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SECURITIZATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: THE CASE OF THE CHIBOK GIRLS

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2015

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SECURITIZATION OF FEMALE HUMAN TRAFFICKING:
THE CASE OF THE CHIBOK GIRLS

Final undergraduate thesis presented to the Examination Board of the International Relations Institute (IREL) at Universidade de Brasília (UnB) to obtain a bachelor degree in International Relations, under supervision of Prof. Vânia Carvalho Pinto

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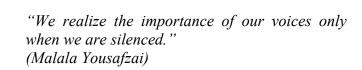**SECURITIZATION OF FEMALE HUMAN TRAFFICKING:**
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"We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced."
(Malala Yousafzai)

RESUMO

Este trabalho tem por objetivo analisar o processo de securitização do tráfico de mulheres na Nigéria através do sequestro das meninas de Chibok. Para tal tarefa, adota-se o uso complementar de duas abordagens teóricas: o *security framing* e a *gender security theory*. Essas ferramentas permitem averiguar os aspectos de gênero e raça do caso, e ainda responder à pergunta: por que o sequestro das meninas de Chibok não foi securitizado com sucesso e quais foram as limitações envolvidas nesse processo? Além disso, esse trabalho aplica as críticas de Lene Hansen à Escola de Copenhagen no *security* framing ao se utilizar dos conceitos de *security as a silence* e *subsuming security*. Ao analisar em que medida a administração de Goodluck Jonathan aceita o discurso proferido pela Anistia Internacional com relação ao caso, esse trabalho conclui que a perspectiva neutra em termos de gênero adotada pelo governo nigeriano com relação às questões de segurança limita a securitização do caso.

Palavras-chave: *security framing*; Chibok; Nigéria; securitização; *subsuming security*; *security as a silence*; tráfico de mulheres; Goodluck Jonathan; gênero; segurança; Anistia Internacional.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the female human trafficking securitization process in Goodluck Jonathan's administration started by Amnesty International through the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping. In order to account for the gender and racial aspects of this case study, I will use two complementary theoretical approaches: security framing and gender security theory. I will use this combination to answer why has the Chibok Girls' case been unsuccessfully securitized and what are the constraints involved? Also, I apply Lene Hansen critics to Copenhagen School to the security framing through the concepts of "security as a silence" and "subsuming security". This research concludes that the Nigerian government's "gender neutral" perspective on security issues is a constraint to a successful female human trafficking securitization through the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping.

Keywords: security framing; Chibok; Nigeria; securitization; subsuming security; security as a silence; female human trafficking; Goodluck Jonathan; gender; security; Amnesty International.

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INTRODUCTION

On April 14th, 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 schoolgirls at the Government Secondary School in Chibok, northeastern Borno State, Nigeria. While I am writing this thesis, it has been more than a year since the kidnapped have occurred; 53 girls have escaped, but 223 are still missing.

Despite previous kidnappings targeting women and girls for demanding ransom money and prisoners of governments since 2012[1], Boko Haram announced they would "sell" the girls as "slaves in the market" and would marry them off (ZENN, 2014; BRING BACK OUR GIRLS, 2014). Therefore, this terrorist attack is not a simple kidnapping, but it appears to be a crime of human trafficking.

This research aims to analyze the human trafficking securitization process in Nigeria through the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping. For this task, I use gender as a category of analysis because I consider this case of human trafficking as a gender-based insecurity[2] that is deeply embedded in collective constructions of subjectivity and security (HANSEN, 2000).

Considering that interdisciplinary studies are still scarce in International Relations (TETI, 2007, pp.117-119), I expect to contribute to empirical researches that apply international relations theory to non-western case studies. For this reason, I use an interpretative framework as an attempt to bridge the fields of IR and African Studies (BATES, 1997; HAUGERUD, 1997; LOWE, 1997 *apud* TETI, 2007, p. 138). I also apply Lene Hansen's critics (2000) towards the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School in this case study to analyze the way gender is subsumed in the securitization process for a non-western audience. This entails the use of local literature concerning historical and cultural associations with female human trafficking to understand how gender hierarchies influence the security agenda in Nigeria (PICQ, 2013, p.8).

In order to account for the gender aspect of this case study, I will use two complementary theoretical approaches: security framing and gender security theory. Security framing is a dynamic process of individual event interpretation that entails looking for ideational elements (history, values, beliefs, ideologies and so on) within the cultural universe of the target audience. This approach is presented as accounting for the two variables above (CARVALHO PINTO, 2014), an assessment I tend to concur with since it satisfies the criteria

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[1] Since the 2012 arrest of Boko Haram leaders' wives and children, the terrorist group have conducted retaliatory gender based violence actions as such kidnappings and female (child) suicide bombings (IFEMEJE ET AL,

[2] Gender-based insecurity is an insecurity situation that threats to cause physical or sexual harm directly a person on the basis of gender (Adapted from HANSEN, 2000).

set forth by Sandra Whitworth to assess the 'gender friendliness' of a theory. These criteria are: (1) it must allow for the possibility of talking about the social construction of meaning; (2) it must discuss historical variability; and (3) it must permit theorizing about power in ways that uncover hidden power relations (WHITWORTH, 1989 *apud* TICKNER, 2001, p.27).

By considering security framing as a non-gender bias instrument, the gender security theory will incorporate gender and race as categories of analysis in the human trafficking issue. This means that the security framing will take into account the gendered reality of the Chibok kidnapping, which includes the kidnaping itself, the construction of the girls' image in the media, the speech act and the reaction of the Goodluck Jonathan's administration[3]. In other words, it will be able to analyze how gender influences the securitization process.

This combination of security framing and gender security theory is the theoretical framework that I will use to analyze the human trafficking securitization process in Nigeria through the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping and ask: why has the Chibok Girls' case been unsuccessfully securitized and what are the constraints involved?

There were several securitization processes that could have been explored in this research on national and international levels. For example, the securitization process started by the Nigerians asking their government to rescue the girls (SHETTY, 2014) and the #BringBackOurGirls campaign that asked the United States' President, Barack Obama, to get the girls back (ALTER, 2015).

Since the subjects involved are constructed during the securitizing move (HANSEN, 2000, p.303), it is impossible to investigate so many processes and interconnections simultaneously. Therefore, I have chosen the one started by Amnesty International. Through petitions, articles and media interviews, this non-governmental organization (NGO) asked the Nigerian Government to take sufficient forceful response towards the kidnapping (DUTHIERS ET. AL, 2014: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2014). Amnesty International believes that Jonathan's administration was negligent in preventing the Chibok kidnapping and it is not making sufficient efforts to guarantee their return (SHETTY, 2014a, SHETTY, 2014b, DUTHIERS ET AL., 2014).

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[3] Goodluck Jonathan became Vice-President of Nigeria on May 29th, 2007. He became Acting President on February 9th, 2010, after the terminal ailment of President Umaru Yar'Adua. On January 14th, 2011, Jonathan was elected President of Nigeria until 2015 (IDIKE, 2014, p.159). This research takes into account the government's response from April 14th, 2014 – day of the kidnapping – until May 29th, 2015 – the very last day of Jonathan's administration.

This research suggests that the Nigerian government's "gender neutral" perspective[4] on security issues is a constraint to a successful human trafficking securitization through the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping. This traditional approach towards security seeks to mitigate the threats against the state's sovereignty and territory. It also perpetuates gender hierarchies, and, consequently, gender-based insecurities such as female human trafficking. This means that the Nigerian state would not perceive human trafficking as a security problem that needs urgent actions to solve it as well as a territory occupation.

Prior to the case study itself, Chapter 1 will discuss the dynamics of securitization and how gender works as a complementary analytical category in this research. The case study will be explored in the following chapters. Chapter 2 will present the Nigerian girls as the referent object and human trafficking as an existential threat – according to the securitization process proposed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, Chapter 3 will evaluate Amnesty International's credibility as a securitizing actor in the eyes of Jonathan's administration. Finally, I will verify the resonance of Amnesty International's speech act and analyze if the results correspond with my hypothesis.

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[4] A "gender-neutral perspective" means that gender is considered irrelevant to the subject in question, which perpetuates gendered social constructions and hierarchies (TICKNER, 1991, p.8). In summary, a gender-neutral perspective does not turn reality into a non-gendered construction.

CHAPTER 1 – THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SECURITIZATION OF FEMALE HUMAN TRAFFICKING

This chapter explains the theoretical framework and concepts used all the way through this thesis. The key theoretical instruments are, respectively, the *theory of securitization*, the *security framing* and *gender security theory*. Also, concepts such as *securitization, subsuming security*, *security as a silence* and others are further explored in this chapter.

1.1 Theory of Securitization: Security as a Process

Following the wideners'[5] perspective of expansion of the term security, an operational method for security studies was framed to fulfill the analytical necessities for the post-Cold War agenda (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, pp. 1-5). After the Cold War, the traditional perspective of security in military and state-centered terms was not consistent with the new conflicts and threatening relations that have emerged ever since. Issues with political, environmental, economic and other aspects started to enter in the security agenda (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, pp. 1-5).

Within this new perspective, the *securitization theory* refers to the process of shifting an issue out of the realm of 'normal' political debate into the realm of emergency politics through the presentation of an existential threat to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby legitimizes the use of extraordinary measures, as exposed bellow. However, the securitization is successful only if the audience accepts the threat as credible (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.25; PEOPLES & VAUGHN-WILLIAMS, 2010, p.78).

Non-politicized → Politicized → **Securitized**

Speech act

Securitizing actor → | Existential threat
Referent Object | → Audience

The *referent object* refers to "things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival" (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.36). In this case, the

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[5] The "wide" versus "narrow" debate about security studies came from the inability of the state centric and nuclear security perspective of the Cold war to be applied in the economic and environmental issues that were rising in the agenda during the 1980s (BUZAN ET AL., 1998, p.1-2).

Nigerian Girls are the referent object that are threatened by human trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced marriage. Their existence depends on the kidnappers will, on the captivities conditions and on the risks that the exploitative practices afford. Also, the *existential threat* should be understood in relation to the particular character of the referent object (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.21). This means these girls are under vulnerable condition in their community[6], which makes human trafficking an existential threat. Human trafficking may not existentially threat other referent object – for example, the state – because it does not possess the same particular character as the Chibok girls.

Hence, some objects and threats can be more easily securitized because they are intersubjective constructions looking for the audience's acceptance. This means that an issue can be easily securitized if it presents qualities that the audience perceives as relevant. However, the definition of the referent object can "block, or severely limit the qualification of issues as security problems" (HANSEN, 2000, p.297).

This occurs because gendered security problems demand understanding of other aspects of the object's identity interlinked to gender, such as national, ethnic or religious, which concerns social/individual security, not the national/collective security. As assumed in this thesis, an audience with a "gender neutral perspective" would not perceive a gender-based insecurity because it would take gender as a relevant variable. Then, a gender-based insecurity would be hardly securitized because the object's gender is not accepted as existentially threatened by the issue proposed. In security terms, this underestimation of an issue is called *subsuming security* (HANSEN, 2000, p.297).

Another barrier that the referent object can confront is *security as silence,* which is when insecurity cannot be voiced due to either absence of or limited opportunities to speak and when doing so might exacerbate the threat faced (HANSEN, 2000, p.287). In other words, the referent object has limited capacities – or none – to perform a speech-act; it would need someone – a securitizing actor – to speak on their behalf.

The Chibok Girls' case portrays Nigerian women as the referent object, which requires an understanding of their gendered, ethnical, religious, and class identities' aspects. These cultural and social dimensions can contribute to a subsuming security condition depending on the associated connotations in how the referent object and threat are produced. Also, it can also be labeled as "women issues" and be marginalized in the agenda (TICKNER, 2001,

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[6] Human trafficking as an existential threat is further explored in Section 2.4 in Chapter 2.

p.114). This means that female human trafficking is problem that targets based on gender, which can limit its possibility of being considered a security issue.

A *securitizing actor* is an actor who securitizes an issue in relation to an existentially threatened referent object, through a *speech-act* (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.36; PEOPLES & VAUGHN-WILLIAMS, 2010, p.79; HANSEN, 2000, p.288). The speech act is not simply "saying" the word "security", but a broader rhetorical performative act which draws upon a variety of contextual, institutional, and symbolic resources for its effectiveness (WILLIAMS, 2003, p.526).

For a successful securitization, the felicity conditions related to the speech act are the internal logic of the speech securitization act and a connection between the existential threat and historical/cultural associations with danger and harm that may aid the audience in making this association. In concern to the securitizing actor, it is required position of authority and social and political capital to convince an audience. (PEOPLES & VAUGHN-WILLIAMS, 2010, p.79; CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, p. 165; BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.31).

While Hansen (2000) focuses these critiques on the securitization theory of Buzan et al. (1998), I consider them in my theoretical framework not only to adapt the theory to my case study, but also to expose how subsuming security appears in the real political dynamics. Considering that securitization acceptance is a political choice, an unsuccessful securitization process can position a subject to a subordinated condition as a security issue.

Although the *security as silence* illustrates the silence – absence of speech – as a visual and bodily performance that talks[7] (HANSEN, 2000, p.294), I apply this visual and bodily performative perspective for understanding, especially, the production of the speech-act and its resonance in the target audience (HANSEN, 2000, p.300; CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, p.163).

The attempt of securitization regardless the audience acceptance is called *securitizing move*. The securitizing actor is the one who determines the securitizing move and its components (BUZAN ET AL, 1998, p.5). According to the framework structured to this point, this case study analysis the securitizing move below:

a) Securitizing actor: Amnesty International

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[7] In "The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School", Lene Hansen (2000) criticizes the Copenhagen School assumption of the actor's ability to speak. She explains that the act of "speaking security" can bring insecurity to the referent object, for example, the Pakistani women under honor killings custom laws can aggravate their insecurity conditions for speaking against these laws. In this sense, their silence "speaks" – in a visual and bodily performance – and this can be perceived internationally.

b) Existential threat: Human Trafficking (for sexual exploration and forced marriage)

c) Referent object: Nigerian Girls

d) Speech Act: Asking Nigeria to take enough forceful response (petitions and articles)

e) Audience: the Nigerian Government

Given that the audience acceptance determines the success of a securitizing move, it is essential to analyze how the speech-act resonates in the Nigerian Government and what were the limitations involved. In this sense, the *securitization theory* analyzes the audience's perception – the Nigerian Government – of accepting or denying an existential threat – Female Human Trafficking. The former is framed by a securitizing actor – Amnesty International – on the extent to which it needs to fulfill the felicity conditions of the process, according to the target audience's preferences – the Nigerian State (CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, p.165). For this analysis, I will use the security framing presented below.

1.2 Security Framing

The security framing investigates the audience's preferences in a more precise and all-inclusive way through the integration of the 'felicity conditions' for a successful securitization with the framing approach. As a result, security framing is a dynamic process that aims to identify the ideational elements within the cultural universe of the target group – the Nigerian Government – that shows its acceptance or refusal of the framed threat.

Then, the securitizing actor – Amnesty International – frame an issue as an existential threat – Female Human Trafficking – and the acceptance of the framing will depend on the extent to which it resonates in the target group – the Nigerian Government.

Table 1 - The security framing criteria

The security framing criteria

Securitizing Actor → Existential threat → Audience

	Dimensions	Criteria	Definitions
Resonance (Felicity conditions)	Credibility	Consistency	Logical Articulation of Constitutive Elements
		Empirical Credibility	Connection with Existing Problems as Perceived by the target group
		Credibility of the Articulator(s)	Legitimacy accorded to the Proponent
	Salience	Centrality	Degree of Importance it assumes within the Value System of the Target Group
		Experiential Commensurability	Connections to the Worldview of the Target Group
		Narrative Fidelity	Cultural Resonance

Source: CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, p. 166.

This *resonance* means that speech-act had credibility and salience. Concerning *credibility* criteria, the message must have *consistency* – logical sense of the arguments, *empirical credibility* – compatibility with the Nigerian Government's existing problems, and an *articulator with recognized legitimacy before* the Nigerian State to delineate this frame. With regards to *salience* criterion, it must have *centrality* of the issue according to the Nigerian State's hierarchy of concerns, *experimental commensurability* – connections to the Nigerian Government's view of the world, and *narrative fidelity* – how the issue relates to its cultural assumptions (CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, pp.165-166).

1.3 Feminist (Gender) Security Theory

For analysis of the female human trafficking in this case study, it is vital to understand gender as a category of analysis because it is a gender-based insecurity. The generalized concept of *gender* in academia could be simply summarized as "a set of culturally shaped and defined characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity" (TICKNER, 1992,p.7). However, I wish to go further and explore gender as

"a system of symbolic meaning that creates social hierarchies based on perceived associations with masculine and feminine characteristics, [it] is not simply an attribute possessed by certain actors, but a system through which those actors are constituted and positioned relative to each other" (WADLY, 2010, p.39).

As a gender-based insecurity, the term *human trafficking* is directed to focus on sexual exploitation and forced marriage, since it influences in how the Chibok Girls – referent object – are constructed and presented to the audience – the Nigerian Government (LOBASZ, 2010, pp.214-229; JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005, pp.25-27). However, I am aware of the risk of subjugating the other purposes of human trafficking, for example, forced labor, false adoption, pornography, organized begging, organ harvesting and other criminal activities (AGBU, 2003, p.2; JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005, p.25).

Even though my focus seems restricted in terms of purposes, the definition of human trafficking used in this thesis was selected in the 2000 Protocol on Trafficking attached to the United Nations Convention Against Organized Crime: "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons using force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, or vulnerability, or the giving and receiving of payments to achieve consent of a person or having control over another person" (AGBU, 2003, p.2).

My approach contrasts with the "gender-neutral perspective" that constructs trafficking as a threat to the state sovereignty, particularly its borders' control. This notion of security reinforces gender hierarchies that diminish human – women and men – security since because their voices as trafficked persons are neglected (LOBASZ, 2010, p.214). The power structures of politics dynamics institutionalized the split between public and private keeping this kind of problem out of what count as "important", and, consequently, limits them from being heard (CYNTHIA ENLOE, 1996 *apud* TICKNER, 2001, p.28).

It enforces gendered assumptions and (mis) representations that reproduce gender and racial stereotypes that: (1) discount women's agency; (2) establish a standard of victimization; and (3) unjustly prioritize the sexual traffic of white women over the traffic of men and women of all races for different purposes (LOBAZS, 2010, p.215).

In spite of most of trafficked victims are rarely kidnapped or abducted, this is the exact way that Boko Haram held the Chibok Girls. This is not a surprising when talking about a gender-based terrorist attack. Nevertheless, it influences the construction presented by the press and many securitizing actors – including Amnesty International – of young and naïve victims who needs for protection. Such focus invokes the elements of "the old image of white

slaves"[8] associated with the trafficking of Eastern European women for sexual work in the 1990s (JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005, p.26). Nevertheless, this is still a case concerning Nigerian poor women of color and it also has an influence on the construction of the referent object – Nigerian women – and the existential threat – female human trafficking.

As previously stated, a gendered security problem needs to be understood in interaction with inter-linked identity elements, like religion, ethnic, and class (HANSEN, 2000, p.287). In order to understand Nigerian women identity and how human trafficking threats them, one must consider a local perspective as well as a global one (AGBU, 2003; ALUBO, 2011; IFEMEJE ET AL, 2015; ZENN, 2014). This is important to fully understand them as a construction presented by an international securitizing actor – Amnesty International.

In conclusion, the analysis of the securitizing move's failure of the Chibok Girls' case and its constraints are exposed in the following chapters, through the complementary use of the theories as explained above. The next chapter will explore the constructions of the Nigerian girls as referent object and the female human trafficking as an existential threat.

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[8] This association is further explored in Section 2.5 in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2 – THE NIGERIAN GIRLS AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT

This chapter aims to present the Nigerian girls as the referent object, human trafficking as an existential threat and the related images projected by the media, as per the securitizing move delineated in the previous chapter. For this analytical task, it is necessary to present the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping and its background. Firstly, I will introduce the Nigerian geography and socio-political aspects that are essential in order to understand the case. Secondly, I will present the insurgency and development of the kidnappers – the Boko Haram terrorist group. Moreover, I will describe the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, in Northern Nigeria. Finally, I will apply the security theory to the case with the identification of the constructions of the Nigerian girls as referent object and female human trafficking as an existential threat, which includes the media's influence on them.

2.1 Background: The Nigerian Socio-political Context

Nigeria is a diverse and complex nation in terms of culture, ethnicity, language and religion. The diversity is such that Nigeria is known as the African Giant, because it has a population of more than 168 million people distributed over more than 250 ethnic groups, including Yorubas, Hausas, Fulanis, Kanuris, Igbos, Ijaws, Kalabaris, Ibiras, Igalas, Tivs (ICC, 2013, pp.9; UMEOBI, 2013, p.3; HASSAN & UMAR, 2014, p. 141). Despite its ethnic plurality, Nigeria is religiously divided; 50% of population is Muslim while 40% is Christian. The rest accounts for traditional native religions and those who do not profess any religion (UMEOBI, 2013, p.1). This ethno-religious consciousness often correlates with the pattern of political parties that exploit these identities to favor group or individual interests. Consequently, it generates a feeling of distrust and fear between the ethno-religious groups, which makes them compete for access in the political arena in order to guarantee one's will over the others' (HASSAN & UMAR, 2014, p.131; ALUBO, 2011).

This intolerance regarding identities is argued to be a heritage of the colonial British rule and its "divide and rule" strategy to mitigate nationalist struggles in African colonies (IHONVBERE, 1994 *apud* HASSAN & UMAR, 2014, p.131). Also, this tension has culminated in ethno-religion conflicts and disturbances since Nigeria's political independence in 1960. Even after its democratization in 1999, Nigerian politics has been marked by ethnic loyalty and patron-client relations (HASSAN & UMAR, 2014, p.131; UMEOBI, 2013, pp.3-

4; ALUBO, 2011, p.82). This political context generated extreme inequality across Nigeria's regions.

Figure 1 - Map of Nigeria stressing Borno State and its cities

Source: I24NEWS[9], 2014.

In Northern Nigeria, most people are Muslims from Hausa or Fulani ethnic groups who live in impoverished communities. In 2010, the region had the second highest rate of poverty in the country. In the state of Borno, 67% of the population is illiterate (AMNESTY INTERNATIONALa, 2015, p.9). The relative deprivation of education, health, jobs and other basic needs enforces the dominant perception in the region that there is a wealthy elite that is Christian while the most impoverished communities are Muslim (AGBIBOA, 2013, p.151). This perception together with the fact that Sharia law was introduced in 12 states, including Borno, has lead to an extreme ethno-religious crisis in the region by both Muslims and Catholics (UMEOBI, 2013, p.4). In the Northern region, education is perceived as a way to convert Muslims into Christians and as a form of southern wealthy elite domination over the north (AGBIBOA, 2013, pp.146-151). Also, the belief that Christians benefit most in a mixed population fosters the insurgency of violent sectarian groups, such as Boko Haram (AGBIBOA, 2013, p.146; ICC, 2013, p.10).

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[9] Available in: <http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/africa/140429-outrage-grows-after-nigeria-schoolgirls-kidnapping>. Accessed on: April 13th, 2015.

2.2 Boko Haram: History and Evolution

Boko Haram[10] is a Salafi-jihadist Muslim group that is largely based in Northern Nigeria; it was first reported in 2002. The group was established in Maiduguri, Borno; its orthodox teaching resembles the one of the *Taliban* in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It considers anything that is Western is un-Islamic and weakens the Islamic society. Muhammad Yusuf, its founder and leader until 2009, declared that its objective was to replace the Nigerian State with a Shariah-based Islamic system caliphate (ICC, 2013, p.11; HASSAN, 2014, p.12).

In July 2009, Muhammad Yusuf was killed in police custody under questionable circumstances. Photographs of his body suggested he was handcuffed at the time of his death. His extra-judicial killing gave him the status of "martyrdom" in the eyes of his followers (IRIN NEWS, 2011 *apud* ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p.46). Afterwards, Abubakar Shekau, successor and current leader, said "jihad has begun" (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p.46).

In 2010, Boko Haram re-emerged with shootings and bombings "in secular schools, churches, mosques, media houses, communication centres, cinemas, marketplaces, universities and the United Nations (UN) headquarters in Abuja" (MAIANGWA & AGBIBOA, 2014, p.52). The sect continually aimed to oppose secular westernization in Nigeria – especially the educational system – and to create an Islamic state. Nevertheless, the group had support among part of the population; Boko Haram lost support as the violent incursions intensified (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, p.14).

Boko Haram's new strategy in its terror campaign is to kidnap of women and children. This tactic is seen as a reaction to the Nigerian police's recurrent detention of family members of Boko Haram militant leaders since December 2011 (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, pp.47-48; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2015, pp.40-41; MAIANGWA & AGBIBOA, 2014, p.52; PEARSON & ZENN, 2014; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.3). Over 100 of the relatives were wives and children of Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram's leader. However, there was no evidence that they were directly involved in the group's operations (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p.48). In January 2012, the group released videos accusing the government of "kidnapping" women and threatening to kidnap wives of government officials in response to this (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p.47; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2015, p.41).

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[10] *Boko* is a Hausa – tribal language of the region – word with pejorative sense used as reference to the secular school system imposed by the British colonial government in Northern Nigeria at the 20th century. *Haram* is an Arabic term to refer to an act forbidden by Allah (PETERS, 2014, p.186). In this sense, 'Western education is sinful'. In its origins, the group named as '*Jamā'a Ahlal-sunnah li-da'wa wa al-jihād,* - Sunni Group for Preaching and Jihad (HASSAN, 2014, p.12; ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p.46).

This demonstrates a cycle of gender-based abductions and detentions, as women were instrumentally used to affect each side and none of the captives had any direct involvement with the conflict. The first retaliatory kidnapping was in February 2013 with the abduction of seven members of a French family in Cameroon, who were brought to Nigeria. This was followed by the abductions of more than a dozen government officials and family members in Borno State. Additionally, Boko Haram captured 12 Christian women and children in police barracks (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, pp.47-48). Since then, the group has undertaken other abductions across Northern Nigeria, where most of people are Hausa-Fulani Muslims.

Amnesty International (2015a, p.3) estimates that Boko Haram has abducted over 2,000 women and children. Most of the documented abductions took place in the Christian area of southern Borno State (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.2). However, it was the Chibok Girls' Kidnapping that raised international attention to Boko Haram and exposed this gender-based insecurity (PEARSON & ZENN, 2014).

2.3 The Kidnapping of The Chibok Girls

On the night of April 14, 2014, 276 female students were abducted at the Government Secondary School Chibok, Borno state. The school was closed since March 2014 due to the state of emergence, but had re-opened for the West Africa School Certificate examination (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, p.66; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.22; MAIANGWA & AGBIBOA, 2014, p.51). Unusually, none of the administrative staff were in the school buildings that evening. Boko Haram members pretended to be soldiers who would protect the girls; however, they put as many students as they could, including Muslim ones, on the truck and took them to the Sambisa forest. The rest were forced to walk about 10 miles at a gunpoint on the route to Boko Haram's camp in the Sambisa forest, until other vehicles arrived (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, p.66; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.23). Fifty-three girls have escaped: some jumped off the back of trucks or hung onto tree branches and jumped down when trucks drove off. Meanwhile, others asked to go to the bathroom during stops to replenish food supplies and then fled. With the help of local residents, these girls arrived home a few days later. However, 223 are still being held captive, the Chibok girls are said to have been split up into three or four groups and held in different areas – probably in the Sambisa forest, around the Lake Chad and near Gorsi mountains in Cameroon (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2005a, p.67).

On May 5, 2014, Abubakar Shekau took responsibility for the Chibok Girls' kidnapping via video message and threatened to force them into marriage and sell them as "slaves" (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, p.6; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, pp.20-21; PEARSON & ZENN, 2014). The act of kidnaping with the purpose of forced marriage and sexual market casts light on female human trafficking which will be explored bellow (LUSCOMBE & FOROOHAR, 2014; CONANT, 2014; ADEKOYA, 2014; BRUNKER, 2014; JEKOWSKY & KAPLAN, 2014; CBS NEWS VIDEO, 2014).

2.4 Human Trafficking as an Existential Threat

According to the Protocol on Trafficking, attached to the UN Convention Against Organized Crime, trafficking is "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons using force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, or vulnerability, or the giving and receiving of payments to achieve consent of a person or having control over another person" (AGBU, 2003, p. 3). Human trafficking can serve different purposes such as forced labor, false adoption, pornography, organized begging, organ harvesting and other criminal activities (AGBU, 2003, p.3; JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005, p.25). The Chibok Girls' case concerns human trafficking as abduction for forced marriage and sexual exploitation. Amnesty International does not use the expression *human trafficking*; instead, it uses the concept of "being sold into sexual slavery or forced marriage" (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, p.6; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2014). It is important to recognize that there is a lack of agreement regarding the definition of trafficking (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014); therefore forced marriage as a form of human trafficking could generate an opposition in countries where the women's consent towards marriage is questionable.

Human trafficking is applicable to the Chibok girls' kidnapping because they were abducted for being sold and marriage. Also, this case is an exploration of the vulnerable conditions they were subjected to like other trafficked people usually are: they are in captivity and under the kidnappers control. This situation fits the human trafficking definition presented above.

Female human trafficking is a gender-based insecurity that is life threatening. Survival depends on the risks related to the exploitative practices they will be submitted to and the captivity conditions. First and foremost, they continue to live only if the kidnappers wish them to. It has been reported that at least 2 Chibok girls died from snakebites and over 11

contracted illnesses (PROIS, 2014; ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014). They are also vulnerable to rape and forced marriage (ADEKOYA, 2014). In videos posted online, Boko Haram claimed that it forced the girls into marriage. Although it is not possible to verify what is happening with the Chibok girls, it has been reported in other cases of abducted women who were forced into marrying Boko Haram members that they were raped and obligated to perform domestic chores (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a, pp.6-7).

Even though female human trafficking threatens individuals, it is constituted from the inscription of women as an inferior gendered collective in their society (HANSEN, 2000, pp.287-291). In other words, the vulnerability of women and girls in Northern Nigeria to radical elements, such as Boko Haram, is due to religious laws, cultural traditions and the socio-economic status of women in this society (MAIANGWA & AGBIBOA, 2014, p.52). The transgression of this social order turns these girls into targets.

Despite this unusual use of kidnaping as a form of human trafficking, human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria. For example, the flows from Nigeria to Europe are quite extensive, especially, in Italy (JEKOWSKY & KAPLAN, 2014). It is believed that Nigeria's human trafficking crisis was exposed when the Chibok Girl's case found room in the international arena. While the Chibok Girls Kidnapping has reached the international media, most human trafficking cases are not even reported. The often hidden nature of human trafficking blurs the connections of this criminal network, which makes it hard to identify the individuals involved and take them to court. Human trafficking victims are usually economic migrants who search for new opportunities in countries with better social conditions than their homelands. Kidnapping is a rare method of trafficking people; deceptive job advertisement is a frequent one (LOBASZ, 2010, p.216; JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005, p.27; JEKOWSKY & KAPLAN, 2014).

Both situations are concerned to human trafficking, the third most common crime in Nigeria after financial fraudulence and drug trafficking. Nigeria is an origin, transit and destination country for trafficked children and is predominantly an origin country for trafficked women. According to the UN office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 83% of the children trafficked for domestic services are recruited in Akwa-Ibom, Kano and Kaduna states, respectively, southern and north part of Nigeria. In 2011, thousand of babies were trafficked, especially from the Eastern region due to the increasing expansion of baby factories[11] (AKANI, 2014, pp. 4-5).

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[11] A baby factory is a place where women are forced to get pregnant and to give their newborns for sale.

This human trafficking situation can be described as one of the Nigerian girls being abused by Boko Haram, while the state fails or refuses to protect them (HANSEN, 2000, p.293). In this context, speaking to authorities or to media networks risks the lives of the girls in captivity as well as the lives of those not being held because both are under Boko Haram's control (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.20). The captives are under its direct control and the ones "free" in their villages are afraid to become the next targets. This case could have remained one of *security as silence* since the act of speaking their insecurity would risk their lives (HANSEN, 2000, p.287).

However, performative actions taken by non-governmental organizations (NGOs through petitions, articles and reports), the media (through the #BringBackOurGirls hashtag) and public opinion (through manifestations, raids and entreaties) built its way into the international discourse (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2014; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014; OPOOLA, 2015; BRINGBACKOURGIRLS, 2014; ANSARI & BRUEGGEMAN, 2014).   This alarming situation posed to a captivating referent object – Nigerian girls – shocked the international community.

2.5 The Referent Object: Nigerian Girls

Internationally, it is recognized that human trafficking threatens the lives of persons through different exploitative activities and actions to eliminate it are necessary. However, the image constructed of the victims affects the amount of attention it elicits in the political arena (LOBASZ, 2010, pp.226-228; JAHIC &FINCKENAUER, 2005, pp.25-27; WILLIAMS, 2003, pp.524-527). The Chibok Girls are young, naïve, willing to improve their education and in need of protection, which correlates "to the old image of white slaves that resonates with the developed countries of the West" (JAHIC &FINCKENAUER, 2005, p.26).

The image of white slaves was explored by the media at the end of the 20th century – the moment that the trafficking of Eastern European women to Western Europe brought attention to the modern slave trade, also know as human trafficking. These European women were pictured as young and naïve in a way that victimizes them. This means that the potential of their agency of looking for a better job that made them vulnerable for human trafficking is not presented. In the Chibok kidnapping, the fact that these girls went to school for an exam during the state of emergence declared due to Boko Haram's violent actions shows that these

girls were challenging the social context they were inserted. Hence, their act of going to school put them under a vulnerable condition and this fact is not considered in the media.

This image presents the victims as "one of our own", which brings a feeling that it could have happened to anyone: "Can you imagine if 234 girls were abducted from their school in Paris or in Chicago? This would be a nightmare, this would be an uproar" (NICOLE LEE *apud* ANSARI & BRUEGGEMAN, 2014).

In this sense, this is also the image that sells news. Even so, the Chibok Girls' image portrays many characteristics presented in the old image of white slaves; they are still poor African women of color. As the women from Asia and Africa could not bring human trafficking to the spotlight like the European women did because they do not fit in this image (JAHIC & FINCKENAUER, 2005); so the Chibok Girls do not fulfill completely this image that resonates among the West. This may be one of the causes for the Western perception of the case as a domestic issue (RICCERI, 2014; GARDNER, 2014; MURDOCK & STEARNS, 2014).

Although, the Western perception is not our subject, this image projected by the media internationally influences the construction of the Chibok girls as referent objects in AI's speech act. Amnesty International does not show any support for this image directly, their use of the words *young* and *schoolgirls* invokes the naiveté and purity related to this construction of the Chibok girls (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a; AKWEI, 2014; SHETTY, 2014; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL; 2014).

In conclusion, human trafficking is an existential threat posed to the Nigerian girls embedded in the social norms of the region. In addition, this threatening situation presented to the referent object – Nigerian Girls – shocked the international community through a resemblance to the white slave image that has been perpetuated. Actually, both constructions influence the acceptance of the securitizing move[12] as well as the securitizing actor's credibility and the speech act, which are explored in the next chapter.

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[12] The audience's acceptance will be further in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3 – AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: SPEECH ACT AND ACTOR'S CREDIBILITY

This chapter aims to present Amnesty International – AI – as a securitizing actor and explore the contents of its speech act according to the securitizing move delineated in Chapter 1. Also, I apply one of the three criteria of security framing's *credibility* dimension: the *credibility of the articulator*, as outlined in Chapter 1. The structure will be as follows: I present Amnesty International's background and structure, then I proceed to introducing the speech act and verify its consistency. Finally, I analyze the actor's credibility according to the vision of the audience – the Nigerian Government.

3.1 Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a result of the worldwide support generated by "The Forgotten Prisoners" article published in a newspaper in 1961. The author, Peter Benenson, was outraged when two Portuguese students were jailed for raising a toast to freedom, during the Salazar dictatorship. In this article, he coined the term "prisoner of conscience"[13], which is still a pillar of Amnesty today (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015b; POWER, 1981, p.10; BALDWIN, 2008, p.14).

In September 1962, Benenson and a group of like-minded intellectuals officially founded Amnesty International. The primary goal of this international, voluntary, human rights organization is the impartial protection of human rights for all. (BUCHANAN, 2002, p.581; BALDWIN, 2008, pp.1-10; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015b). Consequently, Amnesty International found its way through the investigating and exposing of human rights' violations all over the world, seeking to lobby governments and companies to keep their commitments to human rights (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015b).

However, it was only in 1989 that Amnesty International started to focus on violence against women. It realized that women suffer more human rights' violations – female genital mutilation, rape, forced prostitution, domestic violence, etc – than any other group in the world and fighting these issues would require a reconsideration of the public/private division. AI concluded, in 1995, that the government-sponsored discrimination against women

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[13] "Any person who is physically restrained (by imprisonment or otherwise) from expressing (in any form of words or symbols) any opinion which he honestly holds and which does not advocate or condone personal violence. We also exclude those people who have conspired with a foreign government to overthrow their own" (BENENSON, 1961 *apud* Baldwin, 2008, p.14).

contributes directly to human rights violations in the private sphere (BAHAR, 2001, pp. 107-112).

Even though Amnesty started fighting violence against women, its commitment usually keeps its actions towards "public" violence that emanates from the government. The lack of practical measures against domestic/private violence "naturalizes" the family contract and its gendered hierarchy, thereby, reproducing the image of women as weak, dependent female child demanding protection of a powerful and paternal figure – the husband or the state (BAHAR, 2001, p.109). Hence, only some human rights violations are under Amnesty's protection: death penalties, imprisonment, torture and extrajudicial executions. All of these are crimes usually committed by the states (BAHAR, 2001, p.110; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015b).

3.2 The Case of the Chibok Girls: Amnesty International's Speech Act

On April 14th 2015, an act of violence against women captured the attention of Amnesty International and the entire international community: the kidnapping of 276 girls in Chibok, Nigeria. AI was concerned about (1) the return of the kidnapped girls; (2) the negligence of the Nigerian government to prevent it; and (3) the government's lack of effort to guarantee their return.

Consequently, the organization started its speech act – understood here as performative[14] – on 2 May 2014, a few weeks after the kidnapping. The speech act is composed by online petition, interview of AI's Secretary General, articles in different websites, media campaign such as the #BringBackOurGirls, protests and official reports. All of these elements will be further explored bellow.

Firstly, Amnesty made an online petition[15] to ask the Nigerian Government "to work to secure the safe release of the girls and to ensure that the perpetrators of this attack are brought to justice" (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2014). This was not the only message from Amnesty International directed at the Nigerian government. Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General, has been writing articles and conceding interviews to different media sources to raise international and national concern about the case. In Amnesty's blog, he stated that the government should act "swiftly and firmly to secure their

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[14] As exposed in Chapter 1, the speech act is considered as a performative act in which the media, the images and the bodily performances compose the act of "saying security" to an issue.
[15] This online petition is still open and it does not seem to have a closing date set. Anyone can sign the petition from any country. Unfortunately, the petition opening date is not presented on the web.

safe return – with international support if needed" in commitment to human rights and accountability (SHETTY, 2014b). Moreover, Amnesty International called their readers to tweet in support of the Chibok Girls with the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls and to submit photos in solidarity to the case in Amnesty's Bring Back Our Girls Tumblr (AKWEI, 2014). By May 12th 2014, the hashtag had been tweeted over one million times – about 35 thousand tweets a day (BBC TRENDING, 2014). Oby Ezekesili, a former Federal Education Minister, tweeted it for the first time, more than a week after the kidnapping (ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014; BRING BACK OUR GIRLS, 2014).

The hashtag attracted attention of the international media and famous personalities, including political ones. Michelle Obama, David Cameron and others supported the #BringBackOurGirls in tweets and pictures, consequently, people all around the world mobilized themselves around the issue (BBC, 2014; THE GUARDIAN, 2014). The first states to offer intelligence assistance and technical support were the United States, United Kingdom, France and China (BIGG & OLA, 2014; (DUTHIERS ET AL., 2014; ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014; ELBAGIR & LEPOSO, 2014). However, the possibility of foreign troops or military incursions has already been rejected. It is expected that the Nigerian authorities can handle the situation with their own initiatives and the international assistance (GARDNER, 2014; MURDOCK & STEARNS, 2014). The AI also supported other actors' protests, rallies and sit-ins across Nigeria and worldwide (SHETTY, 2014a; OYOYO, 2015). For example, on 19th February 2015, the Nigerian Student Association – NSA – in collaboration with Amnesty International organized a protest at York University, Canada. The students expressed their disappointment regarding the Nigerian government failing to provide security to its citizens (OYOYO, 2015).

Even though this case constitutes a human trafficking crime, Amnesty International does not use this concept in its articles, reports, petitions and declarations. Instead of *human trafficking*, it uses the expression of "being sold into sexual slavery or forced marriage"[16] (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2014). This speech act influences the acceptance of the securitizing move by the Nigerian Government[17] as well as the credibility of the AI as a securitizing actor.

The organization did not limit its speech to the security of the Chibok Girls; it also urged the Nigerian government in taking responsibility for preventing this issue. On 12 May

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[16] The reasons for Amnesty International not expressing the issue as *human trafficking* are discussed in Chapter 1 as well as the application of the concept of human trafficking to the case.
[17] The *consistency* of the arguments articulated in the speech act and other resonance dimensions of the securitizing move will be explored in Chapter 4.

2014, Amnesty reported that the Nigerian security forces had more than four hours advance warning of the armed raid on Chibok but failed to act on it. The organization gathered evidence, testimonies, and other credible sources' declarations that confirmed the military headquarters of Maiduri and Damboa were repeatedly contacted by both security and local officials between 7 p.m. and 2 a.m. (SHETTY, 2014a).

Also, Amnesty's declarations denounced the lack of effort to stage a forceful enough response to rescue the abducted and to protect from human rights abuses committed by Boko Haram (DUTHIERS ET AL., 2014; SHETTY, 2015). The girls' parents and people from the Chibok community confirmed the perception of abandonment of the case (OPOOLA, 2015) as well as the lack of information from the federal government about what has been done to search for the girls (ANSARI & BRUEGGEMAN, 2014).

3.3 Amnesty International's Credibility as a Securitizing Actor

As one of the criteria to evaluate the resonance of a securitizing move, the criterion *credibility of the articulator* means that Amnesty International must have legitimacy in the eyes of the audience (CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, pp. 165-166) – the Nigerian Government - in order to perform such a move.

In general, when "organisations like Amnesty International are speaking security on behalf" of the referent object, its success "would presumably involve an international threat issued against" the Nigerian state (the audience), including economic, political or military sanctions. Since Amnesty International is unable to muster sanctions on its own, the success of the securitizing move would be achieved only with the support of powerful states or institutions capable of mustering these sanctions (HANSEN, 2000, p.294). For example, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch campaigns against the systematic rape of women in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BAHAR, 2001, p.112; E-TEAM, 2014) captured so much international attention that it culminated in the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia – ICTY – and the prosecution of those who committed human rights violations.

Nonetheless, Amnesty itself tries to build a credible image based in its structure and history. In terms of structure, the institution maintains its financial independence to ensure that economic interests do not undermine its human rights work (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015a; BALDWIN, 2008, p.25). Also, Amnesty International is

committed to gathering accurate information before pushing for or making charges of human rights violations (BALDWIN, 2008, p.26).

Concerning its historical credentials, the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 'securing the ground for freedom, for justice, and thereby also for peace in the world' in 1977 (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015b). Although Amnesty International never claims direct credit for the release of prisoners of conscience, the prisoners that were released thanked Amnesty International for its advocacy on their cases. Some of those who were grateful and appreciated Amnesty's involvement in their cases include Rajat Neogy, Faraj Ahmed, and more recently, Moses Akatugba (BALDWIN, 2008, pp.14-15; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NIGERIA, 2015).

All of these were prisoners of conscience released due to AI's advocacy effort. Rajat Neogy was the founding editor of "Transitions", an African magazine that frequently attacked African dictators. Then, Neogy was imprisoned in 1968 and released one year later BALDWIN, 2008, p.15). In the case of Faraj Ahmed Birgdar, a Syrian poet and journalist, he was arrested in 1987 by the Military Inteligence on suspicion of membership of the Party Communist Action. He was released just in 2000 (ENGLISH PEN, 2004). The most recent release is the Moses Akatugba's one. He was sentenced to death for stealing mobile phones. In May 2015, he received the government's pardon (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NIGERIA, 2015).

Consequently, Amnesty International became an important conduit of information to institutions, such as the UNHRC (BALDWIN, 2008, p.29), and it helped to transform human rights into a powerful tool to critique the state sovereignty (WILLIAMS, 2005, p.148). However, according to the security framing model, the credibility of the securitizing actor as regards a certain issue emanates from the audience (CARVALHO PINTO, 2014, pp. 165-166). In other words, Amnesty International's legitimacy as a securitizing actor in this case is determined by the Nigerian government's perspective.

The way this organization is perceived by the international community affects its recognition in the eyes of the Nigerian government. Actually, the fact that Amnesty has international credibility puts pressure on governments to respond to incriminatory allegations. Also, this NGO – non-governmental organization – is able to mobilize international public opinion and legally binding institutions which avoids Amnesty's allegations of being ignored. For example, the International Criminal Court – ICC – used Amnesty International reports in the "Situation in Nigeria: Article 5 Report" in 2013 for evaluating if the situation in Nigeria meets the legal criteria of the Rome Statute (ICC, 2013).

Even so, it is necessary to analyze how the government expresses its perception on Amnesty International's credibility. Its speech act is marked by three moments: (1) asking to rescue the girls or guarantee their release, (2) denouncing the state's negligence not only to prevent the kidnapping but also to act immediately on the issue, and (3) denouncing lack of efforts since the kidnapping in solving the issue. However, it was in the second occasion that the Nigerian government started to respond directly to Amnesty International accusations[18].

President Goodluck Jonathan vowed to investigate the allegations, but "defended its military response taken on the issue and questioned the motives behind the accounts" (DUTHIERS ET AL., 2014). The Minister of State for Defense, Musiliu Olatunde Obanikoro, endorsed the need to conduct investigations too. The Minister of Information, Labaran Maku, denied the four-hour advance warning and affirmed that the government as soon as it heard of the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls and they "… shouldn't turn this into a trial of the Nigerian government" (SHETTY, 2014a; DUTHIERS ET AL., 2014). Hence, it can be affirmed that Amnesty International is perceived as a credible institution according to the proponent, but not an unquestionable one.

It does not mean that the international support provided to Amnesty is always the same like the one during the Bosnia-Herzegovina genocide; therefore, its potential to securitize issues is not fixed either because it also depends on the audience's preferences. Even if it were fixed, it would not produce the same result, since the audience and the context are different. The next chapter introduces the audience and evaluates the resonance of the securitizing move.

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[18] Every government's declarations and reactions concerning the Chibok Kidnapping are essential to understand the resonance of the securitizing move, which will be further explored in Chapter 4. However, the responses directed directly to Amnesty International are needed to investigate its credibility as a securitizing actor, as demonstrated above.

CHAPTER 4 – THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT'S PERCEPTION OF A GENDERED-BASED INSECURITY

This chapter seeks to evaluate the resonance of the AI's securitizing move as regards the intended audience - the Nigerian government. For this task, I will verify the degree to which the *felicity conditions* are fulfilled: salience and credibility.

As regards credibility, I search for *consistency* – logical articulation of constitutive elements – and *empirical credibility* – connection with the existing problems as perceived by Nigerian government – in Amnesty's message. In terms of salience, the message must possess *centrality* – degree of importance it assumes within the value system of the Nigerian government, *experiential commensurability* – connections to the worldview of the Nigerian Government, and *narrative fidelity* – cultural resonance. Then, I proceed to an evaluation of the Nigerian government's perception on security issues in terms of gender sensibility.

4.1 The Government's Response

The abduction of the 276 Chibok schoolgirls occurred whilst Nigeria was trying to present a positive image as host of the upcoming annual meeting of the World Economic Forum – WEF – to foreign investors in 2014 (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014; ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014).

Patience Jonathan, first lady, did not seem to acknowledge the kidnapping: she accused activists of fabricating kidnappings and detained one of the leaders (KRISTOF, 2014). After the #BringBackOurGirls campaign went viral internationally, the government's first reaction was to lie about it: announcing that it had rescued the girls (CBS NEWS, 2014, 1:52-2:39 min.; ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014). After about 3 weeks the abduction occurred, the #BringBackOurGirls campaign was a top trend in the media and the protests took over the streets in countries all over the world. In this scenario, President Goodluck Jonathan had inaugurated a "fact-finding committee" on May 2nd 2014; the primary concern was to provide public interface with all of those directly concerned in this tragedy. He insisted that it was not a replacement for the search and rescue of the Chibok girls (ADEWUNMI ET AL, 2014).

After admitting on national television that he had no idea where the girls were, Jonathan thanked foreign nations – United States, United Kingdom, France and China – in the WEF meeting that have pledged support in finding the kidnaped girls (BIGG & OLA, 2014;

ELBAGIR ET AL., 2014). Three regional summits were held in Paris, London and Abuja for sharing intelligence and developing a regional counterterrorism strategy against Boko Haram (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015, p.67).

Even though Boko Haram tried to negotiate a ransom (PROIS, 2014), Interior Minister, Abba Moro rejected the deal. He affirmed that it was absurd for a terrorist group to try to set conditions (BBC NEWS, 2014). With the growing public outrage at home and abroad over the failure to rescue the girls, other government officials affirmed that all options were open in the effort to free them, including negotiation or military operations with foreign help (ADIGUN & UMARA, 2014). It is not clear which strategies and actions have been taken to rescue the girls, due to the lack of information provided by the federal government that conducts the case in a "discreet" way to guarantee the safety of the girls (ANSARI & BRUEGGMAN, 2014). In this case, the resonance evaluation will consider the data available about all the efforts under President Jonathan's administration to rescue the Chibok girls.

4.2 Credibility & Salience

Jonathan administration was acknowledged for taking women empowerment as a priority in its agenda – *centrality* and *experiential commensurability*. For instance, he appointed 13 female Cabinet Ministers, 5 female Special Advisers, 10 female Ambassadors, 16 female Judges of the Court of Appeal, 11 female Permanent Secretaries, 16 female Judges of the Federal High Court, 3 female Judges of the Supreme Court, 6 female Judges of the National Industrial Court, and others. His National Gender Policy prioritizes the participation of women in politics, which explains the raising number of women in decision-making positions (IDIKE, 2014, pp. 159-160).

However, this *experiential* commensurability is impaired due to the lack of progress in recuing the Chibok girls after several months since the incident occurred, which make some authors believe that all this promotion of women's empowerment is an act of benevolence on the part of the administration (IDIKE, 2014, p. 160) – lack of *experiential commensurability*. Another weakness in the *experiential commensurability* is in terms of female human trafficking. Nigeria is one of the top countries of origin for human trafficking. According to the UNODC, 60% of the prostitutes in Italy hail from Nigeria (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014). In the U. S. State Department's 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report, Nigeria ranks as a Tier 2 country; this means the government has made efforts to fight trafficking – *centrality and experiential commensurability* – but it does not comply with minimum standards of the

Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection act – lack of *centrality and experiential commensurability*. (CONANT, 2014; BRUNKER, 2014; JEKOWSKY & KAPLAN, 2014). It corroborates with the fact that the Chibok girls who escaped captivity had received limited counseling and medical care due its high profile international attention. The others who suffered from different abductions or violations did not receive any government support or medical care (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2014, p.5). Also, there were some allegations that Nigerian officials are complicit in the human trafficking (BRUNKER, 2014) due to the systemic corruption of the government and its institutions (AGBU, 2003, pp. 2-4) – lack of *centrality*. The under reporting and the often hidden nature of the crime (JEKOWSKY & KAPLAN, 2014) permit an exploration of the poverty and low status of women for cheap labor and sex (AGBU, 2003, p. 2).

Indeed this low status of women is compounded by forced marriage (AGBU, 2003, p. 2), a common practice in the Northern part of Nigeria (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014; IFEMEJE, 2012, p.141). Despite the attempts to fix the age to get marriage to 18 years in the Nigerian Child's Rights Act, the customary law approves the child marriage (IFEMEJE, 2012, pp.141-142) – lack of *narrative fidelity*. In Northern Nigeria, 48% of Hausa-Fulani girls are married by age 15 and 78% are married by age 18 (BRAIMAH, 2014, p.475). Even the parents who believe in educating their daughters will arrange for them to get married at a young age. This is because they believe that their married status will prevent their daughters' harassment at school (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014). There is a stigma for being single because marriage is a rite of passage to adulthood and social responsibility. She does not foster the procreation as responsibility to the community; therefore, she cannot access freely the social opportunities without a husband, which involves studying and working ones (OKEKE, 1999, pp. 52-54) – lack of *experiential commensurability*.

This subordinated condition in marriage is also reinforced by the bride price – a token sum paid to the bride's parents – and by some indigenous statutory laws. The bride price custom gives the impression that women are 'property' and after she is married, her voice can be denied – lack of *narrative fidelity* and *experiential commensurability*. This occurs because the act of paying for the bride's parents gives the husband the feeling of buying a property that is under his control, which can result in psychological or physical violence against the wife. As regard these laws, Section 55 of the Penal Code gives legal backing to wife battering for disciplinary purposes; Section 6 of the Criminal Code legalizes spousal rape; and, finally, Section of the Evidence Act lays the onus on the victim to present proof beyond all reasonable doubt to secure the conviction of a rapist (IFEMEJE, 2012, pp.142-145) – lack of *narrative*

fidelity and *experiential commensurability*. As shown, the Nigerian legal system is infused with violent practices and discriminatory customs against women (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, p. 47; PETERS, 2014, p.188).

Nevertheless, gender-based violence[19] actions were also conducted by the Jonathan administration in 2012: the arrest of Boko Haram leaders' wives and children. Since they did not had any direct involvement in the conflict between Boko Haram and the government, more than 100 women and children were detained for instrumental purposes. There was no evidence that they were involved in the group's activities either (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, pp. 47-48; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2015, pp. 41-43). Ever since this incident, the Boko Haram strategy was to kidnap women for ransom, servitude marriage, suicide bombings and other instrumental purposes (PETERS, 2014, p.188; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2015, p 40). Since Jonathan's announcement of a State of Emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states in 2013, a cycle of gender-based abductions and detentions has been endorsed (ZENN & PEARSON, 2014, pp. 49; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2015, pp. 42-43) – lack of *centrality* and *experiential commensurability*.

Moreover, this perspective of women as "assets" is connected with the idea that educating women is a waste of resources because they will have to perform their reproductive and housekeeping duties – lack of *narrative fidelity*. It is not unusual for families to traffic daughters as house helpers for their own financial gain (IFEMEJE ET AL., 2012, p.140) – lack of *experiential commensurability*. Education could be a way to empower Nigerian girls in order to fight kidnaping, forced marriage and other kinds of violence (LUSCOMBE & FUROOHAR, 2014; IFEMEJE ET AL., 2012, p.146).

Patience Jonathan's act of accusing the protesters of fabricating the kidnapping and the government's lie that they have rescued the girls is a sign of not taking the issue as a priority – *lack of centrality, empirical credibility* and *consistency*. If the kidnaping never existed or it had been solved, it would not be a problem to be considered.

The tables below show the ideational elements of the resonance with its correspondent criteria.[20] Table 2 presents the conditions that were fulfilled towards a successful securitization. Table 3 shows all the elements that undermine the success of the securitizing move.

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[19] The concept of gender-based insecurity or violence is presented in the Introduction.

[20] As previously expressed, the actor's credibility was partially fulfilled but it is not presented in the chart bellow.

Table 2 - Resonance

Resonance				
Centrality		**Salience**		
Consistency	*Empirical Credibility*	*Centrality*	*Narrative Fidelity*	*Experiential Commensurability*
		Women empowerment: Women in decision-making positions		Women empowerment: Women in decision-making positions
		Nigerian efforts to fight trafficking		Nigerian efforts to fight trafficking

Source: Self-compiled by the author.

Table 3 - Lack of Resonance

Lack of Resonance				
Centrality		**Salience**		
Consistency	*Empirical Credibility*	*Centrality*	*Narrative Fidelity*	*Experiential Commensurability*
Affirming that the kidnaping was fabricated	Affirming that the kidnaping was fabricated	Women empowerment as a benevolent act	Forced/ Child marriage	Women empowerment as a benevolent act
		Nigerian efforts not fulfilling minimal standards for victims' support	Bride Price	Nigerian efforts not fulfilling minimal standards for victims' support
		Government's systemic corruption and complicity in human trafficking	Indigenous Statutory Laws	Stigma for being single
		Gender-based detentions	Women as "assets"	Indigenous Statutory Laws
		Affirming that the kidnaping was fabricated		Gender-based detentions
				Traffic girls for house helping

Source: Self-compiled by the author.

In conclusion, Amnesty's message does not possess *salience* because the very notion of the evil associated to human trafficking has no support in the audience's culture (*narrative fidelity)* and partial support in its worldview *(experiential commensurability)*; consequently, it is not perceived as completely relevant either *(centrality)*. Regarding its credibility, the message has a partially credible *articulator*, but the criterion of *empirical credibility* and *consistency* are not fulfilled at all. Hence, the securitizing move failed as the issue remains in the political sphere. For example, on March 26th 2015, President Goodluck Jonathan signed the Traffiking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, which criminalizes the removal of organs in line with the Palermo Protocol and child employment for domestic help under the age of 12 years. Also, it adjusted the institutional agencies in the national anti-trafficking effort (NAPTIP, 2015). These were the only direct responses to human trafficking as a threat, since the Chibok kidnapping. However, there were not significant changes for the victims' protection and reparation policies.

4.3 The Rescue of the Sambisa Forest

On April 2015, the Nigerian military rescued 200 girls and 93 women in four Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa Forest. However, the Chibok Girls are not among them (BBC NEWS, 2015b). This is not a surprise, considering that Boko Haram has kidnaped over 2000 women since 2009 until April 2015 (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2015, p.3). Even though the military did not rescue the girls from Chibok, could the rescue of almost 300 girls be a result of the securitizing move explored above?

The answer is negative because this rescue was not a consequence of the securitizing move. This military offensive was initiated six weeks before the presidential election when more than 70% of Borno state and part of Yobe state – the size of Belgium – were under Boko Haram control (BLAIR, 2015: BBC NEWS, 2015a). The operations to retake the territories were conduct in collaboration with the Chadian army.

Nevertheless, the objective of this thesis is not about this military incursion, it is possible to affirm that the upcoming elections and the need to recover that area in the north played a relevant role on it. In this sense, it can be affirmed that the rescue of those girls was not the objective of that military offensive, but a side effect. This means that the Jonathan's administration was "gender-neutral" towards the planning and application of this military

offensive. The rescued girls were not the resulted pursued; only to take over the territory occupied was relevant.

I conclude that the Nigerian government security approach is traditional and sovereign based (LOBASZ, 2010, p.214) because its priority is the stability and territory control of the state, it does not include the human security that involves those women trafficked. This perception constrains the securitization of gender-based insecurities such as female human trafficking, as explored above. The fact that there are women in positions of power does not correspond to an equal status to men (OKEKE, 1999, p.51) and, consequently, neither how its insecurities are perceived. Hence, this is a *subsuming security* case in which the Nigerian girls from the Northern poor region of the country – the referent object – limited severely the qualification of human trafficking – the issue – as a security problem (HANSEN, 2000, p.297).

CONCLUSION

Through the use of security framing and gender security theory as my theoretical framework, I conclude that the Chibok girls' case was not securitized because female human trafficking is a gender-based insecurity and the Jonathan's administration had a "gender neutral perspective" on security issues. This means that the government did not consider gender as a relevant; consequently, female human trafficking is not relevant in the security agenda either.

Hence, I believe the critics Lene Hansen (2000) made about the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School are also applicable to this case, as exposed through the previous chapters. The Chibok girls' kidnapping is a *subsuming security* case where the gendered construction of the referent object as women and the fact that this reason for their insecurity limits/blocks the possibility of securitizing this issue towards a "non gender-friendly" audience. This insecurity poses existential threat to the Chibok girls because it is embedded in social norms of their region, as explored in Chapters 2 and 4. Also, the kidnapped girls cannot voice their insecurity themselves because it would aggravate their security conditions – *security as a silence* – as exposed in Chapter 2. In this case, they needed a securitizing actor like Amnesty International.

Concerning the securitizing actor, in Chapter 3, I concluded that Amnesty International is perceived as a credible actor according to Jonathan's administration due to the supported afforded by international institutions capable of mustering sanctions, for example, the ICC. In Chapter 4, the other criteria were not completely fulfilled which means that the resonance of the securitization of female human trafficking through the Chibok girls' case failed. Finally, I proved that this gendered insecurity is not securitized when the audience perception is gender neutral towards security issues.

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