Post 9/11 Representations of the War on Terror:

A Canadian Perspective

By

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Abstract

This thesis is an exploratory analysis of the discourse of Canadian prime ministers in speeches delivered from the 9/11 terrorist attacks up until 2022. It is driven by the research question: How have Canadian Prime Ministers represented the fight against terrorism in the two decades since the 9/11 attacks? Through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Terrorism Studies, it seeks to understand how Canada's leaders have presented the fight against terrorism to the Canadian public, as well as to what extent they have employed similar narratives to their American counterparts. The findings show that in speeches given by Canadian prime ministers, we see the presence of both reductionist and racialized discourse as well as discourse about diversity, inclusion, and tolerance. The prime minister's speeches at times perpetuated harmful narratives that framed the fight against terrorism as one between 'us and them' or between civilized and uncivilized peoples. At the same time, however, the analyzed speeches also included discourse surrounding the importance of diversity and respect for Islam and the Muslim community. The thesis ends by placing the findings within the context of Canada's militaristic counterterrorism policies in the last two decades and calls for a more holistic approach to fighting terrorism which addresses the structural violence caused by neoliberal globalization.

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Chapter 1

1. Research Question

The main question for this thesis is: How have Canadian Prime Ministers represented the fight against terrorism in the two decades since the 9/11 attacks?

Other research questions include: What policy decisions have been privileged through this discourse? How similar or dissimilar has the discourse of these Prime Ministers been from that of American politicians?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Origins of a Discourse:

With the Cold War coming to a close, the 1990s were a time of political and economic restructuring. Since the end of the Second World War, the international system had largely been governed by the battle between American-led liberal democracy, and Soviet-led communism. This governing paradigm was now to be replaced. However, scholars were not certain as to what would replace the struggle between democracy and communism. What would the impending geopolitical transition look like?

Among the academic debates, a body of discourse would emerge, which would propose that future international conflicts would be based on a cultural binary. A binary between what these scholars perceived to be the progressive, modern West, and the backward, static Middle East. This Western-centric discourse equated modernity and civilization with the 'superior' West, and associated tradition and barbarism with the 'exotic' and inferior Rest/East (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 2). What was being proposed was a culturally inspired discursive mentality, which pitted Western culture against non-western culture. Due to irreconcilable differences between the West and East, conflict would

inevitably emerge. The prophets of this culturalist and reductionist discourse were Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington, and their writing would go on to form the basis of what would become known as the *War on Terror Discourse.*

Fukuyama first engaged in this discourse in his essay 'The End of History?', and later in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*. He proclaimed that Western liberal capitalism had defeated its two major opponents—fascism and communism (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 2). Fukuyama believed the collapse of the Soviet Union signaled the "end of history as such: that is the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government" (2). Put differently, he was proclaiming the undisputed superiority of the liberal democratic project. As such, a technocratic utopia would soon emerge, within which conflict over ideology and abstract goals would be replaced by global technocratic problem-solving (Fukuyama 1989, 18). However, this vision was not attainable at the current moment, as liberalism was still challenged by "religious fundamentalism", especially of an Islamist kind (18). With 'The End of History', Fukuyama was reviving the old developmentalist claim that Western liberal capitalism is a universal paradigm (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 3). Nations that were "still in history" (non-liberal states), would soon see the error of their ways and embrace the intellectual and material value of liberal capitalism (3).

Samuel Huntington would enter with a thesis that followed a similar line of thinking. However, whereas Fukuyama argued for liberal democracy's universalism, Huntington's work was based on Islamic particularism (Knight and Mahdavi 2012, 3). Huntington did not expect the future to be one of peaceful coexistence across civilizations, but rather one of violent clashes, due to irreconcilable differences between cultures (3). He asserted that "the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will be, not primarily ideological or economic but, cultural" (Huntington 1993, 34). He believed a clash of civilizations would

dominate global politics, with the primary fault line being between Islamic and Western civilizations (34). In the same vein as Bernard Lewis before him, Huntington argued that the "fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future" (22). The irreconcilable cultural differences between the 'West' and the 'Rest' would pit them against each other, and thus the West must, "exploit differences and conflicts among…Islamic states" while maintaining "the economic and military power necessary to protect its interests in relation to these civilizations" (49). For Huntington, the domination of the West over the Rest would remain an ongoing source of conflict between the two: "The next world war, if there is one," he suggested, is likely to be triggered by "the conflict between the West and the Rest" and the violent responses of "non-Western civilizations to Western power and values" (41). He believed in the Post-Cold War era that "the Velvet Curtain of culture has replaced the Iron Curtain of ideology".

In Huntington's eyes, the greatest conflict would be between the West and either Confucian or Islamic civilizations, or both (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 4). Due to this inevitable conflict, Huntington argued that the West should consolidate its power and defend itself against 'the Rest', by strengthening its ties to friendly civilizations and protecting itself against Islamic civilization. In doing so, the West would be able to exploit differences among Islamic civilization and in the process, maintain its economic and military superiority (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 3). In other words, Huntington advises Western policymakers to adopt the colonial 'divide and rule' playbook.

In fact, both The End of History and The Clash of Civilizations are rooted in a colonial mindset. It is this mindset that Edward Said problematized in his influential 1978 book *Orientalism*. Said problematized the continual depictions of the Middle East as timeless, static, seductive, and hyper-religious (Said 1978). This depiction served to justify imperialism, western intervention, and resource extraction in the Middle East in the colonial

era and continues to do so to this day. Orientalism is a way of coming to understand the 'Orient' that is based on the Orient's special place in European and Western experience; a place that is perceived to be mystical and timeless in many ways (Said 1978, 1). For Europe and the Western world, the Orient is one of its deepest and most recurring images of the "other" (1). While Fukuyama and Huntington built their cultural dichotomies through a modern lens, the core of their discourse involves the 'othering' of the Islamic world, which has been occurring since the 17th century as a result of colonialism. Since the 17th century, a large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the distinction between East and West as a starting point for theories, novels, and political accounts concerning 'the orient' (Said 1978, 2). With their focus on cultural fault lines, Fukuyama and Huntington analyzed the modern political landscape through an orientalist lens.

While philosophically and spiritually *The End of History* and *The Clash of Civilizations* are vastly different, they are nonetheless two sides of the same coin, in that both theses turn the West and the Rest into two monolithic categories (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 4). *The End of History* implies that the West offers a universal paradigm of development and democracy, which the Rest, lacking its own models of development, will inevitably follow (4). Similarly, the *Clash of Civilizations* portrays the West as superior, thus, it must prevail over cultures with different histories, values, and institutions (4).

However, over the three decades since *The End of History* and *The Clash of Civilizations*, critical postcolonial scholars have laid bare the glaring flaws within both theses. Mojtaba Mahdavi and Andy Knight, for example, problematize Fukuyama's assumption that there is a singular path to modernity—a path that the West has already walked, and which the Rest have no choice but to follow (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 5). In *The End of History*, Fukuyama examines the character, cultures, and traditions of the non-Western world in terms

of Western standards, not in terms of its own values. The reference point for his analysis remains the West. Put differently, the Rest is defined not in terms of what it is but what it lacks. Ultimately, this ethnocentric universalism ignores the possibility that non-western societies can modernize themselves.

Moreover, the End of History thesis fails to address conflicting tendencies within Western modernity itself. Western modernity is characterized by both expressions of liberty, human rights, and democracy as well as systemic violence, colonialism, and totalitarianism (Mahdavi and Knight, 5). The Fukuyama thesis struggles to account for intra-civilizational conflict, such as the 2011 Occupy Wall Street Movement, or even the more recent Freedom Convoy.

Rather than the ‘end of history’, Joseph Nye, for one, argues that the post-Cold War world could be described as a *return* to history (Nye 2007, 266). Rather than having one existential threat in the form of global communism, as was the case during the Cold War, liberal capitalism today has various fragmented competitors in the forms of ethnic, religious, and national communalism. For example, China and Russia use capitalism and global markets, yet neither is liberal nor fully capitalist (266). Similarly, different forms of religious fundamentalism have challenged the hegemony of liberal capitalism.

Post-colonial scholars have similarly criticized the contradictions within the Clash of Civilizations thesis. The first major contradiction is that the Clash of Civilizations argument relies on a vague and abstract notion of ‘civilization identity’, which presents civilizational identities as somehow automatically generated by culture and unchanging. However, as John Dryzek has argued, civilization identities do have to be mobilized, which is done through a discourse that of necessity must create a constitutive ‘other’ (Dryzek 2006, 36).

Additionally, the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ thesis discounts the fact that there are always ongoing struggles over the definition of a given civilization, as well as over who gets

to represent a civilization (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 5). Civilizations are not unity or monolithic entities; each civilization is forged from an amalgam of official and unofficial, current and countercurrent voices within it (5). Rather than sealed-off units, civilizations are dynamic, plural entities (Said, 2001).

2.2 American Literature Review:

Importantly, the Western-centric, developmentalist, colonialist discourse of Fukuyama and Huntington would not remain in the ivory towers of academia. Many assumptions in their culturalist rhetoric would reappear in the Western War on Terror discourse in the post-9/11 years. As critical postcolonial scholars would show, the language of American President George W. Bush would follow a similar ‘clash of civilizations’ mindset to justify the War on Terror and American intervention in the Middle East (Knight and Mahdavi 2012, 4). Bush, along with American neo-conservative politicians, suggested that America’s enemies hated them because they hated Western values and civilization (4). In their minds, terrorists attacked the world trade center because it was symbolic of the center of Western civilization (4).

Adopting the civilizational theme of Huntington, Bush would state: “This is civilization’s fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom” (Pourmokhtari 2022). The President would often portray the attacks, as well as America’s response, through the language of Manichean binaries. In an address to Congress, President Bush said: “You are with us or you are with the terrorists” (Barber 1996, 28). Conceiving of the War on Terror as a cultural clash emanating from a religious base, Bush was quoted as saying: “Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them” (Pourmokhtari 2022). The War on Terror would go on to be consistently conceived of as a cultural fight between ‘us’ and ‘them’, with Bush becoming the prophet of the discourse.

Over the next two decades, the racialized and reductionist nature of the "War on Terror Discourse", as was popularized by Bush and adopted widely in Western liberal democracies, would be highlighted by critical postcolonial scholars, especially in the sub-field of Critical Terrorism Studies. One of the most groundbreaking pieces of scholarship which brought attention to the danger of America's terrorism rhetoric was Richard Jackson's 2005 work *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics, and Counter-Terrorism*. It is a work that has become synonymous with critical terrorism studies and in many ways was the nexus for the wave of critical scholarship which would follow.

In *Writing the War on Terrorism*, Jackson uses Critical Discourse Analysis to denaturalize and disrupt the hegemonic official discourses supporting the War on Terror. Denaturalizing the discourses supporting the War on Terror is consequential precisely because "the *practice* of counterterrorism is predicated on and determined by the *language* of counterterrorism… [and] the language of the 'war on terrorism'... is a carefully constructed discourse" (Jackson 2005, 8). Jackson goes on to argue that the dominant discourses of the "war on terror" led to the creation of a new social reality for the American public through the creation of a whole new language (Jackson 2005, 8-18). This new language commenced with the interpretation of 9/11 as an act of war, which promoted and justified a militaristic response. A response to 9/11 which prioritized military interventions overseas, Jackson (2005) shows, required the events of 11 September 2001 to be framed as new and unique, while simultaneously being similar to Pearl Harbour (40).

More specifically, this framing wrote 9/11 as an act of war, perpetrated by an enemy who posed an existential threat to the United States which could not be eradicated through the dialogue and negotiation of diplomatic efforts (Jackson 2005, 58-76). Jackson goes on to trace the considerable discursive work which was invested in attempts to construct the war on terror as good, moral, and just (121-152). These efforts, he reveals, are in part a quest for

resonance and legitimacy by politicians. Jackson's seminal work would spur the development of critical scholarship which sought to problematize Western discourses of terrorism.

Building on the work of Jackson, Adam Hodges would show how the Bush "War on Terror narrative" acts as a type of discursive formation that sustains, in Foucauldian terms, a 'regime of truth' (Hodges 2011, 3). It places boundaries on what can meaningfully be said and understood about the subject. The Bush 'War on Terror narrative' is essentially a master narrative that sets the rules of the game, within which everyone, even those who resist the narrative and the policies it entails, must appropriate its language to be listened to and understood (3). For Hodges, understanding the narrative constructed by President Bush is important as the repeated narrations by the President effectively accumulate into larger cultural narratives shared by many within the nation and beyond it (2). Through a Foucauldian lens, Hodges reminds us that discourse does not simply reflect events that take place in the world; discourse provides events with meaning, establishes widespread social understanding, and constitutes social reality (3). The Bush War on Terror narrative has provided the 'official story' and the dominant frame for understanding 9/11 and America's response to terrorism (3). Through this narrative, the events of 9/11 become "acts of war", invisible to alternative interpretations, and America's response to terrorism unquestionably becomes a "war on terror" (5).

In an article that predates Jackson's influential work, Mahmood Mamdani demonstrated in "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism", how the Geroge Bush 'master narrative' utilized, and popularized, the use of 'culture talk': the trend of defining cultures according to their presumed "essential" characteristics, especially as it relates to politics (Mamdani 2002, 766). Essentially, it is the idea that we can infer someone's, or a group of people's, political views and values based on their culture. In specific, this relates to the idea that those who practice Wahhabi Islam are

prone to be radicals and terrorists (766). Mamdani problematized the growth of culture talk by Western politicians, including Bush, in the aftermath of 9/11. Engaging in such culture talk leads individuals to think of culture in political and territorial terms (767). Mamdani argues that political units (states) are territorial, but culture is not (767). Contemporary Islam is a global civilization, with fewer Muslims living in the Middle East than in Africa or South Asia. Ultimately, culture talk presents the Islamic world as composed of mummified peoples, who do not *make* culture, but who just *conform* to culture (767).

A key assumption underpinning much of this critical scholarship is that politicians must use language to garner support for and justify their policies. In other words, in western democracies, language is a prerequisite for policy, and politics takes place within a particular discursive context (Holland 2016, 204). A politician must use their knowledge of the particularities of their country's political culture to 'sell' their policies, not unlike a salesman. Ideally, the end result is strong support for a given policy, however, indifferent acceptance or ambivalence may be all that's needed. This process is what Jack Holland investigated in *Selling the War on Terror: Foreign Policy Discourse After 9/11* (2016). In analyzing how the U.S. government justified the War on Terror, Holland presents a three-part framework for understanding how politicians justify their policies.

Firstly, his framework emphasizes that politicians and policymakers use language to paint a particular picture of the world. They present an understanding of world politics by giving friends and enemies geographic addresses, as well as locating threats and opportunities in the world map. In this first step of the foreign policy process, the identities of states and the nature of regions are written and cemented. The result is that certain policies will become increasingly conceivable, as others appear illogical or even unthinkable. When seeking to set the stage for military intervention, for example, state leaders will attempt to denigrate and dehumanize their enemies.

The second part of Holland's framework emphasizes that in democracies, politicians are constrained in their portrayal of the world, as they must draw upon and plug into the preexisting cultural knowledge of their audience. This may include mobilizing widely understood national mythology or speaking in terms that resonate with core constituencies. This second step is visible when politicians employ populist or folksy terms in an attempt to render their foreign policy communicable and resonant. Crafting communicable and resonant policy is vital as foreign policy initiatives often require significant political capital, which is often in short supply.

Lastly, Holland's framework argues that the war on terror has been a good example of the impact that a coercive foreign policy can have. Winning the discursive political battle on a topic can silence potential critics. Framing one's policy in the language of the national interest and the national identity can make speaking out in opposition to that policy a challenging task. In the U.S., for example, opponents to the dominant narrative of counterterrorism coming from the Bush administration risked being labeled as failing to defend freedom or being un-American (Holland 2016, 208). Some opponents were even considered a threat to the United States due to their supposed sympathizing with the cause of America's enemies (208). It is through the development of a coercive policy that the Bush administration created their 'master narrative' and 'regime of truth' which Adam Hodges has identified (2011).

Finally, by employing his three-stage framework, Holland shows that from September through January 2002, the language of counterterrorism in the United States was centered around four key ideas: that 9/11 was "an attack on all of us"; that 9/11 marks a "moment of temporal rupture"; that no distinction should be made between terrorists and their state sponsors; and that the Taliban in Afghanistan was "harboring" al Qaeda (Holland 2012, 100).

The idea that 9/11 represented an attack not just on the United States, but on 'all of us' was politically useful; it helped legitimize that *coalition* intervention was required in the fight against terrorism (100). On 12 September 2001, President Bush made some remarks which explained what was attacked on 9/11, and why this extended the attack beyond America. Bush asserted that "freedom and democracy are under attack", as the "enemy attacked not just our people, but all-freedom loving people everywhere in the world" (101). For Bush, freedom represents a universal concept. While in his eyes America may be the epicenter of freedom, it is not a uniquely American possession or principle. Since the 9/11 attacks targeted the universal value of freedom, Bush was able to present 9/11 as 'an attack on all of us', which required a coalition response (101).

Next, Bush portrayed 9/11 as a moment of temporal rupture. This was done by constructing 9/11 as an act of war; the dawn of new and dangerous times; a moment of unity; and a moment of crisis (Holland 2012, 104). The cumulative effect was to render previously unlikely or unthinkable policies now conceivable. By framing 9/11 as the dawn of a new era and a moment of rupture, American foreign policy discourse ensured that the perceived rules of the game were fundamentally and irrevocably changed (104). To remain safe in these new and dangerous times, wartime policies were needed.

Lastly, collapsing the distinction between terrorists and their 'state sponsors' served two objectives. First, it naturalized and legitimized a policy of state intervention in response to an attack by a non-state actor (Holland 2012, 109). Second, it served to conflate Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Taking a step back, Holland combines these four key ideas to identify two dominant overarching themes in American foreign policy discourse in the wake of 9/11: Manichean binaries; and the language of frontier justice (110). In the period after the attacks, the Bush administration had a proclivity for Manichean binaries between 'good Americans' and 'evil

terrorists'. In the days after 9/11, 'evil' and 'terror' were woven together in American foreign policy discourse to construct an 'enemy other' whose "only motivation is evil" (Bush Archives, 25 September 2001). By constructing an enemy who was motivated solely by evil, the American government was able to dismiss alternative explanations for the attack and shut the door on the possibility of negotiating with America's enemies (Holland 2012, 111).

In addition to portraying terrorists as evil, Bush made it clear that their enemies were cowardly. "They hide in caves" Bush told Americans, but "we'll get them out" (Bush Archives, 16 September 2001). He went on to argue that the new enemy will "hit and run", "strike and hide", but "we're going to make sure they have no place to hide" (Holland 2012, 111). The process of portraying a cowardly enemy went hand in hand with dehumanizing the enemy through animalistic representations, such as when terrorists were referred to as "parasites" (Bush Archives, 29 January 2002). The political effect of such language was to naturalize violence and brutality against terrorist threats (Holland 2012, 112).

The dehumanizing language in American foreign policy discourse was compounded by a civilization dichotomy that drew from colonial discourses. Terrorists were deemed a threat "to civilization itself" (Bush Archives, 16 November 2001). In turn, "no nation can be neutral in this conflict, because no civilized nation can be secure in a world threatened by terror" (Bush Archives, 16 November 2001). Echoing the language of Fukuyama and Huntington, the fight against terrorism was presented as being between the civilized West and the uncivilized, barbaric 'other'.

These representations of the barbaric, evil 'enemy other' would be combined with portrayals of American exceptionalism and heroism to form the Manichean binaries that the Bush administration used so effectively. The nefarious nature of the enemy was juxtaposed with the compassion, generosity, courage, and determination of the American people (Holland 2012, 112). As Bush stated in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks,

"America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining." (Bush Archives, 11 September 2001).

Turning back to *Writing the War on Terrorism*, Jackson has shown how the binary between good Americans and evil terrorists helped to enable military intervention as a logical response to 9/11 (Jackson 2005, 81). Troops intervening in Afghanistan were portrayed as the 'good guys': the bringers of 'freedom' and heroic defenders of the homeland (Holland 2012, 114). Furthermore, the Manichean framings helped make the war on terror communicable and digestible to the American public. The theological undertones appealed to the estimated seventy million American conservative Christians that Bush targeted (Holland 2012, 114). Moreover, the good vs evil binary coerced potential opponents into acquiescence for fear of being seen as appeasing evil (114).

The second dominant theme in the American war on terror discourse that Holland identifies is the language of frontier justice. This is referring to the prevalent use of wild west mythology and language coming from President Bush. Three wild west references were most common in the language of Bush: 'hunting down' terrorists; bringing them to justice; and declaring them beyond the protection of the law because they had broken it (Holland 2012, 115). West and Carey note that Bush's references to 'cowboy stories' rose tenfold after 9/11 (West and Carey 2006, 379). In short, employing the language of frontier justice was a bid to 'sell' the Bush administration's foreign policies to the American public. Bush was attempting to relate to his political base and present his counterterrorism policies in a communicable manner.

Critically, the narrative of terrorism woven in the American political context fails to address structural violence as a major cause of terrorism. Benjamin Barber argues that rather than conceptualizing the fight against terrorism as one between civilized or uncivilized

peoples, or between good and evil, we ought to view it as a struggle between 'Jihad' and 'McWorld'. Barber believes that democracy is under threat in the 21st century, as it is caught between two opposing forces; a sterile cultural monism (McWorld), and a raging cultural fundamentalism (Jihad) (Barber 1996, 16). In his eyes, Jihad refers to the resurgence of traditionalism, tribalism, and fundamentalism in reaction to the homogenizing forces of McWorld. Jihad is a form of resistance against the globalizing forces that are destroying traditional cultures and ways of life, and leaving many people behind. Jihad can take many forms, such as religious fundamentalism, ethnic separatism, and localism.

On the other hand, McWorld is the homogenizing force of globalization. It refers to the forces of capitalism, technology, and the media that are creating a global culture and erasing local differences. McWorld is characterized by the spread of consumerism, the erosion of traditional culture, and the rise of global corporations that have more power than many nation-states.

Barber argues that as part of McWorld, neoliberal globalization becomes a form of structural violence that fuels terrorism by creating a sense of alienation, frustration, and powerlessness among marginalized populations around the world. The spread and consolidation of neoliberal globalization around the globe promotes a global economy that benefits the wealthy and powerful while marginalizing and disempowering the poor and disadvantaged. This creates a sense of economic and political exclusion among these groups, which can fuel resentment and frustration. For example, the structural adjustment programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank on developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s led to widespread poverty and unemployment, particularly among rural and indigenous communities. This exclusion can lead to the rise of extremist groups that use violence to challenge the dominant order. Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and other extremist groups have targeted both Western countries and local governments that they perceive as

being complicit in the marginalization of Muslim communities around the world. In sum, the exclusion of non-elites as a result of neoliberal globalization is a form of structural violence, which ultimately is a root cause of terrorism and extremism.

This cycle of exclusion, frustration, and violence can only be broken by addressing the root causes of structural violence. This would require a more equitable and inclusive form of globalization that empowers marginalized populations and gives them a voice in the global economy and political system. It would require a new commitment to distributive justice; a readjudication of North-South responsibilities, and a redefinition of the obligations of global capital to include global justice and comity (17). More specifically, this may involve policies such as debt relief, fair trade agreements, and greater investment in education and infrastructure in developing countries. In contrast, the perpetuation of narratives that present the fight against terrorism as a civilizational struggle between us and them justifies and makes possible militaristic counterterrorism policies that do not address the root causes of structural violence. In the end, hawkish approaches to fighting terrorism only deepen the exclusion and frustration of those left behind by McWorld, as already marginalized communities become further marginalized by violence, war, and instability. Ultimately, in the words of Barber, “the war against Jihad will not succeed unless McWorld is addressed” (17).

In addition to identifying its overarching themes, critical scholars have problematized the American War on Terror discourse through diverse lenses. Laura Shepherd’s work looks specifically at how discursive constructions of gender allowed for the American-led invasion of Afghanistan to be seen as a legitimate response to the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 (Shepherd 2006). In “Veiled References: Constructions of Gender in the Bush Administration Discourse on the Attacks on Afghanistan Post-9/11”, Shepherd demonstrated how the discursive link between Al Qaeda and Afghanistan, between supporting war and believing in peace, was reinforced through gendered articulations (20).

Fermor and Mubarek adopted a slightly different approach, looking at the discourse of American politicians through the lens of Orientalism. Fermor looked not at Bush's language, but that of Obama, analyzing his speeches during the rise of ISIS from 2014-2016 (Fermor 2021, 313). Fermor argued that Obama tapped into orientalist and racialized discourse to cast ISIS as an existential threat to Western civilization (313). Ultimately, this opened the door to further intervention in the Middle East, while simultaneously stigmatizing Muslim communities. Fermor conducted a discourse analysis of official statements, in which he showed how President Obama modified his language to elevate the level of the terrorist threat in official discourse (312). To achieve this, Obama drew on longstanding racialized and orientalist archives of knowledge, some of which have been discussed above. By reproducing the traditional orientalist character of barbaric Easterners as threats to Western civilization, Obama promoted an approach to intervention that prioritized air power, targeted assassinations, and international cooperation to defend the 'civilized' world (312). Fermor's study demonstrates how the master narrative of the War on Terror popularized by George Bush lives on, far past his time in office.

Altwaji Mubarek similarly analyzed "neo-orientalism", as a monolithic discourse based on a binary between superior American values and inferior Arab culture in the post-9/11 era (Mubarek 2014, 313). Similar to Fermor, Mubarek criticized Western leaders and academia for reinforcing and reproducing neo-orientalist discourse, which he argues is partly responsible for the increase in American apathy towards Muslims in recent years.

While these scholars analyzed the War on Terror discourse with varying lenses, they all problematized the core notion of Islamic culture as the explanation for terrorism. They are united in their rejection of the cultural dichotomies theorized by Fukuyama and Huntington, and popularized in the wake of 9/11 by the Bush administration.

In the field of Critical Terrorism Studies, however, the majority of research is focused on the American political context. While the U.S. War on Terror has been discussed at great lengths in academic and policy circles, it is comparatively understudied in other Western nations (Holland 2012, 5). This brings us to discuss the state of Canadian War on Terror studies. Research in the Canadian political context is growing, but there is a marked lack of studies with an explicit discursive lens.

2.3 Canadian Literature Review:

Throughout the last two decades, Canada's domestic counterterrorism policies have been increasingly problematized, most often in regard to the mistreatment of Canadian citizens. Thomas Poole's 2007 text "Recent Developments in the War on Terrorism in Canada" analyzed three distinct phases of anti-terror legislation in Canada, from the "copy-cat" laws in the aftermath of 9/11 to the more recent willingness to interrogate the murky implementation of these laws (Poole 2007, 633). In a similar vein, *Detained* by Daniel Livermore explores the injustice and abuse that Canadians suffered after being labeled as potential extremists in the wake of the September 11th attacks (Livermore 2018, ix).

Scholarship on Canada's foreign response to the War on Terror is similarly expanding. In *Empire's Ally*, Jerome Klassen and Greg Albo systematically break down Canada's role in Afghanistan in the 2000s. Despite Canada's prolonged presence in the country, the authors find that Canada failed to achieve their initial objectives of peace, women's rights, and international development (Klassen and Albo 2013, vii). In contrast, Western intervention in Afghanistan in fact fostered violence, corruption, and the spread of narcotics (vii). Canada spent billions of dollars in the province of Kandahar on a '3D' strategy of defence, diplomacy, and development. However, this strategy failed to increase the standard of living, led to the deaths of hundreds of Canadians, and overall the province did not become any more stable (vii). In short, Klassen and Albo argue that Canada has

played the role of the ‘Empire’s ally’ in the War on Terror: acting as a secondary power, Canada has followed in the footsteps of the policies of the United States in order to pursue neoliberal policy objectives (x). Put differently, Canada’s war in Afghanistan represented the “imperial policy of a secondary state in the US-led empire of capital” (xi). The failure of Canada’s policies in Afghanistan is made more problematic when one considers the heavy human and economic costs of Canada’s intervention. An analysis by David Perry concluded that by 2008 (roughly half the total time Canada was in Afghanistan), operations in Afghanistan had already cost Canada $7 Billion (Perry 2008, 722). The human cost was similarly high, by the end of Canadian intervention in 2014, 165 Canadians had been killed (Canadian Encyclopedia 2021).

Over the last decade, Canada’s domestic and foreign counterterrorism policies have been increasingly criticized. However, the pool of research with an explicit discursive lens remains marginal. One scholar who has adopted a discursive lens is Uzma Jamil. Jamil has problematized how Canada has ‘securitized’ Muslims in the 21st century. Jamil explored the social and political construction of Muslims as threats to national security (Jamil 2016, 106). This was accomplished through an analysis of a 2015 Quebec government plan to counter violent radicalization. In doing so, Jamil pointed to securitization as a discursive process that involves both state and society in the construction of Muslims as threats to the nation. Jamil pointed to an instance of Stephen Harper echoing the ‘War on Terror discourse’ of American politicians. In 2015, commenting on the new national security law C-51, Harper said that violent radicalization was a crime and that his government would not hesitate to find who committed it, “whether they're in a basement, or whether they’re in a mosque or somewhere else” (107). In doing so, Harper was portraying mosques as places of potential criminal activity, linking Islamic culture to a national security threat (107).

Steuter and Wills have contributed to Canadian discursive War on Terror studies by examining how Canadian news media has depicted and constructed an image of the 'enemy', in the context of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Steuter and Wills 2009, 7). Their data revealed a pattern of dehumanizing language that was applied to Arab and Muslim citizens at large (7). They argued that the Canadian media mobilized familiar metaphors in representations of Islam and Muslims, which fabricated an 'enemy-other' who was dehumanized and de-individualized in much the same way as has been identified in American foreign policy discourse (7). Steuter and Wills argue that the consequences of these representations set the stage for racist backlash and prisoner abuse (7).

A recent study that does explicitly analyze the discourse of Canadian politicians was conducted by Zuzana Měřičková (2022). Měřičková conducted a discourse analysis of speeches given by Prime Ministers regarding terrorism and the War on Terror, looking at the emotions invoked by the speakers. One of the study's findings demonstrates a commonality between the Prime Ministers of evoking negative feelings of fear and hate in their speeches, which Měřičková argued is employed to garner support for counterterrorism policies (Měřičková 2022, 88).

Canadian War on Terror and counterterrorism studies have expanded over the last decade. Canada's domestic and foreign policies have been increasingly scrutinized as it has become clear that these policies have in large part failed to achieve their objectives. Domestically, many counterterrorism policies have led to Muslim Canadians being securitized, stereotyped, and vilified. Abroad, Canada's War on Terror and counterterrorism policies have failed to achieve the objectives of stability, development, or the advancement of women's rights in countries such as Afghanistan.

Continuing to problematize Canada's counterterrorism policies is of high significance, as in 2023, it has become painfully clear that the Western War on Terror has failed. As

Canadians are aware, Canada's foreign involvement in the War on Terror was most pronounced in Afghanistan, specifically in the Kandahar province. The War in Afghanistan (2001-2014) was Canada's longest war and its first significant combat engagement since the Korean War (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2021). As an ally of the United States and a member of NATO, Canada joined the war in Afghanistan in 2001 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Canada's campaign would be multifaceted, involving land, air and sea forces as well as civilian and diplomatic intelligence resources (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2021). Canada's main contribution in Afghanistan was the maintenance of an army battle group of approximately 2,000 infantry soldiers, along with armored vehicles, tanks, artillery and other support units.

During the U.S. led "Operation Enduring Freedom", Canada provided direct military support against the Taliban regime and the al-Qaeda network (Albo and Klassen 2013, 7). In 2004, Canada took command of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul. After 2005 Canada directly led the counterinsurgency in Kandahar province and played a critical role in shaping the Afghan political process and the military involvement of NATO (7). The Paul Martin government famously adopted the '3D' approach to stabilization and reconstruction—a political intervention combining defense, developmental, and diplomatic responsibilities (7). The same strategy was later advanced but relabelled a 'whole of government approach' by the Harper government. Canada's combat operations concluded in 2011 and the armed forces left in 2014, with 40,000 members of the Canadian armed forces having served and 158 Canadian soldiers being killed (Canadian War Museum).

Despite Canada having spent over a decade in Afghanistan, Angela Joya has argued that Canada's strategy of state building failed to produce either a strong state or a democratic society in which human rights are respected (Joya 294). The militaristic approach of Canadian foreign policy undermined development in the country and subordinated the provision of aid to short term military calculations (294). Overall, the Canadian military

failed to bring long-lasting peace or security to the population of Kandahar (294). Instead, counterinsurgency efforts alienated the population, which increasingly supported the insurgency and opposed the presence of foreign troops (294).

Today, Afghanistan is in the midst of an accelerating human rights and humanitarian crisis heightened by the August 2021 withdrawal of American forces. A report from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), notes that 28.3 million Afghans will require humanitarian and protection assistance this year, up from 24.4 million in 2022 and 18.4 million at the beginning of 2021 (Security Council Report, 2022). During this year, the number of people facing crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity is expected to rise to 20 million. Since the botched withdrawal of American forces in 2021, the Taliban have imposed increasingly severe restrictions on the rights and freedoms of Afghan women and girls, including a ban on girls attending high school. All the advances in women's rights—which were a key goal of Western intervention—have been rolled back in the country.

Moreover, terror and violence continue to rock Afghanistan. In 2022, there was at least one mass shooting or explosion every week in Kabul (Dias and Patidat, 2023). This violence and repression is occurring amid a crippling economic collapse. Official GDP statistics from the World Bank show that Afghanistan’s economy contracted by 20.7 percent in 2021 (World Bank 2022). Similarly, in Iraq, Isis has committed systemic rape, sexual slavery, and forced marriage of Yezidi women. Almost three thousand Yezidi women and children remain missing due to abductions by ISIS, however, there has been no systematic effort by the Iraqi authorities to rescue them or ensure their return (Human Rights Watch 2023). More broadly, the Wilson Centre reported in 2022 that ISIS still had a strong presence in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula. In Pakistan, there was a 27 percent increase in terrorist acts in 2022, which coincided with deepening social and

political polarization, as well as devastating floods (Khan 2023; United States Institute of Peace, 2023). In short, the goals of stability and development that Canada and many other Western nations invested so heavily in have failed, and the policies associated with these failures have been increasingly criticized in recent years.

However, while Canadian war on terror studies are expanding, there is a need for more research with an explicit discursive lens. As critical post-colonial scholar Edward Said emphasized through his work on Orientalism, discourse is much more than a simple collection of words or a form of language (Said 1979). The way in which one speaks about a particular issue can carry political and social consequences. Discourse, and the ideas within it, can justify, promote, subjugate, and kill (Said 1979). The narratives that our leaders build regarding a political phenomenon will open the door to certain policies while closing the door on others. With the War on Terror, this is what Hodges refers to as the 'master narrative' that was built by President George W. Bush (Hodges 2011, 3). The language of American politicians placed boundaries on what could be meaningfully said and understood about terrorism, which in turn privileged certain policy paths (3). Thus, in order to dissect why certain counterterrorism policies were pursued in Canada, we must understand how the War on Terror was discussed and framed.

Chapter 2

3. Theoretical Framework:

This thesis adopts the Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) theoretical framework. This framework questions Western hegemonic counterterrorism measures that have been pursued in the decades following the September 11th terrorist attacks (Jackson 2016). The sub-field of CTS encompasses a range of debates about the nature and definition of terrorism, the use of the 'terrorist' label and the language of terrorism, the terrorism taboo and the need for more

primary research, the silence on state terrorism, the exaggeration of the terrorist threat, and the normative dimension of terrorism research, among other issues (Jackson 2016, 2). In short, CTS offers a sustained analytical and normative critique of the War on Terror and Western counterterrorism practices (2). In bringing the diverse CTS studies together, Richard Jackson argues that the cumulative critique reveals the War on Terror to be a "historical phase of neoliberal capitalist expansion led by the hegemonic geostrategic impulses of the United States" (4). This historical phase reflects and co-constructs a broader legitimizing discourse of counterterrorism based on Western exceptionalism, civilization struggle, and risk management (4).

Of particular interest for this project is the assumption in CTS that Western counterterrorism approaches and practices have been constituted in and through the discourses of counterterrorism that have been employed to explain and justify them (Jackson 2016, 7). Put differently, the language of terrorism and counterterrorism that has been employed, particularly by elites after 9/11, has both legitimized the approach taken to domestic and international audiences and shaped the approach itself by determining its internal logic and acceptable limits. Importantly, this process has occurred differently based on location. The way in which elites in the United States have constructed, explained, and enacted their counterterrorism practices has differed culturally and politically from the approaches taken by elites in other Western nations (Jackson 7). As such, studies that seek to expand the analysis of discourse to understudied nations are of high significance (7).

For CTS scholars, language matters for two overriding reasons. First, the interplay of competing discourses establishes the possibility and likelihood of particular policies (Holland 2016, 206). Put differently, language is a prerequisite for policy (in democracies at least), and politics takes place within a particular discursive context. In the case of 9/11, for example, military intervention is much more likely if the attacks are framed as an act of war (which

they were) (206). Second, language enables politicians to garner support for policy by packaging it in particular ways. Again, in Western democracies politicians do not have free will to pursue any policy they like; rather, they must sell their policies—including counterterrorism—to the public (206). This assumption of strategic agency on the part of elected officials once again underscores the importance of studying counterterrorism discourse in various contexts and states. Every country has a distinct political culture, and the language of the war on terror becomes indigenized and contextualized based on the unique political culture of that state (206). While the overarching message may have similar objectives, the war on terror discourse in the U.S. will differ from that of the UK, and the discourse of British politicians will differ from that of Australians, which will differ from, of course, Canadian politicians. In the end, Jack Holland argues that elected elites can increase the political possibility of a certain foreign policy by constructing a language that is not only conceivable and communicable, but also coercive (206).

Furthermore, CTS approaches terrorism and counterterrorism as “symbiotic social constructions” (Holland 2016, 203). That is to say that they are social (rather than natural), and have a symbiotic relationship in which terrorism and counterterrorism promote and sustain each other, despite claims of desiring each other's destruction (203). CTS also highlights the role of culture, language, and discourse as they relate to counterterrorism.

CTS literature has demonstrated that the War on Terror has been a “complete failure and a colossal waste of lives and resources” (Jackson 2016, 8). It has resulted in more than a million casualties in two major wars, along with numerous smaller military interventions (8). It has fostered the creation of the Islamic State, destabilized regions like the Middle East, undermined ongoing peace processes, increased militarization, elevated anti-western sentiment, and even increased levels of terrorist activities in some regions (8). Overall, CTS scholars view the War on Terror as a self-fulfilling prophecy and a wholesale failure (8).

The theoretical base of CTS very much adopts a constructivist view of the War on Terror and international relations as a whole (204). Many CTS scholars are heavily influenced by Foucault, and his core assertion that ideas matter in politics. These ideas rarely emerge or remain at the level of the individual; rather, they are expressed and shared (204). They go from being subjective to intersubjective (and back again), with the principal medium in this process being language (204). By talking and writing about the world, we actually script, create, and construct that world; we do not just (in)accurately describe it. Everything from a table, to a tank, to a terrorist emerges out of the words that help to build that "thing" into what we understand it to be (204).

This focus on language and discourse has been a consistent theme of CTS research since its emergence as a subdiscipline. That is because CTS has often adopted a discursive ontology and a linked skeptical epistemology (204). Having a discursive ontology means that CTS scholars view that world as discursively constructed. The result of this position is that terrorism is understood and studied as a "social fact", rather than a "brute fact" (Jackson et al. 2011, 35). This is to suggest that there is nothing inherent or objective about terrorism at all. Consider, for example, that violence is a frequent occurrence, however, the label "terrorism" is reserved for specific types of violence conducted by particular actors in certain circumstances. Importantly, the 'terrorism' label is applied in an inconsistent way, which usually serves a broader political or policy agenda. In short, the point is that terrorism becomes what is *is* through the words of those whose voices are heard and accepted.

Alongside this discursive ontology, CTS has generally adopted a linked skeptical epistemology. This is to acknowledge that studying discourse brings inevitable (inter)subjective biases into the research process (Holland 2016, 205). It is impossible to step outside of discourse altogether in order to attempt to uncover some ultimate truths which might accurately and objectively explain the way the world works (205). Ultimately, the

pervasiveness of language limits the claims that can be made, which is why CTS scholars are unlikely to suggest that there are clearly identifiable root causes of terrorism (205). Instead, CTS scholars focus on analyzing discourse and the impact that particular discourses have. A strong normative commitment runs through the heart of Critical Terrorism Studies, as the scholars of this subfield have focused on analyzing dominant discourses in order to challenge and resist their effects (205). For the purposes of this research, the author has adopted the ontological and epistemological assumptions of Critical Terrorism Studies.

This thesis likewise adopts the definition of discourse employed in CTS. A discourse occurs where language produces the meaning of things in a fairly systematic, regular, predictable way (Holland 2016, 204). For example, the dominant discourses in 2003 painted Saddam Hussein as mad, evil, or both (204). Arguing against this assertion was difficult because the language used to talk about Hussein was so pervasive and dominant (204). The discourse around the Iraqi leader set the rules of the game, within which everyone had to play.

Additionally, Critical Terrorism Studies is an appropriate theoretical framework due to its preferred methodological approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which this thesis adopts. CDA is discussed further below, but of note is that CTS scholars tend to adopt Critical Discourse Analysis due to CDA's tendency to side with the interests of dominated groups who suffer as a result of dominant discourses (Holland 205). Through the use of CDA, CTS scholars seek to reveal, for example, the patriarchal, eurocentric, orientalist, racist underpinnings of counterterrorism discourse (Holland 2016, 205).

Employing the theoretical framework of CTS will allow the author to deconstruct the terrorism discourse of Canadian politicians in two senses. First, CTS seeks to denaturalize dominant discourses by revealing them to be cultural rather than natural (Holland 2016, 205). Second, CTS attempts to reveal the binaries upon which broader discourses are built.

4. Hypothesis:

Canadian Prime Ministers have employed reductionist cultural binaries when speaking about counterterrorism that portrays the Muslim and Arabic world in a negative light.

5. Methodology:

This thesis adopts Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which consists of analyzing three levels of discourse. The first level is textual, which comprises the character of the text itself (Fairclough 2013, 94). The second level analyzes the connection between the discourse under study to other discourses which already exist (94). The third and final level analyzes the context surrounding the discourse, as well as the social practices that were adopted by the discourse (94).

Fairclough's CDA is a fitting framework as elements of the project fall within all three levels of discourse. The primary research question falls under the first level, as the author seeks to understand how Canadian Prime Ministers framed the War on Terror through their speeches. The secondary research questions (regarding the policies promoted through their speeches and the similarities to the American WOT discourse), fall under the second and third levels of analysis. The author analyzed the character of the discourse presented in the official speeches delivered by the four analyzed prime ministers (Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin, Stephen Harper and Justin Trudeau). The analysis was guided by several questions. Such questions include: What labels do the speakers use? Do they ascribe terrorism to a particular minority? What emotions do the prime ministers evoke? Do they employ 'us vs them' language that builds binaries? Who do they present as the 'enemy' in the fight against terrorism? The guiding questions were informed by the literature review discussed above.

Prime ministerial speeches were selected as the corpus under study as these speeches provide a means for conveying each administration's official narrative about the fight against

international terrorism. Given the rehearsed nature of the speeches, they articulate a perspective that has been well thought out and is representative of a larger set of ideas that underlies much of the administration's discourse and policies.

All the speeches were collected from the Canadian government website and its archives. All of the collected speeches were delivered between the 9/11 terrorist attacks and 2022, with the latest speech being delivered by Justin Trudeau on June 23, 2022. The speeches were collected through manual searches on the archives and were placed in individual datasets. By referring to the speeches analyzed in Zuzana Měřičková's 2022 analysis of the emotions evoked in prime ministerial speeches, the author was able to determine which terms would be most useful for gathering speeches. The author searched the words… Between 11-26 speeches were collected for each Prime Minister, all of which either directly address or include large portions dedicated to speaking on the War on Terror or terrorism. The speeches were coded manually by the author. Due to the exploratory elements of the project, the speeches were coded inductively, meaning no codes were created prior to coding. An inductive approach was appropriate due to the limited research on the discourse of Canadian politicians regarding terrorism. Having pre-established codes might have created bias in the author, as the speeches could have been read in a way to fit the pre-established codes. The coding unit is a coherent idea that consists of at least one sentence and is no longer than one paragraph in length. One idea may be coded into more than one code. The parts of the speeches which do not relate to terrorism were not included in the codes. All the codes created while coding the speeches are summarized in Table 1 at the beginning of the findings section. The specifics of the coding methodology have been inspired by Zuzana Měřičková's analysis on "How Canadian Prime Ministers Speak About Terrorism Since 9/11" (2022).

The author created twenty two different codes based on the reading of the speeches, not all of them present in speeches delivered by every speaker. The code *Solidarity* refers to parts of the speeches where the Prime Minister stated that Canada stands in solidarity with a country that had suffered a terrorist attack, or with the families of victims of an attack. A similar code is *Condolences*, which is used for specific sections where the speakers sent their condolences to the families of victims. The code *Determination* is used for statements regarding Canada's determination to fight and defeat terrorism. *Civilization's Fight* is a code employed when the speaker reminded the public that all 'civilized nations' are under attack from terrorism and that all 'civilized nations' must stand together to defeat it. A code with a similar message is *Western Values,* which refers to when the Prime Minister stated that we must protect 'our' values and 'our' way of life in the face of the terrorist threat. The code *Diversity* is for reminders that Canada is a nation built on diversity, and that Canada must continue to promote diversity and inclusion. In the same vein, *Islam* is a code for when the speaker emphasized that the fight against terrorism is not a fight against Islam, or those who practice it. The code *Innocent Victims* refers to statements regarding the innocence of those killed in a terrorist attack. Two codes similar in the message the speaker attempts to send to the public are *Continued Threat* and *Global Threat*. The first refers to the fact that Canada and Canadians continue to be at risk of terrorist attacks, the latter mentioning that no nation is safe from the threat of terrorism. An accompanying code is *Novel Threat*, which is attributed to statements regarding the novel and unique nature of the threat that terrorism poses. The code of *Cooperation* includes parts of the speeches when the speaker refers to the necessity of cooperation to fight terrorism. Some prime ministers reminded the public that patience is needed, as terrorism will not be defeated overnight, these statements were placed into the *patience* code. Certain prime ministers referenced Canada's greatness and unique abilities, which led to the creation of the *Nationalism* code. *Rebuild* is for statements regarding the

need to help countries such as Afghanistan rebuild, which is tied into Canada's '3D' policies in Kandahar. Another such code is *Women*, used for references to the advancements of the rights of women and girls. The code *Cowardly Attacks* refers to statements emphasizing the cowardly or heinous nature of an attack. The code *Courage* includes mentions of the efforts of Canadians fighting terrorism and responding to the terrorist threat. While the code *God* includes overt religious references or statements. The code *Divide Us* refers to mentions that terrorists seek to divide Canadians. Finally, the *9/11* code is for specific mentions of the September 11th attacks.

It must be noted that the research does have limitations. The main one is that the analysis was conducted only by the author. This is an important caveat due to the subjective nature of the coding. Thus, the author has attempted to make the analysis as transparent as possible. A second limitation is with the data collection, as the speeches were collected from various archives. For Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, the speeches were collected from their archived websites. The Stephen Harper speeches were found on the Canadian government website through the search engine. While Justin Trudeau's speeches were collected from his current governmental website. Due to these diverse sources, it is possible that important speeches were missed in the collection process. The third limitation is that the terminology used to classify the speeches on the websites of each prime minister differed. Each of them labeled the speeches in a different way: as speeches, statements, or even news.

Chapter 3

6. Findings

The following section presents the findings of the analysis. It is divided into four individual sections, each presenting the results of one of the prime ministers. It presents the character of

speeches delivered by each prime minister. The prime ministers are ordered chronologically so it is easier to observe the evolution of the terrorism discourse in Canada.

Table 1: All codes and number of references made by each prime minister in his speeches

	Jean Chrétien (19 speeches)	Paul Martin (13 speeches)	Stephen Harper (11 speeches)	Justin Trudeau (26 speeches)
Solidarity	27	12	10	28
Determination	26	10	15	14
Civilization's Fight	17	0	0	0
Us vs Them	11	3	9	1
Diversity	24	1	0	20
9/11	41	13	9	1
Courage	2	2	7	10
Innocent Victims	5	4	12	11
Rebuild	4	2	5	0
Women	0	0	1	0
Cowardly Attack	1	7	8	26
Continued Threat	3	1	11	4
God	0	0	3	0
Divide Us	0	0	0	8
Condolences	8	9	5	23
Islam	7	0	0	0
Novel Threat	16	4	1	0
Western Values	11	6	5	4
Global Threat	5	2	3	2
Patience	6	0	0	0

	Jean Chrétien (19 speeches)	Paul Martin (13 speeches)	Stephen Harper (11 speeches)	Justin Trudeau (26 speeches)
Nationalism	11	0	4	0
Cooperation	16	2	2	12

6.1 Jean Chrétien Findings

Jean Chrétien was in office from 4 November 1993 until 12 December 2003 (Canada 2013). His term overlapped with many of the most important milestones of terrorism and the fight against terrorism: the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq (although Canada did not participate in the invasion of Iraq). These events help explain why, despite being in office for the shortest amount of time out of the Prime Ministers under study, Mr. Chrétien has the second largest dataset.

Jean Chrétien's most prevalent code was *9/11,* which is not surprising due to the fact that his tenure as Prime Minister coincided with the September 11th attacks. The recency of the attacks also explains why Mr. Chrétien employed the *Novel Threat* code more than any other Prime Minister under study (16 references). Through his speeches, Chrétien attempted to help the Canadian public come to terms with these terrorist attacks which were on an unprecedented scale. He regularly employed phrases such as: "But even as this campaign has begun. We must be clear in our minds that it is a new kind of struggle against a new kind of enemy" (October 9, 2001). Not only was the terrorist threat novel in form, but it was also novel in the level of threat it posed to the Canadian public: "The scope of the threat that terror poses to our societies and our way of life has no precedent or parallel in history" (October 9, 2001).

Chrétien regularly stressed that Canada stands in solidarity with its southern neighbor and that the two countries share a unique bond. The *Solidarity* code appeared 28 times, while *Cooperation* had 16 appearances. His third most utilized code was *Determination* (26

references), as Chrétien made it clear that the Canadian state was fully committed to eradicating terrorism. In stressing the determination of the country, Chrétien was focused more so on the global fight against terrorism, rather than the fight to protect Canadian citizens domestically, with the *Global Threat* code being employed 6 times.

Chrétien often evoked feelings of Canadian *Nationalism* (11 references), making it clear that Canada's government, armed forces, and citizens are doing excellent work in the fight against terrorism and in supporting the United States. He expressed pride for Canadian troops, as they are always "ready to serve…", and "as always they will do Canada proud" (October 7, 2001). On 4 occasions these nationalist statements were accompanied by references to the *Courage* of Canadian public servants and soldiers. In several speeches Prime Minister Chrétien gave his *Condolences* to the families of victims of terrorist attacks (8 references), and he stressed that these victims were *innocent* and did not deserve to die (5 references).

In order to understand how Jean Chrétien framed the War on Terror, it is worth more deeply scrutinizing the codes of *Civilization's Fight, Western Values, Islam,* and *Diversity.* Doing so complicates our understanding of Mr. Chrétien's speeches, and points to certain contradictions in his discourse. There were 17 and 11 references for *Civilization's Fight* and *Western Values*, respectively. Chrétien regularly defined the fight against terrorism as one between civilized and uncivilized peoples. Since September 11, 2001, the "free and civilized nations of the world have joined hands to press for the first great struggle for justice in the 21st century" (October 9, 2001). Implicit in such statements is a dichotomy between the 'civilized' nations fighting against terrorism, and the 'uncivilized' nations and peoples either abstaining from the fight or actively working against the so called 'civilized' nations. Often accompanying such statements were remarks that reminded Canadians that the War on Terror was a fight in the name of 'our values', or 'western values'. On October 7, 2001, Prime

Minister Chrétien stated that the 9/11 attacks were not just an attack against the United States, but an attack against "the values and way of life of all free and civilized people around the world". While terrorists are presented as seeking to destroy Western values, such values are also what the 'West' is fighting for. Values such as prosperity, opportunity, and democracy. These statements could be argued to fall in line with the rhetoric often employed in the American political context, however, Jean Chrétien also made regular statements regarding the importance of Canada's diversity. In fact, Chrétien's speeches included the *Diversity* code more than any other Prime Minister under study (24 references). It was also his 4^{h} most prevalent type of statement (behind *Solidarity, Determination,* and *9/11).* In these statements, Chrétien shed light on Canada's diversity, inclusiveness, and multiculturalism. Canada is a nation made up of "every faith and nationality to be found on earth" (September 14, 2001). While Chrétien often stressed that this was civilizations' fight, he also made it clear that it was not a fight against any one community or faith (September 13, 2001). Along with this, it must be mentioned that Chrétien was the only Prime Minister to specifically state that the fight against terrorism is not a fight against the Islamic faith (7 references of the *Islam* code). He reminded Canadians that Islam is a faith about peace, and condemned the acts of "intolerance and hatred that have been committed against your community since the attack" (September 21, 2001).

6.2 Paul Martin Findings

Paul Martin was the Canadian Prime Minister from 12 December 2003 until 6 February 2006 (Canada 2013). Whereas the speeches of Jean Chrétien were focused primarily on the 9/11 attacks, the majority of Paul Martin's speeches were in reaction to a recent terrorist attack somewhere in the world, or in reaction to the death of soldiers in the War on Terror in Afghanistan. 7 of the 11 analyzed speeches referred to these two kinds of events. Thus, his speeches were often centered around providing solidarity to the countries,

soldiers, and families who were victims of terrorist attacks or the War on Terror, with the *Solidarity* code appearing 12 times.

Even though his speeches were often in response to a recent terrorist attack, Paul Martin still routinely referenced the 9/11 attacks (13 references). This was the most prevalent code in Mr. Martin's speeches, which speaks to the fact that 9/11 remained a reference point for how Canadians understood international terrorism.

In line with his predecessor, Paul Martin made it clear that Canada was *determined* to defeat the terrorist threat, and would take whatever steps were necessary to achieve that goal (10 references). He offered his condolences to the countries and the families who were victims of terrorist attacks, with the *Condolences* code appearing 9 times, making it his fourth most common type of statement. Following the *Condolences* code is *Cowardly Attacks*, which Prime Minister Martin utilized 7 times. This stands in contrast to Jean Chrétien, who only emphasized the cowardly nature of an attack once in the speeches analyzed. Paul Martin frequently made use of words such as cowardly, deplorable, and senseless when describing a terrorist attack. In certain cases, these statements were accompanied by reminders of the innocence of the victims (4 references).

In four instances Martin made note of the novel nature of the terrorist threat. This is a significant decrease from Prime Minister Chrétien, where the *Novel Threat* code appeared 16 times. This proportional decrease may be the result of the Canadian public having developed a better understanding of terrorist attacks in the years between the 9/11 attacks and Paul Martin's time in office.

Paul Martin's speeches include several other points of discontinuity with his predecessor. Whereas Jean Chrétien made 17 references to the fact that the War on Terror was *Civilization's Fight,* Paul Martin did not do so a single time. Furthermore, in several speeches, Jean Chrétien stressed that the War on Terror would not be won overnight and that

patience was needed (6 references). On the other hand, Paul Martin's speeches never included the *patience* code. The same story is present for the *Nationalism* code, with no such statements from Paul Martin, in contrast to 11 from Jean Chrétien.

Paul Martin did not frame the War on Terror as a civilizational struggle (0 references), but he also never made mention of the importance of Canada's diversity, nor did he stress the fact that the fight against terrorism was not a fight against Islam. There were 0 instances of the *Islam* code in his speeches and only 1 case of the *Diversity* code. However, on several occasions, he did frame the War on Terror through the language of *Western Values* (6 references). The spread of Western values was presented as the solution to terrorism: "We believe that liberty must be embedded and nurtured in democratic institutions. We believe that security can only be ensured through freedom of choice, education, individual endeavor, and equality of opportunity" (December 1, 2004). At the same time, however, western values are put forward as an explanation for terrorism. Employing a quote from American President George W. Bush, Paul Martin stated:

"Mr. President, in the immediate aftermath of September 11th, you said: "American was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining." Today, that light still burns brightly. And let me assure you: it does not burn alone" (December 1, 2004).

Finally, Prime Minister Martin made 3 references to the fact that terrorism is a global threat, 2 references to the importance of cooperation with Canada's allies, and a further 2 references to the need to help Afghanistan rebuild. On 1 occasion he made it clear that terrorism is a continued threat, and twice shed light on the courage and bravery of Canadian soldiers and workers.

6.3 Stephen Harper Findings

Stephen Harper was in office as Canadian Prime Minister between 6 February 2006 and 4 November 2015 (Canada 2013). 11 speeches were included in his final dataset and coded. As with his predecessor, many of Harper's speeches were given in reaction to a recent

terrorist attack or the death of Canadian soldiers. Other speeches were delivered on the anniversary of a major terrorist attack, such as 9/11 and the attack on Air India Flight 182 in 1985. As such, the *9/11* code was commonly present in his speeches, with 9 references in the 11 speeches analyzed. However, this was not Harper's most prevalent code, as *Determination* had the most references, with 15. Following this was the *Solidarity* code, as Stephen Harper continued the trend of emphasizing the fact that Canada stands shoulder to shoulder with its allies and with victims of terrorism and their families.

Prime Minister Harper dedicated a significant portion of his speeches to making it clear that terrorism is a *Continued Threat* to Canadians. In his 11 speeches, the *Continued Threat* code appeared 11 times. Canadians must remain vigilant, as "Al Qaeda has singled out Canada as one of the countries targeted for terror" (March 13, 2006). On the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, Stephen Harper stated that September 11th "will serve as a constant reminder that we are not immune from terrorism (Sep 11, 2011). On the 23 of June 2010, the prime minister reminded the country that terrorists could strike at any moment: "Sadly, we have no way of knowing when, if, or how, we may once more be attacked, or by whom." (23 June 2010). But terrorism did not just present a threat to Canadian citizens, but in fact was a danger "both to democracy and fundamental rights and values" (23 June 2013). Such reminders of terrorism's ongoing danger were much less frequent in the speeches of the three other prime ministers under study.

Stephen Harper was the only Prime Minister to have religious messaging in his speeches, albeit such statements were uncommon, with the code *God* appearing 3 times. On 12 occasions Prime Minister Harper emphasized the innocence of the victims and gave his condolences to the families 5 times. He highlighted the cowardly nature of terrorist attacks 8 times, which is more than both Chrétien and Martin, but much less than Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Only once did he describe terrorism as a novel threat, perhaps a reflection of the

fact that the War on Terror had already been going on for five years when he was sworn into office.

In the same vein as Prime Minister Chrétien, Stephen Harper expressed a sense of Canadian *nationalism* in his speeches (4 references) and made note of the *courage* of Canadian soldiers (7 references). In contrast to Mr. Chrétien, however, Harper did not urge *patience* from the Canadian public (0 references). Harper was the only Prime Minister under study to mention the advancements in the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, doing so once in a speech to the Canadian Armed Forces in Afghanistan in March 2006. In the same speech, he would stress the need to help Afghanistan rebuild. In total, the *rebuild* code appeared 5 times in Stephen Harper's speeches.

Overall, Stephen Harper did not frame the War on Terror as a civilizational struggle. The *Civilization's Fight* code never appeared in his speeches. At the same time though, Harper never pointed to the importance of Canada's *Diversity,* with the code never appearing. Additionally, no statements were made that stressed that Canada's War on Terror was not a war on *Islam* (0 references). Finally, Harper made note of the need for international cooperation only twice, making him tied for last in that category, alongside Paul Martin.

6.4 Justin Trudeau Findings

Justin Trudeau has been in the office of the prime minister of Canada since 4 November 2015 until the present day ('Prime Minister of Canada' 2013). The last included speech by Prime Minister Trudeau was on June 23, 2022. Trudeau's final dataset included 26 speeches.

The bulk of Mr. Trudeau's speeches are dedicated to providing *Solidarity* to those affected by terrorism (28 references). Such statements are often combined with a condemnation of the cowardly nature of terrorist attacks. The *Cowardly Attack* code appeared 26 times, far surpassing the three other prime ministers in that category. Justin Trudeau was

also most active in the *Condolences* category. No other speaker gave their condolences more than 10 times, while Mr. Trudeau did so on 23 occasions.

As Prime Minister Trudeau's speeches were heavily focused on providing *condolences* and *solidarity* to the countries and individuals affected by terrorism, he has numerous categories with 0 references. These include the codes: *Rebuild, Patience,* and *Nationalism.* Potentially reflecting the passage of time since the War on Terror had started, Trudeau was the first prime minister to never mention the *novel* nature of the terrorist threat. Furthermore, he did not paint the War on Terror as a civilizational struggle, with the *Civilization's Fight* code never appearing. Trudeau routinely highlighted Canada's diversity (20 references) but never made statements that attempted to limit potential Islamophobia (0 references to the *Islam* code). However, he was the only prime minister to remind Canadians that terrorists seek to *Divide U*s and that as a nation we must not let that happen (8 references). As with all of the prime ministers under study, Trudeau regularly dedicated portions of his speeches to assuring the world that Canada's *Determination* to defeat terrorism remained strong (14 references). More than any other speaker, Prime Minister Trudeau took time to thank Canada's service men and women and first responders for their *Courage* (10 references).

7. Discussion

7.1 Why Study Discourse?

In politics, ideas matter. But ideas rarely emerge or remain at the level of the individual; rather, they are expressed and shared through language (Holland 2016, 205). By talking and writing about the world, we script, create, and construct the world (204). Everything from a table, to a tank, to a terrorist emerges out of the words that help to build that "thing" into what we understand it to be. In this process of building understanding, an

object or phenomenon becomes what it *is* through the words of those voices who are heard and accepted (204). As such, the language of heads of state and political leaders is highly significant. Political leaders are presented as the authoritative voice in the political realm, and their language is heard widely across a given citizenry. More often than not, the discourse of our leaders becomes the dominant narrative on any political issue. This dominant narrative, in turn, legitimizes certain policies, while discrediting or delegitimizing others. In the wake of 9/11, for example, the language of President George Bush led the September 11th attacks to be seen as an act of war, which required a mass military response. If, however, the 9/11 attacks had been constructed as an international crime, rather than an act of war, it may have led to an international policing response and a very different looking ‘war on terror’ overall. As Richard Jackson has argued, the language of terrorism and counterterrorism employed by elites after 9/11 has both legitimized the approach taken to domestic and international audiences and shaped the approach itself by determining its internal logic and acceptable limits (7). Moreover, this has occurred in contingent ways in different states. The ways elites have constructed, explained, and enacted their counterterrorism practices have differed country by country. As such, seeking to develop a greater understanding of the Canadian terrorism discourse is significant for the field of critical terrorism studies.

This thesis set out to understand how Canadian Prime Ministers constructed and represented terrorism and counterterrorism since the September 11, 2001 attacks. It did so with the hope of contributing to the growing field of research which has problematized Canada’s domestic and foreign response to terrorism. A field which, however, continues to have a gap in studies with an explicit discursive lens. While scholars have laid bare the reductionist discourse of American politicians (as well as the damaging policies it led to), the discursive origins of the War on Terror remain understudied in other Western nations, including Canada. In analyzing the discourse of Canadian prime ministers, the author

hypothesized that Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin, Stephen Harper, and Justin Trudeau had employed reductionist discourse when speaking about terrorism that presented the Muslim and Arabic world in a negative light and built divisive binaries. This hypothesis was the result of Canada having been shown to have played the role of 'empire's ally' in their fight against international terrorism, having generally mimicked the counterterrorism policies of the United States (Albo and Klassen, 2013). The following section takes a panoramic look at the findings in order to identify the key trends and takeaways that emerged in the data. In order to more easily compare and contrast the language of each prime minister, the data has been compiled into three graphs. Figure 1 combines the data for all four prime ministers under study to show the overall nature of how Canadian prime ministers have spoken as a collective. Figure 2.1 and 2.2 show the prevalence of codes in the individual dataset of each prime minister. To more easily see the data, this graph has been split into two. Each following sub-section discusses one key finding and ends with an overall conclusion on the data's significance.

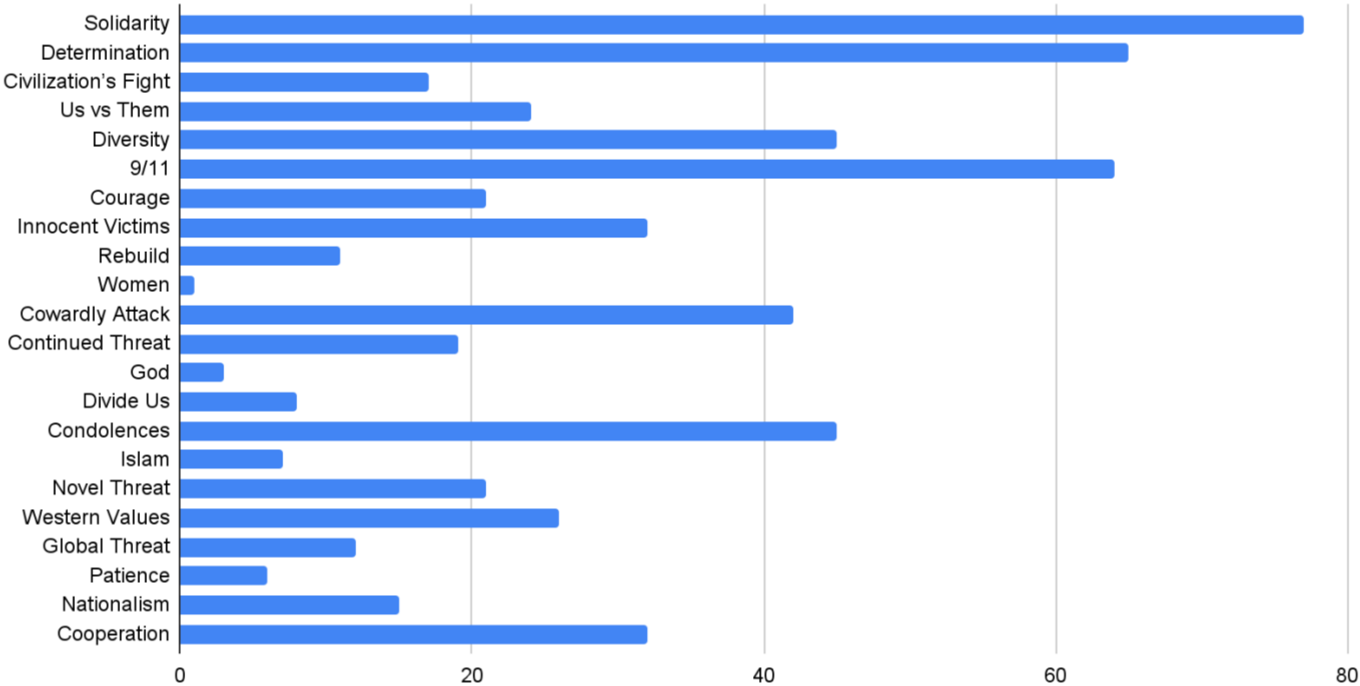


Figure 1: Total Frequency of Codes across all datasets in Canadian Prime Ministers' Speeches on Terrorism
Chrétien (19 speeches), Martin (13 speeches), Harper (11 speeches), Trudeau (26 speeches)
Solidarity
Determination
Civilization's Fight
Us vs Them
Diversity
9/11
Courage
Innocent Victims
Rebuild
Women
Cowardly Attack
Continued Threat
God
Divide Us
Condolences
Islam
Novel Threat
Western Values
Global Threat
Patience
Nationalism
Cooperation
0
20
40
60
80

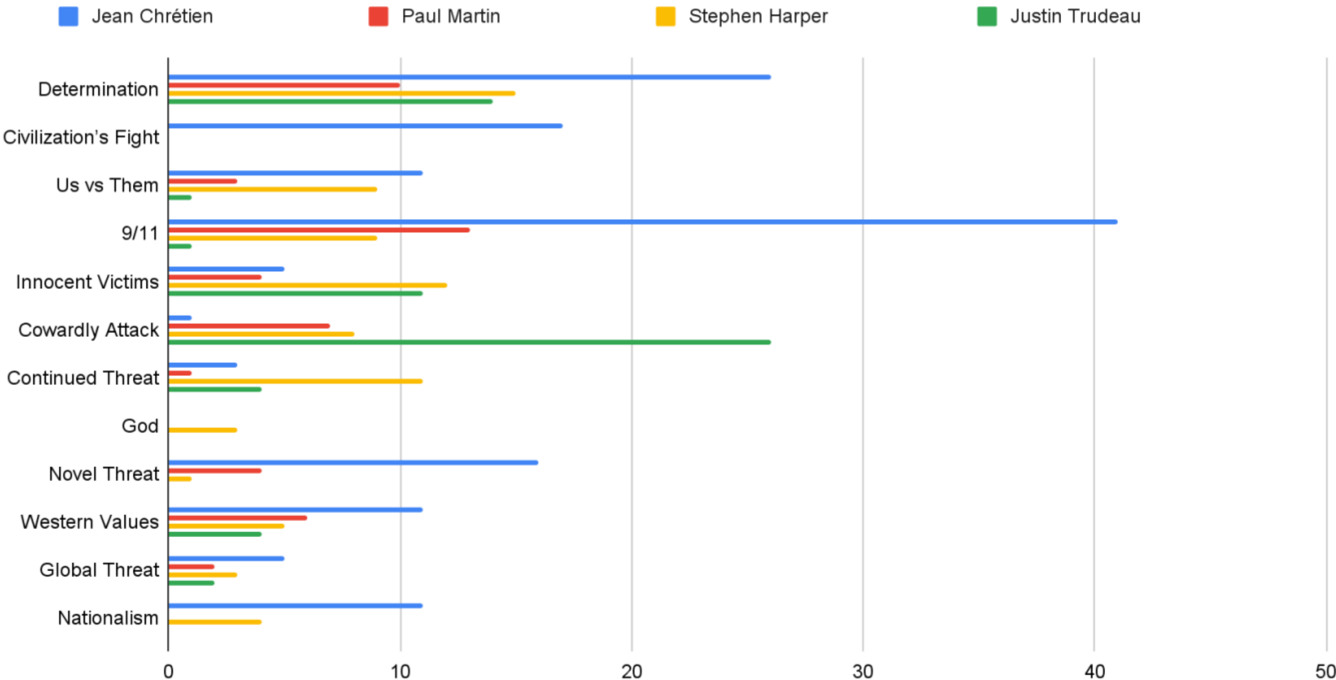
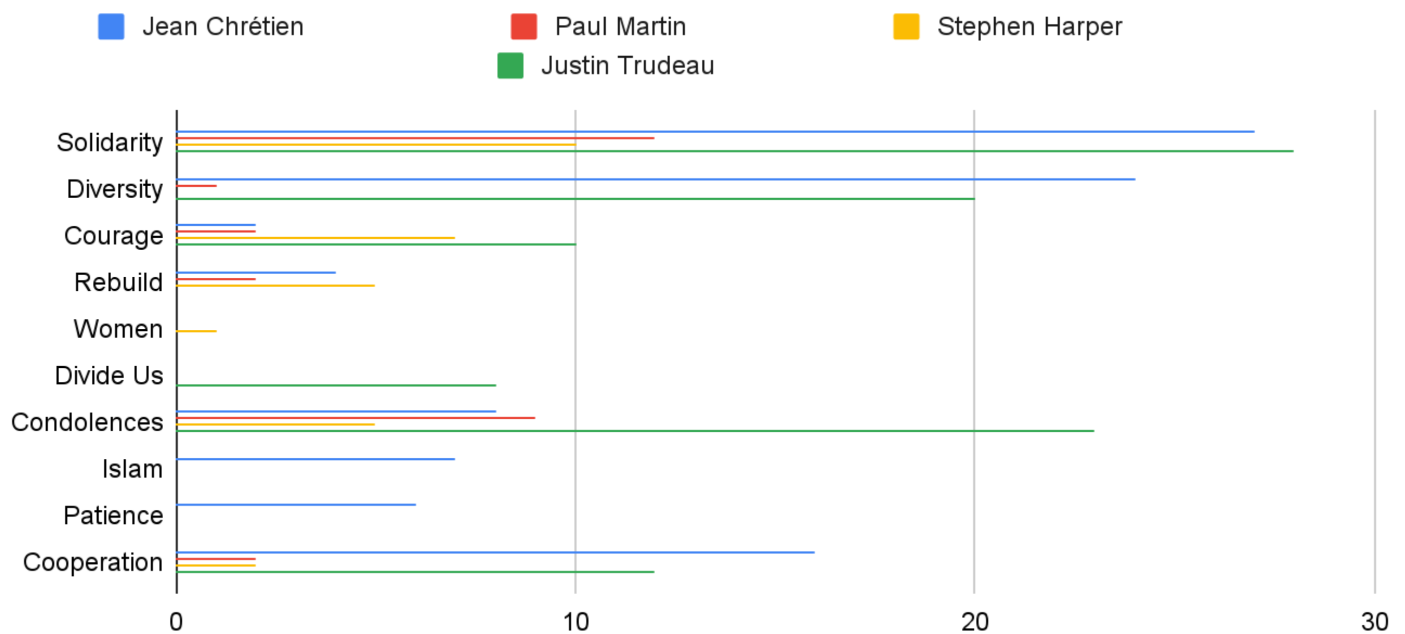


Figure 2.1: Number of Codes in each Prime Ministerial Dataset (Graph 1 of 2)
Chrétien (19 speeches), Martin (13 speeches), Harper (11 speeches), Trudeau (26 speeches)
Jean Chrétien
Paul Martin
Stephen Harper
Justin Trudeau
Determination
Civilization's Fight
Us vs Them
9/11
Innocent Victims
Cowardly Attack
Continued Threat
God
Novel Threat
Western Values
Global Threat
Nationalism
0
10
20
30
40
50

Figure 2.2: Number of Codes in each Prime Ministerial Dataset (Graph 2 of 2)

Chrétien (19 speeches), Martin (13 speeches), Harper (11 speeches), Trudeau (26 speeches)



7.2 Solidarity, Cooperation, and Determination

One of the most common themes found in the data was the expression of solidarity with countries that had suffered terrorist attacks and with the families of victims. All four prime ministers regularly expressed solidarity in this fashion. The four prime ministers expressed solidarity 77 times in total, making it the most prevalent code (see Figure 1). This solidarity was often expressed in the context of a global fight against terrorism, highlighting the need for cooperation and collective action. After a 2017 terrorist attack in Egypt, for example, Trudeau stated: “Canada condemns this attack and stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Egypt at this time” (November 24, 2017). In a 2015 speech regarding a motion in the House of Commons to extend and expand Canada’s mission to counter the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Stephen Harper noted that the Canadian

government had "worked closely for the past six months as part of a broad international coalition, including our closest allies, to help degrade and disrupt ISIL's ability to inflict harm" (Library and Archives Canada, 2015).

Overall, Chrétien and Trudeau were most likely to express solidarity, with 27 and 28 references, respectively (Figure 2.2). Paul Martin expressed solidarity 12 times, while Stephen Harper did so on 10 occasions. This finding that each prime minister dedicated a significant portion of their speeches to stressing the need for solidarity is in line with research conducted by Greg Albo and Jerome Klassen in their 2013 book *Empire's Ally.* In analyzing Canada's involvement in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2013, the authors characterized Canada as having played the role of an 'empire's ally' to the United States. In short, Albo and Klassen argue that Canada has mimicked and supported the American War on Terror. As such, it is not a surprise that the data shows Canadian Prime Ministers making references to Canada's steadfast support of the United States and the special relationship the two countries have. Furthermore, many speeches analyzed were given in reaction to a terrorist attack somewhere in the world, which also serves to explain the large presence of the *solidarity* code.

More broadly, the emphasis on solidarity can be seen as an attempt by the prime ministers to demonstrate Canada's commitment to being a responsible global citizen and a reliable partner in the coalition fight against terrorism. By expressing support for other countries and their victims, they were able to demonstrate that Canada was not only concerned with its own security, but with the security of the international community as a whole.

In addition to expressing solidarity, the prime ministers also stressed the need for cooperation with other nations in order to combat terrorism effectively. The cooperation code appeared 32 times across all four datasets (Figure 1). This was often framed as a joint effort,

such as when Jean Chrétien reminded Canadians that “defeating the threat will require coalition action across a broad front” (October 9, 2001). This rhetoric was intended to demonstrate Canada’s commitment to working together with its allies to tackle the global threat of terrorism. Additionally, the emphasis on cooperation may be a result of the prime ministers being influenced by the language of American politicians. As Holland (2012) has shown, one of the key ideas coming from the Bush administration was that 9/11 was “an attack on all of us”, and thus a coalition response was needed (100). In much the same way, Canadian prime ministers may have utilized the language of cooperation to justify their involvement in the coalition fighting terrorism. It must be noted, however, that a focus on cooperation was not consistent across all prime ministerial datasets, as Jean Chrétien and Justin Trudeau were much more likely than Paul Martin and Stephen Harper to emphasize cooperation in their speeches.

A theme that was present in all datasets was Canada’s determination to fight and defeat terrorism. The *determination* code had 65 references in total, with all prime ministers under study making note of Canada’s determination (Figure 1, Figure 2.1). For instance, in a speech given by Jean Chrétien on September 24, 2001, Chrétien stated that “We will change laws that have to be changed. We will increase security to protect Canadians. We will remain vigilant.” Similarly, in the wake of a terrorist attack in Barcelona in August of 2017, Justin Trudeau stated: “While we cannot ignore the outrage we feel, together we must renew our commitment.”

These statements convey a sense of resolute determination in the face of a perceived threat to national security. They also serve to position Canada as an active and responsible participant in the global fight against terrorism. However, the emphasis on the need to “eliminate” or “defeat” terrorism raises questions about the potential for overreaching and

harmful policies. As the War on Terror has shown, a singular focus on defeating terrorism can lead to a range of human rights abuses and a neglect of the root causes of terrorism.

Adopting a critical lens, the emphasis on Canada's determination to defeat terrorism and to stand shoulder to shoulder with its allies (the United States specifically), can be understood through Canada's evolution over the last three decades from peacekeepers to peacemakers. Throughout Canada's intervention in Afghanistan, the country's role in the world shifted from one of a prominent peacekeeper to one of a belligerent (Melnyk 2011, 6). The language of Canada's prime ministers played a key role in this process, in part from their emphasis on the country's determination to eradicate the terrorist threat side by side with the United States. This rhetoric justified Canada's participation in the occupation of Afghanistan and has led to a fundamental redefinition of Canada's image in the global community.

From the end of the Korean War in 1953 until the first Gulf War in 1991, Canada's military was almost exclusively involved in United Nations peacekeeping operations, of which it was a leading contributor (Melnyk 2011, 7). Canada was not actively involved in making war for almost forty years, and thus developed the perception as a reliable peacekeeper that did not participate in imperial projects.

However, starting with the Gulf War in 1991, Canada began intertwining itself militarily with the United States, turning its back on its UN peacekeeping image (Melnyk 2011, 8). After the Gulf War, Canada joined the United States in the bombing of Serbia in 1999. Two years later, Canadian Special Forces joined the American invasion of Afghanistan. In a single decade, Canada transformed its international identity from a peacekeeper to one of a belligerent in various wars, all of which were led or instigated by the United States (8). As Greg Albo and Jerome Kallsen put it, Canada became the 'empire's ally'. In other words, Canada transitioned from a peace*keeper* to a peace*maker*. While the two terms sound similar, in practice, they play out very differently. Peace*keeping* refers to

military involvement by a third party sanctioned by the global community via the United Nations that ensures the maintenance of ceasefires and peace agreements (9). Overall, it is a primarily passive role. In contrast, peace*making* refers to military action that is robust, intense and generates conflict. It is characterized by an active and aggressive role, often regarded as imperial in nature. Peacemaking has been used as a descriptor of Canada's role in Afghanistan, primarily as a result of Canadian counterinsurgency efforts that have worked in lockstep with the United States.

From this perspective, the language of Canadian prime ministers regarding *determination* and *solidarity* with the United States can be interpreted as contributing to the severance of Canada's peacekeeping legacy. As journalist Michael Valpy put it, "Our national mythology has moved beyond the idea of peacekeeping and embraced the culture of the warrior" (Melnyk 2011, 19). By reinforcing the link between Canada and the United States as partners in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts, Canadian prime ministers have contributed to the "culture of the warrior" in Canada.

7.3 Innocent Victims

Every Prime Minister took time to remind the world that those killed in a given terrorist attack were innocent victims, in doing so highlighting the brutal nature of the attack. There were 32 references total to the innocence of victims (Figure 1). Stephen Harper was most likely to do so, with 12 references, followed closely by Justin Trudeau, with 11 (Figure 2.1). One reason that the prime ministers would emphasize the innocence of the victims is that it reinforces the idea that terrorism is a fundamentally unjust and immoral act. In addition, emphasizing the innocence of the victims helps to humanize them and underscores the tragedy of their deaths. On the one hand, this could be seen as encouraging empathy and compassion, which can help build solidarity and resilience in the face of terrorism. Emphasizing the innocence of the victims helps to counteract the dehumanizing rhetoric that

is often used by terrorists and their supporters. By emphasizing that the victims are innocent human beings, the prime ministers are challenging the idea that terrorism is a legitimate means of achieving political or ideological goals. On the other hand, however, it could be argued that regularly highlighting the innocence of victims is a tool to portray terrorists as evil or barbaric, in turn reinforcing a binary between ‘us and them’. While this type of language humanizes the victims of terrorist attacks, it simultaneously dehumanizes those who perpetrated the attack and ultimately legitimize a war-like response. As Holland (2012) has demonstrated, by portraying the enemy as evil, politicians justify and promote a militaristic response to terrorism.

Moreover, while the prime ministers emphasized the tragic deaths of innocent civilians as a result of terrorist attacks, they failed to mention the deaths of innocent civilians that have resulted in the prosecution of the Global War on Terror. More than 38,000 Afghan civilians died between 2001-2021, but they receive no mention by Canada’s leaders (Maher 2021). Afghanistan’s civilians have endured two decades of suffering, deprivation and destroyed lives due to the war-induced breakdown of the economy, public health, security, and infrastructure. 92% of the population faces some level of food insecurity and three million children are at risk of acute malnutrition. At least half of Afghanistan’s population is living on less than $1.90 a day (Watson Institute 2022).

Even as direct conflict has ended in Afghanistan, unexploded ordinance and landmines continue to kill, injure, and maim civilians. Decades of fighting and instability have also inflicted invisible wounds and generational trauma. In 2009, the Afghan Ministry of Public Health reported that two-thirds of Afghans suffer from mental health problems (Watson Institute 2022).

In total, about 243,000 people have been killed in the Afghanistan/Pakistan warzone since 2001, with more than 70,000 of those killed having been civilians (Watson Institute

2022). But despite this appalling loss of life, the hegemonic discourses of the Global War on Terror have no room for discussions of the civilians caught on the wrong end of Western militaristic counterterrorism policies. When you divide the world into good and evil, the death of 38,000 Afghan civilians transforms from an unacceptable tragedy into unfortunate but inevitable 'collateral damage'.

7.4 Civilization's Fight

A striking trend is that only Jean Chrétien employed the language of *Civilization's Fight*, doing so on 17 occasions (Figure 2.1). In a speech on September 14, 2001, Chrétien stated that "with our allies, we will defy and defeat the threat that terrorism poses to all civilized nations". When speaking in Dallas, Texas later in the same year, Prime Minister Chrétien reassured the audience that Canada would remain a steadfast partner of the United States, a partner "with a clear understanding that the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were targeted not just on the United States, but against all civilized peoples and nations" (November 28, 2001).

Such statements are an example of reductionist and racialized discourse that perpetuates damaging stereotypes and reinforces an 'us vs them' mentality. Chertien's emphasis on this being a fight in the name of all "civilized nations" suggests that some countries are more civilized than others and that this distinction is an important factor in the fight against terrorism. This reductionist discourse oversimplifies what is a complex issue and could be argued to reinforce an orientalist narrative of Western superiority. By portraying the "civilized" world as the ones fighting against "uncivilized" terrorists, it creates an idea of a monolithic, homogenous 'civilized' West, which in reality is diverse and pluralistic. Implicit in such statements is that this 'civilized' West stands in contrast to the monolithic, uncivilized 'East/Rest'. As Holland (2012) has shown, this civilizational dichotomy has roots in orientalist archives of knowledge, with the non-Western world (and the Middle East

specifically) being portrayed as timeless, static, hyper-religious, and barbaric. Historically, Western powers have used the ideas of "civilization" to justify the subjugation and domination of other cultures, labeling them as "uncivilized' and therefore inferior (Said 1978). Ultimately, this racialized discourse can lead to the demonization of entire cultures and religions and can justify discriminatory policies and actions. It is important to note that the other prime ministers under study did not use this type of discourse. While they also used language that could be seen as divisive or reductionist, they did not frame the fight against terrorism in terms of "civilized" vs "uncivilized" peoples.

It is possible that Chrétien's framing of the War on Terror as a fight between civilized and uncivilized nations was influenced by the language of President George Bush. As we've discussed, it was during Mr. Chrétien's time in office that President Bush first popularized the metanarrative of the War on Terror as a fight between the civilized, progressive 'West', and the backward, uncivilized 'East'. A key aspect of President Bush's 'War on Terror Discourse' was to frame the fight as a civilizational struggle that drew from orientalist archives or knowledge. In a speech given on September 29, 2006, Bush stated: "From Afghanistan and Iraq to Africa and Southeast Asia, we are engaged in a struggle against violent extremists. A struggle which will help determine the destiny of the civilized world." (Hodges 54). If we compare that statement with the one given by Jean Chrétien on September 14, 2001, we see clear similarities: "And together, with our allies, we will defy and defeat the threat that terrorism poses to all civilized nations" (Chrétien, September 14, 2001). On 16 other occasions, Prime Minister Chrétien made similar statements echoing this civilizational dichotomy.

Identifying Chrétien's use of a civilizational dichotomy to frame the War on Terror is significant as the narrative of "civilization's fight" was used to justify Canada's intervention in Afghanistan. Shepherd (2006), Khalid (2017), and Fermor (2021) have argued that such

civilization/barbarism narratives, which have been identified in the language of multiple U.S. administrations, were essential in rendering "civilizing" intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq a seemingly logical response to 9/11 (Fermor 2021, 314). American troops intervening in Afghanistan were portrayed as the 'good guys': the bringers of 'freedom' and heroic defenders of the homeland (Holland 2012, 114).

In the same vein, Chrétien's narrative of 'civilization's fight' helped to position large-scale "civilizing" intervention from the Canadian military as an appropriate response to the situation in Afghanistan. Angela Joya has identified three stages of Canadian foreign policy in Afghanistan since 2001 (Joya 2013, 285). Jean Chrétien's tenure in office corresponds to the first stage (2001-2003), which Joya characterizes through Canada's large-scale military support to the US-led invasion (285). Under Operation Apollo Canada dispatched up to twenty naval ships, six aircraft, and more than two thousand soldiers (285). This large deployment of force was made more acceptable to the Canadian public through the presentation of the deployment as a mission to "defend the values and principles of free and civilized people everywhere" (Chrétien, October 17, 2001).

At the same time, however, it would be a gross oversimplification to say that Jean Chrétien simply parroted the language of American politicians. On inspection of the codes of *Diversity* and *Islam*, we see that in fact, Jean Chrétien's speeches were more complex and nuanced than the above discussion would at first make it seem.

Chrétien was in fact the only speaker under study to remind Canadians that the fight against terrorism was in no way a fight against Islam. He did so 7 times, with statements such as: "I wanted to stand by your side today. And to reaffirm with you that Islam has nothing to do with the mass murder that was planned and carried out by the terrorists and their masters. Like all faiths, Islam is about peace. About justice. And about harmony among all people." (September 21, 2001). In another speech, he stated that "Canadians of all origins and faiths

are united against terrorism" and that "we must make it clear that the war against terrorism is not a war against Islam or any other religion". Furthermore, Chrétien stressed that "the vast majority of Muslims are peaceful people who abhor terrorism" and that "we must show respect for their faith and their culture." Such sentiments of harmony and respect for Islam stand in contrast to the narrative of 'civilization's fight'.

Additionally, statements from Jean Chrétien where the *Islam* code was present were often accompanied by the *Diversity* code. Once again, these statements stand in contrast to his repeated use of the civilizational dichotomy. Chrétien regularly made statements where he stressed that "this is a struggle against terrorism, not against any faith or community" (September 21, 2001). In the same speech, he expressed shame that Muslim Canadians had been attacked and discriminated against in the wake of 9/11, saying that such acts "have no place in Canada" and that they made him feel shame as prime minister (September 21, 2001).

These contradictory trends point to the fact that while Jean Chrétien was likely influenced by the dominant 'master narrative' of civilizational struggle being promoted by the Bush administration, he also promoted narratives on the importance of Canada's diversity and inclusion. Put differently, the data shows that while Jean Chrétien did adopt certain aspects of the American War on Terror discourse, he did not simply echo the messaging of the Bush administration, but infused his speeches with narratives of diversity and respect for Islam, overall adopting language that was less inflammatory and divisive.

7.5 Emphasis on Diversity

Overall, the degree to which the speakers emphasized the importance of diversity fluctuated from dataset to dataset. Jean Chrétien and Justin Trudeau regularly emphasized the importance of Canada's diversity in their speeches, acknowledging the contributions made by diverse communities and highlighting the need to build bridges between different cultures and religions. Jean Chrétien's dataset contained 24 to the *Diversity* code (Figure 2.2). While

the code appeared 20 times in the 26 speeches of Justin Trudeau (Figure 2.2). In an address to the 2001 Confederation Dinner, Chrétien took time to say that "Canada is a nation of immigrants. People from all nationalities, all colours and religions. This is what we are. And let there be no doubt: we will not allow the terrorists to force us to sacrifice our values or traditions." (September 24, 2001). While conveying similar sentiments, Justin Trudeau was more likely to explicitly make note of the importance of diversity: "As Canadians, we choose compassion over hate and we embrace diversity and equality as we work to build a safer Canada for everyone" (June 22, 2022).

In contrast, Paul Martin and Stephen Harper had a complete lack of emphasis on diversity in their speeches. Paul Martin made just one reference to the importance of diversity, while Stephen Harper did not (Table 1). It must be noted that the datasets of Paul Martin and Stephen Harper were smaller than those of Chrétien and Trudeau. However, there is still a significant proportional decrease in the *Diversity* code. In short, both Paul Martin and Stephen Harper did not actively promote diversity or make it a central theme of their speeches.

This divergence in rhetoric regarding diversity and inclusion reflects differences in the political priorities and perspectives of the different prime ministers. Chrétien and Trudeau both placed a high value on diversity and inclusion and saw these as key components of Canada's national identity and strengths. In contrast, Martin and Harper may have placed more emphasis on national security and the need to combat terrorism and thus did not prioritize diversity in their speeches to the same extent. Overall, these findings suggest that the prime ministers spoke about diversity and inclusion in a nuanced and complex manner, reflecting differences in their political priorities and perspectives.

7.6 'Us vs Them'

Jean Chrétien's speeches were the only ones under study to explicitly frame the fight against terrorism as one between civilized and uncivilized peoples. This does not mean, however, that he was the only prime minister to represent the war on terror through inflammatory dichotomies. All prime ministers under study at times reminded Canadians that the struggle against terrorism was a fight between 'us' and 'them'. The *Us vs Them* code appeared 24 times in total, being most common in the speeches of Jean Chrétien and Stephen Harper (Figure 2.1) In building an oppositional binary between 'us' and 'them', the speakers further legitimized the militaristic response that Canada took in the wake of 9/11. The code appeared 11 times for Chrétien, 3 for Martin, 9 for Harper, and 1 for Trudeau. This suggests that even those prime ministers who emphasized the importance of diversity and respect for different cultures and religions still resorted to binary and reductionist rhetoric when discussing terrorism and counterterrorism.

Framing the fight against terrorism as one between 'us and them' can contribute to the stigmatization and marginalization of certain groups, particularly Muslim communities, by perpetuating a narrative of a clash of civilizations. It also tends to oversimplify what is a complex political and social issue and can lead to policies and actions that exacerbate rather than address the root causes of terrorism. As the growing body of critical terrorism studies has increasingly shown, this is exactly what occurred with many counterterrorism policies.

While it is understandable that political leaders may use simplified language to communicate complex issues to the public, it is important to problematize and scrutinize the consequences of using such reductionist and divisive rhetoric. As was discussed at the beginning of this section, the discourse of political leaders can shape public perceptions and attitudes toward certain groups and can influence the development and implementation of policies that have real-life impacts on individuals and communities. The language and

discourse of our political leaders often form the dominant narrative of a given political phenomenon. Thus, the perpetuation of a binary between 'us and them' may lead the public to view the fight against terrorism in a divisive manner, fuelling islamophobia and anti-muslim sentiment, and legitimizing militaristic counterterrorism policies that do not address the root causes of terrorism. As Jean-Paul Sartre reminds us, "the more one is absorbed in fighting Evil, the less one is tempted to place the Good in question" (Satre 1946).

7.7 'Western Values'

The speeches of each prime minister included some emphasis on the importance of 'Western values' in the fight against terrorism. In total, there were 26 references to *Western Values* across all datasets (Figure 1). While the exact phrasing and framing of these mentions varied from prime minister to prime minister, all of them to some extent spoke about the need to protect or defend Western values in the face of the terrorist threat. Jean Chrétien, for example, spoke about standing up for Western values in the face of terrorist attacks, and that the fight against terrorism was, in part, about defending these values. Paul Martin spoke about how terrorists sought to destroy Western values but also framed Western values as a solution to terrorism. Stephen Harper, for his part, presented terrorists as fundamentally opposed to the values that Canadians hold dear, including freedom and democracy. He argued that the fight against terrorism was not just a fight for Canadian security, but also a fight for the values that make Canada strong. Justin Trudeau mentioned that Western values such as freedom and diversity define Canadians and that these values are shared with other countries. Overall, while each prime minister spoke about Western values in slightly different ways, they all recognized the importance of these values in the fight against terrorism.

Once again, adopting a critical lens, emphasizing the need to protect 'our values' plays into the larger 'us vs them' narrative that has been woven throughout Western war on terror discourse. While the protection and promotion of values such as freedom and

democracy are important, the promotion of Western values is often done in a reductionist manner. Painting the world as divided between the 'West' and the 'non-West' contributes to a Huntingtonian clash of civilizations narrative.

Furthermore, in emphasizing the need to protect Western values, the prime ministers contribute to a Western-centric view of the world, in which 'the West' is a purely positive force. Firstly, the notion of the West as a monolithic force for good is false. Secondly, in reality, there is no single 'West'. Western civilization is, and continues to be, an amalgam of liberalism and fascism, democracy and dictatorship, development and underdevelopment, equality and inequality, emancipation and racism (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 5). The West has built modern civilizations, while simultaneously destroying other civilizations (6). It has contributed to democratic nation-building in the global North, but also launched military coups to overthrow nationalist governments in the global South. It has fought genocide in Europe, yet committed systemic violence and torture in Abu Gharib and Guantanamo Bay (6).

Thus, when Paul Martin stated that the 2005 London bombings were an attack on "our way of life", we must ask: what is 'our way of life' exactly? When Stephen Harper spoke of standing up for 'Canadian values' in a speech in March 2006, which values was he referring to? Was he referring to the values of multiculturalism and diversity that have become important elements of Canadian identity over the last four decades? Or was he referring to the Christian values that justified the cultural genocide of Canada's indigenous population through residential schools? Both sets of values have contributed to our country's history and could be argued to be 'our way of life'. Just as there is no single 'West', there is no single set of values that define Canada.

Additionally, when we speak of the West as a monolithic entity of good, we open the door to speak of the 'Rest' in a similarly reductionist manner. However, just as there is no

single 'West', there does not exist a single 'Rest'. Each and every non-Western civilization has a similar history of contradicting values, legacies, and traditions (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 6). Who defines what Africa stands for: Nelson Mandela, a prophet of non-violence and pioneer of peace, or Idi Amin, a symbol of barbaric violence? Who or what best represents Islamic civilization: over a billion Muslim people who live peacefully in the five continents, or a tiny group of violent Muslim extremists?

Moreover, speaking of 'our values' being under attack implies that 'our values' stand in contrast to 'their values'. Embedded within the message from our political leaders that "freedom and democracy will always triumph" (Trudeau March 22, 2017), is the notion that the Rest does not possess these values. Such messaging plays into a Hungtintonian 'clash of values' narrative, wherein the 'East/Rest' (and the Middle East specifically) is incompatible with modernity and democracy (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 6). Part of Huntington's essentialist argument is that the 'Islamic mind' and democracy are mutually exclusive and inalterably grounded in culture (6).

However, as Fred Halliday argues: there is nothing specifically "Islamic" about obstacles that hinder democracy in Muslim societies. Any argument about the incompatibility between Islam and democracy adopts a false premise that there is one true, traditional and timeless 'Islam' that rules social and political practices (Halliday 1996, 116). In reality, there is no such Islam. Rather, like all religions, Islam is "a reservoir of values, symbols, and ideas…the answer to why this or that interpretation was put upon Islam resides…in the contemporary needs of those articulating Islamic politics" (Halliday 1994, 96).

According to Pipa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, data and empirical evidence suggest that when political attitudes are compared, far from a clash of values, there is a minimal difference between the Muslim World and the West in terms of their attitudes toward democratic ideals. (Norris and Inglehart 2004, 154-155).

7.8 Advancements of the Rights of Women and Girls

A notable finding is the almost complete absence of references to the advancements of women's rights. Out of all four datasets, the code *women* only appeared once, doing so in a speech given by Stephen Harper on March 13, 2006. Prime Minister Harper stated: "Reconstruction is reducing poverty; millions of people are not able to vote; women are enjoying greater rights and economic opportunities that could have been imagined under the Taliban regime". It is surprising that this issue, which was a key objective of Canada's involvement in Kandahar province, was given so little attention in the speeches. The lack of reference to women's rights is additionally surprising given the fact that women's rights have been intimately tied to the justification for Western militarism in the Middle East. From the very beginning, the Bush administration legitimized the invasion of Afghanistan by referring to it as part of a larger campaign to free women. In a radio address to the country on November 13, 2001, Laura Bush declared that the war would free the women of Afghanistan (Attai and Karim, 2021). The State Department made it a point thereafter to emphasize the terrible conditions of women and children under the Taliban regime. The regime's treatment of women, including denying women and girls access to education, work, healthcare, and freedom of movement, became intertwined with the war on terror in general and the war in Afghanistan in particular. As such, women's rights and participation became intimately tied to war and militarism (Attai and Karim, 2021).

It is possible that the lack of attention to the advancement of women's rights in the speeches may reflect a broader trend of gender blindness in counterterrorism policies and rhetoric. The focus on military operations and security measures in the War on Terror may have overshadowed the importance of promoting human rights and gender equality, particularly in the context of conflict-affected regions.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Key takeaway

Overall, the findings suggest that the hypothesis is partially supported. In analyzing public speeches given by Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin, Stephen Harper, and Justin Trudeau, we see the presence of both reductionist and racialized discourse as well as discourse about diversity, inclusion, and tolerance. The prime minister's speeches at times perpetuated harmful narratives that framed the fight against terrorism as one between 'us and them' or between civilized and uncivilized peoples. At the same time, however, the analyzed speeches also included discourse surrounding the importance of diversity and respect for Islam and the Muslim community. The degree to which each prime minister under study engaged in these forms of discourse varied. Additionally, the data also shows the presence of conflicting themes within the speeches of individual prime ministers. Jean Chretien, for example, had strong recurring themes of both divisive and inflammatory discourse, as well as rhetoric which promoted diversity and respect for Islam. This finding points to the fact that the discourse of Canadian prime ministers was complex, nuanced, and context-dependent.

The complex nature of the speeches given by Canadian prime ministers regarding The War on Terror and counterterrorism may be the result of their efforts to tailor their speeches to the specific policy environment of the day. As political leaders, prime ministers are often called upon to address issues that are complex and multifaceted, and they must navigate a range of political and social pressures in their approach. For example, depending on the political climate of the time, a prime minister may need to emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion in their speeches to address concerns about xenophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment. Alternatively, a prime minister may need to highlight the need for a strong and decisive approach to counterterrorism to address concerns about security and safety. In addition, the nuanced nature of the speeches may also be influenced by the prime minister's

desire to balance different perspectives and stakeholders. For instance, a prime minister may need to balance the concerns of security agencies and law enforcement with the concerns of civil liberties groups, and their speeches may reflect this effort to balance competing perspectives.

Understanding how Canada's militaristic counterterrorism policies were justified is important as today it is painfully clear that these policies have categorically failed. Writing just prior to the official end of Canada's military mission in Afghanistan in 2014, Professor Ronald Paris dishearteningly concluded that, "the Canadian exertions and sacrifices in Kandahar did little to change the underlying conditions of [the Afghan] conflict" (Centre for International Policy Studies, 2014). Canada entered Afghanistan in 2001 with hopes of fostering democratic renewal, but ultimately its militaristic approach only created disillusionment, corruption, and violence.

In 2014, Ronald Paris stated that an accurate assessment of Canada's legacy in Afghanistan would take years to emerge. Today, almost a decade later, Canada's legacy has taken a tragic shape as Afghanistan is in a spiraling humanitarian crisis. 28.3 million Afghans will require humanitarian and protection assistance in 2023 (Security Council Report, 2022). Afghanistan's economy contracted 20.7 percent in 2021 and in the wake of a brutally cold winter, an estimated 6 million Afghans are "knocking on famine's door," according to the U.N's top aid official (Reuters, 2023). A repressive Taliban regime is in firm control of the country and has systematically rolled back the rights of women and girls and repressed all opposition. All girls have been barred from attending secondary school, women have been banned from parks and gyms, and cannot travel long distances without a male relative. Furthermore, Canada's hawkish counterterrorism approach has not limited terrorist activity in the region. Since the Taliban takeover, groups such as the Islamic State Khorasan (IS-K) have been gaining strength, and Afghanistan has remained the country most affected by terrorism

over the last four years (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023). These developments are a far cry from Canada's initial objectives of peace, women's rights, and development (Klassen and Albo 2013, vii).

By continuing to problematize Canada's counterterrorism discourse and policies, the goal is to foster the creation of more effective and holistic approaches to fighting global terrorism moving forward. Canada's future counterterrorism policies need to address the root causes of terrorism. The Western approach to fighting terrorism in the twenty-first century—based solely on the forceful extermination of extremists and terrorists—has failed time and time again because efforts to understand the underlying reasons for radical extremism have been superficial at best (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 18). Since the root causes of radicalism, extremism, and terrorism are multiple, any public policy response should also be multiple, rather than focusing only on the militaristic extermination of the terrorist threat.

Doing so would allow for the development of alternative policies to the Global War on Terror, such as policies that respect the dignity of difference, promote multicultural responses, propose a more critical and inclusive policy of multiculturalism and a radical approach toward accommodating difference, and embrace a reflective posture and strategy (Mahdavi and Knight 2012, 18). Future policy orientations should be based on economic and political policy responses, rather than militaristic ones. They should facilitate the economic and political inclusion of disadvantaged, minority, and excluded groups (18).

A key component in the fight against terrorism that Western nations have failed to address is the need to confront the structural violence caused by neoliberal globalization. As Benjamin Barber argues, the spread of neoliberal globalization has promoted a global economy that benefits the wealthy and powerful, while marginalizing the poor and disadvantaged. In other words, neoliberal globalization has left many groups behind, which

fuels resentment and frustration among these groups, and creates the environment for extremism to grow.

Too often, for those who are not lucky enough to be born into the elite upper crust of today's interconnected world, globalization looks like an imperious strategy of a predominantly American economic behemoth (Barber 1996, 22). What Western elites understand as the market-driven opportunities to secure liberty and prosperity at home seems to non-elites as nothing but a rationalization for exploitation and oppression in the international sphere. What we call international order is international disorder for them (22). The aversion of Western elites to all political regulation in the global sector, to all institutions of legal and political oversight, to all attempts at democratizing globalization and institutionalizing economic justice looks to those in the global south like brute indifference to their welfare and claims of justice (22). The prevailing market ideology prioritizes the privatization of all things public and insists on total freedom from government. It fetishizes non-interference in the global economic sector. Yet, total freedom from interference—the rule of private power over public goods—is another name for anarchy. And as Benjamin Barber puts it, "Terror is merely one of the many contagious diseases that anarchy spawns" (22).

If Canada is serious about reducing global terrorism, it must play a role in addressing the structural violence of neoliberal globalization, and as Benjamin Barber argues, must assist in the development of a crucial second civic and democratic front in the fight against terrorism. The first 'front' in the fight against terrorism has been the military front. To be sure, the elimination of terrorists who seek to inflict harm has been a necessary step. However, since Western nations have not addressed the structural violence that gives rise to these terrorists, the Global War on Terror has essentially been a futile game of whack-a-mole, with new threats constantly emerging. The second civic and democratic front would be aimed

not against terrorism per se but against the anarchy and social chaos—the economic reductionism of neoliberal globalization and its commercializing homogeneity—that have created the climate of despair and hopelessness that terrorism has so effectively exploited (Barber 1996, 16).

The second front would involve policymakers facilitating the "readjudication of north-south responsibilities" and redefinition of global capital to include global justice and comity (Barber 1996, 17). At the international level, we need to democratize global economic and political institutions. In specific, this could take the form of debt relief, fair trade agreements, and greater investment in education in developing countries. "The war against Jihad will not succeed," Barber argues, "unless McWorld is also addressed" (17).

However, the much needed democratic front will struggle to emerge in an environment where the discourse around terrorism is dominated by inflammatory binaries between 'Us' and 'Them'. The framing of the fight against terrorism as a civilizational struggle between good and evil has placed blinders on policymakers, causing them to only envision militaristic solutions to the terrorism question. We need to challenge the hegemonic concepts of good and evil and embrace the plural concepts of goods. We need to craft more inclusive global economic and political institutions that do not exclude all but the most privileged in society. We need to listen to others, celebrate differences, and tackle global challenges as a collective. As Jean-Paul Sartre reminds us, "The more one is absorbed in fighting evil, the less one is tempted to place the good in question" (Sartre 1946).

9.1 Avenues for Future Research

It is important to acknowledge that the trends and takeaways above, as well as the project as a whole, are by no means conclusive or exhaustive, nor were they designed to be. This thesis was designed as an exploratory study that hoped to shed light on this under-researched aspect of Canada's counterterrorism policies and fight against international

terrorism. The exploratory nature of this project means that it aimed to create discussion and open further avenues of research, rather than provide a definitive conclusion. In order to draw more concrete conclusions on Canada's counterterrorism discourse, further research needs to be conducted. Having established that Canadian prime ministers did at times build oppositional binaries that presented the Muslim world in a negative light, an avenue of further research would be to connect the identified discursive trends to the adoption of counterterrorism policies. One could research to what extent the reductionist aspects of the discourse of our politicians directly led to the adoption of ineffective counterterrorism policies, such as an increase in the number of troops in the War on Terror, torture, targeted killing or other violent measures.

Another potential avenue of research would be to create a timeline to see how individual speeches reflected the specific policy questions of the day, as well as the extent to which party affiliation affected the rhetoric of each prime minister. Similar analyses looking at different countries are also needed since discursive studies in this field have primarily been focused on the United States. It is important to continue to analyze the discourse of terrorism as it can provide a lens into the legitimization and justification for counterterrorism policies that may be ineffective or even counterproductive. It has been over two decades since the War on Terror began, and the counterproductive and at times nefarious results of counterterrorism efforts have become increasingly visible. Continuing to analyze the War on Terror through a critical lens will contribute to more effective counterterrorism policies moving forward.

9.2 ***Limitations***

As mentioned in the methodology, this project has several limitations. Firstly, the analysis was conducted solely by the author, which may introduce potential biases and limit the perspectives and insight gained from the research. To alleviate this, future research could

consider incorporating a team of researchers with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to ensure a comprehensive analysis.

Another limitation is that the nature of the coding and categorization of the speeches is subjective. While the author attempted to minimize bias through a systematic and transparent coding process, the subjective nature of the coding cannot be fully circumvented. Again, to address this limitation, future research could consider using multiple coders or qualitative data analysis software. A final limitation is that some important speeches could have been missed in the collection process which may have altered certain conclusions.

9.3 A Project of Personal Reflection

In any qualitative social science research, reflexivity is crucial. Reflexivity involves examining the researcher's own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions that may influence the research process and findings. Being reflexive involves acknowledging and critically examining one's positionality and how it shapes the research process. It involves recognizing that as a researcher, we are part of the world being studied (Lumsden, Bradford, and Goode 2019, 1). Through reflexivity, researchers can also reflect on their own role in perpetuating inequalities and stereotypes. Being reflexive is particularly important when studying a contentious topic that is surrounded by political and ideological debates, such as terrorism and the Global War on Terror.

Furthermore, for anyone engaging in critical social science research, it is vital to be reflexive. In critical social science, a key assumption is that knowledge is not objective, neutral, or value-free, but is always produced, disseminated, and used by someone for some purpose. Thus, if knowledge is always for someone or some purpose, the critical researcher must challenge the goals of their own research. Overall, if a researcher acknowledges their positionality in relation to the research, their findings will be better understood and accepted by other researchers.

Born in 2001, my formative years were during the height of the Global War on Terror. In addition to a desire to contribute to this understudied area of counterterrorism studies, this project was inspired by a desire for personal growth and reflection. As I hopefully continue to study global politics and international relations, I thought it would be fitting to conduct a thesis project which challenged any potential implicit biases of my own. Growing up during the Global War on Terror, I was routinely exposed to various forms of discourse, be it conversations, statements, speeches, or even films and television, that presented the fight against terrorism as one between 'us and them', or between 'civilized and uncivilized' peoples. While today I would like to believe I do not subscribe to any of these narratives that perpetuate Islamophobia or anti-muslim sentiment, this project was an opportunity to learn about how these narratives came to be, as well as their effects. In gaining a greater understanding of these narratives, I hoped to dispel any inherent biases or damaging perceptions of my own. As I continue my academic journey, I hope to conduct further research which will force me to critically reflect and view the world through different perspectives.

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