



KUANNERSUIT

Identifying Matters Of Security In The Mining Project In Kuannersuit

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Photo of the view from Kuannersuit by Aningaaq Rosing Carlsen

Abstract

This thesis examines what matters of security that can be identified in the public consultation processes in 2014 and 2021, concerning the mining project in the mountain of Kuannersuit in South Greenland. In a theory-driven research design based on the theoretical framework of the Theory of Securitization by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998) from the Copenhagen School, this thesis conducts deductive coding and thematic analysis. The empirical data constitutes 51 written consultation responses and one transcript of a public consultation meeting, produced in 2014 and 2021 in connection with the public consultation processes concerning the mining project in Kuannersuit. With the ontological and epistemological approaches of constructionism and interpretivism, this thesis also investigates how the discipline of security studies can be applied to the public discussion on the mining project in Kuannersuit and future mining in Greenland. The thesis demonstrates how actors claim security, by labelling environmental, economic, and societal issues as a matter of concern, throughout the consultation processes. This is shown in the argumentation of environmental conditions, economic conditions, and societal conditions being affected by the mining project in Kuannersuit. The analysis of these argued security issues, showed that there was a mutual underlying cross-sectoral referent object (that which is threatened), which constitute a two-sided understanding of Greenlandic independence. The project in Kuannersuit is argued as both a means to greater economic independence, thus securing future Greenlandic independence, but also, that the project stands as a threat towards citizen co-determination and participation in local community development. In the thesis however, the theory of securitization also demonstrated that the framework has limitations in its application of threats and referent objects. But by following the theory's definition and application of the widened security agenda, it provided an opportunity to identify issues that are argued as related to security complexes, but which not necessarily is part of a securitizing practice. Thus, the theory proves applicable when trying to identify issues that take the form of matters of security, even though these issues may not apply in a securitizing practice as per the theory of securitization. In a discussion, about the Greenlandic uranium law from 2021, the thesis argued the law to be, to a lesser extend, an expression of the Greenlandic Parliament exercising political measures towards the securitization of independence, and more to be an expression of Greenlandic political attention on what kind of Greenland the citizens wish for the future.

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1. Introduction: Matters of Security - a Widened Perspective

I must admit, as I sit here writing my final university thesis, the events of reality cast a dark shadow as a harsh reminder of why security studies are continuously critical to revisit, rethink and reformulate, as the world moves towards new realities of international relations. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and thus definitely war on European soil, it becomes clearer to me more than ever why the study of security, and how new contributions on the security agenda, is crucial to explore. Because of this, I want to first and foremost position my introduction to the thesis historically, acknowledging the urgent changes we are witnessing in these first days of 2022 between national interest and international relations. Then I will introduce my reader to the scope of the thesis and to my theoretical, philosophical, and methodological approach, and to why the phenomenon of security is relevant to still gain increasing knowledge about.

Post-Cold War perspectives and attitudes on security have over the past 30 years been contested by a new widened security perspective, challenging the Cold-War period's dominant approach to international relations of realism and liberalism. Both perspectives understood the world through different lenses, with realism on the one hand representing an image of the world with the state at the centre and where conflict and competition are the root to maintaining peace between states. For realists', security is almost exclusively connected to the use of force and has military implications as the core means to maintaining state interest and uphold of sovereignty. On the other hand, liberals argue how economic cooperation and interdependence are the governing worldview through which one will maintain national interest and thereby sustain peace (Jackson et al. 2019, pp. 70-107; Hirschauer, 2014).

During the Cold War, the Arctic region has also seen militarization and discussions on security as a result of the ongoing tensions between the polarized world leaders from East to West. According to scholars Jacobsen & Herrmann (2017), security in the Arctic is now yet again object for increasing interest from scholars aiming at understanding how security is positioned in a region of drastic environmental changes. Due to increasing climate changes, which are especially evident in Arctic regions, rising temperatures have made the remote icy waters accessible. These regions have emerged as *new sphere(s) of rivalry for resources and influence* (Dzamukashvili & Glurjidze, 2021), placing the Arctic on the global map in new ways for the world to consider. With an increasing commercial interest leading to an upscaling of military presence, Jacobsen & Herrmann (2017) even describe the

situation in the Arctic region as somewhat of a *race for resources and remilitarization* (Jacobsen & Herrmann 2017, p. 7). They claim a potential situation, for a new Cold War, is emerging as *climate change, globalization, urbanization, and demographic shifts* among the region's Arctic peoples are leading to cultural, economic, and socio-political changes (Ibid. p. 7). As Gad, Jacobsen and Strandsbjerg (2017) state, changes to the climate are not the only issues prevalent to Arctic regional changes. Shift in global power balances, the increasing demands for natural resources and emerging political struggles, both in and outside the Arctic, has left the regions set to changes, evidently symbolizing the becoming of a new age for the Arctic and its peoples (p. 14).

With a new political reality after the end of the Cold War, the need for expanding the theoretical perspective of security agendas was evident, and among others, scholars from the Copenhagen School took on the construction of broadening the understanding of security, using a philosophical lens called constructivism. Constructivism theorises that security could also relate to issues connected to society, politics, economy, and the environment, expanding beyond the traditional approach to security studies which focus mainly on traditional military and political security complexes. This resulted in the concept of a widened security agenda (Jacobsen & Herrmann, 2017).

During the 1990's and 2000's, studies related to the Arctic region turned to the use of constructivist theoretical perspectives, and the Theory of Securitization, born from the Copenhagen School by Berry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), slowly became a popular analytical lens through which security was studied (Jacobsen & Herrmann, 2017, p. 9). According to Padrtova (2019), traditional security studies tend to focus on the national state as the centre of attention and as the only actor for which security could be invoked. Also, in the Arctic regions this would apply, but with growing impacts on the arctic regions from *climate changes, oil and gas extraction, mining, and fisheries* Padrtova (2019, p. 37) argues, that there is still only limited focus on security and the process of securitization in Arctic regions, and that there is a growing need for knowledge connected to why issues related to the environment could serve as object for analysis in connection to security. Before climate changes were even "a thing", the Arctic was pictured as a place where only Indigenous Peoples, adventurers scientists and explorers would set foot. A place surrounded by imaginations of exoticness and less civil life (Sejersen, 2015, p. 2). Scholar Sejersen (2015, p. 3) explains how the increasing changes in the Arctic have had an impact on not just environmental issues, but also contributes to changes with and within economic, societal, and cultural issues. And as he claims,

understandings and questions on sovereignty, security, and safety may require to be reconsidered (Ibid. p. 3).

Security studies in the Arctic region through the securitization lens, have among many scholars, contributed to the widening understanding of security. Jacobsen (2015) describes how Greenland managed to gain a more autonomous foreign policy from Denmark by exploring national identification, and in line with this, Ulrik Pram Gad has explored Greenlandic identity and Greenland as a future nation state (Gad, 2017). In a slightly different direction, turning to the field of the environment, Kristensen and Rahbek-Clemmensen (2018) activates the theory of securitization in connection with Greenlandic debates on uranium and the effects of uranium mining on the Greenlandic future society.

According to Janussen (2019, p. 16), the discussion on the Greenlandic subsoil and its possible raw materials, has been a sore spot for both Danish and Greenlandic politicians, whom have had an almost tug of war around raw materials. Already during the 1950's, much focus was on the Greenlandic subsoil and its possible assets, like oil and minerals, leading to a major focus on the possibilities the Greenlandic subsoil posed. A Danish energy crisis during the 1970's was a leading factor in the wish for extraction of raw materials from the Greenlandic soil and mountains, as the thought of Greenlandic raw materials became the subject of speculations that the crisis could be relieved through such extractions (Sejersen, 2015, p. 16). Following the discussions on the Danish-Greenlandic relationship connected to raw materials, Sejersen (2015) claim, *In these speculations, tensions also developed between Denmark and Greenland. [...] Greenlandic politicians opposed what they perceived as an exploitation of Greenland* (p. 17), leaving an impression of a highly conflict-filled time.

Explorations for raw materials have occurred around much of the Greenlandic coast with discussions rising in connection to this upcoming field of income for the Danish state and the later Greenlandic Self-Government. But these speculations were fuelled by concern for the environment, social impacts, international relationships, foreign policy, and disputes over economic gains (Nielsen, 2013). As Professor Gjørsv (2017, p. 37) explains, the concept of security has been expanding into the field of the environment since the 1980's with the increasing recognition, that the environment plays a role for not only the state but also nations, societies, communities, and people, breaking free of the state-centred approach in traditional security studies. From economic uncertainties associated with

the trade of natural resources and the discussion on security in international relations, to the protection of ecosystems on the basis of environmental preservation, environmental security surely has many aspects. Also, energy security has, according to Gjørsv (2017, pp. 37-38), evolved into its own concept. In recent times, with the massive development of renewable energy technologies, energy security articulates both the necessity for reliable energy sources, for the sake of consistent and constant availability of energy, and how it affects the security of the state by linking national security to energy policies.

In continuation of this comprehensive focus on security, I will introduce this thesis' problem area and raison d'être, as I, in this thesis, connect a discussion on the widened security agenda and today's complex discussions on Greenlandic mineral industries.

1.1. Rare Earth Elements – An International Focal Point

According to the International Energy Agency, the main international forum for energy, the world has entered an era of major changes. Demanding challenges to meet today's need for technology that can accommodate the green transition of the future are in high focus. But this technology is not easily bought and relies on mining for critical minerals.

“Today, the global energy system is in the midst of a major transition to clean energy. The efforts of an ever-expanding number of countries and companies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to net zero, call for the massive deployment of a wide range of clean energy technologies, many of which in turn rely on critical minerals such as copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt and Rare Earth Elements” (International Energy Agency, 2021, p. 1)

For now, China holds a central role as the world's leading supplier- and consumer of the Rare Earth Elements (Kalvig, 2021, p. 93). This makes the access to such raw materials increasingly more difficult, if not unstable for the European national and regional economies, by being dependent on China. As the European Commission (2020, p. 16) states, this dependency makes the European Union member states vulnerable, potentially posing as a security issue in the near future.

These expected difficulties, in supply and demand for Rare Earth Elements, also pose as an issue relevant to Greenland, as this massive international interest in the supply for Rare Earth Elements has resulted in exploration activities in areas located around Greenland's coast.

1. 1. 1. Kuannersuit: a Mountain of Possibilities

8 km northeast of the town of Narsaq in the municipality of Kujalleq in South Greenland, lies the mountain of Kuannersuit. South Greenland is known for its picturesque green landscapes stretching far beyond, with amazing views and a somewhat more fruitful climate than the rest of Greenland. This scenic landscape is described by a Danish biologist and journalist, as bit of a fairy tale “*Narsaq Elv runs with its bubbling water from the glacier at the edge of the ice sheet and down to Dyrnæs Bay and the small Narsaq town (...) in the beautiful red, yellow, blue, and green wooden houses*” (translation by author) (Nielsen, 2013). But this mountain is not only the starting point for great colourful descriptions, but also a years-long discussion about minerals, oil crises, environmental considerations, local socio-economic conditions, and ultimately discussions on Greenlandic independence.

This is where the otherwise picturesque tale of Mount Kuannersuit comes into play. Because Kuannersuit contains some of the world's largest deposits of Rare Earth Elements and it is thus put in the centre of attention in this expanding transition away from fossil fuels. The past years particular focus, on the need to develop CO₂-reducing energy, has left the demand for the extraction of Rare Earth Elements higher than ever (International Energy Agency, 2021, p. 43). These conditions have led to massive international interest in the extraction and processing of Rare Earth Elements, giving way to geopolitical concerns in the West, including Greenland. In the midst of transitioning to the use of clean energy, the international society encounters challenges both with the increasing demands to supplies in Rare Earth Elements and national interest. As Janussen (2019) states, after half a century of speculations and discussions about the Greenlandic subsoil and its values, contemporary discussions about Greenland's future relationship to mining and its place in Greenlandic politics is yet again a pressing topic.

In 2013-2014, the discussions on Greenlandic mineral resources were yet again at its height, and especially the divided opinions about Greenland's opportunities to become economically independent from Denmark led the discussions. According to scholars Gad, Jacobsen & Strandsbjerg (2018), the discussions include topics related to: oil, conservation of the vulnerable Greenlandic nature, a post-colonial Greenlandic society, the concept of sustainability, and future perspectives on economic activity. On the one hand, there were worries about nature, the climate impact of mining and ethical problems, and on the other hand, arguments that mining is the only way out of economic dependence from Denmark.

With the introduction of Self-government in 2009, Greenland took over the legislative and administrative competence regarding mineral raw resources, and in 2014 the outside world witnessed a historic zero-tolerance policy on mining of uranium being lifted, albeit it never really being a legislative ban (Christensen, 2014; Thomassen, 2014). After scrutinising records for the zero-tolerance policy on mining of uranium, Thomassen (2014) argues that it is widely believed that the zero-tolerance policy toward uranium was only a result of a shared decision in 1988 and not a policy. But nonetheless, it left the 2014 vote on the removal of the zero-tolerance policy, a move to legitimize the mining of uranium in Greenland.

1. 1. 2. A New Political Agenda

In the last months of 2020, there was internal division in the ruling party in Greenland which, eventually, ended in new elections to the Inatsisartut (the Greenlandic Parliament) in April 2021. As Ulrik Pram Gad from the Danish Institute for International Studies states to the Danish newspaper Information, *the election is most of all about distribution policy* (translation by author). He further explains that the election will be about having to compromise in the discussion about Greenland's future economic development, including the issue on mining of uranium-containing rock material (Hansen, 2021, ¶ 6).

For only the second time in Greenlandic governmental history, the left-wing party Inuit Ataqatigiit (IA) and chairman Múte B. Egede won the election. Múte B. Egede advocated throughout the election to stop the project in Kuannersuit, and promised voters that *Greenland's raw material journey must not take place at the expense of Greenlanders' health, welfare and job opportunities* (translation by author) (Preisler, 2021, ¶ 10). Thus, Egede talked into the dilemma that, while many argue that mining activities are devastating to the vulnerable Greenlandic nature, many of the challenges that Greenland faces, in an attempt to secure Greenland's future income and business development, is believed to redeem with the implementation of the project in Kuannersuit.

This rising geopolitical interest in the Greenlandic underground, has also linked Greenland's interests in increased self-agency, concerning international relations, to security policy aspects of the uranium mining and national security interests. This is especially fuelled by Danish politicians fearing Chinese involvement in Greenlandic mining and infrastructure projects, and has thus presented China as a political security threat (Gad, Graugaard, Holgersen, Jacobsen, Lave & Schriver, 2018). As Gjørsv

(2017) explains, the concept of security is increasingly employed into other areas and debates, also concerning energy, climate, and economics in relation to environmental issues. Following the massive political and economic interest in the Greenlandic subsoil combined with the pressing political project of Greenland as an independent national state, the questions and heightened debate on uranium becomes a central topic of current Greenlandic political debate (Gad 2014, p. 4: Bjørst, 2017, p. 28).

Considering the years-long interest in raw material extraction in Kuannersuit and today's discussions about natural resources and national interests (Thrane 2016), I find it interesting to dive into this particular mining project to explore an interplay with security studies in the Arctic. After reviewing an extensive amount of literature, I set out to investigate the complex topics surrounding the project in Kuannersuit, ranging from discussions on environmental changes, regional Greenlandic development, and local social challenges, to discussions on national security interest, and how these topics interplay and sets the stage for today's Greenlandic political discussions on the project in Kuannersuit.

1. 2. Research Question

Thus, my research question for the thesis is:

What matters of security can be identified in the public consultation process in 2014 and 2021 concerning the mining project in Kuannersuit?

In continuation of recent years' developments within the mining industry in Greenland, discussions on Greenlandic economic independency and the central topic of mining in the election to the Inatsisartut in 2021, I also find it particularly appropriate to ask ***why the Inatsisartut adopted the law on the prohibition of prospecting, exploration, and exploitation of uranium, etc. of December 2021¹*** (translation by author) (UL, 2021) (hereafter the uranium law). This question is not part of my main research question but will be examined in the thesis as a natural continuation of the research question.

In the following thesis, I will attempt to identify what matters of security that arise in the public consultation processes in 2014 and 2021, concerning the mining project in Kuannersuit. I will pursue

¹ Inatsisartutlov nr. 20 af 1. december 2021 om forbud mod prospektering, efterforskning og udnyttelse af uran

this, using a deductive research design, based in the theoretical framework of the Theory of Securitization by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), from the Copenhagen School. With the ontological and epistemological approaches of constructionism and interpretivism, this thesis likewise sets out to investigate whether the discipline of security studies can be applied to today's discussion about mining in Greenland. The analysis is conducted using deductive coding on a set of empirical data, while applying thematic analysis based on the theoretical framework of the theory of securitization.

1. 3. Motivation

In this thesis, I position myself in the field of security studies in the Arctic in the connection to the raw mineral industry in Greenland. I do this because I have great motivation to work with and solve challenges that now and in the future arise around reliable and sustainable energy, and the challenges that we see on the global stage which relate to energy and energy security. During my studies, I have, with different approaches, worked with the understanding of security in the Arctic, but mostly from an angle of national and regional interest and in the field of traditional security studies (Horsfeldt & Engesgaard, 2020: Horsfeldt, la Cour, Grønbech, & Engesgaard 2020). In this thesis, I am particularly interested in local challenges and how environmental issues and the concept of security can be researched in local Arctic context.

Through my studies in International Relations and European Studies, I have obtained a wide insight into important international themes focusing on global, regional, and local management, concerning a wide range of topics from war to social welfare. I have also obtained knowledge around the European Union as an actor in international relations and likewise I have studied the European Union's cooperation and relationship with Overseas Countries and Territories. In continuation of this I have had the opportunity to specialize in Arctic Studies where I have gained knowledge about how to approach and understand area-specific issues and how to rethink and research Arctic matters using the unique Aalborg University framework of Problem-Based research methods. Throughout this thesis, I wish to shed light on how security interplay in environmental, societal, and economic areas, and the continuously growing research field to understand the complicated political, natural, and human aspects when illuminating the concept of security in an Arctic context. In this thesis I aim to demonstrate how real-life problems in Arctic regions can be studied and how we can, and must, approach historical, social, political, and cultural dimensions in the Arctic when doing so.

2. The Theory of Securitization - A framework for the thesis

In this section, I will introduce the Theory of Securitization by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (Buzan et al. 1998) from the Copenhagen School. It will then be further elaborated in chapter 2. 2. and 2. 3.

What is the theory of securitization and how does the concept of security play a role in connection to the theory? To answer this, I look into the background for the book: *Security A New Framework for Analysis*, by Buzan et al. (1998). The authors describe how the theory is an attempt to widen the approach to security studies by creating a new and comprehensive framework for security studies.

After the end of the Cold War, when it came to understanding the concept of security, a new and wider agenda for security studies over time established itself. To understand security and the dynamics of security studies, the authors formulated a new analysis-tool that could be used to understand security, not only within the traditional military and political areas, but also in areas such as economics, environment, and society. As Buzan et al. (1998, ¶Preface) describe, *our approach is based on the work of those who for well over a decade have sought to question the primacy of the military element and a state in the conceptualization of security*, and thereby allowing security issues to be discussed outside the realms of the state. This attempt came after several different actors had all tried to question security and its traditional place in the literature, all concerning state survival and with the military as a means of maintaining it.

“Their [the different actors] move has generally taken the form of attempts to widen the security agenda by claiming security status for issues and reference objects in the economic, environmental, and societal sectors as well as the military-political ones that define traditional security studies ...”

(Buzan et al. 1998, p. 1).

As the quote describes, there was an attempt to call for security in connection with issues other than the security of the state and thereby state survival which until then had claimed the status as “worth of protection” when it came to expressing security. As the authors claim,

“Identifying security issues is easy for traditionalists, who, broadly speaking, equate security with military issues and the use of force. But it is more difficult when security is moved out of the

military sector. There are intellectual and political dangers in simply tacking the word security onto an ever wider range of issues” (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 1).

Buzan et al. (1998) thus faced the challenge that there seemed to be a need to be able to analyse security with a broader understanding of security studies, but at the same time *without losing sight of the original purpose* (Ibid. ¶Preface). It reflected the post-Cold-War debate, that, on the one hand there was a need to be able to assign non-military issues security status, represented by “The Wideners” and on the other hand, the fear that allowing so, would dilute the meaning of the word security and effect social and international relations (Ibid. p. 2). Buzan et al. (1998) describe their contribution to security studies, as an attempt to *construct a more radical view of security studies by exploring threats to reference objects and the securitization of those threats that are nonmilitary as well as military* (p. 2). They assigned the word *threat* to whatever was threatening and the word *referent object* to whatever was worth of protecting against that threat. With this approach they thereby rejected, that security could only be analysed in connection with military and political security issues, likewise that other non-military issues were only relevant if they related to military implications, opening the possibility to reflect on security matters in a widened perspective.

2. 1. The widened Security Agenda

With the theory of securitization representing a new approach of perceiving security studies, I will move on to the primary components and purposes of the theory of securitization.

The concept of security that I apply in this thesis, differs from security connected to what one would maybe associate it with from one’s own life, like citizen security, personal security, or social security. In Buzan et al.’s framework (1998, p. 21) security refers to survival, primacy, and priority. The purpose of understanding security from a broadened perspective, is connected to the process of arguing a threat to pose as a prevailing threat – so much that it can be categorized as an existential threat. Likewise, by presenting something as “in danger of surviving” to the extent that it must be dealt with right away, one has traditionally been able to legitimize the use of extraordinary measures to cope with the threat. *Traditionally, by saying “security” a state representative declares an emergency condition, thus claiming a right to use whatever means necessary to block a threatening development* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 21). This means that when e.g., someone presents an issue as endangered or as extremely dangerous and perceived as something to be handled right now, the issue

is taken away from the normal political handling of the issue and into a field that is "above" general political practice, granting it absolute primacy. Usually, the state exercises politics with common means to which they have a mandate. But as the authors describe, *Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politicization [...] where an issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures, and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure* (Ibid. pp. 23-24), leaving the process of securitization a justification and legitimization on the use of policy tools, which are usually reserved for crisis management.

“We do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued and just gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimise emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible had the discourses not taken the form of existential threats, points of no return, and necessity” (Ibid. p 25).

In this quote, the authors present that the threat does not necessarily have to require actions like emergency measures, but that it is enough that the arguments initiate activities that could actually lead to the adoption of emergency measure when handling the threat. Because as Buzan et al. (1998, p. 21) describe, within the widening security agenda, they question what *existential threat* and *emergency measures* mean. They describe that it is important for those who analyse security issues according to the widening agenda, to understand, that we are not dealing with a universal standard for what poses as a threat, but that the threat can only be understood in connection with the referent object which is threatened. If we look at the fact that, within the widened agenda, there are several security issues which appears across a wide selection of sectors: understood as areas within state's interests like economics and societal areas. Thereby they also argue that the nature of the threat changes according to which security issue is argued and in which sector one perceives it within.

Likewise, it is important to understand, that securitization, according to the widening agenda, does not always go through the State, as with traditional security studies, but that securitization can be enacted in other forums as well. This means that other social entities can now attempt to argue that an issue is a security issue (Ibid. pp. 21-22). The argument would be that, *If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant*, implying, that if this specific issue is not handled as a security issue, no other issue is relevant (Ibid. p 24).

Thus, this attempt to securitize an issue entails a premise that a threat does not necessarily have to be a *real* threat, or that something is *really* threatened. It's all about how something is presented and argued. When analysing security issues with the theory of securitization, it is thus crucial to understand, that the analytical focus should be on the actor's use of a *rhetoric of existential threat*, or on the attempt to *speak security*, with the aim at establishing an intersubjective understanding as something being in danger or as something being a threat (Ibid. p. 25).

A tool for identifying attempts of an actor using *rhetoric of existential threat* or attempts to *speak security*, could show itself as specific language use such as speaking of survival or priority of action. The word security does not have to be a part of the speaking, but the speaking should have elements of urgency, emergency, prioritisation, importance, danger, or point of no return, and as Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 25-33) claim, the speaking should also identify a possible way out of the dilemma. Likewise, it can be the dramatizing of an issue as supreme priority, or to speak about issues that are endangered or need protection.

Buzan et al. (1998, p. 30) argue, that the process of securitization must be understood as an intersubjective process where we distinguish between security as objective, where there is an actual threat e.g., a tsunami or radioactive nuclear waste fall out, and subjectively where something is perceived as a threat. But as they claim, *nothing ensures that these two approaches will line up* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 30), leaving situations where one actor could perceive something as in extreme danger, and another actor does not. But by claiming that the understanding of security is intersubjective, they also argue, that security is an entity not capable of being measured. And as they say, *it is not easy to judge the securitization of an issue against some measure of whether that issue is "really" a threat; doing so would demand an objective measure of security that no security theory has yet provided* (Ibid. p. 30), referring to the fact, that security studies have yet to create a definition of security or a way of measuring it.

2. 2. The Copenhagen School's Levels and Sectors for Analysis

When working with the theory of securitization, one will become familiar with the fact, that the theory divides the theory into different components for the purpose of facilitating the analysis, emphasizing dynamics, and simplifying often complex studies. It thus strengthens the analyst to have insight into the components that make up the theory of securitization before engaging in an analysis. For the

purpose of facilitating the theoretical framework, the following chapter will outline the components of the theory.

2. 2. 1. Levels of Analysis: Finding Units

According to Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 5-6), Levels of Analysis is a way in which you, in your analysis of security issues, can divide or separate Units occurring in the dynamics. Unit is an expression which covers the actors occurring in the analysis. Thus, Levels are not an analytical element in the analysis itself and is not object to analysis, but are used to locate and identify which forms of actors that are operating in the data. By dividing actors into Levels, one also gets the opportunity to see the relationship between the actors and possible security issue. Levels must therefore be seen as providing a framework for theorizing, including *ontological referents for where things happen rather than sources of explanation in themselves* (Ibid. pp. 5-6).

According to Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 5-6), the most common used Levels of Analysis are:

- *International systems* meaning the largest components. This could be global organisation like the UN.
- *International subsystems*, meaning groups of units within the international system e.g., the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the EU, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
- *Units*, meaning actors composed of various subgroups like organisations or communities. This could be states, nations, or larger transnational firms.
- *Subunits*, meaning organised groups of individuals that try to affect the behaviour of the Unit. This could be lobbies or organisations like Greenpeace.
- *Individuals*, meaning the individual citizen of the world.

2. 2. 2. Sectors

To meet the widened agenda for security studies, Buzan et al. (1998, p. 8) tried to develop a more diversified approach to sectors by considering what they mean and how they interplay. The sectors came to include the economic, societal, and environmental in addition to the military and political sector. But as Buzan et al. (1998) describe,

“Sectors might identify distinctive patterns, but they remain inseparable parts of complex wholes. The purpose of selecting them is simply to reduce complexity to facilitate analysis. The use of sectors confines the scope of inquiry to more manageable proportions by reducing the number of variables in play” (p. 8).

This quote explains, as with levels, that sectors do not pose as object for analysis, but merely pose as a way of identifying specific interaction. First and foremost, it should thus be understood, that the attempt to perceive security issues from sectors, enables you to identify distinctive patterns for one specific sector where specific threats and actors are located. But with this approach, the analyser risks seeing security issues one-sided, eventually missing the bigger picture so to speak. So, to fully investigate security issues, the analyser needs to accept, that other entities than the state can claim security for “things”, because threats are perceived subjectively. Only then the multi-sectoral approach appears, allowing sectors to remain inseparable parts of a complex whole.

2. 3. The Components of the Securitizing Practice

In addition to the components of Levels of Analysis and identification of sectors, the theory of securitization is composed of six theoretical “tools for analysing”, which constitute a toolbox for theorizing. The components and tools thus serve as a collective framework to analysing a securitizing practice when identifying securitization. The components and tools in the theory must therefore be understood as a translation tool used in an attempt to identify security issues and possible securitization.

The six theoretical tools for theorizing:

1. A Securitizing Actor
2. A Threat
3. A Referent Object
4. Facilitating Conditions
5. An Audience
6. Extraordinary Measures

1. A securitizing actor is the actor(s) that attempts to argue that a given issue is either in danger or is a threat. The securitizing actor presents an argument about what is perceived threatened and why, aiming at succeeding with their argument (Buzan et al. 1998 pp. 31-32).

2. A threat is the entity which a securitizing actor proclaims to pose as a danger towards something and which needs urgent attention. The threat itself is only understood in relation to the referent object in question as it holds characteristics to the context it sits within, meaning that the threat varies according to the actor and sector (Buzan et al. 1998 pp. 21-22). This is an important part of understanding the widened security agenda, as it holds the analytical approach to threats.

3. A referent object(s) is *things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 36).

4. Facilitating conditions shall be understood, as conditions under which the attempt to position something as a threat, occurs. According to Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 32-33), the success of the securitizing attempt, depends on if the attempt to *speak security* is a good combination of language and society. This means that the constructions and language used, and societal status of the securitizing actor, matters greatly if the securitizing actor is to succeed.

5. The audience ultimately determines whether an attempt at securitization is successful or just an attempt. They are the unit of “deciders”, accepting or rejecting the securitizing actors attempt to securitize an issue (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 31).

6. According to the wider agenda for security studies, extraordinary measures has moved from being actions that traditionally was linked military or political methods for upholding the survival of the state. Now the referent object in question, and the particular nature of the threat, leaves a wider possibility to choose among different kinds of extraordinary measures. This could be mobilization of special political powers or to justify that an issue receives a disproportionate amount of attention and allocation of resources (Buzan et al. 1998, pp. 21-22).

By describing the components and tools constituting the theoretical framework, and how they can be used to identify a securitizing practice, I will engage in a discussion on whether the theoretical framework is applicable for examining matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit. It is important to emphasize that in this thesis, the focus is not on whether successful securitization has been achieved or not, but on how the tools can provide an insight into the discussions on security in the project in Kuannersuit. It is relevant to investigate whether the discipline of security studies can be used to identify matters of security in the consultation processes, because an investigation based on this framework will qualify the discussion about mining in Greenland and the applicability of security studies.

3. Philosophy of Science

In this chapter, I present the methodological approach of the thesis. To clarify the deductive approach in the thesis, I have chosen to place this section after the theoretical section, to make it clear to the reader that the theoretical framework is crucial to how the rest of the thesis is designed.

As this thesis is based on a qualitative research strategy with a deductive approach using the theory of securitization by Buzan et al. (1998), I think it is appropriate for the understanding of the thesis' research approach that I review the relationship between research strategy, theory, research methods, and the topic of security matters.

When working within qualitative research, it is important to make a number of considerations in order to meet the requirements for qualitative social research. According to Clark (2021, p. 4), it is important that you, as a researcher, first and foremost realize what approach you have to your subject and to your research. This is done by considering what approach you have to everything from choosing which part of the world you want to deal with, to how the research question should be formulated, what methods you use and how to interpret your data. Likewise, the researcher should also consider what implications possible findings have for the theory, if any. By making these considerations, Clark et al. (2021, p. 4) believe, that one can avoid some of the initial mistakes that most often occur in connection with research. This could, among other things, be to consider whether one's research methods are in line with what one really wants to know something about. Likewise, the authors claim that by being aware of the approach you have to the research, it also helps one to understand how others in the same field, or other scientific fields, work with their research. By being taught how to conduct research, you ensure correct procedure in the research, so it accommodates the area the research is situated in. As Clark et al (2021, pp. 4-5) explain, conducting social research should be because it is *fascinating* to know about social life. They continue to explain, that social research is a way of getting an insight into why things change, or why they don't, and how it can lead to new understandings about a given subject or to identify gaps in the academic literature.

The use of theory in one's research also plays a significant role, as it is the theory that brings the "glasses" through which one try to understand the research. It is thus important to state the theoretical approach at the beginning of the thesis, as it has a great impact on how the research is structured. The theory can also be used by the reader to understand the starting point of how the researcher views the world she is investigating (Clark et al. 2021, pp. 6-7).

3. 1. Ontological and epistemological considerations in securitization theory

In the following section, I will discuss the theory of securitization's ontological and epistemological considerations, through its constructionist and interpretive starting point. Likewise, the concept of security in connection to the theory will be discussed.

3. 1. 1. Ontological considerations

Ontology is, in a simple sense, the study of the nature of reality. It is important to articulate because the ontological starting point determines how to define the reality examined in this thesis. In the thesis, I work from the premise of ontological constructionism, being that reality is *social constructions that have been and continue to be built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors* (Clark et al. 2021, p. 27), claiming, that it is the actors in the world that create social phenomena and their meanings, produced through social interaction. This also points to the fact that the researcher's own version of the world has an impact on how the research project turns out. Constructionism is according to Weinberg (2014, pp. 4-6) positioning in the world as created through social interactions. This suggests that the world as we perceive it is in fact a product of constructed meaning and created through social interactions. Thus, phenomena or social entities are not pre-given or fixed external realities, in which social actors cannot influence.

Stepping into the theory, we see that Buzan et al. (1998, ¶Preface) also articulate their ontological approach in the theory. Here they explain how they work from a constructivist perspective, where security can be analysed with a *constructivist operational method for distinguishing the process of securitization from that of politicization - for understanding who can securitize what and under what conditions* (Ibid. ¶Preface). The concept of security and whether something is a security issue thus holds an important role to the ontological position. As I interpret Buzan et al. (1998, p. 31), the process of securitization and framing something as a security issue, is subjective and created intersubjectively through social interactions and constructions of the meaning of the concepts. By stating that security and securitization are not fixed entities and thus cannot be viewed as objective entities, it also provides an opportunity to establish that the focus for this thesis security and securitization, meets the constructionist logic.

3. 1. 2. Epistemological considerations

My view of the problem field and of the knowledge I gather strongly influences the interpretation of the empirical analysis. Moving on to the epistemological considerations for this thesis, I want to draw from the theory's starting point, as I interpret it. Epistemology concerns what should be viewed and accepted as knowledge in the research, likewise how we acquire this knowledge (Cellucci, 2015, p. 215). Drawing on the theory of securitization, and the theory's fundamental idea that, *the existence and management of certain issues as security problems does not necessarily depend upon objective, or purely material conditions* (Balzacq et al. 2014, p. 3), I move towards an epistemological view of interpretivism. Here the researcher needs to pay respect to the fact, that there is a difference between the methods used by the natural sciences and their view of the world and the sciences that work with societal, economic, or psychological conditions. Following, an interpretive approach to the data is based in my interest in specific environments and my acknowledgement that the reality of the subject and the data are not objective, but influenced by people within the environment I place myself in. This leaves this thesis to use methods that does not follow scientific models, but methods that try to grasp intersubjective social action, and what these actions produces of opinions or experiences.

In the theory, Buzan et al. (1998, ¶Preface) explain, that with their framework for the study of security, they move away from the traditional way of looking at security and into a new era. According to this thesis' interpretation of the theory of securitization, this described origin from traditional security studies, draws parallels to the theoretical tradition of political Realism from an International Relations perspective. Political Realism has the perspective on security, that security is a state-centred issue and works from a form of objective point of view, where threats are often categorized according to how acute they are for state survival (Jackson et al. 2019, p 70). In continuation of this, in this thesis I put my interpretive research approach into play, by examining how security can *also* be understood away from the traditionalist Realist realm by using a widened perspective on security.

But as a previously deployed soldier during NATO missions to Eastern Europe and a professional firefighter, my understanding of the concept of security surely draws from the perspectives of Political Realism. My preconception of security is shaped by ideas from the disciplines of security- and defence, conflict resolution and prevention of disaster. During my studies I have however increasingly taken an interdisciplinary approach to the concept of security to incorporating knowledge from academic disciplines like social sciences, sociology, and natural

sciences. However, this recognition should not be understood as qualitative research being just “up to the eye that sees”, but a recognition of, that I as a researchers need to be clear about how I conduct the research, with insight onto the thesis’ theoretically and methodologically approach, making it easier to evaluate the thesis’ trustworthiness and transparency (Nowell et al. 2017).

3. 2. Theoretical Framework vs Research Methods

It is important to shed light on the relationship between the theoretical framework and the research methods used in the thesis. In this thesis I have designed a theory driven research approach. This is demonstrated in the application of the theoretical framework using the theoretical components and tools, through which I view the empirical data. The theoretical framework of Securitization thus serves as a justification for how I understand the world I am investigating.

Working deductively means I use the theory of securitization actively in the analysis, while also using the knowledge that is already around the subject, gathered through studies or through literature reviews (Clark et al. 2021, p. 19). In this process, the theoretical framework is used to guide empirical inquiry, which means that I carefully consider how to collect data and whether that data can be interpreted based on the chosen approach. As Clark et al. (2021, p. 19) describes, *the researcher draws on what is known about a particular domain and on relevant theoretical ideas in order to deduct a hypothesis*. However, in this thesis, one must understand the word hypothesis as a speculation I have about something that I would like to investigate with the chosen framework.

4. Methods

The next step in the thesis is to discuss the approach to the empirical data and how this thesis’ analytical approach is designed to structure, identify, and make sense of the data for the sake of being able to identify and discuss matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit.

This thesis’ research approach is based in qualitative methodologies and following the philosophy of science, the research methods should follow the traditions of qualitative research. Because this thesis follows a philosophy of science where interpretivism and constructionism is the ontological and epistemological position, the use of qualitative methods provides an opportunity to emphasize meaning, world views, understandings, and interpretations of phenomena, focusing on words, social interactions, or relationships (Clark et al. 2021, p. 350). Following the ontological position of

interpretivism, I understand the social world and the properties in it, as outcomes of social interactions. To capture and translate data, I therefore need a method that corresponds to this, and which provides an opportunity to structure and assist in capturing insight into this thesis' problem field.

4. 1. Document analysis

A central and recognized method within the social sciences is document analysis, which is considered a method in line with interviews or observations (Boyatzis, 1998). In order to meet scientific quality, I argue, that document analysis allows me to create a methodological connection between what I aim to investigate, the theoretical framework, and the analytical approach to the data. While using document analysis, I also recognize this thesis' epistemological positioning, as to how and what qualitative research should accept and collect as empirical data for analysis.

According to the theory of securitization, *the analysis should be conducted on text that are central in the sense that if a security discourse is operated in the community, it should be expected to materialize in this text* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 177). Understood in the sense, that the use of documents as empirical data is central to the understanding that securitization only appear when security arguments are used as instruments in debates. Document analysis in this thesis thus allows access to direct insight into whether security issues appear from text. According to Kristensen & Hussain (2019, p. 151), the purpose of analysing documents by focusing on textual content, is to provide an as accurate description of reality as possible. Clark et al. (2021, p. 489) describe how the nature of documents provides qualities such as direct thoughts and original unchanged words, available to everyone in their original form. The selected empirical data thus represent data that I argue will provide direct insights into the project in Kuannersuit. But here it must also be stated that transcriptions are different, as in the transcription from one language to another, original meanings and perceptions may be lost. When transcribing audio or video into text, there is undeniably something "lost", as body language, facial expressions and speech pauses cannot always be translated into text. It also means that I as a researcher must be extra aware that transcripts are a special kind of text that describes reality differently than an original written text (Ibid. p. 442).

4. 1. 1. Thematic Analysis

In the thesis, I strive to conduct reliable qualitative research by following a set of traditions. But by having emerged myself into extensive academic literature surrounding this thesis problem field, I also

allow myself to explore a research approach that I argue to enable me to discuss and explore the applicability of security studies when investigating matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit.

In this thesis I have chosen to conduct thematic analysis and code development, as described by Professor Richard E. Boyatzis (Boyatzis, 1998). I chose not to follow the method traditionally used in connection with the theory of securitization, called discourse analysis, because I argue that thematic analysis is an appropriate analysis method for this thesis. I argue that thematic analysis will give an insight into how language is used in real life situations while uncovering what the actors' statements reveal about their chosen position and what those positions could reveal about matters of security in the project of Kuannersuit. As per Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 176-177), their use of discourse analysis is founded in the understanding that discourse analysis is an instrument to locate specific rhetorical structures. These rhetorical structures constitute discourses that function on their own right, meaning that they are not indicators of underlying motives or hidden agendas, making it a poor instrument if wanting to find perhaps hidden motives.

I argue that thematic analysis leaves a lot of flexibility to match this thesis' research design by representing an analysis method that can capture this thesis' interpretive position. As Boyatzis (1998, ¶vii) describes, thematic analysis is not connected to one single theoretical framework but can be used in many different ways. In this thesis, I make use of the analysis method as formulated by Boyatzis (1998), because I argue that this approach provides an opportunity to look into the empirical data with a pre-constructed coding frame, functioning as a lens that filters the data. This approach is important when constructing the theory driven coding frame, as the coding frame will function as a prerequisite for theorizing. The coding frame thus formulates indicators towards the search for topics which indicates, mentions, or directly focuses on issues that may relate to a security issue.

4. 1. 2. Constructing the Coding Frame

Nowell et al. (2017) describe the analysing part of qualitative research as the most complex part. The researcher not only has to identify, organise, or report patterns within data, she also becomes the instrument for making the analysis by having to make the appropriate judgements for the coding. Regarding this thesis' ontological position of constructionism, it presupposes a responsibility to recognize that the researchers' presence in the analysis has an impact on how the analysis is conducted. As thematic analysis is the process of encoding qualitative information (Boyatzis, 1998,

¶vi), the researchers' position stands clear for the understanding of how the data is gathered, processed, described, and analysed, and it must be acknowledged that, I as the "processor" of this material, my approach to the study and the way of seeing the world I study, have an inevitable impact on the outcome of the thesis.

The coding frame applied in the thematic analysis, is generated deductively from the theoretical framework of securitization. When developing a theory driven coding frame as by Boyatzis (1998), I should pay close attention to the theory of securitization's elements and formulations and use those to formulate the indicators, or the signals that would support the theory when applying the themes to the data. The themes should be derived or generated from the initial hypothesis about matters of security in the project of Kuannersuit and should be as close to the theory of securitization as possible, minimalizing interpretation at this point. This also means that the themes should follow the jargon in the field of research. The wording of the themes thus comes or emerges from the theoretical starting point of securitization (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 33). This part also entails to determine the applicability of the themes to the empirical data, by making sure the themes are compatible with this specific kind of data. This ensures the themes are designed for this thesis and not just drawn from the theoretical framework without being thoroughly adopted to the data (Ibid. p. 36).

A good theme should contain five elements before applying to data, as by Boyatzis (1998, p. 53):

1. A name which is meaningful to the phenomenon being studied and communicate the essence of the theme.
2. A definition on what the theme concerns. What characterizes the theme?
3. A description of how to identify indicators and how to know if, and when, the themes are occurring.
4. A description of what qualifies this data to be coded as a theme and what may exclude it.
5. Examples on a code.

4. 1. 3. Coding Frame

As explained above, the themes that I code according to, are constructed directly in extension of the theoretical framework that I apply in the thesis. Therefore, concepts and definitions derived from the theory of securitization by Buzan et al. (1998). The actual design of the themes in the coding frame

and the application of the themes with indications, qualifications, and examples, are produced by me, and my interpretation of the theory therefore also applies to the construction of the themes.

I have constructed four main themes, as according to the above design from Boyatzis (1998, p. 53), each with a set of subthemes, as presented in the below coding frame:

Coding frame		
	Main theme	Subtheme
Theme nr. 1	Referent Object	Labelling Security Speaking Security
Theme nr. 2	Threat	Extraordinary Measures Facilitating Conditions Labelling Security Speaking Security
Theme nr. 3	Units of Actors	The Securitizing Actor The Audience
Theme nr. 4	Sectors	The Economic Sector The Political Sector The Environmental Sector The Military Sector The Societal Sector

Here follows a thorough description of the four themes constructed according to Boyatzis' (1998, p. 53) five elements of a good code.

1. Name: **Referent Objects**.
2. This theme concerns “things” that are constructed by a securitizing actor, as threatened and which the actor believes have a legitimate claim to survive (Buzan et al 1998).
3. Indications on when the theme occur, are when an object, thing, someone, or something are constructed to be threatened or as needing special attention. The theme occurs in the process of the construction of a shared understanding of what is endangered and should be collectively responded to (Ibid. pp. 23-26).

4. Qualified identification of referent objects occurs in connection to an identification of a threat towards the referent object, requiring emergency action. This can happen through *Speaking security* or *labelling security* - the use of arguments describing issues as: supreme, needing priority of action, urgent, important, threatened, survival, dramatic, as directly threatened, point of no return or needing a way out. *Speaking security* or *labelling security* can also relate to someone using expressions such as to lose, preserve, lack, need, fear, to be afraid, lack of action, missing and the like.
5. Positive examples of identification of referent objects could be something or someone arguing that “something” is in danger, threatened, at risk and the like.

1. Name: **Threat.**

2. This theme concerns any issues perceived as posing as a threat to a referent object (Buzan et al. 1998, pp. 29-31).
3. Indications on when threats occur, are the identifications of an issue being constructed as threatening to a referent object and as posing a legitimate issue to mobilize emergency measures towards (Ibid. pp. 24-26. The theme occurs in the process of the construction of a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat through the *Speaking of security* and *labelling security* (Ibid. p. 27). *By Speaking and labelling security*, the arguments describing the issue take the form of linguistic-grammatical expressions like; supreme, needing a priority of action, urgent, important, threatening survival, dramatic, as directly threatening, point of no return or needing a way out. It can also relate to the use of expressions such as to lose, lack, need, fear, to be afraid, lack of action, missing, distress if not handled, being puzzled by, worrying, and the like. It could also manifest directly by using expressions like disaster, death, damaging, risk, destroy, pain, threatened, and the like.
4. A code qualifies if the nature of the threat is argued as to justify the use of extraordinary measures to handle them, or if the issue invokes some kind of need, fear, lack of, dread, distress or need for more/special action. A theme is identified if the invocation of security is seen as the key to legitimise the use of force or to mobilize or take special action to handle the threat.
5. A positive example of the identification of a threat could be the invocation of urgency, placing an issue as top priority or justifying actions outside normal political procedure. The issue must

be presented as a threat, arguing that this issue is more important to act on than any other issue. Ranking it as absolute priority, claiming a right to handle the issue through urgent action or by relocating energy and resources to this specific issue. It could also be the identification of a situation that needs attention before going proceeding to meet potential challenges with this specific issue that would otherwise pose as a potential threat towards something.

1. Name: **Units of Actors**

2. This theme concerns the identifications of actors related to identifying matters of security. It concerns the distinctions of two actors: *the securitizing actor* and *the audience*, concepts created by Buzan et al. (1998), and explained in the theory chapter.
3. Indicators of a securitizing actor could be the attempt to construct issues as relevant to security, attempting a securitizing move (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 33). The Audience are people capable of making decisions on the issue/in the field, and whom the securitizing actor is trying to direct the securitizing move towards (Ibid. p. 36).
4. A qualifying identification relates to the actor positioning themselves to the issue in question by affecting the dynamics surrounding the possible security issue.
5. Positive examples of actors could be communities, organisations, or individuals loyal to an argument towards a security issue or actors attempting to frame issues as non/security issues. Negative examples could be mother earth as an actor in itself, or abstract entities incapable of having a voice affecting the dynamic (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 78).

1. Name: **Sectors**

2. The theme concerns a way of identifying characteristics specific for the sector setting them apart from other sectors. It concerns identifying dimensions of the sector while still viewing it as part of a whole (Buzan et al, pp. 7-8).
3. Indicators could be descriptions relating or linking argued security issues to sector specific agendas, like materialization of arguments, words or sentences relating to key issues, dilemmas, agendas, or scenarios linking to sector specific issues.
4. A code is qualified if it identifies sector's that relate to sector-specific security issues.
5. Positive examples of identifying sectors could be the identification of sector specific agendas, ideas, or values that are characteristic of or rooted in the particular sector. It could be the

mentioning of pollution, energy problems, ideas or practises of communities, trade, sovereignty, political units, law, or human rights

4. 2. Empirical data collection

In this thesis, the empirical data constitute three different sets of data samples:

1. First, a series of 13 written consultation responses from 2014, addressed to The Mineral Resources Authority² in Greenland (Translation by author). These 13 written responses from 2014, was produced in connection to a pre-hearing on the project in Kuannersuit, starting from the 24th of August 2014, initiated by the Naalakkersuisut (Government of Greenland).
2. Second, a series of 38 written consultations responses from 2021, addressed to The Mineral Resources Authority in Greenland (Translation by author). These 38 written responses from 2021, was produced in connection to the public consultation for citizens and stakeholders on the project in Kuannersuit, starting from the 17th of December 2020, initiated by the Naalakkersuisut.
3. Lastly, two documents containing the transcript of a public consultation meeting from 2021. The public consultation meeting was held in the city of Narsaq on the 9th of February 2021. This meeting was recorded and has since been translated into Danish, English and Greenlandic.

Because thematic analysis is *sensitive to the quality of the raw data* (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 54), it is evident that the analysis is done on a sample of empirical data that is reliable and valid. In this thesis, the empirical data constitutes a sample of documents produced in direct connection to the project in Kuannersuit. I argue that this collection of data presents an opportunity to observe and identify matters of security in connection to the project of Kuannersuit, because I expect the chosen written consultations responses and transcript to be situated in a context, where matters of security can be expected to occur.

² Råstofmyndigheden i Grønland.

The table below shows the data samples categorized into 8 different categories, corresponding to affiliation of the writer.

Category /Sender	Year	Pages	Reference
Citizen local to South Greenland			
John Rasmussen	2014	1	(Rasmussen, 2014)
Erik J. Nørskov	2021	32	(Nørskov, 2021)
Monika Brune & Paul Cohen	2021	1	(Brune & Cohen, 2021)
Winnie Jørgensen og Birger Kristoffersen	2021	1	(Jørgensen & Kristoffersen, 2021)
Lena Pedersen	2021	1	(Pedersen, 2021)
Ingibjörg Gísladóttir	2021	3	(Gísladóttir, 2021)
Niels Sakariassen	2021	19	(Sakariassen, 2021)
Per Lyng	2021	3	(Lyng, 2021)
Greenlandic citizens living outside Southern Greenland			
Jan Rehtmar-Petersen	2014	1	(Rehtmar-Petersen, 2014)
Malene Simonsen	2021	2	(Simonsen, 2021)
Eva-Maria Trans	2021	1	(Trans, 2021)
Kuno Fencker	2021	5	(Fencker, 2021)
Mikkili Skourup, Jane P. Lantz, Kistâra Motzfeldt Vahl, Kristian Lyng Petersen, Bent Olesen, Erika N. Baadh, Hans Kristian Olsen, Kristine Lyng-Pedersen	2021	5	(Skourup, et al. 2021)
Authorities, municipalities, institutes, or its representatives			
Kujalleq Municipality	2014	7	(Kommune Kujalleq, 2014)
Sermersooq Municipality	2014	6	(Narup, 2014)
Naalakkersuisut Ministry of Housing, Infrastructure and Gender Equality	2021	1	(Bøjler, 2021)
Naalakkersuisut Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting	2021	1	(Jacobsen, 2021)
Søren Munch Kristiansen	2021	7	(Kristiansen, 2021)
Kujalleq Municipality	2021	2	(Christensen, 2021)

Naalakkersuisut Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Church	2021	5	(Hasselriis, 2021)
Naalakkersuisut Ministry of Health	2021	1	(Johansen, 2021)
Organizations and Associations in Greenland			
Transparency International Greenland	2014	3	(Hoffer, 2014)
Avataq	2014	1	(Myrup, 2014)
Inuit Circumpolar + annex signed by 48 environmental organizations	2014	6	(Dahl, 2014)
Kanukoka (the national Association of the Greenlandic Municipalities)	2014	2	(Abelsen & Christensen, 2014)
KNAPK The Association of Fishers & Hunters in Greenland	2014	2	(Lyberth, 2014)
NAAP-NARSAQ (Fishermen's and Catchers' Association in Narsaq)	2014	1	(Davidsen, 2014)
SavaatillitPeqatigiit Suleqatigiissut (The Cooperating Sheep Farmers' Associations)	2014	1	(Lund, 2014)
Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu (Greenland National Museum & Archives)	2021	3	(Madsen, 2021)
SIK - Sulinermik Inuussutissarsiuteqartut Kattuffiat (trade union)	2021	2	(Petersen, 2021)
Greenland Business Association	2021	1	(Krogsgaard-Jensen, 2021)
Urani? Naamik Peqatigiiff Narsaq	2021	8	(Urani? Naamik, 2021a)
Urani? Naamik Peqatigiiff Narsaq	2021	11	(Urani? Naamik, 2021b)
Urani? Naamik Peqatigiiff Narsaq	2021	18	(Urani? Naamik, 2021c)
Urani? Naamik Peqatigiiff Narsaq	2021	27	(Urani? Naamik, 2021d)
Organizations or Associations located outside Greenland			
Greenpeace	2014	2	(Burgwald, 2014)
WWF World Wildlife Fund	2014	5	(Frost, 2014)
NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark and VedvarendeEnergi (environmental organizations in Denmark)	2021	5	(Bendsen, Jensen & Hooge, 2021)

Business industries in Greenland			
Nukkisiorfiit	2021	7	(Nyland, 2021)
Greg Barnes - Tanbreez Mining Greenland A/S	2021	4	(Barnes, 2021b)
No specified location or affiliation			
Jesper Stormly Enevoldsen	2021	1	(Enevoldsen, 2021)
Elaine Walters	2021	1	(Walters, 2021)
Isak Lund	2021	2	(Lund, 2021)
Frederik Pedersen	2021	1	(Pedersen, 2021)
Algerd Monstavicius	2021	1	(Monstavicius, 2021a)
Dion Monstavicius	2021	1	(Monstavicius, 2021b)
John Abraham.	2021	1	(Abraham, 2021)
Marco Zimmermann	2021	1	(Zimmermann, 2021)
Martin Ghisler	2021	2	(Ghisler, 2021)
Robert E. Rutkowski	2021	1	(Rutkowski, 2021)
Gregory Bennett Barnes - G. B. Barnes & Associates Mining Compagny	2021	10	(Barnes, 2021a)
Transcriptions			
Public Consultation Meeting Narsaq 09.02.2021 Part 1:2	2021	38	(Narsaq, 2021a) ³
Public Consultation Meeting Narsaq 09.02.2021 Part 2:2	2021	42	(Narsaq, 2021b) ⁴

4. 2. 1. Contextualizing the empirical data

In connection to Greenland Minerals Ltd.'s application for a permit to exploit at Kuannersuit, the public, organizations, authorities, and municipalities had the opportunity to consult submitted consultation material and comment on it in their consultation responses. These reports function as a form of projects descriptions with both technical and non-technical information.

The data sets must therefore be seen in close connection to the consultation material as a form of public, private and industry opinions, attitudes, and contributions towards the project in Kuannersuit.

³ Appendix

⁴ Appendix

In 2014, the pre-hearing presented consultation materials of two pre-requisite reports:

1. The Social Impact Assessment (SIA), 38 pages (Grontmij, 2014)
2. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), 56 pages (ORBICON, 2014)

In 2021, the consultation process presented consultation material of four documents:

1. Social Impact Assessment, 294 pages (Greenland Minerals A/S, 2020a)
2. Social Impact Assessment, Non-technical summary, 40 pages (Greenland Minerals A/S, 2020b)
3. Environmental Impact Assessment, 331 pages (Greenland Minerals A/S, 2020c)
4. Environmental Impact Assessment, Non-Technical Summary, 49 pages (Greenland Minerals A/S, 2020d)

In connection to the consultation meeting in Narsaq on the 9th of February 2021, three power points were displayed:

1. Consultation meetings on the Kuannersuit project - Presentation by the Ministry of Minerals⁵ (Translation by author). 6 pages. (Naalakkersuisut, 2021)
2. Presentation by Greenland Minerals: Kvanefjeldet - With a focus on the green transition⁶ (Translation by author). 17 pages. (Greenland Minerals Ltd., 2021)
3. Presentation of DCE: Kuannersuit - Important environmental topics of the project⁷ (Translation by author). 24 pages. (Jørgensen et al. 2020)

4. 3. Application of Coding Frame to Data

As Boyatzis (1998) describes thematic analysis, it *is a way of seeing*. It is about observing, which leads to understanding. But to be able to observe, the researcher needs to develop an ability to “sense” the themes in the data and find a “codable moment”. Sensing a theme, or a pattern as Boyatzis (1998, p. 3) describes it, is a way of perceiving the empirical data and making the information in the data occurring to the analyst.

⁵ Høringsmøder vedr. Kuannersuit-projektet

⁶ Kvanefjeldet - Med fokus på den grønne omstilling

⁷ Kuannersuit- vigtige miljøemner ved projektet

In practice, this means:

1. *Sense* a "codable moment", either by it manifesting directly in the data or by it manifesting as an underlying theme in the text (Ibid. pp. 4-5)
2. Encode the data with the pre-constructed themes from the coding frame, as described in the above chapter. By using the pre-constructed coding frame, I search for patterns in the data corresponding to the themes that I have constructed.
3. Lay the thematic framework of securitization "in front of" the data after the application of the coding frame.

However, this ability to see patterns involves a lot of underlying competencies that the researcher must possess in order to use thematic analysis as a method. For me as a researcher to develop this essential ability to "*sense* a theme", or recognize a codable moment, a lot of training comes in advance. But as Boyatzis (1998, p. 8) recognizes, an amount of cognitive complexity also serves as a prerequisite for using thematic analysis. It typically entails that the researcher has immersed herself in academic contributions relevant to the research question. By having emerged myself in reasonable amounts of relevant academic literature, before engaging in this thesis, I have strived to obtain what Boyatzis (1998, p. 8) calls *theoretical sensitivity*, enabling me to recognise what is important and what is meaningful to the answering of the research question.

4.3.1. Computer assisted analysis

By using NVIVO, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, I use the program's tools to apply the pre-constructed themes, label, sort, organize and retrieve coded data (Clark, 2021, p. 550). NVIVO has allowed a quick and more efficient coding process, while highlighting possible connections in the data, allowing me to sort out relevant information and filter the large volume of data.

5. Analysis

In an attempt to investigate what matters of security could be identified in the consultation process connected to the project in Kuannersuit, I have created a theory-driven design, which aimed at not only shedding light on matters of security, but also illuminating whether the theory of securitization was an appropriate theory for investigating the research question. In the following I will present a

discussion on the analytical findings and the complex picture of the project that emerged. The analysis is divided into five chapters with a summary in the last part, followed by the conclusion.

5. 1. Security issues and Units in sector-specific complexes

The great focus on nature and the consequences a mining project can have for the environment and the health of the population surrounding Kuannersuit, reveals as a dominant topic throughout the analytical processing of the data. I discovered that security issues through specking security and through labelling security, were argued by far in connection with environmental issues. I interpret this analytical finding as an important takeaway from the data. But as Buzan et al. (1998, p. 170) aske: when does an issues become a security issue?

Taking a starting point for this analysis, I want to investigate why environmental issues appeared to take primacy in the identification of matters of security. According to Buzan et al. (1998, p. 169), to narrow down which threats and referent objects are operating in the construction of a securitizing move, it is the Unit which is the focal point of interest. Referring to chapter 2. 2. 1. in this thesis, the Unit is to be understood as the actors and only with those understood in a Level of Analysis, can I interpret the security issue in question and apply the theory of securitization's identification of particular sector security complexes. In connection with the analysis, I therefore categorized the data sets into 8 categories according to the "sender's" affiliation: 1. Citizen local to South Greenland, 2. Greenlandic citizens living outside Southern Greenland, 3. Authorities, municipalities and institutes, or its representatives, 4. Organizations and Associations in Greenland, 5. Organizations or Associations located outside Greenland, 6. Business industries in Greenland, 7. No specified location or affiliation and 8. Transcriptions. The background for dividing the data in this way was to clarify the actors in the data and to illuminate the actors' relationship to each other and to the society they appear in. Then I applied the Level of Analysis as part of locating actors in relation to dynamics of interaction (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 5)

Buzan et al. (1998, pp. 74-75) describe security issues connected to the environmental sector, as associated with great complexity. The purest security issues occurring in connection to the environment are that of disruption of ecosystems, like climate change, deforestation, and ozone layer issues (Ibid. p 75). But issues relevant to energy problems like: depletion of natural resources, pollution disasters from corporations or chemical industries, population problems, over-consumption, poverty, war-related damage to the environment or epidemics, also make out the picture of security issues connected to the environment (Ibid.).

The identification of environmental issues posing as security issues are seen in a quote from Skourup et al. (2021), whom I have labelled as Individuals as per Level of Analysis, because they pose as individual citizens arguing their case from a private perspective, “*The core problem is that Kuannersuit has naturally occurring substances, such as fluorine, heavy metals, uranium and thorium, which in a concentrated form pose a catastrophic health risk to humans and the environment*” (translation by author). This quote indicates that there is an uncertainty about the future of the environment and citizens during the implementation and operation of the mining project in Kuannersuit, because of the natural occurring radioactive substances in the mining waste. The mentioning of chemicals and their potential harm to humans and the environment I determine as *speaking security*. This is because chemicals or radioactive metals are already surrounded by a preconception that they are dangerous to humans and nature and should only occur in their natural existences or in controlled environments. As Buzan et al. (1998) say about facilitating conditions, *the most important is to follow the security form, the grammar of security, (...) plus the particular dialects of the different sectors* (p. 33). Here we see how, when referring to the referent object *the health of the humans and the environment*, the argument gains a little more weight, as the threat which is *naturally occurring substances, such as fluorine, heavy metals, uranium and thorium*, are surrounded by the preconception that they are dangerous, and it may pose as a circumstance to greater success in the attempt to securitize the environment and the health of the population. The complexity surrounding the identification of a security issue, calls for an identification of actors appearing in relation to the security issue argued, and in this first part of this analysis, I argue Skourup et al. (2021) constituting as Individuals as per Level of Analysis. This identification is important to argue, as later in the thesis, I wish to engage in a discussion about actors and their role in the securitizing process and how this perspective can have important implications for the success of the securitizing moves.

In the above example, I identify an environmental issue being argued as posing a threat and thus the environmental sector emerges because precisely this sector is identified through sector-specific threats and referent objects, here being the environment and health of humans that pose as referent object, and the mountain's natural toxic content, exposed through the processing of the rock material, posing as the threat. In the data, I found, that the argued threats were frequently linked to entities that harms nature, and most commonly the environment itself or some parts of the environment posed as referent objects. This perspective is supported by Buzan et al. (1998, p 75), who describe how the

environment often pose as referent object in environmental security. This argument is also present in this consultation response by, what I label as a Subunit, representing Inuit Circumpolar, and an annex signed by 48 environmental organizations, “*We call the Naalakkersuisut (...) and the Danish Government not to repeal the uranium zero tolerance policy, as uranium mining will pose a risk of pollution of the vulnerable Greenlandic environment*” (translation by author) (Dahl, 2014). Here I interpret the mentioning of pollution as an environmental issue, as an argument towards pollution posing as a security issue. Labelling mining of uranium as a threat through linking to pollution, I argue is an example of the securitizing form, or *the grammar of security, (...) plus the particular dialects of the different sectors* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 33). The argument, as I interpret it, has connotations to disaster and possible environmental collapses and through speaking according to the dialect of the environmental sector, it appears to pose as a security issue, with the environment being the referent object, and the threat being the possible consequences from the mining projects. By looking for security concerns within the various units, I shed light on the securitizing practice and which actors participate in the dynamics, while also interpreting the argued security issues from the actor’s point of view. This approach is backed by the theory of securitization, as it describes that the decision on whether something is a security issue is not up to the interpreter, but up to the actors involved in the dynamics surrounding the securitizing practice (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 34).

In this next consultation response from a Greenlandic citizen living outside of South Greenland and labelled as Individual, I demonstrate that by following the actor’s argumentation, I minimise subjective interpretations at this point in the analysis. The citizen claims the following about the mining project “*I believe that the risk that the plans for the Kuannersuit project could harm nature, the environment and the population is too great*” (translation by author) (Simonsen, 2021). I argue, that Simonsen place an environmental issue as a security issue, by speaking a threat into the planned mine’s consequences for the environmental surroundings by using the words: *risk*, and *harm*. Likewise, by pointing a threat toward the environment and the population, I interpret those as the referent object. By applying the theoretical framework “on top” of the data, I here demonstrate how the framework is used to identify, encode, and interpret the words used by the citizen, while using the theory of securitization’s components of sectors and Units to analyse the actors involved and the sector the argumentation is placing the issue within.

Similar to the latter consultation response, in a quote from Greenland's electricity, water and heat supply company, the only supply company found in Greenland, the focus is on the mining company’s

limited geological examinations in connection with the mine's connection to Narsaq city's drinking water supply: *“Nukissiorfiit considers it problematic that, on the basis of limited geological studies, it is concluded that there is very little or no connection between Lake Taseq and Napsaup Kuua, which is Nukissiorfiit's primary source of drinking water supply in Narsaq.”* (Nyland, 2021). I interpret the problematization of the mining company's investigation, as an expression that Nukissiorfiit attributes distrust and concern to the location of the mine waste disposal and the mining company's investigations into future impact on the area. I argue that the statement about Narsaq's future access to drinking water is based in the concern that a collapse in drinking water supply will have major consequences for the city's future existence, and thus the end of the local community as we know it today. Mining projects have for a long time been associated with some consequences for the surrounding environment and people. Voller, Obbekær & Tybjerg (2021), who are Danish journalists at Danwatch⁸, asked leading international mining experts in connection with the potential mining operation in Kuannersuit, to read the mining company Greenland Minerals Ltd's environmental assessment of the project. The experts were left with many worrying words in connection to the operation of the mine. Gavin Mudd, an associate professor at the Department of Environmental Engineering at RMIT University in Australia and one of the leading experts when it comes to mine management states that:

“It takes a lot of work, a lot of careful research and testing of the design - and a thorough monitoring of the construction itself, because you can have a great design, but if the construction is shit, it can still fail” (translation by author) (Voller, Obbekær & Tybjerg, 2021).

Because, if the dam collapses or is somehow damaged it could result in a wave of mine waste and polluted water, entering rivers and the surrounding environment. Voller, Obbekær & Tybjerg (2021) state that according to the mining companies own environmental assessment, a wave of polluted water would suffocate all life. The locals and their future possibilities to thrive is also identified in a consultation response from two locals to the area, labelled as Individuals:

⁸ danwatch.dk: An independent media and research centre that publishes investigative journalism in the public interest, by publishing journalistic studies on human rights and the environment and with a particular focus on developing countries and emerging economies (translation by author).

“It is our wish that a mining project with the described consequences is not implemented and that we, together with the other users of the areas around Kvanefjeldet and the citizens of Narsaq, can continue to live in and use these areas” (translation by author) (Jørgensen & Kristoffersen, 2021).

In this quote the mentioning of the wish to continue to live in and use the areas around Kuannersuit as a vital part of the lives of residents and users of the area. The implementation of a mining project in Kuannersuit would thus stand in complete contradiction to the ability to use and live in the area. Here it is again the project’s possible consequences that pose a risk and is argued to be a threat to the long-term coexistence of civilizations with nature, with the referent object being the coexistence. Thus, I interpret the consultation responses about the project as an environmental security issue, by the actors speaking of and labelling the forthcoming mining project in Kuannersuit to destruction, deprivation of rights to the land and final annihilation and termination of citizens' existence in the area. Thus, I see a pattern emerging of speaking and labelling the project as a threat. I argue that environmental issues become security issues through speaking and labelling the projects possible negative impacts and effects on nature and environment.

In the acknowledgement of this pattern, I interpret the above statements to reveal an underlying concern for the future relationship between the citizens in the area and nature surrounding Kuannersuit. As Buzan et al. (1998) describe: *“underlying many of these reference objects are baseline concerns about the relationship between the human species and the risks of the biosphere and whether that relationship can be sustained without risking a collapse of the achieved levels of civilization”* (p. 23). Buzan et al.’s (1998) description of the underlying referent objects pose as a way of identifying the specific referent objects in question here, and I argue that the underlying referents object is linked to not just the local civilization and their future possibilities to live and thrive in the area surrounding Kuannersuit, but is also a reference to the citizens opportunities to do business and create or maintain a developing society for themselves. Here I want to attach a comment to Buzan et al.’s use of the word *civilization*, which in this thesis should not be seen in connection with the concept *civilized*. As some scholars have suggested, the use and understanding of the word *civilization* has changed over the years. In some historical literature about European colonialism one encounter how colonised peoples are referred to as being more or less civilized seen in the context of European norms and values. Civilization thus refers to the mission of the civilized European people to spread civilization to uncivilized peoples (Duara, 2004). In Buzan et al. (1998)'s theory of securitization, I interpret the word *civilization* not in the context that the citizens in and around Narsaq

have achieved a certain “level” of civilization, but as an expression that humans on earth constitute a civilization (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 23).

Although most of the highlighted argumentation connected to environmental security issues are, broadly speaking, against the implementation of the project, there are also few consultation responses that argue a reversed situation. From an environment perspective, I found arguments that the project in Kuannersuit poses as an important means to achieve the necessary green transition needed to prevent future major climatic events around the globe. A person, labelled as Individual, with no specified affiliation to Greenland, but proclaimed skilled in radiation and an investor in the mining company Greenland Minerals Ltd. states,

“I am of the opinion that there is no danger to the community and no significant damage to the environment in the containment procedures they are proposing. The need for rare earths will be enormous as we move swiftly into the electrical age and this mine will be of critical importance to avoid or mitigate a major climatic event. It is really critical that this project be approved” (original language) (Monstavicius, 2021a)

I interpret Monstavicius’ statement to emphasize the project as very important, in fact critically important, because the effects of not implementing the project would lead to unforeseen consequences in the form of climatic disasters. By speaking security through using words like *critically* and *avoid* and labelling the project as a solution towards the need for rare earth elements, to meet the global consumption of "green" technology as described in the introduction of the thesis, I argue Monstavicius is trying to place the rejection of the implementation of the project as a form of threat. This use of argumentation stands, as I interpret it, as a form of facilitating condition because of the use of background information based in current environmental academic and political discussions. The argument towards the fear of rejection of the implementation of the project, is connected to the fact, that the world would face drought, starvation, population migrations, a collapse in biodiversity, extreme forest fires, instabilities in the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets and other catastrophic events, if temperatures were to exceed a certain temperature worldwide. It is known that the burning of fossil fuels and the rising temperatures are connected to these events (Welsby et al. 2021: Buis, 2019).

To conclude this chapter, I want to highlight how the analysis surrounding matters of security in the environment sector, opens up complex arenas where several possible actors other than state-actors, are given the opportunity to voice their opinion. This draws on Buzan et al.'s (1998) widened perspective on security post-Cold War. Here the power of definition shifts from being primarily within state bodies and military affairs, to other social entities and actors. It thus opens up the possibility of identifying matters of security within other arenas and from other actors. This approach broadens the areas and understanding of what security is and where it can be argued, and thus the concept of security extends to areas such as the environment.

In this first chapter of the analysis, I found several significant points in the consultation responses, which illuminate how environmental issues are being argued as environmental security issues, both pro and against the project. After scrutinizing the data, I argue this identification of securitizing moves as a way to identify matters of security in connection to the project in Kuannersuit. Identifying securitizing moves thus pose as a tool for illuminating how discussions on the project opens new discussion on how security can be studied in connection to mining projects in Greenland.

5. 2. A Cross-Sectoral Approach to Security Complexes

Following the above analysis of the consultation responses, my interpretation of local environmental issues and co-existence between nature and civilization as being prevalent referent objects has highlighted how environmental issues take primacy as security issues in connection to the project in Kuannersuit, which I argue is an important point to emphasize.

However, in this chapter I want to present how current and developing industry and the foundation of a sustainable society, plays into this thesis' cross-sectoral approach to security analysis. In chapter 5. 1., I demonstrated how the analysis of sector-specific complexes can serve as a facilitating analytical tool, in an attempt of conveying prevalent findings in the analysis of security issues. But with this approach there is also the risk of missing important points from the data. I have taken this initial "risky" approach because I want to highlight that, with sector-specific analysis, the analyst only views the proposed security issues through one lens. According to the theory of securitization, and explained in chapter 2. 2. 2., it is first and foremost important to clarify that sectors do not stand alone but must be seen as presenting part of a complex world. I will therefore now demonstrate how I have applied this thesis' cross-sectoral approach, by illuminating the synthesizing of sectors.

5. 2. 1. Economic Security Complexes

In continuation of this cross-sectoral approach, the exposition of a security issue crossing sectors, is illustrated in this first quote by a local to the area around Kuannersuit and labelled as Individual: *Preserve South Greenland and the opportunity for us and future generations to live off and in harmony with nature*” (translation by author) (Pedersen, 2021). Here I argue that Pedersen initially tries to articulate the mining project as a security issue from an environmental perspective. But as Buzan et al. (1998, p. 169) state, the starting point for studying any security issue should begin at Unit (actor) level rather than in the sector. This actor-approach, placing the actor as the departing point for the security issue, proves that sectors exist IN the actors as different types of security issues. According to the theory of securitization, the positioning of Units (the actors) in the Level of Analysis therefore stands as an important point of departure when analysing the argued security issue. In this way, the sectors and their contexts are created cross-sectionally because an issue may well occur in one sector but at the same time pose as an issue in another sector (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 169).

The quote from Pedersen (2021) thus draws on an environmental sector issue, but as emphasized above, I interpret the securitising practice as in reality taking place cross-sectoral. The proclaimed issue being the preservation of the area thus crosses into the societal sector by appealing to generations and their ability to continue living in the area, and lastly into the economic sector by arguing for the opportunity *to live off* the nature. I interpret this quote as an underlying expression of an economic issue appearing, from the view, that if the people and future generations are deprived of the ability to develop on local based industry, the fundamental fabric of society will fall away. The attempt to speak security around what I interpret as future opportunities to maintain industry and create a sustainable society in the area surrounding Kuannersuit, as an expression of the wish to maintain and develop on the main areas of industry for the local community. According to the municipality’s own description (<https://www.kujalleq.gl>), South Greenland is known for its sheep farming and the green areas around Narsaq. Narsaq is also the centre for food processing, housing Greenland’s biggest company Royal Greenland in one of its fish factories. Also, there is a lamb and sheep slaughterhouse. Likewise, Narsaq is home of the Food Collage Inuili, where young students train for the food industry (<https://inuili.gl>).

In continuation of this discussion about preserving the South Greenlandic industries within food, fishing, and sheep farming in the context of a future sustainable society, I want to bring a perspective from scholars Gad et al. (2017): For many years, Greenland's internal discussion about Greenland's future has involved the perception of a sustainable society also on a local level with considerations about what is to be preserved in relation to Arctic communities (p. 18). The discussion revolves around the wish for achieving economic sustainability and thus economic independence from Denmark in order to achieve future political independence. Gad et al. (2017) describe how only a few years after gaining Self-Government the sitting Premier in 2014, Aleqa Hammond from Siumut, stated: “*I want Greenland to have a self-sustaining economy based on our own resources with a greater degree of integration into the world economy*” (original language) (p. 18). Siumut’s relationship to political independence, and the way to it, can thus be seen in contrast to the current ruling party Inuit Ataqatigiit (IA). In IA’s Program of Principles, they describe how future independence should take place with a background in sustainable conditions focusing on education, health, and economy (Inuit Ataqatigiit: Principiprogram, 2014). During the elections in 2021, IA was also very clear about their disapproval of the project in Kuannersuit and their plans towards closing down the project.

In the following consultation response from the Subunit, SavaatillitPeqatigiit Suleqatigiissut (The Cooperating Sheep Farmers' Associations), I interpret a concern based in possible environmental impacts on local businesses that holds an important role for southern Greenland: “*we want to ensure that sheep farming is not prevented. This means that sheep farming must not be harmed by raw material-based activities*” (translation by author) (Lund, 2014). By using words like *harmed* and *prevented*, the response leaves an impression of the Association being worried or vigilant in their approach to the project. I interpret the quotation to label the mining project as having the power to influence the existing professions in the area to the extent those local industries have the risk of disappearing due to environmental impacts on the areas.

The challenge with these two consultation responses has been to analyze the data from the understanding of threats and referring objects related to economic security complexes. According to the theory of securitization, the challenge lies in assessing if and when an economic issue actually qualifies as an economic security issue, or whether an economic issue in reality has security implications in other realms of sectors (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 115). The interpretation of the wish for local future use of land as being fundamental for the operation of the local society collides with

theoretical requirements in the theory of securitization. Because individual companies or professions are usually not crucial to the stability of national economy and are therefore not considered qualifying as referent objects from an economic security complex point of view (Ibid. p. 100). However, I translate these responses about individuals' future use of the local area and the future of local industries, as attempts to articulate an area of concern which related to the economic sector. According to the theory of securitization, such attempts can very well be seen as part of securitizing move from the perspective, that a local area and its people could be subject to immediate or creeping effects on the coherence of the local area if e.g., a business that has had great significance for the local community and its people, suddenly shut down (Ibid. p. 100). Therefore, I would also argue that this concern is part of a larger perspective on securitizing moves, and thus an expression that I can identify issues as related to matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit.

On Unit level, from Levels of Analysis, the Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting, represents Greenland's leading authority in the fishing and hunting industry. In what I believe is a powerful statement, the Ministry state: *“the Ministry must emphasize that we prefer the fishing industry to be developed in the area rather than mining with harmful effects on nature, its riches and people's health”* (translation by author) (Jacobsen, 2021). In this quote, I argue the Ministry, in line with IA's Program of Principles, to explicitly clarify an attitude towards the mining project, that mining, with all its possible health and environmental consequences, is not preferable as a means of business development in the area. What is also very interesting about this quote, is the recognition that it is submitted after the election in 2021, where IA won. I interpret the quote's reference to health and environment, as a clear use of language which draws attention to risk, set against other opportunities for business development. By looking at the quote as an expression that the Ministry does not push for implementing of the mine, it also gives the impression that IA's overall negative attitude towards the mine project may have played a role in the 2021 legislation of the uranium law. This new law states, that new permits issued under the Minerals Act cannot include uranium if the total content of uranium in the resource exceeds a certain amount (UL, 2021) §1. This turning in attitudes towards uranium in mining thus leaves the historic debate and 2014 decision to accept uranium in mining up for question.

In a quote from a local citizen from Narsaq, labelled as Individual, he presents an argument about the great uncertainty that the local community has encountered, and is constantly encountering, in connection with the lengthy process to which the project in Kuannersuit is subject to:

“In the SIA report, there is no mention that our City has been frozen on new projects and the investment opportunities have been ruined for many years. For example, you cannot take out a house loan at over 10 years' rates due to uncertainty about the future of the city. One has obviously not been in doubt whether the city will be uninhabitable after a few years of uranium mining”.

(translation by author) (Sakariassen, 2021).

I interpret this statement as an expression of a concern that connects to individual economic conditions. The example about investments into the local area in the form of new projects, gives the impression that the citizen is linking both current but also potential future problems related to the economic sector.

This interpretation of the concern for maintaining and developing the area's economic opportunities is likewise articulated by Sejersen (2014), Associate Professor. In his report *Efterforskning og udnyttelse af råstoffer i Grønland i historisk perspektiv*, he explains how the environmental footprint of raw material activities is known to be long-lasting and difficult, whereas the economic benefits are short-lived. These long-lasting footprints vs economic benefits can also be analysed using the theory of securitization. Here Buzan et al. (1998, p. 105) explain how a potential environmental crisis, as in this case a potential pollution crisis within the mining project, is capable of inflicting serious damage on local economies and societies. Gradual or acute threat to society from major pollution or lingering decline in quality of lifestyle I argue would create a heavy burden on the community, which already has societal challenges (Bjørn, 2021). Such gradual or acute threats could come in the form of: reduced opportunity for occupation and loss of income, leading to forced relocation to areas with new employment opportunities. Society could be left with a burden more destructive and difficult to contain, and as I interpret it, could conflict with other occupations such as fishing, slaughterhouse activities, agriculture, and the society's opportunities for future economic diversification, for example in the form of greater tourism. The referent object, I claim, seems to be the protection of the possibilities to engage in local economic activity based in local industries.

Above, the reader is again presented with the interpretation of the consultation responses expressing concern for future local coherence of the community and local professions. But once again I encounter the challenge that individual economics and individual professions do not, in principle, qualify as referent objects within economic security complexes. As Buzan et al. (1998, pp.110-115) describe,

the premise of today's open and liberal market economy is, that one must accept some form of uncertainty where some are losers and other winners when it comes to economics. In line with this dilemma the authors explain that it is difficult to categorize an issue as a security issue within the economic sector when it comes to local or regional economic development opportunities (Ibid. p. 11). Although the theory of securitization offers several suggestions for referent objects within the economic sector such as: the national economy or individuals who are affected by economic security issues. These could, at first glance, fit several of the arguments put forward in the consultation responses, but this interpretation falls to the ground. For as Buzan et al. (1998) describe, there are very few economic issues that are actually so extensive that they qualify in a securitizing practice and can achieve successful securitization on the basis that they are economic security issues alone (Ibid. p. 103).

5. 2. 2. Mining as a Means of Economic Independence?

In continuation of this concern for the local community's economic sacrifices, in connection with a mining project, I also found consultation responses that turn the picture around and articulate the mining project as the exact means to resist economic stagnation. These responses base their argumentation in the concern for collapse of local communities due to lack of economic development and likewise express a fear of Greenland "closing in on itself". Major economic issues are brought to the front, which I interpret as an expression of concern for the future national economy, which in the above have been introduced as a means to carry the Greenlandic society in the direction of economic independency from Denmark.

This interpretation is expressed in the following consultation responses from a range of actors. In a consultation response from a citizen with no specific affiliation to Greenland, and labelled as Individual, the argumentation revolves around the current fishing and hunting industry:

“Greenland Minerals' environmental studies are very good, but there is nothing in life without risk. (...) With all due respect for individual reindeer herders or the fishery, here lies a very important, economic addition to the long-established branches of the economy!” (original language)
(Zimmermann, 2021).

This quote illustrates the disposition that current industry must step aside and make room for an important profession, which can function as a diversification of local economy and as an additional economic opportunity for the Greenlandic overall national economy. Zimmermann's use of the word *risk* in connection to the mine, I argue, is a way to elevate the discussion from environmental issues to a question of national economics, thereby deviating from a question of local interest and impact, and into a question about the national common good. I interpret it as a way of arguing that if Greenland does not act on economic stagnation and make the right decisions about economic development in society, they risk their entire future national economy.

When the mining company started their process for an exploration permit, several citizens, and authorities in Narsaq were happy about the new mining opportunities, as it was a long-awaited opportunity for the area's economy and social conditions. As chairman of the Greenland Economic Council, Professor Torben M. Andersen states, mining in Kuannersuit will lead to *new industries and increased business activity in the area. This will play a major role in Narsaq's economic development* (translation by author) (Bjørn, 2021, ¶ 4). The project will thus have an impact on the possibilities of employment and Narsaq's overall development.

In a consultation response from the Greenlandic Business Association (GE), labelled as Subunit, I yet again encounter an argument which I interpret as an illustration on the mine being seen as a means for business development, both on a local and national level: "*On the basis of the two reports (SIA/EIA), it is basically GE's (Greenland Business Association) assessment that the Kuannersuit mine project will be able to create business development in South Greenland in general and in the Narsaq area in particular*" (translation by author) (Krogsgaard-Jensen, 2021). In connection with GE's consultation response, GE proclaims that they expect the use of local labor in the project and states a connection between expected income for the National Treasury and employment opportunities for the Greenlandic community (Krogsgaard-Jensen, 2021). Here I interpret the mine as not just a local project but also as a national project that infiltrates all parts of Greenlandic society. The mine thus gets the position as an opponent to local economic stagnation and becomes an opportunity to get closer to future economic independence.

In line with the above presented consultations responses I interpret individual financial challenges, South Greenlandic regional business development, local employment, and the diversification of economic branches as corresponding to a form of referent object. I claim the illustrated responses as

an attempt to speak a concern related to the economic sector. This attempt is critically assessed in the theory because attempts like this, are built to fail in nature (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 102). Because even though individual finances, unemployment and stable industries in societies are indeed important to the citizen or the region, these issues are not clear economic security issues because they don't apply to economic survival for Greenlandic national economy or the Greenlandic Self-Governments ability to govern the nation. Likewise, I do not interpret the above statements about economic stagnation in the Greenlandic economy in the case of lack of implementation of the mine, as posing as a securitizing move, but as an attempt more in line with politicization of economic affairs for Greenland.

In summary, the economic sector contains several types of referent objects, some relevant and others diluted by the fact that they do not actually qualify as security issues in the economic sector. The latter is seen more as an expression that economic issues can spill over into other sectors as security issues, and thus different sectors intersect, making it sometimes difficult to find the root of the actual security issue posing in the specific situation. Despite the fact that I argue that neither the arguments for or against the project exists as economic security complexes as per the theory of securitization, I consider these attempts, both the pros and cons, as an expression of a concern about the economy at local and national level. I claim this concern to relate to possible implications on international relations concerning Greenland metaphorically closing in on itself. The raised concerns regarding economic considerations on both Individual, Subunit and Unit level, I argue, can thus be used to identify matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit, even though they do not constitute a security complex as per the theory of securitization. But by identifying issues ascending from the securitizing practice, I am able to label the issues as matters of security because they pose as security issues from the perspective of the actor.

5. 3. Cross-Sectoral Issues becoming Security Issues

The key to analysing the societal sector is to view *ideas and practices that identify individuals as members of a social group* (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 119). Here, society is thus about *identity, the self-conception of communities and the individuals identifying themselves as members of a community* through speaking of a common “we” (Ibid. p. 119). In continuation of this, I will in this part of the analysis get into why I argue the ability to obtain decision-making power and maintain co-determinacy on matters that concern local communities to be an illustration of the identification of matters of security in the project in Kuannersuit. I will engage in a discussion on cross-sectoral issues

and the recognition that environmental and economic issues could in fact be based in societal and political security complexes.

Within the societal sector the theory of securitization speaks of a "we", which refers to the overall identity of a larger group (Buzan et al 1998, p. 123). This "we" should also be seen as the starting point for a discussion on referent objects and threats. In this consultation response from the Subunit KANUKOKA, the National Association of the Greenlandic Municipalities, it is expressed how a project the size of the mining project in Kuannersuit will have a major impact on society:

“KANUKOKA believe that the mining project of this size is of great interest to all the Greenlandic municipalities and therefore they should be more involved in the consultation process. Projects of this size will have an impact on demographics and labor market conditions far beyond the local municipality's boundaries. There is a lack of further investigation of the settlement pattern of the outside workers, including especially during the operational phase, it is expected that part of the employees will settle permanently in the area where a large part of them could be expected to move to the municipality” (translation by author) (Abelsen & Christensen, 2014).

In this quote, I interpret KANUKOKA's point regarding *further investigation of the settlement pattern of the outside workers* and their expectation *that employees will settle permanently in the area where a large part of them could be expected to move to the municipality*, as an expression of a special focus on the area's future demographic coherence and future composition of the local communities. The focus on the composition of the population and the future of the local community, is also seen in this quote from a citizen from South Greenland, labelled Individual, during the consultation meeting in Narsaq in 2021:

“The debate about Kuannersuit does not only happen here (at the meeting), here in Narsaq it is an everyday thing (to discuss) (...) And the fact that someone says that the city is being evacuated, who can answer correctly? Or is it just something you say to scare people?” (translation by author) (Narsaq, 2021b, p. 24).

The quote is taken in the context that the citizen is concerned about what impact uranium mining will have for the community. By using words and phrases such as *evacuated* and *scare*, I interpret, that

the citizen would like to draw the listener to the understanding that the project's impact on communities are relevant issues to deal with. I argue that the citizen and KANUKOKA state a potentially great challenge to the cohesion of the local community if the local area is exposed to several parallel communities, which in principle is not to be integrated, and likewise the societal impacts on being exposed to possible uranium pollution.

Issues posing as environmental issue, but which I argue to manifest in the societal sector, is revealed in this consultation response from the Subunit, the WWF World Wildlife Fund:

“The citizens of Narsaq have expressed that they feel insecure about the prospect of dust from the mine drifting down over the city. The concern is that dust from the mine will pose a health problem to the people of Narsaq and that the city will be depopulated over the years” (translation by author)

(Frost, 2014).

Here I argue that the claimed environmental issues provide an analytical lens through which I can identify and highlight root causes of threats that manifests cross-sectoral. I argue that it is an example of an issue being presented as if the issue is a security issue in the environmental sector, but which in fact manifests in the societal sector. Here it is the fear of depopulation of the city and thus the risk that the city will have to be uninhabitable, that constitutes the societal root. I interpret it as an expression of a fear that the referent object, which is the local society's survival, are threatened by the possible consequences from the project in Kuannersuit. Kalvig (2021, p. 86) states that an inevitable part of the process of extracting Rare Earth Elements is that radioactive substances cannot be avoided and must therefore also be considered in this project. As an example, Kalvig (2021) explains *there have been a number of significant environmental problems associated with the production of rare earths in Brazil, China, India, Malaysia and the United States* (p. 86), as a reference to the fact that mining is known to have major effects on society.

But this claimed threat to health and environment is not necessarily enough to convince anyone with decision-power to accept the securitizing moves, and on top of that, in this case, we are speaking of a threat which exists in the future, but which in turn also calls for some known conditions from other cases. Thus, this use of argumentation may weigh heavily in the argument against the mining project. This is demonstrated in the theory as a facilitating condition, because there is in fact cause for concern when it comes to the consequences of mining waste. I argue, that in this case, known conditions from the mining industry supports the attempt to voice a topic as a matter of

security because societal effects known from the mining industry, in general, could also pose as a factor in the mining project of Kuannersuit.

An example of the identification of the project in Kuannersuit being a societal security issue, by speaking security, is found in a quote from the consultations meeting in Narsaq in 2021. Here a citizen connects current South African mining project's life-threatening consequences with the project in Kuannersuit: *"People die back-to-back, get cancer, water gets polluted, animals, flowers, and soil dies?"* (translation by author) (Narsaq, 2021b, p. 19). Likewise, I also identified the project in Kuannersuit as a societal issue and the future use of the area as referent object in this quote from the Subunit NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark and VedvarendeEnergi:

"(...) and the long-term consequences of uranium mining could be extensive radioactive pollution, which due to the health hazard may make it necessary to ban agriculture, fishing, hunting, and livestock farming in significant parts of South Greenland, just as it can be dangerous to live there"
(translation by author) (Bendsen, Jensen & Hooge, 2021).

I argue that the use of speaking security and labelling security, by connecting the deadly consequences of gold mining in South Africa to the project in Kuannersuit and the banning of future agriculture and hunting activities, to be an immeasurable attempt to securitize the existence of the complete society.

I interpret the following arguments as if the cohesiveness of the local community, the "we", and the composition of the people and the future connection for citizens to the local area, as being argued in danger of major changes and challenges: *"Will Narsaq residents be forced to relocate if it becomes too dangerous to live there? (...) What means will be used to force us away? (...) Where will you move us?"* (translation by author) (Lynge, 2021), and *"If Narsaq loses the vast majority of its fishing area to the mine and associated facilities - then who should want to live in that city?"* (translation by author) (Trans, 2021). The consultation responses come from two citizen, one local to South Greenland and one citizen living outside South Greenland. Here I argue that the citizens express a fear that the area will completely lose its opportunity to have a local population and that this development, in the worst case, will force the local citizens away from the communities. The citizens describe a future where no one has the desire or opportunity to continue their life in the areas. I claim this to relate to the mine's potential consequences for the area and the citizens, but also because the

cohesion of society could be reduced due to the project's impact on the area. By questioning whether anyone will *force* them away, and the question of who wants to live in “such a place”, I interpret an argument towards a security issue, which contains questions of threats to local citizens’ future. A possible future depopulation of the local community and thus cessation of the community, I argue to be backed in the theory of securitization as a threat, because complete depopulation of the community could be so all-encompassing that society really does cease.

In continuation of this, I want to draw attention to the theory's description of the societal sector and what can be threatened and by what. The argued threat of depopulation, evacuation of the communities and future unemployment issues connected to the closure of local industries is, in the theory of securitization, issues that may pose as a threat within the societal sector. Within societal security issues, there are several types of threats. This could be migration by the dilution of a people by influence of others, threats to identity or composition of people. Also, depopulation can be seen as a possible threat in the societal sector because. But as with e.g., unemployment and crime, this only become a societal security issue if it threatens to break down society (Buzan et al. 1998, pp. 121-122). As I interpret the above consultation responses, it is an expression of concern around the mine having such great impact on the cohesive strength of the local community, that the community itself (and thus the “we”) is in danger of not surviving in the future.

As Senior Research Fellow Stewart (2020) describes:

“Across the world, mining contributes to erosion, sinkholes, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, significant use of water resources, dammed rivers and ponded waters, wastewater disposal issues, acid mine drainage and contamination of soil, ground and surface water, all of which can lead to health issues in local populations” (original language) (Stewart, 2020, p. 1154).

By referring to some of the environmental effects that mining projects have had on other areas, like extreme environmental destruction as per Stewart (2020), the three citizen and NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark and VedvarendeEnergi make use of a rhetorical tool backed in the theory as facilitating conditions. With the use of language that is supported by "the grammar of security", they attempt to construct the project as an existential threat towards the citizens and thus societal coherence. In this case, by the citizen bringing previous knowledge about mining in other areas of the world to support how dangerous future mining will be in South Greenland, I argue the argument

has a stronger impact and may be more successful in persuading people to oppose to the project. I claim that this argumentation goes to show, that the mutual referent object is the "we" which is threatened as per the "we" to exist also in the future. The threat towards the community's future existence occurs as intense and acute to the Individual level unit, but as the theory of securitization describes, not everyone or any actor, no matter how threatened they may feel or how much they argue, have the same authority to securitize a topic (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 32). This is also seen in this instance, where the citizen, which I argue to pose as a securitizing actor, may not have the necessary weight and place in society to call something threatened and authorize securitization. Therefore, the use of specific linguistics by using words and sentences that gives connotations to death, annihilation, and destruction, can pose as a tool to gain acceptance on the securitizing move.

5.3.1. Violating Historical Collective Rights

In addition to citizens in and around Narsaq city expressing uncertainty and fear for their local community's future existence, there is in Greenland a historical belief about the collective use and ownership of nature. In the following chapter, I will argue how these two perspectives collide.

A citizen local to South Greenland, writing as a representative for a group of committed citizens who are part of the Greenland Business Association, states: "*A district with limited access is being built. It is a severe restriction on the ability of the local community to use the suburban areas*" (translation by author) (Nørskov, 2021). In this consultation response, I interpret how limited access and restrictions surrounding the use of the area around Kuannersuit is being labelled as matter of concern for the citizen. When looking into academia, we are presented to the historical conflicts of interest arising between effected citizens and authorities as "*the traditional right of collective use is being challenged by the mining companies' exclusive concessions*" (translation by author) (Frost & Fægteborg, 2014, p. 18.). In continuation of this, I interpret the quote from the local citizen as an expression of frustration over the common use of nature and the area around Kuannersuit being possibly deprived from the citizens and as an expression of the project violating the citizens' historical collective right of use. This historical common perception of nature and local areas as common property, I argue, is an expression that the citizens fear the loss of co-determination over their own areas and that their decision-making power over the use of the area is diluted by intrusion from outsiders.

In another quote from the consultation meeting in 2021, a citizen expresses dissatisfaction and an expectation that the area around the mine to a large extent cannot be used in the future. It is articulated that the mines' impact on the area will be so all-encompassing that even areas a little further from the mine itself will be useless in the future: "*Sermilik is located below the mine, and there we fish and catch our meat, impacts on the site can be extensive, and I reckon that one will no longer use the site for fishing or hunting?*" (translation by author) (Narsaq, 2021b, p. 3). Here the project in Kuannersuit is yet again presented as a threat to the locals' use of areas, and I interpret it, in line with Frost & Fægteborg (2014), as if when decision-makers transfers the use of Greenlandic territory to a group of people outside the Greenlandic people, here the mining company, as an infringement on the peoples' right of access to the area and the areas hunting and fishing possibilities. Therefore, this *traditional right of collective use* becomes a matter of societal security, as it is by the citizen seen as a vital part of their life and well-being and as an obstacle to the coherence of society.

As I have tried to examine in this part of the analysis, the members of the state, the nation, society, the people, and the individuals are the focal point of analysis. Here I have, based in a Level of Analysis, revealed how societal issues become security issues when investigating what security encompasses for the members of a community. According to Buzan et al. (1998, p. 119), traditional security agendas have for the most part constituted state security issues where focus has been on political and organisational stability, and the survival of the state, founding itself in the political sector. But following the widened security agenda, the traditional view of the state as a *fixed territory and formal membership* (Ibid. p. 119) is being thrown away in an attempt to zoom in on the state's components. By examining argumentation, contextualization, and the actors' ideas about what is threatened and by what, I have been able to identify societal ideas about community, coherence, and the future common use of local areas, as matters of security that reveal itself in connection with the project in Kuannersuit.

5. 4. A Mutual Underlying Referent Object?

By first looking at sector-specific security complexes within the environmental sector, and then opening up the discussions around the need to look at security complexes cross-sectoral, I argue that the theory of securitization has functioned as a lens through which I can view and highlight threats that manifest across sectors as cross-sectoral security complexes. Throughout the analysis, I have recognised that the mining project in Kuannersuit takes primacy in the interpretation of threats. But

by looking at how the actors argue for and against the project I have also recognised how the actors present the project in Kuannersuit in different ways depending on which referent object should be "protected". But what exactly is the referent object then? During the analysis the actors have presented several "things" that are worth "protecting" depending on the perception of the project. This observation has puzzled me.

5. 4. 1. Claiming Co-determination as an Expression of Greenlandic Independence?

Since 2007, the Australian mining company Greenland Minerals Ltd. has had approval for preliminary exploration to determine the possibility of mining for Rare Earth Elements in Kuannersuit. What is interesting to understand here, is that the Chinese raw material company Shenghe Resources Holding Co. Ltd, holds approx. 8% of the shares in Greenland minerals Ltd., possibly ensuring a great deal of influence in the mining project in Kuannersuit (Kalvig, 2021, p. 161). But in the latter years, Chinese interest, and growing involvement in the raw mineral industry, has been subject to much attention.

According to Andersson, P., Zeuthen, J.W. & Kalvig, P. (2018) many scholars, of Chinese-Arctic relations, regard China's Arctic and Greenlandic interest and involvement in mineral and mining activities as a strategic political move. This Chinese involvement into the Greenlandic mining sector has also led to some political dispute both in Denmark and Greenland, because of the element that Chinese companies are state-owned enterprises and therefore are partly driven by Chinese state interests (Andersson, Zeuthen & Kalvig, 2018, p. 103). Andersson et al. state, that official state documents on China's interest in the Arctic region, including Greenland, expresses non-military interest, but addresses, that *China intends to explore and exploit Arctic resources, including mineral resources* (Ibid. p. 105). In Denmark, uncertainties, that Chinese investment come with hidden political agenda, has led Denmark to voice its concern over Chinese involvement into Greenlandic relations. This has led to dilemmas over Danish national security interests and Greenlandic economic development (Andersson, Zeuthen & Kalvig, 2018, p. 103; Sørensen, 2018).

In a consultation response from a person with no specifies affiliation to Greenland and labelled as Individual, I encounter a strong concern over possible hidden Chinese agenda:

“Has Greenland sold its soul to CCP (Chinese Communist Party)? Sure looks like that. Big mistake! (...) You had better put the Chinese quest for your deposits on hold. They will destroy your environment, your communities, your respect around the world. Truly frightening that your great country is giving away its most valuable resources to foreign invaders. This is unacceptable and dangerous. Your traveling down the wrong road with your inability to understand the ramifications of your actions regarding China and rare earth minerals. (...) Letting China into this industry is a massive mistake that will haunt your communities forever. If you want to be sovereign, stay away from partnering with the Chinese government” (original language) (Abraham, 2021).

In this quote, I interpret the writer's use of strong expressions such as: *big mistake, dangerous, sold its soul, destroy* and *invaders*, as an expression that Greenland could risk ending up in the “claws” of China. As stated earlier in the thesis, mining projects in Africa are linked to environmental disasters, human rights violations, and inhumane working conditions, and here it is not insignificant to mention that mining in Africa is in many cases operated by Chinese state-owned firms (Vella, 2018). In the case of Kuannersuit, Greenland Minerals Ltd. is an Australian company, but because a larger part of the company's shares is owned by a state-owned Chinese mining company, there is reason to link the project in Kuannersuit with China's interests in Greenland. As mentioned above, Chinese interest and involvement in Greenland have been subject to concerns about political and security implications (Andersson, P., Zeuthen, J.W. & Kalvig, P, 2018; Sørensen, 2021).

In continuation of this, the concern about influence and power of mining companies, also appear in this consultation response from a citizen local to South Greenland, labelled as Individual: *“It is a dangerous development if foreign mining companies have to manage society and local development in that way. Mining companies are short-term profit phenomenon. Society and the people would like to be permanent”* (translation by author) (Gisladdottir, 2021). According to Sørensen (2021) expert in Chinese affairs, this concern, about the interests behind Chinese involvement in Greenland, is very appropriate. Chinese involvement, and influence in Greenlandic large-scale mining industry, has prompted the Danish Defence Intelligence Service to proclaim an increasingly attention to how Chinese investments in Greenland are closely connected to Chinese state interests in the Arctic. This also connects to how Chinese commercial and strategic interests has an impact on the security situation in the Arctic (Sørensen, 2021, 102). This insight into Chinese interests give me reason to interpret that the expressed concern about China's involvement in the mining project in Kuannersuit is an attempt to clarify how Greenland should “defend” their free room for maneuver or

decision-making power when it comes to raw materials, local development, and national interests in an attempt not to be “overrun” by Chinese state interests.

Likewise, mining companies’ interests versus citizen interest, are also present in this consultation response, from a local South Greenlandic citizen, labelled as Individual: “*The citizen consultation meetings that have been held in Narsaq city have been conducted by the mining company itself, and seem, quite frankly, not very credible*” (translation by author) (Rasmussen, 2014). I claim the expressed opinion to be an example on, that the communication surrounding the project, already in 2014, did not invite trust from the citizens. I interpret a concern connected to the mining companies’ abilities and self-interest in conveying possible impact to the area and society, and if it is done objectively “enough” so that all aspects of the mining project are presented to the public.

In the report *Råstofaktiviteter i Grønland*, by authors former connected to interest groups Inuit Circumpolar Council and World Wildlife Fund Frost & Fægteborg (2014, pp. 31-38), the authors recognise an emerging area of attention. It deals with rising public demand for the involvement of the population in raw material activities in Greenland. This debate comes on the basis of the heightened discussion about citizen involvement, and how citizen-demand for more and better information should play a role in future handling of raw material activities in Greenland. In the report, the authors provide advice on how to meet the citizens' wishes to actively participate in raw material activities, including how the information should be distributed, how dialogue should be included, how much and how complicated the information may be and also what languages it should be written in.

This recognition, that citizens are not met in their need for citizen involvement, is also reflected through several of the written consultation responses. Arguments are made that the communication surrounding the project in Kuannersuit, and the accessible material describing the project, over the years have been the cause of much frustration and tension. In a consultation response from a group of Greenlandic citizens outside South Greenland, labelled as Individuals, I argue that there is expressed concern and frustration about the material that is available to citizens:

“The text-heavy consultation material is extensive, complex, and technically difficult to understand, and it in itself prevents many ordinary citizens from relating to the mining project. In addition, there has been a lack of easy-to-understand critical and objective societal information, and even close to the consultation meetings, citizens are calling for more easily accessible information”

(translation by author) (Skourup, et al. 2021).

By using words like *extensive*, *complex*, and *difficult*, I argue the statement to label concern connected to the accessibility for citizens and their initial involvement in the project. The statement also explicitly states a lack of critical and objective societal information. I claim that this frustration can be translated into a concern for the people's voice and participation in the project because the citizens are not met in their need for “citizen-friendly” material. I argue that the use of words like *prevent*, *lack of* and *not credible*, is an expression of labeling a security issue by connecting the lack of opportunity for objective, citizen-friendly or easy-to-understand information, to a situation where the citizens cannot express their opinions and attitudes towards the project. Therefore, the citizens are in “danger” of not being taken into consideration by the decision makers. Thus, I interpret the statement as connected to concerns about the citizens ‘role and voice in the mining project.

At the consultation meeting in Narsaq in February 2021, a citizen expresses frustration about the lack of response from the mining company and from experts concerning the potential impacts on the community: *“If you cannot get closer to (presenting) the possible impacts for what worries the citizens about potential impacts on nature, I experience that people feel and tell me, that they question the credibility of the reports”* (translation by author) (Narsaq, 2021b, p. 16). I interpret this questioning of the credibility as an illustration of insecurities and frustration based in the lack of response from experts and the seemingly deficient written material. I argue the citizens’ way of voicing the lack of response as an expression of “speaking to a door”, in the sense that the citizens lack proper feedback when they participate in the consultation meetings. Likewise, by voicing that people *feel* and *tell* the citizen that they question the reports from the mining company, the citizen also expresses a common public insecurity about a possible lack of participation in deciding what’s going to happen with the project in Kuannersuit. Thus, I observe a possible security issue connected to the project's credibility towards and involvement of the citizens.

Scholars Olsen & Hansen (2014) have, in continuation of citizen-participation, conducted a study on Public Participation. Here they investigate actors' (population and stakeholder)

different opinions on what consultations on raw mineral, or in this case offshore oil exploration, should contain. They found that there is a need for more specific Public Participation guidelines to meet the citizen's need to better understand the industry and implications of raw material projects on the communities. As the authors say:

"The locals similarly emphasized the importance of thorough information campaigns, arguing that proper information enables a better understanding of the projects and the potential impacts (...) (the actors) emphasized the need for information during PP about what can be expected to happen, how it will influence the every day life of the locals, and job opportunities" (original language) (Olsen & Hansen, 2014, p. 74).

As the quote clearly highlights, already in 2014, there was a great focus on the citizens' role in raw material activities in order to meet the citizens' need for involvement and participation. In this thesis, the data sets showed a clear pattern connected to concerns that the mining company does not present as credible, that the investigations have not been carried out thoroughly, and that the material, in which the citizens and the authorities can orient themselves, are not objective enough and thus "hides" knowledge about the project's real impacts on the area and society.

Based on the above interpretations on; fears of China's involvement and interests in Greenlandic minerals, mining companies not necessarily looking after the interests of citizens and lack of citizen-involvement and citizen-voice, I get the impression, that underneath this premise lies a deeper underlying message behind the response to the project in Kuannersuit. From the perspective of concerns about Greenland closing in on itself risking both the economy and society if they miss the opportunity to earn on the minerals of the mining project, I argue that there could also be a message corresponding too something greater than environmental, economic, and societal security complexes.

According to the theory of securitization, a strong state will always act on the basis of what is best for the people of the state, based on the ideas on which the state is funded (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 146). Greenland is not in the traditional sense a state on an equal footing with other territorial states. But in the theory, there is room for understanding the state as an expression of other Units-level entities with strong political institutions, functioning as state-like entities (Ibid. p. 145). By interpreting Greenland as a state-like entity, the theory also describes how sovereignty is the fundamental referent object within the political sector, as sovereignty is the foundation of the state

surviving as a state. Immediately it would be easy, based on the theory of securitization and the “rules” applying to the theory, to interpret the mining project in Kuannersuit as being incapable of having an impact on Greenland's entire survival as the state-entity it here constitutes. However, to this I will include scholars Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen (2018) and their discussion about how independence and sovereignty can be interpreted into the context of the mining project in Kuannersuit. According to Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen (2018), the debate on mining and uranium in Greenland, is about three perspectives, one political, one economic and one environmental, but these perspectives all point back to Greenland's future role as an independent state. In line with Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen (2018), I argue, the argued lack of co-determination over local community and future is an expression of a larger and more comprehensive discussion about Greenland's political development and Greenlandic perception of what independence entails. Likewise, this thesis illustrates that both the arguments against and the arguments for the project in Kuannersuit, all point to the underlying topic of independence. I argue this to be demonstrated in the arguments describing; the project as a threat to the population's "survival", the arguments that describe the project as necessary for Greenland to develop economically and the arguments concerning China's "dangerous" involvement in Greenland.

This interpretation, on independence in the context of the mining project in Kuannersuit, is backed in theory of securitization. Here the authors explain that sovereignty does not always have to be about sovereignty, as in the traditional sense, but can also refer to; that breach of sovereignty also means breach of the ability to self-govern (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 150). Thus, I argue, that the perceived threats against Greenland's future independence, can be connected to Greenlandic sovereignty being challenged. However, I interpret the word independence to be understood in two ways. One is about the ability for the people to “anchor” themselves in the project, and that this anchoring is an expression that people have co-determination over their communities and local development. The other is about independence as seen from the outside world, where Greenland strives future international recognition as an independent actor (Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen, 2018, p. 48).

This recognition leaves me to ask myself: can you claim security, from an Individual-level perspective, connected to lack of involvement and co-determination, as a question of Greenlandic independence being threatened?

According to the theory of securitization, individual-level security is on the security agenda in the political sector, as opposed to any of the other sectors (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 141). This

leaves me to interpret those concerns connected to individual co-determination, the voice of the people and its context to the discussion on future independence, as being indeed relevant to highlight as a matter of security in the project in Kuannersuit. As highlighted in the theory, the analysis of sectors gives view into relationships and interactions, and I argue, that the referent object expressed to be threatened in the overall case of Kuannersuit is mutual co-determination of what is to happen to Greenlanders own country and future development. This gives rise to an interpretation that the peoples' own participation is directly connected to the idea of an independent Greenland and must be seen as something to be "taken care of" or protected because it is threatened. This interpretation of a referent object also supports this thesis' take on security, by showing that security can indeed be claimed in a broader security complex (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 27).

Having now established that the underlying referent object in the data can be interpreted as an expression that Greenland's future independence is threatened, both if the project becomes a reality but also if it does not. It is now relevant to look at if this interpretation, of threats and referent objects, can be translated into implications to the current political perspectives surrounding the project in Kuannersuit, which have been outlines in chapter 1. 1. 2.

5. 5. The Uranium Law as an Extraordinary Measure?

The historic decision to move away from zero-tolerance on uranium in 2014, has been strongly criticized by many for being hasty and without foundation in the people's wishes. The legislative move has since been discussed by scholars also. According to Rasmussen & Merckelsen (2017, p. 90), the ending of the zero tolerance can be seen as a result of the Greenlandic government for years trying to paint a rosy picture of uranium mining as the absolute path to economic development, societal wealth and finally the path to economic independence. This process has later been called a de-securitizing move from the Naalakkersuisut, to claim a form of legitimacy in the use of uranium to gain economic and political independence (Ibid. p 92).

But why is it, then, that the Inatsisartut in December 2021, only 7 years after the ending of the zero-tolerance towards uranium, again legislates against uranium? And does the interpretation of independence as a referent object, have any relevance in connection to the new uranium law?

According to scholars Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen (2018), "*The threats facing Greenland are never just about the rules of Greenlandic politics, economic sustainability, or environmental*

uniqueness – they are about imagining and ultimately finding a road to independence that supports Greenland as a nation” (p. 48), claiming, that the topic of uranium has always prompted discussion that ultimately is about Greenland’s road to independence. If one then follows the idea that securitization is about primacy and that securitization can only be claimed as a success if the process includes both securitizing moves, extraordinary measures, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rule, is it then possible to identify the uranium law as a form of extraordinary measure, ultimately securitizing the independence process?

5. .5. 1. The Power to Securitize

In an attempt to answer if the uranium law constitutes an extraordinary measure, I will highlight the role that Level of Analysis plays in this context. Because, by identifying who constitutes the securitizing actors, I also highlight the challenges that may exist for precisely these actors when an attempt to securitize is made. Throughout the analysis, Individual and Subunit-level security complexes have been dominating the discussion and I have spoken little of extraordinary measures and the power to mobilize such measures. The reason lies in the need to address who the audience is, because as discussed earlier in this thesis, not all actors have the same power to mobilize a successful securitization. But following Levels of Analysis, the theory of securitization describes a way in which I can highlight the actors occurring in the dynamic and their different power concerning securitization (Buzan et al. 1998, pp. 5-6).

As Floyd (2021), a researcher on security studies, explains, when speaking security in the attempt to achieve securitization, there would be little to no point if there was no audience with the power to mobilize measures to obtain an actual securitization. According to Floyd (2021), *if we can ascertain the addressee of the securitising speech act then we can know with certainty who the audience actually is* (p. 86). By determining who the consultation responses are addressing, I can thus determine who the audience is because, as Buzan et al. (1998) explains, while anyone can declare a security issue and call for something as threatened, securitization is only successful if it involves a threat, counteraction, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules (p. 26). To reach these requirements, an audience have to be involved in mobilizing actions against the threat.

In this analysis, *the addressee* behind the consultation responses and the meetings, is the Greenland Minerals Authority, which have the power to grant the acceptance of license to exploit Kuannersuit. Floyd (2021) explains how the power to mobilize extraordinary measures, is reserved for more

powerful actors in the dynamics and, as I interpret it, this is rarely possible for the Individual or Subunit level actors. Here only the "persuasion-work" takes place with the intent to convince or "request" more powerful actors to mobilize measures against the perceived threat and, as I have emphasized throughout the analysis, there are several attempts to securitize the mining project from both pros and cons-actors.

I also want to draw on literature from Ghincea, researcher on international security, who argues, that the role of the audience in securitization theory remains under-conceptualized, inconsistent, and at times non-existent (Ghincea, 2017, p. 2). He states that:

*"while the securitizing actors try to appeal to "as broad an audience as possible"
[...] "securitization acts can have various and parallel audiences," in some cases large audiences
that can include the entire nation and other times can be limited just to narrow audiences"*
(Ghincea, 2017, p. 2-3).

Thus claiming, that the audience does not necessarily have to be one entity, but can also present as several different audiences depending on where in the process the actors are in their attempt to securitize. I follow this view on audiences by interpreting the audience in this analysis to be connected to a two-stage process. First the Individuals and the Subunits attempt to initiate support from one set of audiences, by speaking "the language of security" towards a threat and a referent object to declare a matter of concern. I interpret this first stage of audiences as a broader set of likeminded people such as: the wider population in southern Greenland but also the rest of Greenland's population. This dynamic is especially visible in the consultation meeting where I see citizens proclaim common opinion and seek moral support from the local community. They do this by referring to each other's statements and, as can be seen in several places in the transcripts, the citizens applaud each other's questions as a form of indirect popular support. In the second stage, as per Ghincea (2017, p. 2-3), the securitizing actor, the Individuals, try to mobilize a more formal support from an audience that have power to initiate measures towards threats. In some of the consultation responses, some of the actors, whom are against the project, present that any legislation against uranium may be the only way to halt the threat, as they perceive it. Legislation against uranium is a move which can only be taken by the elected representatives in parliament. Following the theory of securitization, this way of expressing "a way out" is part of the "grammar of security" as a way of presenting the threat as possible to avoid, thus trying to position the threat as a threat that is in fact

existing and not just subjectively. According to the theory this can be interpreted a conscious attempt to position the threat on a level where it is absolutely necessary to act on right now (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 24). The written consultation responses and the consultation meetings are all addressed to a formal audience such as the Greenland Minerals Authority or the Greenlandic Government by the Head of the Ministry of Minerals; Jørgen T. Hammeken-Holm. The fact that the actors direct their message to this particular type of actor I interpret as a crucial attempt to reach an audience that has decision-making power over the mining project.

In continuation of this, I would like to draw on the fact that, the Greenlandic election to Inatsisartut in April 2021 was to a great extent concerning the mining project in Kuannersuit and the effects it would have on society whether approved or not (Hansen, 2021). The realization that the mining project has drawn so much focus from the citizens and from the politicians during a Parliament election, I think is a strong indicator of what Buzan et al. (1998) state about gaining resonance,

“We do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued and just gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimise emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible had the discourses not taken the form of existential threats, points of no return, and necessity” (Ibid. p 25).

This quote leaves me to interpret, that the consultation responses from the public, industries, and authorities, illustrate how argumentation, which draws on "securitizing grammar" with sector-specific characteristics, have gained great resonance on the project in the political arena. This is demonstrated with the Inatsisartut, in the form of the audience, discussing the project in Kuannersuit throughout the whole election. I argue that this immense focus on the project would not have appeared so strong, had the consultation responses and meetings not taken the grammar of security of point of no return, necessity, urgency, and primacy. This interpretation therefore leads me to a discussion on whether the uranium law can be seen as an expression of an extraordinary measure mobilized in an attempt to securitize independence.

Referring to the above quote by Buzan et al. (1998, p. 23), I argue it to be partially possible to see the uranium law as an expression that: so much focus has been created on the project in Kuannersuit that

the legislation could very well be seen as an expression of an emergency measure. However, I do not interpret the uranium law as an expression of the Inatsisartut exercising political measures towards securitizing Greenlandic independence. I would however argue that the process of legislating against uranium in mining projects, could be an identification of a widened perspective on security migrating into politics, without it necessarily being a process of securitization. What I mean by this, is the fact, that to claim Greenlandic independence successfully securitized as per the theory of securitization, would be to stretch the theory outside its capacity. The theory of securitization has a framework that must be followed to claim successful securitization, and I do not think that the framework contains enough support on the topics of individual co-determination, people's voice, and popular anchoring, as to conclude the theory being applicable. In this way the theoretical framework is limited by boundaries towards actors, threats, and referent objects.

I do however argue, that if one applies the basic idea behind the widened security agenda, meaning the acceptance of attributing issues outside the political and military realm status of security issues, the topics of co-determination, the people's voice, and popular anchoring, are very well possible to claim as matters of security. I see the uranium law as a manifestation of the citizens of Greenland, despite the fact that they can "only" be analysed as being at Individual and Subunit level, having been successful in creating *enough resonance*, resulting in increased political attention. I would argue that the public awareness and strong focus on the project from both citizens and politicians during the Parliament election in 2021, is an illustration of the citizens, institutions, and the authorities having the power to manifest so much focus on the project, that it has created a platform for the politicians to legitimately revision the Minerals Act. I thereby argue that the uranium law can be seen as an expression of the fact that political decision-makers to a large extend have listened to the voice of the citizens, reflecting what their wishes are for Greenland in the future. Given the decision taken in 2014 around uranium, this legislation may prove to be a product of political realization of the citizens wishes for co-determination in how Greenland as a country should be in the future.

6. Conclusion

In this thesis, I set out to investigate what matters of security could be identified in the public consultation processes concerning the mining project in Kuannersuit. I did this, by pursuing an analysis using a deductive research design based in the Theory of Securitization by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998) from the Copenhagen School. The background to this particular

research question is found in my academic interest in investigating whether the discipline of security studies could be applied to today's discussion about mining in Greenland. In the thesis I have used deductive coding based on pre-created themes, applied to a data set comprising 51 consultation responses from 2014 and 2021, and on a set of documents containing transcripts from a consultation meeting in 2021. I have conducted thematic analysis and used the theory of securitization as a framework for analysis.

Through systematic coding of the datasets and a thorough analysis, this thesis has demonstrated how it is possible to identify how securitizing actors attempt to claim both environmental, economic, and societal issues status as security complexes. This was demonstrated in an analysis of arguments performed in consultation responses and in consultation meetings where I interpreted how actors made use of “the grammar of security”, by labelling and speaking security connected to issues they argued to be either threatened or posing as a threat in connection to the project in Kuannersuit. But the analysis led me to the realization, that by looking at the argued security issues through a sector-specific lens, I risked overlooking important aspects, because arguments about issues that are threatened or seen as a threat are rarely one-sided or sector-specific and they are rarely without implications in other sectors. This realization opened up a discussion about how some arguments are presented within sector-specific areas, but in reality, move between the sectors depending on which unit the actor constitutes, and which audience is addressed. By working from the perspective of the actors, I interpreted that issues that were argued as threats or threatened were in fact cross-sectoral, in the sense, that they can be analysed from several angles and with different implications depending on which perspective one takes on them. Depending on which actor I took perspective from the issue in question took different form and had different implications depending on which Level they constituted. By analysing the issues raised in the consultation responses and at the consultation meeting, and with insight into academic contributions to knowledge about mining in Greenland, I found that the project in Kuannersuit posed as both a means towards increased Greenlandic independence and as a threat to Greenlandic independence. This is expressed by the fact that the word independence underlies a form of double-understanding. In relations to increased Greenlandic independence, the arguments were made towards Greenland's role as an actor in the international society, claiming Greenland not to close in on itself by being opposed to the mining project and potentially losing the economic freedom that follows. But the project also showed to pose as a complete contrast to Greenlandic independence seen from a community perspective, as hindering the

voice of the citizens, and thus being an obstacle to achieving local anchoring of further development of local communities.

I found that the theory of securitization had limitations to its framework, when applying it to this thesis, by setting up rules for what kinds of threats and what kinds of referent objects can be analysed using the theory. This was particularly evident by the fact that topics such as the role of the individual in the debate on security does not have a significant place in the framework of the theory. But I claim that the theory's starting point in its definition and application of the widened security agenda provides an opportunity to use the theory to identify areas that are argued as related to security complexes, but which are not necessarily part of a securitizing practice. I interpret this, as an identification of the theory being applicable when trying to identify issues that take the form of matters of security, even though these issues may not apply in a securitizing practice as per the theory of securitization.

In a discussion about whether the common referent object of independence has had any implication on the legislation of the uranium law from 2021, I argued, that the uranium law, to a lesser extent can be viewed as an extraordinary measure mobilized towards securitizing Greenlandic independence. However, I argued that the law could be seen as an expression of the political decision-makers having largely kept an eye on the people's attitude towards mining and the debate on what kind of Greenland they wish for the future.

6. 1. Future perspectives

The findings of this thesis provide an opportunity to consider what could qualify the discussion. Further research of the citizens' relationship with politicians, could be interesting in the sense of being able to examine whether there is less distance between the citizens and politicians in Greenland than there is, for example, in other similar countries. This research could possibly shed light on whether the Greenlandic citizens' success in drawing such a large political focus on the project in Kuannersuit, has had an impact on the revision of the Minerals Act with the uranium law of 2021. To investigate this, it might be relevant to examine the relationship between the Greenlandic population and the Greenlandic politicians, and this relationships' possible implication on legislation in Greenland.

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