

Working Papers on Arctic Security No. 3

A Question of Security? Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Securitization in the Canadian Arctic

Kylie Bergfalk
University of Waterloo

September 2012

MUNK
SCHOOL
OF
GLOBAL
AFFAIRS



ArcticNet
ᐃᑭᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑭᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ

The Emerging Arctic
Security Environment

A QUESTION OF SECURITY? INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI AND SECURITIZATION IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

The contents of this publication are entirely the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view or opinions of the Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program and the ArcticNet project on *The Emerging Arctic Security Environment*.

This publication is available under limited copyright protection. You may download, distribute, photocopy, cite or excerpt this document provided it is properly and fully credited and not used for commercial purposes.

Working Papers on Arctic Security

This series seeks to stimulate deeper academic dialogue on Arctic security issues in Canada. Papers fall into three categories. The first includes theoretically—and empirically—driven academic papers on subjects related to Arctic security broadly conceptualized. The second focuses on the impacts of defence and security practices on Arctic peoples, with a particular emphasis on the Canadian North during and after the Cold War. The third category of papers summarizes key Canadian and international policy documents related to Arctic security and sovereignty issues.

This series is supported by the Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program and the ArcticNet project on *The Emerging Arctic Security Environment*.

Series Editor

P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Ph.D.

Associate professor and chair of the department of history at St. Jerome's University (University of Waterloo). Co-chair of the Arctic Peoples and Security pillar of the Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program and co-lead for the ArcticNet project on *The Emerging Arctic Security Environment*.

Forthcoming Papers

P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Shackleton

When the Skies Rained Boxes: The Air Force and the Qikiqtani Inuit, 1941-64

P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Ryan Dean, and Peter Kikkert

Canadian Arctic Defence and Security Policy: An Overview of Key Documents, 1970-2012

Harry Borlase

Arctic Strategies and Security Questions: A Comparative Analysis

P. Whitney Lackenbauer

Should the Canadian Rangers be Expanded, Enhanced, or Left 'As Is'? : Framing the Issues

P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert

A Military History of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

Jessica Shadian

Reconceptualizing Sovereignty and Security: The Inuit Circumpolar Conference/Council and Arctic Governance

Previous Papers

Heather Exner-Pirot

Human Security in the Arctic: The Foundation of Regional Cooperation

Wilfrid Greaves

Turtle Island Blues: Climate Change and Failed Indigenous Securitization in the Canadian Arctic

A Question of Security?

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Securitization in the Canadian Arctic

Kylie Bergfalk

In this case it is the Inuit, living in the vast Arctic regions, who are feeling the first and substantial effects of global warming. Forces mostly outside of the Arctic have caused climate change, manifested in the Arctic by changing sea-ice, tundra, and wildlife patterns. And the traditional Inuit way of life is threatened [...] [T]alking about the effects of global warming on the Arctic isn't going to stop the impacts from growing. Still, Inuit are taking action to ensure the world is aware of how these climactic changes are not only threatening the survival of traditional Inuit culture but the earth's survival.¹

Jose A. Kusugak, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2000-2006

This paper examines Canadian Inuit response to the challenges that they face in a rapidly changing Arctic environment. What are they saying about these challenges and how are they saying it? To answer this question, I adopt the lens of securitization theory and apply it to the discourse of Canada's leading national Inuit political organization, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). Since its creation in 1971, ITK's chief goal has been to represent Canadian Inuit on the national stage. Canadian Inuit are not a monolithic people group and there is considerable diversity in the way different Inuit understand their problems and the solutions to those problems. ITK policies and publications, however, come closer to representing a unified Inuit voice than those of any other Inuit organization in Canada.

Why look for evidence of securitization in ITK discourse? In part, because the current rhetorical environment regarding the Canadian Arctic lends itself to the securitization lens. Some scholars have suggested that the Canadian government subscribes to a policy of securitization in the Arctic and, while a systematic analysis of Canadian government discourse using the securitization theory framework has yet to be undertaken, there is preliminary evidence to support this hypothesis. Klaus Dodds observes in his analysis of Prime Minister Harper's 2007 and 2010 Speeches from the Throne that the dominant trend in Canadian government rhetoric is an emphasis on Arctic sovereignty and territorial integrity, which reinforces militarized understandings of security, with a corresponding diminution of the role of multilateral cooperation and indigenous peoples.² Certainly, Harper's "use it or lose it" catchphrase frames the Canadian Arctic in terms of existential threat, the first step in the process of securitization. Regardless of whether or not securitization of the Arctic by the Canadian government has successfully taken place, the presentation of an existential threat is significant in the shaping of the political and rhetorical environment in the Canadian Arctic. It is interesting to consider whether Inuit in Canada, as independent Arctic actors, have also moved to securitize the challenges that they face. If so, with what motive? What do they stand to gain from securitization that they would not gain otherwise?

¹ *Unikkaaqatigiit: Perspectives From Inuit in Canada*, Ottawa: Joint publication of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments at Université Laval and the Ajunnginiq Centre at the National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2005, 5.

² Klaus Dodds, "We are a northern country: Stephen Harper and the Canadian Arctic," *Polar Record*, 47(243): 371-382 (2011).

Securitization Theory

Securitization is a sub-theory of international relations theory developed by the “Copenhagen School” in the 1990s. It combines the realist and constructivist approaches to security to create a framework of analysis that encompasses a wider security agenda. This framework incorporates threats beyond traditional military security and facilitates the discussion of issues in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors in terms of security.³ To this end, the Copenhagen School offers a particular structure of analysis for identifying the social construction of security and security threats through a process called *securitization*. Its purpose is to “find out what differentiates security and the process of securitization from that which is merely political” by developing “an increasingly precise understanding of who securitizes, on what issues (threats), for whom (referent objects), why, with what results, and, not least, under what conditions (ie., what explains when securitization is not successful).”⁴ The process of securitization which the Copenhagen School expounds has three components: the identification of an existential threat, an emergency response, and effects on “interunit relations,” or intersubjective interactions between the securitizing actor and the audience, as a result of breaking free of the rules.⁵

In order to simplify the scope of this inquiry the Copenhagen School establishes five sectors where a security threat might be identified: military, political, environmental, economic, and societal. Issues or relationships within each of these sectors may be securitized by a *securitizing actor* that identifies an object under threat within the sector. The object under threat, designated the *referent object*, must be seen to be existentially threatened and have a legitimate claim to survival. The Copenhagen School also allows for the presence of a third actor in the field of security: the *functional actor* affects the dynamics of the sector without being the referent object or the securitizing actor.⁶ Critics, such as Thierry Balzacq, widen the scope of inquiry further to include the audience or audiences and the contexts of the securitization in the analysis.

Each sector produces sector specific referent objects. In the military sector, the referent object is usually the state. The sovereignty or ideology of the state, which might be threatened by “anything that questions recognition, legitimacy, or governing authority,” are possible referent objects in the political sector.⁷ In the economic sector, the Copenhagen School emphasizes large-scale economic threats, such as the survival of a national economy or a global market regime, but sub-national economic groups, as in the case of Inuit, might frame economic threats in terms of securitization too. The Copenhagen School specifies that “unless the survival of the population is in question, the huge range of the national economy doing better or doing worse cannot be seen as existentially threatening” and this logic holds true for sub-national economic communities as well.⁸ In the societal sector, the referent object may be a large-scale collective identity that functions independent of the state, such as a nation or a religion. Specifically, “the abilities to maintain and reproduce a language, a set of behavioural customs, or a conception of ethnic purity can all be cast in terms of survival,” although it can be difficult to differentiate existential threats from lesser threats in the societal sector because identities are inconstant and subject to change in response to internal and external pressures.⁹ Finally, there is an array of possible referent objects in the environmental sector, ranging from a single species or habitat to the entire planetary climate.

³ Political scientist Stephen Walt articulates traditional security as “the study of the threat, use, and control of military force.” Quoted in Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A new framework for analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 4.

⁴ Buzan et al, *Security*, 5, 32.

⁵ Buzan et al, *Security*, 32.

⁶ Buzan et al, *Security*, 35-36.

⁷ Buzan et al, *Security*, 22.

⁸ Buzan et al, *Security*, 22.

⁹ Buzan et al, *Security*, 23.

The discursive designation of an existential threat to a referent object by a securitizing actor is the *securitizing move*. In the Copenhagen School framework, securitizing moves are identified in the *speech acts* of the securitizing actor. Speech acts, according to the theory, are words or phrases that not only describe but also perform a security threat. In the words of Ole Wæver, one of securitization's progenitors, "it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one."¹⁰ The speech act in securitization is not a simple theoretical concept and Balzacq discerns the crux of its complexity in the differences between the philosophical and sociological views of securitization. The philosophical approach to securitization "*ultimately* reduces security to a *conventional procedure* [...] in which the 'felicity circumstances' (conditions of success of speech act) must fully prevail for the act to go through" whereas the sociological approach prefers to understand securitization as a strategic and pragmatic process "that occurs within, and as a part of, a configuration of circumstances including the context, the psycho-cultural disposition of the audience, and the power that both speaker and listener bring to the interaction."¹¹ The Copenhagen School, Balzacq suggests, adopts a philosophical approach and this creates a central tension in their framework, between identification of securitization as a self-referential practice (created by an actor for that actor's purpose) and as an intersubjective process (in which securitization is the result of negotiated interaction between the actor and the audience).¹² His critiques of the Copenhagen School of thought regarding securitization are drawn from his own sociological orientation and attention to context.

This case study on Inuit discourse primarily adopts a philosophical treatment of securitization, true to the practice of the Copenhagen School, although it seeks to anticipate and acknowledge the portions of this case study and argument that might benefit from a more comprehensive consideration using the sociological approach.

Delimitations

Building on this theoretical foundation, this paper applies the lens of securitization to the Inuit case study. Its task is to identify and analyze speech acts in the ITK discourse to determine whether Canadian Inuit can be said to be making securitizing moves regarding the challenges they face in the Arctic, particularly in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors. This investigation is by no means a comprehensive analysis of Inuit discourse, nor does it explore all the possible analytical avenues presented by the securitization lens. Rather, in seeking only to determine whether Canadian Inuit are securitizing actors, it lays the groundwork for further empirical study and identifies possible opportunities for further research. It is essential, then, to begin with a discussion of this case study's delimitations.

One of the challenges inherent in the use of the securitization lens is posed by the audience. The audience is an essential piece of the Copenhagen School conception of the intersubjective process of securitization but it presents significant challenges to both theoretical and empirical securitization studies. In the Copenhagen School framework, securitization can only be said to be taking place if a securitizing move is made *and* the audience accepts the presentation of the issue as an existential threat. Leonard and Kaunert draw attention to critiques of the Copenhagen School's lack of clarity regarding the concept of audience, noting its significance to its overall framework as well as the ambiguity of its application.¹³ Who constitutes the audience in a given securitization context? What

¹⁰ Ole Wæver, "Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery," International Studies Association Conference Montreal, March 2004, 13.

¹¹ Thierry Balzacq, *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve* (New York, Routledge: 2011) , 1-2.

¹² Balzacq, *Securitization Theory*, 3.

¹³ Sarah Leonard and Christian Kaunert, "Reconceptualizing the audience," in *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*, edited by Thierry Balzacq, (New York, Routledge: 2011), 57-76.

does acceptance mean and how can it be identified? When can an audience be said to be persuaded? What if there is more than one audience and how do you account for differences between multiple audiences? Several scholars have endeavoured to address these critiques and answer these questions by expanding on and contextualizing the Copenhagen School's conception of audience.¹⁴

In the Inuit case, where ITK is the possible securitizing actor, it would indeed be difficult to identify the success of securitization via audience response. There seem to be multiple audiences at multiple levels – the Canadian federal government, provincial and territorial governments, the Canadian public, Inuit in Canada, circumpolar Inuit more broadly – and the evidence of receptivity to a securitizing move in each audience, as well as acceptance itself, likely varies in each case. Further, several of the documents considered in this discourse analysis have different audiences or serve more than one audience. The ambiguity of audience and the difficulty of determining acceptance, both in theory and in the ITK case, are part of the reason that this paper concerns itself with only the first component of securitization, determining the presence of a securitizing move. This is the first delimitation; it is senseless to talk about securitization before the presence of a securitizing move is established.

A second delimitation confines this study to the environmental, economic, and societal sectors. It omits the military and political sectors for two reasons. First, the greatest challenges Inuit face in the Arctic are located in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors and this is where we find the most-likely cases for Inuit securitization. Second, the ITK does not talk about the state in terms of existential threat and when the military and political sectors do appear in Inuit discourse they are usually linked to the other three sectors. Take, for example, this “Priority Policy Initiative” articulated in the ITK *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* document:

a re-conceptualization and expansion of the Arctic Rangers [*sic*] program so that, in addition to serving as a resident militia, it is able to serve the following functions effectively: (a) environmental monitoring; (b) supply of country food to communities; (c) work for those unqualified or unable to work in wage employment, particularly in small communities; and, (d) sustaining of land based skills and cultural/linguistic continuity.¹⁵

The Canadian Rangers fall within the military sector but the Inuit discourse explicitly envisions that this military unit will serve civilian purposes in the environmental (a and b), economic (c), societal (b and d) sectors. Therefore, it is logical to restrict this investigation to the relevant sectors.

Naturally, there is a great deal of overlap between these three sectors. For instance, increasing weather variability in the environmental sector affects both traditional Inuit livelihood, which may be framed as a referent object in the economic sector, and the ability of older generations to pass Inuit traditional knowledge related to weather patterns along to the younger generations, which could be framed as a referent object in the societal sector. For the purpose of this study, however, the discourses surrounding threats in each sector have been isolated as much as possible in the discourse analysis in an effort to most effectively apply the securitization framework.

¹⁴ See Leonard and Kaunert “Reconceptualizing the audience”; Thierry Balzacq, “The three faces of securitization: Political agency, audience and context,” *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no.2 (2005): 171-201; Mark Salter, “Securitization and desecuritization: A dramaturgical analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11, no.4 (2009): 321-49; and H. Stritzel, “Towards a theory of securitization: Copenhagen and beyond,” *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no.3 (2007): 357-83.

¹⁵ *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* (Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2008), 15. The label “Arctic Rangers” is incorrect, as is the reference to the organization as a “program.” On the Canadian Rangers, a component of the Canadian Forces Reserves that is not isolated to the Arctic, see P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “The Canadian Rangers: A Postmodern Militia That Works,” *Canadian Military Journal* 6/4 (Winter 2005-06), 49-60, and *The Canadian Rangers: A Living History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, forthcoming 2013).

Methodology

Leaving aside questions of the success and advisability of the securitization of broader Arctic issues for now, this paper seeks to lay the groundwork for further study by determining whether there is evidence of Inuit attempts to securitize their economic, social, and environmental problems. This task is addressed through the application of a discourse analysis to a selection of ITK publications with relevance to each sector. ITK was selected for this study because Inuit are their own strongest advocates in these three sectors and, as the coordinator of regional Inuit political organizations and a long-time lobby group in Ottawa, ITK is the most active and influential Inuit actor on the national stage in Canada. The timeframe for this case study is the decade or so since the year 2001, when ITK changed its name from Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). The name change reflects ITK's changing priorities: by the year 2000, three out of four regional land claim agreements were settled and ITK needed a new direction. Seeking a pan-Inuit cause, it refocused its resources and efforts on issues in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors that affect all Inuit across Canada.¹⁶ As the national voice for Inuit in Canada on these issues and a frequent publisher of policy recommendations, ITK is well-suited to this securitization case study.

The selected documents are treated to a discourse analysis, with attention to the context and content of each document. In preparation for the case study, I flagged several key words that frequently appear in Inuit discourse as possible indicators of a securitizing move and then noted the nature of their appearances in the texts. Some of the flagged words are nouns that could be used to describe or respond to an existential threat. Others are verbs, signifying actions that Inuit or their audiences might take in response to the challenge presented. In the language of securitization, each of the words might mark the designation of a referent object. The following list provides examples of possible securitizing language: *defence, threat, sustainable, survive, security, continuity, preserve, protect*. The context in which each word appears is critical. There is a spectrum of securitization language and the textual context is essential to determining where on the spectrum each appearance of these words falls. For example, the *protection* of an object from extinction indicates the designation of a referent object. *Protect* might also be used, however, in a case of decline. In this second case, the object in question is not a referent object because decline does not necessarily indicate an existential threat. Therefore, *protect* used in the second case would not indicate a securitizing move whereas in the first case it might. In some cases, issues are framed in terms of existential threat with words or phrases that were not flagged. These cases are also noted and included in the analysis.

In order to be designated as indicators of a securitizing move, the speech acts in the discourse must meet two important burdens. First, the issue must be framed as an existential threat. Survival must be evidently at stake. Otherwise, there is no referent object and no reason to look for securitization. This burden is clearly articulated by the Copenhagen School as the first component of the process of securitization. The second burden is equally important. In addition to framing the issue as an existential threat, the discourse must propose an extra-ordinary policy remedy, one that would only make sense in the context of an existential crisis. In other words, "the existential threat has to be argued and just gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible (...)."¹⁷ This second discursive burden is implied in the second "emergency response" component of the Copenhagen School's securitization process. If a speech act meets the first burden but does not meet the second then it cannot be declared a securitizing move. Likewise, it is not a complete securitizing move if the second burden is met and the first is not.

What cues in the discourse indicate that an "extra-ordinary" policy recommendation is present? This case study develops four criteria and questions by which to measure the "extra-ordinariness" of each policy recommendation

¹⁶ Whit Fraser, "A tribute to Jose Amaujaq Kusugak | Remembering Jose Kusugak," Nunavut Arctic College, <http://arcticcollege.ca/josekusugak/?p=299> (accessed April 5, 2012).

¹⁷ Buzan et al, *Security*, 25.

that appears in conjunction with an existential threat: applicability, timeframe, novelty, and intent. If a policy recommendation meets one or more of the criteria then it may be said to be “extra-ordinary.”

First, would the policy be conceivable if the referent object were not existentially threatened? In other words, would the recommended policy be appropriate if the object were only in decline? If the answer is yes, then the policy has unlimited applicability – it is not limited to an emergency response situation – and it is an ordinary measure. If the answer is no, then the policy recommendation is the direct result of the framing of the issues as an existential threat and a securitizing move is taking place.

Second, what is the timeframe suggested by the policy recommendation? If the policy recommendation is part of a securitizing move then it will set out the short timeframe (relative to the proposed problem) that is typical of an emergency response. Balzacq notes that “it is in the idea of criticality or emergency that the essence of securitization primarily lies,” so the presence of a time-constrained proposed response would suggest the criticality or emergency of a securitizing move.¹⁸

Third, is the policy recommendation novel? Or is there precedence for it in the dialogue on the relevant issue or in the existing relationship between the potentially securitizing actor and the audience? This is especially pertinent in the Inuit case when the Canadian government is the most likely audience. There is a long history of federal government policy in the North. Accordingly, a policy may have been radical at the time of its first proposal, but I posit that the policies recommended in the Inuit discourse under consideration in this case study should not be considered extra-ordinary if they fall in line with a decade or more of existing policy dialogue or implementation. The weight of precedence and the passage of time push such policies into the realm of the ordinary.

Finally, how does the possible securitizing actor intend for the audience to receive the policy recommendation? Is it intended to create a crisis situation and spur emergency action? This final question is related to the previous three, of course, and it is difficult to answer. Part of the challenge of identifying extra-ordinary policy recommendations is the subjective nature of the assessment. However, some measure of objective certainty may be reached by applying these criteria to each policy recommendation. If the policy recommendation meets even one of the criteria for extra-ordinariness then it qualifies as an extra-ordinary policy and meets the necessary second burden for the designation of the speech act as a securitizing move.

To review, the speech acts in the ITK discourse are subject to a double burden – the identification of an existential threat and a correspondingly extra-ordinary policy recommendation – and each possible speech act must meet both burdens in order to qualify as a securitizing move. The application of this methodology to selected ITK publications will reveal whether Inuit are securitizing actors in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors in the Arctic.

This case study considers Inuit discourse in four documents published by the ITK: *Unikkaaqatigiit: Perspectives From Inuit In Canada* (2005); *Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan* (2007); *ITK Strategic Plan* (2007-2009); and *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* (2008). In the interest of addressing the essential context of the discourse, the necessity of which is highlighted by Balzacq (2011), a description of each document and an explanation of its purpose follow.

The *ITK Strategic Plan 2007-2009*, published in 2007, is a useful starting point, both as an introduction to the ITK as an actor with a particular agenda and for its coverage of issues in each of the three sectors. As an actor, the ITK identifies four roles for itself: a representative organization, an advocacy organization, a learning and teaching organization, and an “independent, long-term Inuit voice on the national scene.”¹⁹ The impetus for the publication

¹⁸ Balzacq, *Securitization Theory*, 32.

¹⁹ *ITK Strategic Plan, 2007-2009* (Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007), 2.

of the *Strategic Plan* was three-fold. First, the organization needed a new vision and mandate, “having successfully delivered its past core mandate, advocacy for Inuit rights” in the land claim settlements. The second strategic driver relates to the “unprecedented attention” focused on the Arctic at the time of the plan's formation, giving the ITK “both an opportunity and an obligation” to channel the attention in ways that would produce “substantial, meaningful, and measurable benefit” to the region and the region's inhabitants. The third motive is the need to fully utilize the visibility of the ITK president as a national leader in effectively communicating Inuit challenges and desires and to raise support among Inuit and the general Canadian population.²⁰ These last two motives substantiate the hypothesis that Inuit discourse, securitizing or not, is directed at multiple and varied audiences. The time frame in this document sets priorities for the two year plan, but resolution is not expected, many of the goals laid out for the ITK are long term, and its policy recommendations are broad and abstract. Interestingly, this document is the only selected document to articulate a wish to diversify the funding base for dealing with Inuit problems; it challenges the ITK to “move towards obtaining 40% of annual funding from non-federal government sources” and “reduce program demands/commitments attached to federal funding support.”²¹

ITK and several other Canadian Inuit regional and health organizations published *Unikkaaqatigiit: Perspectives From Inuit In Canada* in 2005 as a collaborative study of environmental change in the Arctic and its impact on Inuit communities. Its conclusions are drawn from a series of workshops held between 2002 and 2005 in Inuit communities across Northern Canada. The report identifies Inuit observations of changes in the arctic, the implications of those changes for Inuit life, and the adaptive strategies that communities are adopting or could adopt. Cooperation among Inuit communities and various levels of government is emphasized, as is the need for financial resources to fund the adaptive strategies. The project partners are explicit in their purpose, presenting *Unikkaaqatigiit* as a “solid platform to begin the development of tools that will allow community decision-makers to include climate change scenarios and potential impacts in their everyday activities.”²² The audience for this piece of Inuit discourse would appear to be Inuit themselves, especially those in vulnerable communities across Northern Canada. The policy recommendations at the end of the report, however, are drawn from comments by Inuit who participated in the workshops and the nature of the recommendations (ie. requests for financial support, infrastructure construction, educational initiatives) suggest that Inuit leadership and various levels of government are the actual target audience for the recommendations.

Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan was developed by the ITK in cooperation with the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada) (ICC) and was published in 2007. *Inuit Nunaat* refers to the geographic region of the four land claim agreements in Canada – the “Inuit homeland.”²³ The 2005 Partnership Accord between the Canadian government and all Canadian Inuit, represented by the ITK, called for the development of the *Inuit Action Plan*. This *Action Plan* was intended to be the first of many plans in an ongoing cooperative effort to “identify activities and initiatives to be conducted over a three year period, with revisions as needed.”²⁴ It describes the challenges and proposes policy initiatives for issues in a range of subjects, including the environment, health, social and economic developments, human resources, research, international priorities, and women's issues. The three year time frame it recommends for implementation is fairly narrow. The report also explicitly denies ties “to any general exercise to redefine the relationship between the federal government and aboriginal peoples” and this will have bearing on the fulfillment of the second burden for the possible speech acts in the *Action Plan*.²⁵ The plan repeatedly and emphatically underscores the importance of Inuit and Canadian government collaboration, and is itself the product of a

²⁰ *ITK Strategic Plan*, 4.

²¹ *ITK Strategic Plan*, 7.

²² *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 11.

²³ *Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan* (Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada), 2007), 1.

²⁴ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 14.

²⁵ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 15.

collaborative effort between the two, yet, like *Unikkaaqatigiit*, the action that it calls for suggests that its primary target audience is Canadian federal government.

ITK developed and published *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* (January 2008) in response to the 16 October 2007 Speech from the Throne. After establishing the Arctic context, risks, realities, and pressures, it identifies seven organizing themes which are intended to simplify Arctic policy making by organizing the Arctic's considerable challenges into workable topic areas with achievable goals. Mindful of the complexity of Arctic policy-making historically, the ITK *Arctic Strategy* themes were designed to be “sufficiently general to bring together and focus a variety of legislative, policy, program, and investment tools, cutting across a number of jurisdictions and playing out in both the public and private sectors” as well as “sufficiently specific to encourage concrete results and transparent accountability.”²⁶ The following seven themes capture the challenges and policy recommendations articulated in this document: (1) clarifying the geographic stage for a Canadian Arctic policy; (2) Canadian contributions to a peaceful and stable international Arctic region; (3) the environmental, economic, and societal civilian purposes served by military contingents in the arctic; (4) effective devolution of Arctic management to Arctic peoples; (5) the protection and development of aboriginal culture and languages; (6) the development of sustainable economies in Arctic communities; and (7) appropriate support for and use of scientific research and traditional forms of knowledge in policy formation. Within each theme, the document lays out critical considerations and priority policy initiatives. It calls for a flexible time frame of ten to fifteen years for the realization its suggested policy recommendations, “long enough to shape events and see results, short enough to acknowledge degrees and depth of unknowns.”²⁷

These documents suggest an Inuit desire for thoughtful and steady policy-making rather than securitization of Arctic issues and urgent emergency responses to the formidable challenges in the North. The subsequent discourse analysis, arranged by sector, confirms the absence of a complete securitizing move on the part of Canadian Inuit.

Discourse Analysis in the Environmental Sector

Changes and potential threats in the environmental sector have serious consequences for every aspect of Inuit life. According to *Unikkaaqatigiit*, “the land provides sustenance and shelter, and is the foundation of culture and knowledge” and, although many Inuit have adopted southern lifestyles, a significant proportion of Inuit still rely on wildlife and fish as an integral part of their diet.²⁸ It is no surprise, then, that changes in the physical environment are the cornerstone of Inuit discourse. Environmental changes are intimately connected to Inuit livelihoods and culture and consequently it is in the economic and societal sectors that the ITK discourse identifies the greatest threats.

The framing of an existential threat in regards to the environment itself appeared in the ITK discourse only once, in *An Integrated Arctic Strategy*, where “open-ended environmental failures, as a consequence of both unmitigated external causation and absent or inept adaptation strategies” are first on the list of “Key Risks.”²⁹ On the whole, the language used in ITK reports related to environmental and climate changes is impeccably rational and measured. The *Inuit Action Plan* refers to the Arctic environment changing at an “alarming rate” but the possible securitizing key words that appear in environmental contexts all characterize the danger in terms of decline and difference rather than existential threat.³⁰ For example, the *Action Plan* notes that the “Canadian Inuit and the Government of Canada

²⁶ *Arctic Integrated Strategy*, 10.

²⁷ *Arctic Integrated Strategy*, 9.

²⁸ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 54.

²⁹ *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 8.

³⁰ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 23.

acknowledge the twin goals of *preserving* delicate and unique Arctic biological diversity and associated Inuit knowledge, and *protecting* Inuit rights to their genetic resources.”³¹ Preservation in this context does not necessarily connote existential threat and the protection of Inuit rights is not a matter of the survival of their genetic resources. Food security appears with some regularity in *Unikkaaqatigiit*, but only in terms of the quality and accessibility of wildlife food sources. The policy recommendations related to food security are directed to the local level, where educational initiatives might improve hunting tactics, “in terms of hunters becoming more selective about the caribou they hunt,” and the installation of community freezers could preserve food longer and increase the accessibility of traditional meats as temperatures rise.³² Other serious threats in the environmental sector, such as the stability of permafrost and the erosion of shorelines which affect the success of Inuit hunting and the integrity of Inuit houses, buildings, and culturally important sites (in the case of shoreline erosion), also receive non-securitizing treatment.³³

The lack of existential threat framing is accompanied by an absence of extra-ordinary policy responses. ITK policy recommendations in the environmental sector are decidedly non-radical. They call for research and cooperation, both between Inuit and the Canadian government and between the Canadian government and international actors, in almost every case.³⁴ The *Inuit Action Plan* does include an exhortation for “the Government of Canada to undertake the following Environmental actions on an immediate and urgent basis” in its list of recommended next steps, but no specific time frame is given and the items on the list are all general recommendations related to increasing Canadian commitment to existing international environmental regimes, greater integration of Inuit people and traditional knowledge in relevant bureaucratic structures, and more funding for such measures.³⁵ All of these policies are conceivable outside of the existence of an existential threat and have considerable precedence in Canadian government policy and in the relationship between Inuit and the federal government. Even if the “immediate and urgent” timeframe clearly met the second burden for a securitizing move, and the banality of the policies it refers to do not convince me that it does, the first burden is not met in the environmental sector: only one existential threat frame appears in almost two-hundred pages of relevant material.

Discourse Analysis in the Economic Sector

According to the Copenhagen School, securitization in the economic sector is complex and easily misused. Its complexity arises in part from the nature of capitalism, in which the insecurity of market actors drives the efficiency of the market.³⁶ In general, however, the designation of an existential economic threat depends on the referent object. “For individuals,” Buzan et al explain, “economic security can be understood most clearly in terms of basic human needs.”³⁷ In the case of Inuit, it is useful to think about economic security in individual terms: that is, access to the basic necessities for sustaining human life. Traditional Inuit livelihood has historically been able to provide the necessities for survival, so threats to that livelihood may also threaten the survival of Inuit individuals and family groups (which are the basic unit of traditional Inuit social organization). In addition, modern Inuit life is marked by decades of Southern influence so threats to the Inuit community’s ability to participate in the larger Canadian capitalist economy may also be framed in existential terms. The Copenhagen School notes that there is an “overspill quality” to economic security, wherein “much of what is talked about as ‘economic security’ has in fact to do with

³¹ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 29 (emphasis added).

³² *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 8.

³³ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 63.

³⁴ See *ITK Strategic Plan*, 6; *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 23; *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 21-30; *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 10.

³⁵ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 30.

³⁶ Buzan et al, *Security*, 95.

³⁷ Buzan et al, *Security*, 103-104.

logics of survival in other sectors and not the economic one” and this phenomenon is apparent in Inuit discourse regarding the economic sector.³⁸ The discourse analysis suggests that the existential threat frame exists, to some extent, but it is not accompanied by the extra-ordinary policy recommendations that would make the ITK a securitizing actor.

In terms of traditional livelihood, there is some evidence of an existential threat frame. The traditional Inuit way of life relies on subsistence hunting and fishing but climate changes have affected fish and wildlife populations as well as the Inuit ability to hunt and fish effectively using traditional skills and knowledge. In this passage from *Unikkaaqatigiit*, Inuit concern about the loss of traditional livelihood is expressed in vague terms of existential threat:

Many communities emphasized how environmental changes are impacting aspects of Inuit culture and lifestyle, which are based on subsistence hunting and life on the land. Commonly, these discussions focused on the *loss* of weather prediction abilities and the overall decrease in confidence in weather interpretation by people that were previously experts in this ability. This *loss*, couple with a strong sense of *loss* associated with a decrease in the time spent on the land and *a shift away from the subsistence lifestyle and livelihood*, has been a recognized result of the suite of environmental changes being experienced by Arctic communities today.³⁹ (emphasis added)

According to this summary of community observations, the continued existence of traditional ways of life and the traditional knowledge that makes the traditional Inuit lifestyle possible in the Arctic are at stake. For individuals, the loss of Inuit livelihood includes access to good, safe, and nutritious traditional food sources from the land and sea.⁴⁰ The existential threat to Inuit livelihood is articulated more clearly in regard to the aspects of these circumstances that fall within the societal sector (i.e., the loss of traditional knowledge and behavioural customs), as Buzan et al anticipate, but it is present to some degree in Inuit discourse surrounding traditional livelihoods and therefore suggests an existential threat to Inuit survival in the economic sector.

ITK frames an existential threat in the economic sector, but this is not accompanied by extra-ordinary policy recommendations. Participants in the *Unikkaaqatigiit* workshops recommended more research and cooperative efforts between existing research facilities, the federal government, and affected Inuit communities. They also identified a need for more education about the changing weather and travel safety conditions in northern communities. Locally, they recommended a return to the use of more traditional skills in order to regain skills being lost to technological and scientific weather-forecasting methods and as a way of reducing the danger to Inuit hunters on the land. They proposed that a video about climate change in the north be created and distributed in schools and communities. They also suggested making adjustments to the education of Inuit youth, such as reworking school curriculum in order to expose students to more time on the land and facilitating youth involvement in appropriate projects, research, and employment that deal with the environment.⁴¹ No timeframe is given in the immediate textual context, but the suggested courses of action are not unprecedented nor are they inconceivable outside of the context of a security threat. Further, the intention of these recommendations is not to induce an emergency response but to alleviate danger and “decrease the number of people being stranded or injured while away from the community,” which is a reasonable goal.⁴² Therefore, the second burden is not met and Inuit cannot be said to be making a securitizing move in regard to their traditional livelihood.

³⁸ Buzan et al, *Security*, 116.

³⁹ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 104

⁴⁰ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 104.

⁴¹ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 104-105.

⁴² *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 105.

Turning to the second aspect of the economic sector, Inuit participation in the Canadian capitalist economy is strained by physical changes in the environment and external pressures from the South. Environmental changes that affect fishing and hunting patterns also affect Inuit ability to participate in the cash economy by selling the parts of the wildlife that they do not use or consume, like seal pelts. Inuit hunters in the northern communities of Repulse Bay and Holman Island observe that warmer temperatures mean that seals have less fat and thinner fur. The hunters have had to adjust the time of year that they hunt to avoid hunting when the seals are thinnest and to change some of their hunting techniques, as thinner seals with less fat sink rather than float when shot which makes retrieval challenging. Fur quality is also decreasing as temperatures rise, leading to a decline in fur prices and less income from traditional hunting and trapping activities.⁴³ The danger to Inuit economic well-being is clear, but it is not framed in terms of survival.

Inuit participation in the capitalist economy is also threatened by a host of historical and systemic challenges posed by Southern people and policies in the North. Nonetheless, securitizing language is not apparent. For example, ITK discourse decries how “reliance on imported labour, alongside the economic disempowerment/social distress of permanent residents, undermines the productivity of the Canadian economy and undercuts international competitiveness.”⁴⁴ This statement clearly points to some of the challenges that Inuit face in their pursuit of economic well-being, but the identified threat is a threat to the Canadian economy rather than Inuit livelihood and it is framed in terms of damage rather than existential threat. ITK also asserts that “in order to manage their affairs to a reasonable level, crippling gaps and deficiencies in core social areas, particularly education, housing, and health currently experienced by permanent residents have to be addressed and remedied.” This language makes the difficulties of their situation obvious but there is no existential threat frame – rather, they want Inuit to be able to participate in the economy to “a reasonable level.” Likewise, the proposed solutions (that the government address the acute problems in education, housing, and health) are not extra-ordinary because they ask for effective government support in issue areas where the government has a responsibility to all Canadian citizens.⁴⁵

This is not an exhaustive analysis of all the possible threats to Inuit economic well-being that ITK identifies, but it is representative of the discourse's general orientation. Most of the economic dangers are not framed in terms of existential threat and those that are, such as traditional livelihood, are not accompanied by extra-ordinary policy recommendations. Accordingly, they are not part of a complete securitizing move. In the economic sector, Inuit and ITK cannot be said to be securitizing actors.

Discourse Analysis in the Societal Sector

In the societal sector, ITK discourse uses the existential threat frame to greatest effect but it still fails to present extra-ordinary policy recommendations and does not complete the securitizing move. Identity is the key concept in the societal sector and, according to the Copenhagen School, “societal insecurity exists when communities of whatever kind define a development or potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community.”⁴⁶ For Inuit, the survival of their language, Inuktitut, and of traditional behavioural customs and culture is at stake. A community may react to societal threats in two ways: “through activities carried out by the community itself or by trying to move the issue to the political (and potentially military) sector by having the threat placed on the state agenda.”⁴⁷ Inuit react to societal threats in both ways, although their responses do not reach the realm of the extra-ordinary.

⁴³ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 73-74.

⁴⁴ *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 17.

⁴⁵ *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 17.

⁴⁶ Buzan et al, *Security*, 121.

⁴⁷ Buzan et al, *Security*, 122.

The Inuit language, Inuktitut, appears frequently in the discourse. Sometimes it is plainly framed in terms of existential threat and other times it falls just short of being declared a referent object. It is certainly a key concern for Inuit and ITK; three out of the four documents discuss language preservation as a core priority. *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* names the “terminal collapse of aboriginal languages as working languages” as another “Key Risk” and dedicates its fifth theme - “Cultural Distinctiveness and Continuity” - to the state of Inuit language and culture. The threat of a “terminal collapse” is undoubtedly existential and this frame is repeated in the claim that “aboriginal languages in particular are under stress, with their future as fully functioning languages adapted to contemporary life under threat.”⁴⁸ Not all of the *Integrated Arctic Strategy* references to Inuit language and culture introduce an existential threat,⁴⁹ but this idea is presented repeatedly in the discourse. It is interesting to note that in *An Integrated Arctic Strategy*, and in the other documents as well, the ITK discourse consistently links the challenges in the societal sector to success in the economic sector.

In *Building Inuit Nunaat*, Inuktitut is spoken of primarily in terms of preservation, but the discourse fails to frame an existential threat. “The preservation, protection, promotion, support, and enhancement of Inuit language and culture are of primary importance,” the document explains. “Inuit language and culture have been affected greatly by the legacy of the residential schools, the proliferation of southern mass media, the introduction of the wage economy, and by many different social issues.”⁵⁰ Preservation and protection are key words that can indicate a securitizing move. In this context, accompanied by the words promote, support, and enhance, they do not suggest an existential threat. Further, the discourse notes that Inuit language and culture have been “affected greatly” by external pressures, not that those external pressures threaten the existence of Inuit language and culture. The *ITK Strategic Plan* also observes the importance of the “preservation of language and culture” and emphasizes that the ITK must take a “key national role” in “preserving spoken Inuit languages, and ways of life.”⁵¹ Like *An Integrated Arctic Strategy*, both of these documents pointedly link social issues and cultural integrity to challenges in the economic and political sectors. The language of a securitizing move is not evident in these documents, but ITK's recognition of the complexity of the challenges that Inuit face is unmistakable.

The framing of Inuktitut in terms of existential threat is not ubiquitous in the discourse but it does appear in *An Integrated Arctic Strategy*. Is it accompanied by extra-ordinary policy recommendations that would confirm a securitizing move? Again, the answer is no. There is no shortage of policy recommendations regarding the preservation and promotion of Inuit language in the discourse but none of them meet any of the criteria of the second burden: applicability, timeframe, novelty, and intent.

In *An Integrated Arctic Strategy*, where the clearest existential threat claim is made, three policy recommendations stand out. First, the strategy calls for “federal government support for aboriginal languages in the Arctic on at least as generous as federal government support for English and French minorities in other parts of Canada. A solid commitment by the federal government to a long term coherent strategy to support the Inuit language.” Second, ITK asks for the “implementation of the recommendations of the March 2006 report of Thomas Berger with respect to the creation of an educational system capable of graduating acceptable numbers of students proficient in the Inuit language as well as one or both of English and French.” Third, it requests “federal government support for those Inuit

⁴⁸ *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 19.

⁴⁹ For example, the point that “inadequacies in the creative integration of education and language policies in particular are having detrimental effect on the life prospects of aboriginal young people and the functioning of aboriginal communities and households, and the productivity of Arctic economies” describes decline and detriment rather than termination. *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 19.

⁵⁰ *Building Inuit Nunaat*, 40.

⁵¹ *ITK Strategic Plan*, 4, 7.

regions who wish to enact language legislation as a bedrock for protecting and preserving the Inuit language.”⁵² What does ITK mean by support? Is it extra-ordinary for Inuit to request support on par with the federal support given to English and French minorities, given that bilingualism was a fairly extra-ordinary policy at its inception?

I posit that these policy recommendations are not extra-ordinary because they do not meet the criteria of the second burden. By “support,” ITK is likely requesting financial contributions to the maintenance of aboriginal languages; this interpretation is reinforced by its other requests. Would it make sense for Inuit to ask for financial support if the Inuktitut language were not existentially threatened and only in decline? It would. Furthermore, there is precedence for such support both in several decades of Canadian language policy and in the relationship between the federal government and Inuit. Canada's bilingual policy might have been radical when it was proposed in the 1970s but by 2008 it was no longer a novel proposition. Additionally, Inuit request for support is geographically bound to Inuit Nunaat and the Arctic; they do not suggest that students or government officials in southern Saskatchewan be required to learn Inuktitut.

In regard to the historical relationship of financial support for northerners by the southern government, the Canadian government has been promoting and funding Inuit culture and language projects since the late 1970s – for example *Inuit Today* (now called *Inuktitut*) magazine, the 1.6 million dollar radio project ANIK-B, also known as “Inukshuk,” and the ITK organization itself.⁵³ Canadian federal funding for Inuit culture is not a novel concept or policy. The time frame the *Integrated Strategy* calls for is a “long term coherent strategy,” and there is no evidence of the urgency that would suggest an extra-ordinary policy response. Finally, all of these reasons and the ITK's stated desire for a “solid commitment” from the federal government suggest that their intent is not to provoke an emergency response to an existential threat and create a security crisis but to contribute to the formation of practical solution to the very real threats posed to Inuit language and culture. Consequently, the second burden for the presence of a securitizing speech act is not met and the ITK cannot be said to be making a securitizing move in relation to the protection of Inuktitut.

Inuit treatment of threats to their behavioural customs and traditional culture has already been hinted at in the previous discussion of traditional Inuit livelihood in the economic sector. Climate change and weather variability have consequences for the continuity of traditional Inuit lifestyle and culture. Former ITK president Jose Kusugak writes in the forward to the *Unikkaaqatigiit* report that “Inuit are taking action to ensure the world is aware of how these climactic changes are not only threatening the survival of traditional Inuit culture but the earth's survival.”⁵⁴ He identifies Inuit action as a response to an existential threat posed to both their culture and the earth. Later, the report notes that “the changes in their local environments threaten [...]those things that hunters and community members learn while being out on the land – their traditional knowledge and skills, which have been cultivated over long periods of time spent on the land and passed from generation to generation.”⁵⁵ One of the main threats to Inuit culture, as articulated in the ITK discourse, is the increasing difficulty of passing the knowledge and skills (such as fishing or igloo building techniques) down to younger generations.

The existential threat frame here is accompanied by confidence in the Inuit ability to adapt and cope with changes. This confidence is intimated in the statement about the longevity of transgenerational knowledge transfer in Inuit culture, and is explicitly articulated in the following passage:

⁵² *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 19-20.

⁵³ “Inuit Tapirisat of Canada,” *The Inuit North* (July 1979), 7.

⁵⁴ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 5.

⁵⁵ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 104.

climate change may be a major threat to the Inuit way of life, however as a people, they have lived through periods of major change. Some of these changes have been measured over geological time, and some have been measured over decades – such as contact with European culture. Throughout, Inuit have adapted and survived as they must continue to do now.⁵⁶

How existential can the threat be if the ITK praises the resilience of the referent object in the same breath with which it frames the threat? This is an interesting question, although alone it is not enough to discount the existential threat and possible evidence of a securitizing move. Nonetheless, as in the other sectors, the securitizing language is not accompanied by extra-ordinary policy recommendations and the second burden is not met. The policy responses that Inuit recommend for dealing with threats to behavioural customs and culture are the same responses that appeared in the discussion of Inuit livelihood in the economic sector: education. In this case, the response calls both for local communities to self-educate and for the government support of changes in the public education of Inuit young people. As in the economic sector, these requests have a reasonable time frame and their directives fall within the appropriate realms of responsibility for both communities and the government. They are not extra-ordinary policy recommendations and the securitizing move in the societal sector remains incomplete.

Conclusion

Deep analysis of four main ITK documents from the last decade indicates that Inuit are not securitizing actors on Arctic issues. When they (infrequently) frame problems as existential threats, they do not make extra-ordinary policy recommendations, leaving the securitizing move incomplete.⁵⁷ My reading of the documents suggests that this is purposeful: the emergency response that a securitizing move is intended to provoke would be counterproductive to the measures that Inuit actually seek to solve their problems. One of the “Key Risks” laid out at the beginning of *An Integrated Arctic Strategy* is “intermittent attention gaps, with crisis driven decision making and conflict management.”⁵⁸ Securitizing these issues would not result in the consistent and thoughtful long-term policy solutions that Inuit desire and would encourage what they see as risky policy behaviour.

What does this case study contribute to securitization theory? In large part, it illustrates that securitization is a clumsy tool with which to analyze complex subjects and multifaceted actors. In designing the methodology for this case study I came up against some of the key limitations of the theory. For example, the Copenhagen School assumes that everyone is securitizing all the time, but this did not turn out to be the case for Inuit. There is no provision in the theory to address the identification of real threats in terms of survival without making it a security issue. As previously mentioned, the question of audience in the Inuit case is unclear and complicated. This is especially true considering the power dynamics between ITK and its various possible audiences, ranging from Inuit populations to the Canadian public to the various levels of Canadian government. Are Inuit securitizing actors if their securitizing moves are meant to catch the attention of a securitizing state? What if they resist securitization by the state? Here, a more thorough application of the sociological approach to securitization might prove fruitful. Furthermore, the theory is insufficiently developed in its application to non-state actors, which have different audiences, motives, and options for action than states. Can the same rubric be applied to them? This case study is an experimental exercise in that regard. Lastly, it is challenging to identify the threshold for an extra-ordinary policy recommendation by a non-state actor in each of the three sectors: environmental, economic, and societal. Is it a case of failed securitization if a securitizing move was intentionally half-made? Can securitization be the means to a non-security end?

⁵⁶ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 54.

⁵⁷ See table in Appendix 1: while many of the key words do appear in the discourse in contexts that could be part of a securitizing move, they are used much more frequently in non-securitizing circumstances.

⁵⁸ *Integrated Arctic Strategy*, 8

Though this case study concludes with a clear answer to the heavily delimited question it set out to investigate – that Inuit have not made complete securitizing moves and are not securitizing actors in the environmental, economic, and societal sectors according to Copenhagen School criteria – its delimitation also points to several avenues for further research. There are cases where Inuit have framed issues as existential threats in the last decade, but is this a new phenomenon? Are today's *ordinary* policy recommendations the *extra-ordinary* policy recommendations of the past? To what extent does Inuit discourse build on past securitizing discourses? Were Inuit groups securitizing actors in earlier decades? How have Inuit responded to the securitization of military and political issues by Canadian government? Further research is necessary to adequately answer these questions.

There is no doubt that Inuit face serious environmental, economic, and societal challenges in the Arctic. They are not sitting idly by while the world changes around them and the *ITK Strategic Plan* makes clear that they are aware that many eyes are on them.⁵⁹ My analysis suggests that securitization is not a tool that they have found particularly useful. Maybe the risks of securitizing their problems outweigh the potential benefits, or perhaps securitizing these issues would misrepresent the reality of Inuit ability to cope. The following passage from *Unikkaaqatigiit* is illustrative of an Inuit assessment of their own resilience and role in world:

Unfortunately, once again, Inuit are the proverbial 'canary in the coal mine' for the rest of the world. Not only are Inuit experiencing the affects[sic] of climate change first and are therefore in a position to warn the rest of the world about what is perhaps to come, but Inuit are also leading the world in ingenuity and knowledge to adapt to these changes at the local scale. Key to the cultural identity of Inuit is the ability to adapt. It has allowed them to survive for thousands of years in one of the harshest and most sensitive environments on Earth. Southern regions may very well benefit from the lessons being learned in the Arctic today.⁶⁰

If Inuit are the metaphorical “canary in the coal mine” then they may be the most politically savvy songbird the world has seen and, as this analysis proves, securitization is not one of the songs that Inuit see fit to sing.

⁵⁹ *ITK Strategic Plan*, 2, 4.

⁶⁰ *Unikkaaqatigiit*, 118.

Appendix 1: The Frequency of Key Words in Securitizing and Non-securitizing Contexts in the ITK Discourse

<i>Key Words</i>	<i>Securitizing use of language</i>	<i>Non-securitizing use of language</i>
Threat	3 (4 appearances in direct Quotes from the “Partnership Accord”)*	5
Defence	0	0
Sustain	2	Dozens
Survive	2	5
Security	0 (4 appearances in direct quotes from the “Partnership Accord”)*	> 18**
Continuity	2	3
Preserve	1	8
Protect	1	Dozens
Loss	2	> 20

* The “Partnership Accord” is a 2005 Canadian government document outlining the goals of the relationship between the Canadian government and Inuit. Inuit were consulted on its composition but they were not the sole authors. Securitizing language in this document cannot be attributed to Inuit alone and likely reflects more on the objectives of the Canadian government than on the nature of Inuit discourse.

**Many references to food security appear in the documents, especially *Unikkaaqatigiit*.

Bibliography

An Integrated Arctic Strategy. Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2008.

Balzacq, T. "The three faces of securitization: Political agency, audience and context." *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11 No. 2 (2005): 171-201.

-----, *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York, Routledge: 2011.

Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan. Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada), 2007.

Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998.

Dodds, Klaus. "We are a northern country: Stephen Harper and the Canadian Arctic." *Polar Record* Vol. 47 No. 243 (2011): 371-382.

Fraser, Whit. "A tribute to Jose Amaujaq Kusugak | Remembering Jose Kusugak." Nunavut Arctic College. <http://arcticcollege.ca/josekusugak/?p=299> (accessed April 5, 2012).

"Inuit Tapirisat of Canada." *The Inuit North*. July 1979: 7-16.

ITK Strategic Plan, 2007-2009. Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007.

Leonard, Sarah and Christian Kaunert. "Reconceptualizing the audience." In *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. Edited by Thierry Balzacq. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Salter, M. B. "Securitization and desecuritization: A dramaturgical analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority." *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 11 No. 4 (2009): 321-49.

Stritzel, H. "Towards a theory of securitization: Copenhagen and beyond." *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 13 No. 3 (2007): 357-83.

Unikkaaqatigiit: Perspectives From Inuit in Canada. Ottawa: Joint publication of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments at Université Laval and the Ajunnginiq Centre at the National Aboriginal Health Organization. 2005.

Wæver, Ole. "Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery." Paper presented at the ISA Conference Montreal March 2004.

About the Author



KYLIE BERGFALK is a fourth year student at the University of Waterloo where she is pursuing a Joint Honours Degree in Political Science and History with a Specialization in International Relations and Global Governance. In 2012, she was awarded the St. Jerome's University Betty G. Headley Senior Essay Award. After graduation, she hopes to find a career that will unite her interests in the history of Canadian foreign policy, poetry and dinner parties. She currently resides in Seattle, Washington.

MUNK
SCHOOL
OF
GLOBAL
AFFAIRS



ArcticNet

$\triangleright \rho \triangleright^{\text{fb}} C^{\text{fb}} \sqcup \Gamma^b \quad \triangleright \rho \sigma \triangleleft^{\text{fb}} \Pi^c$

The Emerging Arctic Security Environment