.

Table 1

	National Rally	The Conservative Party
Party programs	4	3
Parliamentary Transcripts	2	9
Other	11	6
Sum	**17**	**18**

Table 1 visualizes the collected material. Overall, the corpus for each party is about equal.

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[2] WayBack Machine Internet Archive: https://archive.org/web/

3.5 Operationalization of the theoretical framework

Moves to securitize environmental migration is identified through discourse analysis. Building on the assumptions of constructivism, discourse analysis studies how different forms of written and spoken communication are produced, interact and come to constitute the social world (Bryman, 2012; 528).

The study of the political right´s securitization of environmental migration has not to the authors knowledge been studied empirically. A challenge is therefore to construct methodological guidelines where discourses relevant to the research question can be retrieved.

To manage this, a broad preliminary literature scan using internet search engines is conducted with the aim of locating frequently used words in environmental migration discourses. It is subsequently revealed that different combinations of environment, ecology, climate, climate refugees, climate change, displaced, flee, exodus, asylum seeker, migrant, immigrant[3] most often appear in such discourses. Since no two cases of securitization are equal, a non-flexible criterion centering on the identification spoken words is restricting. Keywords therefore function as identifiers for discourses where securitizing moves *could* take place.

The next step is to identify contexts in where environmental migration is framed as a security threat – or in other words, situations indicating moves to push environmental

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[3] Author translation: environnement, écologie, climat, réfugiés climatiques, déplacés, fuir, changement climatique, exode, demandeur dasile, migrant, immigrant

migration beyond the rules of conventional politics (Buzan et al., 1998; 23). This suggests contexts of urgency or emergency, with the intent of giving an issue special priority. An example of a securitizing move being made is if large-scale out-environmental migration is framed to overwhelm an absorbing country or territory to an extent which it cannot be dealt with through regular politics. An observable issue (partly discussed in section 2.1.2) is to define the moment when an issue enters the realm of security. The location of securitizing moves is according to Buzan et al., (1998; 25) done by interpreting "particular rhetorical and semiotic structures to achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed". In other words, the speech act needs to hold a sense of extraordinary emergency – "if the issue is not dealt with immediately, it will be too late and we will not be around to deal with it in the future" (Buzan et al., 1998; 26).

Sections resembling this sentiment are highlighted for a further qualitative interpretation through the theoretical framework. This step builds in the securitizing narratives uncovered in the literature review (Hartmann, 2010) (Kita and Raleigh, 2018). Broad points of reference are thus narratives building on (neo)-Malthusian assumption of environmental degradation (Hartmann, 2010) (Reuveny and Moore, 2009) (Urdal, 2005), and the identification of environmental degradation or climate change as a threat multiplier (Selby et al., 2017) (Kita and Raleigh, 2018; 364).

The third step is to interpret these using the securitization framework. The adopted criteria for securitization comes from Buzan et al (1998; 26). According to the authors, successful securitization hinges on three criteria; the existence of an issue with the potential of being securitized, a will to employ emergency measures to deal with the respective threat, and

the existence of an audience to scrutinize the securitizing move. For determining a successful securitizing move, this study does not necessitate the adoption of an emergency measure. It is sufficient for the securitizing move to gain enough resonance by an audience to legitimize the *possibility* of an emergency measure to be employed (Buzan et al., 1998; 25). Securitization is thus defined as "the intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects" (Buzan et al., 1998; 25). Securitization is assumed to be a strategic practice where actors use discursive techniques to "induce or increase the public's mind" (172) and garner support for a policy or course of action (Balzacq, 2005;172-73). The analysis is neither concerned with the evaluation of policies or courses of action favored by the securitizing actor. Policy discussions are outside the scope of this study. What is most important is that the utterances analyzed present (1) a framing of environmental migration as threatening to a referent object; (2) demand a course of action to protect the referent object from the threat of environmental margination; and (3) the existence of an audience to interpret the securitizing move. As mentioned before, there are limitations to the information extractable from the corpus material. It is thus difficult to empirically demonstrate the moment in which the audience *accepts* the securitizing move. To avoid speculation, the analysis limits itself to the identification of an audience.

3.6 Reflections on methodological framework

Creating a clean research design can be difficult when simultaneously taking a critical stance towards the authority of knowledge claims. Consequently, a critical impulse to problematize the actions and communication of the "political-right" can spill over into jargon-laden research and prejudiced conclusions (Salter and Mutlu, 2013; 15). This has

been mediated by making clear, explicit choices and emphasizing the underlying assumptions of the research question.

Language constraints are the greatest challenge to the assessment of the research question. The research question focuses on the European political right, yet only two cases are analyzed questioning the generalizability of findings. Nevertheless, with reference to the study´s aims, the nature of this study is to provide a first exploration opening horizons for future inquiry. A more comprehensive case selection would need considerable translation work beyond the resources available for this study. Because translation is time and resource consuming it also carried a constraint on how much material is collected for RN. The collection process is to an extent aided using a keyword where sections referring to environmental migration are easily extracted for analysis.

As an explorative study, a quantitative analysis can be argued to be better able to determine whether the securitization of environmental is something the political right is becoming engaged with. However, this would come into epistemological conflict with the theoretical framework of securitization theory which is grounded in constructivism and is best studied through discourse analysis. Future inquiry is encouraged to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods through Mixed Methods Research (MMR) (Timans et al., 2019).

With the use of securitization theory, the results of this study are less applicable to non-Western and non-democratic contexts. According to Wilkinson, the CS state-centered focus only becomes applicable to the conditions of unified states with clear cut institutional divisions, peoples and borders (Wilkinson, 2007). The CS is also challenged

by its negligence to issues and discussions on gender, and the lack of attention towards "silent security problems" (Buzan and Hansen, 2009). Within this critique, speaking security is understood as a privileged activity which leverages spoken threats above others. As Lene Hansen (2000) argues, not all people can speak their security problems (cited in Buzan and Hansen, 2009; 216). For example, in areas where HIV/AIDS is prevalent some people are discouraged from seeking treatment due to a fear of being framed a security threat (Buzan and Hansen, 2009). Such points of critique are mediated by limiting the scope of study to European political parties. Upon reflection, the Eurocentric nature of this study will make it challenging to re-apply its respective methodologies to other geographies, cultures, and societal and political structures. Its horizons should primarily be limited to the Western, Euro-Atlantic contexts.

4 Results

4.1 Results overview

This section presents the findings of the analysis. Overall, the analysis makes two focused findings contributing to existing literature. Most significantly, the analysis indicates that the securitization of environmental migration is on the rise among the European political right. Both the far-right National Rally and center-right British Conservative party both performed more securitizing moves against environmental migration during the second period analyzed. This is found to be stronger among the British Conservatives.

Parties diverge on the narratives used. Whereas the British Conservatives primary securitizing agenda centers on raising more urgent concern to climate change and framing itself as a global leader, RN is more concerned with the justification of climate change as a legitimate cause of refugee status. In addition, RN´s antagonism to what it calls the "globalist elites", pushes it towards alternative environmental interpretations reflective of a nationalist and nativist ideology. Occasionally both parties converge on the use (neo)-Malthusian and orientalist narratives explaining the root causes of migration. Yet for the Conservatives this is more applicable to specific party members and less informative of the party's guiding narrative.

The second important finding is corollary to securitizing moves occurring less often and with less alarm than expected. This goes counter to the expectations of the study - that the political right´s inclination to securitize immigration would translate into stronger campaigns problematizing environmental migration (Ruser and Machin, 2019). The

suggested reasons for this are discussed in the conclusion. In short, environmental migration is likely predicated on a more complex set of factors than (im)migration in isolation. A combination of factors such as climate skepticism, the polarizing nature of environmental politics, and the preference for alternative environmental discourses likely negate a stronger and more instructive securitizing agenda. Finally, methodological constraints are also likely sources of constraint on findings.

In summary, although findings suggest a positive trajectory to securitize environmental migration, more research including cases from more countries is needed to determine whether this is on the verge of becoming an instructive part of the European right´s engagement with the environment.

4.2 Chapter structure

The presentation of findings is structured in the following way. Findings of both parties are first elucidated chronologically beginning with the period 2012-2014 and moving to the period of 2018-2021. Because the source material for RN overall made less direct references to environmental migration, discourses on migration and the environment are included as separate sections within the analysis in that respective case. Limited resource material is most noticeable for the 2012-2014 period; however, the structure is re-applied to the 2018-2021 period for analytical consistency. This choice allows deeper investigation into the reasons for why environmental migration is given little saliency, and thus also uncovers that RN peruses sophisticated alternative environmental discourses, consistent with earlier findings (Forchtner, 2020) (Boukala and Tountasaki, 2020) (Lubrada, 2020). For the Conservatives, a higher availability of information

allowed findings to be condensed into one section illuminating securitizing environmental migration discourses for each of the two periods.

4.3 National rally

4.3.1 National Rally Overview[4]

The National Rally (Rassemblement National, formerly National Front, [RN]) is a French far-right political party which has gained considerable political traction in recent years. Since its conception it has followed central themes of racial differentiation, anti-immigration and anti-globalization (Boukala and Tountasaki, 2020). Although the party had success in French politics for many years, its influence remained marginal as its radical positions made it hard to resonate with more moderate voters (Stockemer, 2017). For this reason, RN was long considered a protest party in French politics. This changed in 2011 when Marine Le Pen, daughter of former party head Jean-Marie Le Pen took power. Since taking leadership, Marine Le Pen has managed to capture broader swaths of the electorate through what Nonna Mayer (2013; 160) frames a "de-demonization" aiming to soften the party's image. RN has primarily gained success through a people-centric and anti-elitist populist discourse - unmistakably evident within its environmental and migration discourses (Stockemer and Barisione, 2016).

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[4] Translations of all quotations are included in appendix 3. Quotes are referenced with a code corresponding to the appendix.

4.3.2 2012-2014 Discourses on Migration

In its election programs from 2011 and 2014 RN displayed a restrictive stance on migration, primarily for economic reasons. With the French economy still recovering after the 2008 financial crash, migration is constructed as a threat to domestic jobs. Both the 2011 and 2014 campaign programs blame immigration for decreasing wages, meanwhile accusing newcomers for not wanting to culturally integrate (RN, 2012b). Migration is considered an opportunistic and illegal activity aiming to exploit social welfare benefits in France. As the 2011 and 2014 programs both mention; "they know how to find the most advantageous social benefits in Europe" (RN, 2012b) (RN, 2014) (A).

The election programs also place RN an existential battle against "communitarianism" and Islamic fundamentalism. Hence, RN show populist traits blaming communitarians, and the "globalist elites" of supporting the arrival of "Islamic fundamentalists" and in turn threating the French cultural identity. This is seen in complains about Muslim food-practices, objecting pork being removed from school cantinas, and restaurants only offering Hallal meat (RN, 2014). Finally, the Arab spring (referred to as the "Arab Crisis") is mentioned as another source of illegal immigration and insecurity.

4.3.3 Environmental Discourses

The 2012-2014 period reveals no explicit mention of climate change. RN´s website during this period made few mentions to the environment apart from a few discussions on renewable energy in the context of protecting the French workforce. In addition,

environmental issues are not mentioned among the most frequently searched words on its website (See appendix 1).

The environment, and ecology is more vividly discussed in election programs. Here, RN shows what this study refers to as a "two-pronged" environmental discourse. On the one end, this speaks of the "in-group" citizens responsibility to their land, while using environmental discourses to legitimize the denial of people from poor and developing countries. Most interesting in this respect is the establishment of the "New Ecology" movement, towards the end of the 2012-2014 period. The New Ecology movement came as an embodiment of the two-pronged environmental discourses and a subsequent desire to devise an environmental movement defined against the "illegitimate" and "corrupt" mainstream.

On climate change, comments by the former party head Jean-Marie Le pen are instructive of RN´s views during this period. In 2010 he stated that ecologism was the "religion of elite bohemian bourgeoise" (Touctchkov, 2010). Indeed, the analysis found similar sentiments purported by daughter, and new party head Marine Le Pen. As she suggested, the climate had always been shifting, both with and without human interference (Terraeco, 2012). This is illustrative of Van Rensburg´s (2015; 4) "process skepticism", with RN displaying skepticism towards the scientific, bureaucratic and political processes which develop and disseminate mainstream climate science. Instructive of process skepticism are also Marine Le Pen´s comments to French environmental magazine Terraeco ahead of the 2012 presidential election:

> "The world has experienced climate change that had nothing to do with human activity. It is not the work of the IPCC that can establish with certainty that man is the cause of climate change"

(…) "The IPCC is the consensus of those who have the floor. These are the priests and bishops of climate change." (Terraeco, 2012) (B).

Here, Le pen exabits a populist ideological position aiming to create distance to the corrupted mainstream bodies of science.

Apart from climate change, RN is notably engaged with environmental discourse more broadly. It is also here references to security are made. Most importantly, the local environment (also understood as the local ecosystem, or ecology) is voiced as a referent object of security in need of protection and conservation. Under the section "Ecology, food and industrial safety and animal protection" (present in both the 2011 and 2014 programs) RN drew passionate connections between ecology the local territory and identity:

"the preservation of flora, fauna and landscapes is an objective at the heart of the vision of man that we defend, that is to say a man living in harmony with his environment, mastering the consequences of his action, on the planet and in its place of life, respecting the heritage bequeathed through the ages and taking into account animal suffering" (RN, 2012a/2014) (C1)

The statement insinuates a pronounced connection between the individual and his/her local environment. Links are drawn between the cultural heritage of the land and the preservation of the local ecological system. RN points to the preservation of the beauty of the local flora, fauna and landscapes where individuals of the land have responsibility of leaving the environment intact for future generations. The 2011 and 2014 programs stated that: [it] matters a lot to our fellow citizens who wonder about the future of the environment that we are going to leave to our children" (RN, 2012a) (C2). This resembles what Lubrada (2020) refers to as "rootedness", a concept which assumes beings are rooted to their environment and part of a holistic ecological unit.

The passage also insinuates a unity a unity of "fellow citizens", or those who cherish and respect the local land, to defend it from outside threats to the local ecology. Outsiders, as informed by its position on immigration, materialize as people alien to the local ecology. As the electoral programs also suggest, "the environmental issue is closely linked to economic issues, to the international control of migration and to the development of poor and emerging countries" (RN, 2012a) (RN, 2014) (C3). The passage mentions three sources of threats: economic, international control of migration, and the development of poor countries. This resembles Betsy Hartman´s conceptualization of the environmental degradation narrative – especially on the last two points. Migrants are envisioned as poor, peasant like figures forced who degraded their own land beyond the human prerequisites for living and are subsequently forced on the move (Hartmann, 2010; 234).

The degradation narrative explains a two-pronged nature of RN´s environmental discourse during this period, and thus has a convincing application. On one side, it speaks of French citizen´s responsibilities to their land, meanwhile legitimizing the denial of people from "poor and developing countries" who bring in dangerous environmental customs and place the local ecology under threat. According to Hartmann (2010; 234) such a sentiment is convenient because it both targets migration and conceptualizes the environmental as an object which can be securitized. Hence environmental policy serves an anti-immigration agenda. As the following passage explains "[protecting the local ecology needs] an ambitious policy of cooperation with countries currently suffering from massive emigration" and the "promotion of harmonious development" in poor countries" (RN, 2012a) (C4). Thus, the local environment serves as a referent object against an imagined threat of mass migration from poor and underdeveloped countries. Yet, the

measure of "promoting harmonious development" does not correspond or allude to a state of exceptionality.

A final element of RN´s environmental discourse is informed by its ideological anti-globalist rhetoric which also comes to serve a securitizing function. Globalist elites - the facilitators of immigration through laissez-faire border policies allow mass migration and subsequently generate a threat to the local environment. The Schengen area, in particular, became a representation of a globalist conspiracy looking to wash out the French cultural and ecologically linked territorial identity.

A good representation of RN´s environmental discourse during 2012-2014 period came through the "New Ecology" movement – a RN affiliated ecological think-tank supporting a form of "patriotrical ecologism" (Binctin, 2015). The now discontinued movement, came to life in late 2014, and staked out a new direction for French right-wing environmental politics in opposition to the illegitimate and "dangerous" mainstream (Neslen, 2014). The movement centred on synthesizing national identity and the protection of French industry, meanwhile contrasting the EU or the IPCC (Boukala and Tountasaki, 2019). In an interview with the Guardian, then serving member of the European Parliament (MEP (Member of the European Parliament) Mireille d´Ornano summarized: "The New Ecology movement is based on national interests and patriotism. We have to be closer to our people and not against our country´s interest" (Neslen, 2014).

The New Ecology movement serves RN´s two-pronged environmental position well. First, it stakes out an alternative environmental discourse built into an ethno-nationalist agenda which rejects internationalism (Forchtner, 2019). Secondly, it stakes out a more

ideologically coherent position relatable to environmentally concerned people on the right. It subsequently looks to capture climate sceptic, forgone and disenchanted electorate audiences forgone by a liberally progressive main-stream political agenda. As d´Ornano further states in her interview with the Guardian: "We don't want a global agreement or global rule for the environment". She further asserts that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is "communist project (Neslen, 2014).

4.3.4 Securitizing Environmental Migration

The analysis of RN migration and environmental discourse in the period between January 1st 2012 to December 31st 2014 indicates moves to securitize environmental migration through the degradation narrative. Yet environmental migration is never mentioned explicitly in the collected material. This is most likely explained through a combination ideological and structural factors (Lockwood, 2018).

 The ideological explanation derives from RN´s antagonistic relationship to the "globalist elites". Climate change discourse likely took a symbolic position in this struggle, being a political matter associated with the cosmopolitans, communitarians, and central-left politics in general. It therefore became important, both to distinguish itself from and find alternative explanations to such political directions (Lockwood, 2018). This is also a likely contributing factor to why the New Ecology movement draws on elements of anti-socialism and battle-narratives against corrupt elites (Forchtner, 2020).

The second reason is structural, and centres on what Balzacq (2005) refers to as the contextual conditions informing the audience. It is here possible that RN primarily saw itself appealing to public audiences primarily concerned with economic reconstruction

and the bolstering the job-market following the 2008 economic crash. Overall, the sparse references to environmental migration signifies that securitization is not an instrumentalized part of their policy agenda during this period, but more likely an extension of its restrictive policies on immigration.

4.4 National Rally 2018-2021

4.4.1 Discourses on Migration

In comparison to the foregoing period, RN returns with a more hostile and stronger securitized discourse on immigration during the 2018-2021 period. Both party programs analyzed (2017 and 2019) connotes migration through the language of enmity and an in-group versus out group dichotomy. This is partly served by what the 2019 European election program refers to as "the ideology of nomadism", defined by free and unrestricted people movements across borders. Migration is not only considered to have personal motivations, but also potential "weapon[s] of mass destruction to the enemies of Europe" (RN, 2019; 51) (D1).

 Similarly, the 2017 election program speaks of the "choice of the civilization", calling upon the people of France to unite and seize control from the corrupt and callous perpetuators of globalism. Both programs subsequently narrate the coming elections as battles of survival against the globalist elites who promote immigration at the expense of the ordinary citizen (RN, 2017) (RN, 2019). This manifests in proposals of quite radical measures such as the eradication of "immigration suction pumps", which securitizes family reunification schemes and the acquisition of French nationality through marriage.

Similarly, to the foregoing period RN again proposes leaving the Schengen agreement in order to restore the natural integrity of the French boarders (RN, 2017).

In addition, the 2017 and 2019 campaign programs present increased hostility towards Islam. The 2017 presidential program speaks of the eradication of terrorism, yet only mentions Islamist terrorism. Adding to this, all organizations linked to "fundamentalism" are to be dismantled and all foreigners linked to Islamist fundamentalism are to be expelled. RN´s applies a broad understanding of "fundamentalist" without distinction between with more extreme fundamentalist, and mundane religious practices. Consequently, religious practices such as Hallal slaughtering, and the use of cultural clothing associated with Islam is interpreted as fundamentalist - skewing the boundaries between normal religious practices and prompting the securitization of Muslims more broadly.

This is even more visible in the 2019 election program were EU´s long-standing difficulties with public transparency are attacked (Brosius et al., 2018). Immigration is framed a "denial of democracy" – a practice forced upon the common citizen without their consultation. Another example is demonstrated in a proposed legislation against Islamist ideology issued in early 2021. The proposition proposes revoking funding of "Islamic ideology", banning Islamic ideology within public services, and providing tools to remove Islamist foreigners from the French territory (RN, 2021b; 3). Islam is declared a totalitarian ideology - radically incompatible with the fundamental rights and freedoms of the French people, and a threat to the values of the French republic (RN, 2021b; 2).

4.4.2 Environmental Discourses

As with the forgoing period the 2017 and 2019 campaign programs give no mention to climate change. Yet, discourses on ecological conservation and the symbolic ideological battle against corrupt globalist elites returns with greater force. A snapshot of the most searched keywords on RN´s website in 2018 sees the emergence of "ecology" for the first time (see Appendix 2). Overall, the idea of "ecologism", although present in the forgoing period, is both more prominent and more refined as an integrated political discourse. This manifests through what the 2019 European election program defines as a "European ecological civilization".

This idea centres on synergizing the European identity with the territorial ecology of Europe (RN, 2019). Europe is described as an ecological unit in an existential battle against "nomadism" and multiculturalism. Foreigner's "pillage" local resources and disrupt the harmonious nature of the local ecology (RN, 2019; 3). The idea of an ecological civilization subsequently becomes a vessel for ethno-centric preservation. On this point, the 2019 European manifesto summons the European alliance to perpetuate the natives of the soil because "the best guardians of nature are those who received their territory from the generation before, and who will pass it on to the next" (RN, 2019; 55) (D2).

A distinguishing feature of this period are subsequently stronger efforts to parcel environmental discourses into a more complex philosophical political concept. In the 2019 manifesto multiple references are made to the ideas of party member and European Parliament elect and author Hervé Juvin. Juvin, who personally contributed to 2019

manifesto, purports ecological visions with foundational links between people, their land, nation, and nature – and above all, ecological justifications for the differentiation of people (Forchtner, 2019; 2). In his publication *Ecology and Human Survival,* Juvin states:

> "If we are to survive as human species, we are to survive because we don't share the same ideals, the same desires, the same will. And we will survive because our cultures and civilizations are deeply rooted in specific geography, climate and resources—because nature and culture both defines a territory and a community as ours". (Juvin, 2019)

Juvin´s reflections overlap with RN´s view on locality and ecology and the idea of a European ecological civilization with accuracy. Moreover, it feeds into an ethno-nationalist ideal in which people origin, are rooted to - and above all - entitled to a particular territorial space, again consistent with the concept of "rootedness" (Lubrada, 2020). The bottom line suggests instrumental moves to securitize the local ecological system against outsiders, restricting access to people from foreign lands in the name of environmental protection (Turner and Bailey, 2021; 3).

4.4.3 Securitizing Environmental Migration

During the 2018-2021 period RN´s environmental discourses play a key role in its interpretation of "climate refugees". Just like the foregoing period, the degradation narrative is also implicitly integrated in the idea of "rootedness". Nomadism as caused by the destruction, overconsumption and the depletion of resources threatens the richness of the European land through the manifestation of mass migration (RN, 2019). The most significant findings from this period comes with the availability of parliamentary transcripts where the first explicit moves to securitize environmental migration are revealed.

One example is found in a National Assembly debate from April 2018 on the control of immigration, effective rights of asylum and successful integration. Here, Marine Le Pen takes issue with the handing of refugee status to people impacted by climate change. Addressing a proposed amendment to their recognition, Le Pen states, "this type of amendment is absolutely irresponsible: 143 million people are potentially affected. (…) where are you going to put them, exactly?" Le Pen makes it implicit that the influx of climate refugees will add to an already pressing immigration issue. In the same debate, Le Pen asks: "Where are you going to put them? How are you going to treat them? Where are you going to house them? What jobs are you going to offer them?" (Le Pen, XVe Législature, 20.04. 2018a) (E). Climate refugees are here securitized as a force which could potentially overwhelm the French society by its share numbers and cause problems for French jobs and livelihoods.

Corresponding to RN´s posture against globalist elites, the legal justification of climate refugees is interpreted as another part of a plot to cause national disunity and marginalize the in-group. In a further response to the opposition from the same debate, Le Pen claims that: "If we had followed all of your amendments, we would have to welcome 600 or 700 million people!" (Le Pen, XVe Législature, 20.04. 2018a) (E). The passage shows that climate change is interpreted as a force which can cause mass migration. The same sentiment is repeated by Le Pen two days later:

> "Mr. Chairman, I am surprised that you did not see fit to enforce the rules, which I read to you earlier. Since it is about talking about the title, I am going to talk about it: "for a migratory flood, a diverted right of asylum and an assumed communitarianism", this is what your bill should have been called. Indeed, after the economic, health and family immigration streams, you have succeeded in adding a new one, that of climate refugees. How many will they be? 123 million? 250 million? I don't know, and I'll let you discuss it among yourselves.

It is the last nail in the coffin of our country's immigration policy. This bill is, as I said, a Gulliver hampered by the European treaties, the jurisprudence of the European authorities, your multiple texts and appeals, all of which aim to prevent France from defending itself against migratory submersion" (Le Pen, XVe legislature, 22.04. 2018b) (F).

Moves to securitize climate refugees are also found by other party members. In a press release by regional vice-president of Provence-Alpes-Côte d´Azur Philippe Vardon, Vardon fears that the recognition of climate refugees would supply an additional justification for immigration. As he mentions, the handing of refugee status to climate refugees will "[Lead to a] pandora 's Box that tomorrow could lead millions of people to come and claim asylum in our country" (Vardon, 2018) (G).

RN´s discourse from this period more clearly envisions environmental migration as a security concern. Informed by a more hostile view on immigration, environmental migration is discussed as unwanted, illegal, and generally something which ought to be prevented. Anthropogenic climate change, as a factor contributing to displacement and migration is considered with less importance than the actual security threat poor, peasant like figures migrating towards both France and Europe present (White, 2017). Subsequently, the imagined threat of massive numbers of climate refugees is weaved into a greater struggle against illegal immigration, and a political rationale to strengthen borders. As Jordan Bardella, RN lead candidate in the European Parliament revealed in an interview from April 2019: "Borders are the environment's greatest ally; it is through them that we will save the planet" (Mazoue, 2019).

4.4.4 Conclusion National Rally

Considering both periods under one, RN visibly increases its engagement both with the environmental more broadly and environmental migration specifically during the second period. This is consistent with the expectations of this study. As the consequences of environmental change are more often put on the political agenda, the political right is increasingly being forced to position themselves on the issue in order to stay politically relevant (Ruser and Machin, 2019).

RN is no exception here. However, instead of manoeuvring within mainstream environmental discourses, RN uses environmental policy discourse to propagate its own ethno-nationalistic, and anti-immigration agenda. The specific phenomenon of environmental migration is not found to play a significant role within this agenda. This comes despite clear and increasing securitizing agendas towards immigration. It is therefore suggestive that environmental migration is postulated by a more complex set of factors than the ideological dispositions which prompt RN to securitize immigration more broadly. Discourses on migration and the environmental converge on their antagonistic relationship to "globalist elites", who in the context of climate change, are blamed of facilitating climate refugees.

Overall, the findings on RN comes close to very recent findings of Turner and Baily (2021) and their concept of "ecobordering". This, they suggest, is a position which first poses a racialized and (neo) colonial imagery of immigration as a threat to the national environment before using it as a rationale for further border restrictions. Taking up such a position is convenient as it provides a response to growing environmental concerns,

meanwhile distancing itself from the "elitist" mainstream and providing justification for anti-immigration policies. The concept therefore builds on what the section from 2012-2014 presents as RN´s two-pronged environmental discourse and the degradation narrative and the concept of "rootedness" (Lubrada, 2020).

The concept of "ecobordering" is interesting as it suggests certain political motives behind RN´s increasing engagement with environmental discourse. The comments by Bardella that "borders are the environments greatest ally" are significantly revealing in this respect. Yet, both Bardella´s comments and the concept of ecobordering do not account for environmental migration specifically. It subsequently says little about the relationship between increasing environmental engagement and its possible correlation to the securitization of environmental migration. In this respect, RN´s relationship with the concept of climate refugees is more interesting, and future studies are encouraged to inquire deeper into this phenomenon.

4.5 The Conservative Party

4.5.1 The British Conservatives Overview

The British Conservative Party is a British centre right party which holds a historically strong position in UK politics (Bale, 2021). During the 2012-2014 period the British Conservatives were led by David Cameron, a self-described "compassionate conservative" who sought bi-partisan consensus on the otherwise polarized issue of climate change (Carter and Clements, 2015) (Norman and Ganesh, 2006). Upon taking office David Cameron promised that the Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition

would be the "greenest government ever" (Cameron, 2010). However, internal division and push-back from more Conservative Party members prevented cross-cutting consensus (Carter and Clements, 2015). Despite his compassionate conservative claim, David Cameron and his conservative government advocated tighter control of immigration in comparison to the previous Labour government (Cameron, 2013). In 2015 Cameron was criticised for dehumanising migrants crossing the English Channel, describing them as a "swarm of people" (Elgot and Taylor, 2015).

Cameron has since been succeeded by Theresa May and Boris Johnson. Of such, Boris Johnson is more often described as a "right-wing populist" in comparison to the cross-cutting centrism seen under Cameron (Parsons, 2021) (Cole, 2021). Subsequently, Johnson is criticized for proposing wide-ranging environmental protection policies, yet placing little action behind his words (Maxwell, 2021). Despite the British Conservatives moving in a more populist direction under Johnson, neither Johnson nor the Conservative Party more generally reject climate science (The Conservatives, 2019). On the topic of migration, the Conservative party is found to have deepened its apathy for immigration following the 2015 European Migration "Crisis", despite the UK hardly being directly affected (Bale, 2021; 14)

4.5.2 2012-2014 Securitizing Environmental Migration

The Conservative Party engages actively with environmental discourses both in the 2010 general election and 2014 European election manifestos. Yet, no explicit mention of environmental migration is made (The Conservative Party, 2010, 2014). This indicates that British electorates are not primary audiences of securitizing moves during this period.

However, more frequent mentions are found in public statements, public speeches and parliamentary debates. Here, climate change and environmental degradation are primarily framed as "threat multipliers", both to domestic and international audiences. In addition, the degradation narrative is found used, albeit to a lesser extent than by RN. Most of the time, moves to securitize environmental migration are either made with the intention of persuading audiences of the need for more urgent attention to climate change, or to promote the UK as a global environmental leader. Overall, however, environmental migration is approached with less alarm and urgency than a situation of emergency suggests.

One instance exemplifying the threat multiplier narrative is found in a news report by the Foreign and Commonwealth office from 2012. The news report, which summarizes discussions of an international conference on the risks of climate change to global security and prosperity, argues that climate change amplifies global instability, conflict and international migration (HM Government, 2012). It also reveals discussions on the adverse consequences of climate to UK national security. Because climate change is framed as a non-traditional "threat multiplier", the report advocates a "strategic approach beyond the normal sphere of politics" (HM Government, 2012).

Its prescriptions, however, are not of a particularly urgent character - advocating more cooperation between the private and public sphere, as well as the international domain. The securitizing move is still considered relevant because of its framing of environmental migration as a risk to the national security of the UK. Moreover, the move included a sufficient audience in the form of international and domestic security officials, policy makers and academics (HM Government, 2012)

An additional securitizing move came in January of the same year when secretary of state for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Caroline Spelman spoke to global leaders at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos. Her speech, which addresses the launch of the UK initiative "Climate Change Risk Assessment", stated three key threats to the UK from climate change: global diseases, trade and infrastructure and international migration (Spelman, 2012). Throughout her address, the UK is framed as a global leader on climate science. As she mentioned: "The UK leads the world in climate science, and the Government will ensure it continues to do so" (Spelman, 2012).

The controversial nature of Spelman´s address is less tied to mentions of environmental migration but more to the way in which she interprets the report she cites. Indeed, Spelman references the Foresight report (2011) a comprehensive and detailed study of environmental implications on global and internal migration trends overseen by leading experts within the field. In fact, the report comes to vastly different and contradicting conclusions:

> "For some, concerns about migration in the context of environmental change go beyond the fact of movement itself, to the notion that large-scale migrations in the future could contribute to regional and international security problems. This report concludes that there is a relationship between environment, migration and security, but one which is complex and multi-dimensional, and confounds efforts to frame insecurity simply as a consequence of environmental change and/or increased migration. (…) It is unhelpful to frame the relationship between migration and global environmental change as a security issue; indeed, to do so may undermine efforts to build on migration as an adaptation strategy, or to mobilise collaborative action to address environmental change at a local, regional or international level" (Foresight, 2011; 199)

Although not denying the relationship between environmental change and migration, the report, consistent with minimalist scholars, emphasizes the problems of framing environmental migration as a security issue. It is therefore suggestive that Spelman

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engaged in a selective reading and presented a more "sensationalist" reading in order to garner legitimacy to the UK as a global leader in the global battle against climate change. With reference to the literature review, environmental migration is more tangible in the human imagination than particles of Co2 in the atmosphere and incremental rises in temperature. When used as an example for the consequences of climate change, it can thus be politically beneficial (White, 2017).

A negating factor to the securitizing move is that the speech contains rather ordinary language and is missing a strong crisis narrative intending to spark senses of urgency among the audiences. Nevertheless, the speech frames environmental migration as a risk to international and domestic security, includes a sufficient audience and is arguably amplified intentionally by using security framings to induce a stronger sense of danger.

Both the forgoing examples made suggestions towards the multiplier hypothesis. In one other case the degradation narrative is found used in combination with the multiplier narrative. Contrary to the previous examples which centre on climate change, this comes during a parliamentary discussion on immigration. During a debate on the Immigration Bill from February 2014 Lord King of Bridgewater suggests that "the problems of climate change are making certain areas virtually uninhabitable" (HL Deb 10 February 2014. Col. 433). Climate change is suggested another driver of mass migration, which together with a "population explosion" will contribute to a "the quantum leap in the number of failed states" (HL Deb 10 February 2014. Col. 433). The narrative of population explosion as a contributing factor to environmental degradation, can according to Hartmann (2010) induce imageries of desperate people forced on the move. This comes in synergy with the

multiplier narrative, where climate change adds an amplifying element to an already strained social and environmental issues.

With reference to the theoretical framework, Bridgewater's securitizing move includes a powerful sense of emergency. Placed within a debate on the immigration bill, environmental migration is here securitized with reference to national security.

4.5.3 2018-2021 Securitizing Environmental Migration

The 2018-2021 period reveals an increase in securitizing moves against environmental migration. Of such links between climate change, conflict, failed states and mass migration are more often mentioned. One contributing factor is likely the (now postponed) 2020 COP 26 conference in Glasgow, where the UK will be hosts. Subsequently, examples of talks on incorporating environmental migration into COP discussions are found (HL deb. 12 March 2020. Col. 1092).

Again, no explicit reference to environmental migration is found in the 2019 manifesto - the only manifesto published during this period. The manifesto does, however, show implicit concern to the cross-border security implications of climate change, mentioning that "(…) the climate emergency means that the challenges we face stretch far beyond our borders". Climate change is also discussed as part of the UK´s foreign policy, and more specifically tied to ambitions of international development and strengthening the UK globally (The Conservative Party, 2019; 51).

Apart from the manifesto, most securitizing moves are found in parliamentary debates and to a lesser extent in official documents. Corresponding to findings in the manifesto,

environmental migration is here tied in with discussions of foreign aid as a preventive measure, especially to parts of the world affected by migratory drivers i.e., floods, droughts, and desertification (see for instance HC debate 01 July 2019. Col. 961) (HC debate 09 February 2020. Col. 178).

Another similarity to the foregoing period is that securitizing moves are found to be aimed at persuading international audiences of the urgency of environmental issues. One example comes with PM Johnson address to the UN security council in February 2021. Johnson states that wild-fires, flooding, desertification and crop-failure will contribute to the failure of fragile nations, the radicalization of people, forced displacement and civil war (HM government, 2021). Most significantly, Johnson warned his audience of the imminent concern of migration if not urgent measures were put in place.

Climate change is during the 2018-2021 period again found framed in relation to the threat multiplier hypothesis. During a debate on the Defence and Foreign policy review in the House of Lords dated January 8th, 2020, Early Howe indicates that large scale migration as the most pertinent concern stemming from climate change. Howe urged fellow Government representatives to be "nimbler on our feet" and adapt faster (HL debate January 8, 2020. Col. 178). Again, because the securitizing move is issued in a discussion on defence and foreign policy, environmental migration is constructed as a possible threat to national security. The expression "nimbler on our feet" alludes a sense of urgency.

In another case, the paper "Climate Change and Sustainability Strategic approach" issued by the UK ministry of defence, frames climate change as a threat to international peace.

The paper´s opening segments paints an apocalyptic view of the impacts of climate change, driving up the competition for scarce resources, contributing to governance break-down and civil unrest, and driving mass migration (UK Ministry of Defence, 2021; 7). Here, implications to the UK are seen in the form of threats to global peace and consequently, a migratory problem affecting the UK.

Another instance using the multiplier hypothesis comes in May 2019 during a debate on climate change and the environment. Here, Conservative party member Tom Tugendhat claims that the impacts of climate change in other parts of the world will cause security concerns for the West. More specifically, Tugendhat cites the Syrian civil war where famine supposedly contributed to war and mass migration (HC debate 01 May 2019. Col. 281). Climate change is further suggested a contributing factor to the growth of extremist groups in the Maghreb and Sahel regions of Africa. As he warns; "talking about the rise of al-Shabaab in the Maghreb and the Sahel without talking about climate change is just impossible" (HC debate 01 May 2019. Col. 281). Tugendhat´s securitizing move draws connections between climate change, war, and the rise of terrorist groups. Strains on the environment is believed incite conflict and subsequently cause mass migration towards the West.

A similar sentiment is repeated during a debate on the 2019 G20 summit in the House of Lords. Here, Lord Young of Cookham warns of "heat waves, floods and hurricanes occurring with unprecedented frequency and intensity, contributing to conflict, state failure and illegal migration" (HL debate 08 July 2019. Col. 1703). Here, Lord Young aims to persuade fellow parliamentarians of the need to make stronger commitments towards the Paris agreement (HL debate 08 July 2019. Col. 1703). References to "illegal

migration" awards a problematic nature to environmental migration and insinuates it being something that should be prevented.

Similarity to the foregoing period publications and reports by international political entities are found cited. During a debate in the house of Commons in November 2018, Conservative member Zac Goldsmith cites the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees in his account of climate change as a threat multiplier. Concern is drawn to climate change´s impact on migration. He states:

> "If the science is right and the trends continue, we will see appalling consequences: increasing food shortages, lands becoming uninhabitable, and refugees on a scale that we as a species have never had to deal with before" (HC debate 11 November 2018. Col. 31-32).

In another debate on the climate emergency Jeremy Lefroy cites the European Union (EU) and the World Bank:

> "It is now acknowledged that climate change is one of the biggest drivers of forced migration. Indeed, the European Union predicts a tripling of refugees for this reason by the end of the century, and the World Bank predicts 143 million climate migrants escaping crop failure, water insecurity and sea level rises" (HC debate 17 October 2019. Col. 530).

Both the aforementioned examples highlight how maximalist projections are reused in political discourses. In addition, and in contrast to the previous period, it suggests that international reports projecting mass environmental migration caught on with conservative members of parliament between the periods. This is interesting juxtaposed the fact that environmental migration is discussed more often in the British parliament during the later period. This suggests that Conservative MP´s resonate with security narratives pertinent to environmental migration in discussions on the environment and climate change.

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Supporting this is also the fact that security narratives of environmental migration appear to resonate across party lines. One example comes during a debate on the impact of climate change in Sahel from July 2019 when Green party member Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb pleads the need for a climate migration strategy. As she states, unless the UK assumes more earnest responsibility of its historical emissions, the world will be at risk of becoming uninhabitable by 2050 (HL debate 24 July 2019. Col. 750). In response Conservative member Baroness Sugg suggests that the idea of a strategy is interesting, and, that she will bring it back to the department for discussion (HL debate 24 July 2019. Col. 750).

The same synergy is also found when the roles are reversed. Following Lefroy´s citations of the EU predicting a tripling of environmental migration, Labour opposition representative Clive Lewis stated: "It is a privilege to follow [Jeremy Lefroy] who I believe is one of the few Conservative members who gets the scale of the challenge before us" (HC debate 17 October 2019. Col. 530).

The foregoing suggests that securitized framings of environmental migration resonate across party lines in UK politics. It subsequently demonstrates the intersubjective nature of securitization, with both a securitizing move and audience acceptance. This dynamic is a rare occurrence in the analysis overall.

Other instances in the analysis uncovers the degradation narrative. However, this is found to be less impactful on audiences during the 2018-2021 period. During a House of Lords debate on defense, diplomacy and development in January 2020, Lord King of Bridgewater takes issue with "huge population explosions" in Nigeria, of which he

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considers to be "the most important issue" concerning the topic of debate. Bridgewater's comments follow a similar logic to his statements from the period before - connecting poverty, climate change, and population growth to mass migration (HL debate 30 January 2020. Col. 1573). However, this time Bridgewater´s argument receives pushback from the opposition. In response Labour representative Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale suggests that population growth is not a primary concern. Rather, Lord McConnell advocates supporting impacted nations in the form of securing jobs, creating opportunities and investments for progress (HL debate 30 January 2020. Col. 1573).

Pushback from the audience is also seen in one other instance, this time caused by internal disagreement between Conservative Party members. During a debate in the house of Lords on immigration detention from July 2018, Conservative member Lord Deben takes concern with the increased pressure climate change places on immigration to the UK. Lord Deben stated: "the pressures on immigration will grow not just because of disorder elsewhere in the world but because of such major issues—I say this advisedly—as climate change". Lord Deben emphasizes the size of the problem – that it will only get "worse and worse", and that it had yet been grasped to its full extent (HL debate 24 July 2018. Col. 1682). However, Lord Deben´s securitizing move is received with skepticism by party fellow Baroness of Williams of Trafford who questions the urgency and scale of the issue. Baroness Williams points out that there are various debates on the environment-migration nexus and bluntly responds that people might not be interested in coming to the UK because of the heat: "the weather here over the past few weeks has made me think that people might not want to come here, either, because it is so hot" (HL debate 24 July 2018 Col. 1682)

4.5.4 Conclusions: The British Conservatives

The findings on the Conservative Party corroborates the study´s expectations which are that the political right´s preoccupation with migration as a security issue, in combination with increasing demands for environmental engagement will contribute to moves to securitize environmental migration. Supporting this is the fact that both the environment and climate change in isolation were more often framed as an emergency during the 2018-2021 period in comparison to 2012-2014. As the global environmental crisis continues to worsen it is hypothesized that the political right will adopt securitized discourses on environmental migration as a strategy in line with a growing demand for environmental engagement by various audiences.

The major negating factor is that no empirical indications for this are found in party manifestos. The sample size of this study is also too limited for definite conclusions. Moreover, when mentioned, environmental migration is only partly framed with urgent concern. Hence, partly consistent with earlier findings, the language used did not reflect urgent calls to legitimize exceptionality (Warner and Boas, 2019; 1473).

Despite negating factors, the noticeable change between the periods is promising for future research. Such should include more parties from the European political centre right.

5 Conclusions: The Securitization of Environmental Migration in Europe

This section discusses findings and answers the research question. It makes general conclusions and weaves findings in with the broader literature. The section gives a brief overview of the conclusions from each party before discussing overarching conclusions with reference to the research question. This is aimed at answering the research question with the subject being the European political right. The second aim is to discuss and reflect on the reasons why securitizing moves against environmental occurred less often, and with less urgency and strength than expected. Finally, the study lays out horizons for future research.

This study sought to explore the extent to which the European Right has securitized environmental migration. Overall, the study makes a focused discovery indicating an increasing tendency to securitize environmental migration by the European political right. The discovery applies to both cases assessed, although it is more visible among the British Conservatives. This suggests that there are distinct, likely ideological features, informing how the conservative and far right interpret the phenomena of environmental migration (Whitmarsh and Corner, 2017); 122) (van Rensburg, 2015). Whereas the British Conservatives primary securitizing agenda centers on raising more urgent attention to climate change and instating itself as a global leader, RN is noticeably more concerned with the justification of climate change as a legitimate cause for refugee status. Moreover, and consistent with earlier findings, RN´s lack of engagement with climate change suggests that the issue takes up a symbolic place within its broader antagonism against

"globalist elites" (Lockwood, 2018). Subsequently, RN is found to be more prone to develop alternative environmental discourses more consistent with its far-right ideological foundation. Findings also corroborates studies suggesting that there are importance nuances to how the political right approach environmental politics (Forchtner, 2019, 2020) (Lockwood, 2018) (Shaller and Carius, 2019) (Lubarda, 2020) (Ruser and Machin, 2019).

Prior work on political communication strategies on environmental migration often speak of the use of securitizing narratives aiming to draw attention to the threat of a looming migration crisis (Ransan-Cooper et al., 2015) (Farbotko and Lazrus, 2011) (Kita and Raleigh, 2018) (Hartmann, 2010) (White, 2011, 2017) (Brzoska, 2009). This study adds to these findings by finding that such narratives are also used by the European political right. Both parties analyzed are found to use (neo)-Malthusian and orientalist narratives when explaining the root causes of migration, although this is more revealing in the case of RN. For the Conservatives this is more limited to the views of certain party members than informative of the party´s broader policy agenda. In addition, multiplier narratives are found used by the Conservative party, albeit less so of RN. This is likely because the multiplier hypothesis often narrates migration as caused by climate change – an issue which RN showed little engagement with by virtue of its skepticism to the climate process (van Rensburg, 2015)

Corroborated with the findings in this study, environmental migration is primarily securitized as a threat to the referent object of national security. For RN, other referent objects are found such as national identity, French culture and the "European civilization". In addition, the national ecology, and European ecological civilization were

referenced as threats against "nomadism". For RN, environmental migration as a threatening subject is harder to isolate from its broader anti-immigration agenda. The important exception is climate refugees.

Answering the research question, the thesis of this study is that the securitization of environmental migration is on the rise among the European political right. It is hypothesized that the political right will adopt securitized discourses on environmental migration as a strategy in line with a growing demand for environmental engagement by respective audiences. The findings of this study suggest that this will be more strongly seen among center-right conservatives because they are found to be more in agreement with conventional scientific wisdom on environmental change. They are subsequently more likely to resonate with narratives of climate change as a cause of mass migration. The far right, on the other hand, often reject mainstream environmental solutions, viewing them as conspiratorial plots by cosmopolitan, communitarian elites (Forchtner, 2019, 2020) (Lockwood, 2018) (Lubrada, 2020). The findings of this study are more suggestive of the far-right resorting to formulate their own, alternative environmental discourses built around ethno-nationalism, anti-socialism, authoritarianism, and ethno-pluralism (Forchtner, 2019; 2) than engaging with environmental migration discourses. RN´s "New Ecology movement" from 2014 and proposals for "European ecological civilization" in 2019 are suggestive of this. Climate refugees are again the exception.

The conclusions are caveated by numerous counterweighing factors. Significantly, environmental migration is rarely referred to with exceptional urgency. Moreover, none of the party programs analyzed drew explicit links between environmental issues and migration. It is thus suggestive that securitizing discourses on environmental migration

are not instructive parts of political strategies during the periods analyzed for either party. This goes counter to the expectations of this study which suggests that the political right´s ideological inclination to restrict immigration in combination with a growing demand for environmental engagement would indicate stronger moves to securitize environmental immigration. Indeed, findings on RN strongly suggest a securitizing agenda towards migrants, more broadly. Environmental migration is, however, a more complex issue. Although findings are made, their mundane character and sparse occurrence raises questions to the overall thesis of this study. On this point, it is argued that factors such as climate skepticism, the polarizing nature of environmental politics and the preference for alternative environmental discourses negate a more comprehensive and instructive agenda to securitize environmental migration.

Finally, because the study is only informed by two cases, conclusions can at best generally indicate that the securitization of environmental migration is rising among the European political right. Although the contextual political dynamics relating to growing environmental concern and increased hostility to immigration are supportive of the main conclusion, more and broader qualitative and quantitative research informed by more cases across the European continent are warranted.

The coming part of the conclusive chapter is reserved for discussions on caveats to the conclusion. Indeed, findings beg the question; why has the political right not pursued a stronger securitizing agenda against environmental migration? Finally, horizons for future study are presented.

5.1.1 Climate Skepticism

Prior studies document that the political right is prone to be hesitant towards environmental action (van Rensburg, 2015) (McCright, et al., 2015) (Lockwood, 2018) (Jylhä, et al., 2020). A likely explanation for why environmental migration, as caused climate change, is overlooked is because the underlying drivers are denied. With reference to van Rensburg´s (2015) terminology of climate skepticism, RN in particular displayed both evidence and process skepticism. Most strongly, RN is found to be skeptic to the climate process, i.e., the organizations and institutional bodies disseminating climate science. This explains why the party is found to resonate more with narratives speaking of the environment or ecology rather than climate change specifically. Consequently, conceptualizations of people from poor countries degrading their own land and self-generating mass outward migration are found to be more noticeable than those speaking of migration as induced by climate change.

The Conservative Party did not deny climate science. Yet, existing work on center-right attitudes to climate change generally converge on the fact that it is rarely a major concern of its policy agenda (Båtstrand, 2015; 538) (Hess and Renner, 2019) (Carter and Clements, 2015; 212).

5.1.2 Polarization

Environmental discourses are polarizing, politicized and divisive (Wetts, 2019; 1339) (Huber, 2020) (White, 2017). The political right has struggled to agree to widely accepted economic, societal and political reforms and the international cooperation needed to prevent and mitigate global environmental degradation (Biermann, 2014) (Whitmarsh

and Corner, 2017) (Ehlers and Krafft, 2006; 3). This is because solutions largely conflict with traditionalist, protectionist, conservativism and nationalist ideologies and have therefore found more ownership among the left-of-center. Left-of-center discourses center on the legal protection of "climate refugees" and "climate justice", referring to the fact that people from the global south are disproportionately affected compared to historic environmental footprints (White, 2017; 176).

Findings from this study suggest that discourses on environmental migration as adaptation resonates poorly among the political right as it provides justification for increased immigration. This explains RN´s more recent securitizing moves centering on the legal status of climate refugees. Other discourses were tellingly less noticeable, presumably out of a deliberate reluctance to conform with the opposition and thereby undermining its own "anti-elitist" policy agenda.

For the Conservatives, this position is less clear because it is more engaged with climate change overall. Security discourses on environmental migration is also, on occasion, found to resonate across party lines. Still, Whitmarsh and Corner (2017) finds that discourses on "climate justice" are ineffective and counteractive in generating support for climate policies among conservative voters in the UK. This, however, can be a factor for why the Conservatives will resonate more strongly with security discourses on environmental migration, as partly indicated by this study. For this reason, securitized interpretations of environmental migration can be expected to become more appealing for the center-right because it diverts from more intrusive environmental protection policies and directs it towards the management of migration (Parsons, 2021).

5.1.3 Preference for Alternative Environmental Discourses

Another explanation for why moves to securitize environmental migration occurred less than expected is that other competing discourses are given greater saliency. Literature on the far right´s environmental communication devises multiple discourses which depart from environmental migration. The scope and nature of this study did not allow detailed discussions of these discourses. Yet, findings, particularly on RN, suggest a preference for more ideologically conforming discourses.

A convincing conceptualization which became increasingly preset in the analysis of RN is "ecobordering" (Turner and Baily, 2021). Ecobordering uses environmental communication (i.e., the threat of people alien to the local ecology) as a rationale for stricter border policies. This is, overall, a potentially powerful strategy because it diverts attention from systematic socio-economic drivers of environmental issues and channels it towards the management of immigration (Turner and Baily, 2021; 17).

Securitized discourses on environmental migration are found to be more present in the case of the Conservative Party. Yet, the phenomenon is never mentioned in party programs and it is thus suggestive that the securitization of environmental migration is just one of several competing political discourses. Tellingly, the 2019 party manifesto is more concerned with "free markets, innovation and prosperity" as solutions to the environmental emergency (The Conservative Party, 2019; 55).

5.2 Methodological Reflections and Critique

The data gathering process revealed less cases indicating securitizing moves than expected. One reason relevant to the Conservative party during the 2012-2014 period is that the governing coalition consisted of both the Conservatives as the Liberal Democratic Party. Subsequently, some governmental positions were occupied by Liberal Democrats. One example is the Secretary of State for Energy Ed Davey (2010-2015). The data-gathering process indicated many incidents of potential securitizing moves purported by Davay (i.e., environmental migration is mentioned in a security context). However, these were intentionally discarded, consistent with the case selection.

Another reason relevant to RN is that no parliamentary transcriptions from the French National Assembly are available for the 2012-2014 period. This is simply because they first became available electronically in 2017. In addition, language barriers and translation work limited the amount of data-material gathered.

It is also possible that securitization theory arbitrarily confined data-material to specific speech-act incidents framing environmental migration as a security threat. Indeed, the securitization framework discriminates against other discourses not involving security, thereby inherently limiting the data-material available. Nevertheless, the theoretical framework supplied explicit guidelines and contributed to a more focused analysis.

An epistemological limitation lies in the reliance on data transcripts. Subsequently, vocal intonations and body language of securitizing actors were not assessed. This reduced the assessment of urgency and emergency of securitizing moves to the exact words uttered and the grammatical structure they were placed in (Balzacq, 2005). Indeed, a more

holistic analysis of speech acts might arrive at different conclusions. The resources available for this study did not allow for such an analysis.

Finally, some have argued that securitizing the environment can be normatively positive from a consequentialist point of view because it is likely to draw increased attention to climate change and other environmental issues (Floyd, 2007, 2010). With reference to the notion that environmental migration gives a "human face" to more obscure and temporally distant environmental impacts (White, 2017) it can, from a consequentialist perspective, be ethically positive to securitize environmental migration if it generates more urgent environmental action. This study has not considered the ethical and normative value of securitizing environmental migration. Despite the literature review being largely unison on the adverse or unintended consequences securitizing environmental migration brings - such as, militarizing the environmental issue, fracturing domestic bi-partisanship, derailing international environmental cooperation - it is worth remembering the structural epistemological and ontological assumptions this study is built on. Other theoretical assumptions, such as those of realism, generally interpret more security in a positive light. Tellingly, studies building on different guiding assumptions may come to different conclusions.

5.3 Horizons for future study

This explorative study makes focused academic and empirical contributions to existing literature. It makes an academic contribution to the environment-migration-security nexus by bridging the idiosyncrasies of center and far-right immigration sentiments with environmental communication and embedding it within the conceptualizations of security

studies. Moreover, it makes a more focused empirical contribution by uncovering securitized narratives of environmental migration within the discourses of the European political right. The observations of this study form the hypothesis that the political right will adopt securitized discourses on environmental migration as a strategy in line with a growing demand for environmental engagement by respective audiences. Subsequently, future research is encouraged to investigate the following two themes:

Because this study is only informed by two cases, conclusions can at best generally indicate that the securitization of environmental migration is rising among the European political right. Although the contextual political dynamics relating to growing environmental concern and increased hostility to immigration are supportive of the main conclusion, more and broader qualitative and quantitative research informed by more cases across the European continent are warranted. To better incorporate contextual factors in the securitization framework, future study is encouraged to reflect on the teachings from second generation securitization scholars. Here, Bourbeau (2011; 3) argues that contextual factors tangibly enable or constrain the securitization of migration.

Finally, future study should dive deeper into the intersection between environmental migration and the ideologies of the political right. On this point, future studies are encouraged to inquire into the functions of securitizing environmental migration as a political strategy juxtaposed competing strategies from the left. As White (2017; 176) explains, the left is more inclined to apply interpretations of victimhood while the right pertains a stronger inclination for national security. With reference to future bi-partisan environmental action, it is particularly interesting, positioned against findings by Wetts (2019; 1340) indicating that non-confrontational environmental discourses are unlikely

to mobilize strong public emotion and activism. For us distressed by the state of contemporary environmental politics, this is an additional intersection potentially causing stalemate and political disruption worth critical attention.

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6.1 Appendixes

Appendix 1: RN most searched words from website 2012-2014

January 2012

MOTS-CLÉS
Les mots-clés les plus utilisés apparaissent en premier dans la liste

Euro, Crise économique, Présidentielles, Insécurité, Présidentielle, Immigration, Parrainages, Sarkozy, Grèce, Crise financière, Laïcité, Démocratie, Corruption, P.S., UMP, Marseille, Front National, Dette, Justice, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Référendum, Economie, Union européenne, Libye, Droit de vote des étrangers, Santé, Délinquance, Pouvoir d'achat, Chômage, Energie, Peine de mort, Mayotte, Israël, Outre-Mer, Communautarisme, Fraudes, Retraites, FNJ, Droit de vote, Sénatoriales, Retraite, Banques, Droite populaire, Dexia, Copé, Primaires PS, Nicolas Sarkozy, Social, DSK, Réforme

January 2013

MOTS-CLÉS
Les mots-clés les plus utilisés apparaissent en premier dans la liste

Municipales 2014, Immigration, Insécurité, Euro, Législatives, Sarkozy, Fiscalité, Parrainages, Présidentielle, Hollande, Valls, Paris, UMP, Justice, Union européenne, Laïcité, Mélenchon, Mariage homosexuel, Chômage, Démocratie, Marseille, Crise économique, Syrie, Copé, Fondamentalisme, Agriculture, Référendum, Hénin-Beaumont, Emploi, Cahuzac, Roms, Sondages, Retraites, P.S., Halal, Fillon, Communautarisme, Toulouse, Grèce, Assemblée Nationale, Législatives partielles, Austérité, Algérie, Jeunesse, Culture, UMPS, Santé, Outre-Mer, Parti Socialiste, Taubira

March 2014

`71 sujets`**-CLÉS**
Les mots-clés les plus utilisés apparaissent en premier dans la liste

Législatives, Immigration, Euro, Insécurité, Présidentielle, Parrainages, Sarkozy, UMP, Mélenchon, Hollande, Fondamentalisme, Fiscalité, Démocratie, Copé, Crise économique, Justice, Laïcité, Hénin-Beaumont, Chômage, Référendum, Halal, Toulouse, Fillon, Grèce, Mariage homosexuel, Valls, Meeting, Assemblée Nationale, Union européenne, Marseille, Emploi, Algérie, P.S., Sondages, Communautarisme, Syrie, Souveraineté budgétaire, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Agriculture, UMPS, Pouvoir d'achat, Consigne de vote, Clandestins, Montauban, IVG, Outre-Mer, Projet présidentiel, Crime, Crise financière, Corruption

Appendix 2: RN most searched words from website 2018

January 2018

MOTS-CLÉS

Les mots-clés les plus utilisés apparaissent en premier dans la liste

Immigration, Insécurité, Terrorisme, Municipales 2014, Régionales 2015, Euro, Agriculture, Justice, Paris, Front National, Présidentielles 2017, Hollande, Fiscalité, Santé, Sarkozy, Union européenne, Islam radical, Législatives, Départementales 2015, Laïcité, UMP, Chômage, Présidentielle, Valls, Parrainages, Grèce, Communautarisme, Emploi, Démocratie, Européennes 2014, Syrie, Ecologie, Jeunesse, Outre-Mer, Mariage homosexuel, Mélenchon, Défense, Austérité, Transports, Culture, Marseille, Législatives 2017, Brexit, Police, Traité transatlantique, Copé, Clandestins, Enseignement, Médias, Référendum

Appendix 3: Table of translations

Reference code	French	English	Source
A, p.53	sachant y trouver les avantages sociaux les plus avantageux de toute l'Europe	they know how to find the most advantageous social benefits in Europe	RN (2014)

B, p.54	Le monde a connu des changements climatiques qui n'avaient rien à voir avec l'activité humaine. Ce ne sont pas les travaux du Giec qui peuvent établir avec certitude que l'homme est la cause du changement climatique. Le Giec, c'est le consensus de ceux qui ont la parole.	The world has experienced climate change that had nothing to do with human activity. It is not the work of the IPCC that can establish with certainty that man is the cause of climate change" The IPCC is the consensus of those who have the floor. These are the priests and bishops of climate change.	Terraeco (2012)
C1, p.55	La préservation de la flore, de la faune et des paysages constitue un objectif au cœur de la vision de l'homme que nous défendons, c'est-à-dire un homme vivant en harmonie avec son environnement, maîtrisant les conséquences de son action sur la planète et sur son lieu de vie, respectant le patrimoine légué à travers les âges et tenant compte de la souffrance animale.	the preservation of flora, fauna and landscapes is an objective at the heart of the vision of man that we defend, that is to say a man living in harmony with his environment, mastering the consequences of his action, on the planet and in its place of life, respecting the heritage bequeathed through the ages and taking into account animal suffering	RN (2012a)
C2, p. 55	compte beaucoup pour nos concitoyens qui s'interrogent sur l'avenir de l'environnement que nous allons laisser à nos enfants	[it] matters a lot to our fellow citizens who wonder about the future of the environment that we are going to leave to our children	RN (2012a)
C3, p.56	L'enjeu environnemental est très lié aux questions	the environmental issue is closely linked to	RN (2012a)

	économiques, à la maîtrise internationale des migrations, au développement des pays pauvres et émergents	economic issues, to the international control of migration and to the development of poor and emerging countries	
C4, p.56	couplée à une politique ambitieuse de coopération avec les pays souffrant aujourd'hui d'une émigration massive, et de développement harmonieux des zones de la planète aujourd'hui menacées par un saccage des ressources naturelles et l'anarchie qu'engendre les flux migratoires liés à la pauvreté	[protecting the local ecology necessitates] an ambitious policy of cooperation with countries currently suffering from massive emigration" and the "promotion of harmonious development" in poor countries	RN (2012a)
D1, p.59	Elle sert d´arme de destruction massive aux ennemis de l´Europe	weapon[s] of mass destruction to the enemies of Europe	RN (2019)
D2, p.61	Les Meilleurs gardiens de la nature sont ceux qui ont recu leaur territoire des générations avant eux, et qui veulant les transmettre aux générations apres aux	the best guardians of nature are those who received their territory from the generation before, and who will pass it on to the next	RN European election program (2019)
E, p.63	Mes chers collègues, ce type d'amendement est absolument irresponsable: 143 millions de personnes sont potentiellement concernées. Mais, madame Autain, où allez-vous les mettre, exactement? (...)Où allez-vous les mettre? Comment allez-vous les soigner? Où allez-vous les loge? Quels emplois allez-vous leur offrir? Si on avait suivi l'intégralité	Dear colleagues, this type of amendment is absolutely irresponsible: 143 million people are potentially affected. But, Madame Autain, where are you going to put them, exactly? (…) Where are you going to put them? How are you going to treat them? Where are you	XVe législature

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	de vos amendements, il faudrait accueillir 600 ou 700 millions de gens !	going to house them? What jobs are you going to offer them? If we had followed all of your amendments, we would have to welcome 600 or 700 million people!	*Marine Le Pen.*
F, p.63	Monsieur le président, je m'étonne que vous n'ayez pas cru bon de faire respecter le règlement, dont je vous ai donné lecture tout à l'heure. Puisqu'il s'agit de parler du titre, je vais vous en parler : « pour une submersion migratoire, un droit d'asile détourné et un communautarisme assumé », voilà comment aurait dû s'appeler votre projet de loi. En effet, après les filières d'immigration économique, sanitaire et familiale, vous avez réussi à en ajouter une nouvelle, celle des réfugiés climatiques. Combien seront-ils ? 123 millions ? 250 millions ? Je l'ignore, et je vous laisse en discuter entre vous. C'est le dernier clou dans le cercueil de la politique d'immigration de notre pays. Ce projet de loi est, je l'ai dit, un Gulliver entravé, par les traités européistes, la jurisprudence des instances européennes, vos multiples textes et recours, qui tous visent à empêcher la France de	Mr. Chairman, I am surprised that you did not see fit to enforce the rules, which I read to you earlier. Since it is about talking about the title, I am going to talk about it: "for a migratory flood, a diverted right of asylum and an assumed communitarianism", this is what should have been called your bill. Indeed, after the economic, health and family immigration streams, you have succeeded in adding a new one, that of climate refugees. How many will they be? 123 million? 250 million? I don't know, and I'll let you discuss it among yourselves. It is the last nail in the coffin of our country's immigration policy. This bill is, as I said, a Gulliver hampered by the European treaties, the jurisprudence of the European authorities,	XVe législature Session ordinaire de 2017-2018: Séance du dimanche 22 avril 2018 (2018). *Marine Le Pen.*

	se défendre contre la submersion migratoire."	your multiple texts and appeals, all of which aim to prevent France from defending itself against migratory submersion.	
G, p. 64	en ouvrant ici une boîte de Pandore qui pourrait demain conduire des millions de personnes à venir réclamer l'asile dans notre pays.	[Lead to a] pandora 's Box that tomorrow could lead millions of people to come and claim asylum in our country	Vardon, P. (2018). *Immigration: le député Roussel veut-il que la France accueille des millions de réfugiés climatiques ?* RN - Rassemblement National.