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**Act 140 as a securitization measure**

*A study on the shift from integration to repatriation of refugees in the Danish asylum system*

Lund University

Sociology of Law Department

Master Thesis (SOLM02)

Spring 2019

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## I. Abstract

The Danish asylum system has experienced radical changes during 2019 in regards to asylum and refugee rights with the right-wing governing coalition's introduction of Act 140. Central to Act 140 is the *repatriation philosophy* that is carried out in practice with an increased focus on temporary residency of refugees within the Danish asylum system as opposed to permanency. Thus, *social integration of refugees* as a political objective is instead replaced with *repatriation of refugees* when the conditions in their country of origin are deemed as safe. Many war conditions, however, last up to 15 years, which means that refugees will be left with feelings of uncertainty for a long period of time, knowing that they are not supposed to make a permanent living in Denmark, which further influence the integration of refugees in areas of social, cultural and economic life. The aim of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of Act 140 initiated by the political right through an elaboration of the three parliamentary debates between the political left and right that preceded Act 140 in order to generate specific conclusions on the discourses that surrounds the legislation as well as the influence of securitization in the passing of Act 140. With a socio-legal point of departure using Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis, Act 140 is identified as a securitization measure initiated by the political right. This thesis concludes that the Danish People's Party plays a fundamental role in the discursive framing of refugees as a *threat* to Danish society that creates 'them versus us' politics by referring to parallel societies, oppression of women, and unemployment levels amongst refugees. The political right's *othering* of refugees has led the passing of Act 140 with support from the Social Democrats, but with objection from other left-wing parties such as the Radical Left, Red Green Alliance and the Alternatives. The left wing parties that object to Act 140 argue that the legislation will not only increase poverty amongst refugees but will also be an inhibition for refugee's possibilities of naturalization, gradual attainment of civil rights through social integration and thus the pursuit of equality within Danish

society. **Key words:** Asylum and Refugee Rights, the Refugee Convention, Nationalism, Securitization, Social Integration, Repatriation, Political Communities, Critical Discourse Analysis, Othering Narrative, Assimilation, Multiculturalism, Parliamentary Debates, Socio-Legal Research, Human Rights, Civil Rights

## II. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Isabel Schoultz, without whom this thesis would not have been possible. Thanks for your encouragement, understanding and valuable guidance.

To the biggest source of my strength, *my family* - thank you for your wisdom, guidance and love – it has guided me through life at the toughest of times.

Thanks to *all* my friends for *always* believing in me – and to Mikala and Isabelle for treating me for a well needed massage.

A big thank you to Tobias for believing so much in me throughout this writing process - your motivation, support and encouragement has been so valuable to me.

A very special thanks to my sister and *dudely*, Estelle, for years of academic support whether that has been your contributions and constructive feedback to my work, or your continuous love and support - you are my anchor in this world.

### **III. List of Abbreviations**

MP: Member of Parliament

DIS: Danish Immigration Service

DPP: Danish People's Party

RL: The Radical Left

DLP: Danish Liberal Party

RGA: Red-Green Alliance

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

UN: United Nations

CS: The Copenhagen School

NHR: National Human Rights

IR: International Relations

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# 1 Introduction

Denmark was one of the first nations to ratify the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees on the 4th of December 1952, which was a major milestone for refugee and asylum rights (UNHCR, 2019; Gammeltoft, 2017). The Refugee Convention requires nations to extend certain legal protections to those who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” find themselves having to flee their country of origin (ibid, 2019). Central to the Refugee Convention and thus high on the international agenda is *social integration* of refugees and asylum seekers in their host countries, which is in accordance with *Sustainable Development Goal 16* that aims for “access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” and thus shall be considered as a top priority for nations that receive refugees and asylum seekers (Robila, 2018: 2). From an international perspective, *social integration* is considered to be the best approach in the adaptation of refugees and asylum seekers in their host country (Berry, 1997). According to the protocols of the Refugee Convention, *social integration* functions as a two-way process but may only be pursued by refugees and asylum seekers if the host country is open and inclusive towards multiculturalism (Robila, 2018).

Approximately thirty years after having ratified the Refugee Convention, the Danish government made a public statement that put an emphasis on the country’s 1983 Aliens Act as being amongst the most liberal legislations in the world with its strong ties to the Refugee Convention (Gammeltoft, 2017). Since then, however, Denmark has moved further away from priding itself as an international humanitarian superpower and the country’s 2019 Aliens Act is

considered amongst the strictest in Europe (Time, 2019). Thus, the Danish asylum system has experienced radical changes from one extreme to another since the Refugee Convention was first ratified in 1952, which signifies the fundamental opinion struggles that exist within the political communities (Gammeltoft, 2017: 99).

The restrictive turn towards immigration of refugees is predominantly owed to the growth in popularity of right wing populist parties defining “the people” along “ethnic, national, and religious lines” that *otherize* and treats refugees as threats to Danish society (Widfeldt, 2018: 1; Malone, 2014: 5). With the rise of electoral support and parliamentary influence of right wing populist parties in Denmark such as the Danish People's Party, the radical changes to the Aliens Act, restrictive immigration and asylum policies have rejected the very idea of multiculturalism within Danish society; the idea that various cultures are able to live together whilst simultaneously maintaining their own beliefs, traditions and languages (Bloom, 2014). Instead Danish politics have been dominated by difficult assimilation discourses, a rise in deterrence policies, and a recent 2019 *repatriation philosophy* that replaces the former social integration philosophy of refugees, which for years has been a central aspect to the Social Democrat's immigration politics (Jacobinmag, 2019).

There are multiple factors that contribute to successful social integration of refugees and asylum seekers into areas of education and employment and adaptation to social and cultural elements in a given society, including their experiences, “their physical and mental health, or social support” (Robila, 2018: 8; United Nations, 2019). However, with an increased level of securitization policies in Denmark that deem refugees and asylum seekers as a *threat* to society, social integration has become overwhelmingly difficult (Ibid., 2018). As of March 2019, the Danish governing right wing coalition and the Social

Democrats voted in favour of Act 140, which represents a fundamental change in the Aliens Act, Integration Act, Repatriation Act and other laws related to these Acts (L 140, second treatment, 2019). These set of amendments function as a form of securitization procedure by the Danish Government confined by verbal interventions by top-ranking politicians of predominantly the right wing, which will be elaborated later on in this thesis' analysis. These verbal interventions are demonstrated in three debates that are labelled as 'treatments' of Act 140 in the Danish Parliament, an Act referred to as *the paradigm shift*, which according to the political right is going to lead a fundamental change in the way in which Denmark has previous dealt with asylum, and which will be the focus of this thesis (The Local, 2019; L 140, first treatment).

This focus was motivated by a desire to explore thought provoking debates in the Danish Parliament, *folketinget*, that had a significant legislative impact on laws regarding immigration, and which in their aftermath have fostered various public debates regarding political interests, democratic injustice and political corruption (Time, 2019). Act 140 was passed as formal law on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2019 despite much disagreement between the Members of Parliament (MPs) and without consideration to recommendations and warnings from influential international organisations such as the United Nations.

Act 140 was led by the political right that held executive power as representatives of the Government at the time when Act 140 was introduced. Before Act 140 could be passed as formal law, the Act had to be treated three times in the Danish Parliament as in accordance with the Danish constitution. The three treatments in the Danish Parliament consisted of debates between relevant political parties, which were the Social Democrats, Red-Green Alliance, the Radical Left, and the Alternative from the political left and the Liberal Party along with the Danish People's Party from the political right in order for the

parties to introduce their stance on the legislation, and negotiate on changes so that the legislation becomes favourable to the majority of the MPs. Every legislation must be treated three times in the Danish Parliament and requires the presence of MPs from all relevant parties, so that the debates are in accordance with democratic principles that support and encourage proper and constructive exchange of thoughts to take place between the political communities (Folketinget, 2019). I have, therefore, chosen to explore the three parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140 for discourse analysis, since a significant premise for this study is that meaning and opinion making within Danish society is constructed and given importance to within discourse, especially those discourses formed by high-ranking politicians in the Danish Parliament (Chaney, 2017). The transcribed debates that consist of more than 300 pages and 13 hours of debate time in the Parliament have been retrieved from the Danish Parliament's webpage, *Folketinget*, where the most relevant statements have been selected and translated from Danish to English in the analysis section (Folketinget, 2019).

### 1.1. Aims, Objectives and Significance

The aim of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of Act 140 initiated by the political right through an elaboration of the three parliamentary debates between the political left and right that preceded Act 140 in order to generate specific conclusions on the discourses that surrounds the legislation as well as the influence of securitization in the passing of Act 140. This aim is accomplished by conducting Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on Norman Fairclough's approach to CDA along with the theoretical framework of securitization, which together provide the basis for the analysis of the three parliamentary debates.

The parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140 represents the encounter of two opposing political interests in the area of immigration; Firstly, the political interests of some left wing parties that represent the *opposition*, which consists of the political parties, the Radical Left, the Red-Green Alliance, and the Alternatives, that desire an increased focus on *social integration of refugees* as in accordance with the protocols of the UN's Refugee Convention. Secondly, the political interests of the political right that consist of the Danish Liberal Party the Conservatives, and the Danish People's Party that aims for *repatriation* of refugees as a form of securitization measure. Despite the Social Democrats being labelled as a party belonging to the political left, the party takes an interesting stance in the parliamentary debates as supporters of social integration politics, while simultaneously acting in agreement with the right wing political parties, that there is a *societal need* for repatriation practices. I have selected these particular debates for analysis since the Danish Parliament represents a powerful institution in a representative liberal democracy, and its politicians' verbal interventions in the Danish Parliament has an impact not simply on the enactment of law, but also meaning and opinion making within a broader social context. From a socio-legal departure, this study aspires to critically investigate the right wing's influence on the enactment of law through discourse that enabled the 'paradigm shift' in Denmark 's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers.

## 1.2 Research questions

The main, overarching research question of this thesis is as follows:

*“What socio-legal insights can be learned from the study of discourses regarding the shift from integration to repatriation in the Danish asylum system?”*

The sub-research questions are as follows:

*“How do the political right and left discursively frame the shift from social integration to repatriation in the three parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140?”*

*“How has the political right framed refugees and asylum seekers, as well as social integration, in order to enable the passing of Act 140?”*

### 1.3 Delimitations

This study has been narrowed down by defining certain boundaries and limitations with the purpose to control the range of the study. Thus, this study will focus on the three parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140 where *relevant* most noticeable statements have been selected for analysis based on repetitions of themes and concepts. I have chosen to take a point of departure in right-wing securitization statements, and the left-wing responses to these statements that represent discursive deviations between the political right and left. This is due to the fact that Act 140 and the philosophy of repatriation is initiated and promoted by the right wing, and therefore, the political right sets the conversational agenda by introducing what needs to be addressed in the Danish Parliament.

## 1.4 Disposition

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter consists of the introduction, which encompasses the aims, objectives, significance, research questions, delimitation and deposition. The second chapter consists of the background that is supposed to give a general overview of pre-knowledge required for the understanding of this thesis' domains. The third chapter consists of a literature review and a section that identifies the research gap that has determined the formulation of the research questions. The fourth chapter presents the securitization theory as the theoretical framework for this thesis, in addition to a section that elaborates on the motivation behind the choice of this theory. The fifth chapter consists of an introduction to methodology and data collection for Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse model, choice of material, ethical considerations, strengths and limitations. The sixth chapter encompasses the analysis that has been divided into three parts with sub-headings in order to make the analysis more tangible and in-depth. The seventh chapter is composed of the conclusion that summarizes the empirical findings, answers the research questions and suggest future research. Lastly, the eighth chapter consists of the bibliography.

## 2 Background

This following section aims to provide a brief overview of the political parties that represent the Danish governing coalition and the opposition of 2019 along with an elaboration of Act 140 and the international criticism that the Act has received from the UN, in order to provide the reader with the pre-knowledge required for the understanding of this thesis' domains.

### 2.1 The *governing coalition* and the *opposition* of 2019

In 2015, the Danish Liberal Party won the Danish elections with 19.5 per cent of the votes, and thus obtained executive power as the biggest right-wing party in Denmark. The Danish Liberal Party then formed a government consisting of the right-wing political parties; Danish Liberal Party and the Conservatives, with parliamentary support from the Danish People's Party (Altinget, 2015). In Denmark, the system of governance is parliamentary democracy with a multiparty system of governance, which means that even relatively small political parties can assert their influence on legislation (Denmark, 2019). The Danish left wing typically represents those parties that support social equality and egalitarianism, which means that they tend to value the international agenda and view the implementation of human rights treaties as significant to the maintenance of social order in Danish society (The Local, 2019). Danish parties of the political left tend to be welcoming towards refugees, and typically focus on initiating social integration programs so that refugees can reach their full potential in Danish society (Malone, 2014). The Danish right wing populist parties tend to be more critical towards immigration as they traditionally place nationhood pursuits higher than objectives of equality and social inclusion of foreigners (ibid, 2014). Thus, in Denmark, restrictive immigration policies are

usually enforced by the right wing with significant influence from the Danish People's Party. The right wing tend to place an emphasis on the reduction of taxes, especially for private companies in order to foster economic growth, and tend to "reject social equality and the integration of foreigners and other outsiders" when it is too big of a financial cost (ibid, 2014). The 2019 conservative-liberal governing coalition has in recent years described refugees and asylum seekers as a negative factor within Danish society due the financial costs of social integration programs and high levels of unemployment amongst refugees. Especially discourses on 'social integration' of especially Muslims refugees have been in the forefront of Danish politics due to the 2015 European migrant crisis that has led the political communities to raise questions related to "integration", "nationality", "belonging", and "multiculturalism in Danish society (The Local, 2019).

Relevant right-wing politicians in the area of asylum are: *Inger Støjberg*, from the Danish Liberal Party. *Martin Henriksen* and *Kenneth Kristensen Berth* from Danish People's Party. On the left-wing of relevant politicians we have: *Mathias Tesfaye* from the Social Democrats, *Pelle Dragsted* from Red-Green Alliance, *Caroline Magdalene Maier* from the Alternatives (L 140, first treatment, 2019). These political actors will not have relevancy on a personal level, but rather as spokespeople that represent their parties' ideological stance. Thus, the names of the political actors are only stated in this study in order to introduce the statements.

## 2.2 Act 140 and its *controversies*

Act 140 refers to various laws on immigration and introduces a set of amendments to the Aliens Act, Integration Act, Repatriation Act that will

severely influence the lives of refugees that have been granted asylum in Denmark (L 140, 2019). Act 140 was first introduced as a bill and thus as a proposal by the political right in the Danish Parliament and after its third treatment it was passed as formal law. The Act represents a fundamental change in previous legislation on immigration, and includes a set of amendments that enable further access to withdrawal of residence permits for refugees, a limitation in family reunions, an increased punishment for violation of entry ban and violation of residency, isolation of refugees on tolerated stay on an Island, and a reduction of social benefits for dependents, which according to Act 140 will be renamed *repatriation support* instead of *integration support* (UNHCR, 2019; L 140, 2019).

According to the political right, the main purpose of these amendments is to present an image of Denmark as an unattractive destination for refugees in order to reduce the number of asylum claims received in the Danish asylum system and in order to repatriate a larger sum of refugees (Refugee, 2019). With the *new* focus on repatriation in Act 140, social integration has become an undesirable political interest of the political right, since refugees are expected to eventually return back to their country of origin (L 140, 2019).

Some negative consequences of Act 140 include a 12-16 per cent reduction of the ‘integration allowance’, which will be renamed ‘repatriation allowance’. The reduction of social benefits is according to the governing right wing coalition supposed to function as an incitement for refugees to join the labour market (Refugee, 2019). However, the reduction of social benefits means that some refugee families will live in poverty and struggle to afford medicine, accommodation and food, which conflicts with the Danish constitution’s paragraph on subsistence level (ibid, 2019). Another negative consequence is that since refugees and asylum seekers’ residency permits can easily be

withdrawn, social integration programmes led by private companies (i.e. language, work, culture and social adaptation courses) become less desirable for companies to initiate, since employers cannot be certain that their integration investments will yield a return in the long-term (CPH Post, 2019). In addition, refugees will no longer receive preferential treatment, which means that refugees will no longer receive additional allowances or special treatment if they have children, nor will they necessarily get the chance to be united with their families since family reunifications become increasingly difficult with Act 140 (Local, 2019; L 140, 2019).

Act 140 was voted in favour of by 76 % of the MPs, which includes the largest party in the opposition, the Social Democrats, which represents a major shift in the Social Democrats' previous political behaviour in the area of asylum that strongly supported social integration (The Local, 2019; L 140 third treatment, 2019). When Act 140 was passed, the most controversial and surprising aspect of the implementation of Act 140 was according to a variety of activists and humanitarian organisations not simply the degree to which the set of amendments exclude refugees and asylum seekers from significant areas of society, but also the fact that the Social Democrats unexpectedly voted in favour of the legislation along with the Danish People Party in February 2019 (The Local, 2019).

The legislation has been criticised by a variety of international organisations, including the UNHCR, for its paragraphs on repatriation and its controversial intent to isolate approximately a hundred rejected asylum seekers on an Island called Lindholm. These asylum seekers who will become isolated on Lindholm have been convicted of crimes and cannot yet be deported to their country of origin due to the UN Convention against torture (Time, 2019). Many international organisations have made remarks on Act 140's legislative nature

that regards the very abstract and vaguely defined paragraphs on repatriation, which enables a strict application procedure and selection choices that might reflect the biases of immigration officers (ibid, 2019).

### 2.3 UNHCR's remarks on Act 140:

The legislative process is designed to provide time for deliberation, which means that human rights bodies, international organisations, and other labour market or communal related organisations can add remarks and recommendations to assert their influence on an Act (Folketinget, 2019). The report is comprised of the following elements: “recommendation of the parties, amendments to the Act concerned, statements by the parties explaining their attitude to the Act and to the amendments, a description of the committee’s work on the Act, a list of enquiries about the Act” (Folketinget report, 2019: 21).

A variety of organisations and authorities were invited to comment on Act 140 on the 21st of December 2018. The report that was conducted by UNHCR provide insight into the potential risks of Act 140 and whether the Act fulfils Denmark’s international promises having ratified the Refugee Convention (Altinget, 2019). UNHCR function as a prominent organisation that works on both a national and international level in becoming an effective mechanism for the protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law.

The UNHCR follows the protocols set by the Refugee Convention, which disapproves of restrictions in the area of asylum and integration that has a negative impact on social integration. As stated in the UNHCR's report, “UNHCR is concerned with the pace and scope of the restrictions the Danish Government has introduced in the area of asylum, integration and family

reunification. The adaptation of increasingly restrictive asylum policies and unilateral measure by the political States risk to marginalize refugees, and make durable solutions, including successful integration more difficult” (UNHCR, 2019: 2).

UNHCR states ”... as UNHCR understand the Proposal, according to Article 11 and 19, regular and systematic checks on whether the criteria for (resettled) refugee, subsidiary or temporary protection status continue to be met shall be initiated by the Danish Immigration Service upon extension of the respective short term, one or two-year residence permits” (UNHCR, 2019: 4). As the quote asserts, the Act allows for the Danish Immigration Service to conduct regular checks on refugees in regards to whether protection is still a necessity, which allows for an increased focus on repatriation in the Danish asylum system.

In addition, the report writes that ”...short-term residence permits and frequent are counter-productive to integration. Moreover, the 1951 Convention foresees a gradual attainment of rights, with the end of the continuum being naturalization” (UNHCR, 2019: 4). As the paragraph from the report asserts, the UNHCR emphasizes that the purpose of *temporary residency* of refugees in their host country, is to gradually attain rights through social integration in order to become a full member of society, and refugees should only return to their country of origin *if desired* and when fundamental changes have occurred in their country of origin (ibid.).

In addition, UNHCR writes “the frequent periodic reviews of individuals’ international protection needs often undermine the individuals’ sense of security and thus do not help facilitate the integration process. According to the UNHCR, refugees and others in need of international protection are entitled to a secure status. Anything else would be detrimental to refugees’ sense of security, which

international protection is intended to provide” (UNHCR, 2019: 4). As the quote asserts, the focus on repatriation and frequent checks on refugees and asylum seekers will have an impact on these individuals’ sense of security that has a tremendous influence on their ability to focus on a smooth integration process. This focus on repatriation and short term residency “and regular status reviews may also expose refugees to risks of labour market exploitation, as precarious status reduces their bargaining power in the employment sector” (Ibid, 2019).

The report conducted by the UNHCR is crucial as it provides a significant link between social integration and the attainment of rights of refugees, which if denied may lead to increased levels of marginalization society. Thus the report gives insight to the real effects of the legislation on refugees and asylum seekers, which include market exploitation, an increased sense of insecurity that diminishes social integration, and an inability to attain citizenship rights through naturalization. The link between social integration and attainment of rights is significant as it provides insight into why and how the repatriation philosophy as opposed to an integration philosophy suit the political interests of the right-wing.

### **3 Literature Review**

The purpose of this section is to present a critical and analytical overview of existing literature on the topics of restrictive asylum policies, securitization of immigration issues, anti-immigration attitudes within political communities and the various discourses closely linked to these topics. The literature on these topics is quite extensive and characterised by multiple approaches from a variety of scholars in a wide array of fields such as human rights, international law and political science. Therefore, the focus of this literature review has been to explore literature themes and concepts that commonly prevail in discourses related to refugee and asylum rights. The literature presented below discusses problems related to human rights versus citizenship rights, liberalism versus nationalism, and how these relate to the area of asylum.

#### **3.1 Civil Rights versus Human Rights**

An extensive amount of literature elaborates on the rise of restrictive asylum policies in Europe with a focus on European countries' commitment to international conventions, defined broadly as “principles, norms, and rules governing the international order” (Sales, 2002; Phillimore, 2012; Moore et. al., 2004: 1319). Such literature provides significant conclusions on the restrictionist stance on asylum that places an emphasis on securing borders and “restricting access to social welfare for asylum seekers” (Phillimore, 2015: 576). A central emphasis in such literature is on the rise and spread of right wing populist anti-immigration discourse on refugees that has evolved alongside a resistance towards internationalism such as the implementation of conventions and their principles, norms and rules. Typically these anti-immigration discourses tend to focus on how international commitments undermine sovereignty and the nation state by for

example encouraging high levels of immigration (Postelnicescu, 2016; Moore, 2004; Solakoglu; 2016).

In recent years, Denmark and other European countries have experienced a major restrictive turn towards immigration following events that has caused a large-scale influx of asylum seekers such as the European migrant crisis in 2015 (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013; Stokes-Dupass, 2017; Nedergaard, 2019). The literature that addresses European countries' restrictive turn overwhelmingly highlights a rise of political scepticism towards globalization, the EU and the UN since such global liberalism facilitates the presence of a variety of transnational institutions, which fosters "the changing structure of the national state, and the diminished sovereignty of national agencies" (Robertson and White, 2007; Solakoglu, 2016: 1). While this literature tend to address the political scepticism fostered by globalization, it seems to lack reflections on the legal and extra-legal mechanisms demanded by the political right wing as a result of an increased need for security due to globalization. Nationalistic resistance to global liberalism within political communities of the right wing aims to create a more uniform national culture, through state policy (Solakoglu, 2016). The formation of a more uniform national culture that aims to create *liberal people* out of immigrants through assimilation and strict citizenship policies, restrains refugees from obtaining citizenship rights (ibid, 2016; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Citizenship rights are commonly emphasized within literature regarding discourses on refugees and asylum rights in Denmark because citizenship is the ultimate achievement in terms of rights within nations and symbolises a specific and privileged socio-political position protected by paragraphs on fundamental rights in the Danish constitution (Nedergaard, 2019). Since the Danish citizenship represents certain social, economic and political rights, as opposed to human rights that are oftentimes vaguely defined in domestic law as merely principles and guidelines (ibid, 2019) the question often goes: *when is a refugees eligible for the attainment of such*

*citizenship Rights?* While the assessment of constitutional rights provide insights into the benefits and advantages of the individual with these sorts of rights, the critical assessment of *political interest* that help establish the conditions for such rights seems to be underdeveloped in the literature presented above.

The nation state model, which favourites a uniform national culture as opposed to a multinational state where no ethnic group dominates, typically sees that the possibility of citizenship rights occur *when and if* the refugee have assimilated *fully* into Danish society (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Whether a refugee should be expected to integrate or assimilate into a society has been heavily debated across various European countries that have been a subject to large-scale levels of immigration (ibid, 2013). Much of the right wing populist discourse on immigration promotes an assimilation model so that the state can sustain a uniform national culture where refugees may eventually acquire naturalization *when and if* they pass as *liberal and Western* individuals (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). This form of assimilation process comes with a set of preconditions emphasizing that in order to attain citizenship, refugees must leave behind language, culture and norms from their country of origin in order to fit into Danish society (ibid, 2013). Thus the substantial change in the Danish discourse on immigration is to a large extent owed to the spread of right wing nationalistic discourse that promotes strict immigration policies with the intent to protect social cohesion and assure that Denmark do not become threated by the external ‘other’ (Pope. 2017). Such literature also explores how various European countries (e.g. Hungary, Sweden, Denmark) have reacted to the increased influx of immigration refugees since the *1990s* with an increased level of securitization policies (Gaasholt and Togeby 1995, Hussain et. al. 2000) which is strongly linked to the rise of popularity in right wing populist parties’ restrictive policies on integration, naturalization, family reunification, and increased repatriation policies.

With the rise in popularity of right wing populist parties following the 2015 European migrant crisis, many liberal democracies have gone from having inclusive policies that promote social integration of refugees and asylum seekers as in accordance with the international agenda, to the exclusion and marginalization of refugees by treating these individuals as a threat to national identity (Kelly, 2015). The literature reveal that the negative treatment of refugees and asylum seekers is fundamentally embedded in nationalistic tendencies and the spread of right wing populist discourse on refugees and asylum seekers as ‘others’; individuals so different that they pose a threat to cultural achievements (Aggergaard Larsen 1998, Abdalla, 2017, Hervik 2019, Andreassen 2013). However, most common in such literature is the differentiation between nationalism and political liberalism in the way that these political ideologies view rights of refugees (Kelly, 2015), which will be discussed below.

### 3.2 Liberalism and Nationalism on *Rights*

Political liberalism and nationalism are two distinct ideologies that continue to shape significant political developments into the twenty-first century in especially liberal democracies such as Denmark (Kelly, 2015). As political ideologies, liberalism and nationalism struggle to align with one another in the way that they view the rights of refugees. A wide array of literature makes sense of political interest on immigration matters by exploring how these two political ideologies view rights of refugees in a conventional sense (Kelly, 2015: 2). A crucial distinction between economic liberalism and political liberalism must first be made: economic liberalism refers to market freedom and economic conditions, while political liberalism refers to the individual’s freedom and their protection of rights (Ibid, 2015).

The distinction between *civil rights and human rights* is significant as these set of rights come in different forms and represent an individual's moral and legal entitlement to do or have something. In the simplest terms, human rights arise on the mere fact of being human and are sustained "by global institutions that have legitimacy by virtue of international agreement and hence are an aspect of global governance" while civil rights are enforced "by national states that are sovereign" (Haugaard, 2006: 235). Hence conventional political liberalism promotes the attainment of rights on the mere fact of being human, while nationalism sees that rights are achieved through citizenship as a result of shared descent, language and culture (ibid. 2006). Therefore, political liberalism most commonly promotes equal rights and opportunities and is strongly embedded in a political culture that values "social participation and private autonomy of foreigners" (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). The tension between these two political ideologies in the ways that they view rights is depicted in "national citizenship and human rights as indicative of the intellectual and legal contradiction between social rights and human rights" (Haugaard, 2006). For example, when an individual has acquired citizenship they attain constitutional rights, which are not merely about liberty, freedom and security but also positions the individual with a specific identity status. As stated, "...these contributions are the principal underpinnings of the rights and duties of members of a nation-state community, and citizenship is in principle an effective juridical status conferring a specific socio-political identity" (Haugaard, 2006: 229). That means that while "human rights are said to be innate, social rights are created by states" (ibid.).

These two contrasted ideas - "the imprescriptible rights of human beings and the exclusive sovereignty of the nation state - have remained an important dilemma of any justification of rights" (Haugaard, 2006: 234). The prevalence of liberalism and nationalism within society therefore lays the ground for how refugees and asylum seekers are treated within society in terms of rights. The exclusion of

rights through difficult assimilation discourses by right-wing populism is strongly embedded in the idea that refugees are unable to adjust to norms and customs within society since their values and characteristics such as their religious beliefs are undemocratic. Therefore, refugees and asylum seekers are perceived as a threat to society by especially the political right, which makes the attainment of certain social, economic and political rights and advantages as an undesirable political objective (Kelly, 2015).

### 3.3 The chronic *othering*

A wide array of literature explores the *othering* discourse that tends to overgeneralize different “characteristics about culture, race, religion and social background” (Pope, 2017; Nurullah 2010: 1021). As the world grows more connected through globalization, there is an increase of “cultural tension that has inspired a resurgence of nationalism” (Wren, 2001, 141). Wren suggest (2001) that the process of othering, which she describes as “cultural racism” has “led to institutionalized racism, rampant labour market discrimination, and extremely high levels of ethnic minority unemployment” of the Danish ethnic minority population (p. 159). Literature that explores the othering narrative overwhelmingly highlights how right wing elites deploy the othering discourse directed at the immigrant other, in order to construct fear within society embedded in an ‘us and them’ politics’ (Pope, 2017:58). The othering narrative is typically deployed by far right wing politicians that tend to discursively emphasize historical elements of their descent that make their nation “unique” and “tie society together” (Gammeltoft, 2017). A wide array of literature (Hervik, 2012; Nurullah, 2010; Wren, 2001) explores elements of right-wing discourse on immigrants that has fostered a substantial change in the overall Danish discourses, which suggest that racist viewpoints have become commonplace and woven into

the very fabric of Danish society (Hjarnø, 2010; Lindekilde, 2014). Thus the emergence of institutionalized racism, anti-immigrant attitudes and general hostility towards foreigners is closely linked to the rise of right wing populist discourse. These discourses frequently construct an image of refugees that are predominantly Muslim as a *problem or a threat* and informs the “generally racist practices within a variety of institutions” (Wren, 2001: 158). The chronic othering of refugees illustrates how those in power “can mistreat the powerless. No one has less power than a refugee, they are stateless noncitizens. They are separated from their home through extreme violent means and subjected to a foreign government” (Pope, 2017:66). The othering narrative allows for a mistreatment of refugees (Jensen, 2011: 63; Pope, 2017: 58) as it “identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and reinforces and produces positions of domination and subordination” (Johnson et al 2004, 253). As Pope (2017) puts it, the othering construction “goes hand in hand with policy narrative” where powerful politicians aim to introduce a set of policies that limits the opportunities of refugees and asylum seekers (p. 58). The attainment of citizenship rights, therefore, becomes overwhelmingly difficult for refugees as these individuals are frequently linked to terrorism, as oppressive to women, and against freedom of speech (Ibid, 2017). When refugees are discursively framed as dehumanizing subjects to be feared and guarded against, citizens are unlikely to support policies that benefit refugees (Pope, 2017: 59). This fear is embedded in the belief that refugees may begin to impose their “undemocratic values” onto the rest of society and rise as a political force (Wren, 2001: 159)

### 3.4 The crisis of *multiculturalism*

The chronic *othering* of refugees and asylum seekers leads to problematic discussions regarding the attainment of citizenship and whether refugees and

asylum seekers should be granted this opportunity (Wren, 2001). Citizenship therefore may only be possible for those refugees who integrate *well* into society in regards to work, active participation, and significant cultural knowledge along with adaptation to become a *liberal* individual (Jansen, 2013: 14; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Citizenship rights distinguish from human rights, which are oftentimes vaguely defined as guidelines as opposed to binding legal measures protected by the constitution (Ibid, 2013). Thus the distinction between human rights and civil rights that are acquired through citizenship maintains a system of oppression where refugees and asylum seekers are positioned in society as only worthy of equal treatment (Jansen, 2013) when and *if* they become a *real* Dane. However, there are various definitions of what constitutes the Danish identity and these definitions are oftentimes defined within the political communities, whether those definitions rely on cultural, economic or social aspects of Danish society. The ethnically diverse nature of refugees in Denmark has been at the centre of the discourses on what it means to be Danish, and whether refugees should be expected to integrate or assimilate into Danish society in order to be accepted as a permanent member of society (Jansen, 2013).

Yoland Jansen (2013) critically examines multiculturalism's contemporary alternatives in terms of secularism, assimilation and (civil) integration, and emphasizes how these concepts have become overwhelmingly problematic as they lead to nationalist and insufficient democratic conceptions and practices of citizenship (Jansen, 2013: 13). Jansen (2013) introduces assimilation and secularism as interconnected concepts that are central within discourses related to refugee rights that are held across Europe and that have changed the political landscape within several liberal democracies (Jansen, 2013: 13). As stated, "...the frequent appeals to these two historically layered and interconnected

concepts have marked a transformation in social, political and cultural scholarship, in public debates and in governmental policies (Jansen, 2013: 14). The presence of assimilation and secularism as concepts within discourses related to refugee rights commonly regards the presence of Islam and whether or not Muslims refugees should be free to practice their religion in the public sphere (ibid.). The religion question is oftentimes discussed within and between political communities where especially discourses led by the far-right tend to be marked by fear and resistance towards religious aspects of Islam that are perceived as fundamentally different from Western values and norms, which paints the picture that if society allows Muslims to freely practice Islam, Muslims will eventually gain social, economic and political power to take over the democracy (Jansen, 2013).

Within political discourses related to refugees, “secularism has become an increasingly central concept connected to a broadly-shared diagnosis of the present which goes more or less as follows: the most difficult and conflict-ridden questions in our Western multicultural societies, in not the world at large, are related to religion, particularly since Islam has emerged as a public or, even more strictly, as a political force” (Jansen, 2013:16). Therefore, many political actors have turned to the question of how to deal with Islam within the public sphere, especially refugees with a Muslim background (Ibid, 2013). Within these contexts, secularism is invoked as a precondition of democracy “especially defence of the rights of women, children and sexual minorities” which positions Muslim refugees as a threat to democratic values “such as women’s rights, freedom of speech, sexual minority rights” amongst other (Wren, 2001; Jansen, 2013; Alexander, 2006: p. 21)

### 3.5 The *marginalisation of refugees*

Literature on the marginalisation of refugees in Denmark overwhelmingly highlights the impact of the right-wing governments' pursuit of the restrictionist strategy that successfully limits the "universal right to asylum by introducing stricter border controls, safe country of origin lists, a reduction of social benefits, detention and narrow legal interpretations of refugee definitions" (Phillimore, 2011: 576). The restrictionist strategy is justified when politicians position themselves as truth-telling intellectuals who presents a picture of refugees as threatening to Western values and cultural achievements (O'Donnell, 2016; Phillimore, 2012). Wren suggests, "the justification for cultural racism has been cloaked in an unconsciously racist logic, buttressed by traditional liberal values such as freedom of speech or rather the freedom to voice racist viewpoints" (Wren, 2001, p. 158). The restrictionist strategy has severe consequences for the lives of refugees who become excluded and marginalized from various aspects of Danish society as a result of reforms that reduce their opportunities and integration possibilities (Phillimore, 2012).

Andersen et. al. (2007) explore a variety of factors such as education levels, employment, wage and income, poverty, and social exclusion of refugees by reflecting on the Danish right wing restrictive policies and the outcome of anti-immigration discourses that had emerged since the 90s (Ibid, 2007). Andersen et. al.'s framework suggests that with low social benefits, refugees are left without the proper economic means to navigate in society, which consequently impacts refugees' level of social and cultural integration in Denmark. The primary aim of these reforms is to "incentivize employment and self-sufficiency" but instead has the social costs of increased crime and lower education levels amongst refugee children (Dustmann et. al., 2016). As Andersen et. al. (2007) puts it "...these restrictions on benefits are targeted towards those who are most marginal in relation to the labour market, thus changing the long-established principle of the Danish welfare state to have equal treatment of social assistance claimants" (p.

14). As Andersen et. al (2007) puts it, “those on restricted benefits are not more likely to be employed than those on ‘normal’ benefits, since only 10% of those affected by the reduced benefits were able to get a job compared to 11% among those on ‘normal’ benefits” (p. 14). So whether lowering social benefits function to incentivize unemployed refugees to join the labour market lack explicit answers since current research on the long-term effect of such reforms are in major shortage as demonstrated in literature above. While the literature lacks these long-term insights, existing literature overwhelmingly highlights other major consequences of such reforms such as “a sharp increase in crime, not just for males, but also for females” (Dustmann et al. 2019). Besides higher levels of crime, lowering social benefits “leads to lower participation rates in preschool programs, but also lowers performance in language tests as well as the number of years (and in particular boys) attend school” (Ibid, 2019: 32).

### 3.6 The restrictionist *strategy*

Literature that addresses Denmark’s recent anti-immigration policies overwhelmingly highlights that because Denmark is a signatory to multiple UN conventions such as the Refugee Convention, the country is obligated to accommodate and adjudicate all asylum claims (Gammeltoft, 2017; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011). With these international obligations, Danish officials have responded to the influx of asylum seekers with a series of rather dramatic steps aimed at dissuading asylum seekers from coming to Denmark in the first place in (Ibid, 2017). Despite Denmark’s international promises having signed and ratified the Refugee Convention, the country’s restrictive turn towards immigration is an inhibition for the gradual attainment of citizenship rights and thus the possibility of eventual naturalization for refugees. Instead securitization

practices function as a national reputation management with the purpose to make it less attractive for asylum seekers to apply for asylum in Denmark (Ibid, 2017).

Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen elaborates on Denmark's former international position as a liberal frontrunner when it comes to asylum policies and the protection of refugees. As one of the first countries to ratify the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees that guarantees the temporary protection of refugees through temporary residency, Denmark has undergone rapid changes in its political climate with the pursuit of different policies of deterrence in the area of immigration (Gammeltoft, 2017: 100). Since "Denmark has introduced numerous forms of deterrence or non-entree policies" as a form of securitization method, the country continues to distance itself from the international agenda and thus moves further away from its former humanitarian efforts. Deterrence policies can be defined as "such policies that intend to discourage or prevent migrants and refugees from either arriving in the territory of a perspective destination state or accessing its asylum system" (Ibid.: 103). The use of deterrence policies was seen during the 2015 European migrant crisis: with the increased influx of refugees coming from Syria, the Danish government, then consisting of the political right, ran anti-refugee campaigns in Arabic newspapers. The purpose of the campaign was to discourage refugees and asylum seekers of seeking protection in Denmark (ibid: 99). The controversial campaign was followed by suggestions by the Danish Prime Minister in 2015 that the 1951 Refugee Convention should be revised and Denmark's international promises should be reconsidered. With Denmark's international obligations the right wing is restricted in their possibilities of preventing individuals' rights to asylum and protection (Ibid, 100). As stated, "...rather than preventing access to asylum per se, policies of indirect deterrence are designed to make the asylum system and protection conditions appear as unattractive as possible, thereby achieving a 'beggar-thy-neighbour' effect in pushing asylum-seekers towards other

countries” (Ibid: 100). The strategy for the right wing has, since then, been to implement policies of indirect deterrence that are designed to serve largely symbolic and political purposes with the intention to market Denmark as an unattractive destination for refugees (ibid.). This type of national reputation management has fostered difficult assimilation discourses within the political communities that refugees and asylum seekers are to become *liberal individuals* possessing *Danish values* in order to fit into society and thus sends a very clear message that multiculturalism is unwanted (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011). Thus “...the seismic shift in the overall Danish integration and immigration policy - from soft liberal equality-of-rights and modest room for diversity towards a stricter civil integration and citizenship acquisition programmes, education policy, and anti-discrimination initiatives” is initiated by predominantly the political right especially the populist parties with roots in nationalism (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011: 7)

### 3.7 Research gap

As the previous sections have demonstrated, literature on topics related to asylum policies, securitization of immigration issues, anti-immigration attitudes and the discourses closely linked to these topics are quite extensive. However this study departs from the fact that none of the cited literature above has studied the parliamentary debates of Act 140. In addition, research on social integration as an undesirable objective of the political right is very much underdeveloped.

European countries’ restrictive turn towards immigration and rise in popularity of right-wing populism has received much academic attention within literature. The exclusion of refugees in areas of social, cultural, political and economic life,

and thus how European countries' have moved further away from the international agenda, is therefore well documented within security studies.

Previous research has shown that this topic has mostly been studied within security studies of International Relations (IR), and therefore lacks a socio-legal perspective. Such a socio-legal perspective could result in in-depth reflections on the political demands for policy regulation and introduction of laws as a result of globalization and an increased need for security. While this study departs from the same themes and concepts that have been elaborated above, it simultaneously varies from these studies with its socio-legal perspective with focus on the enactment of a law enabling a 'paradigm shift' in Denmark's treatment of asylum seekers. Although this thesis deploys the securitization theory, which is categorized as an IR theory, this thesis pays attention to the broader socio-legal context with an emphasis on asylum rights.

## 4 Theoretical framework

Having reviewed a variety of literature related to securitization of immigration issues, this section aims to present the theoretical framework of securitization from which the data will be analysed. The theory of securitization will be presented in order to understand the themes and concepts that appeared throughout the analysis, from a perspective that focuses on power dynamics of the internal-external security nexus. The theoretical framework of securitization is supplementary to this thesis' methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that also is a theory and includes Foucauldian theoretical elements, which allows for an in-depth and coherent analysis.

### 4.1 The theory of securitization

The subject of security studies as an academic undertaking is generally regarded as a sub discipline of International Relations (IR) that focuses on societal threats where the referent object relates to national identity. Many scholars have contributed significantly to the subject of securitization in the field of IR from across disciplines such as Lupovici (2016) Balzacq (2015) Stritzel (2007) and Floyd (2011) amongst others. The securitization theory deals with the societal assumption that there are *natural* threats that needs to be managed for the maintenance of stability in society. The point of the securitization theory is to challenge this idea of *natural* threats in society as the theory emphasizes that threat images are instead *constructed* by those in power such as experts, specialists and politicians in order to frame an object or subject as a threat to national identity (Wæver, 1995). Thus, at the core of securitization theory is the emphasis on power relations that construct *threat* images; i.e. “an issue that is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object”, and which thus “justifies

extreme measures to handle these perceived threats” (Buzan, Weaver and de Wilde, 1998: 2). Most securitization studies share the notion that successful securitization is termed as justification of a change from ‘normal’ politics to the politics of emergency: i.e. “it legitimizes taking extraordinary measures in defence of the political community” or society as a whole (Lupovici, 2019; De Wilde, 1998).

As a term initially coined by Ole Wæver (1995), securitization is a constructionist theory of security that refers to those situations where societies perceive that there is a threat to their national identity (Wæver, 1995). Wæver (1995) argues that *threat* images do not necessarily exist in *actuality* but rather that they are a result of successful speech acts within the political communities (Wæver, 1995). Wæver emphasizes that the construction of threat images allows for the political communities to go beyond the normal bounds of political rules with the use of war or violence, political secrecy and violations of international treaties in order to manage threats, which is considered as a societal *necessity* (ibid, 1995).

Some scholars address the thought of securitization as simply successful speech acts; the idea that something becomes a security problem through discursive politics (Balzacq, 2010). Other scholars such as Stritzel (2007) as a later contributor to the Copenhagen School’s (CS) school of thought, view speech acts as social practices that are unable to single handedly grasp elements of the ‘real-world’ such as context and power relations (ibid.). While speech acts are strategic actions of discourse that operate at a high level of persuasion due to the use of a “variety of artifacts (e.g. metaphors, emotions, stereotypes, gestures, and lies), a focus on the ‘authority of the speaker’ and speaker-audience relationship enables a deeper and more thorough reflection on the conceptualization of embeddedness” (Balzacq, 2010: 2; Stritzel 2007: 373). Therefore, securitization

occurs in a process where a securitizing actor frames an object/subject as an existential threat in order to use extreme measures that they otherwise would be restricted in using, which the relevant audience accepts for the management of threats. Thus securitization refers to a successful speech act “through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object” and in order to allow for exceptional measures to deal with the threat (Strizel, 2007: 358). An existential threat refers to an *emergency* so pressing that if it is not dealt with immediately it will have such severe consequences that all other problems will become irrelevant (Buzan, et al, 1998).

According to the CS’s school of thought, when an authoritative speaker frames an object/subject as a threat to social order, this act is described as simply a *securitization move*, and does not single handedly explain how an issue becomes securitized (ibid.). Instead CS views securitization as only successful when an influential audience has accepted that the perceived threat is something to be dealt with (Buzan, et al. 1998). CS’s framework, therefore, goes beyond an analysis of simply securitization measures, and digs deeper into the power relations between actor and audience that create these measures. Thus, the focus of securitization theory lies on the speaker’s power position, and how this position is able to present the speaker’s arguments as facts, truth telling and legitimate (ibid.).

The audience’s need to be secured is, furthermore, central to CSs framework, as this particular need influences the audience’s political choices that essentially gives power to the speaker (ibid.) As stated, “treating an issue as a security carries certain negative connotations, such as the logic of necessity and threat, defence, less available options and empowerment of certain elites” (Wæver, 1995: 2011). As the paragraph asserts, when an issue is treated as something that

needs to be securitized, it is treated as something negative within society that needs political attention and resource allocation (ibid.). Thus securitization may be regarded as a more extreme version of politicization; the action of causing something to become a political matter (Buzan et. al. 1998; Oxford dictionary, 2019). Although it is not always the case that public issues become politicized and that they are dealt with by the state, the issues that do become politicized require “government decision, resource allocation or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance” (Buzan et. al, 1998: 23).

Contrary to securitization, which is regarded as an extreme form of politicization, *(de)securitization* as theorized by CS also has long-term implications (Stritzel, 2007). (De)securitization refers to a “shifting of an issue out of emergency mode and into normal bargaining process of the political sphere” (Buzan, et. al, 1998: 4). As concepts, desecuritization and securitization are significant when examining how and why Denmark’s immigration laws have undergone such a vital change in 2019. These concepts provide an insight in how political communities perceive immigrants and thus why and how Danish right wing political actors have changed the focus from integration to repatriation by establishing refugees as a threat to Danish society. In addition, (de)securitization as a concept enables an examination of where opposite left wing actors stand in comparison to right wing actors that promotes a securitization mode. Therefore, at the centre of CS’s framework on securitization is the emphasis that securitization is often used as a rhetorical tool to discursively frame asylum issues as threats in order to “attract more attention that mobilizes resources” (Stritzel, 2007: 377).

Minority and immigration related issues tend to be framed in terms of security and control of rights. As suggested by Bigo (2002) the popularity of securitization related to immigrant issues “is not an expression of traditional

responses to a rise of insecurity, crime, terrorism, and the negative effects of globalization; it is the result of the creation of a continuum of threats and general unease in which many different actors exchange their fears and beliefs in the process of making a risky and dangerous society” (Bigo, 2002: 63). Thus, there is a common understanding amongst scholars that immigration has become a major subject to securitization attempts in the 21st century, more so than other socio-political issues (Beck, 2017: 3).

The theory of securitization shares a variety of similarities with socio-legal frameworks on risk-based governance where *law* function as a regularly form to deal with perceived risks that Febbrajo’s addresses as a cultural product which may not necessarily be *real* (2009: 71). Similar to these two concepts is the belief that “it is not the risk problems that determine their method of governance, but rather, the character of the polity that determines whether or how problems are framed as “risks” to be governed in the first place” (Huber et. al., 2012: 231). While the securitization theory in general describes how a state forms or identifies “threats”, risk-based governance is the response by the state to the likelihood of said threats happening. The link between the securitization theory and frameworks on risk-based governance provide insights to socio-legal relevance by exploring how specific *acts* such as the creation of particular laws aim to deal with perceived risks that are created with the use of successful speech acts (Ibid, 2009). As stated by Febbrajo (2009) “...it is thus necessary to speak of law, not only and not mainly, as a regulator of internal risks, including those produced by law itself, but as a sort of meta-communicator that selects and combines possible answers deriving not only from a legal system, but also from different social systems, on the basis of a more diffuse communication and perception of risks” (p. 80). Thus, law is generally treated as the answer to risks “that is expected to intervene when other possible answers fail”, however risk-based governance tend to ignore the social context that creates the problem in the

first place (Febbrajo, 2009: 73). Thus, law is treated as a cure to the symptoms but ignores the underlying problems, which may be fixed with a focus on shaping social actions and norms (Ibid, 2009). As described by Huber et. al. (2012) “risk-based governance rationales can conflict with public demands for equal treatment, be it production from flooding irrespective of location or production from intrusive state population-profiling techniques to detect potential terrorists” (p. 221). Many “advanced” liberal democracies tend to have constitutions that prevent the state from “making distinctions between citizens according to specific characteristics in order to treat all in the same way” (Huber et. al, 2012: 223). The principles associated with ‘equal treatment for all’ can conflict with risk-based approaches to “setting priorities and allocating scarce resources” (Ibid, 2012: 223). Therefore, risk-based approaches to governance have a poor fit in those “politics where the state has “hard-wired” constitutional responsibilities to provide security for its citizen or where the definition or identification of adverse outcomes creates irreconcilable constitutional conflicts” (Huber et. al, 2012: 231). This link between securitization and risk-based approaches to governance provide significant socio-legal insights to the study of Denmark’s restrictive turn from integration to repatriation of refugees and asylum seekers proceeded by Act 140. Risk-based governance is difficult *when* and *if* an individual is protected by the constitutions that by law prevent the state from treating individuals different from one another. So while frameworks on risk management provide a significant link to how law works in a securitization discourse, the theory of securitization enables a focus on language and power, which goes hand in hand with the CDA approach, and therefore, has been selected for thesis.

## 4.2 Motivation of choice

The theory of securitization along with insights on risk-based approaches to governance is suitable for this study, since minority and asylum related issues tend to be framed in terms of security and control of rights. The theory of securitization provides insight to the construction of threat images in an environment such as the Danish Parliament where the structure of power relations amongst actors and the “institutional, cultural and linguistic context in which these actors operate” has a tremendous impact on the introduction of formal law (Rychnovska, 2014: 9).

Denmark’s transition from its former position as a humanitarian superpower to its restrictive turn towards immigration suggests that securitization measures and power imbalances are at play. These imbalances impact the way in which immigrants are perceived and whether social integration of refugees and asylum seekers is desirable within the Danish society. The securitization measures that have occurred in Denmark influence important aspects of human rights; how immigrants are treated, perceived, and the social, economic, and political rights that they have within the Danish society.

With the emergence of a variety of themes related to securitization throughout the preliminary analysis, the securitization theory was the most appropriate fit when exploring parliamentary debates related to immigration issues. In addition, the risk-based approaches to governance provide insights into how the constitution of “advanced” liberal democracies tend to prevent the state from framing individuals as risks in the first place. In addition, the usage of this theoretical framework is fostered by a review of literature, which suggests that

right wing political discourse on the influx of immigrants from the Middle East has been significantly shaped by securitization attempts (Beck, 2017).

As the literature review demonstrated, the attainment of citizenship rights through naturalization enables immigrants to obtain a certain social, economic and political status. The attainment of citizenship rights is undesirable for the political actors who perceive refugees and asylum seekers as a threat to society, as such rights may grant refugees and asylum seekers a chance of obtaining power and influence. Therefore, the securitization theory is a significant tool that helps unravel how the right wing has managed to discursively frame social integration of refugees and asylum seekers as a *threat* to Danish society. With the securitization theory, an emphasis on power relations that construct threat images with the use of discourse enables an examination of political interests, racism in public policy, and marginalization of refugees and asylum seekers.

## 5 Methodology and data collection

The following section presents the method that has been applied to this study in order to elaborate on how the data for this study has been gathered, organized and recorded in order to answer the research questions.

The research method deployed throughout this study has been qualitative with the use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the analysis of statements given by political actors in the first, second and third treatment that preceded Act 140. This thesis focuses on statements from parliamentary debates in order to emphasize the role of language as a “power resource that is related to ideology and socio-cultural change” (Bryman, 2012: 536). The CDA approach is embedded in Foucauldian theories that address the correlation between language, power, domination and social practice (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 1) similar to the theory of securitization, which enables the methodology and theoretical framework to work together for a more in-depth analysis.

Discourses as a central aspect of CDA refers to the control of the domain of ideas (what can be spoken about) and functions as a form of governance within society (ibid.) Therefore, discourses function as a *form of action* that assists in shaping, producing and reproducing the social world (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 4). When it comes down to political communication, political actors either reinforce certain assumptions or challenge them, which contribute to the flow of commonly accepted knowledge as a discourse (ibid.). When having to explore political communication, whether that regards short statements or entire speeches, CDA is to be regarded as more than simply a tool, but as an entire approach that detects and unravels underlying power relations (Muquit, 2012).

Central to discourses are *ideology and power relations* which is to be considered as the two primary elements of CDA as ideology works as a medium for the maintenance of power relations within society (Muqit, 2012: 557). Similar to Foucauldian theories, power is a central element of CDA, as a way for actors to either reinforce oppression and force (Jørgensen & Philips, 2012: 14). As asserted, “power is responsible for the ways in which the social world is formed, created and talked about (ibid.). It is, therefore, central to CDA to acknowledge the historical placement of unequal power that exists between genders, ethnicities and social classes (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 63). Thus crucial to the use of CDA is its critical elements that aims to unravel inequalities, injustices and asymmetrical power relations (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 64).

### 5.1 Norman Fairclough’s Three Dimensional Model

This thesis deploys Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for analysis of text, discursive practice and social practice in order to get a comprehensive account of which factors that motivate MP’s points of view, how statement and arguments are formulated, and the larger social context of the debates that took place between January and February 2019.

Fairclough’s three-dimensional model places an emphasis on discourses as facilitators of the social world - i.e. “in the most abstract sense, discourse refers to language use as a social practice” (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 7). For a detailed analysis of linguistic characteristics of the debates in the Danish Parliament, this thesis focuses on stylistic devices such as word choice, repetition, hyperbole (exaggeration) and metaphors that give insight to the “ways in which texts treat events and social relations and thereby construct particular

versions of reality, social identities and social relations” (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 83; Van Dijk 1993).

This analytical approach assumes that language helps create change behavior and thus functions as a power tool. More specifically, “...communicative events shape, and are shaped by, the wider social practice through their relationship to the order of discourse” (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 70). As the paragraph asserts, communication itself cannot be thoroughly studied without reference to its wider social context, which Fairclough’s three-dimensional model provide access to (ibid.). *The first dimension* focuses on the linguistic elements of the texts by examining “vocabulary, syntax and grammar” and thus unravels attitudes toward subjects or objects (Fairclough, 1992: 73; Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 68). *The second dimension* focuses on the ‘discursive practice’, which regards the interpretation and constitution of texts through the use of “intertextuality” and “interdiscursivity” to examine how texts are produced, repeated, and consumed (ibid). *The third and last dimension* focuses on social practices, which aims to connect the text to its wider social context (ibid). In sum, central to Fairclough's approach is “that discourse is an important form of social practice that reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures” (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 65).

For this research, three debates has been transcribed by the Danish Parliament and then retrieved on their website for analysis. The three debates consist of the first, second and third treatment of Act 140, i.e. “L 140: proposal to amend the Aliens Act, Integration Act, Repatriation Act and other laws” (Folketinget, 2019). Fairclough’s three-dimensional model will be applied onto these transcribed debates where the most *relevant* themes and concepts have been selected for analysis due to the large scale of the debates that consist of more

than 300 transcribed pages and 13 hours of debate time. Fairclough's three-dimensional model was carried out dimension by dimension for a more comprehensive analysis (Jørgensen & Phillip, 2002) - i.e. starting the analysis on a word level, proceeding to analyse the discursive practice, followed by an analysis of the social context (ibid, 2002). Connection to the theory of securitization and previous literature will be made throughout the analysis, which will be followed by a discussion and conclusion to answer the research questions.

## 5.2 Choice of material

The selection of these three parliamentary debates was guided by the research questions with the desire to explore how securitization measures and policies are initiated through discourse. These three transcribed debates were selected to carry out the CDA since they represent a fundamental shift in the way that Denmark has previously dealt with asylum. These transcribed debates were also selected based on their discursive development from the first to the third debate where statements from the political actors become more distinct from one another. The way in which the MPs discursively frame the effect of the legislation is so distinct from one another, as if the political actors were referring to widely different legislations. This allows for an analysis of *ideology and power* that unravel different political approaches to asylum and thus allows for a comparison of widely distinctive perspectives on the topic. Three debates were selected for a *collective* analysis, as the three debates were identical to one another, with the same purpose and content, which allows for a consistent analysis that is based on the same prerequisites (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002).

### 5.3 Ethical considerations

This study has aimed at reflecting on *ethics* throughout the entire research process, which has led me to consider whether it is ethical to disclose the names of the MPs throughout this study since it might cause MPs some trouble as study objects. However, since the MPs are public representatives of their parties with a lot of power, and the transcribed debates are public, I have come to the conclusion that disclosing the MPs names is justifiable.

### 5.4 Strengths and limitations

This thesis has conducted qualitative research with the purpose to gather material that could be evaluated in great detail. Typically qualitative research provides an open-ended approach to gathering data since this type of research easily adapts to unexpectedness and thus is able to generate in-depth conclusions (Bryman, 2012: 380). While criticism of qualitative research typically revolves around its subjective nature that tend to be non-statistically representative, qualitative research has a variety of advantages. The initial thought of this study was to conduct semi-structured interviews as this method follows a systematic approach to gathering data. However, interviews were almost impossible to conduct since the recruitment of MPs was extremely difficult. Therefore, I decided to focus on only CDA and reviewed a wide variety of legal documents and transcriptions prior to selecting the three transcripts that this thesis focuses on. Due to time-related restrictions, I was unable to deploy several methods to this thesis, which may have resulted in a more nuanced perspective on the immigration laws, integration and repatriation philosophy in Denmark.

In addition, I must acknowledge the limitations of CDA in the form of a “linguistic bias” as a native speaker of Danish. I therefore have a certain relationship with the Danish language, which enables me to locate slang, certain meanings and idioms. While the analysis of the statements is conducted in English with the purpose to avoid confusion, the location of relevant statements has been done in Danish. In addition to this study’s strengths, a clear limitation as a researcher is my former role as an intern of a UN agency, where I have worked with similar issues as examined in this study. I therefore may have been coloured by the institutional practices and beliefs of the United Nations.

## 6 Analysis

This section aims to critically analyse the parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140. While the Social Democrats are labelled as a party belonging to the left wing, this section will analyse the Social Democrats' statements separately from that of the political left in order to thoroughly locate discursive deviations between the political parties. The following analysis is divided into three sections, where each of the sections represent a dimension from Fairclough's three-dimensional model in order to assure an in-depth and tangible analysis (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). Using Fairclough's model along with the securitization theory and insights on risk-based governance for analysis will allow for an examination of discourses, and the power dynamics that surrounds them.

### 6.1 Dimension 1: *Language, Discourse and Power*

The first part of the analysis will focus on Norman Fairclough's first dimension in order to focus the linguistic aspects of the three parliamentary debates of the political left and right. The focus, therefore, lies on a word level in order to explore and identify how discourses are initiated textually. With a focus on stylistic devices such as word choice, grammar, repetitions, hyperbole, metaphors and emotions, it is possible to define how discourses function as a form of social practice that "reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations" (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 65).

#### 6.1.1 *Themes and concepts* in the debates

Central to the three parliamentary debates is the theme of social *integration*, which alone has more than 95 mentions throughout the debates. As the analysis will later demonstrate, the way in which *social integration of refugees* is perceived and discursively framed by the political left, right, and the Social Democrats, varies greatly. These discursive variations demonstrate whether the political communities perceive social integration of refugees as a *risk* within society that needs legal and extra-legal mechanisms in order to deal with these perceived risks of refugees (Huber et. al., 2012) within Danish society. Thus, these discursive variations between the political communities are a result of *political interests* that typically lays the ground for political motivation, and enables a reproduction of power and domination through ideological conceptualizations (Rebenstorf, 2004).

The way in which political parties discuss social integration throughout the debates reveal three main concepts: “social cohesion” which refers to the bonds or the glue that maintain stability within society, “temporary residency” which refers to refugees’ right to stay in the country for a certain length of time, and lastly “the societal necessity” that refers to the needs of society that requires certain social rules or laws. These three concepts are central elements in the parliamentary debates, since the main consequence of an increased focus on temporary residency (and thus repatriation) is according to the political right and left, most likely to be the decrease of social integration, which according to the political right is a societal necessity for the maintenance of social cohesion in Denmark. The Social Democrats, however, argue that social integration of refugees will not be influenced by the Act. These concepts relate to the right-wing discourse on securitization of immigration related issues, and are significant throughout this analysis as they unravel successive right wing inventions that have enabled the establishment of refugees as a threat to Danish society, which will be demonstrated with quotes later on in this analysis.

As these concepts unravel throughout the analysis, the objective of the political right is to make the possibility of permanent residency, and eventual attainment of social, economic and political rights more difficult with the securitization measure, the *repatriation philosophy* that is a central aspect of Act 140. The Social Democrats share a few similarities with the political right that frequently address that it is a societal *necessity* to have an increased focus on temporary residency of refugees in the Danish asylum system. The remaining MPs of the political left disapprove of Act 140 since they view social integration of refugees as a desirable political objective that is in accordance with the highly prioritized international agenda. The left and right contradict one another on matters related to refugee and asylum rights as demonstrated in their ways of arguing either for or against an increased focus on temporary residency of refugees in the Danish asylum system that Act 140 enables. This will be examined and discussed below.

### 6.1.2 A *shift from social integration to repatriation*

Act 140 focuses on a shift from social integration to repatriation of refugees, which the political right and Social Democrats describe as simply a distinction between those refugees who need protection and those who do not. The political right and Social Democrats argue that if the conditions in the refugee's country of origin are deemed as safe, refugees should immediately return "home" as they no longer need protection. The left wing, however, argue that war conditions can last up to fifteen years, and thus that the political right and Social Democrats fail to account for the fact that when refugees reside in Denmark up to fifteen years, they might have formed strong ties with Denmark. According to the political left, therefore, an increased focus on temporary residency will have a negative impact

on social integration; private companies will invest less in refugees as workers, refugees will feel less secure since their residency can frequently be invoked, and there will be less incitement to learn elements of Danish social and cultural life since refugees are told that they are not supposed to make a *permanent* living in Denmark. The political right and Social Democrats rarely address these negative elements of Act 140 that the Alternatives and Radical Left (parties of the political left) frequently emphasize, and instead the political right and Social Democrats frame Act 140 as the most logical political decision for Denmark since these parties believe that the country is facing a crisis. The DPP, for example, address the Act in a very logical and transparent way:

“We will go from integration of refugees to a focus on repatriation. This is something refugees will be told upon arrival and this will be reflected in their temporary residency, and also in the fact that allowances will be renamed repatriation allowance” (Martin Henriksen from DPP, first treatment, 2019: 21).

As the quote demonstrates, Martin Henriksen from DPP presents Act 140 in a very logical way with minimum display of emotion in the first treatment. Here, Henriksen addresses the shift from integration to repatriation with a referral to the concept of temporary residency that stems from the Refugee Convention. In the third treatment, however, statements from other DPP politicians reveal that the logic behind Act 140 is embedded in the belief that integration of refugees (with a Muslim background) is not possible:

“...Isn’t the acknowledgement that integration of people from overwhelmingly Muslim countries is impossible?” (Kenneth Berth from DPP, first treatment, 2019: 30).

As we see in the quote, Kenneth Berth makes an indirect speech act in which there is a significant difference between the form and the function of his utterance: though his sentence takes the grammatical form of a question and thus an interrogative sentence, the sentence functions as a declarative rather than an interrogative, meaning that the sentence serves to make a point rather than to elicit an actual answer. Thus, although it may seem like Kenneth Berth is requesting information with his utterance, he is rather eliciting the information that Muslim refugees are, in fact, incapable of integrating into the Danish society. Kenneth Berth, furthermore, uses the negative verb form "isn't" to seek the audience's agreement and acknowledgement of this fact. What is more, rather than using adjectives such as "challenging" or "difficult", Berth uses the adjective "impossible" to describe the integration of refugees from what he refers to as 'overwhelmingly Muslim countries'. While all three mentioned adjectives denote a sense of probability, they differ greatly in terms of where on the probability spectrum they may be placed, and while adjectives such as "challenging" or "difficult" denote a sense of likelihood, i.e. that integration could occur, 'impossible' denotes that the likelihood of integration to occur is none existent, which serves as an intensifying effect in his argument. Thus, through the use of an interrogative sentence which functions as a declarative, the negative verb form "isn't", and the adjective "impossible", Berth discursively constructs a negative image of Muslim refugees which serves to alienate them from the Danish society, and furthermore, seeks to encourage the audience's acceptance of this exact image (See Stritzel, 2007; Jansen, 2013). While the DPP foresees integration of Muslim refugees as impossible, and thus as a risk that needs to be managed within society, the political left describe integration of refugee as possible:

“All of a sudden we no longer want to integrate, rather, we want to send people immediately with no belief that the refugees that come to our country could

potentially be progressive and fruitful individuals, that is able to enrich Denmark both economically and cultural. That is something those people voting for this legislation is supporting - integration, that is a word we no longer like” (Caroline Magdalene Maier from the Alternatives, third treatment, 2019: 2).

As asserted in the quote, the use of the pronoun “we” presents Caroline Magdalene Maier as an individual who speaks not to voice personal opinions, but as an individual who speaks for the greater good of Denmark’s shared interests and objectives. The left wing party’s use of the word integration is as evident contrasting to that of the DPPs, since the Alternatives frequently present integration as a desirable political objective that enables refugees to join and participate in Danish society (Haugaard, 2006). What is more, Caroline Magdalene Maier uses positive words such as “progressive” and ”fruitful” when describing refugees, which emphasizes that refugees may as well contribute positively to Danish society. This positive way of portraying refugees stands as a clear contrast to the negative way in which refugees are portrayed by the political right, which will be outlined in greater detail later on in this analysis. The point here is that the Alternatives clearly disassociate themselves with the political right and Act 140’s shift from integration to repatriation, similar to their alliance party, the Red-Green Alliance:

“From now on, if you make an effort to become a part of Denmark; get a job, educate yourself and learn Danish, that will no longer play a role in determining whether or not refugees should be able to get permanent residency in Denmark, and that will decrease the integration. The effect will be that a growing part of the population will become a b-team who will live in fear for their future” (Pelle Dragsted from Red-Green Alliance, first treatment, 2019: 42).

Pelle Dragsted from the Red-Green Alliance asserts that a focus on temporary residency (and thus repatriation) in the Danish asylum system is hurtful to social integration of refugees with the use of negative language as for example, “that will no longer play a role” and “who will live in fear for their future” to signify the loss of opportunity for refugees, which Dragsted emphasizes is instead replaced with fear. Pelle Dragsted emphasizes that this unrewarding societal model will function as an inhibition for social integration, which will marginalize refugees that he stresses using the words “b-team” that refers to the inferior position that will be given to refugees within Danish society (Jansen, 2013). While it seems that the Red-Green Alliance aims to appeal to the audience's emotions and awake sympathy by emphasizing the loss of opportunity for refugees, the Social Democrats takes on a more neutral stance and claims to desire social integration of refugees while simultaneously presenting Act 140 as vaguely non negative:

“I agree that the reduction in social benefits will decrease integration - I agree. But I don't agree that the focus on temporary residency reduces integration. At least not a big enough reduction that we need to take temporarily away” (Mattias Tesfaye from the Social Democrats, first treatment, 2019: 12).

As the quote asserts, the Social Democrats agree that the decrease in social benefits will have a negative impact on integration, and as the literature suggests, a reduction in social benefits has been shown to be linked to higher levels of crime, lower participation rates in preschool programs, lower performance in language texts (Dustmann et. al, 2019; Andersen et. al, 2007). So while the Social Democrats state that Act 140 will reduce social integration of refugees with the reduction of social benefits, the party still voted in favour of the Act.

### 6.1.3 The *threat* of refugees

The establishment of refugees as a threat in Danish society stems from primarily an othering narrative that fosters a ‘them versus us’ politics (Wren, 2007; Johnson, 2004), which appears on a frequent basis throughout the debates in order for the political right to introduce a risk-based approach and thus give reason to Act 140. Thus, the political right views Act 140 (and thus temporary residency) as a societal necessity that protects Danish society from the threat of the external ‘other’:

“...if we protect both the people who need protection but also keep those who no longer need protection, then we will have a lot of people in Denmark with a very very foreign background” (Inger Støjberg from Venstre, first treatment, 2019: 48).

In the above quote, we see that Inger Støjberg uses the conjunction "if" to introduce a conditional sentence expressing a hypothetical situation and its consequences. The condition and hypothetical situation is here expressed in the clause "if we protect both the people who need protection but also keep those who no longer need protection", while the consequence of the hypothetical situation is expressed in the clause "then we will have a lot of people in Denmark with a very, very foreign background". The use of this type of conditional sentence essentially expresses that if the hypothetical situation will become true, so will the consequence stated evidently also become true (Stritzel, 2007). Thus, by using this conditional sentence, and by not using any probability markers such as 'might' or 'may', Inger Støjberg asserts that the consequence, i.e. that Denmark will have a lot of people with a very, very foreign background, is a fact rather than merely a hypothetical outcome to a hypothetical situation. What is

more, in the consequence stated, Inger Støjberg uses the intensifying adverb "very" twice to strengthen her argument that the refugees that will stay in Denmark are "foreigners". Although the word 'foreign' may not only carry negative connotations, the word does, nevertheless, have implications of the unknown and unfamiliar, which could ultimately pose a threat to the known and familiar, in this case, Denmark and its national identity and perhaps security (Gaasholt and Tøgeby 1995, Hussain et. al. 1997; Wæver, 1995). Thus, by using a conditional clause and establishing the consequence as truth, as well as by discursively portraying the refugees as a possible threat to Denmark, Inger Støjberg tells a rather frightening story of what will happen to Denmark (Buzan et. al, 1998) if it is not protected by Act 140. She thus appeals to the audience's emotions (Balzacq, 2010: 2; Stritzel, 2007: 373) using Pathos and seen in this light, Act 140 becomes a societal necessity since it is the only thing that can save Denmark from the frightening scenario, ultimately legitimizing the Act. While Inger Støjberg from Venstre seeks to legitimize Act 140 by emphasizing refugees as foreign, other parties of the political right do to some extent acknowledge the inhumane aspect of Act 140:

“There will be cases in the international media, where on a human level it might not be seem as an appropriate measure. However on a societal level, we just have to do this” (Martin Henriksen from DPP, third treatment, 2019: 28).

As we see in Henriksen's statement, he acknowledges that there is an inhumane aspect to Act 140, which the media might identify, while simultaneously justifying this inhumanity with the *societal necessity*. Henriksen states “we just *have to do this*”, which signifies an emergency (Stritzel, 2007) and that there is no other option but to pass Act 140, that while being inhumane, is the most logical decision as it protects Denmark from the external other. The DPP's way of constructing an image of the external other as a threat allows the political

party to go beyond the normal bounds of political rules with the potential violation of international treaties (See Wæver, 1995). Henriksen from DPP continues to stress that the DPP's focus on a shift from integration to repatriation is because Denmark is threatened. This 'shift' as emphasized by Henriksen, signifies a change from normal politics into politics of emergency (See Stritzel, 2007) due to the threat of refugees:

“When we in DPP continue to insist that we need tightening of laws it is because in our belief, Denmark is threatened internally and externally. We insist that we as Danes and thus as Danish politicians have a duty to protect our country and leave a proper society and a proper country that is connected to our descendants” (Martin Henriksen from DPP, first treatment, 2019: 28)

As demonstrated in this quote, the Danish People Party uses words such as “protect” and “threatened” that constructs an image of refugees as subjects that are dangerous that may inflict damage on Danish society. The word *threat* is extremely powerful as it signifies the risk of danger and damage that requires crucial government decisions and calls for the extreme measures of Act 140 (Stritzel, 2007). As the quote asserts, the shift from social integration to repatriation signifies a change from normal politics into politics of emergency (Stritzel, 2007) that ultimately legitimizes the extraordinary measures of Act 140 as the defence of social cohesion, i.e. “a proper country that is connected”. The DPP themselves are framed in a heroic manner as protectors of Denmark with the use of hyperbolic and nationalistic language, for example “have the duty”, “protect our country” and “a proper country”. The DPP continue to assert that integration of refugees is a threat:

“West Europe has a tremendous problem with integration, when it comes to people from predominantly Muslim countries” (Kenneth Berth from DPP, third treatment, 2019: 23)

Kenneth Berth emphasizes that integration of refugees with a Muslim background is problematic and difficult using the intensifying word “tremendous” to assert that problems related to integration of refugees do not alone exist in Denmark, but in all of West Europe. This comparison to other European countries might be a strategy for Berth to convey the message that Muslim refugees are the *actual* problem, and not the system or institutions in Denmark that the left wing tend to suggest, since other European countries share the same problems related to integration. Statements like these from the political right seek to casually construct a relationship between Muslims and crime, oppression and unemployment (Jansen, 2013). This focus on Islam conveys the idea that refugees’ religious orientation poses a threat to Danish democratic values. The DPP, therefore, invokes secularism as a precondition of democracy (Jansen, 2013) in the defence of the rights of women:

“It will to a large degree help integration for those refugees that are here, and who has to be here permanently, to send a clear signal that we will not accept the viewpoint on women and humans that the Islamic headscarf represents” (Martin Henriksen from DPP, third treatment, 2019: 26).

The quote conveys the idea that refugees are unable to separate religion and the state, which is typically invoked as a precondition for democracy within liberal countries (Jansen, 2013). Thus, the display of the Islamic headscarf in the public sphere is according to Henriksen emphasized as non-liberal through an indirect speech act. Henriksen continues in the last part of the quote by almost *factually* describing the Islamic headscarf as inhumane and oppressive to women, which

he emphasizes contradicts the very liberal values of Danish society. Henriksen continues in another statement to describe integration problems:

“...If that was the case, we would not have integration problems today: we would not have ghettos, and these people would have become a part of Danish society - they would have assimilated. They would have become Danish. But they are not Danish. They are Syrians” (Martin Henriksen from DPP, third treatment: 2019: 18).

As the quote asserts, Henriksen from DPP emphasizes that Denmark would not have integration problems *if* refugees would become *Danish* through assimilation. The quote from Henriksen conveys the idea that integration and assimilation are two aligned concepts, when these two concepts signify different ways of adapting into society. This word choice might signify that when the DPP refer to integration, they really mean assimilation. The choice of the word assimilation as a precondition for integration implies that refugees should give up their culture as opposed to uniting their culture with that of the Danish. The quote from Henriksen further asserts that problems associated with immigration such as the prevalence of ghettos is due to the poor *character* of refugees and downplays that societal conditions such as the lack of economic resources can have an impact on how well refugees adapt into society. Kenneth Berth from DPP contributes to the idea of assimilation:

“One does not necessarily become Danish just because one contributes with taxes and speak the Danish language, just like we will not become British, just because we speak English” (Kenneth Berth from DPP, third treatment, 2019: 38).

Kenneth Berth (DPP) argues that speaking a language is not sufficient in terms of integration, by making a comparison to the English language that is widely known and used in many varieties throughout the world. Kenneth Berth (DPP) thus stresses that paying taxes and speaking Danish does not mean that someone can call themselves a Dane, which conveys the idea that refugees must do more than simply get a job and learn Danish in order to fit into society. Yet again, the DPP sets up *unknown* criteria that need to be met in order for refugees to become Danes.

#### 6.1.4 Refugees as a social category

The MP's choice of words when describing refugees and asylum seekers as a social category in terms of their identity and characteristics unravel whether the political communities perceive these individuals as risks to Danish society. As the previous section demonstrated, the Alternatives emphasize that the reduction of social benefits will increase the poverty amongst refugees, which the party frequently addresses using a personalization method:

“...with open eyes we know that this legislation will increase poverty in Denmark. Already the current integration allowance means that people are living in poverty. With open eyes, you will also know that this legislation will make integration harder. With this legislation, there will be less money for kids to go to soccer practice, to invite their fellow classmates home, and to become a part of the social life that grants a future in Danish society.” (Pelle Dragsted from Red-Green Alliance, third treatment, 2019: 28).

As demonstrated in the quote, Pelle Dragsted refers to common and relatable kids activities such as “playing soccer” and “inviting friends over” as a

personalization method to humanize refugees. Another left-wing party, the Radical Left, describe refugees and asylum seekers as “humans”, ”parents”, “mothers”, and “kids” in order to appeal to the listeners’ emotions and evoke feelings of sympathy so that other MPs come to understand the distress and misfortune of refugees:

“We know that acknowledgement make people participate. That is Danish pedagogic politics that is Danish school politics, that is Danish educational politics, and that is Danish employment politics. These are the arguments that we always put forwards, because we know that rejection and disapproval will tell humans, people, children, youngsters, that they are unwanted and that will have the opposite effect” (Sofie Carsten Nielsen from the Radical Left, third treatment, 2019: 33)

As the statement asserts, the Radical Left emphasize that Act 140 will have the opposite effect of what is intended since the legislation rejects and disapproves of refugees and asylum seekers with the use of a repatriation philosophy, which signifies that refugees are unwanted. The Radical Left are very transparent about their stance towards Act 140 as exemplified in the MP’s use of humanizing words to describe refugees, which serves as a way to disapprove of the Act. Contrary to the Radical Left’s transparent stance to Act 140 using the personalization method, the Social Democrats use neutral and technical words to describe refugees such as “refugees” and “quota refugees” displaying minimum emotions towards refugees. The party goes on to suggest that social integration of refugees will not be impacted:

“...It also states in the legislation that the integration programs will remain unchanged with a continuous focus on employment and education. We change the ‘name’ of the school booklet, but we will not change the content of the book,

expect the decrease in social benefits” (Mattias Tesfaye from the Social Democrats, third treatment, 2019: 23).

As demonstrated in the quote, the Social Democrats downplays the negative impact that Act 140’s repatriation paragraphs may have with the use of a metaphor in order to stress that Act 140 does not change much except for a few names in the legislation. However, the Social Democrats do not address how the legislation will influence refugees’ feelings of security, the gradual attainment of rights and motivation towards participation in a variety of integration programs (See Jansen, 2013) which both the political left and right argue will be influenced negatively with Act 140.

When referring to refugees and asylum seekers, the left wing (particularly the Radical Left and Alternatives) are prone to present examples of refugees who have successfully integrated into Danish welfare society using positive and affirmative words to describe a successful integration:

“Ghassan Rahmi has since his arrival to Denmark, 5 years ago, learned Danish, he is working as a sanitary chairman, he has been engaged in his local association work: and recently he has been a candidate for the political Party ‘Radical Left’ in the local elections of Holstebro. He is one of those who risk being sent home with this legislation” (Caroline Magdalene Maier from the Alternatives, second treatment, 2019: pp. 2-3).

As the statement asserts, Caroline Magdalene Maier presents a positive actor description in order to raise sympathy for those refugees that Act 140 might strip from opportunity. This personalization method has the purpose to humanize refugees by raising sympathy with the use of the refugee’s names and personal story. This discursive strategy is different from that of the Social Democrats’

which deploys generic words to describe refugees, or that of the political right's that alienates refugees using an impersonalization strategy to represent refugees as something else than human to present refugees as a risk to society (Leeuwen, 1996: 59-61). Caroline Magdalene Maier asserts that the legislation will not only have an impact on those "undesirable" refugees that the Danish People Party frequently refer to, but also those refugees who have integrated well into areas of Danish life. Thus, refugees who have successfully completed integration programs, learned Danish, and is active in the labour market will not necessarily be able to get permanent residency by Danish authorities, as emphasized by Martin Henriksen from DPP:

"... There will no longer be an emphasis on the refugees' attachment to Denmark, but rather on the refugees' attachment to their country of origin" (Martin Henriksen from DPP, first treatment, 2019: 21).

As the paragraph asserts, Act 140 will no longer focus on whether refugees have integrated well into Danish society but rather on what relations that these individuals have with their country of origin, which conveys the idea that refugees must feel minimum attachment to their country of origin in order to be accepted as a member of society, according to the right-wing. The DPP continue to focus on repatriation throughout the debate, which does not place value on well integrated individuals but rather on *all* the reasons why refugees do not belong in Danish society:

"Even though the Danish People's Party have made sure that we have a decrease in the overall influx, and even though we have implemented border control that also rejects criminal refugees, immigration is still a catastrophe for our community" (Martin Henriksen, third treatment, 2019: 22).

Martin Henriksen describes his party, the DPP, in a heroic manner that although having implemented a variety of securitization measures to deal with the *catastrophe* and risk, still face problems related to the threat that refugees pose to society. The word *catastrophe* is an example of hyperbolic language that enhances meaning and describes overall immigration in relation to the most extreme cases (Stritzel, 2007) of “female oppression” and “parallel societies” that according to DPP requires securitization measures in order to be managed. Thus, in order to frame the Act as something that is *good* for Danish society, Henriksen continues to justify Act 140 by describing refugees as individuals with “different moral beliefs” and thus as threats to cultural achievements and social cohesion within Danish society. Henriksen actively uses words along the lines of “foreigners”, “people with different moral beliefs”, and “different” as an impersonalization method in order to distance and dehumanize immigrants of particularly a Muslim background:

“...here we can mention parallel societies where women are oppressed, where non-western immigrants are overly represented in crime statistics, and where the employment rate is alarmingly low” (Martin Henriksen, third treatment, 2019: 18).

In the quote, we see that Martin Henriksen uses a declarative sentence to describe the groups in the Danish society consisting of non-Western immigrants or refugees. Martin Henriksen uses the noun phrase 'parallel societies' to refer to these groups. According to the Oxford dictionary, the word 'parallel' means to 'be side by side with (something extending in a line), always keeping the same distance', thus embedded in the word 'parallel' is the notion of distance: just as two parallel lines cannot intersect or meet at one point, a parallel society to the Danish society can never meet or intersect with the Danish society. By using this

noun phrase to refer to groups of non-Western immigrants and refugees, Martin Henriksen thus discursively constructs an image of these groups as not being part of society but rather as independent societies, which cannot intersect with the Danish society. Following this, Martin Henriksen describes exactly why this is so: because in these societies women are oppressed, the crime rates are overly high, and employment is alarmingly low. DPP relies heavily to numbers by referring to statistics that according to the political party demonstrate how bad and costly immigrants are for society. DPP's vague conclusions on these statistics, that they claim show an overrepresentation of immigrants in the areas of unemployment and criminal records, can be interpreted as a strategy that is supposed to highlight facts so that the securitization become a matter of logics rather than opinions (Stritzel, 2007). Henriksen continues to emphasize how these statistics call for a securitization measure and risk-based governance with the use of almost self-glorifying and positive language of himself and his party's efforts in implementing all these securitizing measures.

#### 6.1.5 Act 140 and the Refugee Convention

As outlined in the literature, the concept of *temporary residency* stems from the Refugee Convention, which states that countries should grant temporary residency to asylum seekers who need protection (Gammeltoft, 2017). While temporary residency ultimately enables a refugee to reside in Denmark, the political left argues that an over emphasis on temporarily within the asylum system brings about a set of economic, political and social limitations and allows for a constant evaluation of refugees in terms of integration, and whether they pass as 'liberal' individuals (See Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011). Thus, temporary residency enables repatriation of refugees to a greater extent even if these individuals have integrated well into areas of Danish life and thus have

formed ties with Denmark (Haugaard, 2006). These limitations are hardly addressed by the political right and Social Democrats that rely on the Refugee Convention's referral to temporary residency in order to allow for the repatriation philosophy to be transmitted into the Danish asylum system. By asserting the idea that the repatriation philosophy is in accordance with Denmark's international promises, Act 140 is discursively framed as conforming to rules and obligations of international order (Gammeltoft, 2017; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011) by the Social Democrats:

“The Social Democrats support that refugees should be granted protection as long as they need it. That is the very spirit of the Refugee Convention, that protection should be granted, and that it should be temporary” (Mattias Tesfaye, Social Democrats, first treatment: 2)

As demonstrated with the quote, the Social Democrats use the word *support* to express a positive attitude towards the protection of refugees, however, as is argued in the last line of the quote, this is not without the condition that the protection should be temporary. This condition is, nevertheless, discursively framed in a positive light: rather than using e.g. contrastive conjunctions such as ‘but’, ‘nevertheless’, or ‘however’ to introduce the condition that the protection granted should be temporary, the Social Democrats use the positive, reassuring phrasing ‘as long as they need it’, discursively linking the condition to an act of generosity, taking into account the individual refugee's needs. What is more, using the intensifying adjective ‘very’ in the positive phrasing ‘that is the very spirit of the refugee convention’, the condition is legitimized through emphasizing the fact that it aligns with the international protocols of the UN. Throughout the debates, both the political right and Social Democrats adhere to the word *temporary* in order to frame Act 140 as beneficial for those refugees who need protection, as opposed to a negative set of amendments that has a

negative impact on social integration. The discursive strategies deployed by the Social Democrats enables an undermining of the degree to which the legislation will make it harder for refugees and asylum seekers to integrate into areas of Danish society:

“The so called paradigm shift is according to us a question about common sense. That political intimation is the easiest. The hardest is the legal and practical completion of the ‘common sense’, which is to assure that temporary, becomes temporary.” (Mattias Tesfaye from the Social Democrats, third treatment, 2019: 2).

As the quote asserts, the Social Democrats emphasize that the legislation is a question of “common sense” which conveys the idea that those who object to the legislation do not have common sense. By doing so, the Social Democrats might be trying to legitimize their opinions by disguising them as shared knowledge, logic and as merely facts rather than opinions (Oxford Dictionary, 2019). The Social Democrats continue to justify Act 140 by referring to other European countries:

“Many refugees that need protection do not get it, while many who have been granted protection and no longer in need of it, never return home. It is the main rule for refugees in Europe – as well as in Denmark – that most refugees stay here in Denmark. That counts for nine out of ten” (Mattias Tesfaye from the Social Democrats, first treatment: 2019: 2).

Here, they use the contrastive conjunction 'while' to assert a contrast between the two notions that 'many refugees that need protection do not get it' and that 'many refugees that no longer need protection are not send home'. In this sense, the two notions are asserted as opposing each other, insinuating that it is impossible both

to take in the many refugees that are in need of protection, while also letting those that no longer need protection stay in the country. What is more, given that the conjunction 'while' may also be used to introduce a phrase that expresses an explanation, the sentence may also denote that because the refugees that are no longer in need of protection are not sent back to their home countries, it is not possible to help the many who are actually in need of protection (whether this may be of financial or other reasons is unclear). Thus, in this sense, repatriation becomes a societal necessity for helping the many refugees in need, rather than a necessity for the Danish society, which frames repatriation as a humane act of not only kindness, but very much also of fairness towards refugees. Inger Støjberg of the political right deploys the same strategy:

“But one is only here temporarily, and that is as long as one needs protection. That is what we work from. But that is an area that has never succeeded in Denmark, with nine out of ten of refugees still staying in Denmark” (Inger Støjberg the Liberal Party, third treatment, 2018: 48).

The political left responds to the Danish Liberal Party’s emphasis on temporality asking:

“How is it that we treat a human being? I ask the minister to describe how she views this? A refugee is not merely a refugee for a couple of months, but actually many years – I think the minister should take this into account” (Rasmus Nordqvist from the Alternatives, first treatment, 2019: 28).

As demonstrated in the statement, the political left emphasize that war conflicts do not simply last a couple of months, which makes the focus on repatriation very problematic. A conflict lasts on an average fifteen to twenty years, which means that refugees must be granted protection for a large number of years

without ever being considered a part of the Danish society. Parties of the political left continuously request that the right wing and Social Democrats should disclose how they intend to deal with social integration of refugees to which the political right emphasize that social integration no longer is a desirable political objective as it is too costly. The DPP from the political right do not disguise their disapproval of left wing parties' position towards the legislation:

“I am so happy that it is not the Alternatives that has an influence on the politics that are being put through here, because that is the absolute biggest national catastrophe that one could work for; to consciously try and change the democracy in this country.” (Kenneth Berth, 2019: third treatment: 9)

As the quote asserts, the metaphor *a national catastrophe* is used to refer to the politics of the Alternatives, where elements from the source domain of “catastrophe” are mapped onto the target domain of the “Alternatives” providing a negative image of their politics. Kenneth Berth uses hyperbolic and negative language when speaking of the Alternatives that according to him will lead Denmark into a national catastrophe that will change the democracy of Denmark. As exemplified in the literature, the political right tend to be resistant towards Islam, which might be embedded in the belief that Muslims will rise as a political force and take over the democracy (Jansen, 2013). Here, Berth implies that the politics of the Alternatives will allow for a change of democracy, using the word “happy” to express pleasure and contentment and to describe the minimum influence that the Alternatives have on politics as a small party of the opposition. This statement by Berth has a patronizing tone to it, which may be a strategy to present the Alternatives as incompetent and inadequate as a political party, and thus to degrade and delegitimize the Alternatives' arguments that tend to focus on humanity and the international agenda.

## 6.2 Dimension 2: Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

This part of the analysis focuses on Fairclough's second dimension with an aim to examine the interdiscursivity and intertextuality that is present throughout the three parliamentary debates. The purpose is to explore how the production and/or reproduction of power and domination persist throughout the debates as well as how it shapes the social world (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 18).

### 6.2.1 *Legitimization* politics

The three treatments of Act 140 represent three parliamentary debates within the political communities of the political right and left, which are dominated by a strong legal discourse that revolves around the removal of paragraphs in Danish legislation that allows for permanent residency of refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark (L 140, 2019). Instead of relying on binding paragraphs developed by the Danish juridical system, Act 140 will enable the Danish institutions to follow a legal practice that is developed by the international conventions but are vaguely defined in domestic law. The use of formal legal words such as “violations”, “temporary” “the essence of the convention” is most frequently adopted by the Social Democrats and the political right in the first and third treatment of Act 140 using a legal discourse on several occasions, while the left-wing use this legal discourse less frequently. In regards to intertextuality, the degree in which the three parliamentary debates refer to UN related frameworks are quite high. References to the Refugee Convention is heavily embedded in the debates. Throughout the debates, parties frequently refer to the Refugee Convention especially in regards to Denmark's responsibility to grant refugees protection, and how these obligations should be fulfilled. The regular references made to conventions (i.e. external texts) are predominantly a way for right wing parties and the Social Democrats to legitimize Act 140 and to be able to “go to the very

edge of conventions” in regards to refugee and asylum rights (DPP, second treatment, 2019). The legitimization process is essentially enrooted in the right wings emphasis on the risks associated with “permanency” of refugees in society. Therefore, the focus on “temporary residency” as a risk-based approach to governance is the right wing response to the likelihood of said threats happening, such as the oppression of women, increase levels of crime and the threat of the democracy. Therefore, the reference to UN embedded framework works as a way for parties to strengthen their arguments and to be able to emphasize that as long as the legislation is in accordance with international obligations, the legislation cannot be considered as crossing lines. This also relates to the distinction between civil and human rights where civil rights as attained through citizenship represent a certain socio-political status (Kelly, 2015). The exclusion of refugees in terms of rights through difficult assimilation discourse of what it means to be Danish might have the purpose to represent refugees as undeserving of the socio-political status that the Danish citizenship represents (See Kelly, 2015). Thus, the Social Democrats’ continuous referral to the RC demonstrates how the party tries to legitimize the Act by claiming that the Act conforms to international treaties as it protects those refugees *who need protection*.

### 6.2.2 The dominance of political ideologies

The political discourses that exist within the three parliamentary debates are very strong. This is noticed through the persistent use of words like “votes”, “government”, “minister”, “financial negotiations”, “threat”, and “power”, “protect our country”, “marginalisation” (L 140, 2019). The most interesting political discourse is how the governing coalition calls for securitization measures that are enrooted in nationalism, while the political left calls for a de(securitization) embedded in a political liberalistic discourse. The concepts “temporary residency”, “social cohesion” and “societal necessity” and the parties’

way of using these concepts to present their viewpoints go hand in hand with the political ideologies of nationalism and liberalism in the way that they view the rights of refugees. As the literature suggests (Kelly, 2015; Haugaard, 2006; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2011) the opinion struggles between the left and right wing are hardly new, as the “entire social organization of the field of politics, and hence of politicians and political groups, is largely based on ideological differences, alliances and similarities” (Van Dijk, 2006: 732). The struggle between the left and right is the result of the polarization of political ideologies; the left being traditionally prone to have attitudes of welcoming immigrants, and the right being inclined to view immigration in the light of its financial costs and negative consequences on society.

As evident in the quotes that were presented in dimension one of the analysis, the polarization of political ideologies is reflected in actor descriptions and attitudes towards international promises and human rights.

The political right that consists of the Danish People's Party and the Danish Liberal Party strive for a society that is depicted in Danish values, which is by DPP definition “their people” that are threatened by the immigration of asylum seekers and refugees that political liberalism and participation in international conventions brings about. Thus, the threat of refugees becomes a risk in society that needs to be dealt with using legal measures depicted in a risk-based approach to governance. The discursive variations between the political parties demonstrate the degree to which that the political communities perceive social integration of refugees as a risk and thus advocate for legal and extra-legal mechanism in order to deal with these perceived risks within Danish society. Therefore, according to the right wing, a focus on social integration of refugees could bring about potential dangers *if* refugees are able to eventually acquire constitutional rights, they may rise as a political force, which prevents a risk-based approach to be

enforced by the state. Therefore, the socio-legal insights refer to the normative rationales for risk-based approaches, which demonstrate how political processes and mechanisms by which legal decisions about risks are taken and implemented within Danish society.

The left wing, however, views Act 140 depicted in nationalism as fundamentally threatening to social cohesion as it facilitates inequality and maintains a system of social exclusion of especially asylum seekers and refugees. The fundamental differences between the ideologies of the left and right wing is, at its core, what defines the radical opinion differences between the left and right wing in the area of immigration. The Social Democrats, despite being categorized as a part of the opposition, voted the same as the right wing in the third treatment of Act 140, all while using common left-wing discourse that “values social integration” of refugees.

Typically the concept of political *liberalism* has a positive connotation for the left wing in regards to immigration, as it is a medium for the implementation of human rights with the guidance of international conventions. Thus liberalism is a characteristic in the left wing political discourse that essentially places ‘human quality’ above discourses associated with ‘capital’ (Haugaard, 2006). The right wing is traditionally more compelling to view liberalism in the area of immigration as a potential threat to social cohesion within Danish society due to the international obligations that political liberalism brings about.

What can be learned with an elaboration of political ideologies, and the way that they view rights, is how particular discourses become hegemonic in particular organizations (Kelly, 2015; Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). Groups of social agents have the power to change organizations in particular directions as demonstrated with the Social Democrats who have ‘bought’ into the political rights’

securitization discourse that strongly is depicted in a nationalistic political discourse (ibid, 2002). The use of a strong securitization discourse and risk assessment of refugees and asylum seekers that according to the right wing pose a threat to cultural achievements might not be explicit in the discourse applied by the Social Democrats. However, the Social Democrats' non critical assessment of the legislation reveal that they do not necessarily object to the legislation either, as demonstrated in the way that the party chose to vote in the third treatment. Hegemony as moral and intellectual domination (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002) as depicted in the political right's verbal interventions and construction of threat images, is most evident in the Social Democrats' adaptation of the concept temporary residency that they emphasize is a societal necessity.

### 6.3 Dimension 3: the Social Context

This part of the analysis focuses on Fairclough's third dimension that aims to take account of the wider social practices and structures that helps shape commutative events (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002: 69).

#### 6.3.1 National security in European countries

A crucial element of the securitization theory is the audience's *acceptance* of the *securitization move* by political actors that is enrooted in successful speech acts. As the former sections of analysis have examined, "security is built on a set of discourses or narratives" embedded in institutionally shared understandings, therefore "becoming a political and social construct" (Estevens, 2018: 3). These *shared understandings* are to a large extent embedded in historical practices where "elites in power, analytics and experts define the existing risks and threats" that the influential audience accepts (ibid, 2018; Stritzel, 2007). Since the 1990s, the political discourse on refugees has changed drastically within European countries

with the emergence of right wing anti-immigration populism as evident in literature that introduces the othering narrative, the problem with multiculturalism and the distinction between human and civil rights (Pope, 2017; Jansen, 2013; Wren, 2001). The rise of right-wing populism has severely affected policies on refugees' legal rights and their possibilities for socio-cultural and socio-economic inclusion (See Kelly, 2015). Especially with contemporary globalization, the influx of refugees in European countries has accelerated in great speed and scale, which has fostered the prevalence of the neo-liberal concept of security within the political sphere.

As one of the most common political trends within the twenty-first century in Europe, the far-right political parties have experienced an increase in electoral support along with European societies' fear of immigration and thus their *need* for securitization of immigration related issues (Twist, 2019; See Gaasholt and Togeby 1995). The change in political discourse on immigration in the direction of a securitization approach is to a large extent embedded in an *othering narrative of refugees* that emerged with great efficiency since the 1990s due to rise of intra-state conflicts and new factors associated with human security within Europe (See Pope, 2017; *ibid*, 2019).

One of the most obvious factors associated with security is the securitization of refugees with especially a Muslim background due to the rise of international terrorism (Estevens, 2018). The media plays a crucial role in classifying which events that the public should assess as a threat, and tend to casually link Muslim refugees together with terrorism (Nickerson, 2019). As stated, "...the findings suggest that news media framing utilizes biased, negative imagery, portraying the events in these countries in a way that reinforces current prejudices against Muslims, even when Muslims are themselves the victims. This unequal reporting increases viewership while simultaneously allowing current perceptions about

terrorism and Muslims to continue” (Nickerson, 2019: 2). Events such as 9/11 and the Paris attack that have been heavily documented within the media, have severely shaped public opinions on refugees that has given rise to Islamophobia inside Europe, “as data seem to support that Muslims suffer higher levels of discrimination in Western democracies, in comparison to other religious minorities” in the aftermath of such events (Fox & Akbaba, 2015: 191; Estevens, 2018).

The far-right political parties in European have fostered a reshaping of the immigration debates in Europe, such as for example border fences in Hungary that have aimed at keeping refugees out of the country. Other European countries have experienced demonstrations and protests against refugees, such as in Poland where far-ring nationalists waved banners stating “no to Islam” on their independence day (Twist, 2019). Central to these movements are the rise of right wing populist politics and electrical influence of these parties that might accept the basics of democracy, but typically tend to have a problem with some liberal protections of democracy such as the international conventions that protects refugees (Estevens, 2018). In many European countries, these far-right parties are successful since they are coalition partners as seen in EU countries like Austria, Switzerland and Denmark that has a political system of multi party governance where relatively small political parties can assert their influence on law making (Estevens, 2018).

## 7 Conclusion

This chapter encompasses an overview of findings, answers to the research questions, a meta-discussion, and reflections on future research.

### 7.1 Brief summary of answers to research questions

*“What socio-legal insights can be learned from the study of discourses regarding the shift from integration to repatriation in the Danish asylum system?”*

This study’s focus on the shift from integration to repatriation and the discourses that surround this shift brought about a range of socio-legal insights in relation to securitization and risk-based approaches to governance. The research highlighted how political parties respond to the likelihood of a said threat happening where the *risk* was related to refugees’ involvement and potential domination within Danish society. These *risks* are framed with a *securitization* approach. In order to deal with this risk, the right wing introduced Act 140 based on a risk-based approach to governance. Act 140 ultimately makes it harder for refugees to attain citizenship rights, and if these individuals were to acquire these rights, the state would be limited in their abilities to control refugees using a risk-based approach. This study shows how risk-based governance as a result of securitization ignores social context, as this approach to risks in society, does not try to shape social action or norms, but instead aims to reduce the risk associated with refugees’ gaining power within society by implementing specific laws. These risks associated with refugees are according to the right wing, the increase in levels of crime, oppression of women, and political dominance of preachers of the Islamic faith. For example, in the process of framing refugees and asylum seekers as a threat, social integration was framed as not only undesirable but also as a *risky* political

initiative by the political right since refugees were framed as unable to integrate into society. The discursive variations between the political parties demonstrate the degree to which that the political communities perceive social integration of refugees as a risk and thus advocate for the need to implement legal and extra-legal mechanism in order to deal with these perceived risks within Danish society. Therefore, according to the right wing, a focus on social integration of refugees could bring about potential dangers *if* refugees are able to eventually acquire constitutional rights, they may rise as a political force, which prevents a risk-based approach to be enforced by the state. Therefore, the socio-legal insights refer to the normative rationales for risk-based approaches, which demonstrate how political processes and mechanisms by which legal decisions about risks are taken and implemented within Danish society.

*“How does the political left and right discursively frame the shift from social integration to repatriation during the three parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140?”*

The political left discursively frame the shift from social integration to repatriation as negative to society, since the shift aims to reduce costs related to social integration such as the social benefits that refugees receive from the government along with government integration initiatives. This shift will according to the political left lead to increased poverty and marginalization of refugees, which will influence social cohesion negatively. The political left discursively frame social integration of refugees as indeed possible using positive actor descriptions and personal stories along with intensifying words and positive affirmations to describe refugees. The Social Democrats, although having stated that they support integration politics, do not explicitly mention that they are in favour of the repatriation philosophy but instead presents the Act as vaguely non negative and as a policy initiative that does not change much about

integration with the use of metaphors in their statements. In addition, the Social Democrats discursively frame the shift from integration to repatriation as ‘common sense’, which the party emphasizes will actually be positive for those refugees that *need* protection. The Social Democrats emphasize that granting protection to refugees that need it, in addition to those refugees who no longer need it but continue to reside in Denmark, is a burden beyond the means of society. The political right favours repatriation and sees Act 140 as beneficial to Danish society and the parties do so by presenting themselves and the Act as almost heroic. The right-wing stresses social integration of refugees as non beneficial to Danish society, since it leads to parallel societies, oppression of women and high levels of unemployment, even despite the social integration government's efforts. Thus, according to the political right, the shift from social integration to repatriation saves Denmark from a catastrophe.

*“How have the political right framed refugees and asylum seekers, as well as social integration as a threat in order to enable the passing of Act 140?”*

The political right have discursively framed refugees as a threat to social cohesion, democracy, cultural achievements and liberal values with the use of intensifying words, hyperbolic language, statistics, repetitions, and comparisons. The political right’s most common discursive strategy in order to frame social integration of refugees as bad for social cohesion have been to describe refugees as individuals with poor characteristics and thus instead present repatriation (and thus temporary residency) as *good* for society. The DPP were fundamental in the negative representation of refugees in the parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140 by referring to parallel societies, oppression of women, and the unemployment to describe how integration of refugees is impossible. The right wing’s framing of refugees and social integration as bad for society goes hand in hand with the European trend of perceiving refugees with especially a Muslim

background as a threat, which have fostered a public need for securitization. This public need has especially allowed the political right to go beyond the normal rules of politics by going to the very edge of international conventions in the defence of national identity.

## 7.2 Discussion

The findings have allowed for an in-depth understanding of Act 140, a securitization and risk-based approach to governance. This has been accomplished with the use of CDA that has enabled me as a researcher, to generate specific conclusions on discourse that surround Act as well as the influence on securitization in the passing of Act 140.

Fairclough's first dimension examined how power imbalances are performed and challenged through language, which is demonstrated throughout the parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140. The second dimension of Fairclough's model found that with the presence of legal and political discourses, the political right and Social Democrats are able to reproduce power relations since these discourses are used to pursue political interests embedded in ideological conceptualizations on rights of refugees. The third dimension allowed for a focus on the audience's need for securitization, which is a crucial aspect of the theory of securitization. The wider social context of Europe provide insight in how Act 140 was passed in the Danish Parliament, because it unravels a current European trend that enables the justification of the extremes measures of Act 140 such as the violation of international conventions.

Overall, CDA has enabled an examination of the relationship between language, power, domination and ideologies in the three parliamentary debates that preceded Act 140 and relate it to the theory of securitization.

This study contributes to scientific knowledge on securitization as it asserts the idea that there are not necessarily *natural* threats within society, but rather *constructed* threats by top-ranking and powerful politicians, which is significant knowledge that might contribute to a more humane way of forming immigration policies. In addition, this knowledge might contribute to implementation of policies that help foster social integration of refugees within European societies, and the implementation of human rights' conventions on more sufficient grounds. This study's insights on rights of refugees as depicted in political ideologies are significant because they contribute with significant socio-legal conclusions on conditions related to refugees' attainment of civil rights established within the political communities of predominantly the political right. In addition, this study contributes to knowledge by showing how successful speech acts can lead to hegemonic domination by establishing refugees as a *risk* in society that needs legal restrictions in order to be dealt with. These observations are important in the field of migration studies because they explore a *very* current trend within both a European context, but also within the US context (especially during the *Trump* era) where risk management such as the infamous 'wall' at the border between the United States and Mexico are framed by the American president as almost *common sense*. The most obvious negative consequence associated with risk-based approaches and securitization is best explained using a metaphor. While risk assessment and securitization aims to *cure* the *symptoms* of a problem, this approach does not deal with the underlying disease. One could then ask if not only the most humane, but also the best legal solutions to migration and integration problems are related to a focus on shaping social actions and norms instead of merely risk managing. There are underlying social problems that cannot simply be fixed with securitization or risk-based approaches to governance.

This study's empirical value lies in the understanding that with securitization and risk-based approaches, policy makers are not interested in changing society like

they claim. They are not interested in dealing with underlying issues. As this study has shown, the policy makers of the political right do not necessarily view refugees as a potential contributing factor in Danish society, or as merely fragile humans that have fled war and prosecution. However, Denmark *does* have international obligations that it cannot escape. Therefore, this study suggests that in policy making there must be a focus on more efficient integration policies, openness to integration as a two-way approach, and an understanding of the significance of international obligations. The parliamentary debates show how language can significantly influence policies that reshape the Danish asylum system. In regards to theoretical significance, it is interesting to link the securitization theory with insights of the risk-based approach to governance. This link shows clear socio-legal implications with a focus on not simply the political processes, but also with consideration to the *act* of implementing a specific law using a risk-based approach to governance.

### 7.3 Future research

Therefore, for future research it would be interesting to examine civil and human rights to a much larger extent, in order to get a more in-depth glimpse of how refugees are denied access to rights with the emergence of anti-immigration policies. Here, it would be especially interesting to examine the broader context of Europe and conduct a comparative study of Denmark and another European country that contrasts with Denmark's unwillingness to allow for the attainment of naturalization.

With this study many questions have been raised such as 'what long-term effects have Act 140 had on the lives of refugees in Danish society?' since the literature review suggested that there is a lack of research on the long-term effects of

reductions in social benefits for refugees. Or ‘how does Denmark manage to fulfil its international promises with Act 140?’ in order to examine what exactly is meant by “going to the very edge” of the international conventions, since this suggests that Denmark does fulfil its international promises, but to a very little extent. Here, it would be interesting to explore exactly what and what not Denmark is doing for the maintenance of international order.

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