The Rise of a Green Scare? Analysing the French Government's Discourse on the Soulèvements de la Terre and Ecoterrorism

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Abstract

In October 2022, the Soulèvements de la Terre and other environmental movements demonstrated against the project of the megabasins in Sainte Soline, France. Following violent clashes between activists and security forces, the Minister of the Interior declared the activists' actions as ecoterrorism. As a consequence, terrorism rhetoric in relation to environmental activists entered French public discourse, as it did in American public discourse, highlighting the emergence of the Green Scare in the beginning of the twenty-first century. As follows, this thesis aims to assess the extent to which a Green Scare has emerged in France over the last two years. In this sense, this thesis aims to introduce the Green Scare phenomenon to a new context. This is done by analysing and discussing the discourse held by the French government from October 2022 to March 2024 in relation to the Soulèvements de la Terre. In addition, this is done through the lens of Altheide's Discourse of Fear.

Using discourse analysis, this thesis found that a Green Scare had emerged, as demonstrated by the presence of government hostility towards the environmental movements notably through the use of terrorism rhetoric, as well as the expansion of the terrorism definition and the expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation, overall contributing to the dissemination of fear as well as their stigmatisation, dehumanisation and delegitimization.

Keywords: Ecoterrorism, Green Scare, Soulèvements de la Terre, France, Discourse Analysis, Government, Discourse of Fear

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1. Introduction

In this Chapter, I will discuss the background as well as the research problem, question, and aim. In addition, I will talk about the study's relevance to social legal research before moving on to the delimitation section. I will conclude this Chapter with an outline of the overall thesis.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The threat of water scarcity

Extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and heatwaves are predicted to increase in recurrence and severity, posing a threat to food security (IPCC, 2023). In the same way, water shortages are expected, particularly in Europe, as the demand will increase while the reserves will decrease (ibid). There is a scientific consensus that due to climate change, annual rainfall amounts and occurrences have become and will continue to be irregular, potentially leading to tensions between the agriculture sector and communities over water acquisition (Leichenko and O'Brien, 2019). Since the emergence of agrarian societies, farmers have relied on irrigation to water their land during periods of drought and in France, certain crops are particularly reliant on this practice, including corn, vegetables, tobacco and wine (Grimonprez, 2022). However, recently, irrigation has been limited, notably by prefectorial orders, as the amount of water that can be pumped has decreased (ibid.). As a result, alternative solutions have been developed. This includes the water storage facilities, such as "bassines", which translates to basins, that collect water from phreatic tables or watercourses during the winter and store it in open air artificial basins to be used in the summer when the water is scarce (Grimonprez, 2023, p. 5). These basins, qualified as mega basins by their opponents, have been contested by both farmers and environmental activists (Grimonprez, 2022). One critique made against these basins is that they serve the interests of a small group of farmers, who now have control over this common resource, water, despite the projects being financed by public funds (ibid.). On this point, the French Environment Code Article L. 211-1 states that water is governed by the principle of sustainable and balanced resource management in order to preserve the ecosystem, while also meeting the needs of various people (Grimonprez, 2023). Another critique is the effect on the environment, specifically aquatic ecosystems (Grimonprez, 2022). Lastly, the basins are

criticised and qualified as maladaptation as they simply compensate for the needs of intensive agriculture instead of consuming water differently (ibid.).

1.1.2 The qualification of ecoterrorism

The criticisms mentioned above have frequently led to action, including demonstrations by the collective Les Soulèvements de la Terre (SLT). This collective was created in 2021, gathering members from Youth for Climate, Extinction Rebellion and other environmental movements (Cortes and Leurquin, 2023). The members of SLT claim to have exhausted all legal resources and are now taking actions in order to defend the lands from artificialisation or grabbing (ibid.). For instance, on the 29th of October 2022, SLT carried out an action aimed at the Sainte Soline mega basins, currently under construction (ibid.). Between four and seven thousand people attended, despite the Prefecture's decrees prohibiting such demonstrations and a total of one thousand five hundred gendarmes and policemen present (ibid.). The gendarmes in this case refer to the police officers part of the military in France (La langue française, 2024). These demonstrations resulted in violent clashes between the activists and the police and gendarmes, also known as security forces, resulting in numerous injuries on both sides (Jouanny, 2022). In particular, the activists denounced the use of explosive grenades GLI-F4 by the security forces, despite their prohibition in 2020 (ibid.). The following day, Gérald Darmanin, the French Minister of the Interior and Overseas France (later referred to as the Minister of the Interior) addressed the events and qualified the demonstrators as ultra-violent and radicalised individuals who used ecoterrorism as a mode of action (Cortes and Leurquin, 2023). His use of the term ecoterrorism triggered debates as it was the first time it was used in the French public discourse. Ecoterrorism was developed in 1982 by Ron Arnold, one of the founders of the non-profit research organisation Centre for the Defence of Free Enterprise (CDFE) (Joosse, 2012). Arnold was explicitly opposed to environmental movements, claiming that he needed to make the public hostile to them and that he wished "to destroy environmentalists by taking their money and their members" (ibid., p. 86). Ecoterrorism is the combination of terrorism and ecosabotage, terrorism being a contested term with no universal definition but usually referring to violence against people that causes terror, as developed in the Literature review Chapter, ecosabotage being a practice that includes criminal offences that are conducted to protect the

environment while causing no harm to people (Hirsch-Hoefler and Mudde, 2014; Lovitz, 2007; Wagner, 2008). Ron Arnold argued that ecoterrorism should be used instead of ecosabotage because he raised private property to the equivalent of human lives (Sumner and Weidman, 2013). The term gained popularity as it was used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the beginning of the twenty-first century, particularly when referring to the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) which was declared as the biggest domestic threat in the United States of America (USA) in 2002 (Wagner, 2008). In addition, the FBI created a legal definition of ecoterrorism, defining it as "...the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or their property by an environmentally oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature" (ibid., p. 26). This use of terrorism rhetoric by the USA government to target environmental movements, combined with other conditions developed in the Theoretical framework Chapter, triggered scholars such as Potter to qualify this era as the Green Scare, in reference to the Red Scares of the twentieth century (2009). In this sense, the emergence of the Green Scare as a phenomenon was a direct result of the United States government's popularisation of the term ecoterrorism in public discourse.

1.1.3 The legislative framework

While the Minister of the Interior has made use of this term to qualify the actions of the SLT collective, there is no legal definition of ecoterrorism in France. Therefore, these actions fall under the legislation of terrorism or internal security, both of which have been expanded in the last decade as the result of the terrorist attacks which took place in 2015 and thereafter. As follows, in the first week of 2015, two terrorist attacks occurred, killing sixteen people and holding fifteen hostages (Dück and Lucke, 2019). Another terrorist attack occurred in November 2015, killing one hundred and thirty people and injuring three hundred and fifty others (ibid.). This resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency, which was extended several times before becoming ordinary legislation two years later (ibid.). The application of the state of emergency in France made it possible for the President to place twenty four environmental activists under house arrest during the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21), pointing out a threat to public safety and order (Cortes and Leurquin, 2023). After being extended five times,

the state of emergency was replaced by the *Law reinforcing internal security and the fight against terrorism* in November 2017 which enables house arrest for the same reasons (ibid.). This law allows for the surveillance of people which could be a threat to public safety and order and for the imposition of obligations on certain individuals such as a declaration of residence, presentation to the police, a ban on contact with specific individuals and so on (ibid.). Therefore this law has enabled exceptional measures of the state of emergency to enter the ordinary law. Alternatively this law introduces four chapters in the Internal Security Code, with measures which could impact environmental activists. These measures include the possibility to create perimeters of protection of certain areas (as used in Sainte Soline), administrative control and surveillance of individuals, home visits and seizures, all of which apply in cases of suspicion of threats to the public security and order (ibid.). For instance, according to the intelligence agencies in France, the Direction générale de la Sécurité intérieure (DGSI) and Renseignement Territorial (RT), more than two thousands environmental activists are classified as Fiché S, which corresponds to highest threshold of warning (ibid.). Alternatively, since his election as President in 2017, Emmanuel Macron has prioritised improving the intelligence service. This has been done notably through the creation of the Centre national de contre-terrorisme (CNCT), in English National Counter-Terrorism Center, and the increase in recruitment and funding for the security agency, the DGSI (ibid.). Innovations, which the government has deemed successful in stopping several terrorist attacks (ibid.). More recently, the associations have been threatened by the separatism law that was adopted in January 2022, which is aimed at religious separatism but that can be extended to other associations (ibid.). In fact, it allows for the dissolution of associations which could have violent acts against property or people, or be of any threat to the public order (ibid.).

In the same way, a growing number of prosecutions of environmental activists has occurred. For instance, this includes people who removed the President's, Emmanuel Macron, portraits in the city councils and were apprehended by the Bureau de lutte antiterroriste de la gendarmerie (Blat), translating to the gendarmerie counter-terrorism office (ibid.). This office took samples of the DNA of the activists and accused them of gang robbery, despite the absence of declaration of theft by the mayors and the fact that they left without taking the portraits (ibid.). Furthermore, fines have been used abundantly concerning environmental activists. Several of

these fines have been dismissed on the grounds of freedom of expression by the justice system but this process takes time and money (ibid.).

Overall, in the last few years, there has been a growing targeting of the environmental activists in France, notably through the expansion of terrorism and public security legislation, as well as the introduction of ecoterrorism in the discourse of the French government.

1.2 Research problem, question and aim

While terrorism and public security legislation have expanded in France over the last decade, the use of terrorism rhetoric to refer to environmental movements, particularly in the discourse of the French government, is relatively new. Indeed, the actions of the environmental activists, in particular the SLT collective, in Sainte Soline in October 2022, triggered the use of the term ecoterrorism by the Minister of the Interior to refer to environmental movements and some of their actions. Since then, the term has been used by the different members of the government and has made its way into French public discourse. The use of terrorism rhetoric by the USA government to target environmental movements was one of the primary conditions for the emergence of the Green Scare in the USA, as developed in the Theoretical framework Chapter. Therefore, one can wonder if the same applies for France. In addition, the absence of research concerning the discourse relating to ecoterrorism in France, as demonstrated in my Literature review Chapter, makes study of this topic important.

As follows, the question which I am interested in is: to what extent has a Green Scare emerged in France over the last two years?

In this sense, the aim of the study is to see the extent to which there has been an emergence of a Green Scare in France, from 2022 to 2024, through the study of the discourse held by the French government, regarding the SLT collective and their portrayal since their involvement in the Sainte Soline mega basin events. Accordingly, this study aims to expand the phenomenon of the Green Scare to a new context. This will be done through the use of discourse analysis and the Discourse of Fear theory.

1.3 Relevance to socio legal research

According to the literature review I conducted, there is an absence of academic research on the Green Scare phenomenon and the use of ecoterrorism outside the USA and the beginning of the twenty-first century. This thesis helps to fill this gap by looking into how ecoterrorism has been developed in the public discourse in France from 2022 to 2024 and how this could highlight the emergence of a Green Scare. This is relevant to socio legal research as the qualification of the actions of SLT in Sainte Soline as ecoterrorism raises several questions which concern both the law, society and their relation. Firstly, this thesis brings forward an example of the law in action, that is how the terrorist and internal security legislation has been applied in France, notably to dissolve the SLT collective. Secondly, this study raises questions regarding the use of the term ecoterrorism in the discourse while there is no legal basis, which is especially important when qualification affects the sentences. Thirdly, the creation of a threat to public order that could justify actions such as the dissolution of an association is intriguing and relevant to sociology of law. Finally, this thesis is relevant to socio legal research as it expands the understanding of the phenomenon of the Green Scare in order to introduce it to new contexts, notably by providing conditions for its assessment.

1.4 Delimitation

In order to ensure clarity in this study, I will define the boundaries of this thesis, while the limitations of these boundaries will be discussed further in the Methodology Chapter. This study took on a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative approach, using discourse analysis, in order to get a better understanding of the subject within its original context. In addition, in this study, I only considered the emergence of a Green Scare in France over the last two years, beginning in October 2022 with the government's first use of ecoterrorism and ending in March 2024. Furthermore, in this study, I concentrated on specific actors, namely the French government and the SLT collective. Finally, I analysed the empirical material through the lens of the Discourse of Fear theory.

1.5 Outline

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The Introduction Chapter serves to discuss the background and the research problem, question, and aim. In addition, this Chapter provides information about the study's relevance to social legal research, as well as its delimitation. Following, the Literature review Chapter examines the previous literature on the topic. Subsequently, the Methodology Chapter, serves to describe the research design, empirical material, method, as well as questions about reflexivity, validity, and reliability, generalisation, ethical considerations and my positionality. Then the Theoretical framework Chapter serves to present the concept of Green Scare developed by Potter as well as the theory of Discourse of Fear developed by Altheide. Furthermore, the Analysis and Discussion Chapter discusses the analysis of the empirical material and connects these findings to the rest of the thesis. Finally, the thesis concludes with the Concluding remarks Chapter. Additionally, this thesis includes a Reference list, divided into categories of sources.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

According to Banakar (2019), the literature review is an essential component of conducting research. It provides a general understanding of the academic literature on the topic of interest or on literature with theoretical or empirical similarities (ibid.). As a result, it helps identify the theories and methodologies that have been used in related studies, as well as areas of academic consensus or disagreement (ibid.). It also aids in the identification of knowledge gaps that the current research can help fill (ibid.). As follows, I conducted a literature review in order to get a general understanding of the academic literature on the topic of ecoterrorism and the discourse surrounding it, in the French context, with the goal of identifying potential knowledge gaps in the literature that could be addressed in this thesis.

In order to conduct the literature review, I searched *Lubsearch* and *Web of Science* for peer-reviewed articles on the subject, considering both French and English literature. In the early stages of my literature review, I discovered that there were few to no scholarly articles on ecoterrorism and France. Indeed, while ecoterrorism has become a recent topic of interest for

popular articles, this interest has not been translated into the conduct of scholarly research. For example, popular articles about SLT and their portrayal as ecoterrorists have been assessed by traditional left-wing media such as *Le Monde* and *Libération*, as well as traditional right-wing media such as *Valeurs Actuelles* and *Le Figaro*, and finally environmental media such as *Reporterre* (Truong, 2023; Celnik, 2022; Maillot, 2023; Bastié, 2022; Quentel, 2023). In order to overcome this lack of scholarly research on ecoterrorism in France, I started off by researching the literature on ecoterrorism, followed by the literature on France and terrorism, with the goal of connecting my findings and assessing the literature related to my topic.

As follows, this Chapter will be divided into two sections: a first one on ecoterrorism and a second on terrorism in France. Following these sections, a summary of the findings will be provided, linking the Literature Review to the rest of the thesis. In addition, each section will describe the selection process, the methods and theories applied in the literature as well as the main themes covered.

2.2 Ecoterrorism

For this section, I searched for the terms "ecoterrorism", "eco-terrorism" and "eco terrorism" as well as related or opposing terms such as "ecotage" and "ecosabotage". In addition, I researched the terms "legislation", "legitimacy", "civil disobedience" and "discourse". Based on the findings from the initial terms, other terms such as "rhetoric" and "resistance" were added. I then screened the articles based on their titles, abstracts, and body of text in order to find the articles that were pertinent, which amounted to eighteen.

It is important to note that the term ecoterrorism originated in the USA; correspondingly, the majority of literature on the subject focuses on the USA, specifically the ELF and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) movements. In the same way, the majority of the literature on this topic focuses on the beginning of the twenty-first century, during the war on terror and a period defined as the Green Scare.

Within these relevant articles, several articles did not explicitly state the theories and methods used, but the most frequently mentioned method was quantitative and qualitative content analysis, specifically of mass media (Sumner and Weidman, 2013; Monaghan and da

Silva, 2023; Joosse, 2012; Wagner, 2008; Sorenson, 2009). Other methods discussed in the literature include conflict analysis (Loadenthal, 2013), qualitative and quantitative historical analysis (Loadenthal, 2016, 2017), textual analysis (Olson, 2018), and political and legal analysis (Balgimbekova et al., 2022). In terms of theory, several authors mentioned Altheide's Discourse of Fear (Wagner, 2008; Sorenson, 2009; Balgimbekova et al., 2022). In addition, Sorenson (2009) mentions theories of framing. Finally Loadenthal mentions the Insight theory (2013) as well as Foucault's Monarchical power (2016).

2.2.1 The terminology

Several articles on the topic of ecoterrorism concentrate on the terminology. Indeed, several scholars discuss the challenges associated with the term ecoterrorism as it is based on the unresolved definition of terrorism (Miller et al., 2008; Sumner and Weidman, 2013; Lovitz, 2007). While terrorism was developed in 1795 during the Reign of Terror that occurred during the French Revolution, there is still no universally accepted definition (Lovitz, 2007). For instance, at the national level, the American Federal law has nearly twenty different definitions, while at the global level, the member states of the United Nations Security Council can each have their own definition of the term based on their domestic legislative needs (ibid.). In addition, the reference to terrorism implies a certain violence. Yet, according to Hirsch-Hoefler and Mudde (2014), challengers of the term question the implication of violence and terror in the term ecoterrorism, which is difficult for them to achieve because the actions target property rather than people. As follows, there is a general consensus in the literature that in most cases the actions carried out by environmental activists match more to ecotage or sabotage that ecoterrorism (ibid.; Vanderheiden, 2005, 2008; Balgimbekova et al., 2022; Beck, 2007). Terminology is an important issue because it affects legal qualifications. Indeed, the question of whether an act constitutes ecoterrorism can have serious consequences, particularly for criminal proceedings, as discussed by Balgimbekova et al. (2022).

Yet, despite the challenges associated with this term, ecoterrorism has gained a certain popularity. Indeed, Smith (2008) and Sumner and Weidman (2013), through the study of mass media in the USA, find that the term ecoterrorism has gained widespread acceptance as a result of the advocacy of industry groups, government declarations, and mass media coverage.

Similarly, these scholars briefly discuss the consequences of this widespread acceptance, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs, but include increased investigation and surveillance, as well as increased penalties and sentencing for activists and environmental movements (ibid.). Nevertheless, according to Hirsch-Hoefler and Mudde (2014) and Monaghan and da Silva (2023), the term ecoterrorism is rarely used in public discourse outside of the USA. This could explain why there is so little academic literature on ecoterrorism in France.

2.2.2 How the term has been used

As mentioned in the introduction of the literature review, the articles related to ecoterrorism have the particularity of emerging from the USA, in the beginning of the twenty-first century. As a result, the context of the war on terror which occurred at that time is mentioned by several of the authors. In the same way, multiple authors such as Pellow (2023), Loadenthal (2013) and Olson (2018) mention the presence of the Green Scare which occurred at that time. This expression makes reference to the Red Scares that occurred in the beginning and middle of the twentieth century, targeting communist people, but this time concerning environmental activists, through the use of the term ecoterrorism and ecoterrorists (ibid.). In this sense, these activists are depicted as the main enemy of the state (Pellow, 2023). With this in mind, other scholars delved deeper into the use of language through rhetoric, framing and labelling and the consequences it had for environmental activists, as developed in the following paragraphs.

Indeed, several authors, including Monaghan and da Silva (2023), Loadenthal (2013) and Sumner and Weidman (2013) discuss the issue of framing in relation to ecoterrorism. According to Monaghan and da Silva (2023), framing occurs when the media chooses how to describe an event, through language, pictures, and so on. This can then influence the public's understanding, interpretation, and judgement of the event (ibid.). Sumner and Weidman (2013) emphasise the power of language in framing, particularly through a reference to Burke, who claims that language is never unbiased because it always excludes and includes certain aspects of reality. According to Loadenthal (2016), for the state, the mobilisation of environmental movements can be a threat to the neoliberal principles, such as private property for example. As a consequence, the government may use framing to eliminate them (ibid.). In the context of the war on terror in

the USA that occurred in the early 2000s, Vanderheiden (2005) points out how the terrorism rhetoric served to address not only terrorists but also actors acting against the war, globalisation, or climate change. For instance, the ELF was described by the FBI as the biggest domestic terrorist threat (ibid.). It is important to note that several authors, including Vanderheiden (2008) recall that Ron Arnold, a member of the CDFE, an open anti-environmental think tank, coined the term ecoterrorism.

Joosse (2012) stands out as the only one to investigate how framing occurs on both sides, through the lens of definitional wars. Indeed, he discusses the involvement of actors such as the FBI and corporations on one side versus members of ELF on the other, in the media's portrayal of ELF (ibid.). For instance, the author notes the work of the CDFE, through the use of terms such as ecoterrorism, to frame ELF as a terrorist collective (ibid.). Beck (2007) refers to this narrative implicitly when discussing activists' struggle for legitimacy, arguing that their actions qualify as civil disobedience rather than terrorism.

The majority of scholars who discuss framing, labelling, and rhetoric evaluate their role in terms of legitimacy (e.g. Beck, 2007; Vanderheiden, 2005, 2008; Wagner, 2008; Olson, 2018; Loadenthal, 2013; Joosse, 2012; Sorenson, 2009; Monaghan and da Silva, 2023). As a matter of fact, there is a consensus that these techniques are used by the government in order to gain legitimacy (ibid.). For instance, through the study of animal rights movements, Sorenson (2009) holds that the terrorism rhetoric is used by the media, the government, animal exploitation industries, lobbies and so on, to deligitimise and stigmatise environmental activists as it refers back to the 11th of September 2001 attacks in the USA.

2.2.3 The consequences

Several authors, including Smith (2008), Sumner and Weidman (2013) and Vanderheiden (2008), point out that the qualification of terrorism has significant impacts for the people being identified as the perpetrators including increased investigation and surveillance, as well as increased penalties and sentencing for activists and environmental movements. Concerning the preventive measures, Loadenthal (2013) points out an increase in surveillance that is also made possible through the implementation of laws targeting the environmental activists, mentioning the examples of the *Animal Enterprise Protection Act* of 1992 and the *Animal Enterprise*

Terrorism Act of 2006, in the American context. Concerning the repressive measures, Varderheinden (2008) specifies that this affects both formal procedures, as with higher sentencing, and informal procedures as with harsher treatment and overall discrimination within the sentencing and detention process. Overall, as highlighted by Loadenthal (2016), these preventive and repressive measures can have consequences for the advocacy of activists, dissuading them for fear of repercussions.

2.2.4 Summary

This section, which assessed the literature on ecoterrorism, shows that the topic has been largely discussed in the USA, particularly in the early 2000s in a period of the war on terror and the Green Scare. The literature features several points of agreement between the scholars. Firstly, they agree that there are challenges associated with an unresolved definition of terrorism and therefore with the terminology of ecoterrorism. Second, they agree that ecoterrorism has been used in labelling, framing, and rhetorical techniques, which most authors believe serve the government's legitimacy. Overall, it seems like they all agree that the association with terrorism can be very harmful because it holds a lot of power in shaping the perception of these environmental movements, especially when it is used so soon after the 11th of September attacks. In the same way, the association with terrorism can lead to the application of harsher preventive and repressive measures, as discussed by several authors.

2.3 Terrorism in France

For this section, I searched for the terms "terrorism", "civil disobedience" (as well as "désobéissance civile"), "France" and "legislation". I then proceeded to screen the articles in the same manner as in the first section, evaluating titles, abstracts, and finally the body of the texts, and found nine articles relevant to the subject. It is important to note that out of these nine articles, three of them are based on a comparison of France's approach to terrorism to another country, including the United Kingdom (Prugneau, 2020), Israël (Feinberg, 2018) and the USA (Dück and Lucke, 2019).

Within these articles, several did not explicitly state the theories and methods used. Yet, the methods mentioned in the literature include interviews (Faucher and Boussaguet, 2018), thematic analysis and content analysis (Bogain, 2017) as well as discourse analysis (Faucher and Boussaguet, 2018; Dück and Lucke, 2019). In the same way, the theories mentioned include Securitisation (Dück and Lucke, 2019), Critical Discourse Analysis (Bogain, 2017), and a combination of State of Exception, Enemy Penology and Pre Crime as part of the Critical Terrorism Studies (De Massol De Rebetz and Van Der Woud, 2020).

Even though the academic community has not evaluated the topic of ecoterrorism in France, the topic of terrorism has received a lot of attention in the last decade. More specifically, the response of the government to the terrorist attacks of 2015 has received particular attention.

2.3.1 Rhetoric and Discourse

Bogain (2017) focused on the discourse and in particular the use of discursive legitimation strategies employed by the French executive in order to justify a war on terror approach to the events of 2015. The author divided these discursive strategies in three categories: authorisation, moralisation and rationalisation (ibid.). This included an emphasis on French exceptionalism, notably through the reference of France as the country of human rights which needed to be safeguarded from the terrorist Other (ibid.). Alternatively, Faucher and Boussaguet (2018) and Dück and Lucke (2019) assessed the use of rhetoric by the executive power. On one hand, Faucher and Boussaguet (2018) focused on the use of symbols in the creation of this rhetoric, notably to give the impression that their handling of the events had helped to bring the country together. On the other hand, Dück and Lucke (2019) focused on the executive's war on terror rhetoric, which led to a process of securitisation which helped justify the French executive's use of exceptional measures. Like Bogain (2017), Dück and Lucke (2019) also examined how French exceptionalism had been employed in this justification strategy. Finally, Dück and Lucke (2019) have contributed to the literature by criticising the use of this rhetoric, warning against the possibility of abuses concerning these exceptional measures, as well as their normalisation.

2.3.2 The state of exception and the normalisation of special measures

Feinberg (2018) highlights the number of exceptional measures that the application of the state of emergency in 2015 made possible including house arrests, house searches, curfews, security and protection areas and so on. This aspect is also highlighted by other scholars such as Rodopoulos (2016), Prugneau (2020), and De Massol De Rebetz and Van Der Woud (2020). In particular these scholars take note of the normalisation of the exceptional measures that have been achieved through their integration into legislation. Indeed, in response to the terrorist attacks that occurred in France over the last decade, a state of emergency was not only declared in 2015 but extended five times before becoming permanent legislation through the adoption of two laws, *Law reinforcing the fight against organised crime, terrorism and its financing* in 2016 and *Law reinforcing internal security and the fight against terrorism* in 2017 (De Massol De Rebetz and Van Der Woud, 2020). The implementation of these laws allows for more exceptional measures, which tend to have a preventive logic, to deal with people who are described as a threat to national security (ibid.). Scholars such as Rodopoulos (2016) argue that while these measures may be justified in times of true emergency, they may be problematic when normalised. Rodopoulos attributes this normalisation to insufficient judicial safeguards, as well as contested definitions of terrorism and organised crime (ibid.). Indeed, he believes that the lack of a clear definition of these crimes allows them to be applied in a wider range of situations (ibid.). Other scholars discuss the concept of terrorism and the growing preemptive logic of terrorist legislation, as detailed in the following paragraph.

2.3.3 Criminal law: from repression to prevention

Le Monnier de Gouville (2021) discusses the definition of terrorism, which is found in Article 421-1 of the French Penal Code, and notes that it does not require that the goal sought by the acts be achieved, therefore it is more focused on the threat of harm rather than the harm committed. As follows, the legislation and measures relating to terrorism have emerged in relation to this perceived threat. As a consequence, the author notes a trend in the recent terrorist legislation which derives from the initial repressive goal of criminal law to a preventive one (ibid.). Guérin (2017) agrees with Le Monnier de Gouville on this point, highlighting the

growing number of preventive measures, such as enhanced surveillance and proactive investigations, which can sometimes come at the expense of individual rights. Furthermore, Guérin (2017) discusses the implications for jurisdictions, as there has been a shift from criminal to administrative jurisdiction, as preventing violations of public order is typically handled by administrative authorities overseen by administrative courts as part of administrative policing.

2.3.4 Summary

This section, which assessed the literature on terrorism in France, shows that some authors have discussed the use of rhetorical strategies to justify special measures after the terrorist attacks of 2015. However, several authors agree that these measures went through a normalisation process after being incorporated into legislation following the state of emergency period. As follows, France has enacted extensive anti-terrorism and internal security legislation, allowing for a wide range of measures that some authors believe will expand the preventive nature of criminal law.

2.4 Summary

It follows, from both sections, that while the discourse concerning ecoterrorism has received much attention in the USA it has not had the same impact in France. Therefore, studying the emergence of this term in the discourse could contribute greatly to the existing literature. In addition, as stated in the second section, France has largely expanded its anti terrorist and internal security legislation in the last decade. Yet this legislation was not developed with the intention of countering environmental movements. Therefore, the recent application of this legislation and the discourse upholding this practice in the last two years makes it interesting to study to what extent there has been an emergence of a Green Scare in France. It also makes it fitting to make use of the Discourse of Fear which was mentioned by some of the authors focusing on mass media and the emergence of the Green Scare in the USA in the early 2000s.

3. Methodology

In this Chapter, I will discuss the methodology, or, as Della Porta and Keating (2008) put it, the manner in which the methods were employed in the research. This includes a presentation of the research design, empirical material, method, as well as questions about reflexivity, validity, and reliability, generalisation and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

In order to assess the extent to which there has been an emergence of a Green Scare in France over the last two years, this thesis took on a qualitative approach. This approach seeks to interpret and make sense of issues based on how people assign meaning to them, allowing researchers to think of issues in their natural surroundings (ibid.). As follows, the emphasis on context in this approach made it particularly appropriate for studying this case. Furthermore, this thesis took on a deductive approach, analysing the empirical material employing a previously established theoretical framework, in this case the Discourse of Fear developed by Altheide (Flick, 2018). Moreover, this thesis adopted a social constructionist ontological stance and anti realist epistemological stance, in accordance with the use of discourse analysis (Bryman, 2016). The adoption of this epistemological stance was consistent with the rejection of the existence of an objective external reality, arguing that reality is shaped by the researcher's construction and preconceptions (ibid.). In the same way, the adoption of this ontological stance was consistent with the belief that discourse and, more broadly, reality are socially constructed (ibid.).

3.2 Empirical material

This section will describe both the procedure of selection and the empirical material. Sampling, in qualitative research, refers to the selection of empirical data for the purpose of the research (Mason, 2018). This thesis made use of purposive sampling, a strategic mode of sampling in which the cases are selected based on their relevance to the research question (Bryman, 2016). More specifically, I used fixed purposive sampling, which means that the sample varied little during the research process since it was fixed in the early stages in relation to the research question (ibid.). Similarly, I used a priori purposive sampling, which means that I

established the criteria for selection in the early stages of the research process and kept them the same (ibid.). It is important to note that this sampling strategy had some disadvantages, which will be discussed below in the section on reflexivity, validity, reliability, and generalisability.

In accordance with this sampling strategy, I focused my study on the French government and their stance regarding the SLT collective, notably through the employment of the term ecoterrorism. In this sense, I chose to focus on the discourse, rather than the repressive or preventive measures, such as the arrests of the activists. Furthermore, I chose to limit my data sources to the period beginning in October 2022, with the first demonstration of SLT in Sainte Soline, and ending in March 2024. The focus on the discourse and a specific time period allowed for a wide range of data that was deemed sufficient for the analysis, all the while remaining feasible for the thesis. The SLT collective was chosen as an example of a French environmental movement with national significance. The French government was chosen based on the criteria developed for assessing a Green Scare, as outlined in the Theoretical framework Chapter. Within the French government, the Minister of the Interior received special attention as he is in charge of ensuring the security of people and property, as well as the maintenance of public order through the police and gendarmes (Ministère de l'Intérieur et des Outre-mer, no date). As a result, the interventions of the Minister of the Interior were used as the main source, but they were completed by interventions from other members of the government, including the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty (later referred to as the Minister of Agriculture), the Minister of Health and Prevention (later referred to as the Minister of Health) and the Minister of Ecological Transition. One of the benefits of studying the statements that were given by these various members of the government was to see the coherence of the discourse within the government.

In this thesis, I used several sources of pre-existing data, all of which were public and officially recognised. These sources included document-based sources as well as audio and visual-based sources, with the latter being mostly used when the interventions were not transcribed and I had to transcribe them myself. Altogether, I made use of fifteen interviews, held by nine different radio stations, in which the government members shared their opinion regarding the events of Sainte Soline and the involvement of the SLT collective. I also used seven questions addressed to the government in the Senate. Finally, I made use of three auditions

of the Minister of the Interior, two in front of the Senate and one in front of the National Assembly. The combination of interventions in the Parliament and in radio stations allowed me to uncover the government's discourse across multiple mediums and targeting various audiences. In addition, I made use of four legal documents, two of which were issued by the government, the *Circular on the judicial handling of offences committed in the context of disputes over land development projects* (2022) and the *Decree dissolving a de facto grouping* (2023). The other two legal documents which were used were court cases held by the Conseil d'État and while they do not form part of the government's discourse they were used as they related to the dissolution of the SLT collective which was enacted by the government. These document-based sources and audio and visual-based sources can be found in the table below.

Table 1: Empirical Material for analysis

Document	Title	Date	Type	Speaker/Author
1	Statement by Mr Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories, on the violence that occurred in Sainte-Soline on 25 March 2023 during a demonstration opposing the construction of a basin, in the Senate on 5 April 2023 (author's translation)	05 April 2023	Hearing in the Senate	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
2	Activism by the association Les Soulèvements de la Terre against market gardening (author's translation)	15 June 2023	Topical question to the government	Olivier Veran, Minister of Health and Prevention
3	Violences during the demonstrations (author's translation)	30 March 2023	Topical question to the government	Elisabeth Borne, Prime Minister
4	Situation in Sainte Soline (author's translation)	30 March 2023	Topical question to the government	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
5	Illegal demonstration in Sainte Soline (author's translation)	03 November 2022	Topical question to the government	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories

6	Illegal demonstration in Sainte Soline (author's translation)	03 November 2022	Topical question to the government	Elisabeth Borne, Prime Minister
7	Law and order doctrine (author's translation)	30 March 2023	Topical question to the government	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
8	Megabasins (author's translation)	03 November 2022	Topical question to the government	Christophe Béchu, Minister of Ecological Transition
9	Commission on Constitutional Laws, Legislation and General Administration of the Republic (author's translation)	05 April 2023	Hearing in the National Assembly	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
10	Commission of Inquiry into the structuring, financing, means and methods of action of small groups responsible for violence during the demonstrations and gatherings that took place between 16 March and 3 May 2023, as well as on the conduct of these demonstrations and gatherings (author's translation)	05 October 2023	Hearing in the National Assembly	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
11	Interview with Mr Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories, on the demonstrations against pension reform, purchasing power, public order, immigration, politics and institutional reform, on LCI on 18 April 2023 (author's translation)	18 April 2023	Interview by LCI	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
12	Interview with Gérald Darmanin, Minister for the Interior and Overseas Territories, on RMC/BFMTV on 4 November 2022, on the controversy surrounding the SOS Méditerranée boat carrying migrants, immigration policy and the violent incidents in Sainte-Soline against a proposed water retention basin (author's translation)	04 November 2022	Interview by RMC/BFMTV	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
13	Interview with Mr Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories, on 2 May 2023 on BFMTV, on the violence against the police during the 1 May demonstrations, the attitude of La	02 May 2023	Interview by BFMTV	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories

	France insoumise, the anti-breakers law, pension reform and statements by Marine Le Pen (author's translation)			
14	Interview with Mr Christophe Béchu, Minister for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, on 10 November 2023 on France Info, concerning flooding in the Pas-de-Calais département, the state of the water table, the Soulèvements de la Terre, the Polar Summit and the demonstration against anti-Semitism (author's translation)	10 November 2023	Interview by France Info	Christophe Béchu, Minister of Ecological Transition
15	Interview with Mr Marc Fesneau, Minister for Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, on France Bleu Berry on 21 June 2023, on the damage caused by storms in the Cher region, farmers faced with global warming and the dissolution of the Soulèvements de la terre (author's translation)	21 June 2023	Interview by France Bleu Berry	Marc Fesneau, Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty
16	Press conference given by Mr Olivier Véran, Minister Delegate for Democratic Renewal and Government Spokesman, on a new Global Financial Pact, the National Council for Youth Renewal, the Public Finance Programming Act, the dissolution of the group Les Soulèvements de la terre, and a draft ordinance to supplement the Government's action against corporate tax fraud, Paris, 21 June 2023 (author's translation)	21 June 2023	Press conference following the Council of Ministers	Olivier Veran, Minister of Health and Prevention
17	Demonstration in Sainte-Soline: Gérald Darmanin's speech in full (author's translation)	30 October 2022	Speech by Gérald Darmanin, collected by BFMTV	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
18	Sainte-Soline: Gérald Darmanin's press briefing in full (author's translation)	5 March 2023	Speech by Gérald Darmanin, collected by BFMTV	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
19	Darmanin supports the police forces involved in Sainte-Soline (author's translation)	05 April 2023	Interview by RMC	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories

20	Ecoterrorism: "It's the right terminology", explains Marc Fesneau (author's translation)	31 October 2022	Interview by RMC	Marc Fesneau, Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty
21	Mega-basins in Sainte-Soline: the Minister of Agriculture calls for "calm" (author's translation)	25 March 2023	Interview by France Inter	Marc Fesneau, Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty
22	Sainte-Soline: the full interview with the Minister for Agriculture, Marc Fesneau, on BFMTV (author's translation)	25 March 2023	Interview by BFMTV	Marc Fesneau, Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty
23	Gérald Darmanin in the Grand Rendez-Vous Europe 1 CNEWS on 2 April 2023 (in full) (author's translation)	03 April 2023	Interview by Europe 1	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
24	Sainte-Soline: Gérald Darmanin initiates the dissolution of the "Soulèvement de la Terre" (author's translation)	28 March 2023	Speech at the National Assembly	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
25	Gérald Darmanin to present "the decree of dissolution of the Soulèvements de la Terre" | AFP Excerpt (author's translation)	20 June 2023	Speech at the National Assembly	Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories
26	Circular dated 9 Nov 2022 on the judicial handling of offences committed in the context of disputes over land development projects (author's translation)	09 November 2022	Legal document (circular)	Eric Dupond-Moretti, Minister of Justice
27	Decree of 21 June 2023 dissolving a de facto grouping (author's translation)	21 June 2023	Legal document (decree)	Ministry of the Interior and Overseas Territories
28	Conseil d'État, Judge hearing the application for interim measures, collegiate formation, 11/08/2023, 476385, limited to the recueil Lebon - Légifrance (author's translation)	11 August 2023	Legal document (decision)	Conseil d'État, Judge hearing the application for interim measures, collegiate formation
29	Conseil d'État, Section, 09/11/2023, 476384, Published in the recueil Lebon (author's translation)	09 November 2023	Legal document (decision)	Conseil d'État, Section

3.3 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis was used both as a method for data collection and analysis, in order to respond to the research question. Unlike other qualitative and quantitative methods, discourse analysis allows a more in-depth understanding of how language constructs the social world,

rather than viewing language as just an instrument to understanding it (Bryman, 2016). Discourse can be defined as the way an object is described and how that description shapes our understanding of that object (ibid.). This method is based on the assumption that language is a performative and utilitarian medium of communication, rather than an objective, neutral one (Rapley, 2007). This means that discourse is used by people to achieve objectives; it is action-oriented (Bryman, 2016). In this sense, discourse analysis seeks to understand how language is employed in specific instances (Rapley, 2007). As follows, in this thesis, discourse analysis was used in order to understand how language was employed, by the French government, in relation to the SLT collective and their participation in the events of Sainte Soline. In addition, it was used to determine the contribution of specific language, such as ecoterrorism, in the emergence of a Green Scare. Furthermore, the social construction influence of discourse analysis allowed me to take a critical approach to overlooked aspects such as practices and language (Bryman, 2016). In practice, this entailed conducting a critical analysis of the empirical material I selected, questioning what was described, how it was described, and what was left out from these sources. Using a Foucauldian approach, discourse analysis allowed me to observe how discourses contributed to the formation and reinforcement of specific identities (Rapley, 2007). This was essential to analyse the portrayal of environmental activists as the perpetrators. In the same way, discourse analysis allowed me to see how specific arguments and rhetorics were constructed in the discourse and how they were presented (ibid.).

In this approach, analysis is an ongoing process, from the choice of topic, selection of data to writing of findings and conclusions (Rapley, 2007). Indeed, I recognise that deciding which sources to use and which units to include or exclude from analysis was part of the analysis process. This is especially true given that I used purposive sampling to select my empirical material, based on what would be most useful in order to respond to my research question. In addition, I understand that the writing process was included in the analysis because it required interpretation and decision-making.

After selecting the empirical material, I transferred it to Nvivo14, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis tool that helped me organise my data using codes (Bryman, 2016). The material was coded according to the themes and subthemes that I developed in relation to Discourse of Fear theory, as described in the Theoretical framework Chapter. In this regard, I

read through the various documents several times, questioning them and looking for examples of how the Theory's themes and subthemes were applied in practice. During this process, I took note of the possibility of context loss and data fragmentation (ibid.). In this sense, I preferred coding through sentences over words because it was critical to consider the context, especially given its importance within the discourse analysis method.

3.4 Reflexivity, validity, reliability, and generalisability

Validity and reliability are enhanced when the findings are clearly based on empirical data (Rapley, 2007). This can be accomplished by being open about the nature of the material used, as well as how it was collected and analysed (ibid.). It could also be done by using quotes from the original sources or by thoroughly reviewing and re-examining the findings with the material (ibid.). Furthermore, transparency, particularly regarding the criteria for exclusion and inclusion of units for analysis, improves validity and reliability (Bryman, 2016). Throughout my research, I followed these recommendations. This entailed including a section describing the collection and selection process of the empirical material, as well as the method of analysis. It also included the mention of the use of Nvivo14 to organise and code my data. Furthermore, the use of officially recognised sources and the inclusion of the original version of the quotes in the analysis helped to strengthen the validity and reliability of this thesis by allowing the reader to access these sources and ensure there are no unexpected developments such as data fabrication.

In the same way, validity and reliability are enhanced through a clear and reflexive approach to the production of knowledge (Rapley, 2007). Reflexive research involves a critical assessment of the researcher's positionality and how it influences the production of knowledge (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). While I included a section on positionality, further on in this Chapter, I recognise that reflexivity is a continuous active procedure throughout all stages of the research (ibid.). In this sense, I submitted my position to a continuous evaluation, recognising the possible influence that my personal and educational background could have on this research. Furthermore, the significance of language in the process of cross-language research is frequently overlooked (Flick, 2018). As follows, I deemed it essential to mention the practice of cross-language research, as my data was in French and my overall research was in English. In

addition, it was critical to consider the relationship between language and meaning formation (ibid.). As well as critically thinking about how the interpretation and translation processes influenced each other during the research process (ibid.). Similarly, I note that the transcription of audio and visual materials is always partial and requires choice making (Rapley, 2007).

Finally, the validity and reliability of a research is also done by recognising the limitations of said research (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). As follows, I recognise the limitations concerning the generalisability of this thesis. Indeed, researchers have the responsibility to generalise properly meaning they must assess the degree to which their research and findings can lead to broader conclusions (Mason, 2018). For instance, I acknowledge that the use of purposive sampling as opposed to representative sampling reduces my ability to draw broader conclusions. Furthermore, I note that this research is contextual and temporal specific, focusing on France during a specific period of two years, which may limit its applicability to other contexts or times. In the same way, I recognise the limitations of focusing solely on discourse, yet, as previously mentioned, this was done for the analysis to be within reach.

3.5 Ethical considerations

The conduct of an ethical research requires transparency, honesty and integrity (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). Upholding these qualities was achieved in part by using publicly available empirical data and being transparent in this Chapter about the various stages of the research. Another essential component of ethical research is the avoidance of causing harm while conducting research (ibid.; Rapley, 2007). Hence, to limit the possibility of harm of this research to the participants, I made specific decisions regarding their identification. Indeed, rather than naming specific individuals, I chose to refer to the SLT collective as a whole. In parallel, the members of the government whose speeches or interventions were used in this thesis were addressed by function rather than name. While it is undeniable that these members are public figures who understand the pressures of being in the public sphere and scrutinised, this decision was made to emphasise that they spoke as part of their function rather than as individuals.

3.6 Positionality

The choices relating to the subject and approach taken while conducting research are influenced by our interests and viewpoints (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). Being critical about how these decisions were made improves the overall quality of the research (ibid.). When conducting this thesis, I strived for objectivity and reliability, while still being aware that my personal and educational background may have influenced the research process and results. Indeed, I understand that having grown up in France and witnessed firsthand the expansion and normalisation of anti-terrorist and internal security legislation may have had an impact on this study. Furthermore, I acknowledge that witnessing the growing repression of environmental activists and activists in general inspired me to conduct this research, as did my interest in environmental issues. I recognise that my educational background in law may shape the way I approached this study. Overall, I aimed to take note of my own biases and assumptions in order to limit their impact on the research.

In this thesis, I addressed the members of SLT as environmental activists. This choice was based on the broad definition of activism. Indeed, an environmental activist, according to the Collins English Dictionary, is someone who takes action in order to achieve political or social change in relation to the environment, specifically its preservation (no date). As this term does not restrict itself to a certain type of action, like demonstrations for example, I believe it was fitting for the thesis.

4. Theoretical framework

In this Chapter, I will discuss the theoretical framework of this research. This entails describing the theory and concepts that were used in this research, as well as how they were used. In order to determine the extent to which there has been an emergence of a Green Scare in France over the last two years, I took on a deductive approach, as described in the Methodology Chapter, which entailed analysing my empirical material using a pre-existing theoretical framework. In this sense, I will develop Potter's Green Scare before developing Altheide's Discourse of Fear theory as well as how they were used for this thesis.

4.1 The Green Scare

Potter (2009) coined the term "Green Scare" to describe the corporations and the United States government's stance towards environmental and animal rights movements in the early 2000s. It refers back to the Red Scare of the 1940s and 1950s, when the USA government used legislation, repressive measures, blacklisting, and other tactics to target communists (ibid). The novelty of the Green Scare is the use of terrorism rhetoric to disseminate fear and discourage future actions by environmental and animal rights activists (ibid.). As follows, the USA government was able to portray these movements as the number one domestic terrorism threat, through a war on terrorism rhetoric in which anyone who did not express clear opposition to the movements' actions was an enemy of the state and a terrorist (ibid.). The Green Scare came about, according to Potter, as a way to protect corporate interests and more generally the American capitalist way of life, all while instilling fear and distrust towards these movements to limit future actions and the expression of dissent (ibid.).

For Potter, the Green Scare occurs at multiple levels, including legal, legislative, and extralegal (ibid.). On a legal level, the Green Scare has resulted in the expansion of the terrorist definition in order to impose harsher sentences on activists (ibid.). Indeed, in addition to portraying activists as terrorists in public discourse, the term "terrorism" was used in courts to increase their penalties (ibid.). According to Potter, the use of this term in courts to prosecute property crimes has political implications, as terrorism typically refers to harm to human life rather than property (ibid.). On the legislative level, the Green Scare manifests itself through an increase in terrorism legislation or legislation targeting environmental or animal rights activists, as it was the case in the USA with the adoption of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in 2006 (ibid.). Finally, on an extralegal level, the Green Scare manifests itself through fear-mongering campaigns and the portrayal of activists as terrorists in the media (ibid.). This, in turn, helps to legitimise further actions against these activists, particularly surveillance (ibid.).

While multiple researchers have discussed the Green Scare phenomenon, including Potter (2009), Pellow (2023), Loadenthal (2013), and Olson (2018), these articles focus on the United States and the beginning of the twenty-first century, when and where the phenomenon emerged. Thus, according to my assessment of the academic literature, bringing this phenomenon to a new

context, that is to a different time and place, such as France from 2022 to 2024, had never been done before. As a consequence, in order to broaden the phenomenon of *the* Green Scare to *a* Green Scare, conditions for its assessment needed to be developed. As follows, in accordance with Potter's description of the Green Scare, I developed seven conditions for the qualification of a Green Scare which I have compiled into the following table for convenience.

Table 2: Conditions for a Green Scare

Phenomenon	Conditions	Necessary or sufficient
Green Scare	Government/corporate hostility	Sufficient
	Targeting environmental or animal movements	Sufficient
	Terrorism rhetoric	Sufficient
	Expansion of the terrorism definition	Necessary
	Expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation	Necessary
	Dissemination of fear	Necessary
	Public distrust for environmental or animal movements	Neither necessary nor sufficient

In this Table, the different conditions were qualified as necessary, sufficient or neither necessary nor sufficient. The necessary conditions correspond to the conditions that are necessary for a Green Scare to occur whereas the sufficient conditions are the conditions that guarantee the occurrence of a Green Scare. While the sufficient conditions guarantee the occurrence of the phenomenon, they rely on the necessary conditions to be fulfilled. Furthermore, the neither necessary nor sufficient condition corresponds to the condition that does not need to be fulfilled for the phenomenon to occur, but that can influence the phenomenon.

The first three conditions, namely government/corporate hostility, the targeting of environmental and animal movements and terrorism rhetoric, were chosen and qualified as sufficient as they correspond to the main conditions of the Green Scare in accordance with the description of Potter. Indeed, the presence of government/corporate hostility was central in both

the qualification of the Red Scares as well as the Green Scare. In addition, the targeting of environmental and animal movements as well as the use of terrorism rhetoric are what distinguish the Green Scare from the Red Scares, as mentioned above. The presence of these three conditions enables the qualification of a Green Scare if and only if the necessary conditions are fulfilled. As follows, the next three conditions, namely the expansion of terrorism definition, the expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation and the dissemination of fear were qualified as necessary conditions. These conditions were chosen in accordance with the different levels in which the Green Scare occurred according to Potter, that is the legal, legislative, and extralegal. Finally, the last condition, public distrust for environmental or animal movements, was chosen and qualified as a neither sufficient nor necessary condition as it was mentioned in the Potter's description of the Green Scare as enhancing the phenomenon, but not as a necessity for the phenomenon to occur. In this sense, the presence of public distrust towards these movements can contribute to the reinforcement of a Green Scare but a Green Scare does not depend on it to exist.

These conditions and this table were used in the Analysis and Discussion Chapter of my thesis in order to respond to the research question and assess the emergence of a Green Scare in France in the last two years. Hence, I confronted the findings with the conditions. It is important to note that these conditions were assessed in relation to the discourse of the French government, for instance when evaluating the expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation, for instance, I focused on how the discourse mentioned this expansion, rather than looking at the legislation itself.

4.2 The Discourse of Fear

The way an event is described influences how the audience perceives it and whether they find it acceptable or not (Altheide, 2002). The Discourse of Fear makes use of framing, applying the frame of fear to choose how a certain issue is talked about, how it is done and what is omitted (Altheide, 2002). In this sense, this theory relies on a Foucauldian understanding of discourse. Indeed, for Foucault (1967), the study of discourse is a critique in which the hidden content is discovered, and that focuses on representation, through the use of specific words, rhetorical

devices, tropes and so on (ibid.). Along these lines, the Discourse of Fear, according to Altheide (2003), occurs through the promotion of fear by the media or the government as a way to achieve specific objectives. In parallel, discourse is an important tool in the construction of criminals and crimes and can be used to portray criminals as omnipresent, close, and a constant source of fear (Foucault, 1975). The production of criminals is also possible through discourse emphasising the importance of society and the social contract, which, once violated, justifies the criminal's description as an enemy of society and an alien in the eyes of the public (ibid.). In particular, in the Discourse of Fear, the threat is frequently described in an overly dramatic and repetitive manner in order to instil fear and justify taking drastic measures against this threat in order to save society as a whole (Altheide, 2003).

In this approach, the notion of victim, defined as someone who is defenceless, weak, and relies on the state to protect them from the threat, is central (ibid.). The victim's presumptions of certain threats are used for the propagation of fear, for instance, the public's perception of terrorism and their past experience with it is used to construct the current discourse (ibid.). In this sense, terrorism has been socially constructed to be distinct from crime, referring to specific images, identities and features such as cruelty, immorality, irrationality, to name a few, with the goal of creating terror (ibid.). As a result, the use of terrorism in discourse will make direct references to these images, identities, and features, giving it significant power. In this construction, a distinction is made between the leaders and the masses, the former being described as tactical and smart, the latter being described as indoctrinated, deceived and mad (ibid.). Together, they pose a constant threat to the victims (ibid.). In turn, the creation of public insecurity allows for the promotion of official sources of social control, which can restore security by extending repressive and preventive measures, regardless of civil rights concerns (ibid.). These drastic measures fail to account for the complexities of these acts, as they operate within a larger with us or against us rhetoric, in which any attempt to defend the perpetrator is accused of also being a perpetrator and unpatriotic (ibid.). In this sense, the notions of patriotism and membership are also central to the Discourse of Fear. Indeed, discourse is used to create a clear division between members and outsiders, particularly through the process of othering (ibid.). In the same way, discourse draws on collective victim identity, wherein shared suffering fosters national unity, often achieved through the highlighting of heroic, sacrificial acts of

patriotism (ibid.). In this theory, there is a distinction between fear as a topic and fear as a resource (Altheide and Michalowski, 1999). For the purposes of this study, I concentrated on fear as a topic to see how fear had been associated with the events, particularly through the use of the term ecoterrorism. The repetitive association of an event with fear may create a symbolic link between both (Altheide, 2002). In practice, the frequent association of activists with terrorists may lead to the association of both, with no distinction made between the two terms.

The Discourse of Fear has been developed primarily by Altheide in order to study fear in the mass media in the USA, yet it was used in this theory in order to uncover the discourse of the French government. As follows, I developed several themes and subthemes, based on the central notions developed above, in order to analyse my empirical material through this theory. The first theme I elaborated was victimisation. This theme was used to examine how victims were developed in the discourse, as well as how public insecurity was developed in response. Furthermore, the second theme I advanced was terrorism rhetoric, in order to uncover how terror had been developed in the discourse. While the use of terrorism rhetoric was presented in the Discourse of Fear, I chose to divide into two subthemes: ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism as it suited the French context better. Finally, the third theme I developed was membership, which was used to uncover the idea of belonging in the discourse, through the subthemes of patriotism and the with us or against us rhetoric.

5. Analysis and Discussion

In this Chapter, I will discuss the analysis of the empirical material. This Chapter is divided into sections based on the themes developed in the Theoretical framework Chapter, namely victimisation, terrorism rhetoric, and membership, with subsections based on subthemes. In these sections and subsections, I will begin by discussing the Minister of the Interior's discourse before moving on to the discourse of the other ministers to assess the overall coherence of the government's discourse. The division into themes and subthemes serves to improve the accessibility and comprehension of the empirical material and analysis, but it does not imply a clear separation, as the themes are interconnected and occasionally overlap. Similarly, I will begin each subsection with one or two quotes, both original and translated, to provide a broad

perspective of the subsection before developing specific ideas. Following each section, a summary of the findings will be provided. Furthermore, I will include a section on the discussion that connects, interprets, and contextualises the findings in relation to the rest of the thesis.

5.1 Victimisation

Victimisation, as stated previously, is a central notion in the Discourse of Fear. For the analysis of the empirical material, this notion was used as a theme, which was then divided into two subthemes: the victims' representation and public insecurity.

5.1.1 The victims' representation

> Les gendarmes protègent en effet les agriculteurs non seulement dans les Deux-Sèvres, mais aussi partout en France, car ils font parfois l'objet de menaces, d'intimidations ou d'insultes, de la part de gens qui utilisent la violence verbale et physique pour arriver à leurs fins politiques. (Document 4)
>
> The gendarmes are in fact protecting farmers not only in the Deux-Sèvres, but throughout France, because they are sometimes subjected to threats, intimidation or insults from people who use verbal and physical violence to achieve their political ends. (author's translation)

> Le droit de propriété et les décisions de justice doivent être protégés - force doit rester à la loi, dit-on - et cela touche, j'imagine, tous les démocrates et tous les républicains. (Document 1)
>
> The right to property and the legal decisions need to be protected - force must remain with the law, they say - and this affects, I imagine, all the democrats and the republicans (author's translation)

These quotes demonstrate that there are several types of victims, both physical and non-physical, that are developed in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior. The first category, which is physical, includes farmers, police, gendarmes, medical personnel, journalists, firefighters and elected representatives. The second category, which is non-physical, refers to the right to property and legal decisions. Altogether, the representation of the victims occupies a significant space in the government's discourse.

In the first category mentioned in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, a strong emphasis is put on the farmers and their position as victims. In this regard, the farmers are referred to as bystanders, which had nothing to do with the events of Sainte Soline but were still targeted by the activists. Indeed, the Minister of the Interior describes them as helpless, fearful innocent people who work bravely to feed the French people while confronted with extreme violence that they cannot face alone. In this sense, and as exemplified by the first quote of the Minister of the Interior, the portrayal of the victims is coherent with the Discourse of Fear in which the victims are defined as entities which are defenceless, weak, and rely on the state to protect them from harm. On this point, the Minister of the Interior states on multiple occasions his support while emphasising the importance of the state in safeguarding the victims from the extremely violent activists, for instance stating "the state is here to protect them" (Document 17, author's translation).

The helplessness that is associated with the farmers, is also present when the Minister of the Interior discusses the other victims. As a matter of fact, the Minister of the Interior uses passive forms to describe the victims' treatment, claiming that they were harassed, attacked, threatened, intimidated, insulted, and so on. For example, this is used in relation to medical personnel and the firefighters, as the Minister of the Interior asserts that they were subjected to physical and verbal violence while attempting to care for the injured during the events. This is true even in cases where the violence occurred on both sides in Sainte Soline, that is between the activists one side and the security forces, on the other, as the Minister of the Interior denies that the activists could have ever been victims of police violence when asked about it, stating "I disagree with the word police violence (...) because police violence means that policemen, structurally, could be violent." (Document 19, author's translation). According to the discourse of the Minister of the Interior, recognising the possibility of police violence would imply putting people who have legitimate force under the law on an equal footing with people who do not, which he does not believe is possible. In this sense, the Minister of the Interior's discourse excludes the activists from the category of victims and confines them to the category of perpetrators, as shown in the following subsection. In parallel, the Minister of the Interior strengthens the portrayal of security forces as victims, declaring that violence is endured rather than exercised by them. One way he accomplishes this is by repeating the number of injured

among the security forces. Another way the Minister of the Interior strengthens their position as victims is by referencing their honour, courage, hard work, and families, as further developed in the patriotism subsection. In this sense, the security forces have a particular role in the discourse, indeed, while they are described as victims in need protection on several occasions and as "scapegoats" for the activists, they are also the ones who represent the state in the protection of the other victims that are threatened by the environmental movements and SLT's actions (Document 19, 24, author's translation). Thus, the Minister of the Interior often mentions their role in the protection of the farmers and other victims, which will be further discussed in the third section.

The second category mentioned in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, includes the right to property and legal decisions. The legal decisions refer to the permits to build the mega basins that have been confirmed by the justice system, whereas the right to property refers not only to the mega basins, which were the main source of contention in the demonstrations, but also to farmers' fields. Both of these are portrayed as victims in the discourse of the Minister of the Interior, while also being used to strengthen the identity of other victims such as the farmers.

Altogether, the discourse surrounding the victims' representation is consistent within the different members of the government. Indeed, the Minister of Agriculture contributes to the portrayal of farmers as victims by mentioning the harms done to them as individuals as well as their right to property and their job. Similarly, the Minister of Agriculture reinforces the Minister of the Interior's portrayal of farmers as helpless and in need of protection from security forces.

5.1.2 Public insecurity

> On dit que des armes de guerre ont été utilisées : oui, par les casseurs. (Document 1)
> It is said that weapons of war were used: yes, by the rioters (author's translation).

> Les services du ministère de l'intérieur estiment que, sur 8 000 manifestants, un millier de membres de l'ultragauche française et européenne étaient venus chercher l'affrontement avec les gendarmes, lesquels ont saisi plus de 800 objets – cocktails Molotov, armes blanches, etc. Parmi les gendarmes, 48 ont été blessés, dont certains grièvement. (Document 9)

The Ministry of the Interior estimates that, out of 8,000 demonstrators, around 1,000 members of the French and European ultra-left had come to seek confrontation with the gendarmes, who seized more than 800 objects - Molotov cocktails, weapons by intent, etc. - from the demonstrators. Among the gendarmes, 48 were injured, some seriously. (author's translation)

The above quotes illustrate how the public insecurity is conveyed in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, in particular in relation to SLT activists but also in regards to the environmental and left movements as a whole. Indeed, this is achieved through the portrayal of the activists as the perpetrators, in the discourse, which took four different forms. The first is their designation as rioters and black blocs and so on, as exemplified in the first quote. The second is their depiction as violent, through the description of their techniques and equipment. The third is an emphasis on the wounded. Finally, the fourth is the presentation of the threat of the movement concerning its internationalisation and future actions.

Firstly, the activists are rarely referred to as such in the discourse. In fact, they are called "casseurs" on several occasions, which directly translates to "breakers" but could be translated as "rioters", as done in the above quote (e.g. Document 1, 4, 23, author's translation). In addition, they are referred to as "black blocks", "professionals of disorder", "elements" and "radicals" on several occasions (e.g. Document 9, 17, 18, author's translation). In the same way, as exemplified in the second quote, the Minister of the Interior often refers to the activists described as violent as ultra-left, excluding them from the environmental movement. The qualification of the activists as casseurs is not new in the discourse, as it was first used in the nineteenth century in France, but it is still contested, in particular for its use in recent years to refer to left-wing movements opposing the government (Bantigny, 2020). It is particularly contentious when used to distinguish certain individuals from so-called good demonstrators (ibid.). Similarly, the qualification of the activists as black blocs is contested as this term refers to a tactic of resistance rather than a person (ibid.). Furthermore, the qualification of activists as elements in the discourse can be debated because it denies their humanity. Finally, calling the activists radicals or professionals of disorder adds to their portrayal as a threat to public order and can undermine the legitimacy of their actions.

Secondly, in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, there is an emphasis on the brutality of the activists. Indeed, the Minister highlights the violence of their actions, often adding adjectives that emphasise this violence, such as hyper, extreme or ultra. In parallel, the activists are described as dangerous, even extremely dangerous and aggressive and participating in what he calls savage demonstrations, once again dehumanising the activists and their actions. In addition, the Minister of the Interior, depicts the activists as having an intent to cause harm, particularly with regard to the security forces, as illustrated in the second quote. This is highlighted by a focus on their intellectual, technological, and material resources, as well as their coordination abilities and experience. These resources, combined with their anarchic organisation, makes it difficult for intelligence services to control them, increasing the threat they pose to the state, according to the Minister. In the same way, this depiction of their brutality and chaotic organisation is used in the discourse to justify the intervention of security forces, as the Minister of the Interior claims that there is no way to de-escalate the situation through communication. This contributes to the delegitimisation of the movement's actions, just like their qualification as rioters, black blocs, and elements, mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The brutality of the activists is also brought forward by the Minister of the Interior through the listing of equipment used by activists in Sainte Soline. This also contributes to the depiction of the activists as a threat to public order. For example, the Minister mentions the use of Molotov cocktails, blowtorches, chainsaws, knives, pétanque balls, axes, truncheons, baseball bats, petrol cans, aerosol and gas canisters, fireworks mortars, cobblestones and so on. In addition to the description of the activists as heavily armed, the Minister of the Interior makes several references to warfare, as demonstrated in the following quote.

> Ces groupes recourent à la violence contre les biens et, par voie de conséquence, contre les personnes lorsque celles-ci s'interposent. On relève également une tactique et une organisation qui s'approchent, par certains côtés, d'une coordination militaire. Lorsqu'ils attaquent les forces de l'ordre ou un bien donné, ces groupes agissent dans le cadre d'une structure hiérarchisée, avec leurs généraux, leurs sous-officiers et leurs soldats du rang. À Sainte-Soline, ils avançaient en colonnes. (Document 10)

These groups resort to violence against property and, by extension, against people when they get in the way. We also note a tactic and organisation that resembles, in certain aspects, to a military coordination. When they attack the security forces or a given property, these groups act within a hierarchical structure, with their generals, non-commissioned officers, and non-commissioned soldiers. At Sainte-Soline, they advanced in columns. (author's translation)

Thirdly, the Minister of the Interior often refers to the number of wounded, and seriously wounded. This reference to the number of victims and their helplessness, mentioned in the previous subsection, contributes to the sentiment of public insecurity.

Finally, the sense of public insecurity is conveyed by mentioning the movement's internationalisation and the risk of further action. Indeed, the Minister of the Interior mentions the europeanisation and internationalisation of this movement and the violence committed by both foreign and French members of the movement, which he believes poses a threat to the republic. Furthermore, he states that this is only the beginning, mentioning other projects that may be subject to the same level of radicalisation as the Sainte Soline events.

The discourse concerning the perpetrators, that is the activists, and their threat to public security is homogenous within the government. In his interventions, for example, the Minister of Agriculture and Food also refers to activists as "black blocks" "elements" and "radicals" (Document 20, 21, author's translation). Moreover, he mentions the intent to harm, in particular security forces, previously mentioned by the Minister of the Interior, as well as the fear felt by the victims, creating a sense of public insecurity. In addition, he states that the actions held by the activists are anti democratic and anti republic, as did the Minister of the Interior, which presents a risk for the current order. Similarly, the Minister of Health points out the brutality of the activists and their actions, mentioning weapons and attacks on people and property. This is also done by the Prime Minister, who mentions the profound shock this brutality has caused for her and French citizens.

5.1.3 Summary

The two previous subsections on the victim's representation and public insecurity, demonstrate a trend in the discourse of the French government to divide the participants in the

events of Sainte Soline in two categories. On the one hand, there are the victims, who are described as passive and helpless. On the other hand, there are the perpetrators, the activists, who are described as violent and dangerous. In addition, the activists are described as a threat to public security and order. Furthermore, these subsections have shown that the discourse on victimisation is homogeneous among the members of the government.

5.2 Terrorism rhetoric

Terrorism rhetoric is a fundamental notion in the Discourse of Fear. For the analysis of the empirical material, this notion was used as a theme, which I then divided into two subthemes: ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism. As follows, ecoterrorism is used in the discourse to refer to physical terror, while intellectual terrorism is used to refer to intellectual terror. Altogether, they form a terrorism rhetoric which distinguishes between the perpetrators of violence on the one hand, and the victims of violence, i.e. the state and its principles, values, and people, on the other.

5.2.1 Ecoterrorism

Je mets des mots sur les choses : jeter des cocktails Molotov sur des gendarmes, c'est de la terreur. (Document 1).
I put things into words: throwing Molotov cocktails on the gendarmes, it is terror. (author's translation).

Et cette partie de la manifestation extrêmement violente relevait d'activistes, une quarantaine de personnes "Fiché S" à l'ultra gauche ont été repérées dans cette manifestation, avec des modes opératoires qui relèvent, je n'ai pas peur de le dire, de l'écoterrorisme, que nous devons absolument combattre. (Document 17)
And this part of the extremely violent demonstration was the responsibility of activists, about forty people "Fiché S" on the ultra-left were spotted in this demonstration, with modes of operation that, I am not afraid to say, come under the heading of ecoterrorism, which we absolutely must combat. (author's translation)

The Minister of the Interior qualifies the acts of the SLT collective in Sainte Soline as ecoterrorism, as demonstrated in the above quotes. In the discourse, the Minister of the Interior uses ecoterrorism to refer to the operating modes of the movement, both against people, such as the use of Molotov cocktails against the security forces mentioned in the first quote, and against property such as degradations and sabotages. It is important to note that this broad definition of ecoterrorism is made possible in the discourse through the elevation of property to the same level as human lives that is done by the Minister of the Interior, citing the right to property as one of the republic's fundamental human rights.

An important aspect of the terrorism rhetoric, and ecoterrorism in particular, is the mention of the violence of the activists. As mentioned in the previous subsection, there is a strong emphasis in the government's discourse regarding the brutality of the activists, as highlighted by the reference to military and guerrilla procedures and methods of actions. As follows, the Minister of the Interior states that the presence of extreme violence in the actions of the collective and the environmental movement is what causes terror. In this sense, terror is closely linked to fear in the discourse, as the Minister of the Interior believes that the actions of the collective have caused fear in the lives of the farmers and other victims. As a result, the Minister of the Interior connects the terror experienced by the victims with the classification of their actions as ecoterrorism. Thus, according to the Minister of the Interior it is the ultra violence of the actions of the activists, which causes terror, that qualifies the demonstrations as acts of ecoterrorism.

Another aspect of the ecoterrorism rhetoric is the reference to the intention behind the actions of the activists. Indeed, in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, a strong emphasis is put on the intent of the activists, as a way to justify the qualification as ecoterrorism. For example, the Minister of the Interior mentions an intent to destroy the Republic, violate the rule of law, and act against the symbols of the capital and the state. Once again, the confrontation with the security forces is brought forward to demonstrate this opposition to the current order, as they serve as a symbol of the state. In the same way, the Minister of the Interior denies any intent, by the activists, to serve the environmental cause or any other social cause.

Furthermore, the Minister of the Interior makes use of terrorist references in the discourse. For instance, the Minister of the Interior uses metaphors when he claims that an

extreme part of the movement has "taken hostage" and "infiltrated" the rest of the movement (e.g. Document, 1, 9, 23, author's translation). In the same way, the Minister of the Interior claims that some activists wish to "kill" both the security forces and the institutions, as demonstrated by the following quote:

> Je veux dire que nous protégeons aussi tous les autres sites, les maisons des agriculteurs, les canalisations, les fermes qui peuvent être prises à partie par des individus qui sont extrêmement dangereux et manifestement qui veulent tuer les institutions, qui veulent tuer des gendarmes mais qui veulent tuer les institutions de la République. (Document 18)
>
> I would like to say that we also protect every other site, the farmers' houses, the pipelines, the farms that can be attacked by individuals who are extremely dangerous and obviously who want to kill the institutions, who want to kill gendarmes but who want to kill the institutions of the Republic. (author's translation)

Likewise, the Minister of the Interior mentions the presence of activists who are being monitored by intelligence services, just as Islamist terrorists are, who are widely regarded as France's most serious terrorist threat. This comparison, done by the Minister of the Interior during several of his interventions, is not trivial as it provides a direct reference to specific images and memories that the public has of terrorists in France. In addition, when mentioning the number of activists classified as Fiché S by the intelligence services, the highest level of warning in France, the Minister of the Interior reiterates their threat to the "Nation and the republican order" (Document 5, author's translation). This is in line with the statement according to which terrorism is a notion of information according to the Minister of the Interior. Thus, according to him the presence of radicalised individuals in the demonstrations contributes to the qualification of ecoterrorism. This means that the term ecoterrorism can be used in the discourse to help monitor certain people.

Once again the discourse held by the members of the government is homogenous. For instance, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Health, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Ecological Transition all mention the intent of the activists to defy the symbols of the state, rather than serve the environmental cause. In particular, the Minister of Ecological Transition and

Minister of Agriculture state the anti democraticness of the actions of the activists. While the Minister of Justice reiterates the threat of the activists for the republican order. However, the Minister of Agriculture is the only other Minister, apart from the Minister of the Interior, who mentions explicitly the word ecoterrorism. He believes this term is appropriate to people who do not see human life as valuable. Both the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Agriculture defend their use of the term ecoterrorism, claiming that they need a word to refer to the extreme violence of the activists' actions, which is ecoterrorism, as highlighted by the first quote of this subsection. According to the Minister of Agriculture, the use of the term ecoterrorism is a description of reality rather than an insult.

5.2.2 Intellectual terrorism

> Et il n'y a pas de doute qu'il y a indépendamment de la terreur physique qu'ont vécue des policiers, des gendarmes à Sainte Soline, dans certaines zones de guérilla urbaine et qu'on a vu après manifestations classiques bien évidemment, il y a aussi une terreur intellectuelle. Désarmer la police, dire qu'elle tue, (...) il peut, il doit y avoir une alarme sonnée. (Document 23)
>
> And there is no doubt that irrespective of the physical terror that have experienced the policemen, the gendarmes in Sainte Soline, in certain urban guerrilla zones and that we have seen after classic demonstrations of course, there is also an intellectual terror. Disarming the police, say that they kill, (...) there can, there must be an alarm sounded. (author's translation)

This quote demonstrates the use of terrorism rhetoric in the discourse held by the Minister of the Interior, in particular through a reference to intellectual terrorism. Intellectual terrorism is used by the Minister of the Interior in order to refer to the violence of the ideas of the activists present in Sainte Soline and the overall environmental and leftist movement that they are associated with.

According to the Minister of the Interior, intellectual terrorism occurs through the propagation of ideas, notably by the environmental activists, that are against the principles of the republic and democracy. This includes criticisms of the institutions and the capitalist system, as well as critiques and verbal attacks on security forces, as mentioned in the preceding quote. Overall, it is the ideas threatening the current order that fall under the category of intellectual

terrorism. Thus, as with ecoterrorism, intellectual terrorism has a broad understanding. Indeed, according to the Minister of the Interior, this type of terrorism includes the use of moral authority, repeated images or lies, to coerce you into giving in politically. The Minister of the Interior, as he did for the use of ecoterrorism, defends the use of intellectual terrorism by claiming that it was used to put a word on the ideas developed by the activists. This in turn, enables him to denounce these attacks.

Once again, as mentioned in the previous subsection, the Minister of the Interior makes use of metaphors when he refers to the infiltration and hostage taking of the social movements including the environmental movements by the extreme left, in order to radicalise them.

As it was the case for ecoterrorism, the Minister of Agriculture is the only member of the government, other than the Minister of the Interior, who refers to intellectual terrorism. Yet, the interventions of the Minister of Agriculture are consistent with those of the Minister of the Interior. Indeed, when asked about the use of intellectual terrorism by the Minister of the Interior to describe the ideas of the activists, the Minister of Agriculture gives his approval, stating that the ideas they advance against the principles of the republic are dangerous and must be considered as a threat.

5.2.3 Summary

The two previous subsections relating to ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism demonstrate the presence of a terrorism rhetoric in the discourse of the French government. This rhetoric is not always made explicit in the discourse, as for example only two of the ministers, that is the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Agriculture, use the word terrorism directly. These ministers justify their use of these terms as ways of describing reality in order to better deal with this threat. Overall, most of the ministers mention the intent of the activists as distinct from environmental issues, citing anticapitalism, antidemocratic and antirepublican motives, which can serve to further deligitimise the activists and their actions.

5.3 Membership

Membership is also a key feature in the Discourse of Fear theory. For the analysis of the empirical material, this notion was used as a theme, which was then divided into two subthemes: patriotism and with us or against rhetoric. The following subthemes were used to evaluate the discourse: patriotism emphasises inclusion, whereas with us or against us rhetoric emphasises exclusion.

5.3.1 Patriotism

Aujourd'hui, avec vous, avec les Français, je veux à mon tour rendre hommage aux forces de l'ordre, à leur courage et à leur engagement. Je veux dire ma solidarité avec les gendarmes et les policiers qui ont été blessés à Sainte-Soline ou dans les débordements qui ont malheureusement parfois entouré les mobilisations ces derniers jours. (Document 3).

Today, with you, with the French people, I too wish to pay tribute to the security forces, to their courage and commitment. I would like to express my solidarity with the gendarmes and the policemen who were injured in Sainte-Soline or in the disturbances that have unfortunately sometimes surrounded the demonstrations in recent days. (author's translation)

Je veux avant toute chose rendre hommage à nos forces de l'ordre. Chaque jour, policiers et gendarmes nous protègent ; ils préservent l'ordre républicain. Aucune violence contre eux n'est acceptable, et le Gouvernement sera toujours à leurs côtés. (Document 6)

First and foremost, I would like to pay tribute to our security forces. Every day, police officers and gendarmes protect us; they preserve the republican order. No violence against them is acceptable, and the Government will always stand by their side. (author's translation)

These quotes from the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior demonstrate the presence of patriotism in the discourse of the French government, most notably through the references to solidarity, as well as the payment of tribute to the different state actors that were involved in the events of Sainte Soline, in particular the security forces. In addition, the honour, engagement, courage, and hard work of the security forces is emphasised, which also serves to reinforce their position as victims rather than perpetrators of violence, in the discourse.

Concerning the references to solidarity in the discourse, the Minister of the Interior sends his support to all the victims developed in the first subsections, that is the elected representatives, the security forces, the firefighters, the farmers as well as the medical staff. Furthermore, the Minister of the Interior states that in the case of a dispute, his republican viewpoint would be to support the teacher, gendarme, and police. The mention of civil servants and the solidarity with them strengthens notions of solidarity and patriotism in the discourse. Additionally, solidarity can be seen through the tendency in the discourse of the Minister of the Interior to use "us" to refer to the government, the state or even the whole French population (e.g. Document 3, 17, 18, author's translation). For instance, it is used by the Minister of the Interior to refer to the shared love of the French population for the republic for more than two centuries. This highlights the Minister of the Interior's efforts to foster a sense of community, as he mentions the need to come together in order to face the threat of the ultra left.

Moreover, the Minister of the Interior compliments the handling of the situation of the mega basins in Sainte Soline. Indeed, despite the number of injured both in the security forces and activists present in the demonstrations in Sainte Soline, the Minister of the Interior congratulates himself, the security forces and the other people involved in containing the activists and upholding the republican order. While he pays tribute to several different actors, there is a particular attention on the security forces notably due to their role of defenders and protectors of the victims from the perpetrators, that is the activists.

Indeed, these security forces, as mentioned previously, have been put against the activists in the discourse. As follows, the Minister of the Interior devotes a majority of his interventions in order to defend them for critiques, calling policeman the most beautiful job in the world. Firstly, the Minister often mentions that they are security forces of the republic and of all the French people regardless of their political aversions. Secondly, as previously mentioned in the subsection on the victims' representation, there is a strong emphasis on the security forces as the victims and not the perpetrators of violence, as opposed to the activists. Thus, in the discourse of the Minister of the Interior, there is an intense effort to defend the acts of the security forces, notably by pointing out the extreme violence of the activists and the fact the security forces were only applying the rule of law and the decisions of justice and were present in the events to protect the French people. In addition, this is done by mentioning the hardship of the profession

of policeman. In the same way, as previously mentioned, the Minister of the Interior refers to the security forces as scapegoats for the opposition, which strengthens their position as victims. Thirdly, the Minister of the Interior highlights the honour and courage of the people who faced the activists in Sainte Soline, including the security forces, the medical staff and so on. For example, the Minister of the Interior praises the medical staff's bravery in fending off the mass, which was occasionally attacking them, in order to go and care for the injured in Sainte Soline. Honour on the one hand is mentioned in the discourse when discussing the defence of the bassines by the security forces, strengthening the authority of the state. Yet, honour is also mentioned as something threatened by the criticism made against the security forces. Courage on the other hand is developed in the discourse in parallel to the description of the activists as extremely violent, dangerous and radicalised.

Yet again, the discourse of the French government is uniform. In fact, the commendation of the different state actors who helped contain the activists is also present in the discourse of the other members of the government such as the Minister of Agriculture and the Prime Minister. In addition, as exemplified by the first quote, the Prime Minister also pays tribute to the different state actors and salutes the honour, engagement, courage, and hard work of the security forces. She also refers to solidarity within the government and with French people, facing together the threat against the republican order. In this sense, the discourse concerning patriotism is homogeneous within the members of the government.

5.3.3 With us or against us rhetoric

> Il y a une complicité évidente désormais avec des gens qui sont rentrés à l'Assemblée nationale avec des mouvements d'extrême gauche qui terrorisent bien sûr. Quand M. Mélenchon dit que la police tue, quand on dit qu'il faut désarmer les policiers, les gendarmes. Quand M. Mélenchon dit qu'il faut rééduquer des policiers, qu'il faut les soigner. Vous trouvez pas ça terrifiant ? (Document 23)

> There is now an obvious complicity with people who have entered the National Assembly with extreme left-wing movements that terrorise of course. When Mr Mélenchon says that the police kill, when it is said that the police, the gendarmes need to be disarmed. When Mr Mélenchon says

that the police need to be reeducated, that they need to be treated. Don't you find that terrifying? (author's translation)

This quote, by the Minister of the Interior, demonstrates the with us or against us rhetoric that is present in the discourse of the government. The reference to political representatives is something that is recurrent in the interventions of the Minister of the Interior. The Minister of the Interior believes that the ideas of the activists, notably concerning their interactions with the police, gains power through the complicity of the political representatives who relay them. For instance, the approval of the violence of the actions by the activists in Sainte Soline is regarded as complicity or cowardice. In the same way, the absence of any statement on violence of the actions is also regarded as complicity. Thus, the Minister of the Interior urges people to express their disapproval of the violences, in particular against the security forces as the disregard of the violences committed against the security forces along with critiques against these forces is deemed anti republican. This illustrates the with us or against us rhetoric as there is a clear polarisation in the discourse between the people who explicitly condemn the actions of the SLT collective, such as the government, as those who are complicit by their silence or approval. It is important to note that, when mentioning this complicity, the Minister of the Interior also refers to their complicity with Islamists, a reference that, as mentioned in the previous section, is not trivial. This reinforces the division between those who condemn the actions and those who do not. A special focus in the discourse of the Minister of Interior is given to the presence of political representatives in Sainte Soline. Indeed, according to the Minister of the Interior, their presence among the activists is worrisome. For him, their presence in Sainte Soline demonstrates their decision to support disorder, radicalism, and ecoterrorism.

Once again, the discourse among the government members is coherent. The presence of the political representatives in the prohibited demonstrations is also called out by the Minister of Health for example. In addition, the Minister of Agriculture and the Prime Minister, have similar arguments to the ones of the Minister of the Interior as they mention that the presence of elected representatives in the demonstrations where there is violence are by extension involved in this violence. In this sense, they are complicit with the SLT collective in their violence.

5.3.4 Summary

The two previous subsections relating to patriotism and the with us or against us rhetoric contribute to the theme of membership in the discourse of the French government. Indeed, membership is developed in the discourse through a focus on inclusion, as demonstrated in the subsection on patriotism in which the ministers make references to solidarity and the hardship, honour, engagement, courage of the state actors, as well as through a focus on exclusion, as demonstrated in the subsection on the with us or against us rhetoric in which there is a clear division between those who commit the violence or are complicit and those who condemn those violences.

5.4 Discussion

In this section, I will start by reviewing the findings of the previous sections of the analysis before making sense of these findings in relation to the rest of the thesis, in particular in relation to the method, theory, and research question and aim. Indeed, this discussion directly informs the research question concerning the extent of an emergence of a Green Scare in France over the last years.

5.4.1 Introduction

In the previous sections, I have conducted the analysis of the empirical material, in particular through the use of the themes and subthemes developed in the Theoretical framework Chapter. As follows, the section on victimisation helped to uncover how the victims and perpetrators were represented in the discourse of the French government. This section provided an introduction of the polarisation between the activists, their supporters, and the rest of the population. The description of the perpetrators was then extended to the section on terrorism rhetoric, in which terms such as ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism were used to stigmatise the activists and confine them to the category of perpetrators and threats to the current order. In fine, the section on membership strengthened the polarisation presented in the first section, focusing on how exclusion and inclusion have been developed in the discourse. Overall, in all the themes and subthemes, the French government's discourse was consistent among its

members. Yet, in the section on terrorism rhetoric there was a certain prudence of most members of the government to directly refer to the terms, as only the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of the Agriculture referred to them explicitly.

Within the legal documents part of the empirical material, there was a clear distinction in the descriptions of the SLT collective between those issued by the government versus those issued by the Conseil d'État. While the documents issued by the Conseil d'État did not fit into the various themes of the Discourse of Fear, I believe they are relevant to discuss as they highlight how the government has framed the actions of the SLT collective. For instance, the Conseil d'État, France's highest administrative jurisdiction, was called upon to rule on the legality of the decree issued by the government enabling the dissolution of the SLT collective. In this decree, the government justified the dissolution of the collective on the basis of violence against both property and people. Yet, the Conseil d'État, in both of its court cases, ruled that the presence of violence against property was confirmed but there was no proof that the SLT collective promoted violence against people, contrary to the claims of the government. In addition, the violence against property was described by the court as limited and having a symbolic character. In this sense, the dissolution of the collective on the basis of their threat to public order was not deemed adapted, necessary and proportionate according to the Conseil d'État, and it was declared as void.

5.4.2 Interpretation of findings

As developed in the Methodology Chapter, discourse analysis can be used in order to get a better understanding of how language constructs the social world. Thus, discourse analysis is used to examine the description of an object and how it influences our understanding of it. It is also used to uncover the objectives of this description.

As follows, discourse analysis served to examine how environmental movements and their activists were described in the French government's discourse. In this sense, through discourse analysis I observed how they had been described as a threat to public order and the perpetrators of violence against both people and property. In the same way, through the use of discourse analysis I was able to examine the attempts by the government to deny the

environmental motives behind the activists and their actions. Overall, this description could influence the perception of environmental movements and their actions all the while contributing to their stigmatisation, dehumanisation and delegitimization.

In addition, discourse analysis served to uncover the objectives of this description. I believe that the discourse of the French government served two main objectives: the first being the propagation of fear and the second being the increase of legislation concerning terrorism and the environmental movements. I believe these two objectives are linked to each other as the first one helps legitimise the second one, as mentioned in the Theoretical framework Chapter. While the propagation of fear was not mentioned explicitly in the discourse as one of the objectives of the government, the portrayal of the perpetrators, that is the activists of SLT and the environmental movements in general, could have contributed to the propagation of fear concerning these movements. For instance, the use of terrorism rhetoric and the comparison with Islamists, taking into account France's past concerning terrorism, can be seen as an attempt to disseminate fear regarding these activists. In parallel, some members of the government explicitly expressed their desire for increased legislation relating to terrorism and environmental movements. For instance, the Minister of the Interior mentioned the implementation of new legislation impacting the activists, including legislation resulting in the increase of security forces and their means and legislation enabling the dissolution of certain associations and de facto groupings. He also mentioned the desire to further expand the legal framework in order to better face the threat that the environmental activists pose to the republican order. In the same way, the Minister of Justice mentioned the possibility of qualifications which could be applied to the activists in order to enhance their sentences. These qualifications would impact the SLT collective and the other environmental movements as they would concern demonstrations held by collectives, in particular those targeted at degradations. In the same way, these qualifications would concern political offences, which could directly impact environmental activists. In addition, he mentioned the possibility of extending the preventive measures concerning these activists.

Overall, discourse analysis and the Discourse of Fear were used in order to respond to the research question. Indeed, as mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, in this thesis I was interested in knowing to what extent a Green Scare emerged in France over the last two years.

This thesis aimed to respond to this question by focusing on the discourse held by the French government regarding the SLT collective and their portrayal since their involvement in the Sainte Soline mega basin in October 2022. In addition, my thesis aimed to expand the phenomenon of the Green Scare to a new context.

As follows, as stated in my Theoretical framework Chapter, I developed seven conditions for the assessment of a Green Scare (see Table 2). In order to respond to the research question, these conditions needed to be confronted with the findings. The findings demonstrated a clear government hostility, which was targeted towards the environmental activists, especially the SLT collective, as seen in their description in the first two sections. In addition, the findings illustrated the use of terrorism rhetoric by the government, notably by referring to ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism, as seen in the second section. Therefore, the first three conditions, government/corporate hostility, the targeting of environmental and animal movements and terrorism rhetoric, were fulfilled. Yet, the qualification of a Green Scare still depended on the fulfilment of the necessary conditions. As follows, the three following conditions, the expansion of terrorism definition, the expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation and the dissemination of fear needed to be satisfied. The findings demonstrated an expansion of the terrorism definition, as it was defined by the government as including not only violence against people but also property and ideas, as illustrated by the use of ecoterrorism and intellectual terrorism. Similarly, as developed earlier in this section, the government had two objectives concerning its discourse, that is the expansion of anti terrorism legislation or anti activism legislation and the dissemination of fear and as stated previously both of these were translated into the discourse whether implicitly or explicitly. Thus, these three conditions can be seen as fulfilled. Finally, the presence of public distrust for environmental or animal movements was not made obvious in the study of the French government's discourse and therefore this condition is not considered as fulfilled. Yet, this condition was qualified as neither sufficient nor necessary and therefore does not impact the qualification of a Green Scare.

Therefore, with both the sufficient and necessary conditions fulfilled, I can conclude that there has been a Green Scare in France over the last two years, as demonstrated by the findings. In the same way, I can conclude that this phenomenon has emerged in the last two years through

the use of terrorism rhetoric to refer to the environmental activists and their actions, which was not present before October 2022 and which demonstrates a change in circumstances.

6. Concluding remarks

In this Chapter, I will provide the concluding remarks of the thesis. As developed throughout the thesis, my objective was to understand the extent to which a Green Scare emerged in France over the last two years. This was motivated by the academic gap surrounding the term ecoterrorism and its appearance in the French public discourse. Not to mention the gap concerning the use of ecoterrorism outside the USA and outside the context of the Green Scare of the beginning of the twenty-first century as well as the gap concerning the study of this phenomenon in different contexts than when and where it emerged.

After studying the discourse of the French government from October 2022 to March 2024, focusing on the themes of victimisation, terrorism rhetoric and membership, I found that a Green Scare had emerged during this time. As a consequence, this thesis contributes to the literature by developing conditions for the qualification of a Green Scare and providing a first assessment of the phenomenon in a new context as well as providing an application of the Discourse of Fear beyond the study of mass media in the USA. Yet, there are some limitations concerning the specificity of this thesis. Indeed, the two-year timeframe that was chosen for feasibility is one of the thesis's limitations; however, this could be addressed in subsequent research by extending it. In the same way, the focus on discourse analysis as a method of data collection and analysis, could be replaced or complemented by other sources of enquiry, in future research, in order to have a more comprehensive assessment and understanding of the extent of a Green Scare in France. Thus, while this thesis provided a preliminary assessment of the phenomenon in a new context, in this case France, it also serves as a starting point for future research in this area to fill the gap in academic literature.

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