To securitize or not to securitize, that is the question

A study looking at the portrayal of Muslims in the Swedish Social Democratic Party's security discourse

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Abstract

This thesis is a documentation of the security discourse of the Swedish Social Democratic Party. It utilizes the Copenhagen School's securitization theory to identify speech acts of securitization and desecuritization in the speaking and writing of political actors within the Swedish Social Democratic Party, focusing on the securitization of Muslims. This is done through a qualitative context analysis. The thesis also examines the rhetoric speech structure through a rhetoric discourse analysis. It covers selected writings from Swedish daily newspapers and government official documents over a five year period between 2010 and 2015. The objective is to shed some light on the security and rhetoric discourse in an effort to extend the research on securitization theory to the case of Sweden. Through in depth readings, results show how the security discourse have changed over time from a more desecurity focused orientation into a more security heavy structure. It also reveals that the nature of the securitization of Muslims have changed from an almost exclusive extremist perspective to a wider, more incorporative one. The author encourages further studies on the changing nature of the security and rhetoric discourse by incorporating policy implementations.

Key words: securitization, desecuritization, Muslim, the Swedish Social Democratic Party, rhetoric analysis
Words: 9939

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1   Introduction

Redefining what security is through speech is the essence of social constructivist security studies. Such theories have since the 1960s tried to explain what makes the enemies of society into enemies[1]. One such an explanation is the Copenhagen School's theory about how political actors attempts to change the mindset of a relevant group into believing whatever or whomever is a threat, by talking about them in a specific way[2].

The Sweden Democrats entered the Swedish parliament in 2010 and have had continued success in following elections, ushering the Nordic countries into yet another mold of similarities as Sweden is the final country to have a lasting far-right party represented in parliament. As many other populist right-wing parties, the Sweden Democrats are characterized by an opposition to immigration, European integration, globalization and cultural heterogeneity[3] and have had public rhetoric portraying Muslims as a security threat to the Swedish society since before they were first represented in parliament[4]. This narrative, portraying security threats towards the Swedish society and what it means to be Swedish, should be put in relation to the Swedish Social Democratic party who owned most of the Swedish political culture, thus the political identity, from the 1930s until the 1980s[5]. As such, targeting the Swedish identity through securitization is an act of trying to redefining said identity. This thesis explores what happens to a former political powerhouse such as the Swedish Social Democratic Party in a time where far-right parties challenge its authority on national identity, through the study of speech acts.

1.1   Purpose and research question

The purpose of this thesis is to map the security discourse within the Swedish Social Democratic Party over the last five years, to see how a social democratic party in the Swedish setting adapts to a changing political environment. New ways of talking about security emerge when a far-right party such as the Sweden Democrats establish themselves in politics. Originating in a social constructivist

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[1] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, New York, Routledge, 2015, p. 16 - 17.
[2] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 91 – 92.
[3] Kinnvall, Nesbitt-Larking. The political psychology of (de)securitization: place-making strategies in Denmark, Sweden and Canada, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 2010 no. 28 p. 1051 - 1070. Available from Researchgate (accessed 20/12 2015).
[4] Mulinari, Diana & Neergard, Anders. We are Sweden Democrats because we care for others: Exploring racism in the Swedish extreme right. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 2014 no. 21 p. 43 – 56.
[5] Abiri, Elisabeth. *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden*, Göteborg, Department of Peace and Development Research Göteborg University, 2000, p. 29

framework of how acts such as speech change the very nature of society and people's behavior, a case study on Sweden and the Swedish Social Democratic Party can reveal new insights about how language change, and how handling security issues changes with it.

Previous studies on the nature of securitization in Sweden have been made either on society as a whole, or on specific issues such as the securitization of migration[6]. The introduction of the Sweden Democrats put an emphasis on Muslims and the way parties talk about Muslims in a security related manner. Other studies have looked into the securitization of Islam[7] or of religion[8] but few or none into the securitization of Muslims. Nor have previous studies targeted social democratic parties. This thesis aims to fill that gap by studying Sweden and the Social Democratic Party's security and rhetoric discourse.

This is realized through the research question:

- How has the process of securitizing Muslims, and the rhetoric discourse surrounding the process, changed in the Swedish Social Democratic Party between the first of January 2010 and the 20th of December 2015?

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[6] Abiri, Elisabeth. *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden.*

[7] Cesari, Jocelyn. The Securitisation of Islam in Europe. *Challenge Research Paper,* 2009 no. 14.

[8] Bagge Laustsen, Carsten & Wæver, Ole. In Defence of Religion: Sacred Referent Objects for Securitization, 2000 vol. 29, no. 3.

2 Theory

2.1 Securitization theory

A more nuanced take on security studies were made popular twenty five years ago[9]. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 made scientists perplexed and the fundamental understanding of security studies that rested on a realist framework were rocked as the Soviet Union disintegrated without any direct application of military force from the United States of America[10]. Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde published a book in 1998 called *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* that set out to redefine the conceptual framework in security studies. It added more depth and width to the realist assumptions of states as sole actors in matters of security and military might as the only kind of security related force[11].

Securitization theory is in the foreground of social constructivist security studies and serves as a theoretical bridge between the realists and the social constructivists[12]. It is a matter of widening the concept of who that can deem something as a security issue and that of who may be the subject to a threat[13]. The Copenhagen School rest on a constructivist epistemology that sees security matters as the things people talk about – the things we people negotiate and accept[14].

There are two conceptual dimensions to the theory. The first is *how* an issue can be securitized, as in what criteria have to be met before someone can start securitizing. The other is *when* an issue can be said to be successfully securitized, on a scale from nonpolicized, to politicized and to securitized[15]. The criteria to securitize are as follows: There has to be a speaker who presents someone or something as an existential threat to a designated audience. This process is known as a *securitizing move*. A successful securitization in turn occurs only when a security move is accepted by the referent object and the securitized issue begins to be a threat[16]. In essence: There is the speaker who makes securitizing moves[17], the speech act which is the linguistic framing of an issue as a threat[18], and the referent object who is subject to the threatening and who must accept the threat to finalize

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[9] Abiri, *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden*, Göteborg, 47

[10] Hough, *Understanding Global Security*, New York, Routledge, second edition 2008, p. 6.

[11] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1998, p. 1 – 2

[12] Hough, *Understanding Global Security*, New York, Routledge, second edition 2008, p. 8.

[13] Hough, *Understanding Global Security*, p. 18 – 19

[14] Buzan, Wæver, De Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 26

[15] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 94 and Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 23-24

[16] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 25

[17] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 96

[18] Ibid, 95

the process[19]. This thesis will focus most of its attention on the speech act and the securitizing move but to comprehend the theory in its entirety what follows is an overview of the speaker and the referent object.

2.2   Speakers and referent objects

The concept of the speaker has evolved since the late 1990s. Early Copenhagen School carried with it luggage from the older realistic views within security studies and acknowledges only the state as the legit speaker[20]. Critics argued that state-centrism creates a bias towards the traditional way of securitization as military issues, because threats to state security could endanger the realization of actions towards other forms of security and thus tends to neglect referent objects in minority[21]. But later versions embraced the notion that a constructed reality places no intrinsic boundaries on what is capable of what and that a state-centric view presents unnecessary restrictions on the theory[22]. In the revision, as argued by Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams, what is required to be a speaker is enough social and political capital to be believable in the eyes of a referent object[23].

The *referent object* in the theory of the Copenhagen school is the audience subjected to the threat[24]. There is an ongoing discussion whether or not to extend the concept of referent object to individuals, so that whatever is posed as a threat to a single person could be a security issue, or narrow it down to the state so that only things that are poised to threaten the state is security-worthy. One argument against more width in the referent object category is that if individuals are included then every individual problem might be incorporated as security problems and thus leaving the concept meaningless[25]. There is another argument in that the state carries a bigger risk than individuals (the state includes everybody, not just the referent object of a particular issue), influencing more people and thus may be deemed more important. But neither width nor importance negates other constellations within the state to be the potential subjects to securitization[26]. The Copenhagen school acknowledges this by incorporating 'societal identities' in their definition of referent object. Societal identities are identities within a given nation-state, where big enough collectives of individual are the target of a speech act as a common identity[27]. Examples of this are religious identities such as "Muslims", "Christians" and national identities such as "Germans"[28][29].

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[19] Buzan, Wæver, De Wilde. Security: A New Framework of Analysis 36 – 37, 40

[20] Abiri, *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden*, 42

[21] Hough, *Understanding Global Security*, 17, 19

[22] Buzan, Wæver, De Wilde. Security: A New Framework of Analysis. 37

[23] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies* 96

[24] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 100

[25] Ibid, 93

[26] Buzan, Wæver, De Wilde. Security: A New Framework of Analysis. 36

[27] Ibid, 99 – 100

[28] Ibid, 115

[29] Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, C*ritical Security Studies*, 100

2.3   The speech act

At the centre of this study is the speech act. It is both the means to securitize as well as the essence of security[30]. This is because the speech act is both the arguments made in favor of securitization (e.g. presenting something as an existential threat to a respondent object and offer a solution) and the thing that by utterance shape society into relating differently to the securitized issue[31]. If a speech act is spoken then the speaker has constituted a securitizing move[32], and if it is accepted by the respondent object then the issue has been securitized[33]. This does not mean that a speaker has to use the term "threat" or "security" explicitly, but that what is important is that the this meaning can be interpreted[34].

Speech acts follow a pretty clear grammatical structure and has several components to it. It has to contain a presentation of an existential threat, a "point of no return" and present a solution[35]. The "point of no return" is there to indicate the severity of the threat, and how eminent is dependent on the facilitating factors.

Speech acts are dependent on facilitating factors to be successful: the features of the threat made, e.g. the characteristics of the threat, and the speaker and his or her authority and acceptance among the reference object[36]. Parts of the facilitating factors of the speaker are covered in the previous section, but it is noteworthy to add that the character of the threats portrayed can influence the referent object differently. If the speaker talks about something already institutionalized in a security discourse then such a threat is easier to securitize than if the speaker present something new[37].

Because this study is a documentation of the efforts to securitize Muslims within a certain political discourse, it emphasizes the first part of the speech act: The securitizing move. The final part, the acceptance, is also very intriguing but because the Swedish Social Democratic Party was not in office during most of the five years, policy implementation linked to it is scarce.

Sectors are areas in which the characteristics of the issues securitized might differ[38]. They are vital to speech acts because the characteristics of existential threats differ between sectors[39]. The one sector subject of this study is the societal sector where collective identities make up the reference groups[40]. Existential threats are the hardest to define in this sector because identities are always changing character. Buzan et al argues that the acceptance step of the speech act in this sector is very dependent on whether the identities keep an open or closed mind in their consideration[41]. But the securitizing move is defined by the linguistic components of the speech act and the characteristics of those are set by

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[30] Ibid, 94

[31] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* 26

[32] Ibid, 25 – 26

[33] Ibid, 24

[34] Ibid, 27

[35] Ibid, 33

[36] Ibid, 32 - 33

[37] Ibid 33 and Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 100

[38] Ibid, 97

[39] Buzan, Wæver, De Wilde. *Security: A New Framework of Analysis,* 27

[40] Ibid, 23

[41] Ibid, 23

the speaker. As such we can deem any presentation of a threat towards a societal identity as existential if the criteria for a speech act are fulfilled.

2.3.1 Desecuritization

The theory of *desecuritization* is the final part of the securitization theory. Among the most undeveloped concepts within securitization theory[42], desecuritization is the notion that issues considered security issues may be moved back into the space of ordinary politicized issues and be handled normally, without the implication of a need for measures outside of the ordinary[43]. Buzan, Wæver and the others of the Copenhagen School consider securitization to be a drastic maneuver in politics and a political choice: Even though it allows for drastic measures, it limits the movement of reason around the issue. Thus to strive towards as little securitization as possible is preferable and moving securitized issues back into the sphere of ordinary conduct is the optimal position for them to be in[44].

According to two political scientists at the University of Strathclyde, Georgios Karyotis and Stratos Patrikios, there exists an internal opposition within the very fundamentals of the concept[45], as is evident in an easy example: If I talk about how, for example, migration is not a threat to our collective lifestyle and advocate that the issue should be politicized instead of securitized; how do I know that I do not securitize the issue further just by talking about migration in terms of a possible security threat, as my opponents have previously? Georgios and Stratos further elaborate on the problems with desecuritization in relation to the opposition, as there are structural interests in society that per their identity keep reinforcing the securitization.[46]

According to Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, Jef Huysmans, former researcher at the University of Kent, presented three ways of desecuritizing migration issues that can be applicable to the securitization of Muslims (since the strategies are concerned with the rhetorical construction of the speech act and not the threat) too:

The objectivist strategy, which is proving through facts the non-threat of an issue, *the constructivist strategy*, which is emphasizing the fickleness of constructed security threats, and the *deconstructivist strategy*, which is an attempt to bridge the gap between referent objects so as what is seen as a threat to one is seen as a threat to many, dwindling the importance of the threat[47].

2.4 The Securitization of Muslims

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[42] For various comments on this issue, see for example: Karyotis, Georgios and Patrikios, Stratos. Religion, securitization and anti-immigration attitudes: The case of Greece. *Journal of Peace Research.* 2010: p. 43 – 57, Roe, Paul. Securitization and Minority Rights: Conditions of Desecuritization. *Security Dialog*, 2004 no. 3, p. 279 – 294 and Peoples, Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, 102

[43] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 29

[44] Ibid,

[45] Karyotis, Georgios and Patrikios, Stratos. Religion, securitization and anti-immigration attitudes: The case of Greece. 43 - 44

[46] Ibid,

[47] Ibid, 101 - 102

In order to study the securitization of Muslims, one needs to define what is meant by "securitizing Muslims".

The securitization of Muslims is complex because it involves several distinct categories of security threats that are intervened. First of all: Immigrants and Muslims are connected in European security discourse. Jocelyne Cesari, a professor in Religion and Politics at the University of Birmingham and a teacher at the Harvard Divinity School, shows that policies directed towards Muslims and immigrants converge in Europe in general, and that the majority of Muslims in Europe have an immigrant background[48]. It then follows that when studying the securitization of Muslims one must also include the securitization of immigration. Second: Cesari argues that the concept of "Islamic terrorism" is prevalent in the European political discourse and allows for restrictive policy-implementation against Muslims[49]. As such, one also has to include the securitization of terrorism in the definition. Third: Religion is also the subject of securitization through the portrayal of religion as a fundamental character in culture, and foreign cultures in turn can be seen as harmful to the national cohesion[50], so because Muslims per definition follow the religion of Islam (not distinguishing between interpretations of Islam or levels of secularism), the securitization of Islam is too, in effect, the securitization of Muslims.

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[48] Cesari, Jocelyn. The Securitisation of Islam in Europe. 2 - 3
[49] Ibid, 12
[50] Hough, *Understanding Global Security*, 118 - 119

3   Method

3.1   Discourse analysis

Speech acts are a means to change behavior among respondents through the use of language. They are a framing technique of sorts with the goal of influencing individuals' behavior, as used in the field of foreign policy analysis[51]. Elisabeth Abiri, from Gothenburg University, explains the vitals of discourse analysis in a very efficient way when she states that "the concept of discourse is understood in two distinct ways. […] in a more general sense in line with the definition of linguistic practices […], as all written and oral statements. Secondly, discourse can also refer to institutionalized social practices"[52]. This can be derived from the writings of Laclau and Mouffe who dictates that all components of a current discourse is spoken of in relation to both other components as well as every alternative not presented within the discourse[53]. This is true in the case of securitization where what speakers can securitize is set by societal institutions[54] and individual agendas but aims to change current practice[55].

3.1.1   Rhetoric discourse analysis

One way to understand the securitizing move is to study how speakers organize their language in order to change the current discourse in their favor. Winther and Phillips offers a methodological approach to this through a strand of discursive psychology advocated by Potter & Wetherell in which a discourse is seen as a set of terms and descriptions that individuals use to shape their own discourse[56]. According to them, Potter & Wetherell's way of analysis is the identification of various discursive practices through rhetoric. Individuals operate within their own discourse, which is their repertoire of terms and descriptions, in an attempt to change the social world in which they are part. Thus, to study *how* they use their language matters because it the rhetoric use of it changes the social life[57]. This is actualized in the thesis as it examines the rhetoric of various speakers from the

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[51] Mintz, Alex & DeRouen Jr. Karl, *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 150

[52] Abiri, Elisabeth. *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden.* 14

[53] Winther Jörgensen, Marianne. *Diskursanalys som teori och metod,* 33 - 34

[54] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis.* 28

[55] Abiri, Elisabeth. *The Securitization of Migration: Towards an Understanding of Migration Policy Changes in the 1990s – The Case of Sweden.* 9

[56] Ibid, 114 – 115

[57] Ibid, 114- 115

Swedish Social Democratic Party who all tries to change their common discourse, in accordance with their own repertoires. The securitization move is in focus because no matter if they succeed with the securitization or not, they still change the discourse by way of framing.

Though it is common for research using discourse analysis to also criticize the power structures in question[58], this thesis does not. The relationship between speaker and, referent object and securitized issue is certainly an uneven relationship where one part tries to assert its power over the other, but the point in this study is to reveal how this is done and not to judge it.

3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

Securitization is both the theoretical structure of what constitutes a security question and a methodological structure with regards to when an issue can be deemed securitized. Many scholars, including Buzan and Wæver, agree that to study securitization is to study security discourse[59], which is in fact to examine the methodological part of the securitization *process*. It is an important distinction to clarify because it implies different methods of looking at different parts of securitization theory. While one can utilize rhetoric discourse to study how language influence the general security discourse, a qualitative content analysis is more suitable to the documentation of securitizing moves. Therefore this study utilizes terms and vocabulary of a classic content analysis in its methodological approach to the texts analyzed. The analysis is divided into one discursive and one rhetorical aspect where the discursive aspect is concerned with the direction of securitizing and desecuritizing moves and asks the following questions to the analyzed texts:

- What component of the securitization of Muslims do speakers talk about?
- Is there an increase or decrease in the securitizing/desecuritizing moves?
- What sorts of desecuritization strategies are used?

The rhetoric aspect is in turn concerned with the structure of the speakers' rhetoric:

- How do they put their speech acts in words?

3.2.1 Terms and language

The analysis covers selected writings from numerous articles and official documents, spanning over five years and touches upon all four of the components of the securitization of Muslims. The language used in the analysis is designed to

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[58] Esaiasson, Peter & Gilljam, Mikael & Oscarsson, Henrik & Wängnerud, Lena. *Metodprkatikan: Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*. 4th edition. Stockholm, Visby, Nordstedts Juridik AB, 2012. 212

[59] Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. 29

be streamlined in an attempt to ease up on the complexity for both the reader and the author. As such "securitization" and/or "securitized" refers to a securitizing move and the terms are used interchangeably. The same goes for and "desecuritization" and/or "desecuritized" that refers to a desecuritizing move.

When referring to the securitizing of Muslims the author refers to either one of the following four components: Muslims as identity, Islam, immigrants or terrorism. "Terrorism" and "terrorist" is used interchangeably with "extremist" and "extremism" due to their similarities in the analyzed material.

3.3 Material

This thesis makes extensive use of two sources: official government documents and Swedish daily newspapers. Official documents include propositions (initiatives presented to the parliament coming from the executive branch) and motions (initiatives presented to the parliament coming from the members of parliament). The logic behind this is that such documents present clear cut speech act from some of the Social Democratic party's most powerful political elite, deemed worthy speakers either through elected mandate or the fact that they get to figure in the press.

The newspapers used are two major Swedish day papers; *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Dagens Nyheter*, and two evening newspaper *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*. Dagens Nyheter is proclaimed independent liberal and Svenska Dagbladet is independent moderate (the Swedish equivalent of centre-right) while Aftonbladet is independent social democratic and Expressen is independent liberal. Such a division between political orientations allows for a broader spectrum of political views and serves as a fail-safe in the analysis so as not to exclude opinions expressed by speakers of different political origins. I have utilized the newspaper database Retriever Research in my efforts to map speech acts over the years and filtered my searches with specific necessary keywords (islam* invandr* muslim* terror* säkerhet* nation* armé* militär* shiamuslim* sunnimuslim* (S), where the asterisk allows for different endings).

One can criticize the amount of keywords and newspapers in hopes of a more accurate and inclusive material. I argue that the newspapers as chosen by their size and political orientations provide a good representation of opinions that figure in Swedish media. The keywords were chosen with the criteria of openness in mind, as I did not want the content of the articles to be colored by the keywords themselves any further than to the subject written about. All the keywords relate to the components included in the securitization of Muslims while at the same time pinpointing relevant articles in a myriad of opinions.

There are many more motions analyzed than there are propositions and the simple reason for this is that only parties in government are able to file propositions, and the Social Democrats in Sweden were only in office for the final of the five years examined. I used a set of keywords similar to those above to discern among the many thousands of motions and hundreds of propositions.

4   Analysis

4.1   Speech acts in daily newspapers

4.1.1   2010

Muslims were politicized in 2010 security but there was either not any real effort to portray Muslims as existential threats to society, or any suggestions of policy. Instead, speech acts of desecuritizing moves were more reoccurring. Islamic extremism was discussed by Nalin Pekgul, former leader of the Social Democratic Women in Sweden, who emphasized the importance of discussing emerging religious extremism as a way to combat the influence of the Sweden Democrats. Peter Weiderud, chairman of the Religious Social Democrats of Sweden, highlights structural discrimination of Muslims in Sweden on premises of incompatible values and Mona Sahlin, previous leader of the Social Democratic Party, commented on a suicide bombing in Stockholm.

Pekgul alternated between speech acts that politicized and desecuritized Muslims. When Pekgul discussed Islamic extremist groups in Sweden she stated that "they are not many, absolutely not. The problem is just that the Muslims are scared of them." And "They [secular Muslims in Sweden, the author's clarification] have seen these fanatics throw acid in the faces of women. They have actually seen them murder human beings"[60]. The wording implicitly portrays extremists as a threat to the Muslim community in Sweden, but it does not contain any suggestion of extraordinary measures. Nevertheless, she discussed Muslims in a security sense: By adopting a categorical language, Pekgul divided Muslims into bad Muslims, who contain extremists, and good Muslims that belong to the referent group. She also utilized vivid imagery to cement this image. But when Pekgul talks about the importance of discussing extremism as a mean against the Sweden Democrats, it is implied that the categorization of Muslims is actually meant to *counter* a generalized view of Muslims as advocated by the Sweden Democrats. This is an example of the constructivist strategy. In this sense, using concrete examples of facts, she also utilizes the objectivist strategy to reinforce her point of desecuritization.

Peter Weiderud and others writes in *Dagens Nyheter* on the lack of tolerance in Sweden for religious minorities:

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[60] Nilsson, Dan. "Förortsoro en het fråga", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2010 s. 21, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

"Utilizing Islamophobic messages, the Sweden Democrats tries to reach four percent. The Government has asked SÄPO [the Swedish Secret Police, author's clarification] to map all militant Islamism in Sweden […] More EU-countries wants to follow the parliaments of Belgium and France to ban religious clothing that covers the face.

[…]

Tolerance should be a criterion for political honesty, concerning the freedom of religion, in this political campaign. The stance should be the largest possible amount of freedom for every religious person to live out their religion and tradition, as long as it does not wrong anybody else"[61]

This is a desecuritizing move. By advocating religious tolerance, Weiderud is countering the securitizing argument that Islam is a threat to the current practices in the Swedish society. Such points are examples of the deconstructive strategy where the referent object is "religious people in Sweden", and Weiderud tries to include Muslims in that identity. The language is concise and full of examples of religious discrimination and descriptions of the Swedish secular society as biased towards branches of Christianity.

Mona Sahlin's brief comment on a suicide bombing in Stockholm was that "It is very serious if now even Sweden has been subjected to a terrorist attack. All Swedes should be able to feel safe and secure in their everyday lives. I am convinced that our society will stand strong even in a time of trial such as this"[62]. In the context of this comment, speculations about the nature of the suicide bombings flourished in the media. The Sweden Democrats were quick to point out that this is the work of marginalized immigrants, and the prime minister encouraged people not to deduct answers too fast[63]. In such light, Sahlin's statement can be seen as a slight desecuritization move in the way that she is trying to avoid connecting the bombings to terrorism. This is the constructivist strategy.

The comment is sweeping and the meanings of "feel safe and secure in their everyday lives" and "our society will stand strong" are vague.

4.1.2 2011

2011 presented no complete acts of securitizing moves from the Social Democratic Party, but rather more emphasis on the security discourse within the realm of the politicized. In one instance, Sven-Erik Österberg, group-leader in parliament, urged the government to invite the opposition parties in a collective effort to suppress "violent extremist movements", following a debate on the same

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[61] Wedierud, Peter el al. "Är vi beredda att älska juden och muslimen?", *Dagens Nyheter* 2010, s. 5, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.
[62] Larsson J. Mats. "Reinfeldt manade folket till tålamod" *Dagens Nyheter*, 2010, s. 8, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.
[63] Ibid,

topic. In another, Carina Hägg, previous spokesperson for the Social Democratic Women in Sweden, presented a lengthy debate article against Islamic extremism.

Hägg writes:

"Religious fanaticism and extremism are growing ever stronger in Sweden. We do not really want to recognize it or talk about it […] Over the course of the latest decade; fanatic religious groups have grown stronger in the Swedish society. Often in Muslim communities, in areas with many immigrants.

[…]But our cowardice and naivity means a serious threat towards our society and can in the worst case scenario be the difference between life and death.

[…]The fanatic societies have been able to grow strong in the quiet, without any larger reaction from the rest of society. It is easily done when the neighborhoods are becoming more and more segregated and the tenants' communication with other parts of society becomes even less. It is about a few individuals whom, with the help of resources, a clear agenda and a well organized system of recruiting succeed in attracting young, confused men in the same way that far-right groups seem to do. While at the same time, the bigger group of secular Muslims stands helplessly by, unorganized and watching."[64]

Society is the referent object discernible in that she refers to it as "we" in the part about not recognizing the threat. The eminent threat of growing extremism is explicitly stated as an existential threat to our society. The only thing that is missing for this to be a clear cut case of a securitization move is a policy suggestion about how to overcome this threat. Much like Pekgul, Hägg also adopts a categorical language. The words paint a picture of an imminent threat with no opposition from the rest of the communities or the society as a whole. Hägg points out that while the extremist individuals are few, secular Muslims have been too passive and by doing this, narrows the gap between what kind of Muslim is responsible for extremism. She also makes the same type of distinction between good, secular Muslims and bad, extremist Muslims. Hägg makes frequent use of examples to create this distinction.

Sven-Erik Österberg's request is interesting because of its wording and its context. When he said that "I expect an invitation from the government where we sit down and discuss. It is clear that more things can be done in certain areas. One cannot stop here and feel pleased"[65], Österberg securitized extremists through urgency.

4.1.3 2012-2014

A group of religious social democrats from the Stockholm area criticize the political far-right for securitizing Islam and Veronica Palm criticize right wing policies for creating a breeding ground for intolerance against Muslims. Mona

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[64] Hägg, Carina. "Upp till kamp mot förortsfanatikerna"
[65] Olsson, Lova. "Extremism ska mötas på bred front", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2011 s. 8, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

Sahlin makes the first complete securitizing move following the Social Democratic victory in 2014.

In 2012, members of Heart, an organization for religious social democrats in Stockholm, commented on the Islamophobic agenda in far-right parties in the wake of the terrorist attack against members of the Workers' Youth League in Norway by Anders Behring Breivik. When they claim that "what poisons the [public, the author's clarification] dialogue is that more and more debaters adopt a far-right description of reality when they talk about Islamisation […]"[66], they are making a securitization move in an effort to securitize far-right rhetoric. This serves as the constructivist strategy because of the disagreement with the social construction of Islam made up by far-right debaters. Using metaphors such as "a cold shower for the Nordic self-image" and "Right wing debaters do not care if the rifles are aimed at the left, against the Muslims and the feminists" reinforces the threat.

Veronica Palm, a member of parliament, securitizes far-right ideology and makes a desecuritizing move for Muslims. Palm exemplifies the effects of such ideology with: "We see anti-Semitism out in the open I Malmö, in other parts of the country afrophobia grows and the hatred of Muslims affect people daily"[67]. By pointing out the development of these societal processes, Palm utilizes the objectivist strategy in trying to convince her audience.

It is only in 2014 that we see the first clear case of securitization in media. Mona Sahlin is acting national coordinator for work against violent extremism[68]. In a discussion about Swedish Muslims involved in terror activities abroad she states:

"This is not just a tragedy because of the radicalization; it is just as much about personal tragedies and relatives in great sorrow.

[…]

"Even though we Social Democrats want to criminalize participation in wars and terror abroad, we still understand the importance of a way back for those that feel great regret and want to go home"[69].

There are two referent objects discernible in this speech act. The first is the Swedish society that is threatened by the radicalization of Muslims, and the other is the Muslim community in Sweden as threatened by the personal tragedies. Criminalizing participation in wars and terror abroad is in turn the solution to these things, finalizing the security move. The emotional connection to the Muslim community through the acknowledgement of sorrow and tragedy, as well as the combination of extraordinary measures and a loop hole are examples of

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[66] Ardin et al. "Högerextrem retorik förgiftar samtalet – Replik", *Aftonbladet*, 2013 s. 6, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

[67] Palm, Veronica. "Bästa skyddet mot rasism är jämlikhet", *Aftonbladet*, 2014 p. 6, retrieved from 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

[68] Nationella samordnaren mot våldsbejakande extremism. Om oss. 2015. http://www.samordnarenmotextremism.se/om-oss/ (retrieved 2015-12-20)

[69] By, Ulrika. "Det handlar om personliga tragedier", *Dagens Nyheter,* 2014 p. 4-5, retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

facilitating measures there to convince the referent objects. They are vague and unspecified.

4.1.4 2015

Anders Ygeman, Minister for Home Affairs, and Stefan Löfven continues the effort of criminalizing participation in acts of terror abroad. Margot Wallström, Minister of Foreign Affairs, opts for a decrease in immigration and so does Stefan Löfven.

Anders Ygeman makes a complete securitizing move in favor of securitizing terrorism when he proposes that Sweden latch on to a proposition under discussion in the European Union about airlines distributing information about its passengers. Ygeman is framing the threat when he says that "we have a growing threat from those that flies away and fight abroad. They establish an ability and will and pose a danger once they come back. By then it is good to know if they went and if they came back"[70]. The threat is those participating in terrorist acts and the solution is the distribution of information. He further states that "it will be possible to search [for people flying, author's clarification] from defined criteria and get a warning flag: here is somebody on his or her way to do the wrong thing". The language is very conservative and does not divulge anything about either what ability is nor how it is helpful to track these people.

Stefan Löfven comments on the proposal to criminalize participation in terror acts abroad:

"The message for those that travel from Sweden to commit crimes against humanity in other countries is that they will be met by police if they return. They shall be tried and they shall be punished.

I am afraid that I have to say that Sweden has been naïve in this regard. Maybe has it been hard for us to accept that in our open society there are Swedish citizens who sympathize with the murderers in ISIL (IS). Just as it is hard for us to accept that, 70 years after the Holocaust, there are still Nazis."[71]

Löfven does not need to mention a threat because by now it is implicated, both by the writing of the proposal and from previous speakers, that those traveling abroad are a threat so the Swedish society once they return. His speech is emotional and the comparison to Nazism serves as a facilitating measure.

Margot Wallström made a brief comment on the state of refugees coming into Sweden saying: "I believe that most feel that we cannot keep maintaining a system where there might arrive 190 000 human beings every year, in the long run

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[70] Rosén, Hans. "Politisk strid om kartläggningen av terrorister". *Dagens Nyheter*, 2015 p. 8 − 9. Recieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

[71] Kärrman, Jens. "Löfven: Verkligheten har sprungit ifrån oss". *Dagens Nyheter*, 2015 p. 9. Recieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

our systems will break"[72]. This is a securitization move with a referral to refugees as a existential threat to the systems of society but without a purposed solution. Her language is emotional and set to construct a social reality where 190 000 people are too much for Sweden to bear, implicating that restrictions should be implemented. The big number is also daunting, reinforcing this image.

This is later supported by Löfven who stated that "we must go lower, substantially lower"[73] in response to the number of refugees accepted into Sweden. This comment is vague in that it does not specify any real figures, but powerful in that it emphasizes the need to decrease the amount.

4.2   Speech acts in motions and propositions

4.2.1 2010

No motion in 2010 followed the grammatical structure of securitization, and one is explicitly focused on desecuritization. The first one is an effort to desecuritize Islam by issuing a speech act that makes Islamophobia out to be a threat towards society in the form of prejudice, discrimination and violence. The other one outlines most of the Party's views on international matters with two subchapters devoted to Human Rights in the Middle East and Security and Conflicts.

Hans Ekström, author of the first motion, follows the grammatical structure of securitization and revises the speech act so as to desecuritize. He presents the threat of Islamophobia against the societal identity which is the Swedes and proposes a solution. He writes:

"Intolerance against our fellow man is everywhere. That is why anti-Semitism and Islamophobia is a problem for anyone who values ideals such as human compassion, democracy and peace in freedom.

[…]

Islamophobia is increasing today and, simplified, stands for ignorance, prejudice and hatred against Muslims and Islam. Islamophobia aims at an unmotivated fear of Muslims and Islam that leads to negative reactions to everything that has to do with the religion. It is aimed at Islam and Muslims in the same way that anti-Semitism is aimed at Jews and Judaism"[74]

He utilizes a comparison with anti-Semitism, which can be seen as a facilitating measure as the atrocities during the time of Nazi Germany is a familiar

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[72] Eriksson, Karin. "Höstens kriser fick flyktingdebatten att tvärvända". *Dagens Nyheter*, 2015 p. 18 – 22. Retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

[73] Eriksson, Göran. "Anpassningen till SD liknar inget annat". *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2015 p. 15. Retrieved 2015-12-20 from Retriever Research.

[74] Ahlin et al. Motion 2010/11:U306. *En rättvis värld är möjlig*

image to the Swedish identity. He uses a vague language when he makes Islamophobia into a threat, and a vivid description of its aims and effects. By linking Islamophobia together with ignorance and prejudice, Ekström implies that this is not the true nature of Islam and therefore tries to redefine to concept in accordance with the constructive strategy.

The second motion was filed by several members of parliament, led by Urban Ahlin, previous chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. This one operates within the politicized parts of Muslims in security questions. Often concerned with international issues, one can be misled into thinking that the referent object is anything but the Swedish identity. But being a declaration, this motion is meant to appeal to Swedish identity's embodiment of will. Three subchapters concern the components of securitization of Muslims:

The rhetoric in the Situation of Minorities focuses on desecuritizing Muslims by advocating "more attention to the protection of minorities and to counteract discrimination of people that belongs to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities […] We want to emphasize that in this context, both Islamophobia and anti-Semitism has to be combated". The reason for this is because "ethnic, racial and religious tensions have grown stronger and has come to threaten economical, social and political structures within the state"[75]. Using the factual example of what have happened as a reason to desecuritize is part of the objectivist strategy. Nothing is defined and the nature of the threat and the solution are vague.

The Human Rights in the Middle East subchapter talks in alternating terms of desecurity and security. It begins with:

"We social democrats are deeply worried about the latest years' development and the situation in the Middle East, first and foremost with regards to the state of democracy and the human rights. It is unacceptable to deviate from democracy and human rights

We who live in a democracy has an important task in that through an active foreign policy contribute to a democratic development and increase respect for the human rights in the region.

[…]

Parts of the West have acted in such a way that the impression of a 'war of civilizations' have consolidated in the Muslim world. […] The fact that this struggle has been described as a war against terrorism has most likely contributed to mistrust and distance from both sides."[76]

The security discourse is present in the categorical portrayal of Muslims through a stark contrast between "the Muslim world" and "the Swedish world". The language promotes this by equalizing Sweden's ways with democratic ways and emphasizing responsibility to project change. The entire subchapter is colored with examples of the different democratic deficits in the Muslim world, be it through religious dominance or terrorist influence over the civil society. They help strengthen the categorization.

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[75] Ibid,
[76] Ahlin et al. Motion 2010/11:U306. *En rättvis värld är möjlig*

There are elements of a desecuritization discourse too where it states that "In the Muslim world […] a number of organization have emerged that are focused on social welfare, environment and human rights". Here we see examples countering the categorical, constructed view of the Muslim world as non-democratic with the objectivist strategy.

4.2.2 2011

One motion was filed that bore any relevance towards the securitization of Muslims in 2011. This was a revision of last year's *A just world is possible* that et again outline many of the Social Democratic Parties stance on international issues. But this version lack the securitization moves made in the previous one[77].

4.2.3 2012-2014

Two motions dealing with the securitization of Muslims were filed between the years of 2012 and 2014. The first is another overview of the Social Democratic Party's views on international issues, but aimed at the European Union. It makes a securitizing move against migration as a facilitating terrorism. The second one is 2013s version of the *A just world is possible* motion. This one is identical to the 2011s version in regards to the securitization of Muslim[78][79].

Like previous declarations, this first motion does not fully commit to the securitizing move. Instead of a proposal for an actual solution, this one suggests a vague inclination or a stance. The motion states that:

"The conditions for terrorism have changed with globalization and the technological advancements. Information technology and an increased migration create structures that are used by these forces for recruitment, logistics, financing planning and mediatization of attacks. This has made our society more vulnerable and the future development harder to judge […] this demands that the crime fighting authorities are allocated resources and tools for the job."[80]

Although the paragraph speaks about terrorism, this is the securitization of immigration and technological advancements. Those factors are the threat to society that can give way to terrorism. The use of vague descriptions concerning the nature of the threat and the solution reoccur here.

4.2.4 2015

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[77] Ahlin et al. Motion 2011/12:U315. *En rättvis värld är möjlig*
[78] Ahlin et al. Motion 2011/12:U315. *En rättvis värld är möjlig*
[79] Ahlin et al. Motion 2012/13:U306. *En rättvis värld är möjlig*
[80] Ahlin et al. Motion 2012/13:80. *Berättelse om verksamheten i Europeiska Unionen.*

Now that the Social Democratic Party is in office, propositions interested in security matters emerge. Three propositions were filed during 2015. Three are concerned with combating terrorism: One is an account for actions taken against violent extremism within Sweden and another is a proposition for a national strategy against terrorism. The final proposition is the policy proposal to criminalize travels with the intention to participate in terrorist acts.

The first proposition is called *Arrangements to make society more resilient against violent extremism* and present numerous speech acts in favor of securitizing Muslims. It states:

"The ongoing recruitment of Swedes to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) is very troublesome.

[…]

There exist today primarily three violent extremist environments in Sweden […] and Islamic extremism. The different activities from the groups of extremists undermined challenge and threaten democracy in various ways. It is especially worrisome in the case of violent Islamic extremism that an increasing number of persons have joined violent Islamic extremism and armed extremist- and terror groups in Syria and Iraq […] those that travel might also present a threat towards Sweden with the intent and ability to perform acts of terrorism.

[…]

[Followers of, the author's clarification] The violent Islamic extremism is practicing takfiri, a interpretation that brands all Muslims that does not follow this extreme, violence promoting Islamic ideology as non-Muslims, in other words as infidels that loses their human rights and shall be taxed, converted, exiled, imprisoned, enslaved or killed."[81].

Though plenty, none of these speech acts can be said to be complete securitization moves because they are the basis for all ready implemented counter measures. Instead they lodge within the area of politization. The wordings have a matter-of-fact air about them so as to more easy convey them as truth, while the descriptions are very detailed. The meticulous description of what kind of Muslims engages in Islamic extremism serve as a denominator for a categorical classification of good Muslims and bad Muslims.

The second proposition is yet another incomplete securitization move because it offers no tangible solution to the portrayed threats. It reads:

"The foremost terrorist threat in Sweden today comes from actors inspired by Al-Qaida or closely related organizations ideologies. There are people likely capable of acts of terrorism within the violent extremist environment in Sweden […] The increased number of travelers to, and more importantly back home again from, areas of conflict where individuals have participated in terrorist training or acts of violence, makes the amount of people capable to do attacks or other kinds of ideologically motivated crimes,

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[81] Löfven, Stefan & Bah Kuhnke, Alice. Regeringens skrivelse 2014/2015:144. "Åtgärder mot att göra samhället mer motståndskraftigt mot våldsbejakande extremism".

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such as threats and acts of violence, increase. People returning from such travels […] have in most cases acquired an ability to attempt serious acts of violence."[82]

This proposition also presents detailed descriptions about the portrayed threat which in this case are Muslims traveling to join in acts of violence and terror. It is a stronger emphasis on the capabilities of people returning, echoing some of speech acts presented in the newspapers by party officials.

The policy proposal is very straightforward in comparison to the previous propositions and motions. It briefly motivates its implementation with:"To be able to counter terrorism needs an effective criminal law legislation" and "There are data stating that at least 15000 people, whereas 4000 from Europe, have traveled to Iraq, Syria and adjoining regions and joined violent Islamic groups. Therefore the problem can be said to have increased in extent"[83].

A policy proposal is not a securitizing move in itself and so one does not expect much in ways of framing the threat. But facts as examples serve as a way to prove its relevance.

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[82] Ibid,

[83] Wallström, Margot & Johansson, Morgan. Regeringens proposition 205/16:78. "Ett särskilt straffansvar för resor i terrorismsyfte".

5   Conclusion

This thesis documented the security discourse within the Swedish Social Democratic Party through an examination of speech acts concerning Muslims. The author applied the Copenhagen School's securitization theory and its structure of a security speech act on Swedish daily newspapers as well as motions and propositions. This was conducted through a combination of qualitative content analysis and rhetoric discourse analysis. Results of the analysis imply that there has been a tendency in the security discourse to move from partial desecuritization speech acts to become more securitization oriented. There also seem to be a change in what components are emphasized in the securitization of Muslims, where the discourse has gone from focusing on extremism to immigration. There is no discernible evidence for a trend in the rhetoric discourse. Different speakers utilize different methods of framing and the techniques overlap in both securitization and desecuritization.

Beginning in 2010, speakers frequently desecuritized Muslims in media through the constructivist strategy, only once using the deconstructivst strategy. In motions, an objectivist strategy was most common. Sometimes one can see a speech act serving the purpose of both securitizing and desecuritizing as in the case of Pekgul and the second motion of 2010 where the Muslim world is both securitized and desecuritized. The situations differ from each other in that the first is a product of the speaker's rhetoric, while the other is intentional.

Between 2011 and 2014, speech acts of securitizing moves began to gain frequency over those of desecuritizing moves. There are still desecuritization going on, as the criticism of far-right rhetoric and ideology in the papers and the desecuritization of religious minorities in the only motion of 2011. But they are either indirect cases of desecuritization, as in the case of the former, or a speech act all ready stated, as the latter, while the first complete securitizing move occur in media and we see the first securitization move against migrants.

2015 presents a turning point in the security discourse. So far, the by far dominating component of the securitization of Muslims had been the securitization of extremists and terrorists, but now refugees and immigrants became an equal target.

The rhetorical discourse was on the other hand much less uniform. The rhetoric structure of the speech acts contained a wide range of phrases, terms and farming techniques from vague and diffuse descriptions of threats and solutions to concise, explicit descriptions of the same things. There might be a slight inclination towards speakers more often being vague when making a securitizing move, but one would need more material to say for sure.

5.1   Further research

An interesting addition to this research on securitization would be to examine if there are any casual relationships between certain speech acts and policy implementations. While Elisabeth Abiri has studied the securitization discourse of migration in Sweden with regards to policy, something similar could be done on Muslims and/or with an emphasis on the relationship between speech acts and policy.

A second way to further study the securitization of Muslims in particular would be a comparative study between two countries with two similar Social Democratic parties, using a most-likely technique. Comparing Sweden and Denmark could prove a valuable link in explaining this process, as the countries are pretty similar in both welfare and political aspects.

A third way would be to complement the discourse analysis by adding a quantitative approach to this question. Karyotis and Patrikios does this when studying the securitization of migration in Greece, by adding quantitative data from surveys about societal attitudes towards immigrants before and after speech acts and policy implementation. This could complement a study on a topic such as this one.

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