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VOICES OF THE ARCTIC: Understanding Indigenous Securitising Moves in the Willow
Project, ANWR Leases, and the Gáallok/Kallak Mine

M.A. Thesis

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Authorship Declaration

I have prepared this thesis independently. All the views of other authors, as well as data from literary sources and elsewhere, have been cited.

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Abstract

In the last two decades, the Arctic has experienced an increase in extractive industry projects. The resource extraction, motivated by the need for green energy transitions and made easier by global warming, has significantly impacted the security of Indigenous populations occupying their ancestral territory in the Arctic. The Iñupiat, Gwich'in, and Swedish Sami are all actively affected by extractive industry projects in their regions. The Willow Project, the ANWR Leasing Scheme, and the Gállok/Kallak mine, respectively, have become a flashpoint for environmental and political debate and have brought Indigenous perspectives to the forefront of public discourse. This research aimed to determine how Indigenous nations securitised extractive projects and what effect the securitised had on the project's approval. Using securitisation theory, the speech acts of Indigenous security actors from the three Indigenous nations were collected and analysed to determine if Indigenous security, while using the language of human security, voices the threat of either ontological or societal insecurity. The findings indicate that Indigenous nations construct security threats as ontological or societal threats based on their political and cultural standing but justify the threat at the human security level.

Keywords: Indigenous security, securitisation theory, extractive industries, ontological security

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INTRODUCTION

From the Chevron-Texaco Oil Contamination incidents in Ecuador to the more recent Dakota Access Pipeline Protests in 2017, increased attention has been given to the conflicts between Indigenous nations, their sacred spaces, and the government-backed extractive industry projects. Extractive practices are defined as “processes that involve different activities that lead to the extraction of raw materials from the earth (such as oil, metals, minerals and aggregates)” (Sigam & Garcia, 2012, p. 3). In fact, a recent study found that while Indigenous peoples represent around 6.2% of the global population, they are direct parties to at least 34% of environmental conflicts (Scheidel et al., 2023). Nearly half of these conflicts result from mining and fossil fuel projects (Scheidel et al., 2023).

The Arctic is not an exception. Spread across the US, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Canada, and Iceland, the “last great economic frontier” has nearly a third of the world’s natural gas, a broad range of critical minerals, and over 10% of the world’s oil reserves (Guggenheim, 2019, p. 2). Since the United States Geological Survey published these estimates in 2008, extractive activity in the Arctic has greatly increased, as demonstrated by the nearly 20 major oil and gas companies active in the region (Perez, 2020).

With the ease of access to mineral and oil resources increasing due to climate change and the demand for resources increasing for “green transitions”, extractive projects have continued to rise. While these projects have been shown to increase overall economic activity, they have also been tied to environmental degradation and human health risks (Schrecker et al., 2018). Moreover, the rapid industrialisation of the region has been a double-edged sword for Indigenous nations. Increased infrastructure and job opportunities come at the cost of environmental degradation and a threat to substantive practices. Simultaneously, the US and Sweden have struggled to reconcile the sovereignty and self-determination of these Indigenous nations with

the state's need to meet energy demands. The *Iñupiat* and *Gwich'in* in Arctic Alaska and the *Sami* across Scandinavia have been central to this debate.

The *Iñupiat*, traditionally located on the Alaskan North Slope and Bering Strait, the *Gwich'in*, occupying the Coastal Plains of Alaska, and the Swedish *Sami*, who live in the *Sápmi* in Sweden, are all actively affected by extractive industry projects in their regions. These projects, the Willow Project, the ANWR Leasing Scheme, and the Gáallok/Kallak mine, respectively, have become a flashpoint for environmental and political debate and have brought Indigenous perspectives to the forefront of public discourse. As the projects have progressed, news coverage has shown that some Inupiaq people are claiming that the project is good for their local economy; others state that they worry for their health (Hopson, 2022; Petersen, 2023). The *Gwich'in* are worried about the impact of the environmental degradation that consistently follows extractive projects (Windeyer, 2023). Finally, the *Sami* think of the continued mining of the *Sápmi* region as an extension of long-held colonial oppression (Reuters, 2022).

These diverse perspectives offer the foundation to the puzzle, as it is not clear why these Indigenous groups would feel differently about extractive industry projects that arguably have the same impact across the board. This prompts several research questions: How do Indigenous nations securitise? How has the history of colonisation influenced their securitisation strategies? How do cultural and spiritual beliefs shape Indigenous approaches to securitisation? Why do some Indigenous nations support extractive projects?

The objective of this research is to identify and evaluate the merits of interpreting this type of conflict by focusing on the security dimensions of indigeneity. While many scholars have characterised the relationship between Arctic Indigenous nations and the state, how extractive projects threaten Indigenous nations and the Arctic, and how these threats find their way into

security discourse/agenda, few have worked towards developing a security concept that bridges the gap between indigeneity and securitisation theory. As such, the objective of this thesis is to study the securitisation moves of the Gwich'in, Sami, and Iñupiat across three extractive projects. By characterising the referent object, threat, and audience, this thesis juxtaposes securitisation, as originally proposed by the Copenhagen School, with the reality of how Indigenous security actors create security.

Moreover, while scholars in other fields have investigated these cases as individual units, neither the Gwich'in, Iñupiat, nor Swedish Sami have been researched as security actors, nor has their project-specific security discourse been the research object. This thesis serves to rectify this gap in the literature by combining sociological and anthropological cross-cultural conceptualisations of the "Self" to propose that Indigenous security while using the language of human security, voices the threat of either ontological or societal insecurity. This will be accomplished by evaluating the securitising moves of the Sami, Iñupiat, and Gwich'in nations and elucidating the intention of the language through discourse analysis.

The corpus that will be analysed is specific to the three cases of extractive industries in the Arctic that this thesis studies: the Gállok/Kallak Mine, the ANWR Leases, and the Willow Project. The discourse to be analysed originates from Sami, Gwich'in, and Iñupiat securitising actors. Each document was scrutinised based on its authenticity, credibility, and representativeness. The speech acts will be identified based on the criteria of securitisation theory, and the discourse of the corpus will be analysed to interpret the speech acts and understand how Indigenous security is created.

As I am not a member of any of these nations, I do not speak on their behalf nor seek to delegitimise their security practices through my analysis. Instead, I intend to gain deeper insight

into the perspectives that have been publicly expressed by the Gwich'in, Iñupiat, and Sami and make a critical contribution to research on Indigenous security practices, with larger contributions to both Indigenous and Security Studies. This is done using the figured world perspective to interpret security as it was intended, not just by how it was spoken. By analysing the discourse to understand what the Indigenous securitising actor means with certain words, the analysis can be culturally aware.

The primary research question driving this research asks how Indigenous nations securitise extractive projects. To shed light on this research question, both theory and concepts must be defined. Then, existent empirical studies will be reviewed to establish what is known and what direction the research should take. As such, this thesis begins with the literature review chapters, which will establish a theoretical framework and provide context for concepts and research objectives. In Chapter 1, the theories of security, from the traditional perspectives to the Copenhagen School's securitisation theory, are reviewed to provide the theoretical framework for this research. Chapter 2 marks the transition from security to Indigenous security, in which two driving concepts of this research are presented and analysed: indigeneity and human security. This includes an empirical review, demonstrating that existing research has taken two paths: remnants of colonial processes and security dynamics of Indigenous nations. This chapter synthesises existing literature and illustrates the knowledge gap at the intersection of Indigenous security, extractive industries, and the Arctic. Next, the research design and approach used to address the research questions are detailed in Chapter 3. Subsequently, Chapter 4 presents the discourse analysis of securitising moves and speech acts of the Gwich'in, Sami, and Iñupiat. This chapter will both analyse the findings and compare the securitisation strategies and realities of

the nations. Finally, the conclusion synthesises the key insights from the study and offers reflections on its significance and future research.

CHAPTER 1: THEORIES OF SECURITY

In this chapter, the theories of security, from the traditional perspectives to the Copenhagen School's securitisation theory, are reviewed. The widening, narrowing, and deepening of security concepts are explored, ultimately leading to securitisation theory. This theory will be analysed for its efficacy and theoretical underpinnings, including examining the crux of the theory – the speech act. The speech act's four parts are critiqued with the goal of understanding the theory's strengths and shortcomings. The chapter closes with a reflection on key takeaways from the theoretical review.

1.1. Traditional Security

The concept of security has been studied for millennia; however, the modern debate (e.g., Security Studies) distinguished itself from war and military studies as a way of making sense of new dynamics following the Second World War (Buzan & Hansen, 2009). Since then, the concept of security has expanded, narrowed, and widened, proving itself to be a floating signifier. The traditional view of security is narrow, meaning that the state is a security-seeking agent defending it and its dependents from external military attacks. Security is widened by expanding the definition beyond the military-state dynamic and reconsidering what the greatest threats to survival are. Security is deepened by asking whose security is being threatened and allowing individuals to be placed as the referent object. The different conceptualisations of security are entrenched in two major schools of debate: traditional (i.e. narrow) and non-traditional (i.e. wideners).

Security, regardless of paradigm, characterises how a threat, referent object, and referent subject interact. Ultimately, it describes a reaction to vulnerability. In the case of International Relations, the vulnerability results from insecurity or the condition of inadequately managing the

threat. In this way, all things seek security by acting on perceived insecurity. As such, security, in essence, is the “absence of threats to acquired values” (Wolfers quoted in Baldwin, 1997, p. 13).

The traditional paradigm places the referent object or the ideal that is being threatened and requires protection, as the state and its constituents. Similarly, the referent subject, or the thing identifying the threat, is also the state or the military as an extension of the state. The study of security within the traditional paradigm includes the “conditions that make the use of force more likely, the ways that the use of force affects individuals, states and societies, and the specific policies that states adopt in order to prepare for, prevent, or engage in war” (Walt, 1991, p. 212). This has restricted security to matters involving peace and prevention through military force (Nye & Lynn-Jones, 1988; Walt, 1991; Schultz et al., 1993). In this paradigm, largely influenced by the “state of nature” debates, all analyses consider actors to be rational and secure as the product of the actors’ interactions (Wendt, 1992). Thus, with the international system in a state of anarchy, the state must locate itself as the authority of security and the military as the only solution.

However, the emergence of the post-Cold War security order challenged this traditional security perspective. In shifting from a bipolar to a multipolar world, narrow security concepts no longer explained the emerging threats facing states. Moreover, many scholars expressed concern that the greatest threats to states, like climate change, nuclear proliferation, and terrorism, could no longer be addressed militarily. With the declining significance of geographic boundaries (Klare & Thomas, 1994) and the pervasive threat of climate change, state actors could no longer effectively respond singularly and unilaterally to global problems (Tarry, 1999). As such, the security agenda broadened to place new “threats” within the discipline, addressing

the evolving question of what constitutes national security and how that looks different in various contexts (Mathews, 1989).

1.2. The Copenhagen School and “doing” security

Developed from Wæver’s early work on securitisation, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* by Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (credited as CS heretofore) is often considered the Copenhagen School’s seminal work. Building on Buzan’s five-sector approach, CS theorise that security can be analysed discursively to elucidate the relationship between a referent object, securitising actor, audience, and existential threat (Buzan et al., 1997). They seek to determine what makes something a security issue, what the response should be, and what happens when something becomes a threat. This provides the foundation for securitisation theory. CS were concerned with developing a framework for analysing how actors construct and frame issues as security threats. First, they established that a securitising move characterises the shift between politicisation when a threat “is managed within the standard political system” and securitised when it requires emergency actions “beyond the state’s standard political procedures” (Emmers, 2013, p. 133). Moving from politicisation to securitisation requires a specific security language called the speech act. A securitising move is successful if the intended audience accepts the framing of the issue as an existential threat and allows the securitising actors to legitimately circumvent procedures and rules by constructing security through language. Through this framework, CS claims that the act of doing security can be interpreted.

Building on Wæver’s post-structuralist roots, securitisation theory borrows from the philosophical theory of the speech act, or the process by which saying something is doing something. Securitising speech acts do not require the utterance of “security” but the designation of the existential threat. Within its philosophical origins, each type of speech act has felicity

conditions, or preconditions, which legitimise the performance of the utterance: “include[s] the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances” (Austin, 1962, p. 14).

Securitising speech acts have what Buzan et al. call facilitating conditions:

(1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security, (2) the social conditions regarding the position of authority for the securitizing actor—that is, the relationship between speaker and audience and thereby the likelihood of the audience accepting the claims made in a securitising attempt, and (3) features of the alleged threats that either facilitate or impede securitization (1998, p. 33).

When constructing the speech act, the utterance must be definitive, sincerely intending to address the threat and persuade the audience to permit intervention. If these elements are present, the securitising actor has made a securitising move, which will, in theory, be accepted or rejected by the audience.

1.3. The Evolution of Securitization Theory: Its Criticisms and Solutions

Securitisation theory’s central tenet, the speech act, has four distinguished parts: the audience, the securitising actor, the referent object, and the threat. Each received different treatment upon inception, with the referent object and threat directly defined, where the audience’s role and the securitising actor’s capacities were more dubious. While the framework remains an important hallmark of security studies, significant elements are under-theorised. As such, most criticism regards the role of the audience, the Eurocentric and elitist nature of the theory, the philosophical underpinnings of the theory, and the ambiguity of desecuritisation. These themes are present across the different elements of the speech act.

1.3.1. The Ambiguity of Audience

First, CS define the audience as “those the securitising actor attempts to convince to accept exceptional procedures” (Buzan et al., 1997, p. 41). Without further development, CS dedicates its time to determining what the audience can and cannot do without indicating who they are and are not. The state of the audience, where it gets its power, whether it is necessary for

the securitisation success, whether lack of audience consent desecuritized or negates securitisation, and many more considerations are left unanswered in the framework. As such, the role of the audience is inconsistent at best and non-existent at worst (Côté, 2016). The theory's Eurocentric underpinnings and precondition that the securitising actor is a democratic regime likely contribute to these issues.

Vuori (2008) adds to the securitisation literature by considering the success of a securitising move and what this looks like in a non-democratic society. He relies on linguistic conventions and borrows from Wævers' early works to demonstrate that the perlocutionary effects of discourse, which is the process of producing an effect on the listener, mark securitisation's success. Vuori (2008) also outlines five strands of securitisation, which have the capacity to demonstrate how non-state actors can utilise securitisation moves. The most valuable addition to the research questions this study asks is the "raising an issue on the agenda" strand. This strand's aim is to argue and convince the audience of the urgency of the threat and try to get the audience to do something about the threat. This strand's sequence requires a claim and a warning. Overall, this is an important addition to securitisation theory, as it allows for analysis of non-democratic or simply non-traditional securitisation processes.

Even with Vuori's expansion of the speech act, securitisation theory has difficulty conceptualising security when a democratic regime does not represent the audience. Côté (2016) calls them "agents without agency", and it represents the theory's analytical failure when not adapted to variation for the identity of the audience (McSweeney, 1996; Huysmans, 1998; Eriksson, 1999; Greaves, 2016). In this sense, the best answer comes from Wertman and Kaunert (2022), who segment the audience into two parties: the legal audience (i.e., the rules of the state

and bodies of formal authority) and the political audience (i.e., the political perception of the non-legal body).

1.3.2. The Act: “Extraordinary Measures” and the Actor

Both of these weaknesses point to the largest shortcoming of the framework – its lack of analytical criteria for the failure or success of a securitising move. Balzacq (2005) and Stritzel (2007) explore this issue in depth, discussing how the philosophical origins of the theory unintentionally limit its sociological application. In light of these limitations, Balzacq proposes that the speech act should be reconceptualised as security pronouncements, anchoring the theory to the relationality of the speech act and an external goal, like policy or intervention. In contrast, CS tie the success of a securitisation move to the audience’s acceptance of the threat and permission for extraordinary measures, but what does this look like when the threat is climate change, where the extraordinary threat is not as linear? Abrahamsen (2005) clarifies this point, emphasising that, in practice, security politics is concerned with managing risk and deterring existential threats. As such, securitisation is gradual and better conceptualised as a continuum, “normalcy to worrisome/troublesome to the risk and to the existential threat” (Abrahamsen, 2005, p. 59). Through this conceptualisation, securitisation exists without reaching an existential threat. It is of note that Abrahamsen adapts Buzan et al.’s politicisation to the securitisation framework and instead considers politicisation as securitisation. With this security continuum, Abrahamsen can use Balzacq’s suggestion to connect securitisation to the external goal of policy rather than allowing it to exist purely in discursive practice.

Huysmans (2011) wrote extensively on securitisation and focused on the “act” of speech act. He suggested that the “realisation” of an act is marked by its “rupturing scene”, not by its formal acceptance or institutionalisation, where rupturing means “to practices that create boundary conditions, however infinitesimal and momentary, through enacting limits of a given

order” (Huysmans, 2011, p. 373). By this logic, the essence of the success of a securitising move rests in its ability to effect change. Floyd (2016) builds on this assumption, outlining clear criteria for successful securitisation: the threat justifies the securitising move, the relevant agent acts by changing behaviour, and the securitising actor justifies the action taken about the threat they identified and declaring a securitising move (p. 684). This closes the gap between language, philosophy, and doing, as well as sociological concerns of securitisation.

Finally, there is the issue of the securitising actor. Securitisation theory overemphasises state authority, limiting its applications to security threats experienced by minorities and underrepresented communities within the state. This is addressed briefly in the original theory, with CS warning that the actors (i.e., audience and securitising actor) “privilege the powerful while marginalising those who are the audience and judge the act.” (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 42). However, acknowledging the weakness does nothing to address it. By investigating how “dominant framings of world politics produce and reproduce relations of power”, they often unconsciously “legitimate certain forms of action while marginalizing other ways of being” (Çalkıvık, 2017, p. 2). Thus, the asymmetric nature of securitisation is revealed. This is manifested in the speech act itself.

Hansen (2000) reveals the theory’s reliance on the prescribed speech act as an inherent weakness, as it “presupposes the existence of a situation in which speech is indeed possible” (p. 285). She determines that securitising one threat can activate another. Thus, the silent security dilemma is the inability to speak security into existence. Guillaume (2018) expands on this perspective, describing the silent security dilemma as illocutionary disablement. This is when the utterance fails to perform—or where the words spoken have no agency or authority. Guillaume explains that silence could instead be used to perform security. Other contexts, like bodies,

gestures, and contexts, carry the power of creating security outside the process of speaking security. The performance through opted silence creates anxiety for the state and has the potential to “perform” in asymmetric relations. Both Hansen (2000) and Guillaume (2018) emphasise the difficulty the traditional theoretical framework has with capturing the security practices of non-elites. Moreover, they call into question what constitutes successful securitisation and what an extraordinary response looks like in practice, especially for securitising moves of minorities.

In addition to locutionary disablement and illocutionary frustration, Bertrand (2018) identifies illocutionary disablement as the final silencing mechanism. This concept describes a situation in which the dominant constructs of the social environment in which the securitisation move is taking place cause the speech to lose its intended force. For the non-dominant society, this presents as adopting dominant thought, reasoning, and language so as not to be dismissed by the intended audience or for something to be lost in translation. Therefore, it is not that this speech act is without speech; instead, the speech misfires and the audience is unwilling or unable to interpret it through their frame of reference.

This is amended by taking a positive security approach to securitisation theory. While negative security is conceptualised as the absence of material threats, positive security exists outside the dichotomy of violence and instead “prioritises non-state actors, attempting to ‘know’ security that affects of individuals everyday” (Hoogensen Gjørsv, 2012, p. 843). Negative security dictates freedom *from* fear or want, whereas positive security describes freedom *to* (Roe, 2008). While negative security cannot conceptualise marginalised actors within security dynamics, positive security moves past the question of the groups’ potential as actors and instead understands that they *are* practising security in many ways and in many contexts (Hoogensen Gjørsv, 2012).

1.3.3. The Referent Object: Between Society and Self

The Copenhagen School, built from Buzan's (1983) criticism of the state-centric view of security, produced the sectoral approach, splitting national security into five separate dimensions: military, economic, environmental, political, and societal. This approach symbolically marked the beginning of the widening of the security concept and challenged security scholarship to adapt to the new world order.

One of the most transformative developments from the Copenhagen School was the sectoral approach to security, proposing society as a potential referent object. Their first conjecture is that society is separate from the state. Where state security is concerned with threats to sovereignty, societal security is concerned with threats to society's identity; without sovereignty or identity, the entity cannot survive. An entity is a society if it can operate as a unit and be a referent object of security in its own right (Roe, 2004).

The Copenhagen School considers the most important societies to be made up of ethnic groups and nations, where "nation" refers to a collective as having an affiliation with a territory, continual membership that links past and future members, and the natural right to demand a nation-state (Wæver et al., 1993, p. 21). They state that typically, this presents as the unit seeking security from the higher level for the sake of the lower level. This would present as the Indigenous nation speaking security to the unit or international sub/system for the benefit of the individuals represented by the subunit. This level of analysis approach explains where the securitising actor's power comes from and the structures by which they must seek security. It also explains the position of authority the securitising actor must take to make a security claim.

Legitimising threats to society can be challenging because "[...] what is perceived as a threat and what can be objectively assessed as threatening may be quite different. Real threats may not be accurately seen. Perceived threats may not be real, yet still have real effects" (Wæver

et al., 1993, p. 43). Nevertheless, Wæver et al. suggest that the most common threat to identity is any action meant to suppress its reproduction through cultural erasure. This is an essential logic for indigenous security.

While societal security can capture elements of what forms a “we,” it has several shortcomings. First, this framework cannot determine who speaks security for society; it is only there to be spoken for. Its weakness is that it homogenises society and holds the “society” in the context of the security event without considering the fluidity and reflexivity of identity (McSweeney, 1999). This flattens the concept and creates a monolith with limited analytical value in most contexts. Roe strongly criticised this concept, stating, “The problem lies in whether identity and thus society itself can be seen as either an object or a process; that is whether identity is something solid and constant or whether it is something fluid and changing” (Roe, 1999, p. 183).

Theiler (2003) argues that the CS’s initial logic is flawed because it treats societies as analytical objects producing security rather than fluid and reflexive entities experiencing security. This reification extracts personhood from society and, with it, removes its ability and motivation to seek security (Theiler, 2003). Theiler (2003) suggests integrating social identity theory, framing societal identity as a “category of practice” where groups navigate relationships with other groups by constantly internalising and externalising so that the community can be “intersubjectively real” (p. 264). Moreover, Theiler argues that this allows for clear boundaries to form motivated by the desire to maintain the social identity, facilitating a means of securitising threats.

Another shortcoming of the theory is that Wævers et al. (1993) ultimately place societal security within the purview of the state. However, this orientation does not account for situations

where the state facilitates the threat or the “nation” has autonomy within the state structure. Theiler (2009) builds on this and determines that state entities often deal with this “nation” through “a federal/devolutional arrangement that grants far-reaching cultural autonomy to the societal sub-units in exchange for political loyalty to the state” (p. 108). To resolve this potential shortcoming, societal security should be considered as a macro-level view of referent objects, while ontological security theory more accurately characterises the micro and meso-level of Self or community.

While it was first developed to understand and recognise patterns of psychosis in individuals experiencing psychological disturbances (Laing, 2010), ontological security theory has since been decontextualised and considered sociologically by Giddens. Giddens (1991) expanded the term to encompass existential anxiety or the threat of uncertainty in one’s identity in relationship to the exterior world. He married the concept with modernity by expressing a crisis of Self as a result of fragmentation in a technologically advanced society with “[...] complex of institutions—which, unlike any preceding culture, lives in the future, rather than the past” (Giddens & Pierson, 1998, p. 94). The tension between extensionality and intentionality, structures that empower and oppress, necessitates a trust in routine. Through this trust, or “protective cocoon”, the individual can “bracket out” threats and maintain routines that confirm “self” (Giddens, 1991, p. 3).

Traditionally, ontological security is an individual process; however, many scholars use this theory to explain the routines and behaviours of the state. For example, Wendt (1994) drew on integration theory and collective identification to argue for collective identities that exist beyond the material body and practice corporate agency. The collective, which Wendt argues is the state, seeks physical security, ontological security, sovereignty, and economic well-being.

Notably, Wendt states that state ontological security is the “predictability in relationships to the world, which creates a desire for stable social identities” (Wendt, 1994, p. 385). The state has a responsibility to provide ontological security as an expression of sovereignty (Huysmans, 1998). Mitzen (2006) continues this argument, theorising that ontological security for the state is the process of maintaining the self through the agency gained through identity. Similarly, Steele (2007) describes that threats to the Self are constructed through self-identities, marking the intersubjectivity of security. Zarakol (2017) builds on this supposition, postulating that states care about their survival; otherwise, security in general would not matter. As such, states are rational ontological security-seeking agents.

First, it is important to understand how to place the ontological self and the concept of identity within the emerging security framework. Historically, ontological security studies conflate identity and self. Krickel-Choi (2024) argues that this reduction and conflation harms analysis. Instead, she defines the ontological self as the entity “who relies on the framework to affirm their reality, manage anxiety and develop identities” (p. 4). Identity is the “story told by a person about where they come from and where they are going in order to make sense of their existence” (Krickel-Choi, 2024, p. 16). This also explains the difference between the “Self” (e.g., the essence) and the self (e.g., the individual). From this frame, Krickel-Choi claims that sovereignty is critical for a state to secure its ontological self. Browning and Joenniemi (2017) continue this argument, stating that the reflexive nature of ontological security inherently distinguishes the self and identity from each other. Thus, the referent object in ontological security is the “Self” and “identity”.

However, the question that emerges is how societal security and ontological security differ when considered in the concept of “nation”, especially because they are similar in essence.

For example, Buzan et al. articulate that society is threatened when “we will no longer be an us” (1998, p. 23). Similarly, Laing illustrates threats to identity through this scenario: ““I can’t go on. You are arguing in order to have the pleasure of triumphing over me... I am arguing in order to preserve my existence.”” (1970, p. 43). In both of these excerpts, the authors describe the continuity of the entity as under threat, but Laing differs in the application of Self. It can be argued that the individuals within Buzan et al.’s (1998) notion of society will continue outside of the theoretical “us” if not without a level of hardship and conflict. Contrarily, Laing makes it clear that the threat has the potential to irreparably harm identity so that the entity does not exist as the “Self”. This provides the theoretical foundation for interpreting threats to Indigenous communities’ identities as being beyond the security of society but as a threat to the maintenance of the nation’s ontological security.

1.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this theoretical background serves as a framework for understanding Indigenous security within the context of securitisation theory. Through an exploration of the development of security and the strengths and criticisms of securitisation theory, this chapter presents the foundational principles that underpin the conceptual framework. By synthesising insights from key contributors across multiple schools of thought, the theoretical background provides a strong foundation for investigating the complexities of security. Moving forward, this theoretical background will guide the empirical investigation, shaping the expectations of the research and ultimately guiding the interpretation.

CHAPTER 2: UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS SECURITY

While securitisation theory helps researchers understand how security is created and provides the analytical foundation for deciphering security discourse, it does not explain why that discourse varies between actors and contexts. Thus, on its own, securitisation theory cannot answer why or how Indigenous security is different. Therefore, we must consider what experiences inform the “Indigenous” part of Indigenous security. This chapter seeks to uncover the conceptual underpinnings of Indigenous security: the Fourth World and Human Security.

2.1. The Fourth World

“Indigenous” was initially deployed to answer the question of *what*. Heavily circulated during the Age of Exploration, the term was assigned to things that would be documented as native to the region (Peters & Mika, 2017). Not only was this terminology intended to represent the “otherness” of the people who had lived on the land since time immemorial, but it is also imbued in power asymmetry, as “indigenous” exists in relation to colonisation and as a method of subjugation.

It would not be until the mid-twentieth century that Indigenous peoples began to see meaningful and positive change in the institutional structures that they were subjected to. When the conventional imperial practices subsided with the end of the World Wars and new nations (re)emerged, the colonial practices severely disrupted the postcolonial spaces’ political, social, cultural, economic, and environmental practices. The progress of civil rights movements in the US, feminism, and ecological movements, all paired with the different Third World nationalist movements, demonstrated the viability of systematic reform and justice. They were characterised by the common goal of seeking representation in existing political institutions while calling into question the efficacy of the institution (Poyer, 2017; Berger, 2004). These decolonisation

movements inspired Indigenous internationalism, or “the significant growth of formal organisational links between unrelated Indigenous Peoples’ around the world” (Crossen, 2017, p. 534).

Here, “indigenous” transitioned from a way of *defining* to a way of reflexively *identifying*. One organisation that catalysed this transition was the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, which was created in 1975. It was the first pan-indigenous organisation born from Indigenous Peoples representing Scandinavia, North, Central, South America, and the Pacific. The organisation was built from the understanding that self-determination would only be realised through international forums. By 1977, the organisation had received consultative-NGO status within the United Nations and was recognised as the spokesperson of the global Indigenous peoples (Kemner, 2011).

At the centre of the Indigenous movement is the right to self-determination: “WCIP urges the international community to recognise and respect our rights, as Indigenous Peoples, to self-determination” (World Council of Indigenous Peoples, 1981, p. 1). The WCIP explicitly tied their advocacy to the “Fourth World” by emphasising the unique needs of Indigenous nations as “separate and distinct peoples surrounded by nation-states” (World Council of Indigenous Peoples, 1981, p. 1). A term coined by their founder – George Manuel – the Fourth World characterises the indigenous reality of sovereignty. He explains that while the Third World will likely maintain its freedom, the “Aboriginal World” (e.g. Fourth World) is “wholly dependent upon” the nation in which it finds itself engulfed (Manuel et al., 1974, p. 4). This process can be conceptualised as postcoloniality, which is “the economic, material and cultural conditions that determine the global system in which the postcolonial nation is required to operate” (Young, 2016, p. 58). The Arctic Indigenous peoples’ struggles towards self-determination and

sovereignty are accurately explained through the Fourth World concept. The Gwich'in, Iñupiat, and Sami have historically been oppressed by the state entities in which they reside and forced to live within the political and administrative systems and legal regimes of the circumpolar nation-states.

A pivotal event in the actualisation of Indigenous rights internationally was the United Nations' 1972 *Study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations: preliminary report* by Special Rapporteur José R. Martínez Cobo. Between 1981 and 1984, Martínez Cobo submitted his findings and demonstrated that the lack of definition of Indigenous peoples significantly limits the self-actualisation of Indigenous nations within the larger state structure. Moreover, it was concluded that the issues Indigenous peoples face, as described by the Fourth World (i.e., marginalisation, exploitation, and oppression), cannot adequately be addressed within the UN Sub-commission. As such, in 1982, the United Nations established the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (Sanders, 1989). This was significant, as it gave Indigenous peoples a formal path to power and a way to actualise change at the highest levels.

In his original findings, Martínez Cobo developed a working definition of “indigenous”:

Indigenous populations are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial condition; whom today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form part, under a State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant (1972, p. 10).

Broad in both scope and intent, this definition characterises the Fourth World and will be adopted in this research as the conceptualisation of indigenous.

The group's most significant legislation, the UNDRIP, was drafted in 1994; however, the United Nations Human Rights Council did not adopt the Declaration until 2006. Finally, in 2007, the UN adopted the declaration, with four notable votes against it: the US, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. This is widely understood to have been motivated by their colonial histories and the human rights issues that existed because of them (Abu-Laban, 2020; Gover, 2015).

The Declaration detailed the rights of Indigenous Peoples in international law and contained the minimum standards for the recognition, protection, and promotion of these rights. Having been ratified by all Arctic nations by 2016, this doctrine establishes a mechanism for safeguarding Indigenous people's rights. UNDRIP emphasises Indigenous self-determination, the inherent right to "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development" (UN General Assembly, 2007, p. 5). However, the declaration's major shortcoming is that its robust framework guaranteeing Indigenous peoples' rights is not legally binding. Without a legal obligation to deliver on the stipulations, the realities of change are not guaranteed.

Another important legal instrument designed to protect the unique needs and situations of Indigenous Peoples worldwide is the International Labor Organizations' Indigenous Tribal Peoples Convention of 1989 (ILO 169). This legally binding international treaty overlaps with UNDRIP, including provisions on the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination over lands and resources and social and cultural well-being. Unlike UNDRIP, of the Arctic Eight, only Denmark and Norway are signatories to ILO 169. Both UNDRIP and ILO 169 focus on the importance of Indigenous self-determination, which forms the basis for the concept of indigeneity and, ultimately, Indigenous sovereignty.

Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes indigeneity as those,

[...] who have been subjected to colonising their lands and cultures and the denial of their sovereignty by a colonising society that has come to dominate and determine the shape and quality of their lives, even after it has formally pulled out (2008, p. 7).

Indigeneity is a political strategy that is flexible enough to allow Indigenous nations to adapt the definition to the unique socio-political and historical circumstances involved in maintaining their status as Indigenous peoples (O'Sullivan, 2017).

Central to indigeneity is self-determination over resources, land, and ancestral territory, and the foundation of this is the "self", which is determining. From the Western perspective, self-determination is the individuals' right to organise political communities, form their own state, and actualise a government structure. However, in the Fourth World context, self-determination represents the decolonisation of the "self" as consenting to the settler state. Moreover, the "self" is constructed through an intersubjective process (Rademaker, 2020).

Indigeneity is a conduit for challenging traditional Western systems and the "prevailing social and political order" while articulating the ways in which Indigenous self-determination can be actualised (O'Sullivan, 2017). As the foundation of Indigenous sovereignty, it describes continuing claims to nationhood with privileges outside the system while maintaining fair representation and advocacy in existing systems. This dilemma describes what Bens (2020) calls the "indigenous paradox" or Bruyneel's (2007) "third space sovereignty", in which the Indigenous nation must prove it is both inside and outside the system. Bens asserts that "indigeneity comes into being when native communities engage with the law of the postcolonial state in which they find themselves" (2020, p. 3). Ultimately, this "state-determined self-determination" displaces Indigenous peoples from the state and international system (Cepinskyte, 2019, p. 3).

Indigeneity also promotes the establishment of Indigenous nations' place in modern society (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Indigenous sovereignty is often mischaracterised as Westphalian sovereignty, but they have competing objectives. Westphalian sovereignty endorses the imposition of legal and knowledge systems and supreme authority delineated by claimed territory; Indigenous sovereignty transcends the traditional state system and political authority as Indigenous nations are not bound by the same territorial imaginaries that nation-states are (Bauder & Mueller, 2023). Therefore, Indigenous sovereignty can be conceptualised as “parallel to state sovereignty” (Lenzerini, 2006, p. 189). This right is increasingly complicated by the imposed post-colonial reliance of largely autonomous Indigenous nations on the states within them (Oeter, 2012).

The Fourth World articulates a unique struggle between Indigenous peoples and the states they are enmeshed with. As actors within and outside of systems, Indigenous nations can have conflict with the state but still be subjugated by it, which demonstrates—from the perspective of the state—the prescriptive sovereignty of the Indigenous nations against the state's coercive power. However, the prescriptive power of the Indigenous nations varies greatly between Indigenous nations. This returns to the Fourth World construct, in which the Indigenous experience is deconstructed by the social system in which it exists.

2.2. Origins of the Arctic Fourth World

The development of indigenous-settler relations in the Arctic occurred in multiple waves (Coates, 2004). First, there was the act of mutual discovery, in which “tribal peoples” first interacted with explorers. Outside interest in the Arctic region took hold in the sixteenth century (Nuttall, 2000). With its vast resources and potential for profitable extraction, the Indigenous Peoples of Coastal North America adapted to increasing contact with Europeans. It is believed

that the first contact of *Iñupiat* with Russian traders occurred in the late eighteenth century (Fossett, 2001). In Gwich'in tradition, the first contact can be traced to the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Yukon in 1847 (Dinero, 2016). By the late nineteenth century, both *Iñupiat* and Gwich'in had established contact and were integrated into a growing trade network that saw North American resources like fur and baleen exit the continent and European-manufactured goods like guns and metal tools enter it (Hickerson, 1973; Cobb, 2003).

A similar history is documented in Fennoscandia. In the sixteenth century, the Swedish Crown demonstrated a strong interest in colonising the Sami, not only for its resources but also for its geopolitical significance (Ojala & Nordin, 2015). At the time, Sápmi territory was claimed by multiple countries, further motivating the Swedish Crown to populate the area and establish an indisputable claim (Lindmark, 2013). Moreover, the discovery of silver ore in the 1630s in Lapland prompted more forceful colonisation efforts and was followed by the 1673 Lapland Bill, legislating the Swedish crown's claim to Sápmi (Lindmark, 2013).

A complex process of resistance and adaptation quickly followed these first contacts. A lot of scholarly research has focused on the malicious overtaking of the Indigenous nations by the colonisers, but in doing so, stripped the Indigenous people of their agency and misrepresented them as docile victims instead of powerful and resistant forces. Moreover, colonisation is often portrayed as a linear process, when in reality, it was through legislation that Indigenous nations were dispossessed of their land and autonomy. As Coates (2004) suggests, "History is more complex, more messy, and a multi-directional process than either argument would suggest" (p. 94).

Colonisation was facilitated through two paths: Christianization and education. These served to instil "Western" values that would make the newly subjugated people "civilised".

These policies became known as eliminationist and assimilationist, which Coates (2004) characterises as phases of spiritual contestation and legalised administration. The Swedish Church had begun evangelising the Sami as early as 1526 (Coates, 2004, p. 148). By the seventeenth century, permanent churches and marketplaces were established in key Sami lands. Generally, “With these sites as nodes in the colonial landscapes, the Swedish state and Church strived to exert control over the social, economic, and religious life of the Sámi communities” (Ojala & Nordin, 2019, p. 106). Additionally, Sami were forced to assimilate through a boarding school system (*nomadskolor*) instituted across Sami territory throughout the seventeenth century. The total institution (e.g., complete isolation) model was designed to systematically eradicate Sami languages, substantive practices, cultures, spiritual practices, and other aspects of self-expression of identity (Weinstock, 2013). The Sami students were fully isolated and surveilled to ensure the internalisation of Christian values (Lindmark, 2013). Thus, Sami students were forced to learn the Swedish standardised curriculum and “unlearn” their own traditions.

White Christian settlers also assimilated the Iñupiat and Gwich’in (Battiste, 2000). These imperialistic materialisations saw the Orthodox Church pushing eastward and making it to Alaska by the 1830s (Burch, 1994) and the Episcopal Church reaching the Northeastern portion by the 1860s (Dinero, 2016). Conversion to Christianity was a very unique and community-based process, ranging from violence at refusal (e.g., Iñupiat) to willing acceptance (e.g., Gwich’in). Furthermore, Christian settlers imported education systems, and formal schooling began in 1867 (Hirshberg, 2008). Like in Sweden, there were boarding schools that executed total institutions. This served to subjugate, control, and separate the Indigenous communities from their “indigenous” identity or, arguably, themselves (Wexler, 2006; Dinero, 2016).

Christianization, subjugation, and colonisation efforts across the globe were spurred on by resource extraction. This was followed by the commercialisation and industrialisation of the Arctic. The major profit-yielding resources came from precious metals. In Sweden, while silver was found in the 1630s, it did not enter the phase of extraction until the late seventeenth century (Lindmark, 2013; Nordin, 2012). More than extracting the resource, the growing industry had to manage its transport. At first, Sami people were forced to work for the mines and would carry the mined ore to the next phase of the industrial chain with reindeer on sleighs (Avango et al., 2019). Eventually, more convenient infrastructure was built to sustain the growing mining industry, including railways and mining settlements; however, this was often to the detriment of Sami traditional practices (Avango et al., 2019).

Building extractive systems solidified the status of the Swedish North as an extractive zone while also continuing internal colonisation and taking more possession of resources and land within Swedish borders (Lindmark, 2013). This continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with more large-scale mining complexes developed in Northern Sweden (Ojala & Nordin, 2015). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Sweden had around 250 active mines, most of which were located in Norrbotten, Skelleftefältet and Bergslagen (*Swedish Mines*, n.d.)

Until the late nineteenth century, industry in Northern Alaska was focused on whaling and trapping (Avango et al., 2014). However, after the purchase of Alaska by the United States from the Russian Empire in 1867 and the discovery of gold deposits shortly after, there was a swift re-orientation. Indigenous nations were excluded from this land sale, as they lacked any status in existent legal systems. Consequently, the larger US political structure annexed Indigenous territory in Alaska and subjected the territory to US resource management practices. By 1880, Alaska was a part of the Gold Rush and was heavily settled by non-indigenous people

(Nuttall, 2018). When copper mining picked up in the 1910s, Alaska was well on its way to becoming an important mineral extraction location for the US (Grauman, 1978).

The continued exploitation of Arctic resources laid the foundation for the perpetual subjugation of the Gwich'in, Iñupiat, and Sami in the Fourth World. Even with legislation and treaties like UNDRIP and ILO 169 that have normative weight, Indigenous peoples continued to be subjected to discrimination and structural violence by the state entities in which they reside. Existing studies offer insights into how the history of colonisation has resulted in the administrative systems Indigenous nations must navigate. For example, while the United States has a government-to-government relationship with recognised Native American tribes, the realities of that arrangement rarely come to light. These inconsistencies are often framed from a Western perspective, noting how Congress often passes legislation that limits tribal sovereignty and makes decisions about the Indigenous population without their input or consent. Moreover, the “Indian tribes” unique place within the US system, namely being outside of constitutional dialogue because they are not bound by the US Bill of Rights, means that while they can self-govern, they are also unprotected in the federal system (Riley, 2007). This brought about the Indian Civil Rights Acts, passed in 1964, which guaranteed individual “Indians” the freedoms outlined in the Bill of Rights. So, while Native Americans are culturally and legally distinct, they are still subject to the federalism imposed on them.

This is most accurately demonstrated by the ANSCA system. In 1968, oil was discovered in Prudhoe Bay in the Arctic North Slope and was estimated to be the largest oil field in North America (Jacobs & Hirsch, 1998). Major oil companies made large investments in the project and hedged the risk associated with building a Trans-Atlantic Pipeline System for the capital gains the project promised. However, this stopped when “Alaskan Native Communities” filed a

claim to Alaska's territory around the same time. Unsettled land claims were addressed through the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which gave over 45 million acres of land and \$962.5 million USD to Native Villages (H.R. 10367, 1971). However, this did not include the 23 million acre Naval Petroleum Reserve N. 4 that was created in 1923 as an emergency oil supply during the First World War.

When designated as a reserve, geographic and geological knowledge was superficial, and the reserve's richness was unknown (USGS, n.d.); nevertheless, with the Prudhoe Bay discovery and the external pressures of the 1973 oil embargo, there was renewed interest in the reserve. In 1976, the name was changed to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A), and exploratory drilling began. The federal government's early interventions in Alaska in the 1800s offered a clear path for the NPR-A, which ultimately served as the catalyst for the case study in the Coastal Plains. As such, how the Indigenous nations reference this colonial history in their securitisation moves is a valuable question for the research.

The same can be said of the role of Sweden in legislating Sápmi. The Swedish Sami have far fewer constitutional rights than their United States counterparts. While they have had special provisions and protections as a minority class, including the 1971 Reindeer Husbandry Act, it was not until 1977 that the Sami were recognised as a minority by the Swedish Parliament (Sweden, 2024). The lack of political and legal status of the Sami gave way to the foundation of the Sami Parliament in 1993. While aspiring to function as a home-rule government, it is restricted by its association as a branch of the Swedish government. The agency granted by the Swedish state government is more performative than actual, as the Sami Parliament is "for now not a body for Sami self-determination" (Sami Parliament, 2019). So, while the Sami Parliament has the ability to independently act on "Sami concerns", they are unable to affect change at the

level of the Swedish government. Like with Alaska, the federal government's early interventions in Sápmi in the 1600s provided the basis for the ambiguous legal status of the Sami and ultimately underpinned the ongoing development in the Sápmi region.

The realities of the Fourth World have been researched, and existing studies demonstrate that there is a connection between the early colonisation of the Arctic Indigenous peoples and the state administrations that they exist in, but there is limited insight into how these colonial legacies shape the securitisation moves of the Arctic Indigenous nations. This gap provides the basis for the first research question of the study: how has the history of colonisation influenced the securitisation moves of the Sami, Gwich'in, and Iñupiat?

2.3. Indigeneity and the Human Security Paradigm

Despite its resilience against some of the most pervasive threats to humankind, including environmental degradation, preservation of identity, and resilience of the traditional economy, very little attention has been paid to Indigenous security practices and security-creating processes. This is likely attributed to the vast distinctness that indigeneity encompasses.

Traditionally, it was assumed that the security of the state would mean human security, as the state entity is ultimately responsible for the experiences of its citizens (Hoogensen & Rottem, 2004). Yet, increased globalisation and the end of the Cold War meant the individual's well-being was a complement to national security but not a guarantee: "The state remains the fundamental purveyor of security. Yet it often fails to fulfil its security obligations... attention must now shift from the security of the state to the security of the people— to human security" (UN Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 2)

Ayoob's (1991) *Security Problematique* was an important work that marked the path away from a state-singular perspective. He determined that emerging states often must address

both internal (e.g., human security) and external (e.g., national security) security through institutional reform. By emphasising that most conflicts since the First World War have been intrastate, Ayooob pushes against the idea that the greatest threats to national security are external to the state. With this, Ayooob (1997) acknowledged the need to expand the security concept, specifically when moving away from Eurocentric analysis, but warned against a broad definition that nullifies the analytical element of security.

The human security paradigm emerged as a way to fill this theoretical gap. It aimed to give language to threats inherently intertwined with human rights and elevate them through security discourse so that they could be addressed through policy in relevant institutions (McDonald, 2002). The most common definition of human security comes from the 1994 United Nations Development Programme report, conceptualised as freedom from fear or want across economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security dimensions. These dimensions are considered a means to security, as they are intended to create safety and limited insecurity. Under this assumption, an individual who has the financial capacity to meet their basic needs consistently and sustainably (economic security), has reliable access and entitlement to affordable and nutritious food (food security), is relatively free from disease and infection in part due to access to health services (health security); lives in an environment without severe land degradation, with adequate access to resources (clean water, air, etc.) (environmental security); is free from physical and structural violence (physical security); can maintain active membership in a community and practice traditional values and relationships specific to that community (community security); and can actualise their human rights without fear of political recourse or encountering barriers within an institution (political security), is secure (United Nations Development Programme, 2009).

The UNDP's seven components can be simplified into five classifications: ecosystem, economic, society, political, and culture (Nef, 1999). Because of their interdependence, these elements must be in alignment to produce security or mitigate insecurity: "[...] environment and economy are linked by resources; economy and society, by social forces; society and polity, by brokers and alliances; and politics and culture, by ideology." (Nef, 1999, p. 25). This "bridging" has produced a range of conceptualisations, from human security as poverty and poverty-related problems (King & Murray, 2001) to human security as global health (Chen & Narasimhan, 2003), from basic needs, dignity and democracy (Thomas, 2000) to freedom from fear, of want, and access to rights and the rule of law (Hampson & Daudelin, 2002).

Most human security conceptualisations share common elements. First, most human security concepts conceptualise a shift in the unit of analysis, beginning with individuals and communities and then considering interventions by the state. This always functions with the smaller unit as the referent object of security. Moreover, typically, threats can be explained as a type of threat to an individual's quality of life (Owen, 2004). Lastly, while the state is the primary security provider, in the human security paradigm, non-state actors play a crucial role in mitigating insecurity (McDonald, 2002).

Nevertheless, human security has been both criticised and praised for its vagueness. For instance, Buzan (2013) thought that human security was not security at all; it was merely a new package from which to present human rights discourse. Similarly, Newman (2013) states that analytically, it is very weak because of its pick-and-choose approach to threats and questions whether human security has any "serious implications for ethics and normative scholarship" (p. 359; see also Paris, 2001). However, anthropologists Winslow and Erikson (2004) find that when

viewing security as the product of symbolic and social processes within different constructs, human security's vagueness is an advantage, as it can connect identity and security.

One of the important features of the human security paradigm is that it made sense of the different vulnerabilities that followed the decolonisation process. As such, human security studies have primarily focused on the developing world and the insecurities resulting from the state's failure as an institution.

2.4. Indigenous Security in the Arctic

In pursuit of understanding how Indigenous nations practice security, it is important to review existing studies that connect security to indigenous experiences. Studies demonstrate that the human security paradigm most accurately accounts for the insecurity experienced in the Arctic Fourth World. Most studies on Arctic Indigenous security are centred on the Inuit in Canada and/or the Sami in Norway (Greaves 2012, 2016, 2018, 2019; Hossain & Petrétci, 2018; Johnson, 2020). There have also been important studies regarding Russian Indigenous peoples (Stammler et al., 2020; Yakovleva et al., 2015). These studies describe modern extractive practices in the Arctic region as an extension of colonial practices (Hanaček et al., 2022). Many of these pieces of research also point to the fact that Indigenous security does not fit into a Western construct.

By analysing discourse from the Inuit in Canada and organisations representing the nation, Greaves (2018) concluded that environmental change is the core source of any threat that was securitised. As Greaves states, "environmental degradation and the meaning of security are, for Indigenous peoples, inextricably linked" (2018, p. 110). This observation is exemplified through studies that connected human security across all seven dimensions as a bottom-up approach to researching threats that cause Indigenous peoples' insecurity. The most proliferated

research topics represent an interplay in these components, which has provided the foundation for fruitful empirical studies. For example, the environmental sector, which is one of the most populated research topics, includes research articulating the connection between climate change's effect on the environment and Arctic Indigenous peoples' food security (Bogdanova et al., 2021; Arruda & Krutkowski, 2017; Vogel & Bullok, 2021; Stepien et al., 2014; Sam-Aggrey & Lanteigne, 2020). Similarly, scholars have explored the connection between extractive industries, environmental security, and Indigenous insecurity (Slowey, 2014; Hall, 2013; Zentner et al., 2019; Stammer et al., 2020).

Studies show that since 1979, climate change has progressed four times faster in the Arctic than anywhere else in the world (Rantanen et al., 2022). The consequences of this uneven distribution have presented as increased extreme weather phenomenon (Kislov et al., 2023), declining fauna and mammal populations due to climate-induced habitat changes (Laidre et al., 2015), and land degradation and erosion that could result in collapsing infrastructure (Hjort et al., 2022). For the Indigenous peoples in the Arctic, these consequences present as threats to food security, decline of traditional lifestyles and culture, and potential displacement (Nuttall, 2007; Arruda & Krutkowski, 2017; Larsson & Sjaunja, 2020; Naylor & Hunt, 2021).

The Swedish Commission on Climate and Vulnerability predicted this consequence, stating in a 2007 report that climate change is a direct threat to reindeer herding and, subsequently, Sami culture. Similarly, research on the Alaskan wilderness by the United States Environmental Protection Agency attests that “the loss of sea ice restricts the subsistence lifestyle of groups such as the Yup'ik, Iñupiat, and Inuit by limiting hunting grounds and reducing habitat for traditional food sources such as walrus.” (EPA, 2016, p. 2). As such, there is

no scholarly debate on whether the environment contributes to Indigenous insecurity. Instead, the scholarship focuses on identifying what is threatened by environmental insecurity.

Human intervention, like industrialisation, is considered to be the primary driver of climate change (Lynas et al., 2021). The environmental changes accompanying this process have altered the substantive practices of Arctic Indigenous nations. Bogdanova et al. (2021) research on food (in)security as a result of climate change in the Arctic highlights the non-climatic factors, like industrialisation of the Arctic, policy changes, and the commodification of reindeer products as significant contributors to growing food (in)security in the region. In fact, Indigenous harvesters in Alaskan communities in the Arctic have attributed an observed decreased access to resources, like caribou, to climate change (Brinkman et al., 2016). This has contributed to a loss of traditional livelihoods, as many Indigenous nations rely on herding, hunting, and harvesting as sources of food but also as cultural routines. First, the extreme variation in seasons can make travelling on ice or snow more dangerous, which affects substantive practices (Huntington et al., 2017). This ecosystem degradation not only contributes to the availability of animals and the vegetation they feed on, but it also can contribute to shifts in migratory patterns that substantially alter the daily practices of the Indigenous nations who rely on the animals (Huntington et al., 2017). Furthermore, this situation is made worse as the traditional food sources are found to carry pollutants like “organochlorines, heavy metals, and radionuclides” as a result of global industrialisation and contaminants in the environment (Kuhnlein & Chan, 2000, p. 595). Therefore, climate change is linked to food and health insecurity in the Arctic because of environmental degradation and food contamination.

Beyond food and health security, substantive practices are tied to cultural heritage and traditional sites of practice, constituting community security dimensions of human security. As

such, the climate's impact on substantive practices has resulted in a loss of traditional knowledge and a decline in language for some nations (Hoover et al., 2012). This is a consequence of contamination because the food source is no longer assumed to be safe, but it also connects with the increased physical danger associated with substantive practices as a result of ice loss (Ford et al., 2019).

The perpetual degradation of the environment by climate change and climate-changing human actions (i.e., deforestation, land degradation, siltation, etc.) make it harder to adapt to environmental stressors, increasing human insecurity (Loneragan, 1999). These climate-related threats are exacerbated by extractive industries (Zentner et al., 2019; Vogel & Bullock, 2021). These extractive industries have been emboldened by melting ice, which increased access to resources and has facilitated a stronger interest in the Arctic as a space for extractive practices (Hanaček et al., 2022). This follows Johnson's (2010) "accumulation by degradation" study, in which gaining access to and extracting these resources degrades the environment, revealing more resources – and the cycle continues. This is increasingly complicated by the understanding that environmental degradation is both a byproduct of climate change and a source of it. Kröger (2019) extensively studied this "land grab" system, demonstrating that the increased value of commonly extracted commodities, like oil, as a key motivator for increased extractive practices. Importantly, this involves states using Indigenous ancestral lands and imposing their will to pressure Indigenous nations to "conform to a global market economy in the form of profit-driven activities such as logging, mining, hydropower, and oil and gas" (Gladun et al., 2021, p. 2). This connects the political dimension of human security to the proliferation of extractive industries in the Arctic.

Within this research, there is a gap in the subject matter as there has been very little investigation on the human security of the less “vocal” Indigenous communities with less established sovereignty within the dominant state administrations. In response, scholars have begun to connect human and societal security to understand Indigenous security in the Arctic (Hossain et al., 2017; Hossain & Petrétci, 2018; Loginova, 2018). While the individual experiences human security, Arctic peoples construct their identities within the community and “threats are as much cultural and environmental as they are economic and political” (Hossain et al., 2017, p. 61). Therefore, while the human security paradigm is the conceptual foundation of Indigenous security, the question remains of how Indigenous securitising actors use human security to elevate security discourse when facing active threats, not just climate change (Greaves, 2018). As such, this thesis seeks to remedy this gap and address how more restricted and dependent nations frame human security to securitise extractive projects.

2.4.1. Indigenous Security and Extractive Industries

In addition to the physical (i.e., resource commodification) and cognitive (i.e., education) colonisation of the Indigenous peoples of Alaska and Sweden, there was also the colonisation of the “Self”, encompassing the psycho-social dimensions of existence. As such, this literature review must consider how the cultural and spiritual dimensions of the Indigenous self affect security.

Indigeneity, as a state of being, is defined in relation to colonisation and serves as a method of subjugation. But what does indigeneity, as a sense of self, mean to those who embody it outside Western constructs? The answers lie in the anthropological studies of the context of selfhood. There is a stark contrast between Western and Indigenous constructions of “Self”. In Western thought, the self prioritises the individual as the primary agent in relation to external

actors (Samson & Gigoux, 2017). Moreover, the “Self” is typified in order to sustain the society in which the self is located. For example, Shweder and LeVine (1984) completed a notable study establishing the contextuality of self and determining the causality between culture and perceptions of selfhood. By studying the description of “person” in India and the United States, they demonstrated that “worldviews have a decisive influence on our cognitive function” (p. 195). From the same collection of essays, Rosaldo (1984) postulated that “cultural models [...] provide a basis for the organisation of activities, responses, perceptions, and experiences by the conscious self” (p. 140).

Their conclusions were confirmed in a study of self-continuity. Chandler et al. (2000) determined that compared to their non-indigenous counterparts, Indigenous youth’s “culturally sanctioned procedure for computing personal persistence is narratively based, and so automatically linked to the narrative continuity (or discontinuity) provided by their own cultural heritage” (p. 16).

Building from the contextuality of selfhood, many Indigenous peoples observed the philosophical traditions of holism, which is the understanding that the Self is not singular but part of an interconnected web of existence. From the perspective of the Inuit, “The self is the profound silence, it is spiritual, it is love, it is a sense of belonging to a tribe, belonging to the universe, belonging to something greater than itself” (Kawagley, 2002, p. 3). For the Sami, culture is based on collectivism and the dependence born of resilience, which holds the answer to “who we are, which is the basis of our thinking” (Kuokkanen, 1996, p. 58). And for the Gwich’in, “your own self-esteem comes from your past, our past” (Arctic Village Council quoted in Dinero, 2016). Across these ideas of identity, there is the common strand of community and cultural continuity.

This reveals the connection between ontological security and Indigenous security, specifically in the context of extractive industries. As Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately affected by climate change and its byproducts, it is logical that they potentially experience higher levels of ontological insecurity. Dale et al. (2019) confirm this supposition in a study on the interactions of oil industries and ontological security in the Arctic. They conclude that “petroleum is paradoxically both a provider of ontological security and a source of increased ontological insecurity” (Dale et al., 2019, p. 368)

Extractive industries promote ontological security by offering economic benefits through participation in the value chain, consultation processes, and benefit agreements (Haarstad & Wanvik, 2017); however, these industries also facilitate increased ontological insecurity by exacerbating existing conflicts regarding territorial sovereignty and can prevent Indigenous peoples from maintaining identity routines. This study will continue this line of research and, as such, assumes that projects will be either supported or rejected by Indigenous nations based on whether it is framed as an ontological security provider or disruptor.

2.5. Conclusion

As has been demonstrated in this literature review, existing research has taken two paths: remnants of colonial processes and security dynamics of Indigenous nations. First, scholars have explored the impact of colonisation on the modern Indigenous nation. At the same time, the human security of Indigenous nations has been studied, emphasising the environmental and food security dimensions. However, a critical gap exists in understanding the ontological security of Indigenous nations as an extension of the identified threat to human security as a result of colonisation. While some studies demonstrate the unique security experiences of Indigenous nations, relatively few studies have compared the Arctic Indigenous nations’ security practices

and considered the unique political and social systems they must navigate. Furthermore, existing research only considers how Arctic Indigenous nations organically create security outside of an event, missing critical insights that can be gleaned from analysing reactive securitisation. Thus, this study aims to address these gaps by investigating the socio-political constraints each Indigenous nation experiences as a result of the Fourth World, how different dimensions of human security are leveraged by Indigenous securitising actors, and how extractive industries are either an ontological security provider or threat.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design utilised to answer the research puzzle. First, the research philosophy is explained, demonstrating the intent to centre indigenous experiences within the research methodology itself. Then, how materials were located for review, including the keywords used and the storage method are detailed. Next, critical discourse analysis is introduced as the research method, with an explanation for how speech acts will be identified and interpreted. This chapter is concluded by the acknowledgement of the limitations of the research design and the ethical considerations undertaken for the research.

3.1. Research Philosophy

Two types of knowledge dominate the Arctic research: indigenous and western. While no singular answer exists for what indigenous knowledge encompasses and can only be defined by comparison, indigenous knowledge is described as “a manifestation of human knowledge, heritage, and consciousness... as a mode of ecological order” (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 44). It exists outside the Western and Eurocentric model of thought and instead is considered a “way of knowing” (Barnhardt & Oscar Kawagley, 2005). More broadly, indigenous knowledge systems are “the unified knowledge that originates from and is characteristic of a particular society and its culture” (Assembly of Alaska Native Educators, 2000, p. 27).

Conversely, western knowledge systems, especially physical and earth sciences, are born of the scientific method, necessitating verification, rigour, and replicability (Harman, 1996). However, the “cognitive authority” of Western science within a Eurocentric framework is a relatively new dynamic in the history of civilisation; it was not until the Scientific Revolution in 15th-century Europe that “mystical” sciences were debased (Elshakry, 2010). This

epistemological stance exists independently of practice, with the research subject isolated from the context in which it naturally exists (Mazzocchi, 2006).

These two types of knowledge exist in completely different philosophical assumptions: one is intuitive and sustainable, while the other is reactive and reductive. It is the separation of knowledge and belief. As such, the research interests in the Arctic, while aiming to be sustainable (ecologically, socially, politically, etc.), typically exist within the Western scientific epistemology. This highlights an important difference in approach when considering the context of securitisation. In a Western context, the types of security (human, economic, environmental, etc.) are straightforward; however, Indigenous security articulated through Western language is not a one-to-one translation.

This sentiment is equally reflected in these systems' different understandings and practices of governance, sovereignty, and role in the international system. Therefore, this research employs the ontological assumptions of social constructivism balanced with the epistemological tenets of interpretivism. As the nature of this research is to reveal Arctic Indigenous nations' varied experiences and roles in securitisation, the philosophy of the research must acknowledge that reality itself is constructed as a result of relationality and that acquiring knowledge is subjective and multifaceted.

As such, this research will also rely on inductive reasoning by means of content analysis of securitisation moves, starting with observing differences in securitisation, on evidence and emerging patterns, and will conclude with a generalisation about securitisation moves of Indigenous groups and nation-states. Simultaneously, deductive reasoning will be employed to determine the themes surrounding the use of language in Indigenous securitisation processes through discourse analysis.

Building on existing research on Arctic Indigenous nations and the role of extractive industries in exacerbating Indigenous insecurity, this research seeks to understand why some Indigenous nations support extractive projects and what security language they use to do this. Three cases were selected to elucidate this connection - The Willow Project and the ANWR leasing scheme (Iñupiat and Gwich'in, Alaska) and the Gállok/Kallak Mine (Sami, Sweden). As was demonstrated in the background section, these nations saw similar patterns of colonisation and extractive practices. The cases all occur in the Arctic and involve extractive practices (e.g., mining and drilling) in which the project's approval and disapproval are perceived security threats to the Indigenous nations. As such, the research will focus on the securitisation moves and the outcome for the Indigenous nations. Moreover, both cases have the same progression: the state gave contracts for the territory for extractive practices at least a decade prior to the conflict, the contractors attempted to proceed with the contract or expand it, third-party groups intervened, escalating the conflict, Indigenous perspectives are covered in the mainstream, and ultimately, the state proceeds with the awarded contract (sometimes adjusted). As such, the cases will be compared using the difference structure method, in which only the outcomes are different relative to Indigenous nations' desires. For the Willow Project and ANWR leases, the majority of the Iñupiat securitising actors supported the project, with the initial exception of the Nuiqsut Village, while the Gwich'in opposed it. Meanwhile, in Sweden, the Sami strongly opposed the project.

The intent is to understand whether securitisation exists in Indigenous discourse surrounding the three extractive projects and how securitisation frames security. In the study, content analysis of texts, including speeches, interviews, letters, and press releases, will be used to measure the presence of components of human security with the statements made. At the same

time, the construction of security will be explored using critical discourse analysis. By converging both broad numeric trends and detailed views, Indigenous security can be explored.

3.2. Locating Material

To locate the appropriate material, the first step was to identify key stakeholders who represented the selected case study. Three categories of securitising actors have been identified who participated in the higher levels of the decision-making process: the Iñupiat, the Gwich'in, and the Swedish Sami. There are also secondary securitising actors, such as UNESCO in the case of Sweden or the ANWR for the Iñupiat and Gwich'in, but their data is not considered in the analysis, only in creating a timeline for the event.

The documents were sourced online through various keyword searches, with case-appropriate language used in both search rounds. For development in the Alaskan Arctic, the following key terms were used: “Willow Project”, “Iñupiat”, “Nuiqsut”, “Gwich'in”, “Gwich'in Steering Committee”, “ConocoPhillips”, “Willow Project hearing”, “Indigenous security”, “ANWR lease”; for Sápmi: “Gáλλok”, “Kallak”, “Mining”, “Gáλλok/Kallak mine”, “Sami”, “extractive industry”, “Beowulf Mining”, “Indigenous security”. Having identified 40 potential documents for all three cases, based on the keywords, the selected documents were scrutinised based on strict criteria: authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and intent. From that original corpus, 19 documents fit the criteria for analysis (see Appendix A for a complete list).

Authenticity was a priority when selecting documents because it ensured that the actual perspectives and interests of the identified actors were accurately portrayed. A document's authenticity was ensured by its source, and either a logo or signature was placed on the document itself to further verify authenticity. Indigenous nations' documents either had a signature representing the authoritative body, the logo or emblem of the Indigenous nation or

representative body (village or collective) or came directly from the Indigenous nation's website. These steps helped to ensure the credibility of the document. These were all documents produced for publication, meaning they were free from errors and formulated with the intention to represent the opinions of the Indigenous nation. Next, documents were screened for representativeness, ensuring they were temporally and contextually relevant. All documents analysed fall in a ten-year range, from 2013 to 2023, and explicitly mention the projects from the case. Next, in line with the previous criteria, documents were further filtered based on whether they explicitly overlapped in subject matter, in which case, the more extensive document was selected. Finally, the documents were accepted into the corpus if securitisation moves could be established.

3.3. Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis examines language in its social context and will be used to understand how Indigenous security actors construct Indigenous security and identity. For critical discourse analysis to be done, the researcher must describe, interpret, and explain the text and its context. First, the external relations in the text, or how the social text is constructed and what social practices reflect, are analysed. This discourse analysis will use figured worlds, or social frames, to elucidate differences between Indigenous and Western security. This is “a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretations in which particular characters and actors are recognised, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others.” (Holland, 2001, p. 52). Figured worlds allow for the contextuality of indigeneity: the Gwich'in, Sami, and Iñupiat securitising moves can be considered within figured worlds as expressions of indigeneity without being considered monoliths of Indigenous security. By

decoding the motivations presented by those within the figured world, the goals of the language can be understood beyond their form.

The figured worlds of the Fourth World and the Indigenous cultures it conceptualises vary greatly depending on context and postcoloniality. Holland (2001) attributes this to the “sociohistoric, contrived interpretations that mediate behavior...” (p. 52). It is important to note that multiple figured worlds can exist and be acted upon by an individual, and this comes down to context. The figured world is not static, and neither are the beliefs and practices of the individuals that contrive them. As such, using figured worlds as a tool of discourse interpretation allows for comparative analysis of Indigenous nations while affirming the common social and cultural constructs in the Fourth World. It will be used to understand how Indigenous nations construct identity. Moreover, it will serve as the foundation for understanding whether human security threats can be interpreted as ontological security.

The figured worlds will answer the first two research questions: (1) how has the history of colonisation influenced the securitisation strategies of Indigenous nations, and (2) how do cultural and spiritual beliefs shape Indigenous approaches to securitisation?

The final step of this process is to consider how the language used is situated within the postcolonial world described by the Fourth World construct. This reinforces why the discourse exists in the first place, what it aims to accomplish, and how it navigates and seeks to affect the existing social structures of the larger political institutions.

After the figured world is established, the speech acts will be analysed using critical discourse analysis. This seeks to answer the question of *what type of security?* This research tool will be used to determine the presence of securitising moves within the selected units of analysis

(texts, etc.). The expectation is that this analysis method will lay the foundation for later discourse analysis.

This research will employ conceptual content analysis, using the phrase as the level of analysis, coding for the existence of the concept. This allows the research to remain focused on the presence of securitisation moves. As all documents are in English, the same set of root words for the codes securitisation were used across case studies: “certain”, “critical”, “danger”, “destroy”, “direct”, “emergency”, “eradicate”, “fear”, “extraordinary”, “harm”, “immediate”, “inevitable”, “security”, “short term”, “survival”, and “threat”. The study used variations of these root words, like *immediately* and *dangerous*; however, the word had to be explicitly stated and could not be implied.

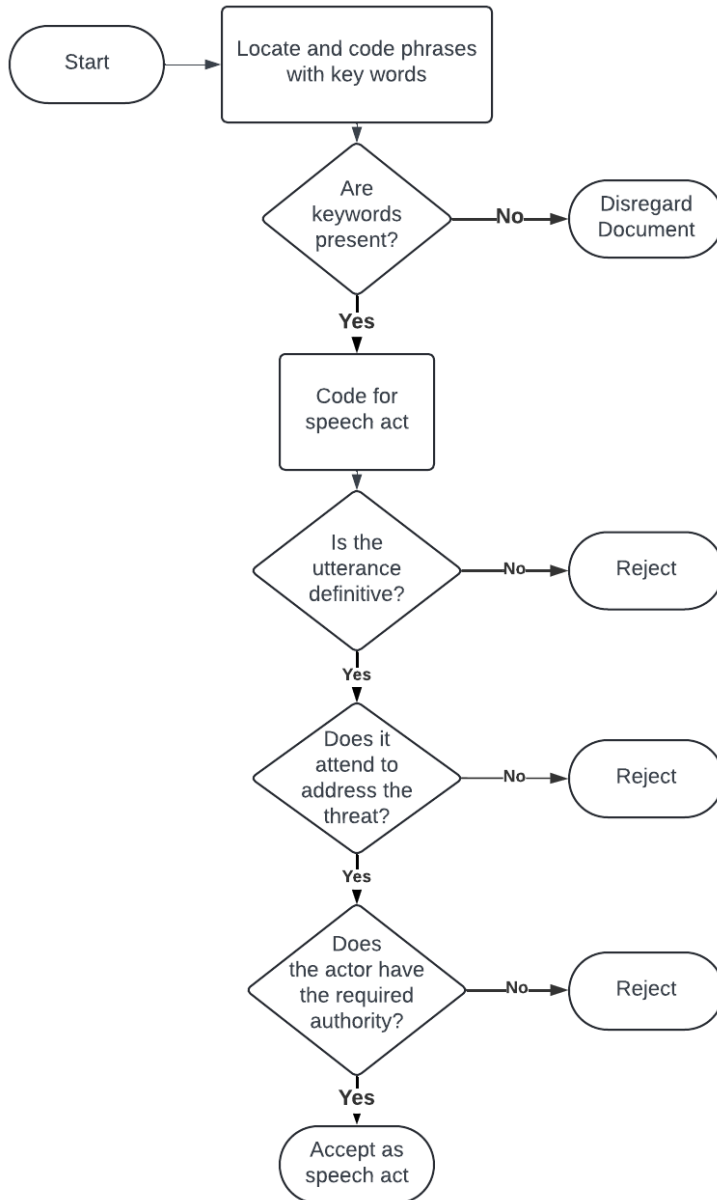
The text was coded in MAXQDA 24. When a keyword was identified in the document, the whole segment, or idea of the text, was evaluated to identify the referent object, threat, securitising actor, and intended audience. These had specific requirements in line with the Copenhagen School’s facilitating conditions:

(1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security, (2) the social conditions regarding the position of authority for the securitizing actor—that is, the relationship between speaker and audience and thereby the likelihood of the audience accepting the claims made in a securitizing attempt, and (3) features of the alleged threats that either facilitate or impede securitization (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 33).

When coding the security speech act, the utterance must be definitive, sincerely intending to address the threat and persuade the audience to permit intervention and spoken by an individual with the authority to securitise. If these elements are present, the securitising actor has made a securitising move.

Figure 1

Establishing Speech Acts



These accepted speech acts will provide the foundation for the analysis chapter. The securitising moves will be grouped by Indigenous nation and will identify the referent object, threat, securitising actor, and audience. Moreover, the prevalence of human security, as conceptualised in the literature review, will be presented in the analysis.

The levels of analysis look at whether the speaker is referring to the Indigenous nation as a societal “nation” under Buzan et al.’s (1997) securitisation theory or whether the collective represents ontological security. A speech act will consider society as the referent object when the statement speaks to “the ability of the government and civil society to function, the necessity to maintain critical infrastructures, for democratic governance to manifest certain basic values, etc.” (Sundelius, 2005, p. 26). Conversely, the referent object will be considered ontological security if the speaker references an uncertainty towards change manifested as an existential anxiety in which the speaker, or whom the speaker represents, feels the perceived threat could fundamentally alter their construction of “Self” (Browning & Joenniemi, 2017).

It is possible that societal and ontological security could both be present in a speech act, as “[i]ndividual-level routines thus constitute society, which in turn stabilizes each individual’s sense of self” (Mitzen, 2006, p. 348). In those cases, the statement will be considered in conjunction with other securitising moves from the same actor to determine the intended level of analysis.

The speech acts will be analysed based on perlocutionary intent and effect. The perlocutionary intent will determine how human security is used to frame the threat as either ontological or societal. Then, the perlocutionary effect will be analysed, which will explain the failure or success of the speech act. This will be done by operationalising through Huysmans’s (2011) “rupturing scene”, where a speech act is a success if it creates “boundary conditions, however infinitesimal and momentary, through enacting limits of a given order” (Huysmans, 2011, p. 373). By this logic, the essence of the success of a securitising move rests in its ability to effect change. Nevertheless, the change that was affected must align with the perlocutionary intent; otherwise, the utterance is considered failed. As such, if there is a change that aligns with

the perlocutionary effect, the speech act succeeded; if there is no change, the speech act fails.

However, if there was a change that later reverted, the speech act could be considered as having a mixed-positive (utterance-aligned) or mixed-negative (utterance-misaligned) effect. Moreover, if there is a case in which the intent is unclear, the speech act will be labelled ambiguous.

3.4. Limitations and Ethical Considerations

This research has many limitations, the most obvious being the researcher's linguistic limitations; as I am not fluent in Swedish, the discourse is limited to what is made available in English. While the sentiment of the research is applicable in other regional contexts in which there is a conflict between Indigenous nations and states over extractive projects, there are likely notable and relevant differences in securitising moves. As such, this research cannot be considered generalisable without more extensive studies. Finally, subjectivity is often interpreted as a limitation of research. However, the research design has been constructed to avoid this pitfall. While subjectivity in discourse analysis is normal, it can limit the replicability and external validity of the research. This was managed using software so as to avoid subjective interpretation of discourse and subsequent analysis of securitising moves.

Because this research uses publicly available documents, no data is collected from any participants, eliminating the need for informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. Nevertheless, the content of the research is rooted in the experiences of three Indigenous nations, which are classified as vulnerable populations. As such, the research design and thesis as a whole have centred respect and recognition at every step of the process.

First, the researcher acknowledges the historical harms inflicted on Indigenous peoples in the name of colonisation. Moreover, as a non-Indigenous person, I recognise the indigenising of the project through its grounding in the value systems of the Indigenous nations. At no point does

this research discredit the indigenous forms of knowledge or serve to perpetuate disparaging narratives, as is evident in the research philosophy. This indigenist research agenda,

[...] evolves from a need to comprehend, resist, and transform the crises related to the dual concerns of the effect that colonisation has had on Indigenous peoples and the ongoing erosion of Indigenous languages, knowledge, and culture as a result of colonisation (Battiste 2000, xx-xxi).

Ultimately, there is no denying that this research is only made possible because of the colonial processes that resulted in the displacement of Indigenous people from their historical land and the oppressive settler colonialism that has challenged the sovereignty and self-determination that are an inherent and unalienable right of Indigenous nations. The outcome of the cases is clear: the projects were approved without the consent of the Gwich'in and Swedish Sami peoples and retracted against the will of the Inupiat, which serves as an extension of neocolonial or eco-colonial practices in the Arctic. This is understood to be a fact in this research. Through this process, the research intends to rectify the Eurocentric origins of securitisation theory while decolonising the existing research on Arctic Indigenous peoples' experiences and perceptions of in/security. As such, the research positions Indigenous peoples as security actors and active participants in the securitisation process as a result of self-determination. The main type of ethical precaution is within the interpretation and representation of Indigenous nations within this research.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF INDIGENOUS SECURITY

This chapter presents the findings of the discourse analysis in three parts. The first section looks at the figured worlds and details the political realities that dictate the way Indigenous nations access securitisation. Moreover, it includes insights into the cultural and spiritual worlds of the Indigenous nations. This serves the greater purpose of providing a contextual lens for the discourse analysis of speech acts. After the figured worlds are presented, the perlocutionary intent, which details the framing of the threats, is explored. This discourse analysis includes the securitisation trends discovered in each Indigenous nation's securitising moves, specifically identifying how human security is used to express ontological or societal threats. Having established the perlocutionary intent of the speech acts, the perlocutionary effect, or the desired change as a result of the utterance, is considered.

4.1. Figured Worlds

4.1.1. *Political Constraints in Securitisation*

As established in the literature, Indigenous nations' political standing can be described through the Fourth World construct, as sovereignty and self-determination must be navigated as entities inside and outside the larger state system. The reality of the Indigenous securitising moves is that the Indigenous securitising actor carries the "burden of proof" (Sami Parliament, 2015, p. 2). Due to the lack of sovereign and independent territory, the Gwich'in, Iñupiat and Sami are required to engage the threats through available means. This dynamic is the product of the colonial histories and realities that Indigenous peoples have endured. Moreover, this dynamic provides the contextual foundation for the securitising moves made.

In the US, the Iñupiat and Gwich'in have a government-to-government relationship based on existing United States legislation (Leavitt, 2023); however, they are still displaced from the decision-making body. This is reflected in the ways securitising moves are constructed. For

example, when attempting to dissuade Congress from passing anti-development legislation, Tribal Administrator Matthew Rexford uses exclusionary language to demonstrate the indigenous federal paradox: “We do NOT [sic] approve of your efforts to turn our homeland into one giant national park to the benefit of the environmental corporations at our expense” (2019b, p. 4). The use of categorical and polarising words like “we”, “our”, and “your” serve to frame the US as an oppressive body using its administrative power to exert its will in the region. Instead of saying something like “you can’t” or “you shouldn’t”, Rexford positions himself and the Iñupiat nation he represents as powerful actors with legitimate claims to influence development in the region. Not only does he state that the government is making decisions without the consent of those who live there, but he draws attention to how environmental conservation is prioritised at the risk of the Kaktovik community. Furthermore, the possessive noun emphasises the deep connection between physical territory and the securitising actor’s nation.

A similar sentiment is expressed in a later speech act by Doreen Leavitt, who serves as the Director of Natural Resources and Tribal Council Secretary of the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope. Speaking at a congressional hearing to convince a committee to allow for development in Alaska, Leavitt states, “The federal government’s rulings on our ancestral homelands will have a tremendous impact on our regional economy, the viability of our communities, and the future of our Iñupiaq culture...” (2023, p. 5). Like Rexford’s statement, Leavitt uses language to demonstrate that the Iñupiat objected to federal decision-making and chose nouns that illustrate the physical (e.g., Alaska and Washington, D.C.) and symbolic distance between the two parties. Furthermore, the use of possessive nouns is intentional as it again demonstrates the relationality between the speaker and the subject. Simultaneously, it emphasises that there is a lack of control even when exerting ownership over a decision.

Even in cases like the Willow Project, where the Iñupiat strongly supported the project and actively participated in its development, the language used by the speakers demonstrates how Indigenous actors are displaced from power: “We have been ‘playing’ by the federal rulebook since the discovery of oil on the North Slope” (Suvlu et al., 2012, p. 3). The legacy of displacement and subjugation are referenced in the speakers’ emphasis on “playing”. The use of quotations around a single word implies that the mayors do not agree with the conventional use of the word. Here, playing does not describe the voluntary action of two parties engaged in competition based on an agreed-upon set of rules; instead, their use more closely resembles a mockery of the ongoing tribal federalism that is meant to be mutually beneficial for the US and Iñupiat, and the Iñupiat have been forced into a game they have no chance of winning, much less walking away with a positive experience.

As would be expected, given that they are entangled in the same administrative system, the Gwich’in use similar possessive nouns to demonstrate the paradox of tribal federalism. When speaking to convince a congressional committee to pass anti-development legislation, Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation of the Yukon in Canada stated, “[...] obviously this is beyond just our control, and is now in your hands” (2019, p. 2). In addition to using categorical language, Tizya-Tramm represents the “Canadian” Gwitchin, adding to the complexity of the colonial history. Even though the Vuntut counterparts do not reside in Alaska, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation district borders Alaska’s state line and relies on the same substantive resource: Porcupine Caribou. This collectivism is showcased by stating “our control”. As an elected witness (e.g., having been invited to testify), Tizya-Tramm must carry the responsibility to represent the Gwich’in Nation as a whole without the lived experience of a “United States” Gwich’in. However, it is the arbitrary borders that were imposed on the Arctic

space during colonisation that have resulted in this paralleled reality. As such, Tizya-Tramm navigates the political structure by engaging in the congressional hearing, thus emphasising the duality expected of the Indigenous nations.

In contrast to the Iñupiat and Gwich'in, the Sami securitising actors could only mobilise in the political context. This speaks to the more significant issue of self-determination of the Sami over Sápmi. Despite good faith legislation like UNDRIP, the Sami do not have any sovereign political power. Instead, they have had to use the Sami Parliament, officially classified as an administrative branch of the Swedish Government, to try to voice their political and security interests (Sami Parliament, 2015, p. 9). As a *branch* of the government, it means that the concerns of the Sami are metaphorically placed outside of the direct responsibilities of the Swedish Parliament, government, and the courts, as all are considered part of the central administration. Consequently, the Sami have no decision-making power over Sami-specific issues (Sami Parliament, 2015, p. 9). Josefine Lundgren Skerk, the Vice President of the Sami Parliament of Sweden, gave a speech at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2015. This excerpt reaffirms the relationship:

State policies highlighting only certain cultural practices of the Sami People is resulting in a critical loss of Sami culture as a whole, in turn leaving gaps in what we, as a People, can pass on to our children and future generations as a living culture. The richness and complexity of our cultural practices is being diminished by State policies and decisions (Lundgren Skerk, 2015).

While she spoke mostly about the structural discrimination and oppression the Sami face in Sweden, she placed the Swedish state's policy as a threat to the Sami. The existing Swedish system charged the Sami Parliament with addressing Sami-specific problems without allowing them the administrative capacities to lead systematic reform necessary to eradicate some of these problems. Thus, by highlighting "critical loss", Lundgren Skerk illustrates that the Swedish state's decision to normalise and protect certain aspects of Sami culture inevitably results in the

marginalisation of the whole and brings attention to the unequal power dynamic between the State and Sami people.

Unlike the Iñupiat and Gwich'in statements, the Sami securitisation moves that originate from press releases from the Sami Parliament are written in the third person and rarely use first-person possessives; moreover, the way these pronouns were used was not to emphasise the distance between the legislative body. For example, in stating, "If we – or someone else – destroy nature, we also harm our culture", the use of "we" and "our" is not to demonstrate the differences between us and others but to demonstrate the ownership of the collective over the object (Sami Parliament, 2014, p. 2). This use of language aligns with the statement's context, as they ultimately represent a branch of the Swedish government. Hence, the you/us dichotomy is more complicated than the Iñupiat and Gwich'in, who operate at the government-to-government level. The rhetorical strategies employed by the different nations, including categorical language, drawing emphasis on certain words, and evoking collective identity as a singular actor, demonstrate the diverse ways these nations navigate the existent political systems and assert agency despite their marginalisation.

At the simplest level, security in the fourth-world paradigm emphasises the system's failure to integrate Indigenous interests into state discourse and simultaneously support their self-determination. This is not only a historic failure (i.e., colonisation and subjugation) but a continuing failure, as many of the securitising actors emphasised being silenced and voiceless despite having a level of access to the administrative systems of the government. For example, in a speech by Hakan Jonsson, during his tenure as the President of the Sami Parliament, he stated that resources are being extracted "without us having a voice in the process, and least of all in the decision to do so" (Jonsson, 2015, p. 2). This process is emblematic of illocutionary disablement,

where the speaker is unable to convey their intended speech act. As demonstrated in the literature, this disablement is largely caused by the political and socio-cultural factors that compose the Fourth World.

This is best illustrated in a letter to BLM from the Native Village of Nuiqsut (NVN) and the City of Nuiqsut. When discussing their initial disapproval of the project, the securitising actors state, “We explain how the road will deflect caribou and make hunting more difficult, and BLM hears us asking for more road access” (Brower & Ahtuanguak, 2023, p. 1). The document continues with this analogy, demonstrating BLM’s inability or unwillingness to understand the statement. The illusionary misfiring could originate with the contextual understanding versus the literal understanding. While the Iñupiat directly indicates “access” should refer to the ability to access the caribou, BLM literally interprets the request and understands access to mean increased infrastructure. This creates an insufficient response to the issues raised by the securitising actor and the perceived and framed threat of development. Moreover, it demonstrates the importance of the figured world. By understanding the spiritual and cultural importance of hunting caribou for the native Village of Nuiqsut, the threat is not as literal as it could be received. This also demonstrates the opposing desires of the actors. BLM acts with the desire for the project to be approved, whereas NVN acts with the desire for the project to be dismissed. Therefore, when interpreting NVN requests to alter the project, BLM will interpret the request through the lens of creating a sustainable and manageable project. However, when NVN makes that request, it is done so in order to diminish the effects of the project and scale down development because of the threat they are speaking of. These opposing end goals and the power differential between these two parties feed the illocutionary disablement.

4.1.2. Cultural and Spiritual Dimensions of Securitization

The primary attribute of indigeneity is the historic tie to an ancestral land and the continued reliance on the land as a cultural and spiritual provider. As such, ancestral land is arguably the most significant feature of Arctic indigeneity, encapsulating Indigenous nations' cultural and spiritual beliefs. This aspect is strongly reflected in the corpus and is how Indigenous nations explain who they are and why the state of the project matters to them. For example, during the congressional hearing to pass anti-development legislation, Chief Galen Gilbert of the Arctic Village stated, "The Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most important natural, cultural, and subsistence resources to our Tribe and to the Gwich'in people as a whole" (Gilbert, 2019, p. 12). Unlike the Western view of the land as a factor of production, for the Gwich'in, the land is essential for physical survival, cultural narratives, and collective identity. As Chief Gilbert states, "From it, we have our caribou, our stories, and our identity" (Gilbert, 2019, p. 12).

Similarly, the Sami Parliament's "Minerals and Mines in Sápmi" strategy emphasises the spiritual and cultural dimensions of the Sápmi (2014, p. 11). These statements contextualise the primary conflict over the extractive project, demonstrating that the Sami and Gwich'in view extractive projects as politically imposed things that allow for capital gains at the cost of depriving the land of its ability to provide for the Indigenous peoples who rely on it as an extension of their existence, not a static and unfeeling physical plane.

The Sami and Gwich'in's relationship with the land is intensified by their relationship with herding reindeer and porcupine caribou, respectively. While not all Sami people are reindeer herders, those who are view reindeer husbandry as a prerequisite for Sami culture and reindeer as sacred (Sami Parliament, 2015). Their lives revolve around the herd, as the reindeer not only

provide for the basic physiological needs of the Sami people but also contribute to the psychological state, providing social status and cultural continuity.

The Gwich'in have a similar relationship to the porcupine caribou. Gwich'in's oral history describes how the Gwich'in and the caribou each gave each other a piece of their heart and promised to care for each other (Demientieff, 2019, p. 1). In this way, the Gwich'in and porcupine caribou share a life force and are each other's responsibility. Moreover, the Gwich'in see the caribou as a conduit of cultural and spiritual practices:

One of the most important values we have as the Neets'ąıı is when a young hunter harvests their first caribou, they then take that meat and share it with everyone in the community. This act passes on our values, and ensures good luck in their life as providers (Galen, 2019, p. 12).

The Caribou have cultural value and are integral to the rite of passage for young hunters. As with rites of passage, this marks a social transition and a new responsibility to provide. This cultural transmission through both partaking in the rite of passage and sharing the caribou internalises and externalises Gwich'in cultural values, all of which are housed within the relationship with the caribou. Therefore, much like the Sami, the caribou are physiological and psychological providers for the Gwich'in.

The Iñupiat have a different relationship to the land than the other two nations. While Iñupiat societies rely on the caribou and other food sources in the region, harm to the land is framed as "harm to our subsistence hunting", not cultural practices (Brower & Ahtuanguak, 2023, p. 6). This is likely because the Iñupiat are not traditionally herders but largely rely on whaling and large mammal hunting. Therefore, the spiritual connection, something as visceral as exchanging hearts, is not expressed in the relationship with one animal that relies on the same land. To this point, Fenton Rexford, an advisor to the North Slope Borough (NSB) mayor and a

member of the Native Village of Kaktovik, stated, “Our tribe has over 23 million acres of homeland that we have inhabited and used for hunting, fishing, gathering, and raised our families for 11,000 years” (Rexford, 2019a, p. 29). This statement asserts historical continuity, demonstrates land-use practices, illustrates the socio-economic importance of the land, and implies a high level of environmental stewardship, as it would be required for long-term land occupation. Moreover, by calling it a “homeland”, Rexford conveys a deep sense of cultural attachment to the place of origin. So, while Rexford does not explicitly state a deep and sacred connection to one animal, he does show the Iñupiat’s enduring relationship with the land.

4.2. Perlocutionary Intent: Framing Threats

As was demonstrated in the literature, human security most accurately accounts for Indigenous insecurity. However, human security alone does not dictate the way the human is threatened. Therefore, one of the primary research objectives was to determine how the Indigenous securitizing actors construct the referent object – is it that the society is threatened or that a collective Self is threatened? Moreover, how is human security discourse leveraged to frame an ontological or societal threat?

The three Indigenous nations and the securitising actors who represent them used ontological and societal frames with varying intensity and clarity. The difficulty in determining the difference between ontological and societal security came with understanding how the securitising agent felt threatened and how the threat would manifest as insecurity. For example, the different Iñupiat security actors place the project as an ontological threat to some and an ontological provider for others. The Gwich’in security actors frame oil development as ontological and societal threats. Similarly, the Sami actors heavily frame the development of the

Sápmi territory as an ontological threat but view it as a part of the broader societal threat enacted by the Swedish state. These findings will be explored in the remainder of this section.

4.2.1. An Ontological-Societal Paradox

The Iñupiat primarily frame the ruling on the Willow Project as a threat to the economic security of the Iñupiat society, but more specifically, to the cities in the North Borrow Slope. Above all, the Iñupiat see the project as a societal security provider and position other human security dimensions as contingent on economic security. This relates to the cultural dimension of the connection to the land; while the Iñupiat view the land as an extension of themselves, they also place themselves as caretakers of the land who have a right to what it provides - including oil: “We are only asking for a chance to see what gifts God has bestowed upon our land” (Rexford, 2019b, p. 3).

As the primary substantive practice is whaling and hunting large mammals, significant cultural practices are not threatened by the development in the region. Instead, the actors repeatedly emphasise the economic potential of the project and the ontological security it would provide. They did this by juxtaposing the quality of life of the Iñupiat in the NBS before development (i.e., pre-Prudhoe Bay) to that afterwards:

“Since the development of oil in our region, we have seen the life expectancy of our people increase by 13 years, on average. This increase in our life span has come through first-world amenities like clean water, sanitation, health clinics, and other essential services” (Suvlu et al., 2021, p. 2)

However, this seems paradoxical as the very things considered to be ontological security providers disrupt the routines that reinforce the ideation of Self. This is acknowledged briefly in the corpus, as securitising actors point out that they are resilient people who have overcome the inability to practice different aspects of the culture. Instead, they must prioritise the longevity and sustainability of their society, and oil presents the opportunity. This opportunity-cost mindset

eliminates any cognitive dissonance that might be expected of seemingly incompatible stances and communicates that the project's alteration or restriction would have subsequent effects not only on the economic dimension of human security but also on the food, community, health, and environmental security of the NSB Iñupiat peoples. This is not to say that the Iñupiat are willing to hand over the land to the highest bidder; as was demonstrated in the corpus, they have been active in the development of the Willow Project and consider themselves active stakeholders in the project. It is that the benefits of the project, at a societal level, are greater than the costs of the project at the cultural level: "Without an economy, our communities are not sustainable; without our communities, our culture begins to die as more and more of our people are forced to leave to find economic opportunity elsewhere" (Leavitt, 2023, p. 9). The speech claims that declining revenue threatens the communities as collective entities. Moreover, the statement positions the project as a means to alleviate the threat; it is through perceived economic insecurity that the actors believe the community is threatened by perceived decline.

Even the Native Village of Nuiqsut, an Iñupiat village that initially opposed the Willow Project, framed the threat economically. The actors assert that "70% of households use subsistence resources for more than half their diet," which equals "nearly \$30,000 per year", implying that the project will place a substantial financial burden on the residents of Nuiqsut (Brower & Ahtuanguak, 2023, p. 5). Similarly, the additional infrastructure, while considered an ontological security provider by the majority of the NBS, is positioned as a threat to the NVN. This demonstrates the variability in threat perception within the Indigenous nations themselves, on top of the different approaches the Gwich'in and Sami take.

4.2.2. Scaling up: Ontological Threats with a Societal Impact

The Gwich'in take a starkly different approach to the securitisation process than their Inupiat counterparts. The Gwich'in are against development in the Arctic and adamantly support the anti-leasing legislation. As such, they use community dimensions of human security.

Drawing from the corpus and the role of Caribou in Gwich'in society, for the securitising agents, the Caribou are an extension of the Self. Therefore, when stating:

As our elder Jonathon Solomon said, “It is our belief that the future of the Gwich'in and the future of the Caribou are the same. Harm to the Porcupine Caribou Herd is harm to the Gwich'in culture and millennia-old way of life (Demientieff, 2019, p. 4).

It can be understood that those two elements are part of the same ontological self. Without the ability to practice the most basic identity-reinforcing routine (i.e. Herding), the Gwich'in Self is threatened. Furthermore, this quote underscores the Gwich'in people's strategic use of human security discourse to highlight the broader societal dimensions of the projects, underscoring the ultimate consequence of ontological insecurity. By disrupting self-affirming practices and relationships rooted in their cultural heritage, the threat of development not only undermines individual and collective well-being but threatens the very fabric of Gwich'in society.

Sam Alexander's spoken statement provides further context for understanding oil development as an ontological threat first and a societal threat second. He states that the land is “the basis for our culture” (2019, p. 2). He continues to emphasise this point by detailing that the Gwich'in language is sustained through herding, gathering, and hunting; directions are in relationship to land features, not to the North and South poles. Even the concept of time is specific to the Gwich'in, with months named according to the traditional knowledge system and the understanding of the weather that time period should bring, not via Gregorian or Julian calendars. All of these things encompass what it means to be Gwich'in and also encompass what is threatened by the development of the ANWR. As such, the threat is conceptualised first as

ontological, as these elements demonstrate how Alexander feels the perceived threat could fundamentally alter his community's construction of "Self". He must ask what happens when the snow no longer comes in May, how to give directions when the land changes because of global warming and traditional geographic references no longer stand, and what happens if the Caribou population declines. From the Gwich'in perspective, the development of the region seals this fate; however, if oil extraction can be avoided, maybe global warming will not accelerate, and the Caribou population will not decline. This represents the extensional anxiety that requires a fundamental and conscious positioning of the self in and outside of routines. If unable to cope with these threats, the Self will decline, and eventually, society, separated from other societies based on what constitutes the Self, will inevitably decline.

Tizya-Tramm offers this same reflection in his statement. He asserts that destroying the ANWR will harm the Caribou and will amount to the cultural genocide of the Gwich'in nation (2019, p. 2). Simultaneously, he views development in the region as part of the larger threat the Gwich'in face: assimilation. This encapsulates the existential threat faced by the Gwich'in community as a consequence of environmental degradation. By emphasising the link between the Gwich'in people and the Caribou, Tizya-Tramm highlights the profound intertwining of cultural identity and ecological well-being, thereby illustrating the dual ontological and societal threat posed by development in the Arctic.

Tizya-Tramm feels that this project holds the fate of the Gwich'in in the balance. He asks the committee and anyone who will listen: "[...] will the velocity of these changes and development swallow our people's future, our relationship, and our ancestors?" (2019, p. 1). This expresses the core understanding of ontological insecurity, the fundamental confrontation of the Self and the other, in which the Self may no longer be distinguished and thus cease to exist. The

indication of time as “future” and “ancestors” showcases the continual narrative that the Self is built from, and without those things, will the Self be the Self? When that question is answered, will the Self still be Gwich’in? These are the questions Tizya-Tramm asks and illustrate the collective experience of ontological insecurity and the potential inability to adapt by recentring a new ontological Self. If the Gwich’in peoples cannot adapt, then it would result in the extinction of society. In essence, Tizya-Tramm’s statement underscores that oil development in the Arctic represents both an ontological and societal threat, with the ontological element serving as the primary concern.

4.2.3. Scaling down: Societal Threats with an Ontological Impact

The Sami used the political and environmental dimensions of human security to frame the project-related threats by frequently referencing Sami human rights and the destruction of nature. Because of its unique position in the Swedish government, the Sami Parliament and the leadership that represents it use context-specific formal language to present the correlation between the threat and the Sami. For example, each official press release was structured around the perlocutionary intent, implying that the things demanded are currently absent and amount to the violation of indigenous rights.

Sami identified human security threats as societal, with emphasis on their ontological impact. The primary argument presented by securitising actors is that if the Sami are to be considered their own nation and people, then they are due the proper legislative protections guaranteed through ILO 169. Sweden’s failure to ratify this legislation represents a significant political challenge for the Sami that manifests as a societal threat. If there is no way to guarantee access to the processes of a society that make it a “we”, then the society is fundamentally

insecure. Therefore, the Sami struggle for autonomy within Sweden results in societal insecurity that manifests as ontological insecurity.

Moreover, because Sami securitising actors express that their political suppression by the Swedish State diminishes their self-determination and independent decision-making, they must then face problems presented by unwanted development. The sentiment that the Sami will cease to exist if reindeer herding is disrupted is not expressed in the corpus. Instead, the analysed documents show that the threat to Sami culture itself is contained to the Gállok region, not a claim made in the name of all Sami across the Sápmi. This is supported by the statement made by the Sami Parliament, “When conditions for reindeer husbandry in Gállok are eradicated, it means ultimately that also the conditions for maintaining Sami culture in the area are removed.” (Sami Parliament, 2022). The Sami state that maintaining culture “in the area” is removed; therefore, it is the political dimension of human security that presents as societal, and the continued failure to ratify ILO 169 and the identified state negligence facilitate ontological insecurity because of an inability to reproduce culture at the community level (i.e., the Sami of Gállok).

Furthermore, political threats facilitate the economic and environmental dimensions of the speech acts. These two dimensions are intertwined because the environmental degradation that would follow development would significantly impact reindeer husbandry and other economic practices of the Sami. This analysis is supported by a statement made in the “Minerals and Mines in Sápmi” (2014) strategy. They state, “It is also important to point out that the Sami trades contribute to both immediate employment opportunities and secondary work/activity opportunities” for the affected communities [...]” (2014 p. 14). Additionally, the threat exists because Sweden prioritises mineral extraction over the “reindeer *industry*” (Sami Parliament,

2022; emphasis added). The use of industry is significant because it implies a large-scale commercial operation that is production driven. This is opposed to how the term “reindeer husbandry” is used in the same document, which refers to the sustainable and culturally significant relationship between the Sami and the reindeer. The semantic differences between these phrases matter because of their appeal to stakeholders. By speaking the language of the audience, making an appeal to the potential economic benefits of the industry, and referencing the economic significance of the industry for the Sami, the threat is constructed.

These dimensions of human security flow from the societal level down to the ontological level of those impacted by the state-sponsored development of the Gállok/Kallak mine. Not only do the securitising actors assert that development would result in the loss of traditional reindeer husbandry due to a disruption of cultural practices, but they also argue that the situation will cause the erosion of cultural identity. This is traced to the loss of intergeneration transmission of culture, as referenced by Skerk, because a loss of cultural practices is “leaving gaps in what we, as a People, can pass on to our children and future generations as a living culture” (2015, p. 1). Skerk continues by stating that it is the State policies that cause this disruption in transmission, not private enterprises developing in the region. Therefore, it is the Sami perception that the current policies amount to the inability of the Sami to realise self-governance and maintain the fundamental functions of society. However, this societal threat has ontological consequences, as those who live in Gállok/Kallak and see these threats manifest in their community must then confront the routines that inform the Self and either adapt or psychosocially cease to exist.

The Sami believe the ontological and individual realities of societal insecurity and oppression by the Swedish state manifest as suicide, domestic violence, and addictive behaviours (Sami Parliament, 2015, p. 6). These behaviours demonstrate the inability of the Self to bracket

out the inconsistencies in routine and a loss of connection to the Self. As such, the socio-economic-political suppression of the Sami people has already created ontological insecurity, and the continued oppression in the form of expanding mining in Sápmi constitutes the reinforcing or intensifying ontological disruption.

4.3. Perlocutionary Effect: Audience Reception

In understanding the success of the speech acts, it is important to analyse both the perlocutionary intent and effect. The intent describes the intention of the speech itself – what does the speaker aim to achieve, or what type of security are they “doing”? The effect is the way the audience responds and is what marks the success or failure of the speech act itself. Because of the various perspectives represented in the corpus of this study, the perlocutionary intent of the speaker and the effect of the speech are modified to the audience as well as reflective of the socio-political constraints of each Indigenous nation.

There are three variations of intent and effect in the research. First, the Iñupiat securitised the project as necessary for the societal security of the nation with the desired effect of the project approval. However, the Nuiqsut Village, which is also representative of the Iñupiat perspective, securitises the project as an ontological security disruptor and does not want it approved. While the Gwich'in and Sami both securitise the project with the desire for its cessation, the Gwich'in mainly securitises it as an ontological threat, whereas the Sami primarily securitises it as a societal threat. As such, intent varies between ontological and societal security, whereas the effect is between the approval or disapproval of the extractive industry project.

While the perlocutionary intent was discussed in the previous subchapter, however, the effect has yet to be analysed. As such, this subchapter will analyse the effect of the speech acts

on the different Indigenous nations and consider the impact of the figured world on the success of securitisation.

4.3.1 Societal Intent and Effect

The Iñupiat securitising actors that specifically securitised the Willow Project were the only actors to see their interests realised within the timeframe of this study. A joint statement made by the Mayor of the North Slope Borough and the President of the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope was released in response to the continuation of the project; specifically, the potential to reduce the number of drill sites stated that decreased development (threat) would “be devastating to our region” (Brower & Edwardson, 2023, p. 1). Both organisations operate and are recognised as the local and regional tribal governments.

Through their discourse, Brower & Edwardson (2023) identify any alteration of the project as a threat to society’s security, “It is becoming an increasingly realistic scenario with declining revenue streams that our communities will become unsustainable. If our communities decline, our subsistence traditions and lifestyle, which make up our culture, will inevitably decline as well” (Brower & Edwardson, 2023, p. 1). The speech claims that without the project, these villages will not be able to sustain themselves and provide the infrastructure that would guarantee the realisation of Iñupiat values and routines. As such, the intended perlocutionary effect of this speech act was to convince the Biden administration to safeguard the right to drill in the Arctic (Brower & Edwardson, 2023, p. 2).

As the Biden Administration ultimately approved the Willow Project with Alternative E, the securitising move was successful; however, there is no clear or substantiated causation between the securitisation and the approval of the project as a realisation of the perlocutionary effect. While the securitisation of the Willow project, by these actors and other Iñupiat actors

with the same perlocutionary intent, could have guided the perception of the project and contributed to its ultimate approval, there are too many contingencies and uncertainties in the decision-making process to make a definitive statement of the effect.

Both the Iñupiat (for ANWR) and the Sami securitised the outcome of a project as societal threats and failed to securitise their issue, as the project outcome was not the perlocutionary effect. Much like the Iñupiat in the NSB, the Iñupiat Kaktovik (or Barter Island) believe that the approval of lease sales on the ANWR is a positive development that would contribute to societal security. Rexford represents the Iñupiat in legal contexts to dissuade the audience from passing legislation that restricts oil development and to convince the audience to protect the right to drill. For Rexford, the primary threat is the loss of economic potential if the lease sales are denied. This is demonstrated by stating, “This literally guarantees us a fate of no economy, no jobs, reduced subsistence, and no hope for the future of our people” (Rexford, 2019b, p. 74). The intended perlocutionary effect is to block H.R. 1146. This securitising move fails, as H.R. 1146 is passed in the House of Representatives, which does not align with the intent of the speech act.

Much like Rexford, the Sami Parliament’s speech acts demonstrate the societal threat the project poses and attempt to elevate this threat to national security discourse and inspire political change. This is demonstrated in the Sami Parliament’s final opinion on the Gállok/Kallak project, composed by the Sami Parliament Chief Executive Fredrik Österling and Lars-Ove Sjajn, the Head of Reindeer Husbandry and Environment Department. The consultation response document states, “In the opinion of the Sami Parliament, the proposed conditions [project] in themselves bring about the total destruction of nature-based reindeer husbandry. The conditions would thereby cause, rather than prevent, extensive harm to reindeer husbandry and Sami

culture” and “When conditions for reindeer husbandry in Gállok are negated, it means ultimately that also the conditions for maintaining Sami culture in the area are removed” (Österling & Sjaun, 2022, p. 3). In this speech act, reindeer husbandry and Sami culture are framed as referent objects, in which the development of the Gállok/Kallak mine is a threat to their existence. The statements presuppose that the development of the mine would diminish or remove the Sami’s access to reindeer husbandry, which both provides the financial foundations and food access for the Sami. This is reinforced by a later statement, “Sami culture and livelihoods are dependent on primary sources of income such as reindeer husbandry in traditional Sami settlement areas” (Österling & Sjaun, 2022, p. 4).

The intended audience of the statement is the Swedish government, which took on the case after the Mining Inspectorate of Sweden and the County Administrative Board were unable to determine the status of the mining application. The statement offers a final opinion to the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, ultimately taking the position that “the mining concession for Kallak K nr. 1 should not be granted” (Österling & Sjaun, 2022, p. 2). As such, the perlocutionary intent of the statement is to stop the mining concession on the basis of the threat it poses to the Sami. The concession was ultimately granted, rendering the perlocutionary intent unobserved.

Regardless of the success of securitisation, the Iñupiat and Sami experienced the benefits of the unarticulated effect of enhancing the visibility of the local Indigenous perspective. For the Iñupiat NSB, the marginalised perspective of pro-development Indigenous peoples confronted the public conceptions of indigeneity, as the idea that an Indigenous population would desire for oil-development in their region was confusing and an unpopular narrative in media discourse (Suvlu et al., 2021, p. 4). As such, as these Iñupiat securitising actors continued with their speech

acts, the public was forced to consider competing perspectives. Similarly, the Sami benefited from their speech acts by gaining popular support from influential bodies like UNESCO. By disseminating their experience as Indigenous Sami in Sweden, the popular support turned in favour of the Sami.

4.3.2. Ontological Intent and Mixed Effect

The Gwich'in and Nuiqsut (Iñupiat) speech acts centred the ontological consequences of the project's approval and had mixed perlocutionary effects. The Gwich'in spoke to mixed effect because the situation is layered as the ANWR leases have been cancelled, paused, and most recently proposed for a new lease sale. While the ANWR was securitised in the legal context through hearings for H.R. 1146, what complicates the effect was that H.R. 1146 was never legislated, and development paused in relationship to their speech acts and legal manoeuvring but ultimately overturned, representing a partial, if not short-term, success.

First, the ANWR securitisation is a mixed-positive. While the perlocutionary intent of the speech was for Congress to establish permanent protection of the ANWR, it fell one step short as no such legislation was passed and adopted into law. Under the Trump Administration, the first round of leases was sold. Then, when Biden was elected in 2020, he supported the Gwich'in claim and passed an executive order that put an immediate moratorium on all leasing in the Coastal Plains. But, in 2022, the lease sales were held, which reactivated the threat against the Gwich'in. Finally, in 2023, the Department of Interior, responsible for BLM, announced that the unsold leases would be cancelled on account of flawed environmental impact reports.

During that time, the Gwich'in in Alaska and Gwich'in in Canada were actively lobbying for the cancellation of the leases. One specific statement emphasises this point. The intended audience was the public, namely those interested in leasing the 1002 plot. The Gwich'in

Steering Committee states that three major oil companies (Regenerate Alaska, Chevron, and Hilcorp), amid the 2022 lease sale, have backed out of “their interest in the Arctic Refuge completely” (Gwich’in Steering Committee, 2022). Moreover,

All major banks in the U.S. and Canada, along with 18 other international banks, have now said they would not finance drilling in the Arctic Refuge; and 14 international insurance companies and the U.S. insurer AIG have said they will not insure any drilling in the Arctic Refuge (Gwich’in Steering Committee, 2022).

As such, the intended audience was affected by the culmination of speech acts, and their behaviour was altered. This move reflects the success of securitisation moves, but it is unclear if this is the final state of the project, considering that the moratorium expired with the release of a new SEIS in March 2024 and a new lease sale is scheduled for December 2024 (Comay, 2024).

The Nuiqsut speech acts are more complicated. Initially, the Nuiqsut were vocal and active in their disapproval of the Willow Project. In a joint letter written by the President of the Native Village of Nuiqsut, Eunice Brower, and Nuiqsut Mayor Rosemary Ahtuanguak addressed the Master Development Plan Preliminary Final SEIS, which was the last step in seeking approval for the drilling rights. In the letter, there were several speech acts that alleged threats that impede the Iñupiat human security in the Nuiqsut village. The Nuiqsut representatives frame the letter as a means to “protect our culture, health, and survival” from the development of the NPR-A and the Willow Project (Brower & Ahtuanguak, 2023, p. 2). The intended perlocutionary effect of this speech act was to convince the public and BLM-Alaska to accept the threat and reject the Willow Project. In the letter, the authors request “that BLM include consideration of an action alternative that would meaningfully reduce impacts to subsistence [...]” (Brower & Ahtuanguak, 2023, p. 6). As the Biden Administration ultimately approved the Willow Project without the recommended changes, the securitising move was unsuccessful.

However, this move was negated by a resolution passed by the Nuiqsut Tribal Council in December 2023. As the governing body of the Native Village of Nuiqsut, the resolution proclaimed the withdrawal of the Native Village of Nuiqsut's support for the joint letter and "reiterate its non-opposition of the Willow project so long as subsistence resources are protected;" (2023, p. 2). This speech act desecuritized the Willow Project within the Nuiqsut agenda. However, it contributes to a perlocutionary ambiguity, where the intended effect is no longer distinguishable in the speech. The primary difference between these two speech acts is that one opposes and the other does not, but they both call for the projection of subsistence. As such, it is unclear what is different in the new speech act and what the intended effect is. For this reason, it is mixed-negative, as the intended effect of the original speech act was unheard and dismissed. So, while the new desecuritisation move would have the intended perlocutionary effect, its ambiguity makes it too muddled for analysis.

4.4. Conclusion

This analysis chapter has provided a comprehensive examination of the selected corpus and presented the findings derived from it. Through the discourse analysis, several key themes emerged, demonstrating the singularity of Indigenous securitisation. While each Indigenous nation had to appeal to Swedish or US administrative bodies, the approaches were dictated by the level of constraint, with the Sami being the most vocal about the structural violence they experienced as a result of Swedish legislation. Moreover, they all had strong cultural and spiritual ties to the ancestral territory; however, the Gwich'in consistently stressed the relationship between the Gwich'in and the caribou. These perspectives dictated the practice of securitisation, with the Indigenous nations securitising the extractive project based on the ontological or societal dimensions of human security. This perlocutionary intent differed between

nations and even within nations when comparing the perspectives of the Kaktovik, NVN, and NSB. Moreover, the perlocutionary effect also varied significantly, with some groups successfully securitising or failing altogether. Yet, there were also groups that had mixed and ambiguous effects, muddling the securitisation outcomes.

Overall, the findings presented in the chapter answered the research questions and addressed the research objectives. In doing so, they successfully solved the outlined puzzle and provided needed insights into Indigenous security practices. It is hoped that these findings will contribute to the literature and meaningfully impact the field. The conclusion chapter addresses these implications, as well as the limitations of the findings.

CONCLUSION

This thesis sought to address the puzzling nature of Indigenous security and extractive projects. The Iñupiat, Gwich'in, and Sami were all actively affected by extractive industry projects in their regions and leveraged the events to leverage their security concerns. The existing literature did not offer explanations as to why Indigenous nations would feel differently about extractive industry projects that arguably have the same impact across the board. As such, having solved the research puzzle as to how indigenous nations securitise, how colonisation and cultural and spiritual beliefs affect this process, and why some Indigenous nations support extractive projects, this paper successfully filled the existing gap in the literature. Moreover, it demonstrates the merits of interpreting these extractive industry conflicts by focusing on the security dimensions of indigeneity.

By leveraging the figured worlds of Indigenous nations, the Indigenous securitisation moves and speech acts can be interpreted as intended by the speaker rather than through the Western framework from which they were stated. First, the figured worlds were established to identify the political constraints that facilitate the disruption and complications of securitisation practices for Indigenous peoples. Similarly, the cultural and spiritual dimensions of the Indigenous peoples further place their security discourse outside of traditional security. These factors were evident in the analysis of perlocutionary intent and effect. The Iñupiat and Gwich'in, with essentially equal political status in the US as codified tribal sovereigns, should have similar success in and motives for securitisation, but in fact, they were mostly opposite. The Iñupiat securitising actors all supported the project by 2023 and heavily securitised the project as a threat to societal security, appealing to the economic dimensions of human security. Conversely, the Gwich'in adamantly disproved all development in the Coastal Plains, securing

the ontological threat by leveraging the community and environmental dimensions of human security. The Gwich'in referenced societal security as an inevitability of ontological threat and rarely outside of it. The Sami, which offered an alternative perspective for the research because of their political status in Sweden as compared to the Gwich'in and Iñupiat, have a unique experience of securitisation. Like the Iñupiat, they utilise societal security to securitise the project. However, they drew on the political, economic, and environmental dimensions of human security to emphasise the societal threat all Swedish Sami face with trickle-down ontological implications for the reindeer herding population.

Moreover, because the intent to securitise the projects as either ontological or societal threats was uttered with different perlocutionary effects, the audience reception did not show a pattern of success or failure. The Iñupiat's securitising moves aligned with the ultimate ruling on the Willow Project; however, it is unclear if this is because of the act itself or because it was the choice that most aligned with the US's policy and political needs and the Iñupiat just happened to be on the same side. Moreover, the Kaktovik Iñupiat's securitisation move failed, as the bill they were lobbying against was passed. However, because lease sales are active again, it can be argued that while the speech act was ineffective, the threat was alleviated. Similarly, for Gwich'in, because the legislation was initially passed after the hearing, the speech acts were successful, and the project was securitised. However, because the ruling was overturned, while the securitising move was a success, the threat was not alleviated. Finally, the Sami securitised development in the Sápmi region and engaged with speech acts targeted at different audiences, including the Swedish Crown, the UN, UNESCO, and the public. Still, the project was approved, which means that the securitisation moves failed. Yet, because the project stalled so frequently, it could be said that the utterances held their short-term effect but did not successfully alleviate the

threat through securitisation. Moreover, the Nuiqsut, who securitised the Willow Project as a threat and then later retracted their disapproval and reasserted their backing of the project, made indistinguishable securitisation moves, as the flip-flopping left the intent and effect too ambiguous to determine its success.

These findings demonstrate that Indigenous security is not uniform. While it can be conceptualised in terms of human, ontological, and societal security, studied through securitisation theory, and interpreted through the Fourth World, there is no one way Indigenous nations did security. The three cases were unique to the cultural practices and political standings of the Gwich'in, Sami, and Iñupiat. Moreso, with the disparate securitising goals within the Iñupiat itself, the study demonstrates the relevance of approaching Indigenous nations as independent units.

The findings offer a strong contribution to the intersection of Indigenous Studies and Security Studies. Because the study centres on the knowledge and priorities of the Indigenous actors, it offers a nuanced analysis of Indigenous security concerns and highlights an overlooked security-practising group. This not only strengthens the subsequent fields of study but also demonstrates the value of this knowledge at their intersection.

As was demonstrated in the literature review, very few studies exist on how indigenous nations securitise via speech acts; however, Greaves (2016) and Dale et al. (2019) were two studies with significant contributions to this niche intersect. First, Greaves's primary findings were that the security perspectives of the Inuit in Northern Canada focus on protecting the Arctic from environmental threats like climate change and general degradation, maintaining identity-reinforcing practices, and maintaining self-determination and territorial autonomy (2016, p. 52). These themes were all present in the discourse analysis conducted for this research. However, an

important contribution is the appearance of a hierarchy of choice. When these things were threatened, Indigenous actors attempted to securitise them through a speech act; yet, as was demonstrated by the Iñupiat societal and economic focus, not all threats can be addressed equally. Therefore, further research should be conducted to understand what triggers the hierarchy of response and what informs the opportunity cost.

Greaves's (2016) second finding was that the Inuit were securitising actors who followed the grammar of security to securitise threats. However, as with my findings, the Inuit are excluded from securitising practices and are perpetually insecure as a result of Canada's unaligned policies. This was also present in my findings, as the success of the securitisation move was dependent on the political administration. Furthermore, the perceived threats, whether by way of economic insecurity or threat of environmental degradation, are the results of the political administrations of the states and evidence of the long-term colonisation of Indigenous peoples. Greaves states that this rejection of security by the administrative power is traced to the indigeneity of the actor. While this thesis neither confirms nor denies this supposition, it adds to the existing research and serves to provide the foundation for future research in this arena.

The second theoretical contribution of this research follows Dale et al.'s (2019) findings regarding the role of ontological security as a result of oil development in the Arctic. They found that oil development is an ontological provider for the Iñupiat in Alaska because of the infrastructure it provides and the self-determination it facilitates as a result of the taxable profit (p. 372). However, they also noted that the role of oil was delicate, and petroleum's unstable price contributed to ontological insecurity in the NSB. While this research corroborates the role of infrastructure in providing security for the Iñupiat, my study characterises this element as a provider of societal security and an ontological security disruptor. The infrastructure innately

disrupts the ontological routines that affirm the Inupiat “Self” but provides for the long-term sustainability of the Inupiat peoples as a society and the continued occupation of their ancestral territory. These competing conclusions demonstrate the hierarchy of threats. Dale et al. consider the community’s self-governing practices as an ontological benefit of development because they are focused on the existential anxieties of the future. However, as was demonstrated in the literature review and conceptualisation of ontological security, limiting this concept to its single dimension also limits empirical insights. My research addresses this gap and places the loss of access to Self-reinforcing routines and the inability to cope with the disruption of those routines as a position of ontological insecurity.

My research also adds to securitisation theory by connecting the Fourth World construct. This is important because it confirms positive security approaches that dictate that marginalised communities can conduct security practices and create security, whether it is acknowledged as such or not. Indigenous security practices largely remain unexamined with existing theoretical work centred on Eurocentric and democratic views, which the Fourth World is neither. Instead, this thesis shows the unique relationship in which security must be created not within the Indigenous nation but by advocating for themselves at a higher level of power. This shows that securitisation theory works in more contexts than have previously been explored. These theoretical contributions emphasise the importance of continued research into Indigenous security practices and experiences. This thesis’s insights into the diversity of security practices in the context of similar extractive industry projects provide a strong empirical foundation for future studies at the intersection of security and indigeneity.

The practical and social implications of this research echo existing calls to expand Indigenous rights within state administrations and strengthen self-determination and territorial

autonomy, both in broad strokes and in relation to extractive industries. As the Sami case demonstrated, they were significantly limited in their securitising capacities because of their political status within the state system. Therefore, this thesis serves to provide empirical support for the ratification of ILO 169 and other significant Indigenous rights legislation. This would guarantee the free, prior, and informed consent of the Sami and would serve to alleviate many threats related to this lack of political power.

Similarly, comparing the Gwich'in and Iñupiat, specifically in the context of H.R. 1146, shows that favouritism towards one group's cause at the cost of the other group's security should not be facilitated in the highest ranks of political power. The Iñupiat in Kaktovik were not consulted about the ANWR anti-leasing legislation, thus effectively silencing dissenting opinions. Moreover, it contributes to the preexisting narrative of the model minority, where the Kaktovik are portrayed as causing problems for legislators while the Gwich'in are painted as subservient to the legislative goals. In viewing this complexity wholistically as security practices, it is clear that neither the Gwich'in nor the Iñupiat benefit from being pitted against. While their desires for development are incompatible, this conflict overshadows their similar desire for autonomy and self-determination. Additionally, the heightening tension between the Gwich'in and Inupait could harm the social relations between these nations, further fracturing broader indigenous kinship and future efforts to manage threats specific to the Fourth World.

This research serves as a strong springboard for future research into indigenous security practices. The most logical direction would be the continuation of this research in terms of following the progress of the Willow Project, ANWR Leasing scheme, and Gáallok/Kallak mines. The findings of this research will be further corroborated and strengthened by a longitudinal study that can follow the changes in perlocutionary intent and the effect of speech acts.

Moreover, it would be able to determine if the identified and perceived threats manifested in the cases of failed speech acts. Furthermore, this would support process tracing to establish causality between perlocutionary intent and effect.

In the broader sense, while this research answered its intended questions, several dimensions have yet to be examined. For example, given Greaves's (2016) and Dale et al.'s (2019) interview approach and findings, it would be necessary to consider how individuals who are not securitising actors feel about the perceived threat and how they characterise it themselves. Moreover, because Indigenous societies are led by elders and are not meritocratic, it would be beneficial to understand how the Indigenous individuals who gave the speech acts reached the level of authority to speak on indigenous security and whether or not that aligns with the general trends at the individual level.

Another perspective that builds on this research while filling a gap in the literature would be feminist explorations of the role of the securitising actor. This would leverage intersectionality to understand if there is a correlation between indigeneity, gender, and social status (e.g., elder) and the audience's response to the speech act. This would build on existing studies that demonstrate indigenous women experience higher levels of human insecurity in the Arctic than their male counterparts (Kuokkanen & Sweet, 2020). Therefore, this is a necessary approach to broadening our understanding of security in the Fourth World.

This research had several limitations. In addition to what was previously stated in the research design, the findings themselves are limited by the nuances likely missed as a result of my outsider status. Because I do not speak any of the Indigenous languages used by the Gwich'in, Inupait, and Sami, or have any lived experience as an Arctic Indigenous person, the figured world construct was developed based on my analysis of the corpus, which might not fully

represent the breadth of cultural, political, and spiritual experiences of these nations. Moreover, because of the strict criteria the research design called for, the corpus was limited, which simplified the study to focus on securitisation and missed the nuances of the Fourth World construct outside of securitisation processes.

Additionally, the study has limited credibility. While the findings align with existing research, it is possible that insights were missed based on the research design or that the findings themselves would not be the same if conducted by a different researcher. This is a common concern with critical discourse analysis, as the findings are largely dependent on the capacities and expertise of the researcher, not on the data itself. This concern was mitigated by providing conceptualizations of human, ontological, and societal security that could be used in replications of this or similar studies. Moreover, by providing a flowchart showing the process of accepting and rejecting securitising segments and an appendix that lists the details of the corpus, the research was meant to be as transparent as possible.

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APPENDIX A
Citations for Corpus

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