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Constructing Climate Change as the Enemy of the State and *l'État c'est moi*

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Contemporary Environmental Policies in China

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Abstract

In this thesis, I am critically assessing contemporary environmental discourse at the governmental level in China. Taking the perspective of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory, this thesis dwells on the question of how the Chinese government might attempt to use discourse in official policies in order to securitize the question of climate change. To answer this question, I have collected policy documents from three parts of the central government – the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the State Council, and the National Development and Reform Commission as well as speeches from President Xi Jinping. In this thesis I seek not only to discover how climate change is represented by the Chinese government, but also who or what they believe the referent object ought to be. This thesis also aims at critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways in which these discourses might construct, maintain, and legitimize social inequalities. The findings imply that the government has attempted to securitize the issue of climate change for controlling the Chinese society and further consolidating their power. The Communist Party of China (CPC) utilized security speech acts which represented climate change as a threat to natural resources, the environment, and human health which served as proxies for the *de facto* referent object – which was interpreted to be the development process and the legitimacy of the CPC.

Keywords: China, The Communist Party of China, Environmental Policies, Securitization Theory, Copenhagen School, Critical Discourse Analysis.

List of Abbreviations

CAAC	The Civil Aviation Administration of China
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CNY	Chinese Renminbi
CPC	The Communist Party of China
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GW	Gigawatt
MARA	The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
MEE	The Ministry of Ecology and Environment
MOT	The Ministry of Transport
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDRC	The National Development and Reform Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRA	The National Railway Administration
NTS	Non-Traditional Security
PRC	The People's Republic of China
UK	The United Kingdom
US	The United States of America

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1 Introduction

In 2007, The People's Republic of China[1] became the largest emitter of CO_2 in the world, overtaking the United States in all ways except for per capita, and it is estimated that the world will emit half a trillion tons of CO_2 into the atmosphere between 2015 and 2044 (Maslin, 2014: 9). This is the same amount that was emitted between 1750 and 2015. This escalation is partly because rapidly developing countries such as China, India, South Africa, and Brazil, are increasing their emissions at a high rate – and their economic development is closely being associated with energy production (ibid).

The energy sector in China has historically been dominated by the use of coal (Liu, 2013: xiii) and as a result, the sustainable development of the energy sector is an issue that affects China's overall economic and social development. Since China began to reform and open up its economy, its energy sector has seen rapid growth in both the renewable and the nonrenewable energy technology development (with a special focus on hydro, solar, nuclear, coal, oil, and natural gas), eventually making China the world's largest producer of energy from renewable energy sources (Liu, 2013:xiii; Harlan, 2018; Ptak, 2019; Zheng and Wei, 2019; Bie and Lin, 2015; Bo et al., 2015; Geall et al., 2018; Luo and Guo, 2013; Wu et al., 2019; IEA, 2018).

The intersection between economic development, climate change mitigation, the market, and poverty alleviation – and their specific government-led projects – has been studied in great detail and from various perspectives e.g. their socioeconomic effects, environmental impacts, policy designs, and institutional limitations (see Geall et al., 2018; Ptak, 2019; Bie and Lin, 2015; Harlan, 2018). These studies, however, have not been emphasizing the discourses in which these projects are taking place. I believe there is a need for a more critical study of the discourse on climate change in the Chinese context. This is partly because the issue of climate change is seen by some authors as a security issue (Buzan, 1983; Allenby, 2000; Dalby, 2013; Barnett, 2007; Floyd, 2008; Floyd, 2010).

1.1 The Purpose of the Research

The goal of this research is to critically analyze the Chinese contemporary discourse on climate change in the light of securitization theory, at the governmental level. The Copenhagen School's interpretation of securitization theory is, in short, that an issue becomes

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[1] Please note that "China" and "PRC" will be used throughout this thesis. It refers to mainland China excluding Taiwan, SARs Hong Kong and Macao.

a matter of security not because it constitutes an objective threat to the state or another entity, but rather because a securitizing actor argues that it constitutes an existential threat to the referent object that needs to be dealt with immediately, if the object is to survive (Floyd, 2010: 1). Securitizing actors, defined as "actors who securitize issues by declaring something, a referent object, existentially threatened", can be expected to be political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups (Buzan et al., 1998: 36-40; Emmers, 2016: 169). Referent objects are defined as "things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival" (ibid). This will be explained in the literature review.

Having securitization theory in mind, the securitizing actor can make a move which attempts to make an issue a security issue. This has been illustrated by analyzing topics such as undocumented migration, drug trafficking, and the war in Iraq (Emmers, 2016: 175-177). Because the theory assumes that an actor must *articulate* that something constitutes a threat, it opens the door for a discourse on the matter. I believe that this discourse can be identified in official policies and speeches and analyzed critically in order to identify an actor's attempt at a securitizing move. I will use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to interpret the key findings in this thesis which is based on the data consisting of policy documents and speeches deriving from four different parts of the central government of China. In this thesis, I will be attempting to answer the following research question:

- *How and why does the Chinese government attempt to use discourse in official policies in order to securitize the question of climate change?*

By utilizing this research question, it is not my intention to assume that the issue of climate change *has* been securitized, but rather to keep the possibility for this scenario open. I am in this thesis, however, looking for discourses in policies which might *indicate* that a securitization can be *interpreted* from the data used in this thesis. This thesis is set to identify discourses in official policies which can both speak both *pro et contra* the case of securitization. In order to have a fruitful discussion on this matter, I will answer two additional sub-research questions related to the overarching research question:

1. *How is climate change constructed as a security issue or threat by the Chinese government through discourse?*
2. *Whose security is threatened by climate change?*

In Chapter 5, the key findings and analysis, I will analyze the first sub-research question. There, I will use the data (which are presented in Chapter 4, the methodological framework) to answer how climate change is constructed as a security issue by the government in the official policies through discourse. The analysis will aim at identifying how climate change is portrayed and how it is potentially socially constructed as a security issue. The second sub-research question will then be answered. It will dwell upon what or who is the referent object, i.e. who or what is to be protected if climate change is constructed as a security issue. This will lead us into a discussion about whether it is the individuals (the population), the state, the Communist Party of China, nature itself, or if it is another entity that is to be protected. I believe these discourses can be identified in official public policy documents as well as President Xi Jinping's speeches.

1.2 Research Delimitations

Due to the nature of the data used in this thesis, I will delimit the perspective of this thesis to the governmental level. Because I am using official translated policy documents deriving from the state, I can only outline and interpret how the government portrays climate change in the analysis. This does not, however, mean that I will only consider the state as the referent object. As the second sub-research question implies, a part of this study will be to find out who or what the Chinese government believes the referent object ought to be. Although the study would have benefited from having individuals' or the populations' perspective on climate change, this can only be achieved to some degree by the secondary literature, but more elaboration on this will be made in the methodology chapter.

Another delimitation is that the policy documents and speeches selected as data in this thesis all concern environmental policies. I choose to delimit the documents used to the environmental sector in order to be able to distinguish between what is a discourse on climate change and what is not. This is because, as mentioned in the first part of the introduction, the environmental policies in China are located in an intersection between other domestic goals such as poverty alleviation, the energy production sector, and the overall economic development at the national level. By selecting policy documents that specifically targets environmental issues, I believe the environmental discourse can be more accurately nuanced.

In this thesis, I will delimit the perspective on security and define it in terms of Hough's (2008: 10, emphasis in original) definition which states "[i]f people, be they government ministers or private individuals, perceive an issue to threaten their lives in some

way and respond politically to this, then that issue should be deemed to be a *security* issue". This definition emphasizes the perceptions of human beings. I believe this is in line with the securitization theory, which highlights the need of a discursive element – a speech act, defined as "the discursive representation of a certain issue as an existential threat to security" (Emmers, 2016: 171), or that a securitizing actor needs to articulate that something constitutes a threat – in order to establish what becomes a security issue and what does not. This definition, of course, highlights the threatening of lives which can ultimately be tied to the notion of survival. It also demands a political response to the threat while not assuming that it is only the government that can construct security issues, or the government having the power of definition of what constitutes a security issue. As we will see in Chapter 3, the securitization framework used in this thesis assumes that more groups than the government can perceive and define security issues.

The last delimitation in this thesis, is that I will only consider domestic environmental policies and issues in what I refer to as mainland China (see footnote 1). In this context, I will only investigate environmental policies that aims at actions, plans, and measures within China. This will help the analysis by staying strictly on one level of analysis in order to pinpoint the national, domestic discourse and not be distracted by China's environmental aims at the regional or international level.

1.3 Relevance for Peace Studies

When considering how this study relates to the field of Peace Studies, one must consider the change and broadening of Security Studies after the end of the Cold War. This will be covered thoroughly in the literature review, but the essence of it is that Security Studies broadened and was no longer limited in its analysis as only having the state as the referent object. Buzan (1983) created a framework and argued that security was not just about states but related to all human collectivities. It could not be confined to an "inherently inadequate" focus on military force (Williams, 2008: 3). Buzan's framework assumes that the security of human collectivities is affected by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal, and environmental (Williams, 2008: 4). The environmental sector is concerned with "the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend" (ibid).

Buzan's framework can be read as a contributing factor to the rising concept of environmental security. There is, however, no agreed upon definition of what environmental

security entails, much less what environmental insecurity entails (Barnett, 2007: 5). Barnett (2007) argues that there are links between environmental security and peace, mainly through interweaving environmental change, violent conflicts and structural violence. He argues that environmental changes can increase the risk of violent conflicts and social instability within countries where e.g. levels of inequality are high, or socioecological systems are sensitive to environmental changes (Barnett, 2007: 7). He connects the dots by arguing that environmental change can also affect structural violence as it can exacerbate the inequity "in the distribution of freedoms and opportunities necessary for people's physiological and psychological well-being" (Barnett, 2007: 12). A world beset with deep socio-economic inequalities that also has finite limits on the economic growth set by environmental constraints would be "a world of much potential violence, fragility, and insecurity" (Rogers, 2016: 61).

This study is relevant for Peace Studies for more than its connection to security literature. Rogers (2016: 62) argues that Peace Studies took a turn in the 1970s where there was a broadening of the field from the concentration on inter-state wars and the US-Soviet nuclear issues to focusing more on equality, justice, and human dignity. Rogers (2016: 63) believes that one of the main characteristics of contemporary Peace Studies is the focus on addressing and exploring "… ways of overcoming structural inequalities and of promoting equitable and cooperative relations between and within human communities". This means addressing a wide range of inequalities whether rooted in class, gender, or racial divisions. This will be covered in the analysis when I analyze "whose security" is threatened by climate change.

1.4 Research Motivation

The motivation for this research is a mix of both academic and personal interests. The academic motivation is because of the extensive academic literature on "the rise of China". For as long as I can remember, China has always been on the rise and has over the years grown to become not only a regional but a global dominating factor in international relations. One simply cannot ignore China's role in the global system in the 21st century. As I am writing from Norway, which at times has had a turbulent relationship with China, there has been a personal interest in Chinese history, culture, and contemporary society. Being a history buff, I have always had an interest for how other countries are governed and their ideologies,

especially when they are radical ideologies on either the far-left or the far-right end of the scale.

The first time I developed an interest for Chinese politics, was when I watched the 2008 summer Olympics in Beijing on television. Several months before the opening ceremony, there were ongoing documentaries on television about how the stadiums were built and the controversies around the Olympics. I remember the massive focus on surveillance and security. Samatas (2011: 3347) describes that all post-9/11 Olympic Games deploy super-surveillance systems at the expense of rights and freedoms. In China, these systems have also been used for regime security, reinforcing population and internet control (ibid). Samatas (2011: 3347-3348) provides two explanations for this. First, the International Olympic Committee expects Olympic host nations in the post-9/11 world to respond fully to real and perceived terrorist threats and therefore they need to have in place a precautionary anti-terrorist policy. Second, it has also been promoted by corporate security interests producing the security systems and the global mass media.

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of the thesis is divided into five chapters. The next chapter will be the literature review, where I discuss the development of Security Studies and securitization theory in the post-Cold War era. After discussing the developments of Security Studies, I will briefly introduce and describe how securitization links to speech acts (although speech acts will be further elaborated on in Chapter 3 because speech acts are a part of my theoretical framework) and, how the Copenhagen School's interpretation of securitization theory has been criticized by other authors. Then I will discuss what has been done on the environmental security front and discourses on environmental problems in China. Lastly, I will identify the research gap, explain how this thesis intends to fill that gap, and give a general direction of how this thesis is positioned among the existing literature.

Chapter 3 is the theoretical framework. Building on the literature review, which covers the classic interpretation of securitization, I will in this chapter present how the theoretical framework of this thesis works and how I interpret and adapt securitization theory for my case.

Chapter 4 explains the methodological framework of this thesis. It starts with positioning the thesis ontologically and epistemologically with an emphasis on social constructivism. I will then present the data collection techniques and discuss how and why the

selected approach came to be. I will proceed by explaining how I analyze the data, presenting and discussing how I interpret and use CDA in the analysis. At the end of this chapter, there will be a section on the overall limitations of the project as well as a section on reflexivity.

Chapter 5 will present the data and key findings as well as the analysis of the data. The first part of the chapter begins with an introduction to each of the documents used in this thesis and focus on primarily two things: the representation of climate change and who or what is to be protected if climate change is perceived as a threat. This relates directly to the two sub-research questions. In the second part of the chapter, I will discuss the main research question in this thesis and answer it. After the data presentation, I adopt a critical discourse analytical perspective and discuss what the main findings might indicate.

Chapter 6 is the discussion where I discuss how I believe the research gap has been filled, how this thesis contributes to Security Studies, and how I believe this thesis is an original contribution to securitization theory.

Chapter 7 will summarize the thesis and provide some concluding remarks.

2 Literature Review

In this chapter I will present the existing relevant literature on the topic of this thesis. The chapter begins by outlining the changes in Security Studies after the Cold War with an emphasis on the widening of the security agenda as well as the change in referent object in the academic literature. Then, I move on to explain the original securitization theory as developed by the Copenhagen School and how the model works in practice. After this I will present the existing literature and criticism of the Copenhagen School. Second to last, I will present the existing literature on both environmental security and what has already been done when conducting research on discourses in China. Lastly, I will present what I believe is an identified research gap which this thesis aims at filling.

2.1 Security after the Cold War – Shifting Perspectives

As briefly introduced in Chapter 1.3, the literature has identified that there was indeed a shift in Security Studies after the Cold War. This shift marked the division between what is referred to as "traditional" and "non-traditional" security, or NTS (Caballero-Anthony and Putra, 2012: 2; Collins, 2016: 8; Williams, 2008: 3-4). The notions of traditional security are concerned with the belief that national security concerns premised on military threats to state security supersede other security threats that could pose grave threats to the state's and its inhabitant's security (Caballero-Anthony and Putra, 2012: 2). The traditional security perspective is thus perceived as the protection of a state's sovereignty from war, conflicts, and violence as its primary concern. This pattern was emphasized by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which has ultimately been viewed as the cornerstone of the modern system of international relations and the notion of security up until the end of the Cold War (Poggi, 1978: 89). This perspective has been challenged by several post-Cold War scholars who have sought to broaden and deepen the Security Studies discourse. The main dispute these challengers make, seeks to challenge the dominant belief that security revolves around military threats and the state as the referent object, i.e. what is to be protected.

The challengers of traditional security have predominantly been scholars in the field of non-traditional security. NTS scholars have argued that since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, threats to national security have been increasingly those of a non-military nature, with e.g. the rising numbers of intrastate wars and cross-border conflicts rather than the "classical" interstate wars (Caballero-Anthony and Putra, 2012: 2). As an illustration, Caballero-Anthony and Putra (2012: 2) refers to an older study of theirs, which

observed that "security threats have in recent times evolved from military confrontations to non-military conflicts such as food security, water security, climate change, human trafficking, pandemics, cross-border conflicts and energy security". Furthermore, they add that "most of these challenges are transnational in terms of their origins, conception, and effects" (Caballero-Anthony and Putra, 2012: 2). However, one of the most important contributions to the literature, is that NTS scholars have shifted the focus of security beyond the state to include what Buzan (1983) referred to as "human collectives", as the primary referent object (Caballero-Anthony and Putra, 2012: 2).

2.2 Securitization Theory and the Copenhagen School

The Copenhagen School is usually represented by the writings of Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, among others (Wæver, 1995; Buzan et al., 1998; Buzan and Wæver, 2003). The Copenhagen School introduced the securitization theory, amidst the development of Security Studies as described above, as a concept to rethink security through the notions of securitization and desecuritization. These concepts have been used as a framework in order to analyze how an issue becomes securitized or desecuritized. This framework has been developed over several years and writings. In the book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* Buzan et al. (1998) define international security in a traditional military context, or through a traditional security perspective. Security, according to them, is about survival (Buzan et al., 1998). It is when an issue is constructed or presented as posing an existential threat to the referent object which has traditionally been the state, but because of the development described above, now includes more than just the government or state's territory (Buzan et al, 1998: 21; Emmers, 2016: 169). Buzan (1983: 75) divided the concept of security into different sectors: political, economic, military, societal, and environmental. I will elaborate on the environmental security sector later in this chapter. The security-survival logic is therefore maintained as well as extended beyond military security. This is also coherent with our definition of security (Hough, 2008: 10) which emphasizes the perceptions of human beings as well as their understanding of threats and the political responses to these threats.

The dynamics of each sector of security are determined by the securitizing actor(s) and the referent object(s). Referent objects and the nature of the existential threat they face can vary across security sectors. As an example, Emmers (2016: 169) believes that referent objects in each sector can be: "the state (military security); an ideology (political security);

national economies (economic security); collective identities (societal security); species, or habitats (environmental security).
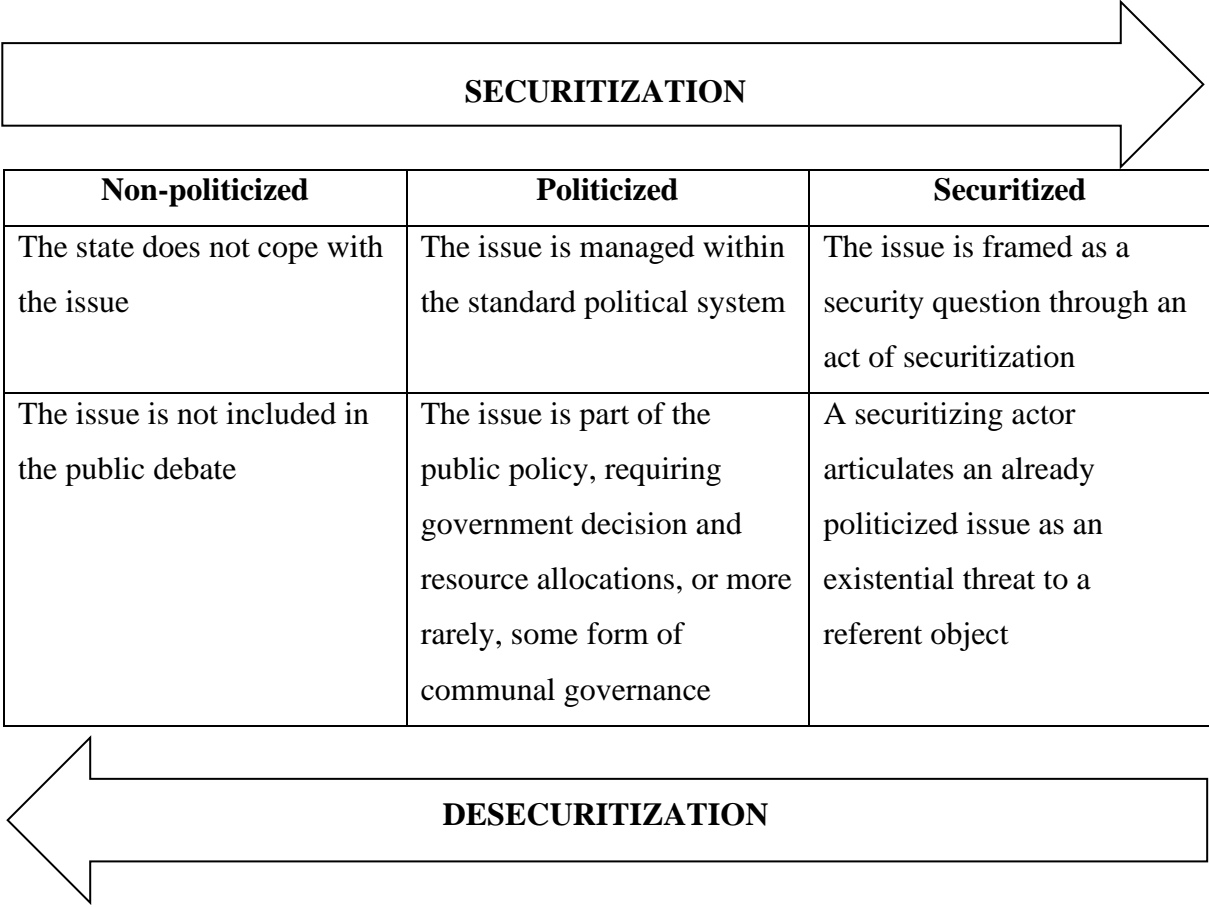
2.3 The Securitization Model

2.3.1 The Spectrum of Securitization

The Copenhagen School offers a spectrum along which issues can be plotted. The spectrum consists of three parts and claims that any specific issue or topic can be (1) non-politicized, (2) politicized, or (3) securitized (Emmers, 2016: 169). An issue is non-politicized when it is not a matter for state policies or actions and is not included in the public debate. An issue becomes politicized when it is managed within the standard political system. A politicized issue is "part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocation or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance" (Buzan et al., 1998: 23; Emmers, 2016: 170). Finally, an issue is securitized at the end of the spectrum when it requires "emergency actions" beyond the state's standard political procedures.

An issue can be securitized, or framed as a security issue, and move from the politicized to the securitized end of the spectrum. Let us say that the securitizing actor, the government, represents an already politicized issue as an existential threat to a referent object, the people. In order to be able to respond to that threat adequately, the securitizing actor asserts that it must adopt extraordinary means to go beyond the ordinary rules, regulations, and possibly norms of the established political domain. Buzan et al. (1998: 23) argue that securitization is "the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politization". Desecuritization can then be viewed as the reverse process, where something is moved (back) into "regular politics" and is no longer handled with extraordinary means, but within the rules of the political system (see Figure 1). Emmers (2016: 170) illustrates this point with the end of the Apartheid regime in South Africa as it represented a desecuritization of the race question in South African society and of its reintroduction into the political domain.

Figure 1: "Securitization Spectrum", adapted from Emmers (2016: 170)

Non-politicized	Politicized	Securitized
The state does not cope with the issue	The issue is managed within the standard political system	The issue is framed as a security question through an act of securitization
The issue is not included in the public debate	The issue is part of the public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations, or more rarely, some form of communal governance	A securitizing actor articulates an already politicized issue as an existential threat to a referent object

2.3.2 A Two-Stage Process

"An act of securitization refers to the accepted classification of certain and not other phenomena, persons, or entities as existential threats requiring emergency measures" (Emmers, 2016: 170). The Copenhagen School provides a two-stage process which explains how and when an issue is to be perceived and acted upon as an existential threat to security. The first stage is the portrayal, representation, or even social construction of certain issues, persons, and/or entities as existential threats to the referent objects. This stage can be started by states or non-state actors such as the civil society, e.g. political movements, trade unions, activists, and NGOs. Non-state actors are regarded as important players in the game (Emmers, 2016: 171), but securitization tends to be a process which is dominated by "powerful actors that benefit from privileged positions" (ibid). Emmers (2016: 171) argues that the securitizing move depends on, as well as reveals, the power and influence of the securitizing actor, which often happens to be the state and its elites.

It is not, however, enough for the securitizing actor to only portray something as an existential threat in order to securitize the issue. In other words, it is not enough to just speak

about an issue as a security issue for it to automatically transform into a question of security. "Instead, the consensual establishment of threat needs to be of sufficient salience to produce substantial political effects" (Emmers, 2016: 171). This is where the second stage comes into play. The second stage of securitization is completed successfully only when the securitizing actor has succeeded in convincing a relevant audience (politicians, military officers, or other elites) that a referent object is indeed existentially threatened (Emmers, 2016: 171). Only when the relevant audience agrees, and consensus on the nature of the threat is established, can the extraordinary measures be imposed. "Because of the urgency of the accepted existential threat to security, constituencies tolerate the use of counterreactions outside the normal bounds of political procedures" (Emmers, 2016: 171). The classical interpretation of securitization theory thus implies that securitization and security speech are utilized when the rulers are asking the relevant audience(s) to legitimize their future acts.

Central to this two-stage process of securitization is the concept of speech acts or the "language of security". The function of the speech act will be covered in depth in Chapter 3, which outlines the theoretical framework. The Copenhagen School considers the speech act to be the starting point of any securitization process. A securitizing actor uses language to express or represent a problem in security terms and to persuade a relevant audience of its immediate danger. Reversed, a desecuritizing actor can reconstitute an issue as no longer an existential threat and thereby moving from the securitized sphere (back) into the ordinary political system or public arena, which can be interpreted to be a desecuritizing speech act.

2.4 Critique of Securitization Theory

Ralf Emmers' (2016: 172-173) critique of securitization theory is preoccupied with what exactly "extraordinary measures" entail. He states that one can easily anticipate what types of emergency measures are to be introduced by a state (Emmers, 2016: 172-173). It is however less clear to Emmers what would form an extraordinary measure for a non-state actor, assuming the non-state actor has successfully convinced an audience of the existential threat. Emmers (2016: 172-173) thus asks, "what would constitute an extraordinary measure that goes beyond standard political procedures for non-governmental organizations such as Greenpeace and Christian Aid?". In the way that I have outlined securitization theory, there is a common view that the articulation of a security problem must go hand in hand with actions and policies. Emmers (2016: 173) questions the significance of a securitization process when it does *not* go hand in hand with actions and policies. "According to the securitization model,

transforming an issue into a security question requires only the audience's acknowledgement that it is indeed a threat. The adaptation of extraordinary means is not a requirement" (Emmers, 2016: 173). Buzan et al. (1998: 25) specifically indicate that "we do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted". Emmers (2016: 173) does not agree and believes that a complete act of securitization really consists of and demands both discursive (the speech act and shared representations) and non-discursive (policy implementation) elements. In this view, a security act would depend on a successful speech act that persuades a relevant audience as well as the adoption by the securitizing actor of emergency powers to address the threat (Emmers, 2016: 173). In this thesis, I adopt Emmers' position, as it also complies with the definition of security which requires a political response.

Balzacq and Guzzini (2015: 98-99) criticize the idea of something "… [acquiring] a security status as a result of an intersubjective process involving a securitizing actor and an audience". Balzacq and Guzzini (2015: 99), among others, have observed that one of the main problems of this intersubjective nature of viewing security problems is that it has not always been consistent, and they believe it has to do with the "precise status of audience in securitization theory". There are arguments that questions "whether securitization can be brought to bear to the diverse ways in which security issues are constructed by various communities, at different times in history" (Balzacq and Guzzini, 2015: 99). If we are to include context or historical factors in securitization theory, it "… would change the theory beyond recognition, moving the focus away from the act that is securitization, toward a causal theory of securitization instead (Floyd, 2010, cited in Balzacq and Buzzini, 2015: 99).

Knudsen (2001: 357-360) is rather skeptical about the entire project of the Copenhagen School, as they "do not share the perspective from which [he] works". He believes that the Copenhagen School's interpretation of security "remove[s] themselves from the military sector in such a way that they also lose touch with the core element in our field, namely large-scale conflict, that is conflict brought to the point of mass violence, subjection, or submission" (Knudsen, 2001: 357-358). Knudsen (2001: 357-359) is of the opinion that new security thinking had its greatest success with the broadening of security thinking, with non-military threats at its core. On the other hand, Knudsen (2001: 358-359) believes that the introduction of securitization was in a part

> a move along the path of the 'wideners', replacing the focus on violence and the
> business of the military with a focus of a broader agenda. But its innovative value was

to shift the attention away from mere widening of the security concept to a spotlighting of the way issues do or do not end up on the political agenda.

The last critique provided by Knudsen (2001: 360) is his opinion that Wæver's concept of securitization and "… of security is not the potential existence of danger somewhere but the use of the word itself by political elites".

Stritzel (2007: 360) argues that "security articulations need to be related to their broader discursive contexts from which both the securitizing actor and the performative force of the articulated speech act/text gain their power". Stritzel (2007: 363) also believes there is a paradox in Wæver's writings when he "explicitly refuses the 'traditional sender-receiver view of communication' – but at the same time he believes in a speaker-audience model?". Following this, Stritzel (2007: 363) asks what if a dictator is the securitizing actor? Is the speaker-audience model the most appropriate one for non-democratic settings? This leads Stritzel (2007: 373) to conclude in his article that securitization theory might possess elements of actor-centrism, but he wished more securitization theory analyses had a stronger focus on linguistic or contextual sides of a speech act. Lastly, his critique of securitization can be summed up in the following way:

> A central question … for the concept of 'act' is to what extent it should be thought of as an always political, contingent and momentous move (as favored by Wæver) as opposed to a more cultural and sequential one, intensifying an already existing or even partly sedimented practice [as favored by Stritzel] (Stritzel, 2007: 376).

The last critique of securitization, which is quite common in the literature, is twofold: first, there exists a Eurocentrism or democratic bias in securitization, and second, the normative critique of securitization theory. We will deal with the former first.

Emmers (2016: 174) believes there is a Eurocentrism in the Copenhagen School of thought. He gives the example of societal security, which is at the core of the Copenhagen School and "emphasizes society rather than the state as the primary referent object, [which] very much derives from a European experience". Vuori (2008: 65-66) believes this is partly because the theory was induced from European politics. Vuori (2008: 66) argues that the Eurocentrism is present in the theory as a "democratic bias" which he believes can be detected in the "paradigmatic understanding" of the theory.

> The practice of securitization has been understood as a means of naturalizing politics, a means of moving certain issues beyond the democratic process of government. In

this understanding, security issues are a type of special politics, which legitimates the use of 'special procedures' through necessities of survival (Vuori, 2008: 66).

We will be more acquainted with Vuori's arguments and theoretical framework in the next chapter. The last critique we will deal with is the lack of normativity in the Copenhagen School's way of thinking. Following the quote above, in a conference paper from 2004, Diez and Higashino (cited in Floyd, 2010: 48) argued that "whilst securitization closes down political debate, desecuritization opens up political debate" – which in e.g. a Habermasian deliberative model of democracy, is the ideal situation. This is of course built on the assumption that desecuritization always leads to politization, i.e., throwing an issue back into the regulatory frames of the standard political system, which the Copenhagen School assumes (Floyd, 2010: 57).

Floyd (2010: 3) has dealt with the moral, ethical or normative critique of the Copenhagen School. Nevertheless, she argues that despite the theory's reputation for not being normative enough, she believes the School holds strong views about the value of both securitization and desecuritization. The Copenhagen Schools argues that *ceteris paribus* securitizations are morally wrong, whereas desecuritizations are morally right according to Floyd (2010: 3). This argument is consistent with the School's and Diez and Higashino's interpretation of desecuritization processes and the 'democratic bias' in the theory. Floyd (2010: 43) believes that the theory's inability to say something meaningful about the moral values of different securitization and desecuritization processes, is one of the many shortcomings of the theory. One suggestion, in contrast to the Copenhagen School, has been to differentiate between securitization processes according to the beneficiary, which can allow insights into the intentions of securitizing actors (Floyd, 2010: 56).

Trombetta (2008: 589) can be used to sum up the critique of "democracy bias" and "lack of normativity" when she quotes Wæver (1995: 56): "less security, more politics!".

2.5 Environmental Security and Discourse in China

This last section of the literature review will briefly dwell upon the existing literature on the concept of environmental security, briefly introduced in Chapter 1.3, and which elements subjected to analysis in the field of discourse analysis in the case of China.

The analysis of securitization has been done with the assumption that it is useful to distinguish between sectors (Albert and Buzan, 2011: 413). One of these sectors, as mentioned in Chapter 1.3, is the environmental security sector. So far, "the identification of

sectors has been purely empirical: they are simply extracted from usage within the actual discourses of securitization (Albert and Buzan, 2011: 414). The sectors can be used as analytical tools that can help shed light on the different practices and dynamics of securitization. However, as sectors are defined as "parts of a whole", there is less theoretical development of what that whole can be (Albert and Buzan, 2011: 415). It is also quite difficult to separate and distinguish between sectors, which could lead to difficulty in arguing where e.g. the lines between economic security and environmental security lies.

Floyd (2008; 2010), Trombetta (2008), and von Lucke et al. (2014), are some of the prominent academic contributors in the field of environmental security. Von Lucke et al. (2014: 857) has worked on a framework to "better trace the process of securitising climate change …" with empirical works from the US and German discourses. von Lucke et al (2014: 860) understands environmental security as a broader understanding of security, which ultimately ties it closer to human security. Trombetta (2008) has analyzed how states such as the US and the UK as well as NATO have securitized the issue of climate change. She has also shown how the traditional logic of war and the confrontational logic of security, does not necessarily consider whether and how by securitizing nontraditional sectors, alternative security logics are evoked, and practices associated with securitization are challenged and transformed (Trombetta, 2008: 585). Floyd (2008; 2010) has studied how environmental security emerged as a concept and set of policies due to the end of the Cold War, as well as the emerging debates on the nature of threats, the appropriate referent object and the meaning of security. Floyd (2008: 51) also studied how there was a *need* for a new set of "discourses of danger" by the security establishment of the US and how environmental security (although it was "sidelined" by the War on Terror-discourse post-9/11) became that new discourse. The possible link between global warming and security sparked a flame in the environmental security debate in the US. All these studies have that in common that the discourse and securitization took place in liberal democracies where deliberation and political discussions are frequent, open, and easy to find for researchers.

In the academic world of studies in or about discourses in China, there are especially three studies which are tied to the topic of this thesis, climate change. Yang and Calhoun (2007: 211) studied how in 2004, public controversies surrounding the building of a dam on the Nu River prompted the Chinese government to halt the proposed hydropower project. They found that the occurrence of such public debates indicated the rise of a green public sphere of critical environmental discourse (Yang and Calhoun, 2007: 211). Another finding is that of regarding alternative ways of communication, with the mass media and the internet as

the most important channels, as well as the role of environmental non-governmental organizations as key players in the production of this discourse (Yang and Calhoun, 2007: 211). Yang and Calhoun (2007: 211) believes that the emergence of this green public sphere demonstrates a new dynamism of grass-roots political change. The environmental discourse has been labeled the rather Orwellian term of "Greenspeak" in the Chinese context (Yang and Calhoun, 2007: 214).

Lo (2015) studied the levels of environmentalism of forty-five young and educated Chinese individuals. In his article, Lo (2015: 755) was interested in how China's political environment offers limited space for critical debates on domestic politics. His findings indicated that among 45 young and educated Chinese individuals, their discourses did not indicate critical intent and deep engagement in the political arguments regarding climate change. "In such a constrained [political] environment, people tend to represent and articulate climate change issues without explicitly addressing their political aspects" (Lo, 2015: 755).

Eberhardt (2015: 33) drawing on Yang and Calhoun (2007) found that in China, amid the messages to consume more, are messages for the masses by the state and NGOs advocating for a "green lifestyle" with little mention of climate change or questioning of existing policies. He questions Yang and Calhoun's (2007) findings and believes smaller public places exist but are occupied by elites that debate climate change in both serious and playful manners (Eberhardt, 2015: 33). Yet, Eberhardt (2015: 33) found that the spaces where policies are being drafted are not public, so citizens continue to focus on their economic livelihood. Hence labeling the environmental discourse in China as "a public sphere without the public". Among the interviewees of Eberhardt (2015: 46), the common narrative was that the corporations were responsible for climate change, but only the government had the ability to address the issue. Eberhardt (2015: 50) concludes that climate change is an issue that is both public and yet not public at the same time.

2.6 The Research Gap and the Position of the Thesis

As demonstrated, there is a common belief in the existing literature that securitization has a built-in "democratic bias" and all the mentioned empirical studies that deals with securitization have been conducted in liberal-democratic states. The exception is Vuori (2008), which deals with securitization in the case of the students rebelling in China in 1989. He, however, does not deal with the securitization of the climate change discourse, which

leaves an opportunity to conduct more research on securitization in an authoritarian regime and climate change discourse.

The existing literature on climate change discourses in China is mostly interested in constructing or identifying the existing discourse or identifying the arenas where the discourse and practice of shaping policies takes place, rather than to critically assess it. The difference between a mere discourse analysis and a critical discourse analysis can be that the latter focuses on why a certain discourse has been constructed, i.e. what it does or how it affects people in their everyday life as well as defacing the notions of power among actors in a society. Another element the existing literature has in common is that they do not conduct a discourse analysis of public policy documents or official records, something that this thesis will be doing. The existing literature is preoccupied with citizens' perspectives on the existing discourse rather than how it affects them in terms of social inequality.

This thesis will be a contribution to both these academic literatures. This thesis both assesses securitization processes in authoritarian regimes as well as identifies and explains how and why the securitizing actors might wish to or attempt to securitize the issue of climate change. CDA can help to explain why certain actors securitize these issues in order to produce or reproduce discourses and power structures, as well as how it affects people. This also helps securitization theory, which does not explicitly consider *why* actors securitize and is less interested in the motives or intentions of the securitizing actor(s), but preoccupied with *how* securitization is done.

In other words, the identified research gap is a combination of questioning the "democratic bias" in securitization theory, putting the theory in an authoritarian setting (and contributing to the expansion of that literature), as well as identifying a specific discourse on climate change in China and assessing the consequences of that discourse critically and how discourses constructs, maintains, or legitimizes social inequalities.

3 The Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this thesis. The chapter offers my interpretation and adaption of securitization theory, as presented in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I will present the following: (1) Vuori's (2008) framework of securitization in authoritarian regimes, (2) speech acts and their functions, and (3) the audience(s).

3.1 Securitization in Authoritarian Regimes

Vuori's (2008) framework is based on a linguistic and philosophical approach to securitization theory. This, Vuori (2008: 66) believes, will allow conceptual travel from a democratic political setting to a non-democratic setting without conceptual stretching. As we have seen, securitization has been studied frequently and widely in the democratic political setting of contemporary European and Northern-American politics. But how does security logic work in authoritarian regimes? "What is 'special politics' where there is no democratic process to move issues away from?" (Vuori, 2008: 66). Vuori (2008: 66) asks if we can still utilize the concept of securitization in analyzing the security politics of non-democracies? His answer is a clear yes, but we need to expand and introduce further categories of securitization. This is because "… the complex act of securitization can contain several kinds … intentions and effects, and thus, that securitization can be utilized for a range of political purposes" (Vuori, 2008: 66). Although securitization and its logic of speech acts are borrowed from linguistic studies, Vuori (2008: 66) believes "[b]oth social and linguistic analysis is necessary to understand the performative of securitization". This thesis will be more oriented around the social analysis, not the linguistic, because we are using CDA to analyze the data. By this, I mean that this thesis will not use the *analytical* framework of Vuori (2008) but we will use the *logic* of his framework and analyze the data through CDA and connect it to the theoretical framework.

In terms of the "democratic bias" in securitization theory, the main argument is that "totalitarian or other non-democratic political systems do not need political legitimacy in the way democracies do. The leaders of totalitarian systems can rule by force, without special justification" (Vuori, 2008: 68). Thus, there is no need to move an issue outside the democratic process, because there is no democratic process to begin with. However, this is not entirely correct, because legitimacy might be the most significant element in the survival of any social institution or governments, and they must exercise a minimum of both persuasion and coercion in order to survive (Vuori, 2008: 68). This argument is of course

building on Buzan et al.'s (1998) security logic which is constructed around the notion of survival. Even tyrants, Vuori (2008: 68) argues, "need people to do their bidding, and loyal actors and subjects are important in the totalitarian systems". Vuori (2008: 68) believes that in the long run, "purely coercive rule is impossible and brutal oppression can turn into a disadvantage for the oppressor. Even authoritarian regimes must legitimize their use of extraordinary measures, and security is a strong legitimator even in non-democratic political systems".

In order to not fall into the trap of Eurocentrism or setting a certain political system as the norm within the theory of securitization, Vuori (2008: 69) believes that we cannot define "special politics" very precisely. We can, on the other hand, say that every society has "rules" and these rules are a product of historical and social contingencies (ibid). "When security logic and rhetoric is utilized to legitimate the breaking of these rules, we have a case of securitization" (Buzan et al., 1998: 24; Vuori, 2008: 69). Vuori (2008: 69) argues if democratic leaders can use security speech to relieve them of the democratic process, in other political environments decision makers can be relieved of other constraints in their political system that they usually have to consider e.g. morality or the unmistakability of leadership. This divide is important because in e.g. totalitarian socialist systems, such as communism, struggle and antagonistic contradictions among adversaries can be a part of "normal politics" or following the "rules" (Vuori, 2008: 69). In these situations, security speech can be used to legitimize for other purposes in addition to the legitimization of breaking the rules. Other purposes can for example be to reproduce political order, renewing discipline, and for controlling society and the political order (ibid).

Vuori's (2008: 76) framework consists of five types of securitization, all with their different desired outcomes and aims. These five types of securitization are: (1) securitization for raising an issue on the agenda, (2) securitization for legitimizing future acts (The Copenhagen School, or Wæverian model), (3) securitization for deterrence, (4) securitization for legitimizing past acts or for reproducing the security status of an issue, and (5) securitization for control. I will not present the Wæverian model because this was done in the literature review.

3.1.1 Securitization for Raising an Issue on the Agenda

As discussed, not every speech act has to come from the elites or the rulers. People outside the official authorities can also utilize securitization speech for various purposes. One such aim can be to raise an issue on the agenda of the decisionmakers. These issues can vary and span from national to local problems in an area. As an example, in this type of securitization, the securitizing actor can be scholars, regular people, NGOs, journalists, or politicians (Vuori, 2008: 77) and the audience can be the decisionmakers. The intention is to warn the decisionmakers of the urgency of a threat, so that they will raise an issue on the political agenda and put measures into effect (ibid). The essence of this securitization is to get someone to "deal with these problems, with these measures, before it is too late and we will not be around to correct our mistake" (Vuori, 2008: 77).

3.1.2 Securitization for Deterrence

Some securitization processes are not aimed at legitimizing or effecting a certain action for repelling the claimed threat, but repelling threats through deterrence (Vuori, 2008: 81). The intimidation of security issues may deter the threat without having to resort to special procedures; the mere possibility of future special procedures may be enough to handle the threat. Here, securitization functions as a warning that future actions may be implemented. Securitizing actors using this type of securitization must have an official position or *de facto* control over subordinates, for example being the president of a state, so that they can use their authority in the speech act (Vuori, 2008: 81). Securitization in this manner is directly aimed at the threat itself. The audience can be other states, secessionist groups, rebel groups, or protesters (ibid). By declaring that something is a threat to the referent object, the securitizing actor gains special powers, which is in turn aimed at deterring the threats identified in the securitization process (Vuori, 2008: 82).

3.1.3 Securitization for Legitimizing Past Acts

The two previous strands of securitization, in addition to the Copenhagen School's interpretation, aim at future acts in one way or another. Some security discourses are not about the future, but about the past. Sometimes, and maybe especially in authoritarian regimes, actions are already taken in secrecy, or even in public, and are legitimated through a security discourse (Vuori, 2008: 83). The nature of security of certain issues must also be reproduced or maintained. This type of securitization aims at legitimizing past acts of the

securitizing actors, e.g. a politically responsible decisionmaker (Vuori, 2008: 83). The audience in this setting are the evaluators of political legitimacy (Vuori, 2008: 85), which in democracies can be the voters, members of parliament, or supreme court justices, while in authoritarian regimes it can be the political elite, e.g. the elite in the Chinese Politburo. The aim is to be able to justify the actions which otherwise might be viewed as illegitimate.

This is different from speech acts trying to legitimate future actions, because in this scenario, the actions have already taken place (Vuori, 2008: 85). This method of securitization can be used in order to reproduce security discourses, to remind the people of security threats, or to construct a post hoc security status of an issue (Vuori, 2008: 85). The essence of this type of securitization is if the head of state claims that "we did X in order to secure Y". This implies that the warning about a threat is followed by an explanation of the actions taken where the securitizing actor tries to convince the audience of their actions taken, which went past the scope of everyday politics, were legitimate due to the repelling of an acute and relevant threat (Vuori, 2008: 85).

3.1.4 Securitization for Control

Security discourses are effective tools for control, as survival is urgent and justifies drastic measures and strict discipline (Vuori, 2008: 88). Securitization for control aims at obtaining obedience to the directives of the securitizing actor(s) (ibid). The audience of this mode of securitization are those under the authority of the securitizing actor, e.g. party members or citizens of the state, while the securitizing actor is in a formal position and can authorize directives (Vuori, 2008: 88). The specific aim is to get the audience to do the acts required by the securitizing actor or to forbid them from doing certain other acts. This requirement makes this type of securitization stand out among the others, as the element of a requirement does not leave the door open for disagreeing with the securitizing actor. This is why the securitizing actor must have a formal position of authority, as well as a reason (why the threat is threatening the referent object) for their directive. The requiring part makes this type of securitization stronger than the others as it does not request legitimization, but rather commands it (Vuori, 2008: 89).

3.2 Speech Acts

John Austin (1962) describes speech acts in his book *How to Do Things with Words* as a way of analyzing meaning. Meaning is described in relation to linguistic conventions correlated with words or sentences, the situation where the speaker actually says something to the listener, and the associated intentions of the speaker (Oishi, 2006: 1). The idea, Oishi (2006: 1) points out, is that meaning exists among these relations and is depicted successfully by the concept of acts: in uttering a sentence, that is, utilizing linguistic conventions, the speaker with an associated intention performs a linguistic act to the listener. Austin, up until his time of writing, believed that philosophy only have been concerned with "statements" that either could be classified as true or false and statements that fell outside the true/false dichotomy had been largely overlooked (Austin, 1962: 6-7). These are the statements used in order to perform an action, i.e. the speech acts. "The name is derived, of course, from 'perform', the usual verb with the noun 'action'; it indicates that the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action… (Austin, 1962: 6-7).

In different words, speech acts are a form of utterance whereby saying something, something is done. A common example Austin uses is a marriage ceremony where he argues when the bride and groom uttering "I do" that constitutes a speech act (Austin, 1962: 5). In saying "I do" something is being 'done', namely the marriage between two individuals. These statements fall outside the true/false dichotomy of other statements, because as we have established, security speech acts cannot be true nor false, objectively speaking, because they are socially constructed among entities in a political community (the speaker and audience).

Wæver (cited in Floyd, 2010: 13) identified what he named the "facilitating conditions" of security speech acts as: (1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security and constructing a plot with existential threat, point of no return, and a possible way out; (2) the social capital of the enunciator, the securitizing actor, who has to be in a position of authority, although this should neither be defined as official authority nor taken to guarantee success with the speech act; and (3) conditions historically associated with a threat makes it more likely that one can conjure a security threat if there are certain objects to refer to which are generally held to be threatening.

Security speech acts are effective as autocommunication, i.e. instead of providing new information, the purpose of this form of communication is to maintain the political order by repeating established political mantras, which in the case of China, has historically been the indication of loyalty to the Party (Vuori, 2008: 71). Through autocommunication, the political

elites can claim to maintain "security" in times of uncertainty or insecurity. Very common in Chinese politics, is to phrase security as "stability and unity", since "chaos" and "turmoil" has been, according to Vuori (2008: 71) "… a recurrent fear throughout different eras of politics". Thus, Vuori (2008: 71) argues, the notion of stability and unity are not merely mantras of the political elites and their leadership, they are also "… embedded into Chinese collective consciousness through most forms of culture and tradition".

3.3 The Audience(s)

The audience is the key to the process of securitization as legitimacy must be argued. Vuori (2008: 70) describes security as a "structured field of practices" where some actors are more privileged to speak and construct security issues than others. In China, the CPC has authoritative positions from which official security issues are articulated. The leader has a key role in the formulation of propaganda and the trickledown effect of official policies as well as a role in the construction of security issues (Vuori, 2008: 70). Vuori (2008: 72) states that the audience has been poorly conceptualized in the Copenhagen School's thought on securitization, and what should be said within the model is that the audience has to be "… such that they have the ability to provide the securitizing actor with whatever he/she is seeking to accomplish with the securitization" and that the specific audiences have to be defined in each empirical case. In my case, I follow Alan Kluver's (1996: 130-134) list of three audiences for official policies and propaganda in China. First, officials for whom official language is a game and tool for social impact. Second, intellectuals for whom official language is a tool of aggression and defense. Third, the masses for whom official language is transformative, in that it legitimizes or delegitimizes different forms of action.

According to Kluver's audiences, I will assume that a single speech act can have multiple and parallel audiences at once, because a speech act in written or spoken form can be addressed to and be relevant for several audiences at a time, even if they interpret the message differently. A security argument can be accepted wholeheartedly by for example military officers but may fail in obtaining legitimacy among the general population or the individual minds (Vuori, 2008: 72-73). This divide could potentially be observed in situations where the military stands with the regime while the population riots.

Even though Chinese politics has a history of secrecy and restriction, Vuori (2008: 71) argues that although the "masses" have historically not been able to partake in policy processes, Chinese leaders still have the urge and need to appeal to them for support for

campaigns. Even though the leadership is engaged in a "dictatorship of the class enemy" Vuori (2008: 71) still believes the leaders have to appeal to the progressive side as well, which will argue for "more democracy". This eventually leads us to the culmination which emphasizes that argumentation in Chinese politics is not only about gaining acceptance, it also creates a foundation for actions (Vuori, 2008: 71).

4 The Methodological framework

In this chapter I explain the methodological framework and methodological approach used in this thesis. First, I describe my ontological and epistemological position. Second, I present the data collection techniques and discuss briefly how and why this approach was chosen for this project. Third, I present and discuss how I analyzed the data. This includes an explanation of (1) how I interpret Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), (2) how CDA functions in this thesis, and (3) why it is relevant for the theoretical framework. Fourth, I reflect on the overall limitations of this research project. Last, there will be a section about reflexivity.

4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Position – Social Constructivism

Ontology is concerned with the nature of social entities (Bryman, 2012: 32). Constructivism is an umbrella term that implies that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors (Bryman, 2012: 33). Social phenomena are therefore under constant revision because of the pluralism of perceptions and interpretations. It also implies that social phenomena and their meanings are produced or constructed by social actors through social interactions. An example of which being the researcher as "the researcher always presents a specific version of social reality, rather than one that can be regarded as definitive" (Bryman, 2012: 33).

For this thesis, I will adopt an ontological position of social constructivism. Social constructivism recognizes Immanuel Kant as its intellectual progenitor, but *social constructivism* contrasts with *constructionism* by having a social or group rather than an individual perspective (Young and Collin, 2004: 376). Social constructivism's attention to social processes in social construction shrouds the construction of knowledge as an interactional and rhetorical process and "reifies and externalizes the mental world which itself is constructed through discourse" (Young and Collin, 2004: 376).

As an epistemological position, social constructivism asserts that knowledge is specific to cultural and historical contexts in the sense that e.g. language "constitutes rather than reflects reality and, is both a pre-condition for thought and a form of social action" (Young and Collin, 2004: 377). The focus of enquiry, according to this position, should be on interactions, processes, and/or social practices (ibid). Following this, social constructivism does more than just point at something and say that it is socially constructed, rather it points to the historical and cultural location and situation of that construction (ibid). Social constructivism covers a variety of views, from acknowledging how social factors shape

interpretation to how the social world is constructed by social processes and relational practices (Young and Collin, 2004: 377). According to Young and Collin (2004: 377), there is a kind of unmasking that can be attributed to social constructivism, "particularly as what is unmasked is seen not to be the natural state of affairs, but constructs that have possibly served in the exploitation of various individuals and groups for an assortment of reasons". This will be connected to CDA later in this chapter.

4.2 Data Collection Techniques

To be able to answer the research question ("How does the Chinese government attempt to use discourse in official policies in order to securitize the question of climate change?") properly, I decided to collect the main data from two sources: official policy documents deriving from the state and speeches and writings from President Xi Jinping (the appendix has a complete list with detailed information about speeches, notes, and other writings of Xi Jinping used as data in this thesis). This implies that I have used the "documents as data" approach as the data collection technique (Bryman, 2012: 542). I have collected policy documents from one commission, one ministry, and from the State Council. They were selected on the basis of their content; they all have connections to climate change and environmental policies. The first document being used as data is the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP) for Economic and Social Development of The People's Republic of China (2016-2020). This document derives from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and explains in detail "China's strategic intentions and defines its major objectives, tasks, and measures for economic and social development" (NDRC, 2016: 6).

The second document comes from the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) and is called China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change 2019. It is a summary of what China's policies and actions have been the last years and is published "… to help all interested people fully understand China's policies and actions … in addressing climate change …" (MEE, 2019: 2). The last document comes from the State Council and is a more concrete Three-year action plan for cleaner air (2018-2020) (State Council, 2018e; MEE, 2018).

Three observations can be made from the selection of documents. The first is that all the documents are available in English. The second is that they derive from three different sectors of the Central Government. The last observation that can be made is the difference in scope and timeframe of the documents. The 13th FYP has a broad scope, covering all aspects of the national and social development goals in China in the period 2016-2020. The Policies

and Actions document covers national environmental policies that have been either implemented in 2018 or track the record of already implemented policies prior to 2018 in different sectors of the Chinese society, both governmental and private enterprises. The last, the Action Plan, has a scope of three years and derives from the State Council. "The document sets out the overall thinking, basic objectives, key tasks, and support measures for the control of air pollution" (State Council, 2018e; MEE, 2018).

These documents have been chosen partly because of their differences in scopes and aims, but also because of their availability online and because they are all in English. I argue that this can provide the analysis with a richer sense of the discourse on climate change in China from the governmental perspective because they do not originate from the same source.

The other data sources are speeches held by President Xi Jinping at various times and places. They are all published in two books called: *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* 1 and 2. These books were published in 2014 and 2017 respectively (with republications in 2018 and 2017) and have been distributed in China and abroad in more than nine languages. "The book … has played a significant role in helping officials and the general public to study and understand Xi Jinping … [and] helps the international community to better understand China and the CPC" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: publisher's note). Both books combined include eight speeches in total, stretching in the timeframe of April 2013 to August 2017.

The reason I chose this document as data approach is because it can provide a comprehensive picture of the contemporary environmental discourse at the governmental level in China. With this approach I am able to identify differences within the overarching discourse because some of the data are from the president while others are from ministries and commissions. This thesis will benefit from this approach not only through the documents' richness of available data and discourses, but also because they can help in answering the research question and sub-questions in an adequate manner.

4.3 Data Analysis: Critical Discourse Analysis

Mullet (2018: 116) describes CDA as "a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways in which discourses construct, maintain, and legitimize social inequalities". CDA rests on the notion that we use language in a purposeful way, and it examines the ways in which language produces and moderates social and psychological phenomena (Mullet, 2018: 116; Bryman, 2012: 536). However, CDA emphasizes the role of language as a power resource (ibid).

CDA does not have a unitary theory or set of methods (Mullet, 2018: 117; van Dijk, 1995). CDA can thus be used to understand and solve problems with any theory or methods that may be relevant (Mullet, 2018: 117). CDA studies can potentially pay attention to all levels and dimensions of discourse, from grammar, style, rhetoric, speech acts, pragmatic strategies, and those of interaction to non-verbal approaches such as film, sound, music, and/or body language as communicative events (van Dijk, 1995: 18).

CDA deals primarily of discourses of power abuse, injustice, and inequality and attempts to uncover implicit or concealed power relations and explain how these are in practice or how they are reproduced in daily life through political and media discourses, controlled by elite groups (Mullet, 2018: 117; Bryman, 2012: 536; van Dijk, 1995: 17-18). "CDA operates under the assumption that institutions act as gatekeepers to discursive resources; power and resource imbalances between 'speakers' and 'listeners' are linked to their unequal access to those resources" (Mullet, 2018: 117). The more descriptive and explanatory aims of CDA are the attempts to uncover, reveal or disclose what is implicit, hidden or otherwise not immediately obvious in relations of discursively enacted dominance (van Dijk, 1995: 18). This could for example be focused towards the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, or other discursive ways to influence the minds (and indirectly the actions) of the people in the interest of the powerful (van Dijk, 1995: 18; Bryman, 2012: 536; Mullet, 2018: 117).

It is an important field of study because, "the exercise of power influences knowledge, beliefs, understandings, ideologies, norms, attitudes, values, and plans …" (Mullet, 2018: 119). Power can also be exercised indirectly through the control of discourse by rhetorical means or control of context in which the discourse is taking place. Discourse consists of (but is not limited to) talk, text, and media and the ways of knowing, experiencing, and valuing the world (van Dijk, 1995: 17-18; Mullet, 2018: 119). In CDA, discourse is an integral component of social processes and is thus seen as constitutive, because discourse sustains and reproduces the status quo (Mullet, 2018: 119; Fairclough, 2001).

One of the first dilemmas that needs attention when conducting CDA research is to examine the nature of social power and power abuse, and the ways dominance is expressed in text and talk. If we choose to go along with van Dijk's (1995: 20) definition of social power, we can roughly define it

> as a form of control, of one group by another, if such control may extend to the actions
> and the minds of the dominated group members, and if dominance or power abuse

further implies that such control is in the interest of the dominant group, this means that dominant social group members may also exercise such control over text and talk. Furthermore, discursively implemented dominance involves preferential access to the context and text resources as a basis or resource of power, comparable to such social resources such as e.g. wealth, status, education, or social position (van Dijk, 1995: 20).

van Dijk (1995: 20) believes there is a close relationship between the patterns of discourse control and social power:

whereas ordinary people only have access to, and control over such discourse genres as everyday conversations with family members, friends or colleagues, and more passive access to institutional (e.g. bureaucratic) discourse and media discourse, the elites have access to and control over a vast array of both informal as well as public and institutional forms of text and talk.

To summarize, the elites have control over preferential access to the most influential and important genres of discourse in society, both formal and informal. Such access can be limited or unlimited depending on their powerful social or institutional position or function or the organization of the society in general.

In this thesis, I have used CDA in light of securitization theory to answer the question of whether or not the Chinese government attempts to use discourse in official policies to securitize the question of climate change. I utilize CDA to critically describe, interpret, and explain the way this happens in the Chinese environmental discourse and policies. I will only pay attention to the discourse through the dimensions of speech acts and the rhetorical aspect of discourse. This is because my data sources are all in written form, and I do not think it will be a fruitful discussion if I were to have e.g. a more linguistical or audio-visual approach in order to answer the research question. With this approach, I believe that we can find patterns of how the Chinese government shapes, produces, reproduces, and constructs the discourse on climate change and unmask, not only power relations, but also how the discourse can have an impact on the population in general.

This approach is well connected to the overall theoretical framework for two main reasons. First, we have already established that social constructivism believes that groups and their interactions produce, construct, or maintain social realities. In the previous chapter, I argued that the Copenhagen School is built on a social constructivist ontology because it requires political communities or societies to socially construct and agree on what constitutes a security issue. Second, I believe CDA is one of the many ways to interpret, analyze, and

discuss public policy documents as well as speeches of central political figures. I believe it is important to be critical of those policies that are produced, especially those produced in secrecy without the public having their voice in the process. Connected to this is the issue of speech acts and I firmly believe that one can study speech acts from a critical perspective in order not only to take the findings at face value, but to dive deeper into what those speech acts seeks to accomplish as well as their results.

Considering the theoretical and methodological framework, I argue that there is a synergy between these two elements and the research question. I chose this approach because of the emphasis on social constructions of security issues. Social constructivism, securitization theory, and CDA all highlight the importance of language as representations of social issues which ultimately constitutes threats in this perspective. Together, they form a strong alliance which is best suited to answer the research question because it also emphasizes the perceptions and representations of climate change and whether it constitutes a threat. This is partly because of securitization theory's unique ability to explain and identify the processes where security issues are formed among a political community.

When I conducted the data analysis, I read through the documents one at a time and asked myself four questions during the reading: (1) how is climate change represented in this text? (2) is it perceived as a threat? (3) whose security is threatened by climate change? And finally, (4) can I place the discourse in these documents within the theoretical framework? In practice, this made me read each of the documents four times with four different perspectives. I believe these questions are coherent with the sub-research questions I asked in the beginning of this thesis which attempts at identifying two aspects of the discourse: the first being how climate change is constructed as a security issue or threat and the second dwelling upon who the referent object could be. I tried to find quotes from these documents which would enable me to identify these constructions in the documents.

4.4 Research Limitations

Ideally, I would have used documents in their original language, but this was problematic due to the immediate language barrier. I do not speak, read, nor understand any form of Chinese so some sort of translation work would be required for this thesis. However, it is time consuming and might complicate the further research of this thesis as well as affect the feasibility of this project. A problem with using translated documents is that I can run the risk of missing out on phrases that may have different meanings in the original document as well

as other messages, nuances, and metaphors might risk of getting "lost in translation". However, since all the documents I have obtained are translated by official authorities in China, I believe this strengthens the status of the documents, at least in term of getting as correct a translation as possible.

Because of the political system in China, there is good reason to believe that the policy documents are to some degree censored and because they are translated into English, it can be assumed that they have been written in a way that can be misleading for foreign scholars. By this, I mean that phrases or policy objectives do not necessarily have to correspond with reality. This is not unique to the case of China because it can happen anywhere. This can, however, be countered to some degree by cross-checking or triangulating with secondary literature.

Related to this, it begs the question of why I did not choose to utilize interviews or other forms of methods in the data gathering process. My research is oriented around governmental discourses. I believe that ideally, I would have used interviews as the main method of gathering data, but this was literally and practically impossible because of the lack of accessibility. I sent out emails to people I believed could be my key informants, but I did not even get my foot in the door, because no one replied. I believe this is due to this being a critical assessment of domestic policies, a matter that could potentially be deemed politically sensitive. Due to the lack of access to key informants, I decided to use the policy documents because of their richness in data and its accessibility online.

Scholars who are critical to CDA point out that research conducted with CDA has been rather negative, and calls CDA scholars to pay more attention to positive or potentially transformative uses of discourse (Breeze, 2011: 493-494). Other critics question CDA's ability to produce an objective standpoint for research, how many CDA scholars fail to include matters of audiences into the analytical framework, and make naively deterministic assumptions about the workings of discourse and social reproduction (Breeze, 2011: 494). Breeze (2011: 520) believes that CDA is fundamentally defined by its political aims and researchers are usually explicit about their political commitments, at least in a general sense. Therefore, we should always (if we have the chance) read up on the authors so we can bear their commitments in mind when we interpret their works.

Qualitative research will in my opinion always be subjective. It is not simply something we can avoid addressing since people and interpretations are involved. This thesis is not an exception to this. I am fully aware that my research strategy and methodological approach is highly subjective. However, I have attempted to provide the reader to the best of

my ability, with my underlying assumptions ontologically and epistemologically speaking. I did this by, explaining how I interpret the theoretical framework, and now in this chapter, explaining how I went about researching. I do not necessarily view subjectivity as a weakness, but the weakness lies in the researcher's (in)ability to critically reflect, address, and show awareness of his or her positionality amidst the research process, data interpretation, and academia in general, which I will do next.

4.5 Reflexivity

When conducting research, one of the most important tasks of the researcher is to acknowledge their own position and subjectivity and biases and explain how they can affect the research. This is highly relevant in my case. Not only am I conducting research on another country and culture which is very different from the one I know from my own upbringing, I am also conducting research on a society which might be viewed as a closed society. I have learned a lot from doing research on China. First and foremost, you cannot always guarantee access. As I briefly explained earlier in this chapter, it is incredibly difficult for a master's student to get a foot in the door. I have learned that trust and having good relations with your Chinese colleagues or interviewees seems to matter a lot more in the case of China than in the West in my experience. I believe that if one is ever going to conduct quality research in China as a Westerner it can take years of trust and confidence building.

Being an outsider in this context can complicate things. First of all, there is the imminent language barrier which can be difficult to overcome. There are a lot of historical and cultural aspects embedded in language and phrases that can end up lost in translation, assuming, of course, that you got to them in the first place. Second, I am carrying with me Western ideas and concepts which I have adopted through my schooling and education in the West over the last twenty years, which can lead to misunderstandings or inaccuracies e.g. that Western though on the idea of a state, which does not necessarily reflect the "Eastern" thinking on what a state ought to be. This is just one of many examples, and I will reflect more on this in Chapter 6.

Related to this is the question of whether theoretical contributions developed in the West, by the West, and for the West is applicable in other cases. This can bring us on a path to discuss general scientific validity of social scientific theories, which we will come back to in Chapter 6. For now, and I truly believe that this question cannot be sufficiently answered in a paragraph of a master's thesis, but I believe that researcher must be aware if their theoretical

assumptions on human nature that are constructed in one specific setting, is universally applicable in other settings or societies which are fundamentally different from the one in which the theory was created and maybe even meant for. We cannot know this for sure before an empirical examination has taken place, but it is worth giving time to address and reflect upon.

I have already established that qualitative research is subjective and that that does not necessarily constitute a weakness or a flaw. This can, however, building on the reflections above, indicate that your starting point does not necessarily reflect the point of reference of your subjects or objects of research. Ontologically and epistemologically speaking, I can never know for certain how the people or objects I am doing research on view the world or reality around them. It is hard to assume other peoples' thoughts, intentions, or perspectives on the nature of reality, especially when they are part of the political elite in a closed society on the other side of the world that you have never met in person. I believe, however, that their *actions* and the *results* of those actions (e.g. policies) can help a researcher like myself to get a glimpse of their perspective on reality and that their intentions can be interpreted from the results of their actions. In other words, one can see parts of their take on reality and intentions by studying their actions, words, and the consequences of those actions and words.

To close this chapter, I would like to bring up one last point which is provided by Eriksson (cited in Floyd, 2010: 45): the contradiction between adopting a securitization perspective and not acknowledging one's own responsibility for widening the security agenda. The researcher's role in Security Studies is massive and as a general observation of the literature in preparing this thesis, only a small portion of scholars addresses their own position. The reflexive part here is that I am wondering about the possibility that my contribution to the security literature broadens the security agenda. The choice of literature, such as those pointing to shifts in Security Studies, are a large part of the more obvious widening of the security agenda. For example, this thesis can be considered a speech act due to the nature of the topic of this thesis. Indirectly or directly, am I, through the work of this thesis, contributing to the securitization or desecuritization of climate change on a more general level? And if the answer is yes, how can I know for sure if I am contributing to a desecuritization (which is deemed morally right by the Copenhagen School) and therefore contributing to a more peaceful world, if one chooses to follow the logic of the Copenhagen School? My answer would be that I cannot know for sure, but I am trying to be aware of it and the first step is to be reflexive about your own position in Security Studies.

Scholars often view themselves as observers rather than advocates, but I believe those lines sometimes are blurred and not necessarily dichotomous. By observing a phenomenon in the social world and writing about it, the researcher has taken an active choice which recognizes the reality of that phenomenon. This thesis for example, can *indicate* that the question of climate change has been securitized by the Chinese government. But has it really? Or can the fact that I give these phenomena – such as environmental security and securitization – attention, contribute to their existence, even if that existence is objectively false?

5 Key Findings and Analysis

In this chapter I will present the main findings from each document and analyze them. The analysis will be done in two parts. In the first part, I will start each section with an introduction to each of the documents, and I will begin with the 13th FYP (from the NDRC), then the Action Plan for Clean Air (State Council), followed by the main findings from Policies and Actions document (deriving from the MEE), and lastly I will present the main findings from President Xi Jinping's speeches. In this part, presenting the key findings, I will concentrate on two things: the representation of climate change and who is to be protected if climate change is constructed as a threat. These relate directly to the sub-research questions (1) *How is climate change constructed as a security issue or threat by the Chinese government through discourse?* (2) *Whose security is threatened by climate change?*

Then, in the second part, I will find answers to the main research question and interpret how and why the CPC might have attempted to securitize the question of climate change. Afterwards, I will swap lenses from a mere descriptive perspective to the critical discourse analysis perspective and explore what might lie behind the key findings which have been presented.

The findings imply that the government has attempted to securitize the issue of climate change for controlling society. This has been done by utilizing security speech acts which represents climate change as a threat to natural resources, the environment, and human health which are interpreted to be proxies for the *de facto* referent object – the development process.

5.1 The Key Findings on Climate Change and Referent Objects

5.1.1 The 13ᵗʰ Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the 13ᵗʰ FYP is a wide-spanning document which describes "China's strategic intentions and defines its major objectives, tasks, and measures for economic and social development" (NDRC, 2016: 6). The 13ᵗʰ FYP consists of 20 parts and 80 chapters spanning from themes such as agriculture, opening up, cyber economy, and environmental policies. They all have one thing in common: they are all connected to how China will further develop socially and economically. The FYP comes out in five-year periods and the 13ᵗʰ FYP spans from 2016-2020, meaning that while this thesis is being written, the CPC is well underway in developing the 14ᵗʰ FYP which will most likely to span from 2021-2025. In this thesis, I have utilized parts 1, 10, and 20 which describe the

development philosophy, the ecological and environmental policies, and the implementation of the 13th FYP, respectively.

In chapter 3 of the 13th FYP there are bullet points which indicate what major objectives are to be achieved in the 13th FYP period. One of these major objectives is to "achieve an overall improvement in the quality of the environment and ecosystems" (NDRC, 2016: 17). This is because China recognizes that their development model is unsustainable with the NDRC stating that

> [o]ur modes of production and ways of life will become more eco- friendly and low-carbon. We will extract and use energy and resources with much greater efficiency. Aggregate energy and water consumption, the total amount of land used for construction, and aggregate carbon emissions will be effectively controlled, and aggregate emissions of major pollutants will be significantly reduced. We will basically complete functional zoning and the building of protective barriers for eco-security (NDRC, 2016: 17).

This is one of the more common phrasings in the 13th FYP. Climate change is always seen in light of the development process, which is tied with China's way of life, mode of production, energy structure, etc. So, climate change is often equated with pollution and a process which is to be reversed by utilizing or enabling "green development". An example of this is when the FYP states that "while working hard to both adapt to and slow down climate change, we will take active steps to control carbon emissions, fulfil our commitments for emissions reduction, increase our capability to adapt to climate change, and fully participate in global climate governance …" (NDRC, 2016: 136). Other representations of climate change include how it is connected to the resource exhaustion of the natural resources and how those resources can be protected:

> We will establish monitoring and early- warning mechanisms for environmental and resource carrying capacity and take restrictive measures in regions which have reached or are approaching the warning lines. We will survey, evaluate, and monitor land, minerals, and other resources. We will increase surveying, mapping, and geoinformation service capabilities, carry out regular geographical monitoring, and promote the development of global geoinformation resources (NDRC, 2016: 121).

> Affording high priority to environmental protection and letting nature restore itself, we will ensure the protection and restoration of ecosystems, build ecosystem service corridors and biodiversity protection networks, and work to make natural ecosystems more stable and better able to provide services, thereby building robust ecological security barriers (NDRC, 2016: 132).

In this way, climate change is not directly constructed as a security issue, but rather a risk-multiplier. The environment is seen as a resource, even an asset, which the development process depends on for providing "services". Climate change, or even unsustainable development, can be interpreted as a risk-multiplier which can evolve into a more severe threat if the natural resources such as clean air, water, forests, soil, and minerals are contaminated or destroyed. However, there are areas of the 13th FYP where there are signs of more imminent environmental threats, for instance where grassland degradation, desertification, low levels of groundwater, and salinization are common security issues constructed by the FYP (NDRC, 2016: 132-133). The FYP has already recognized that the current development model is unsustainable and has deteriorated the environment especially when considering the overuse of natural resources and climate change. A biproduct of this development model can jeopardize the further development process, thus creating a vicious circle. The 13th FYP deals with this problem early on in the document and recognizes this point: "Development is uneven … spatial development is inefficient, resource constraints grow increasingly tight, and the continuing trend toward further ecological and environmental degradation is yet to be fundamentally reversed" (NDRC, 2016: 11-12).

The quote above, about establishing monitoring and early-warning mechanisms for environmental and resource carrying capacity, represents one of the ways the 13th FYP attempts to deal with the issue of deteriorating of the environment, it seems that the NDRC believes that by controlling nature and observing the warning signs, they can understand how far they can push the natural resources and the environment without having to sacrifice the progress of development. Although some passages of the 13th FYP emphasize the importance of protecting the environment, it is always seen in relation to how the environment can provide services for the development process, making the development process the *de facto* referent object. A good example of this is a passage from chapter 45, section 3, which is about ecological conservation and restoration. Here, the NDRC claims that they will "strengthen protection of scenic areas, forest parks, wetland parks, and desert parks, improve roads and other infrastructure in forest areas, and promote the appropriately scaled development of goods and services for leisure activities, tourism, and health activities" (NDRC, 2016: 134). In this quote, we clearly see that the environment is worth protecting, but not because nature itself is worth protection, but because the environment is an asset and preserving nature can encourage the launch of more eco-tourism which in turn opens up for more economic development.

5.1.2 The Action Plan for Clean Air

The theme for the 2018 World Environment Day, announced by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, was "Act towards a Beautiful China", with an aim to encourage the general public to actively contribute to the building of an "ecological civilization" and to work together to develop a beautiful country that enjoys blue skies, green lands, and clean waters (Xi and Haibo, 2020: 9). At the first meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Commission, Xi Jinping, pointed out that "the goal and task of the tough fight against pollution is to reduce the total emissions of key pollutants by 2020 and improve the overall quality of the ecological environment" (Xi and Haibo, 2020: 9). More specifically, President Xi believed it was necessary to have several "symbolic major battles", namely to win the battle for the protection of blue sky; to do a good job in controlling pollution caused by diesel trucks; urban black-odorous water body treatment; comprehensive treatment of the Bohai Sea and Yangtze River protection and restoration; water source protection; and agricultural and rural pollution. "These seven symbolic major battles will be the focus of fighting against pollution in the next three years" (Xi and Haibo, 2020: 9).

In a mobilization meeting held on June 8, 2018 by the Minister of Ecology and the Environment, Li Ganjie, he explained that the "move was to implement the requirements of the central government to fight a good battle against pollution (State Council, 2018a). He continued: "The top priority is winning the battle against air pollution to return the blue sky to the people, while a three-year action plan against air pollution must be released as quickly as possible" (State Council, 2018a). Five days later, the State Council demanded more air pollution control efforts in "pursuit of continuous air quality improvement … " (State Council, 2018b). After the Council meeting presided over by Premier Li Keqiang, a statement was released stating "the main battlefields of the war to defend the blue skies" included the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region (State Council, 2018b). According to Premier Li, "… For China to win the battle against air pollution, it is necessary to upgrade the industrial structure and weed out outdated capacities, as the issue of air pollution essentially stems from the current economic structure and mode of consumption" (State Council, 2018c). The Premier stated "the government should enhance law enforcement for environmental protection, promote information disclosure and evaluation mechanisms, and mobilize the whole society to defend our blue skies" (State Council, 2018c). On June 24, the Central Committee of the CPC promulgated *the Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Comprehensively Strengthening Ecological and Environmental Protection and Resolutely*

Fighting the Uphill Battles over Pollution, which expressed the opinions that "we must resolutely win the blue sky, clean water, and pure land defense battle" (Xi and Haibo, 2020: 10; State Council, 2018d).

This was a small part in how the Three-Year Action Plan for Winning the Blue Sky Defense Battle, or The Action Plan for Clean Air as it was more commonly known, came to be. Upon the approval of Premier Li Keqiang, the document sets out "the overall thinking, basic objectives, key tasks, and support measures for the control of air pollution, and draws the timeline and road map for successfully defending the blue sky against air pollution" (Xi and Haibo, 2020: 10). The document describes how the air quality is to be improved in a very technical manner, but in this study the language and meaning of the document is of interest. One of the key objectives is that "[t]he rate of days with good air quality should reach 80 percent annually, and the percentage of heavily polluted days should decrease by 25 percent or more from 2015 levels in cities at prefecture level and above" (State Council, 2018e). To reach this goal

> … the State Council urged authorities to adjust industrial structures and promote green development, rectify the energy structure to build a clean, efficient energy system, adjust transportation systems to advance green transport, and enhance pollution management by optimizing land use systems. It called on efforts to carry out major action plans and activities to reduce pollution, coordinate prevention and control to cope with heavily polluted days, and improve laws, regulations and policies. Authorities also should build infrastructure and capabilities and strengthen law enforcement, while clearly assigning responsibilities and engaging the public in protecting the environment (State Council, 2018e; MEE, 2018).

This Action Plan would later lead to other Action Plans from different parts of the industrial sectors, which we will see in the Policies and Actions document. The Action Plan also

> … stresses the importance to carry forward air pollution control initiatives in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and surrounding areas, Yangtze River delta, and Fenhe-Weihe Plain, by wielding the economic, legal, technical, and administrative instruments, if necessary, under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, the decisions and deployments of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council as well as the guiding principles of the National Conference on Ecological and Environmental Protection, by upholding the new development philosophy, mobilizing the whole nation, and controlling the pollution at the source, so as to win the blue sky defense battle and achieve multiple wins in the environmental, economic, and social dimensions (MEE, 2018).

The objective over the three-year period is for the total load of main air pollutants to be reduced, along with greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which should lead to less days with heavy air pollution; "remarkably improved air quality, and much greater sense of happiness for the people from the sight of blue skies" (MEE, 2018).

Climate change, in the form of air pollution, is represented as an enemy which is to be defeated because it has taken the blue sky from the people of China. Air pollution – the main focus in this document – along with water contamination and soil pollution, are constructed as the adversaries of the state and the Chinese society. This document has thus been regarded as China's declaration of war on smog and air pollution as well as a prolonging of the 2013 documents on fighting air pollution (Davis, 2018; Eberhardt, 2015: 36). From this, the sub-research questions can be answered by stating that climate change is constructed as the enemy of the state and the people, and that clean air and the "people's happiness" is threatened by climate change and air pollution.

5.1.3 China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change (2019)

This document serves as a summary of China's policies and actions for addressing climate change until the year 2019, a summary of which has been distributed annually since 2016. It describes how different sectors of society have worked towards mitigating climate change, by describing what has been done and how it has been done. It is following up on the goals described in the 13th FYP. The document contains of eight parts with their respective subchapters describing how China has worked towards climate change mitigation and adaption, how they contribute to the global climate governance, and how they have worked to actively involve and broaden the social participation in the general population in relation to climate change.

In the foreword, the MEE expresses that

> China is still a developing country with GDP per capita lower than the world average, faced with the prominent problem of insufficient and imbalanced development. It is also facing a series of arduous tasks, such as economy development, people's livelihood improvement, poverty eradication, and winning the battle against pollution (MEE, 2019: 1).

The first chapter of this document is about how different industries have implemented policies in order to mitigate climate change. Overall, the discourse in this document is about climate change mitigation in relation to the development process. One example is from 2018 when

"China had eliminated and shut down over 20 GW [gigawatt] of backward coal-fired power generation units, overfulfilling the 13th FYP target two years ahead of schedule" (MEE, 2019: 3). Following this, a section of this chapter emphasizes how different industries contribute to the national economic growth such as "the tertiary industry realized an added value of CNY 48,970 billion, accounting for 53.3% of the national GDP … The service industry continued to play a key role in the smooth operation of China's economy, and its contribution rate to economic growth was close to 60%" (MEE, 2019: 3). As previously mentioned, the document mentions the policies implemented by other sectors such as the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), which issued the *Implementation Opinions on Further Promoting the Development of Green Civil Aviation* and prepared and issued the *Work Plan of Civil Aviation on Implementation of the Three-Year Action Plan on winning the battle for the Blue Sky* (MEE, 2019: 5). This workplan puts forward how the civil aviation industry should work to replace oil with electricity in aviation. In 2018, the Ministry of Transport (MOT) issued the *Opinions on Comprehensively Enhancing Ecological and Environmental Protection and Resolutely Winning the Tough Battle for Prevention and Control of Pollution* (MEE, 2019: 5). This policy was created to increase railway traffic volume and reduce polluting emissions from transport production links. Lastly, the National Railway Administration of the People's Republic of China (NRA) issued *Notice on Issuing and the Goals and Measures for Implementing the Spirit of the First Session of the Central Finance and Economics Committee and the National Conference on Ecological and Environmental Protection to Win the Battle for the Blue Sky* and *Opinions on Comprehensively Enhancing Ecological and Environmental Protection and Resolutely Winning the Tough Battle for Prevention and Control of Pollution in the Railway Industry* (MEE, 2019: 5).

Up until now, climate change has only been spoken about in correlation to industry, economic growth, the greening of the development process and economic growth, as well as air pollution as the main issue. In the second chapter of this document, which is about climate change adaption, the MEE states that

> Since 2018, continued efforts have been made to advance the cause of adapting to climate change and positive progress has been made in agriculture, water resources, forests and other ecosystems, coastal zones and coastal ecosystems, human health, comprehensive disaster prevention and mitigation, risk control and early warning of climate disasters and international cooperation on adaption to climate change (MEE, 2019: 12).

In the agricultural sector, policy documents such as the *National Agricultural Modernization Plan (2016-2020)* were "promulgated to actively respon[d] [to the] adverse effects on agricultural production caused by climate change-induced drought and flood, sudden outbreaks of plant diseases and insect pests, and extreme climate events" (MEE, 2019: 12). Furthermore, in forestry, there was a specific five-year action plan in response to climate change, which emphasized "the afforestation ratio of fire-resistant, drought/humidity resistant, pest-resistant, and extreme temperature-resistant tree species were increased, the forest cultivation and management mode adapted to climate change … and the protection of forests and natural forest resources was strengthened" (MEE, 2019: 13). This was in a series of efforts to monitor and prevent forest disasters such as forest fires and pest invasions, in order to "enhance the adaptability and resilience of forestry ecosystem to climate change" (ibid).

This document is unique in that it has its own concrete section dedicated to the issues of human health in connection to climate change:

> China improved the government's public service ability and management level in adapting to climate change, promoted the establishment of health monitoring, investigation and risk assessment institutions and standard systems, and provided sound medical and health services in case of high temperature weather. It strengthened disease prevention and control, dynamic monitoring of epidemics and research on influencing factors closely related to climate change, and formulated public health emergency plans and rescue mechanisms in close relation to climate change induced epidemics such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), human infection with H7N9 avian influenza, and dengue fever. In various provinces (regions and municipalities), pilots were designated for public place health hazard factors monitoring, and high-temperature heat wave and health risk early warning systems were established. China also strengthened research on people's health to adapt to climate change, organized human health protection programs in the context of adaptation to climate change to improve the public's ability to cope with extreme weather such as high-temperatures heat wave (MEE, 2019: 15).

In this document, climate change is seen in its connection to the development process, as a situation to which the development process must adapt to. Climate change is seen in the intersection of development, poverty alleviation, and businesses' contribution to the national economic growth as well as their contribution in lowering emissions. Climate change seems to be equated with pollution and emissions relating to economic development. When the document speaks of adaption to climate change it emphasizes that natural resources need to adapt to climate change in order to be utilized. Climate change is at times represented or constructed as a threat. Air pollution is seen as a battle (in accordance with The Action Plan which came out before the Policies and Actions document) which must be fought if pollution

and climate change are to be defeated. This is also an adversarial discourse as it depicts climate change as the enemy which needs to be defeated in order to take back the Blue Sky. In other cases, climate change has induced and contributed to droughts and floods, which have compromised or even jeopardized sectors such as agriculture as climate change has had adverse effects on agricultural production.

In this case, climate change is constructed as a risk-multiplier while at the same time seen as a threat to natural resources such as forests that are frequently threatened by forest fires, high temperatures, insect pests, plant diseases, and extreme climate events. This document is the only one that refers to the threats climate change poses to human health. Climate change is depicted as a risk-multiplier and inducer of pests and diseases as well as extreme temperatures which is, in the long run, a threat to human health.

5.1.4 Speeches and Notes from President Xi Jinping

Lastly, we arrive at the speeches and notes from President Xi Jinping. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, these speeches and notes are published in English in two books in a series called *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China I* and *II*. These books "… ha[ve] played a significant role in helping officials and the general public to study and understand Xi Jinping … [and] helps the international community to better understand China and the CPC" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: publisher's note).

During a voluntary tree-planting activity in Beijing, President Xi spoke about the importance of forests and how the population should be encouraged to plant trees. He explained how the CPC's

> … tree-planting campaign was launched more than 30 years ago. It has boosted the recovery and development of China's forest resources, and increased public awareness of the importance of tree planting and environmental protection. However, we must recognize the fact that China is still an ecologically vulnerable country with a scarcity of forest resources, and faces a long-term and arduous mission of afforestation and ecological improvement. Forests are the mainstay and an important resource for the land ecosystem. They are also an important ecological safeguard for the survival and development of mankind. It is hard to imagine what would happen to the earth and human beings without forests (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 229).

At other times, President Xi Jinping stressed the importance of forest resources and environmental protection by emphasizing that

Our efforts for ecological conservation and environmental protection will benefit our future generations. We must be aware that it is a pressing and difficult task to protect the environment and control pollution, and that it is important and necessary to advance ecological progress. We must take a responsible attitude towards our people and future generations, be resolute in controlling environmental pollution, strive to usher in a new era of ecological progress and improve the environment for our people to live and work in. Ecological progress is of vital importance to the future of the nation and the wellbeing of its people. … the CPC listed ecological progress along with economic, political, cultural and social progress as the five goals in the overall plan for the cause of Chinese socialism, vowing to promote ecological progress to build a beautiful China and achieve lasting and sustainable development of the Chinese nation. (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 230).

The President also stressed that in order to promote ecological progress, it was vital that the society implemented the Party's guiding principles in order to raise awareness of the need to "respect, protect, and accommodate ourselves to nature, follow the basic state policy of resource conservation and environmental protection … and promoting its natural restoration" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 230). President Xi Jinping continued with stating that China "… must strike a balance between economic growth and environmental protection, and bear in mind that protecting the environment equates to protecting productivity and that improving the environment also equates to developing productivity" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 231). This is backed up with the argument that "a sound ecological environment is the basic foundation for the sustainable development of humanity and society" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 232). In order to realize this, Xi Jinping called for the establishment of "… the strictest possible institutions and legislation in … order to guarantee ecological progress … [and] we will establish an accountability system, and call to account officials whose ill-judged decisions have caused serious ecological damage" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 232).

In a speech at the Fifth Plenary Sessions of the 18th CPC Central Committee, President Xi underlined the

Serious pollution to the environment, especially to the atmosphere, water and soil, has become an apparent threat to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. It is people's earnest wish to stop environmental deterioration and improve the quality of the environment; it is also an important goal of the 13th Five-year Plan (2016-2020) to which we attach great importance, and which we must efficiently promote (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 423).

In other speeches, Xi Jinping has emphasized that "ecological destruction and pollution affect both sustainable economic and social development and public health" and that it is an issue that needs to be addressed with great effort (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 425). He also

believes that ecological progress is a component in the overall approach to development and has stressed the importance of natural resources by saying that "clear waters and green mountains are invaluable assets" (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 426). Furthermore, President Xi has emphasized the relationship between human beings and nature:

> Humanity must respect, protect, and stay in harmony with nature in its development activities; otherwise nature will take its revenge. This is a law that everyone should observe. Humanity relies on nature, and the relationship between the two is one of symbiosis. Harm to nature will eventually hurt humanity. Only by following the law of nature can we effectively avoid going astray in our exploitation and utilization of nature. We should protect the ecosystems as preciously as we protect our eyes, and cherish it as dearly as we cherish our lives (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 428-429).

Xi Jinping, based on the discourse from these documents, represents climate change as a security issue. He emphasizes China's ecological vulnerability through its particular connection to the scarce forest resources and the afforestation issue the forests face. Climate change, in the form of pollution of soil, water, and air, as well as overall environmental deterioration are constructed as the main security issue. Climate change is constructed as the pollution or damage to the environment leading to the withering or diminishing of the natural resources, thus making climate change a long-term threat. Xi Jinping emphasizes that serious environmental pollution has become an apparent threat to the development of the Chinese society. Parts of the discourse represent climate change as a long-term threat that humanity must both adapt to and reverse because harm to nature will lead to nature taking revenge sometime in the future.

From the speeches and notes of President Xi Jinping, climate change is portrayed as a security issue in relation to the pollution of the environment. We saw how the president argues that forest resources act as a safeguard and the mainstay of the land ecosystems, and he advocates for the importance of forest resources for human survival and development. Xi Jinping also argues that environmental protection is important for future generations, which will not have the same pool of resources if the deterioration of the environment continues at the same rate. Another reason why China should promote the reduction of emissions is, according to the president, to give people a good environment to work and live in, on top of it being good for the future generations of China, because a good environment is of importance to the people's wellbeing. This is a very people-oriented view, but the people are not the only thing climate change can threaten. Natural resources as the foundation for the development process is equally important to protect from the dangers of climate change. President Xi

Jinping explicitly says that protecting the environment is protecting the productivity process, i.e. the development process, where the latter is the *de facto* referent object.

5.2 The Securitization of Climate Change and the Critical Discourse Analysis

This subsection provides answers for the main research question (*How does the Chinese government attempt to use discourse in official policies in order to securitize the question of climate change?*) and critically addresses the approach of the Chinese government. In the previous subsection, 5.1, I found that the 13th FYP depicts climate change as intertwined with the development process. Climate change is viewed as a risk-multiplier or a long-term threat and natural resources are to be protected because they are the foundation of the development process. The Action Plan's discourse is fundamentally different from that of the 13th FYP. The Action Plan is the declaration of war on smog and air pollution as well as it is an adversarial discourse, representing climate change and air pollution as the enemy of the state and the Chinese people. The Policies and Actions document finds itself in the middle ground compared to the previous documents. It acknowledges the Battle for the Blue Sky as well as the different industrial sectors' contributions to climate change and how they aim at regulating the different parts of the economic sector in order to adapt to the changing environment. The Policies and Actions document supports the adversarial discourse of The Action Plan while at the same time stresses the importance of the natural resources (like the 13th FYP) and how the natural resources face both long-term threats (such as changes in the environment) and short-term threats such as forest fires, salinization, pests, diseases, and overall degradation. President Xi Jinping stresses the importance of the natural resources as well. Climate change, often described as pollution, is viewed by him as a serious problem and is seen as a threat that needs to be dealt with in order to secure the sustainability of the development process, the wellbeing of the people, as well as the overall future of the nation.

In order to answer the research question, we must ask two important questions: how has the Chinese government attempted to securitize the issue of climate change and why? We have already established that most of the documents investigated in this study portray climate change as a threat in one way or another and utilize an adversarial discourse to depict climate change. In order to analyze how the CPC has attempted to securitize the issue of climate change, we need to take a look at the speech acts in which the securitization process starts. As a reminder, we already established in Chapter 3 that a speech act and the securitization of an issue can be used for a number of political purposes. The main purposes according to Vuori

(2008) are: to break established political rules, to reproduce political order, to renew discipline, or to control society and the political order. This is done by utilizing security logic, representing an issue as an existential threat to a relevant audience in order to: (1) raise an issue on the agenda; (2) legitimize future acts; (3) deter the threat; (4) legitimize past acts or reproduce the security status of an issue; or (5) control, in order to obtain obedience. In Chapter 3, we also established Wæver's facilitating conditions of speech acts as (1) the security language of the speech act, (2) the authority of the securitizing actor, and (3) the historical association with the threat. Furthermore, we established that the identified audience must have the ability to provide the securitizing actor with whatever he or she is seeking to accomplish with the securitization, and that officials, military officials, or the masses as a few examples.

5.2.1 The Speech Acts in the Documents – The "How"

We will begin with the 13th FYP once again. The 13th FYP has several sections and quotes that can be interpreted as security speech acts. Two examples are:

> The period covered by the 13th Five-Year Plan will be decisive for finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. We must implement the strategic plans and policies of the CPC Central Committee, achieve an accurate understanding of profound changes in domestic and international environments and circumstances faced by China in its development efforts, proactively adapt to, understand, and guide the new normal in economic development, and comprehensively advance innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared development so as to ensure that a moderately prosperous society is established in all respects (NDRC, 2016: 6).

> The period covered by the 13th Five-Year Plan will present even more complex domestic and international environments for China's development ... Geopolitical competition is growing fiercer in some regions, traditional and non-traditional security threats have become intertwined, and international relations are more complicated than ever. With factors causing instability and uncertainty in China's external environment growing markedly, greater risks and challenges will be faced in our country's development (NDRC, 2016: 10-11).

These passages from the 13th FYP utilize security language by emphasizing that they "must" implement the strategic plans of the CPC as the changes in international relations create uncertainty for China's future environment to operate within. The first quote can be interpreted as securitization for control, by way it concentrates on the idea that society must implement the policies of the government because it is the only way to ensure the prospering of the Chinese society. The second quote, however, is different. We must remember that the

NDRC is in charge of overseeing the overall development in the country as well as carrying out reforms. I interpret the second quote as the NDRC warning the audience (which in this case is the president, the state council, military officers, and perhaps academics) of the changes in the domestic, regional, and international security environment and by doing this, is securitizing for raising an issue of the agenda. This is because the NDRC encourages and enables the decisionmakers (which happen to be part of the audience of the FYP) to put measures into effect to cope with the situation. This is done by focusing on the "factors causing instability and uncertainty in China's external environment" (NDRC, 2016: 10-11). However, there are no indications that the security logic which is utilized in these statements are those of existential threats. The quotes reflect that the NDRC has viewed the change in regional and geopolitical security politics as something that is a challenge to China, but not as an existential threat.

There are, in other parts of the 13th FYP, phrasings that lean towards what will be done in the future. This is not unexpected as the FYP is a plan that describes what major goals, objectives, and targets are to be fulfilled in the coming five years.

> We will establish a sound national dynamic monitoring and early- warning system for ecological security and conduct regular comprehensive surveys and assessments of ecological risks. We will improve the coordination network for national, provincial, municipal, and county responses to ecological and environmental emergencies, and refine information reporting and release mechanisms for such emergencies. We will become stricter in relation to compensation for environmental damage and require industries that pose a high risk to the environment to carry liability insurance for environmental pollution (NDRC, 2016: 139).

In this quote, we clearly see the point I made in the previous paragraph. By establishing national monitoring systems, the NDRC sends a warning to different industries and corporations that contribute to climate change through pollution (and thus jeopardize the sustainable development process). They should consider lowering their emissions in order avoid punishment because the state has now warned it "will become stricter in relation to industries that pose a high risk to the environment to carry liability insurance for environmental pollution". In this way, the quote above can be interpreted as securitization for control because the government tries to force the industry sector to change its ways in order to fulfill the targets for the 13th FYP, i.e. "do as we say, or else". Alternatively, this can be interpreted as securitization for deterrence because the government attempts to intimidate the industry sector to change its ways without resorting to extraordinary measures, with the

speech act functioning as a warning that future actions may be implemented. As with the previous quote, there are no indications in this quote that the threats climate change poses are of an existential nature. Though we have already established that the 13th FYP regards climate change as a risk-multiplier or even a long-term threat.

In the Action Plan, the discourse is different from the one we have seen in the 13th FYP. For example, in order to win the battle for the blue sky

> … the State Council urged authorities to adjust industrial structures and promote green development, rectify the energy structure to build a clean, efficient energy system, adjust transportation systems to advance green transport, and enhance pollution management by optimizing land use systems. It called on efforts to carry out major action plans and activities to reduce pollution, coordinate prevention and control to cope with heavily polluted days, and improve laws, regulations and policies. Authorities also should build infrastructure and capacities and strengthen law enforcement, while clearly assigning responsibilities and engaging the public in protecting the environment (State Council, 2018e).

In this phrasing, the State Council *urged* authorities to change the entire society by any means necessary. In this case, the only audience which qualifies for the State Council is the President of China and the political elite of the CPC as the ones who can give the State Council, if we see it as a unitary actor, what it wants. It can thus indicate that the State Council is attempting to securitize the issue of air pollution in order to raise an issue on the agenda, as it urges authorities to adjust industrial structures, promote green development, and rectify the energy system before it is too late to correct the mistakes made by an unsustainable development model. However, the document does not address any specific authority, only "authorities" are mentioned in the document. For the reasons already mentioned, it is not unlikely that the State Council is really urging the President to do something about the air pollution. The wording in the quote, using words like "urged", "adjust", "rectify", and "call on efforts", can indicate that the State Council views the situation as dire, in order to win the Battle for the Blue Sky thus the security logic for survival can be interpreted as being evoked by the State Council.

On the other hand, the Action Plan (as quoted in the previous sub-chapter)

> … stresses the importance to carry forward the air pollution control initiatives, especially in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and surrounding areas, Yangtze River delta, and Fenhe-Weihe Plain, by wielding the economic, legal, technical, and administrative instruments, if necessary, under the guidance of the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, the decisions and deployments of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council as well as the guiding principles of the National Conference on Ecological and Environmental

> Protection, by upholding the new development philosophy, mobilizing the whole nation, and controlling the pollution at the source, so as to win the blue sky defense battle and achieve multiple wins in the environmental, economic, and social dimensions (MEE, 2018).

In this quote, the Action Plan calls on the authorities to fight air pollution by taking complete control over initiatives and using whatever means it deems necessary in order to defeat air pollution and win the Battle for the Blue Sky (by wielding economic, legal, technical, and administrative instruments). In order to win the Battle for the Blue Sky, the Action Plan emphasizes that with upholding the new development philosophy as well as mobilizing the whole nation, the Chinese society can win the Blue Sky defense battle and achieve "multiple wins" as the most important contributing factor to the outcome of the battle. This is interpreted as war rhetoric because it is utilizing a security speech act and security logic by the State Council in order to securitize the issue of air pollution for control. This is because it is calling upon authorities to take complete control of the society in order to fight air pollution and obedience is being demanded by the State Council of its subordinates.

In the Policies and Actions document, there are few examples of speech acts which can classify as attempts at securitization, but there are two exceptions to that observation. The first being the reference to

> Policy documents including *the National Agricultural Modernization Plan (2016-2020)* were promulgated to actively response adverse effects on agricultural production caused by climate change-induced drought and flood, sudden outbreaks of plant diseases and insect pests, and extreme climate events (MEE, 2019: 12).

This can be an example of securitization to legitimize past acts because it is referring to the actively response to adverse effects on agriculture by utilizing the modernization plan and the fact that the actions have already taken place. Plus there is an explanation provided to the actions taken. This document, as we established in the previous sub-chapter, is a summary of the policies and actions China has implemented in or prior to 2019 in order to fight climate change. The document provides summaries of different sectors' contributions to fighting climate change. In the previous sub-chapter, we saw that among other things, the document emphasizes the work done in the agricultural sector as well as those regarding water resources, forestry resources, coastal ecosystems, and human health.

Chapter 5 in the Policies and Actions document also summarizes how broad social participation contributed to the fight against climate change. This is the second exception as mentioned above. The document concentrates on how "a green and low-carbon development

pattern with broad social participation has been formed by guidance of the Chinese government, using multi-media communication, and encourage enterprises and citizens to take active actions" (MEE, 2019: 21). The Policies and Actions document emphasizes the job the MEE and relevant departments did and e.g. how they "… carried out the National Low-Carbon Day publicity activities with the theme of 'Low-carbon activities to protect the blue sky'" (MEE, 2019: 21). This activity was done in the Jiangxi Province and the MEE kept carrying out thematic activities such as "Beautiful China, I'm the Practitioner" (MEE, 2019: 21) which demonstrated the progress and achievements of the government and the social circles in improving low-carbon development, practicing green lifestyles, and organizing training seminars for officials at the departmental level in a ministry or provincial government in order to "enhance the awareness and understanding of the provincial-level ecology and environment departments of addressing climate change" (MEE, 2019: 21). The document also mentions the work of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) which organized "Plastic Reduction in Action" that called on the public to reduce the harm of plastic to aquatic wildlife (MEE, 2019: 21). Finally, in conjunction with the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC and the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC, specialized training courses at the provincial and ministerial level were held in order to pay attention to the publicity and guidance to the public (MEE, 2019: 22). It made use of the "Disaster Mitigation Day", "International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction", and "National Fire Prevention Day" to carry out educational activities to popularize safety knowledge, train self-rescue, and prepare the forecasting, warning and science popularization of the dangers of natural disasters (MEE, 2019: 22).

By summarizing the actions and policies of China in relation to addressing climate change and focusing on reversing the adverse effects of climate change as well as lecturing the population and subordinates of the CPC on climate change and how everyone can contribute to fighting climate change, can be interpreted as both securitization for legitimizing past acts and renewing the security status of an issue. This is because the discourse is partly implying that "we did this, in order to secure that" which in this case seems to be legitimizing the policies and actions taken in addressing climate change in order to mitigate and adapt to the changing environment. The audience for this particular speech act can be the President, the State Council, the political elite of the CPC – and of course, as with all the documents used in this thesis, due to the English translation – foreigners and scholars based outside China who wish to understand what China has done in order to address climate change.

In the President's speeches and notes, we find statements which can be interpreted in several ways. If we rewind to the President speaking at the voluntary tree-planting activity in Beijing, we remember that he believed forests were the mainstay and an important resource for the ecosystem and that they were important safeguards for the survival and development of human beings. In that same speech he added that

> Our Party raised a requirement to build a beautiful China at its 18th National Congress. The whole society should enhance its ecological awareness and strengthen environmental protection in accordance with this requirement, so as to build China into a country with a good environment (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 229).

In this particular speech act, the audience is of course all those who attended the tree-planting activity but also party officials and the news media which covered this event. The President is emphasizing the important role of trees in the country's development process and he finds it "hard to imagine what would happen to the earth and human beings without forests" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 229). One way to interpret this statement is securitization for control. This is because the President emphasizes the important role of trees for human survival which is urgent if the afforestation process in the country continues. He also highlights the job the Party has done as well as demanding people to rally behind the Party and follow their "requirement" for enhancing China's environment. The way the President phrases it can be interpreted as the Party being the only guarantee for lasting and sustainable development in such a way that the society can prosper.

In a speech at the sixth group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee over which Xi Jinping presided, he claimed that China must strike a balance between economic growth and environmental protection (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 231). This is the same speech in which he stated that protecting the environment equated to protecting productivity, President Xi Jinping also called for the

> … strictest possible institutions and legislation in place in order to guarantee ecological progress … [and] [w]e will establish an accountability system, and call to account officials whose ill-judged decisions have caused serious ecological damage (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 232).

This paragraph can be interpreted both as securitization for control and securitization for deterrence. In the case of the former, the speech act seeks to establish a framework which essentially forbids officials of making ill-judged decisions and sacrificing a good environment in order to secure short term economic growth. In the case of the latter, securitization for

deterrence, this speech act is not directly aimed for the threat itself, which in this case is ecological damage, but it is rather aimed at officials and disloyal party members who might abstain from damaging the environment in fear of being punished by the "strictest possible institutions and legislation". In this way, the speech act can aim at renewing discipline among party members and officials.

Second to last, at the fifth plenary session of the 18th CPC Central Committee on October 26, 2015, Xi Jinping stated that

> Serious pollution to the environment, especially to the atmosphere, water and soil, has become an apparent threat to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. It is people's earnest wish to stop environmental deterioration and improve the quality of the environment; it is also an important goal of the 13th Five-year Plan (2016-2020) to which we attach great importance, and which we must efficiently promote (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 423).

I interpret this statement as securitization in order to legitimize future actions, or the Wæverian model of the Copenhagen School. This speech was made in 2015 and the audience, included the CPC Central Committee. Climate change, seen as pollution, is established as a threat to the development process and the President urges the government to deal with it. This can be seen as a securitization in order to lay a foundation for future actions since President Xi also mentions the 13th FYP, which was set to be implemented the year after this speech was given. This speech can also be interpreted as securitization for raising an issue of the agenda, but the President already mentions that the issue of environmental pollution is a concrete goal of the 13th FYP, implying that the issue is already raised on the agenda.

A clearer example of securitization for raising an issue on the agenda is when the President spoke about the symbiosis of humanity and nature:

> Humanity must respect, protect, and stay in harmony with nature in its development activities; otherwise nature will take its revenge. This is a law that everyone should observe. Humanity relies on nature, and the relationship between the two is one of symbiosis. Harm to nature will eventually hurt humanity. Only by following the law of nature can we effectively avoid going astray in our exploitation and utilization of nature (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 428)

In this statement, the President is warning the audience (which in this case was the political elite as the speech was held May 26, 2017 at the 41st group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee) of the dangers in overdeveloping and exhausting the natural resources. The President utilizes security logic when he claims that nature will

take its revenge and hurt humanity in the future if the exploitation of nature continues at the same rate.

5.2.2 The Critical Discourse Analysis – The "Why"

The majority of the data imply that the government, if we are to distill the findings into a single discourse, has attempted to securitize the issue of climate change mainly for control in relation to the theoretical framework. This has been done by utilizing security speech acts which represent climate change as a threat to natural resources, the environment, and human health which all serve as proxies for the *de facto* referent object which is – in this study identified as – the development process. The question that remains to be answered is why the CPC has attempted this?

As for Xi Jinping, he might have an interest in securitizing climate change and as he states in his speech where he explicitly calls climate change an apparent threat (Foreign Language Press, 2017: 423) and highlights the efforts of the 13th FYP, is one of the ways the government lays foundations for future actions. Together with the Action Plan, which is more of an ad hoc document, that calls for stronger air pollution control initiatives by wielding economic, legal, technical, and administrative instruments (MEE, 2018), the State Council and the President, open the door for more policies from the central government. These are not limited to environmental policies. By calling for air pollution control by any means necessary, one can utilize the Action Plan to argue that whatever policy you would like to implement is tied to the environmental cause and a part of the Battle for the Blue Sky. In this way, the CPC has laid the foundation for taking complete control and further consolidate their power by repressing people and corporations by claiming that it is in the interest of ameliorating the environment.

The NDRC and the 13th FYP have statements which I have interpreted as security speech acts. The 13th FYP highlights that

> The Party's leadership is the greatest strength of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and provides the fundamental political guarantee for sustained, healthy economic and social development. We need to implement the requirements related to comprehensively strengthening Party self-governance, continuously strengthen the Party's creativity, cohesiveness, and dynamism, and continuously improve its capacity for and performance in governance so as to ensure the best course of navigation for our country's development as it presses ahead through the waves (NDRC, 2016: 15).

[And] [i]n order to guarantee effective implementation of the 13th Five-Year Plan, we will, under the leadership of the CPC, ensure … that the entire Party and the people of China work together in finishing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects (NDRC, 2016: 215-216).

In addition to the quotes above, the 13th FYP encourages that "the Party and the Chinese people should rally more closely around the CPC Central Committee headed by General Secretary Xi Jinping", "hold high the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, remain committed to progressing along the path of Chinese socialism" and "be of one heart and one mind in working to bring a successful conclusion to this decisive stage in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects" (NDRC, 2016: 218-219).

So why is the development process so important to protect? To be able to answer that question, we need to go back in time, because the CPC came to power as a revolutionary party but is now a governing party (Ruan, 2015). The legitimacy of the CPC after it came to power was not based on democratic principles but rather people's cooperation and voluntary participation in massive political and social movements (Ruan, 2015). As a revolutionary party, the CPC based its legitimacy on the support from poor workers and peasants and played on being the supporter of these social classes (Ruan, 2015). Ruan (2015) states that Mao Zedong was worshiped by the Party as a great patriot and national hero, and during Mao, the CPC's legitimacy was (consciously or unconsciously) based on the charismatic leader. "Not only was Mao seen as the one man who possessed the right to lead by virtue of power and heroism, his thoughts were considered as 'invincible'" (Ruan, 2015).

The appeal to class struggle and ideology soon failed as a source of legitimacy during Deng Xiaoping. The Party then needed to turn the ship around and begin seeking legitimacy from a wider social base in the Party. The Party utilized two main sources, the historical authority and "developmentalism" (Ruan, 2015). The official Party rhetoric, which I believe resonates with the findings in this thesis, is that the CPC is legitimate because of two reasons. The first being historical, that the CPC is legitimate because it has "always been around and been in charge", and the second reason being (pointed out by Ruan, 2015) that China has been led by a strongman who is determined and able to justify political repression by promises of economic success that benefits the majority of those being dominated by the CPC, i.e. the citizens. Ruan (2015) points out that the "Theory of Three Represents" by former President Jiang Zemin, the "Scientific Outlook on Development" by former President Hu Jintao, and now the "Chinese Dream" by current President Xi Jinping are the latest efforts by the CPC to address its ideological concerns over the ideological foundation of the Party's legitimacy.

Ruan (2015) summarizes these discourses by emphasizing their take on "the Party's legitimacy not with reference to the [CPC]'s revolutionary past, but to the vitality of the [CPC] resulting from its ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment and to reform itself from within". The Party has chosen to cling onto the magic of economic growth and development and has thus resorted to costly repressions as its source of legitimacy (Ruan, 2015).

However, as the key findings in this thesis have stated, the Party and the government view the current economic development model as unsustainable for the future. The magic of the economic development model they pursued in the past was based on a large and young labor force, rapid urbanization, large-scale infrastructure investment, market liberalization and opening up, and globalization – all of which has either diminished or completely disappeared (Pei, 2019). Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, Pei (2019) emphasizes, the CPC has abandoned the pragmatism, ideological flexibility, and collective leadership that served the Party well in the past. "With the Party's neo-Maoist turn – including strict ideological conformity, rigid organizational discipline and fear-based strongman rule – the risks of catastrophic policy mistakes are rising" (Pei, 2019). Pei (2019) believes that while the Party will attempt to boost its support in the short term, playing on factors such as nationalism, the energy of the supporters will eventually dissipate, especially if President Xi and the CPC fail to deliver continued improvements in living standards and economic growth. "A regime that is dependent on coercion and violence will pay dearly in the form of depressed economic activity, rising popular resistance, escalating security costs and international isolation" (Pei, 2019).

This is not the first time the CPC has gone to war against nature. Chairman Mao Zedong also went to war against nature as a part of the "Great Leap Forward" and the "Four Pests Campaign". The campaign aimed at the extermination of rats, mosquitoes, sparrows, and flies, as these four pests made it hard for peasants to grow agricultural products for food, which eventually became a contributing factor to the Great Chinese Famine due to oversized bugs that ate and infected the crops (Dvorsky, 2012). In the book *Mao's War Against Nature,* Judith Shapiro (2001) tells the story of how China during Mao made extreme human interventions in the natural world and how the traditional Chinese ideal of "harmony between heaven and humans" was replaced by the mantras of Mao which stated that "People will conquer nature" (Shapiro, 2001). Shapiro (2001) describes Mao's and his CPC's "war" as bending the physical world to human will and further illustrates that the interventions in

nature often had disastrous consequences for people and nature. In short, the book argues that the abuse of people and the abuse of nature are often linked (Shapiro, 2001).

As for the government's war on smog, this can be an example which supports Shapiro's argument. The Battle for the Blue Sky might have reduced air pollution but that has not come without social costs. To win the Battle for the Blue Sky in compliance with the Action Plan and other policies, the government ordered thousands of polluting factories to leave urban centers, displacing hundreds of thousands of migrants (Davis, 2018). In addition, the government also designated "no-coal zones" that pushed more than three million households in the region around Beijing (one of the working areas of the Action Plan) to abruptly, almost overnight, switch over to gas or electric heating, often removing coal boilers before new systems were operational (Davis, 2018). Consequently, schools in the Hebei province made international headlines after pupils suffered from frostbite from attending classes outside because delays in installing the new electric heating systems meant it was slightly warmer in the weak winter sunshine than in the cold classrooms (Davis, 2018).

In the CPC's new war against pollution, the Battle for the Blue Sky, the wording is also interesting. The word "Battle" entails and implies a struggle and the CPC has also stated it will be a struggle in the future. The government can thus utilize the security logic and the phrasing "Battle" for the Blue Sky in order to legitimize people's suffering and political repression. This is because the entire state and society is at war with air pollution, and as war demands sacrifices, the CPC can potentially use this war rhetoric to offer an explanation to the part of the population which are not experiencing economic growth, such as minority groups or poor rural peasants. They can also claim that their suffering is not in vein because of "the war effort". It can also go the other way, as more environmental policies aim at consolidating more power to the Party would repress the population even further.

To answer the main research question, I believe that the CPC, the government, and the political elite have attempted to securitize the issue of climate change through discourses in official policies in order to control the Chinese society, the political order, and entire political system. The analysis in this thesis has identified the development process as the *de facto* referent object because it is the source of political legitimacy for the CPC, making this a case of regime survival which is the core interest of the CPC. This is because through environmental policies, among others, they have the complete authority to make critical interventions in people's ways of life, to change the economic sector of people and enterprises, and to rectify the energy structure in a way that aims at making the development process sustainable for the future – which in the end can lead to more economic growth which

satisfies the people and legitimizes the rule of the CPC. I think the President said it best himself when he stated that "by protecting the environment equates to protecting productivity" (Foreign Language Press, 2018: 231). As this study has found, I would like to add to that quote: protecting the environment and its natural resources equates to protecting the development process, which equates to protecting the legitimacy and further consolidation of power by the CPC, thus creating a vicious circle of political repression of the people of China.

6 Discussion

In this chapter, I first discuss how this thesis filled the research gap identified in the beginning of the thesis. Second, I will then discuss how this thesis contributes to Security Studies as a field. Lastly, I will discuss how the findings and works of this thesis contribute to securitization theory. This discussion will lead us on a path which deals with the Western or "democratic bias" of the theory and how this thesis is to some degree affected by this bias.

6.1 Filling the Research Gap

In the beginning of this thesis, I advocated for and encouraged a more critical debate of the contemporary environmental discourse on the governmental level in China. The objective of this thesis was to identify, describe, and critically discuss how and why the Chinese government might have attempted to securitize the issue of climate change. I believe this thesis is an original contribution to the literature as it is the only thesis, to my knowledge, that critically addresses the environmental discourse in China from a securitization perspective. This does not however mean that the research on this topic is finished – far from it, but we will get back to that later in this chapter. This thesis has also challenged the "democratic bias" in the securitization framework by using it in an authoritarian setting.

6.2 Contribution to Security Studies

As discussed in the literature review, we have established that the literature shifts perspectives around the end of the Cold War. The state-centric perspective on security which had dominated the field up until this point in history, was largely contested by the human-centric security perspective thus shifting the state as the referent object in security analyzes to human individuals. However, it is very important to note, that both the shift in the analytical framework and the referent object, is taken from a Western perspective. Even the attributed historical event that is seen as the "cause" of this shift has had a largely Western influence on academia. That does not however, indicate that the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War did not affect the "East" in any way, quite the contrary. For China, the end of the Cold War meant that its primary ally and trade partner as well as ideological ally was weakened and diminished over time.

Even though the literature had a shift in its focus on the referent object, it does not mean that the states are no longer of any importance. There is, however, one question which is yet to be addressed; are states which are dominated by a party, a family, or oligarchs

fundamentally different from those in the West, i.e. liberal-democratic states? An important indicator, I believe, is the national interest of states. The national interest is a key concept in International Relations. It includes interests in the political, security, economic, cultural, as well as other spheres which constitute a state's interests (Liu, 2014). All states will have national interests which are deeply influenced by factors such as cultural traditions, ideologies, and values. In China, which is dominated by the CPC, the Party's tremendous dominance over the forming and interpretation of the national interests are evident, even in this thesis. Scholars such as Liu (2014), Zhou (2019), and former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (2018) are of the opinion that China's core interests represent the core interests of the CPC which is quite different from e.g. the Norwegian context which is based on deliberation and consensus on larger political issues across political and party boundaries, such as tax reforms and foreign policy. Since Xi Jinping became President in 2012 and especially after the 18th Party Congress, China has drawn a clear line of what is unacceptable and has acted to defend its core interests as well as its legitimate rights (Zhou, 2019: 34).

In Rudd's (2018) summary he lists what he believes to be seven of China's core interests, among which are (1) maintaining the ruling party position and the socialist system and (2) promoting sustainable economic development. Zhou (2019: 34) cites the Constitution of China which states that the CPC is the sole leadership of the country. "Under the leadership of the [CPC] and the guidance of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, the Chinese people of all nationalities will continue to adhere to the people's democratic dictatorship and follow the socialist road" (Zhou, 2019: 34). The nature of the party leadership is that the party controls the entire society through its organization, ideology, and structural system (Zhou, 2019: 34). This thesis highlights some of the points above as I have identified and critically analyzed the environmental policies that I believe are connected to the overall core interest of the CPC, which is to stay in power and dominate the Chinese society. Utilizing sustainable economic growth is one of its main tools to legitimize the dominant position of the CPC in contemporary China. Connected to this is van Dijk's definition of social power, which emphasized one group's control over another and that dominance implies that such control is in the interest of the dominant group, which entails that the dominant group members also exercise control over text and talk, with preferential access to the resources creating the discourses (van Dijk, 1995: 20). I argue that van Dijk's point is present in this thesis as the CPC is the dominant group with the access to platforms where discourses are constructed.

My analysis has, however, only focused on the social power of discourse which is based on the government's control or influence over the arenas where the discourse is

produced and not, for example, the personal power of the securitizing actor. This of course affects the analytical conclusions of the thesis and shares parallels with a Marxist perspective which emphasizes the role of who controls the means of production (i.e. the discourse-making arenas) as a way of indicating who has power (the government/CPC) and who does not (everyone else).

In short, I believe this is one of the ways in which China as a state and the CPC are using the state as a tool to stay in power, and it is fundamentally different from Western states. As Security Studies is based on the Western security experiences, it more or less assumes that all states operate in the same way when conducting security analysis. I believe this argument is consistent with the writings of non-Western scholars such as Shih (1996) who argued that a colleague of him based an argument on *national security* issues in China over Taiwan instead of *nationalism*, where Shih (1996: 106) believed the notion of issues on national security over disputed territory was utilizing a fundamentally Western security logic. Bilgin makes the point that by treating understudied insecurities, i.e. those experienced in a non-Western perspective, as a "blind spot" of the security field it may prevent security scholars from fully recognizing the ways in which "the *historical absence* of non-Western insecurities has been *constitutive* both of the discipline and of subjects and objects of security in different parts of the world" (Bilgin, 2010: 616, emphasis in original). Bilgin (2010: 616) continues by claiming that historically, only a small portion of the Security Studies literature has analyzed insecurity as experienced outside the West and asks the question if "… it is possible to make the history of security studies less 'Western-centric' if there is little record of non-Western insecurities and approaches to be found in the figurative archives of the discipline"? This thesis has attempted to be a contributing factor to answer this question by utilizing a Western theory in a non-Western setting, and emphasizing the representations from a non-Western perspective, i.e. the Chinese government, using their own (translated) words, although the interpretation is mine alone. Even if this is not precisely what Bilgin advocated for, it can be a step in the right direction.

In this thesis, I have utilized a definition of security (Hough, 2008: 10) which highlights the perceptions of people. By using Hough's definition of security, and in this thesis in general, I have attempted to stay aware of what I have interpreted as security issues based on the perceptions expressed by the Chinese government in the policy documents. This definition has been useful in this project because it has emphasized the role of perceived existential threats and a society's political response to cope with these threats. This study has interpreted that the Chinese government has perceived climate change as an existential threat

(mostly to their legitimacy of ruling and regime survival) and they have responded politically to this threat, as the policy documents are the result of this response.

6.3 Contribution to the Copenhagen School's Securitization Theory

Building on the sub-chapters above, we must address how securitization theory is affected by this thesis and the above discussion. We have already established and discussed the obvious Western or democratic bias of the Copenhagen School's original theoretical contribution. In order to counter some of the flaws of the Copenhagen School for the case of China, this thesis utilized the broadened framework of Vuori (2008) which introduced new categories of securitization as well as possible political motives for why securitization is happening in authoritarian regimes and criticized the Copenhagen School excellently. However, Vuori (2008) falls short for two reasons. The first being that even though Vuori introduced new categories of securitization, he is preoccupied with securitization as a way to legitimize the breaking of the established political rules. While he has conceptualized this in a masterful way, he only *mentions* the other purposes (such as reproducing the political order, renewing discipline, or for controlling the political and social order) – purposes that were predominantly present in the key findings of this thesis rather than "legitimizing breaking the established political rules".

The second flaw of Vuori's framework is connected to the discussion above, which is that it seems like Vuori assumes that the state of China operates as any other authoritarian state and thus securitizes issues in the same way and for the same purposes as other authoritarian states. This is also built on the Western notion which assumes that all states operate in the same way. Many of the same purposes and categories of securitization Vuori lists in the theoretical framework, such as legitimizing past acts or securitization for raising an issue on the agenda, could easily be applicable in Western cases of securitization.

This argument raises the question of whether scientific theoretical frameworks based on Western experiences are applicable and valid in non-Western cases. This thesis is based on Western thinking and the Western way of doing academic and scientific research, which might have led to misunderstandings and "wrong" or "false" conclusions based on those misunderstandings. For future research, I believe that securitization theory can be "valid" for non-Western cases if the conceptualization of the audiences, the meaning of special politics, the meaning of "the established political rules", and the historical context are nuanced and clearly addressed in each empirical case. If not, it is very easy for security analysts to fall into

the trap of the Western bias and resort to Vuori's theoretical framework and then conclude that every authoritarian regime securitizes issues in order to stay in power and control their society even further.

The discussion above contains valid reflections for the scientific methodological framework utilized in this thesis including social constructivism and CDA, which are also developed and based on Western experiences. It begs the question if CDA and social constructivism are culturally specific in that they are excellent tools for critically addressing issues native to their cultural and historical context, but do they fall short of addressing issues outside their cultural and historical point of origin? This thesis presented one way to address this, by deeming the CPC's struggle for power as "wrong" due to the standards and political agenda of CDA which is based on a Western liberal-democratic thinking when deciding if an issue is inherently "wrong" or inherently "right". If one is of the opinion that an authoritarian regime with one party as its sole ruler is wrong, then it is quite easy to resort to and conclude with a CDA perspective, that this is *ceteris paribus* morally wrong. In this thesis however, I have used CDA to deface the notions of the struggle for power by the CPC in order to ensure regime survival through the use of environmental policies that aim at sustaining the economic growth which I believe is not apparent from a mere discourse analytic perspective.

7 Summary and Concluding Remarks

In this thesis, I set out to answer the question of *"how and why does the Chinese government attempt to use discourse in official policies in order to securitize the question of climate change"?* In order to answer the research question, I asked two additional sub-research questions which asked how climate change was represented or constructed as a security issue through discourse and who or what was to be protected if climate change was indeed constructed as a security issue. For the theoretical framework I utilized a revised version of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory, which was adapted to fit the case of authoritarian regimes.

The main findings of this thesis suggest that there are arguments to be made pro-securitization of climate change in official Chinese governmental policies. The main findings indicate that climate change is both constructed as a short-term threat in the form of imminent threats to the natural resources such as pollution and destruction due to extreme temperatures and climate events, and as a long-term threat in the form of environmental degradation. By utilizing the lens of CDA I critically addressed these findings which indicated that the natural resources and the environment were to be protected since climate change was indeed constructed as a threat. Through CDA I interpreted the findings in a different way: I found that the environment was not the *de facto* referent object, but rather that the development process which relies on usable natural resources, served as a proxy for the legitimate rule of the CPC. Thus, making regime security or the continuing rule of the CPC in all aspects of the Chinese society, the *de facto* referent object. This finding is consistent with the existing literature which highlights that China's "national interests" are really reflecting the interests of the CPC.

I have answered the main research question by explaining that the Chinese government might have attempted to use discourse in official policies to securitize the question of climate change in order to control the development process and further consolidate its power over its subordinates and control the society. This has been done, as I interpret it, by representing and perceiving climate change as an enemy of the state and declaring war on pollution. By doing this, the CPC has authorized itself to take further control over society, in that the CPC can determine what activities are forbidden and legal in the fight against climate change, as well as implement policies in the time of war in order to win back the Blue Sky. This battle is of course a "defense battle" since the CPC cannot possibly be the

aggressor against climate change. This is in contrast to the case during the reign of Chairman Mao, who declared that people must conquer nature.

The findings of this thesis have contributed to the existing literature in several ways, such as: conducting critical research on official policies implemented in an authoritarian regime, conducting critical research on contemporary environmental discourses in general and especially in authoritarian settings, utilizing securitization theory in an authoritarian case, and contributing to the criticism of Western theoretical assumptions used in non-Western settings. I found and discussed that the securitization theory falls short for several reasons, but mainly due to underlying, underdeveloped, and unaddressed theoretical assumptions that affect the research. There is, however, no need to give up in order to make this theoretical framework fit in a non-democratic setting. The dangers lie in conceptual stretching, not reflecting over the researcher's position, and whether the theoretical assumptions can indeed undertake a travel from one theoretical point of departure to another.

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Appendix

Overview of speeches and notes made by President Xi Jinping used in this thesis:

- In *Xi Jinping – The Governance of China 1:*
  - o Chapter name: **Ecological Progress**
    - ▪ *"A Better Environment for a Beautiful China"*, April 2, 2013 – Main points of the speech at a voluntary tree-planting activity in Beijing, pp. 229.
    - ▪ *"Usher in a New Era of Ecological Progress"*, May 24, 2013 – Main points of the speech at the sixth group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee which Xi presided over, pp. 230-232.
    - ▪ *"Leave to Our Future Generations Blue Skies, Green Fields and Clear Water"*, July 18, 2013 – Letter of congratulations to the Eco Forum Annual Global Conference Guiyang 2013, pp. 233-234.
- In *Xi Jinping – The Governance of China 2:*
  - o Chapter name: **Beautiful China**
    - ▪ *"Promote Ecological Progress and Reform Environmental Management"*, October 26, 2015 – Part of the speech "Explanation of the 'Recommendations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for the 13th Five-year Plan for Economic and Social Development'" at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, pp.421-424.
    - ▪ *"Eco-Environmental Protection Is an Integral Component of Development"*, August 24, 2016 – Part of a speech during a visit to Qinghai Province, pp.425
    - ▪ *"Clear Waters and Green Mountains Are Invaluable Assets"*, November 28, 2016 – Comments on the ecological progress, pp.426-427.
    - ▪ *"Green Development Model and Green Way of Life"*, May 26, 2017 – Main points of the speech at the 41st group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee, pp.428-431.

- *"Carry Forward the Spirit of Saihanba, a Model in Afforestation"*, August 14, 2017 – Comments on the exemplary deeds of the workers of Saihanba Forest Farm, Hebei Province, pp.432.