

Securitization

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Since the 1980s, the field of migration has been dominated by police governance, security discourses, and control techniques—in a word, securitization. Securitization is a discourse and system of measures that excludes a particular category of people from society by defining them as a threat—for example, to cultural values, social benefits, public safety, the labor market, or health (Huysmans 2000: 711). Securitization is a form of structural violence and operates through racism.

Jef Huysmans, who had presented his ideas before the 2001 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York, linked securitization to the nationalism of the welfare state. Since the 1970s, full employment in Western Europe has no longer been taken for granted, and there has been an increasing number of violations of workers' rights. From that point on, migrants and asylum seekers have been increasingly seen not as comrades in the labor struggle, but as illegitimate recipients of social rights. Their demands for safe employment and equal rights have also been rendered illegitimate. These rights have come to be seen as pull factors for migrants to the EU, and in this context, the term "fake" refugees has gained traction—referring to migrants allegedly exploiting the asylum system to find employment and use welfare services (Huysmans 2000: 767).

In the past two decades, securitization has become linked to anti-terrorist discourse, which is used to demonize those seeking international protection and other migrants (see Petrović and Pozniak 2014). Securitization manifests as the systematic restriction of freedom of movement and the ability to apply for asylum. Particularly problematic state measures in the area of securitization include: administrative **detention**, **pushbacks**, deportations, Eurocentric procedures for international protection, segregation of asylum seekers in asylum centers, prohibition of employment during the first 9 months of the asylum process, and the conditioning of social and labor rights on knowledge of the language of the country where protection or another status has been granted.

These measures appear to be aimed at "protecting" the domestic population, but in reality, securitization represents the strengthening of racism and the role of the police in dealing with refugees and migrants, who thereby come to be perceived as a security problem by the public (Zorn 2021).

Literature

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