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A Critical Feminist Analysis of the Sweden Democrats

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical feminist analysis of the discourse of the Swedish populist radical right party the Sweden Democrats, focusing axes of social differences, power relations and emotions. Through a theoretical framework consisting of intersectional feminist theory and a methodological framework consisting of intersectionality and critical discourse analysis, selected empirical material from the Sweden Democrats is analysed. A central conclusion is that the discourse of the Sweden Democrats can be seen as a defence of essentialism and resistance to change in the social realm. Categories such as nation, ethnicity, 'race', gender, sexuality and class are manifested in intersecting and different ways within the analysed material. Some of their central functions are as creators of boundaries of exclusion and inclusion and while others are as parameters for correct and incorrect reproduction of the nation. All in all, the discursive interplay between these social categories places the figure of the 'Swede', in particular the heterosexual 'Swedish' man, in a central position of power. The role of emotions is the most apparent in texts that are focused on national threats and defence. It is suggested that emotions provide legitimacy for the Sweden Democrats' nationalist discourse. The role of emotions may also be an important cue to the appeal of a populist radical right party such as the Sweden Democrats.

Key words: The Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*), populist radical right parties, intersectionality, gender, nation, emotions, racism.

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1   Introduction

The Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, abbreviated SD), Sweden's leading populist radical right party, is currently the largest extra-parliamentary party in Sweden. The party is highly debated at the moment due to its ethno-nationalist agenda and the possibility that the party will enter the Swedish parliament in the elections the 19th of September 2010. With the possible exception of New Democracy (*Ny demokrati*) during the term of office in the years 1991-1995 no populist radical right party has held seats in the Swedish parliament (*Riksdagen*).

In recent opinion polls the Sweden Democrats have been pending around four percent. The results from the polls indicate that the party may have sufficient electoral support to be awarded seats in the parliament if elections were to be held presently. Although still a relatively small party, representation in the parliament would entail the opportunity to influence political discourse on a national level, obtain political legitimacy and an increased party support for political activities from the Sweden Democrats. There is also a risk that the party will obtain a disproportionate influence in comparison to their share of the votes. Considering the Swedish multi-party-system, in case neither the alliances of right-liberal nor the left-green parties achieve majority in the parliament the Sweden Democrats may come to hold the balance of power. The present situation taken into account, there is a possibility that the Sweden Democrats will be able to influence the political agenda in a more anti-immigrant direction as has happened in neighbouring Scandinavian countries with the entrance on the political scene of radical populist parties the Danish People's Party (*Dansk Folkeparti*) in Denmark and the Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet*) in Norway.

The Sweden Democrats have attracted attention mainly because of its advocacy of anti-immigration policies. However, the party also represents "right-wing" conservatism in socio-cultural areas such as gender roles and family politics and, in line with several other members of the populist radical right party family, the Sweden Democrats hold a restrictive attitude towards feminism and the feminist movement. As a feminist their entry on the Swedish political scene concerns me. On the one hand, their strife for an increased executive power within the Swedish system of governance represents an undesired political development. On the other hand, the party and similar populist radical right parties can be seen as a symptom of a larger and pressing problem in contemporary Europe related to questions of tolerance and intolerance, equality and inequality, migration and the changing social landscape of the European national-state. Whether the populist radical right is a new phenomenon or a phenomenon with deep historical roots and linkage to Europe's legacy of colonialism, nationalism, Nazi- and fascist movements, xenophobia and genocide, it needs to be examined, explored and understood. This

may be of particular importance for opponents of the populist radical right. Political scientist Herbert Kitschelt argues: "[p]articularly for opponents and enemies of the contemporary Extreme Right, it is important to have an accurate assessment of what this new political force represents in order to more effectively fight it." (Kitschelt 1995: p. x). Agreeing with Kitschelt, my thesis is sprung from a desire to contribute knowledge about a specific member of the populist radical right with the hope that it can be of use in the struggle against it. I have chosen to focus on the Sweden Democrats for two main reasons. The first reason is that the Sweden Democrats is the largest populist radical right party in the society in which I live and the party and its politics are currently highly topical due to the approaching elections. The second reason is that there exists relatively little research about the Sweden Democrats compared to other populist radical right parties such as the Front National in France or the Danish People's Party in Denmark. Especially in the area of feminist research few studies are available about the Sweden Democrats as well as other populist radical right parties. However, judging from my experience many feminists have strong opinions about populist radical right parties, the Sweden Democrats being no exception. More feminist research on the populist radical right may enable feminists engaged in public debate on the matter to support their arguments more powerfully.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

In earlier essays (Knobblock and Raguž 2007, Knobblock 2009) I have attempted to reach an intersectional understanding of the discourse of the Sweden Democrats by focusing on exploring the possible existence of intersections of categories such as gender, ethnicity and nation. This text builds on my earlier work to a large extent but is intended as a development of my thoughts in order to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

My main aim is to present a critical feminist analysis of the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. My basic research question is therefore simply: How can the discourse of the Sweden Democrats be understood from a critical feminist perspective? However, a critical feminist perspective can be a number of things. With time three foci have been crystallised; namely axes of differences and their intersections (such as gender and nation), power relations and emotions. Therefore the following research questions guide my analytical work:

- How are axes of difference, such as gender, sexuality, class, 'race', ethnicity and nation, manifested in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats?

- How are power relations articulated within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats and how are different individuals and groups positioned within these discursive power structures?

- What role do emotions play in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats?

The politics of the Sweden Democrats could be studied in several ways. Therefore, I wish to shortly comment on my choice to centre the discourse of the party. As expressed earlier, I wish to explore the party's politics in-depth. Focusing on discourse allows me to obtain a close as well as a relatively comprehensive image of the party's political messages.

1.2 Disposition

The thesis is organised in five main parts. First, an overview of populist radical right parties in Europe is provided followed by a background to the Sweden Democrats. Second, previous research in the field is presented and discussed. Third, follows the theoretical framework which begins with an introduction to intersectionality as a theoretical perspective. Thereafter I provide a presentation of central theoretical concepts in the thesis, theory about the intersections of gender and nation, and feminist theory in the field of emotions. Fourth, my choice of methodology, method and material will be discussed. Here intersectionality is discussed again, but from a methodological perspective. I then move to a presentation of critical discourse analysis as theory and method. A sub-section with reflections in relation to ontology, epistemology and ethics is also included. The section ends with a presentation of empirical material. Fifth, follows my analysis organised around the following themes; 'entities', time and space, 'Swedes' and 'Others', reproduction, and, ultimately, family, gender and sexuality. Last, I provide concluding remarks.

2 European Populist Radical Right Parties

The populist radical right is the newest party family to have established itself on the European political scene. Examples of populist radical right parties in Western Europe are the *Front National* in France, *Alleanza Nazionale* in Italy, *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium, *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* in the Netherlands, the Danish People's Party in Denmark and the Sweden Democrats in Sweden. Naturally, there are differences between the populist radical right parties, often marked by the respective parties' histories and the contexts in which they act. However, there are sufficient similarities to talk about a consistent party family with a shared ideological ground (Widfeldt 2004: pp 9-17). The choice of term of designation for members of the party family varies greatly among scholars. Terminology that has been used in relation to these parties is, for example, extreme right, far right, radical right, national populism and ethno-nationalism (Mudde 2007: pp. 11-12). I have chosen to use the term populist radical right parties in line with political scientist Cas Mudde (For an extensive discussion about choice of terminology, see Mudde 2007, chapter one).

According to political scientist Anders Widfeldt, the history of the populist radical right can be divided into three main periods. The first period was between the years of 1945-1955. It consisted of activities by parties and movements with roots in the period between World War I and World War II, for example Movimente Sociale Italiano, formed in 1946 and an 'heir' to Italian dictator Mussolini's National Fascist Party. The second period was between the years of 1955-1980. During this period new populist radical right parties were formed with an economical agenda more in the forefront than in the earlier period. These parties protested against the established parties' ways of handling economical development. A typical example is Mogens Glistrup's The Progress Party (*Fremskridtspartiet*) founded in Denmark in 1971. The party's main agenda was protests against the then Danish tax-policies and state bureaucracy. The third period of radical right wing populism began in 1980 and is characterised by an emphasis on immigration critique built on an ideological foundation of safeguarding one's own culture and ethno-nationalism. It has also been marked by an increased electoral support. Possibly, a fourth period has begun in recent years where an increase of the direct and indirect political influence of populist radical right parties is visible (Widfeldt 2004: pp. 12-16). Sociologist Jens Rydgren claims that the current relative success of these parties can partly be explained by their move from the old tradition of the extreme right which was characterised by biologically based racism, anti-Semitism and anti-democratic critique to a political frame-work of ethno-nationalism, ethno-pluralism and anti-political

establishment populism (Rydgren 2005: p. 413, 2007: pp. 243-244). Ethno-pluralism is the belief that different peoples need to be kept separate in order to preserve their national uniqueness and avoid cultural extinction. According to Rydgren, a prominent consequence of the move from biologically based racism to the ethno-pluralist doctrine is a shift of aim from subordination, as in colonial settings, to expulsion (Rydgren 2007: p. 244).

Compared to the established party families in Europe the electoral and political significance of the populist radical right is relatively limited (Mudde 2007: pp. 1-2). Nevertheless, populist radical right parties have strengthened their positions in Europe during the last decades. They have received an increased electoral support in several countries and, possibly, a greater political legitimacy in the public eye and an increased political influence (Widfeldt 2004: pp. 15-16). Especially in multi-party systems, such as in Denmark, small parties can influence policies and social values to a much larger extent than their proportion of the votes would indicate (Mudde 2007: p. 2, Widfeldt 2004: p. 10).

Last, it should be stressed that as political parties, the populist radical right's main strategy to obtain executive power is through democratic elections. Although several of the parties are critical towards the system of representative democracy they do not present themselves as opponents of democracy as a political system per se (Widfeldt 2004: p. 11, 27). As Rydgren points out, there is awareness that an anti-democratic label greatly diminishes chances to win votes since a majority of the European voters support democracy and consider anti-democratic organisation to be illegitimate (Rydgren 2004: p. 23). According to Mudde the fact that the populist radical right is nominally democratic distinguishes is from the extreme right, including fascism and National Socialism, which in essence is anti-democratic (Mudde 2007: p. 31).

2.1 The Sweden Democrats: Background

The Sweden Democrats came into existence in 1988 under its present name. However, already in 1986 a party named the Sweden Party (*Sverigepartiet*) was founded through a fusion of the xenophobic organisation Preserve Sweden Swedish (*Bevara Sverige Svenskt*) and the likeminded organisation the Future Party (*Framtidspartiet*). The core of activists in Preserve Sweden Swedish re-founded the party as the Sweden Democrats in order to overcome to the chaos that had characterised the party machine under its first two years (Larsson and Ekman 2001: p. 108).

In the beginning the Sweden Democrats were strongly affiliated with Nazi activism. Journalists Stieg Larsson and Mikael Ekman, claim that this image of the party was not unfounded since several of its followers had a background in the extreme right movement and the new board to a large extent consisted of former Nazi activists. Further, the first party leader, Anders Klarström, clearly had connections to the Nazi movement. The first years of the party's existence were characterised by scandalous political campaigns and internal conflict. By time, a

board of eleven persons, almost half of them convicted for crimes and with strong connections to Nazism, remained. This situation was seen as impossible as grounds for political activity and the need for a more structured and organised leadership grew (Larsson and Ekman 2001: pp. 125-147). Mikael Jansson, former member of the Swedish Centre Party, took over as party leader in 1995. His foremost contribution to the party was to ensure a break with all obvious connections to the (Neo-)Nazi movement and ideology (Larsson and Ekman 2001: pp. 163-181). Prohibition against wearing uniform was, for example, introduced in 1996 and in 1999 the Sweden Democrats openly disclaimed Nazism (Rydgren 2004: p. 215).

Mikael Jansson's taking over as party leader was the beginning of a process of change where effort have been made to dissociate the party from its past. Under the present party leader, Jimmie Åkesson (2005-), the reform-work has continued. Some of the more controversial opinions are now expressed differently or are no longer to be found in the party's publications. Rydgren summarises the development of the Sweden Democrats as a move from the Swedish extra-parliamentary right-wing extremism to a downright populist radical right party which combines ethno-nationalism, xenophobia, right-wing authoritarianism in socio-cultural issues and a populist critique of the political system (Rydgren 2004: p. 198).

The endeavour to focus on future respectability and present themselves as a legitimate political alternative has proven successful for the party. In the election in 2006 the Sweden Democrats obtained 2, 93 percent of the votes. It is now the biggest extra-parliamentary party in Sweden with its strongest support in the regions of Skåne and Blekinge (Lodenius and Wingborg 2009: pp. 302-304).

3 Previous Research

In my review of previous research I have focused on academic work centred on the Sweden Democrats and on the European populist radical right parties. Naturally, studies of a populist radical right party such as the Sweden Democrats relates to broader issues such as nationalism and racism, to name a few. However, the scope of the thesis prevents a detailed account of research on, for instance, nationalism on a general level. I have also chosen to leave out journalistic articles and reports due to the academic nature of my work[1]. The writings on the populist radical right parties in Europe predominantly come from within the field of comparative politics. Within this rather large body of research the Sweden Democrats is sometimes one of the analysed parties. Works that specifically focuses on the Sweden Democrats are comparatively very few. Below I will present and discuss the previous research in more detail, starting with the work on European populist radical right parties in general and proceeding with work concerning the Sweden Democrats. Ultimately, I will position my own approach.

Within the field of comparative politics authors such as Kitschelt (1994) Mudde (2005) and Rydgren (2004, 2005) provide mappings of members of the populist radical right, predominantly from a broader European perspective. Questions dealt with are history and development of the parties, political influence, or lack thereof, voting patterns in relation to the populist radical right and ideology. Examples from different contexts are provided and similarities and differences are highlighted and discussed. Concerning ideology, emphasis is generally put on ethno-nationalism, xenophobia, populism, sociocultural authoritarianism and values regarding democracy.

The previous research on the ideology of the populist radical right provides highly relevant and comprehensive knowledge about many aspects of the populist radical right parties. Its explanations regarding the parties electoral support is especially important and it is highly useful as a 'springboard' for my own work because of the general knowledge it provides about the history and politics of the party family. Nevertheless, I see two problematic aspects in this body of work. First, there is a tendency to treat the aspect of gender in a rather reductionist fashion. The analyses are predominantly centred on explanations of the gender gap in relation to the populist radical right parties (men tend to vote for the party

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[1] Overviews of the history of the Sweden Democrats are for example found in *Extremhögern* (1994) by journalists Anna-Lena Lodenius and Stieg Larsson and *Sverigedemokraterna – den nationella rörelsen* (2001) by Stieg Larsson and Mikael Ekman. More recent journalistic publications about the Sweden Democrats are *Slaget om svenskheten: Ta debatten med Sverigedemokraterna* (2009) by Anna-Lena Lodenius and Mats Wingborg and *Sverigedemokraterna in på bara skinnet* (2009) by Pontus Mattson. In Maria Blomquist and Lisa Bjurwald's report *Goddag kampsyster! Kvinnorna i extremhögern* (2009) the position of women in the Swedish extreme right is focused. In the report the roles women play in the movement, the arguments used to recruit women, and why women have become a more and more important target group for Nazi groups as well as xenophobic parties such as the Sweden Democrats are explored (Bjurwald and Blomquist 2009: p. 13).

group to a much greater extent than women). Mudde (2007), for example, directs severe criticism against feminist research and claims that its methodologies have resulted in biased research. Mudde himself studies the issue of gender through examining the male/female voter ratio and a mapping of the number of women party officials and their tasks (See Mudde 2007, chapter 4). These research foci provide relevant knowledge. However, Mudde's unwillingness to recognize the validity of feminist research beyond positivist methodology restricts the critical potential of the gender perspective. It fails to acknowledge the importance of identity constructions and processes as well as the more subtle expressions and workings of power related to gender and its interrelated axes of social divisions.

Second, I lack a deeper exploration of the possible interrelatedness of certain ideological aspects of the populist radical rights. As accounted for above, ideological themes that are stressed in the research are, among others, nationalism and socio-cultural authoritarianism. Rydgren (2004) claims that the ideological core of the populist radical right – namely xenophobia and anti-establishment populism – is embedded in general themes of sociocultural authoritarianism where issues such as family values are stressed. By doing so he establishes a link between these traits. Rydgren further mentions exclusion of various groups such as immigrants, homosexuals and feminists. The common exclusion of these diverse groups is attributed to the monist value-base of the parties in question which results in denial of pluralist values. According to Rydgren this monist value-base interplays with an idea of 'natural order'. Everything considered to be in unison with this 'natural order', for instance the nation and the family, is regarded as 'good'. In contrast, that and those considered to subvert the 'natural order'; for instance ethnic mixture, feminism and homosexuality, is regarded as 'bad' (Rydgren 2004: pp. 18-27). I find Rydgren's comments on the linkage between nationalism and authoritarianism and the monist value-base highly interesting since they suggest interrelatedness between the different features of the populist radical right. However, because of their briefness Rydgren's writings fail to analyse in-depth the connectedness between the different traits as well as the 'logic' of the similar (hostile) attitudes towards certain groups. Consequently, I identify a point to be developed in the previous research regarding these issues.

As stated above, very few academic studies centre on the Sweden Democrats. However, historians Ulla Ekström von Essen and Rachel Fleischer (2006) examine the activities of the Sweden Democrats on a local level between the years of 2002-2006. They also touch upon the ideological development of the party which they argue is characterised by a shift from National Socialism, anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and biological racism to ethnic nationalism, ethnic pluralism, populism and culture-essentialism. However, the authors question whether this shift reflects a significant change in the party's fundamental world-view (Ekström von Essen and Fleischer 2006: pp. 8-9, 30-43). The value of Ekström von Essen and Fleicher's report is primarily to be found in their thorough examination of the activities of the Sweden Democrat's on a local level in Swedish municipalities.

In contrast, a novel approach is found in the work of political scientist and doctoral student Christian Norocel. In his ongoing dissertation-project Norocel strives to analyse metaphors of masculinity in three European populist radical

right parties, among them the Sweden Democrats, from a feminist perspective. In Norocel (2010) hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity and heterosexual patriarchy in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats are related to narratives of the family, 'Swedish'/national purity and exclusion. Norocel writes:

> The issue of reproduction has always played a crucial part in the nation-states, and this is reflected in the party's appeals to tackle the issue of family, as a part of a wider attempt to impose a racially pure heterosexual patriarchy. As such, the staunchly restrictive definition of the family, portrayed as the exclusive heteronormative domain of the Swedish male, with a fixity on the nuclear "one father and one mother" formula, has developed across time to proscribe the existence of family narratives including immigrant Others or any other possible family constellations. (Norocel 2010)

My own approach has many commonalities with Norocel's research. Similar to Norocel I wish to draw upon a gender perspective in my analysis. I strongly acknowledge the validity of his focus on masculinity, sexuality as well as issues of national reproduction and the role of the family. However, I have chosen to adopt a more general feminist intersectional focus; drawing on anti-racist feminist theory, theories of the intersections between gender and nation and of emotions. Put differently, masculinity and sexuality are discussed in my work but they are not its main focus.

Gender scholars such as Anne McClintock and Nira Yuval-Davis have critiqued traditional research on nationalism for its failure to acknowledge the gendered dimensions of nationalist projects (Yuval-Davis 2006: pp. 1-3, McClintock 1995: p. 353). McClintock and Yuval-Davis, among others, have strived to fill this gap through demonstrating how gender is a central building-stone in nationalist projects. Gender, however, is not analysed in isolation in this body of work. Departing from an intersectional perspective their research examines the intra-connections of nation, gender, 'race'/ethnicity, class and sexuality, and explores how these intersecting axes of social divisions play out in nationalist processes.

In my own work I wish to transfer the insights and general approach of feminist scholarship on nationalism to the studies of the populist radical right. Studies of the populist radical right can be conceptualised as a sub-field of the study on nationalism and/or a phenomenon with sufficient points of commonalities with nationalism that theory on nationalism is applicable. To my knowledge, feminist studies of populist radical right parties are scarce, particularly in the Nordic context (Norocel's research being one notable exception[2]). This applies particularly to the intersectional perspective I am using as well as to my focus on the role of emotions. My study could therefore help fill a knowledge-gap within feminist research. Further, because the feminist theoretical approach differs from the traditional work on the European populist radical right, it could also bring new perspectives to the field in general.

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[2] It has also come to my knowledge that gender scholar Diana Mulinari and sociologist Anders Neergaard are currently working on a research project centred on exploring the situation of women and immigrants within the Sweden Democrats.

4 Theoretical Framework

My theoretical framework consists of two main parts, which can both be related to a larger field of intersectional feminist analyses. The first part is feminist theory regarding the interrelationship between nationalism and other intersecting categories such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, 'race', and class. Here the work by gender scholar Nira-Yuval Davis is a central point of reference but other authors are also of importance. The second part is gender scholar Sara Ahmed's cultural theory of emotions. However, before these theories are presented in more detail, the theoretical perspective intersectionality is introduced.

4.1 Intersectionality as a Theoretical Perspective

The term intersectionality was first deployed by critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw in the article "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color" (1989, 1991). It arose in a context where black feminists directed serious critique towards the white middle-class feminists' failure to acknowledge power hierarchies, conflicts of interest and differences among women (Lykke 2009: pp. 104-109). As pointed out in Mulinari et al. (2009) the introduction of intersectionality offered possibilities to "expand earlier analysis where gender was the only focus." (Mulinari et al. 2009: p. 4).

From the introduction of the term until the present day it has been widely adopted, discussed and developed. Some feminist researchers explicitly refer to intersectionality in their works while other theorise intersections between categories and power structures without referring to the term (Lykke 2009: pp. 106-107). However, briefly explained, intersectionality as a theoretical approach can be understood as attempts to capture and explore the interplay between different axes of power such as gender, ethnicity, 'race', sexuality, age, and geopolitical location etcetera (Lykke 2009: p. 104). An example of feminist research inspired by an intersectional perspective is found in McClintock (1995). McClintock explores the gendered nature of colonialism through a psychoanalytical and feminist reading. She writes:

> Race, gender and class are not distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other; nor can they be simply yoked together retrospectively like armatures of Lego. Rather, they come into existence *in and through* relation to each other—if in contradictory and conflictual ways. In this sense, gender, race and class can be called articulated categories. (McClintock 1995: p. 5, original emphasis)

According to McClintock, intersectionality implies acknowledging the interconnection and inseparability of analytical categories. As is implicitly made clear in the quotation above, the connection between categories is not to be understood additively. Gender scholar Nina Lykke explains the relationship by referring to the concept of intra-action which was invented by feminist physicist Karen Barad. Intra-action can be defined as "interplay between phenomena that are not clearly demarcated from each other." (Lykke 2009: p. 107). As such, they are mutually transforming (Lykke 2009: p. 107).

Economic historian Paulina de los Reyes and gender scholar Diana Mulinari highlight two aspects of intersectionality. The first is the intersections of time and space. The authors argue that axes of power in a specific setting cannot be analysed in isolation from other spaces and periods of time. For example, there is a link between colonial practices and racist material and symbolic marginalisation in the present postcolonial situation. Another example is how the division of the world into different regions interplay with an idea of peoples inherent biological and/or cultural differences (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005: pp. 18-26).

The second aspect is the perspective's inherent connection to theories of power and inequality. On the one hand, this is because of its potential to make visual and problemize categories such as gender, 'race' and class which are constitutive for the exercise of power and the preservation of inequality. On the other hand, it opens up abilities to make connections between power and inequality and subjects' abilities to act within prevailing structures, practices and ideologies (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005: p. 16, 24).

How to understand power is much debated, especially within critical research. Mulinari and de los Reyes position themselves in relation to a processual understanding of power, in other words something that is being 'made' instead of the result of fixed structures. However, although acknowledging agency, the authors do not ignore structural relations. They argue for situating subjects in temporal and spatial contexts, thus anchoring their agency in "economical relations, prevailing ideologies and the organisation of society" (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005: p. 23). I find this 'middle position' between structural determinism and the 'free subject' particularly useful in relation to the populist radical right. Because it acknowledges structural constraints as well as agency a space is opened up for recognizing discursive and social patterns governing individual and societal action, but also, despite these constraints, leaves room for some freedom of action and consequently, also accountability. Since the Sweden Democrats, as well as other populist radical rights parties, actively strive for executive power within the Swedish system of governance, it is vital to be able to hold them responsible for the consequences of their policies and actions. Needless to say, since the ability to act is not the privilege of the radical right it also opens up for resistance on various levels.

The intersectional perspective has contributed to the growth of various area of research. One of them is the field of critical whiteness studies which I will describe briefly since my research bears several similarities with the field. Critical whiteness studies focus on constructions of whiteness as a normative category. Further, it is argued that it is not sufficient to only analyse positions of

subordination and exclusion. In order to understand the construction and reproduction of relations of dominance it is equally important to consider the privileged position and the intra-sections of categories or axes of power creating it. Important to underline is that feminist critical whiteness studies is a critical endeavour which examines how racialised and gendered relations of power, intra-acting with class privileges, normative heterosexuality and nationalism, are supported and reproduced (Lykke 2009: pp.112-114).

4.2 Central Theoretical Concepts

In this section some theoretical concepts that are referred to throughout the thesis are outlined, namely; gender, sexuality, class, 'race', racism, racialisation, ethnicity, nation and nationalism. These have been thoroughly discussed in a wide variety of research and I do not claim to make an all-inclusive presentation. Instead, the text below can be understood as suggestions to how these concepts can be interpreted.

According to sociologist Floya Anthias and gender scholar Nira Yuval-Davis "[g]ender relates to the social organisation of sexual difference and biological reproduction, and involves social constructions and representations of these, but cannot be reduced to biology." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 18). As such, gender works with notions of natural relationships between social effects and biology (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 18). Lykke explains the conceptualisation 'doing gender' which refers to a procedural rather than a fixed or essential understanding of gender. Gender is here held to be created in human interaction and within a constant negotiation over meaning (Lykke 2009: p. 219). Post-constructionists are, however, critical towards constructionist tendencies to solely focus on the historical-cultural or linguistic aspect of gender. Instead, they theorise body and gender with a starting point in bodily materiality and put emphasis on examining the relationship between subject and body. However, while assigning importance to the agency of the material they refute biological determinism. Instead they claim the existence of non-determining agency (Lykke 2009: p. 223).

Queer feminist theoreticians in particular, highlight the inseparability of gender and sexuality which are seen as intra-acting phenomena that, in the framework of a heteronormative discourse, normalise and naturalise a heterosexual dual-sex model and heterosexual desire (Lykke 2009: p. 227). Gender scholar Tiina Rosenberg defines heteronormativity as "the institutions, structures, relations and acts which uphold heterosexuality as something uniform, natural and all-embracing." (Rosenberg 2002: p. 100). According to Rosenberg, heteronormativity, based on heterosexual hegemony and a binary view of gender, is "actively normative" (Rosenberg 2002: p. 100). Consequently, everything outside the heterosexual norm is marked as deviant and, subsequently, the subject of direct and/or more subtle forms of punishments, for example violence and/or marginalisation (Rosenberg 2002: pp. 100-101). Key principles of

heteronormativity are; 1) exclusion of deviance through a division into categories of us and them, and 2) assimilation through the incorporation of deviance into the norm (Rosenberg 2002: p. 102). The dichotomous structure justifies social inequality, and through its sheer naturalness, it masks a hierarchical system where some groups are privileged over others. (Rosenberg 2002: pp. 102-103).

Class, according to Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "relates to the sphere of production processes but can't be reduced to the economy. […] Exclusion and subordination characterize class relations, but its prime relation is that of economic exploitation." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: pp. 17-18). Hierarchical power-relationships related to class are often legitimised through the portrayal of human subjects as lacking of skills and competencies to improve their situation (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: pp. 17-18).

The concepts of 'race', ethnicity and nation are all closely related to the positing of boundaries. They are part of exclusionary and inclusionary processes as well as the creation of conditions for belonging and not belonging. In the case of 'race' this is "always grounded on the separation of human populations by some notion of stock or collective heredity of traits." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 2). Racism, however, should not be exclusively associated with the category of 'race'. Anthias and Yuval-Davis argue that racism is to be seen as exclusionary practices, which can be related to both notions of 'race' as well as ethnicity:

> Our view is that all those exclusionary practices that are formulated on the categorization of individuals into groups whereby ethnic or 'racial' origin are criteria of access or selection are endemically racist. Further, our view is that racist practices are also those whose outcome, if not intention, is to work on different categories of the population in this way. (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 16)

A conceptualization interlinked with that of racism is racialisation. Mulinari et al. explains racialisation as "the process of differentiating people and stabilising these differences, as well as legitimating power relations based on these racialised differences." (Mulinari et al. 2009: p. 4). Further, it is argued that this conceptualization "acknowledges the connection between racism in the form of historical racial biology […] and the contemporary cultural racism" (Mulinari et al. 2009: p. 4). Cultural racism, or cultural fundamentalism, is, according to Yuval-Davis, the predominant form of racism in contemporary Western Europe. Cultural fundamentalism draws upon "the myth of common origin and a fixed, immutable, ahistorical and homogeneous construction of the collectivity's culture." (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 64). Here the (immigrant) 'other' becomes constructed as the 'alien' or potentially threatening 'enemy' and separatism is advocated for the preservation of the national and cultural uniqueness and welfare (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 64).

Ethnicity refers to notions of cultural identity, belonging and traits. However, ethnicity is more than an individual and collective identity. It also involves material practices, effects and origins as well as par-taking in a group's social conditions and being able to use 'ethnic resources'. Ethnic resources can be

"economic, territorial, cultural and linguistic" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 8). These resources can all be used in the pursuit of political projects. As with all concepts described in this sub-section, ethnicity is to be understood as a category intersecting with others, such as class and gender. However, albeit these intersections produce differences within the ethnic group, a notion of sameness regarding individuals posited as its members are almost always present (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: pp. 6-10).

Ethnicity is mobilised in nationalist projects since the construction of ethnic groups is drawn upon to legitimise the political demands of one group vis-à-vis another (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 25, Brah 1996: pp. 163-165). The claim for separate political representation, often in the form of a separate state, distinguishes the nationalist project from the ethnic project, although Anthias and Yuval-Davis underline that they see no inherent difference between them. (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 25). Naturally, the concept of nation is central to nationalist projects. Anthias and Yuval-Davis see the nation as a construction based upon two myths. These are the myth of common origin, that the group is believed to share a history, and the myth of common destiny, that the group is destined for a common future (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: pp. 26-27). Sociologist Joane Nagel (1998) summarises the goal of nation-hood as follows:

> The goal of nationhood, 'nation-building', involves 'imagining' a national past and present (Anderson 1991), inventing traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), and symbolically constructing community (Cohen 1985). As Gellner (1983, p. 49) argues, 'it is nationalism that engenders nations, and not the other way around'. The tasks of defining community, of setting boundaries and of articulating national character, history, and a vision for the future tend to emphasize both unity and 'otherness'. (Nagel 1998: pp. 247-248)

Below the presentation of the features of national projects is further developed, through a focus on the intersections of gender and nation.

4.3 Gender and Nation

McClintock (1995) and Yuval-Davis (2006) argue that nationalist projects are gendered projects to a large extent. They often incorporate specific constructions of man- and womanhood and men and women tend to be positioned differently within them (Yuval-Davis 2004: p. 1). In this sub-section I will present some of their insights, particularly those of Yuval-Davis, regarding the constructions of womanhood in relation to biological and cultural national boundaries. This will be complemented by Nagel's thoughts on masculinity and national projects.

McClintock, drawing on Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989), accounts for five ways in which women are implicated in nationalism:

-as biological reproducers of the members of national collectivities

-as reproducers of the boundaries of national groups (through restrictions on sexual or marital relations)

-as active transmitters and producers of the national culture

-as symbolic signifiers of national difference

-as active participants in national struggles

(McClintock 1995: p. 355).

Within different national projects the emphasis usually leans more toward one or some of the positions described above. Where notions of biological sameness are prominent women's reproductive roles are usually put in centre. Two discourses within these types of nationalist projects are especially interesting in the context of this thesis. Within the 'people as power' discourse the growth of the nation is made central. Thus, women are encouraged to bear more children in order to increase the population. In some cases it manifests in a 'demographic race'. This can for example take place when "an ethnic majority is seen as crucial in order to retain the hegemony of the hegemonic collectivity." (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 30) In the 'eugenicist discourse' the quality of the nation is at focus. Here one part of the population, often the hegemonic collectivity, is encouraged to have more children while minorities are not. This gives it a quality of 'selective breeding' (Yuval-Davis 2004: pp. 31-32).

In order to understand the role of gender in culturally defined nationalist projects, Yuval-Davis underlines the importance to refute a conceptualisation of culture as static and essential in favour for a view of culture as a "dynamic contested resource which can be used differently in different projects and by people who are differentially positioned within the collectivity." (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 23). In the struggle to define or fix ethnic and/or national collectivities defined by a notion of a common culture, women are often positioned in the roles of 'symbolic border guards' or embodiments of the collectivity's boundaries. A 'border guard' is an identification of people's membership or non-membership in a collectivity through cultural codes such as dress, behaviour, customs, religion and language. The position of women as 'border guards' is visualized for instance in struggle for or against women's emancipation or discussions over women's choice of dress, for instance to wear or not wear a veil. That women and women's roles are perceived as cultural and national embodiment can for instance be seen in notions of threats to national honour when women in the collectivity engage in or are forced into relationships and/or sexual encounters with men from other collectivities (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 23, pp. 40-67).

Nagel (1998) argues for gender-sensitive analyses of nationalism that take manhood and masculinity into account. Seeing nationalism as a primarily masculinist project she argues for a strong inter-linkage between national projects with the form and expressions of hegemonic masculinity within the contexts they take place. Hegemonic masculinity, according to Nagel, is a normative form of masculinity that "sets the standards for male demeanour, thinking and action." (Nagel 1998: p. 247). Interestingly, sociologist R.W Connell mentions nationalist movements (alongside ethnic, religious and economic movements) as one of the

important arenas where defence of gender inequality and patriarchal structures take place (Connell 2005: p. 2015).

4.4 The Cultural Theory of Emotions

Ahmed (2004) conceptualises emotions as relational cultural phenomena. According to Ahmed, emotions produce surfaces and boundaries necessary for the perception of separation between individual subjects and the social (Ahmed 2004: pp. 4-10). Emotions shape both individual and collective bodies through repeated actions directed from and against other bodies and objects (Ahmed 2004: p. 4). Consequently, emotions can be understood as circulating movements within a process where they can both 'move (on)' and 'get stuck'. Emotions become 'sticky' through a repeated use of certain signs in relation to specific bodies and objects.

A wide range of emotions such as pain, disgust and shame are theorised by Ahmed. However, below I have selected to give an account of some of her thoughts in relation to the emotions of fear, love and hate. The examples Ahmed refers to differs from my study. For instance, her analyses of love and hate are developed through examples taken from British right-wing discourse which is more outspokenly racist and anti-democratic than the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. However, her theorisations have a general applicability to the construction of the nation, national subjects and national 'others', thus making them relevant for my analysis.

According to Ahmed, fear works with notions of futurity as well as with preservation. Fear's relation to the future is of a narrative of anticipated pain or injury. This anticipated injury goes beyond the subject, however, and can be attached to collectivities as well as social structures and norm-systems (Ahmed 2004: p. 64). In this process fear produces borders between subjects and objects, between those and that which is fearsome and those and that which is 'loved' and feared to be lost. It includes a construction of objects of fear (those fearsome) as well as a 'turning towards' and a defence of the object of love – such as the nation (Ahmed 2004: pp. 67-68).

The language of threat is bound up with the language of security within what Ahmed calls 'politics of fear'. Through the production of crisis the object of love becomes perceived as insecure which justifies actions for its defence. Ahmed explains:

> Through designating something as already under threat in the present that very thing becomes installed as that which we must fight for in the future, a fight which is retrospectively as a matter of life and death. In other words, to announce a crisis is to produce the moral and political justification for maintaining 'what is' (taken for granted or granted) in the name of future survival (Ahmed 2004: p. 77)

Fear plays a vital part in the conservation of power through the production of crisis. The defence of 'what is' is focused on particular values, truths and norms, and subsequently, often also certain institutions. Conversely, particular forms and bodies come to stand for external or internal threats - others whose presence represents the risk of degeneration, disintegration and decline. As Ahmed puts it:

> These various others come to embody the failure of the norm to take form; it is the proximity of such other bodies that 'causes' the fear that forms of civilisation (the family, the community, the nation, international civil society) have degenerated. (Ahmed 2004: p. 79)

Concerning the emotion of love, Ahmed specifically focuses on what she calls 'national love'. According to Ahmed love is part of the creation of the white subject as well as constructed as belonging to that subjects: you feel national love if you are the white subject. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory she claims that the nation, within this kind of discourse, is constructed as the ideal in which the white subjects reflects itself - it becomes the white subject through its possession of the nation. In addition, the white collectivity is reproduced as consisting of individuals whose love of the nation manifests their sameness and belonging. However, this entails a positioning against individuals and groups who do not fulfil the national ideal – this can be both 'white' opponents to nationalism and immigrants (Ahmed 2004: pp. 122-129).

The feeling of love, according to Ahmed, can be enhanced when the promise of rewards for investing in a loved object (such as the nation) is not fulfilled. The difficulty to admit the lack of rewards for emotional investment makes the subject cling to the loved object. This mechanism frames the discourse of the rewards for national love as a story about the future: the reward will come in form of a child with the characteristics of the ideal white subject. Through postponing the rewards in this way the fantasy of rewards for national love can be retained. However, in order to be able to suppress disappointment the absence of rewards requires an explanation. Within national discourses the presence of 'others' constitutes the explanation. Thus, racialised 'others' are constructed as threats against the white subject and its rewards for its emotional investment in the 'white nation' (Ahmed 2004: pp. 122-123, 131-133).

Narratives of threats and injury are closely related to the emotion of hate. Hate, in British right-wing discourse, is constructed as born out of love for the nation and the 'white' subject who are portrayed as being under threat from national 'others'. These 'others' are depicted as harmful against the white nation since they are taking away its resources and/or engaging in a process to take the place of 'white subjects'. Consequently, 'others' are constructed as perpetrators while 'white' subjects are constructed as 'victims'.

Who occupies the positions of the hated 'other'? According to Ahmed, hate can be distributed across several figures. The 'other' can be any figure who embodies the threat of loss and/or impurity, for example the foreigner or the mixed-race couple. Interestingly, the supposed threat from the 'others' is often conceptualised as an invasion through uses of metaphors such as rape and

molestation. In this fantasy the 'white' woman (and the 'white child') is a prominent figure. The image of a violated white woman comes to embody the vulnerability of the national body in relation to 'others' (Ahmed 2004: p. 43-44).

In conclusion, it can be argued that 'white' subject and nation are constructed and bound together in a narrative of fear, love and hate. This narrative allows the re-formulation of hate against 'others' as defence against threats and injury. These 'others' come to embody the possible removal of national future, thus legitimising their position as hateful subjects.

5 Methodology, Method and Material

In this section I give an account of my methodology and method of analysis. More specifically intersectionality as a methodological approach is discussed before I move to a description of critical discourse analysis (abbreviated CDA) as theory and as method. These parts are followed by ontological and epistemological reflections, specifically in relation to my choice of CDA as an analytical tool. Last, reflections in relation to my own positionality as well as ethics are included.

5.1 Intersectionality as a Methodological Approach

In an earlier section I introduced intersectionality as a theoretical perspective. Here, some methodological implications in relation to intersectionality are commented upon.

Yuval-Davis (2005) provides some guidelines for the conductance of intersectional analyses. First, she puts emphasis on the exploring of the construction and interrelation of positionings, identities and political values. Second, she points to the importance of examining how these different divisions are intermeshed. Third, she underlines the specificity of every context as well as the changing nature of constellations and effects over time (Yuval-Davis 2005: p. 200). Following these guidelines the analyst would need to pay attention to construction and interrelation (and the particular ways it is played out) of axes of social divisions while remaining aware of its changeability and specificity in relation to context.

Further, Yuval-Davis comments on the choice of divisions to focus upon. She acknowledges that some social divisions may be more important than others in a specific time and place, in that they affect a majority of the population. Examples of such social divisions are gender and class. However, although other social divisions may seem to predominantly affect minority groups, for example indigenous status, they may be a defining aspect of certain social relations, and therefore of great importance to take into account. Ultimately, as I understand her line of reasoning, the choice of social divisions should be made in relation to their importance in the context under analysis. At the same time she recognizes that the choice will be guided by the analyst's ability to 'see' certain social divisions rather than others according to her or his previous understandings, background and context (Yuval-Davis 2005: pp. 202-203).

In line with my interpretation of Yuval-Davis' reasoning, my choice of axes of power to focus on has been made in relation to the content of the analysed

material as well as been guided by my previous understandings and theoretical knowledge from the field of gender studies. The possibility to recognize all relevant aspects has, however, been limited, both by my own subjective ability to assimilate and interpret the material as well as the need for limitations in relation to the time and space at my disposition. However, my hope is that the readers' recognition of important dimensions that have been overlooked may serve as invitation to further research in my area of study.

Gender is a central focal-point and category of analysis within the field of gender studies. Quite naturally, much of my theoretical knowledge and interests are centred on the production and reproduction of gender, for instance norms and practices surrounding configurations of femininity and masculinity respectively and its consequences. However, my studies within the field of intersectional feminist theory has made me conceptualise gender as a category that is in interplay with and is difficult to delimit from other social categories such as class, ethnicity, 'race' and sexuality. It has also made me question whether gender is always to be treated as a primary category within feminist research. Depending on context, it is my belief that other categories may be of equal (or even greater) importance in the constructions of power relations and hierarchies of inequality.

A similar line of reasoning is found in work by gender scholar Ingunn Moser. Moser (2006) explores the making and unmaking of differences in relation to disability, gender and class in socio-technological practices. Investigating these enactments of difference in situated practices she understands their interactions as "complex, contradictory, unpredictable, and surprising" (Moser 2006: p. 537). Further, she claims that "processes of differences interact to support and reinforce but also to challenge and undermine each other" (Moser 2006: p. 537). Following Moser, the impact and form of impact of a certain social category cannot be presupposed in all contexts. Consequently, my starting-point has been to conceptualise gender as well as other social categories as potentially equally important. The social categories fore-grounded in my analysis has, thus, been determined through close reading and interpretation of the material.

Naturally, working from a gender perspective may mean other things than primarily focusing on analysing the category of gender, for instance to depart from feminist viewpoints. In this sense, due to my feminist theoretical and methodological positioning my research is rooted in a conceptualisation of reality and academic work strongly influenced by and connected to a gender perspective.

5.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Together with intersectionality techniques for analysis found in the tradition of critical discourse analysis (abbreviated CDA) constitutes my methodological framework. CDA is one of the discourse analytical traditions, and as with any theoretical tradition, it has its strength and weaknesses. My reasons to choose CDA above other models of discourse analysis are pragmatic. First, the clear political stance of CDA makes it particularly well suited for an analysis of an

overtly political project such as the Sweden Democrats. Second, CDA represents one of the more detailed approaches for conducting empirical research in relation to discourse. However, aspects of CDA on the levels of ontology and epistemology make me pause for consideration. Therefore, after an introduction to CDA as theory as well as method I have, in a following sub-section, provided some critical reflections in relation to the ontological and epistemological suppositions of CDA as well as present some thoughts in relation to self-reflexivity and ethics.

5.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis as Theory

Within CDA, the term 'discourse' is used to refer to "semiotic elements of social practice" (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 2005: p. 38). This can for example be language, non-verbal expressions and visual images. According to linguists Norman Fairclough and Lilie Chouliaraki, discourse is to be understood as "one element of social practices, which constitutes other elements as well as being shaped by them." (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999: p. vii).

A founding premise of CDA is, thus, a view of the social as consisting of various social practices of which discourse is but one. The relationship between the discursive and other social spheres, such as the economic sphere and social institutions, is conceptualised as dialectical. Put differently, interplay is believed to take place between language, social structures and institutions. They mutually constitute each other but can not be reduced to one another.

Within CDA, discourse is thought to have more or less ideological effects. Briefly, this means that discursive practices are believed to contribute to constructions of meaning that produce, reproduce or transform relations of domination and power, for example between social groups such as social classes (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: pp. 63). Critical discourse analysts adhere to understandings of power inspired by philosopher Antonio Gramsci as well as philosopher Michel Foucault. In that sense, the tradition of CDA can be said to balance between a Foucauldian view of power as a productive force creating subjects and objects rather than as a property possessed by individuals and a Gramscian conceptualisation of power as hegemony. Fairclough, for example, understands hegemony both as domination and as a process of negotiation from which emerges consensus over meaning, and in which lies opportunities for change and resistance (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: p. 76).

Last, it should be underlined that CDA is openly critical research. Through critiquing and encouraging critique of discursive practices and reflecting upon their role in the production of the social world the analyst provides 'explanatory critique' and raises 'critical language awareness' which can be used in a project of emancipation and transformation of unequal power relations. Consequently, analysts within CDA do not strive for political neutrality or 'objectivity' in a traditional sense. Rather, they openly take the side of oppressed social groups and declare a commitment to social change (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: pp. 63-64, Walsh 2001: p. 29).

Language scholar Clare Walsh (2001) directs criticism against earlier versions of CDA, among them Norman Fairclough, for prioritising class as category of analysis. Consequently, she argues that a feminist version of CDA needs to be especially sensitive to questions of gender (Walsh 2001: p. 27-28). Similarly, feminist critical discourse analyst Lazar (2005) claims that a feminist analysis of the discursive constitution of the social should focus on "how gender ideology and gendered relations of power are (re)produced, negotiated and contested in representations of social practices, in social relationships between people, and in people's social and personal identities in text and talk." (Lazar 2005: p. 11). I fully agree with Walsh and Lazar that it is problematic if the importance of gender is down-played and gender-sensitive analyses are subordinated to analyses of discursive and social practices related to other axes of power. However, I am uncertain whether an exchange of the primary category of analysis, from for example class to gender is the most constructive way forward. Feminist discourse analysts may then risk repeating the mistake of earlier CDA, which is narrowing the analysis by focusing on certain prioritised axes of power. There is then a risk that other important factors of the social structure which are 'intra-acting' with gender are overlooked. From an intersectional feminist perspective I would instead suggest a larger openness and context-sensitive choice of focus, which would leave room for a more adapted choice of categories in relation to the problem or area under study.

5.2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis as Method

CDA can be seen as a large toolbox for analysis of discourse and approaches vary between its users. When outlining a method for my own empirical analysis I have departed from Norman Fairclough's 'three-dimensional framework' which, broadly speaking, focuses text, discourse practice and social practice (Fairclough 1995: p. 3).

The textual dimension refers to analysis on a linguistic level, which can be more or less detailed (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: p. 68). More specifically I have chosen to examine the use of vocabulary and metaphors in the Sweden Democrats' discourse. Here my intention is to reach the various meanings of words and concepts being used as well as discuss the consequences of its usage.

Discourse practice includes both the production and consumption of texts. The production of texts refers to how authors apply and combine available discourses and genres to create a text. This can be put in relation to the concept of intertextuality which according to Fairclough is that "texts are constituted from other already produced texts and from potentially diverse text types (genres, discourse)". (Fairclough 1995: p. 2) The term discourse has been defined in the previous section. A genre, however, is a particular usage of language which participates in and constitutes a particular social practice, for instance a news genre (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: p. 68).

In this thesis the consumption of texts will not be analysed for two reasons. First, my aim is to analyse the official discourse of the Sweden Democrats and

reactions to and interpretations of the party's messages may be outside this aim. Second, within public debate, a large number of different reactions to the discourse of the Sweden Democrats exist and the selection of relevant material is, because of its complexity and time-limitations, beyond my capability.

As explained earlier, there is a belief in a strong interplay between the linguistic-discursive sphere and the social sphere within the tradition of critical discourse analysis. The primary aim of CDA is consequently to explore the links between language use and social practices. In order to capture the relationship between text and social processes and structures a combination of textual and social analysis is believed to be necessary to deploy. Consequently, it is stressed that the analyst needs to draw upon a selection of social theory relevant for the area under research (Jørgensen and Phillips 2008: pp. 65-70). Therefore, following the principles of CDA, I have chosen to use social theory from the field of feminist theory.

In sum, my empirical analysis will take into account words and metaphors. The production of texts will, whenever possible, be analysed through guidance of the concept of intertextuality and reflections on how authors draw upon already existing discourses and genres to create a text. In order to enhance the understanding for the social issues actualised in the material as well as explore the interplay between language use and social practice intersectional feminist theory will be drawn upon.

5.3 Ontology, Epistemology and Ethics: Reflections

Ontology and epistemology can be understood as assumptions about reality (for instance social life) and how we come to know about it, respectively. Ontological and epistemological discussions are large fields in themselves and the scope of positions and insights within feminist debate prevents me from treating these dimensions in a comprehensive way. Instead, this sub-section will centre on a selection of points which I find relevant in relation to CDA and/or this particular thesis more generally. The chosen points are; CDA's division of social life into the discursive and the social, the role of the analyst within CDA, situated knowledges and self-reflexivity. Last, some remarks regarding ethics will also be included.

As explained above, the relationship between the social and the discursive sphere is conceptualised as dialectical within CDA. Although a high degree of interplay is recognised, the social and the discursive are still described and treated as two distinct spheres. However, this understanding can be criticised or conceptualised differently. By departing from a feminist poststructuralist position linguist Judith Baxter criticises the dialectical model brought forward by theorists of CDA. While refuting an extreme postmodernist position where discourses are seen as all-pervasive constructers of the material she argues that experiences of social and material realities are always discursively produced. As such, they are constantly redefined and reconstructed through discourse. Consequently, both the

social and the material cannot exist outside of the discursive realm (Baxter 2007: pp. 9-10).

CDA's conceptualisation of reality can also be critically mirrored in a feminist postconstructionist approach. Barad suggests a conceptualisation of reality as consisting of material-discursive practices (Barad 2003: pp. 815-816). This conceptualisation is best understood in relation to Barad's theory of agential realism. Agential realism refers to Barad's argument that there exists intra-action between human and non-human agents which are understood as phenomena with only temporary boundaries against each other that work actively and mutually transforming upon each other (Barad 2003, Lykke 2009: pp. 100-101).

In sum, both Baxter's and Barad's arguments suggest a much higher degree of inseparability between different dimensions of reality, although in very distinct ways and with separate foci, than the tradition of CDA. By introducing their positions I wish to provide the reader with some tools to critically reflect upon one of the central grounds of CDA. I also wish to reserve myself against a very distinct separation of the social and the discursive and declare a belief in the possibility that there exists a much higher degree of intra-relation than generally put forward within CDA. The potential for greater intra-connectedness does not necessarily disrupt the methodological implications CDA analysts deduct from their ontological assumptions, which is the necessity of complementing discourse theory with social theory. Rather, I would argue, it enforces it since a more complex conceptualisation of reality could be said to require a more all-including combination of methodology and theory in order to approach it.

My second point of critical reflection concerns CDA's description of the role of the analyst as a provider of 'explanatory critique'. It could be discussed whether the role assigned alludes to an idea that the analyst can be able to 'step outside' discourse, social structures and the context under study and, thus, provide a more 'true' or accurate depiction of reality than others. Feminist philosopher Donna Haraway argues, through her concept of situated knowledges that researchers can never step outside the reality they explore or the research methodologies and technologies deployed. Instead she claims that researchers can, through a conscious reflection concerning research approach methods as well as her/his own situated position, reach a partial insight. This partial insight can be understood as an insight into a cut of reality which s/he can access through her/his material-discursive localisation in time, space, body and relations of power (Haraway 1988, Lykke 2009: pp. 148-150).

Inspired by Haraway's thoughts, Barad (2003) suggests that ontology and epistemology is a problematic distinction. Barad understands the world in terms of phenomena that are both constructed and objectively existing reality. A phenomenon is constructed since we can never reach objective knowledge about the world without setting up a research apparatus which through its design give rise to a certain result or outcome. However, within the chosen and designed framework an objective result can be achieved, in the sense that other researchers can replicate it and reach a similar result. As in Haraway, Barad refers to a partial and localised objectivity valid within the framework of the research design but not outside of it. Further, Barad describes a localised subject-position consisting of

both research subject and apparatus/research technology/language which is inseparable and part of the world that is researched. Because of this inseparability Barad suggests a reformulation of epistemology and ontology to onto-epistemology (Barad 2003, Lykke 2009: pp. 151-153). Following both Haraway and Barad, I question my ability to provide 'explanatory critique' in the sense of providing a true depiction of reality through my research endeavour. However, this does not imply a relativist position or a devaluation of the importance of critical exploration. Rather, my work can be understood as a small-scale contribution to a societal discussion, which because it is based on scientific principles may accomplish a degree of credibility making it worth considering. It is critical in the sense that it may be used to question other depictions of reality and hopefully readers may come to reflect upon my version in relation to the world-view conveyed by the Sweden Democrats. Seeing the world as processes rather than a fixed entity, my belief is that the agency of researchers partly lies in the potential of their research to influence these processes.

My 'research apparatus' has been described above and can be said to consist of my theoretical perspectives and methodological choices. However, in line with the feminist tradition of self-reflexivity I wish to make myself as a research subject more present to the reader. Self-reflexivity refers to attempts on the part of the researcher to be mindful of her/his own positionality and how it affects the research (Hesse-Biber 2007: p. 117). Because of the influence of the researcher upon the research, an awareness of the positionality of the researcher also facilitates readers' evaluation of the research's foundations and outcome.

Accounting for your positionality may appear contradictory in a text where critique of essentialized and fixed identities is one of the founding premises. In order to make you and your position intelligible to the reader you may limit your space for change, contradiction and fluidity. Using a simple word such as 'woman' to describe yourself may appear as a natural choice that does not require much thought. However, the very word woman invokes an apparatus of cultural and biological presuppositions about the traits and body of a person which labels and assigns her certain features, possibilities and limitations. Thus, since I experience some uneasiness in writing this section I wish to remind the reader of the difficulty of describing without fixing identities and positions as well as the insufficiency of language when it comes to capture the complexity of our realities and selves.

At the same time I am acutely aware of that my situation as an educated 'ethnic Swede', enjoying the benefits of a Swedish citizenship, places me in a highly privileged position within the power structures of society both locally and internationally. Privilege often makes you blind to structures and hierarchies that are beneficial for you, especially when they work in subtler ways. Thus, it is highly likely that I will overlook certain expressions of power due to this very position of privilege. Nevertheless, as a feminist and a woman I believe that I, also on a personal level, have acquired some sensitivity vis-à-vis societal norms, boundaries and power structures. My position in relation to 'Swedishness' may also entail some benefits in my analytic work. Having grown up in the Swedish society I have acquired a certain linguistic knowledge as a native speaker and a

familiarity with references to cultural, social and historical contexts, which may help me in my interpretation of the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. In sum, reading through a critical lens and reminding me of my limitations has hopefully helped me to use my personal starting points and abilities fruitfully but not generalise or exalt them.

Last, I wish to make some reflections in relation to ethics. According to Lykke, research produces realities and, for good or bad, it always has consequences. Therefore the researcher cannot withdraw from a moral co-responsibility for these consequences (Lykke 2009: p. 159). My main moral dilemma in writing this thesis relates to the risk of participating in legitimising the views of the Sweden Democrats on the societal scene. By writing this text I am, in some sense, taking the party seriously as a political actor since I am devoting energy and intellectual effort to the exploration of its messages. Also, although within a critical frame, the views of the party will be conveyed in this text, which unintentionally could make my text an arena of reproduction of and increased attention for the Sweden Democrat's political discourse. However, I also see a moral dilemma and political risk in choosing not to face the party since it, apparently, is becoming ever more present on the Swedish political scene. Naturally, it is imperative that it is done in a highly critical fashion so that its messages are not allowed to be diffused in an unproblematic way and stand unchallenged. Further my hope is that potential readers read the descriptions of and quotations from the Sweden Democrat's discourse through a critical lens.

5.4 Material

Before writing the analysis I have revised the following empirical material; political documents published by the Sweden Democrats, texts and images published by SD-women (a network focused on women's issues), blogs by four central members of the party, selected issues of the party newspaper SD-kuriren and campaign flyers and posters. All documents were downloaded the 4th of April 2010 from the Sweden Democrats' official homepage or interlinking pages. In addition, I have read the jubilee book *20 röster om 20 år*[3] (2008). The book was published by the Sweden Democrats' own publishing firm for the twenty-year anniversary of the party and contains an overview of the party's history as well as texts by leading party members.

Reading and going through this rather vast selection of materials in its entirety have helped me form a general understanding of the discourse of the party and given me ideas for analytical focus-points and themes. However, not all of this material is explicitly used or referred to in my analysis. Because of my specific analytical and theoretical interests certain texts have proven more useful to comments upon and analyse in-depth than others. For example, I have looked more closely at as well as referred to the Principle Programme (*Principprogram*)

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[3] *20 Voices about 20 Years*

(SD 2005d) but I have not included texts from the document Energy Politics (*Energipolitik*) (SD 2006) in the actual analysis. References are only included to empirical material that has been specifically used in the analysis or elsewhere in the thesis.

When selecting the empirical material two main aspects have been taken into account. The first is a wish to capture the official discourse of the party. The second is the need for limitations. Therefore, political documents were an obvious choice while inter-acting forums such as Facebook were omitted. Several of the political documents as well as the campaign material were issued by the Sweden Democrats some time back. Nevertheless, since they were listed on the Sweden Democrats' homepage at the time of my collection of material I understand them as equally valid representations of the party's opinion as more recently published material. In relation to the blogs and the issues from SD-kuriren a time-related limitation has been made. I have chosen to gather this material within the time-frame of the Sweden Democrats' introductory meeting, held the 2nd of May 2009, before the elections to the European Parliament 2009 and the party's election conference, held the 27th of March 2010, before the elections to the Swedish parliament in the autumn of 2010.

SD-kuriren is the Sweden Democrats' official party organ. Responsible for the publication of the paper under the press law is Richard Jomshof. SD-kuriren exists both as an internet-based paper as well as a regular paper. However, due to the need of limiting the material I have selected the issues in tabloid-format (which are available for down-load in pdf-format on the homepage of SD-kuriren). All in all, six numbers were available during my chosen time-frame.

Concerning the blogs, I have looked at four blogs which, at the time of material collection, were linked to from the official home home-page of the Sweden Democrats. Authors of the blogs are Jimmie Åkesson, party leader; Björn Söder, party secretary; Mattias Karlsson, public relations officer; and Richard Jomshof, responsible for the publication of SD-kuriren. I have chosen not to make these persons anonymous. Consequently, references will be made to the individual author in my analysis. The reason is that these persons are official representatives of the party and not private persons. Especially for the sake of accountability, I find it important that central party representatives' use of discourse is made visible.

I also wish to make a few comments in relation to SD-women, one of the pages which are linked to from the official home-page of the Sweden Democrats (others are for instance SD-motoring and SD-Prevention of cruelty to animals). It is difficult to estimate the size or influence of the network from the information available. However, because of the focus on women's issues the contents and themes put forward in the articles of the network are relevant within the framework of this thesis. Therefore, I have made the choice to also include SD-women within my empirical material.

Last, I use empirical material in Swedish, my first language, but I present my research in English, my second language. As pointed out in González y González and Lincoln (2006), the meaning of words and concepts tend to vary, to a lesser or greater degree, between languages. Therefore, it is difficult to reach an exact

translation when transferring the meaning of data in one language into another. In Swedish, being my first language, I am often familiar with connotations and contexts of words used in the empirical material. However, readers should be aware that some meanings can have been lost or slightly changed in the process of translating them into English. In a few instances where the translation has proved especially difficult I have provided the original Swedish word or short excerpt of text in the form of a footnote.

6 Analysis

The analysis is organised thematically, focusing on 'entities', time and space, 'Swedes' and 'others', reproduction and, ultimately, family, gender and sexuality. When reading through the empirical material I have been looking for what I, metaphorically speaking, conceptualise as 'junctions' or 'crossroads'. To me the themes accounted for above are such 'junctions', i.e. themes that include several layers of meaning and of which an exploration can answer one or several of my research questions. Selections of representative illustrations have been made in relation to all themes. In the vast majority of cases, a similar discourse can be found in other parts of the material.

6.1 Fixed yet Fragile 'Entities'

The first section of my empirical analysis is centred on the construction of the 'entities' nation and culture within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. My intention is to describe these 'entities' as well as reflect upon the process of their construction. I have chosen to use the noun 'entity' because it captures the Sweden Democrats conceptualisation of certain phenomena as real and distinct things. However, the word is put in single quotation marks in order to convey my own hesitancy to accept them as such. At the same time as certain 'entities', such as nation, come across in the discourse as 'fixed', their inherent fragility is evident from the actions portrayed as necessary for their preservation. I begin by quoting from the Sweden Democrats' Principle Programme:

> Every society should be built upon a common value-system, the lowest common denominator in the form of fundamental norms and values. In order for every person to feel secure in his or her identity this uniting factor is important. Of course, every person is unique but we are also more or less similar to one another. We all depend on communities; people who in various ways are similar to ourselves and that we can identify with. The Sweden Democrats think that, above all, the family and the nation provide the prerequisites to achieve this. No constructed collectivities can fully replace these deeply rooted, primordial collectivities. […]
>
> The most important factor in a safe, harmonious and loyal society is the common identity, which in turn presupposes a high degree of ethnic and cultural similarity among the population. Consequently, the nationalist principle – the principle of one state, one nation – is fundamental for the politics of the Sweden Democrats. The nationalist principle is based on the idea of the nation-state, that is to say that the territorial boundaries of the

state should correspond with the boundaries of the population. Hence, in its ideal form such a society has a homogeneous population. [...]

The nation can be defined in terms of a common culture. Two people belong to the same nation if they share the same culture, to put it simply. At the same time, the relationship is more complex, depending on how the concept of culture is interpreted. Above, culture has been defined as 'the surroundings of matters of course, memories and conceptions which we live in and which we take part in forming'. In order to reach a more complete definition of the nation, things like language, religion, loyalty and origin must be added. Accordingly, you should be able to recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. The nation consists of the people and its distinctive character. (SD 2005d)

A common identity is here upheld by the Sweden Democrats as the most important factor in society. In order for people to achieve a secure identity the party argues for uniting factors: 'a lowest common denominator in the form of fundamentals norms and values'. The creation and reproduction of these fundamental norms and values are, however, dependent on the existence of communities, such as the nation and the family, as well as ethnic and cultural similarity among the population. Central communities, according to the Sweden Democrats, are the family and the nation which are conceptualised through formulations such as 'deeply rooted' and 'primordial'. The definition of culture is somewhat contradictory. On the one hand the Sweden Democrats use an expression such as 'matters of course' which gives the notion of culture an air of something obvious or something that is taken for granted. On the other hand they claim that culture is something which people take part in forming.

The understandings of identity, community and culture accounted for above form the basis for the Sweden Democrats' conceptualization of the nation which is defined both as a 'common culture' but also as 'the people and their distinct character'. According to the Sweden Democrats, you 'belong' to the same nation if you 'belong' to the same culture. Here, notions of mutual recognition play a vital part. Recognition of national and cultural kinship is, namely, possible through language, religion, loyalty and origin. Ethnic and cultural similarity, fundamental for upholding the nation, can be achieved through practice of the nationalist principle. The nationalist principle is, as stated in the quotation above, built on the idea of the nation-state. The nation-state, further, is tied to notions of boundaries and homogeneity with regards to the population. The territorial boundaries should 'correspond' with the boundaries of the population and, ideally, population within the nation-state should be 'homogeneous'.

As pointed out by Anthias and Yuval-Davis, ethnicity refers to cultural identity, belonging and traits. The construction of ethnic groups is drawn upon in nationalist projects to legitimise demands of one group vis-à-vis others and claims for separate political representation, often in the form of a nation-state (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 25). In the discourse of the Sweden Democrats notions of identity, ethnicity, culture and population are intertwined. Further, they are mobilised for the construction of the nation and the justification of the practice of the nationalist principle. The goal of the practice of the nationalist principle as a political project is an ethnically and culturally demarcated population within the

borders of a nation-state. Further, when closely reading the discourse, a group of interrelated notions and characteristics stand out. These are notions such as recognition, commonality, homogeneity and characteristics such as fundamental, natural and primordial, where the latter describes the focused 'entities' and the former describes the prerequisites or building-stones of the same. When comparing these notions and characteristics a contradiction visualizes. On the one hand 'entities' such as nation and cultural are essentialized. On the other hand their existence is dependant on the presence of a homogeneous population with a shared identity, recognized as such within the collectivity. Thus, the discourse convey an understanding of culture and nation as both primordial and in need of reproduction by individuals and groups who reinforce both the identity of one another as well as the characteristics of the nation and culture.

In the illustrations above, identity, culture and nation form a trinity where the characteristics of one of them conditions the characteristics of the others and vice verse, making their existence mutually dependent on each other. It appears as if the 'entities' are defined in relation to each other through a form of circular argument. The nation is defined in terms of a common culture which is based on a common identity. However, the creation of this common identity is dependent on the existence of a common culture which is upheld by the existence of the national collectivity. The logic of the circular argument makes me conceptualise the 'entities' culture and nation as fragile, or even as fantastic. The portrayal of them as natural and fundamental comes across rather as a form of mantra than a fact. The repetition of the message of naturalness appears as a necessary act for retaining the image of solidity and permanency in relation to these 'entities' as well as a 'shadow curtain' concealing the energy and activity invested in upholding the construction of these 'entities'.

The boundary-making necessary in order to uphold the construction of the 'entities' should also be observed. In line with Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1996) the positing of social boundaries can be understood as processes of inclusion and exclusion which creates conditions for belonging and not belonging. The discourse of the Sweden Democrats is dependent on a fantasy of distinguishable and 'real' boundaries demarcating parts of social life from one another in order for their conceptualisation of reality as consisting of separate units not to crumble away. However, while they insist on the separateness between nations and cultures they employ a sort of cultural 'greyscale' to motivate more permeable and softer boundaries between some groups and cultures and stricter boundaries between others. The party writes:

> Assuredly, the cultural boundaries can sometimes be distinct and sometimes indistinct, but here the same principle as for man applies: we are more or less similar. Certainly there are cultural differences between Swedes and our Nordic neighbours even if they are less than the differences between Swedes and people from culturally distant parts of the world. Therefore it can be more or less difficult to unite different cultures with each other. Sometimes this can be especially difficult, since the two cultures' fundamental systems of values clash. (SD 2005d)

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The image given above can be conceptualised as an image of cultural continuum. Some countries are depicted as culturally 'close' while others are culturally 'distant'. Examples given of cultures close to the Swedish culture are other Nordic countries while culturally distant cultures are conceptualised as the culture of people from distant parts of the world (SD 2005b). In sum, within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats boundaries can be both distinct and exclusive, towards some cultures and nations, and indistinct and inclusive towards others. In this specific illustration geographical positioning matters, considering the example of Nordic countries as culturally close and remote countries as culturally distant.

What are the consequences of transgressing distinct boundaries according to the Sweden Democrats? In the excerpt of text below the party describes some outcomes of insufficient adherence to the nationalist principle.

> [V]iolations of the nationalist principle give rise to instability and conflicts. Border-disputes and disputes over separate rights for different groups have through the centuries had fatal consequences. For this reason the nationalist principle is central and should be aimed at to the highest extent possible. […] States, which in themselves contain cultural plurality, have always tended to strengthen the strongest culture and weaken other cultures and many cultures throughout history have perished as a consequence of such societal conditions. […] States with several relatively strong cultures within them have further tended to develop in such a way that the cultures become mixed, and the original cultures' own identities have thus been extinguished. (SD 2005d)

A similar message is found in the following quotation. However, here the level of immigration is explicitly targeted. High levels of immigration pose a threat to the nationalist principle since it may result in ethnic enclaves, argues the Sweden Democrats:

> The consequence of a declared goal to create a pluralist society is a serious threat against the Swedish nation and its homogeneous composition. Without a doubt such politics is a grave violation of the nationalist principle. The principle does not preclude immigration. However, the level of immigration must be kept on a level so that it does not result in ethnic enclaves. (SD 2005d)

Several wordings in the quotation above are very strong. The party uses expressions such as violations, fatal consequences, perished and extinguished. These wordings are used to describe scenarios where cultures meet and/or are mixed or of cultural plurality. The impression conveyed is of a looming great threat to national and cultural identity if the nationalist principle is not followed.

Parallels can be drawn between this discourse and Ahmed's (2004) theorising of fear. Through the production of crisis an object of love is distinguished and constructed as 'insecure', according to Ahmed. These 'politics of fear' justify actions to defend the loved object. The process includes the embracement of certain values, norms and institutions as well as the depiction of certain forms and/or bodies as fearsome and objects of fear (Ahmed 2004: pp. 67-79). I would argue that an emotional sub-text of the Sweden Democrats is a narrative where the

Swedish nation, culture and nation are constructed as loved objects. Further, their continuous survival is linked to values such as homogeneity and cultural monism and the institution of the nation-state. Conversely, plurality, the blurring of cultural values and heterogeneity come to represent degeneration and destabilisation, thus threats to the loved objects in the discourse of the party. In this story the figure of the immigrant and, but to lesser extent, supporters of immigration and cultural plurality represents objects of fear. In order to fight the feared destabilising processes, energy is concentrated on fighting these figures. Ironically, however, the language of threats and defence make the contradictory characteristics of 'entities' such as nation and culture within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats reappear: the Swedish nation and culture are essential and static yet insecure, vulnerable to threats and in need of defence.

Below the analysis of the Sweden Democrats nationalist politics will be further developed through a focus on themes of time and space.

6.2 Time and Space

This section is inspired by de los Reyes and Mulinari's (2005) thoughts regarding the intersections of time and space. As mentioned earlier, they argue that axes of power in a specific setting cannot be analysed in isolation from other spaces and periods of time (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005: pp. 18-26).The first sub-section focuses on the theme of time through a discussion of the Sweden Democrat's association with the concept and era of *folkhemmet* (the people's home).[4] The second sub-section is centred on the theme of space. It examines the Sweden Democrat's delimitation of national space as well as their construction of certain spaces within Sweden as examples of 'multicultural society'.

6.2.1 The Past is the Future

The Sweden Democrats frequently refer to earlier periods of Swedish history in order to outline, as well as legitimise, their conceptualisations of nations and culture. In this sub-section, I will discuss the party's discourse concerning folkhemmet.[5] I begin by providing a shorter presentation and contextualisation of the concept.

Economic historian Jenny Andersson characterises folkhemmet as "a symbol for a particularly Swedish idea about welfare and for specifically Swedish values concerning solidarity, equality, and security." (Andersson 2007: p. 29). The idea

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[4] Another time-related theme is the Sweden Democrats' Nazi heritage. However, from considerations of space I have chosen not to discuss the association with (Neo) Nazism specifically. For an exposition of this subject see Larsson and Ekman (2001).

[5] I have chosen to retain the Swedish word folkhemmet because I regard it as a specific concept and as such difficult to translate.

of folkhemmet as a vision of society took shape in Sweden during the 1930's. At that time Social Democracy had achieved a dominating position in society and needed to formulate a new and independent ideology. A central contributor to the development of the concept of folkhemmet was Per Albin Hansson, prime minister of Sweden 1932-1946. Hansson drew upon the concept of home when he formulated the vision of society. In other words, the smaller community and the fellowship between small groups of people, served as a model for the greater society (Qvarnsell 1986: pp. 15-16). The use of the metaphor of the home is apparent in the following excerpt from one of Hansson's most famous speeches – the speech on folkhemmet:

> The foundation of the home is the spirit of community and the feeling of togetherness. The good home does not know of any privileged or neglected members and any pets or stepchildren. There, nobody looks down upon the other and there no one tries to get advantages at the expense of others, and the strong does not oppress or plunder the weak. In the good home there is equality, care, cooperation and helpfulness. Applied on the great home of the people and the citizens, it would mean the dissolution of all social and economic barriers which presently separates the citizens into privileged and neglected, rulers and dependents, rich and poor, propertied and destitute, plunderers and plundered. The Swedish society is not yet the good home of the citizens. Certainly, there is formal equality, equality in terms of political rights, but socially speaking class society and the dictatorship of the few prevail. (Hansson 1948a: p. 152)

Here, Hansson puts emphasis on community and cooperation but only on the premises of the realization of radical social change – the dissolution of all social and economic barriers. Thus, the metaphor of home interplays with a vision of far-reaching reforms for equality resulting in the levelling out of social differences and imbalanced power-relations.

However, according to Andersson, there were (and are) different sides to folkhemmet as an ideological concept. On the one hand, folkhemmet is related to ideas of universal rights, that everyone in society has the right to participate and take part of its good, which have functioned as important foundations in the construction of the Swedish welfare-system. On the other hand, folkhemmet is also related to policies of correction, expulsion, and disciplining. Andersson sees a clear continuum between the idea of folkhemmet and practices such as forced sterilizations and detention of society's deviants, for instance mentally ill. The difficulty to acknowledge and incorporate difference within folkhemmet can further be linked to perceptions of immigration as a threat to the imagined national community. Further, folkhemmet is interrelated with ideas of a normative 'Swedishness', whose defining features – solidarity, equality, welfare, community - are perceived as paramount building-stones for the successful construction of folkhemmet (Andersson 2007: pp. 31-48). According to Andersson, as folkhemmet is conceptualised today it can be understood as a metaphor for a bygone period and nostalgia for the earlier heydays of the Swedish welfare-state. As such, "it is a peculiarly nostalgic vision of the future built on historical experiences which are made into foundations for future society […] a construction

of the past, as well as of the future." (Andersson 2007: p. 30). The emotion of nostalgia can be defined as a "sentimental yearning for a period of the past; regretful or wistful memory of an earlier time." (Pearsall and Trumble 1996: p. 993). A nostalgic, as well as selective construction, of the past through the concept of folkhemmet, is a fundamental part of the politics of the Sweden Democrats. The party writes:

> An important goal for the Sweden Democrats is the recreation of folkhemmet; the free, open and democratic society, where all citizens are equal before the law and have the possibility to exert influence and feel secure, physically as well as socially. (SD 2005d)

Here, the notions of freedom, openness, and democracy are referred to but also the workings of the legal system and physical and social security. In addition, it is stated that folkhemmet needs to be recreated. In other words, it is suggested that folkhemmet, as characterised by the party, is something the citizens of Sweden once enjoyed but now has been lost. Party member Håkan Skalin advocates a similar line of thought in the Sweden Democrat's jubilee book *20 röster om 20 år* (2008): "The Social Democratic Party that once built folkhemmet is […] history, and today it's only us Sweden Democrats who are the power that both can, will, and have as a goal to rebuild it again." (Skalin 2008: p. 131). In other words, Skalin claims that the Social Democrats' commitment to the vision and project of folkhemmet is a thing of the past. In contrast to the Social Democrats, the Sweden Democrats are both willing to, and capable of administering its ideological heritage and execute its inherent intentions.

Party secretary Björn Söder readily refers to rhetoric connected with the construction of folkhemmet in his political speeches and statements. In a speech held the 17th of October 2009 and published in his blog Söder proclaims:

> We have a country where our Swedish values and our fine culture have its place. We have a country where also people with roots in other countries, who are willing to work, do their share, take in our culture and our values are welcome and those who are not willing go back home again. If it is not doable it is only to go back home. Our hospitality is great for those who want to be welcomed and become part of the Swedish [culture. Author's comment], but there is a clear signal for those who do not want to do this: Go back home and do not come back again! It is as simple as that! […] As usual I wish to conclude with the words that were the motto of our father of the people Per Albin Hansson: Sweden for the Swedes, and the Swedes for Sweden! (Söder 2009a).

The sentence that Söder borrows from Hansson is very short and can be interpreted in several different ways. At first sight, Hansson's words appear as a slogan which strongly affirms the nationalist project of the Sweden Democrats: the intertextual reference seems to be the forwarding of an ethnically homogeneous Swedish population's supreme right to the country of Sweden. Thus, Hansson's words seem to reassure Söder's message of immigrants' choice between either assimilation or a return to their 'home-countries'.

Interpreted in this manner, Hansson's words would also give the party a certain form of legitimacy on a general level. It suggests that the politics of the Sweden Democrats is in line with the thoughts of Hansson, a prominent figure within the Swedish working-class movement and a respected politician in the history of Swedish politics. However, a longer quotation from Hansson's speech from 1926 reveals a different message:

> One wants to reserve the governing for "the bourgeoisie", those propertied and wealthy regard the native country as their own. There *they* want to be at the head of affairs. Therefore they are happy when the workers cheer the native country. Those cheers sound to them as battle-calls. In that respect, they are not completely wrong. "If they have robbed us of our country, we will reconquer it", sings the working-class youth. Political democracy has not yet had its social equivalence. Sweden is still a class society where the great masses live in distress and precariousness. Sweden is not yet the good home for *all* Swedes. In order for it to be so, it must be completely won by the great masses of the people. Ahead on this path to conquer it is the Swedish Social Democracy and its watchword is: Sweden for the Swedes – the Swedes for Sweden! (Hansson 1948b: pp. 143-144).

When put into context it is apparent that the phrase from Hansson quoted by Söder is not a battle-call for the prerogatives of ethnic 'Swedes'. Rather, it is a contribution to the struggle against the privileges of the wealthier classes at the expense of the workers in Sweden at the time. It is also an argument in favour of an enhanced democracy in the country through ensuring the partaking of the working-class in both the decisions concerning the country and its prosperity.

A comparison between the Sweden Democrat's texts and Hansson's speeches reveal crucial differences between the two political projects. Fundamentally speaking, the class-oriented goals of Hansson's project are an increased inclusion and re-organisation of society towards equality. The project of the Sweden Democrats is more ambiguous. On the one hand, the association with earlier Social Democracy may be an attempt to capitalize on feelings of disappointment among the traditional Social Democrat electorate. The nostalgic features of the Sweden Democrats' discourse – surfacing in their discourse of *recreation* of folkhemmet – effectively support this message. Nostalgia is 'stuck' to folkhemmet surrounding the concept with feelings of both great loss and desirability. It paints the picture of the previous existence of a better society for the inhabitants of Sweden which, sadly, now has been lost. One of the reasons for this loss is the actions of the original creators of this society – the Social Democrats – who has let down the people of Sweden and their voters. Consequently, a new administrator or a 'true' heir to the vision of folkhemmet is needed which, according to the discourse of the Sweden Democrats, is found in their own party.

Hansson's primary hinder or centre for resistance against the fulfilment of his political goal is located in the bourgeoisie and its privileges. Despite the Sweden Democrats' attempted association with the workers' movement their politics do not target the wealthier classes primarily. Rather, the obstacle to the realization of

the vision of folkhemmet is associated with the lack of common identity, security and, as in Söder's speech, with immigrants and their alleged unwillingness to adapt to Swedish society and culture. These central aspects of the Sweden Democrats' discourse, rather than positioning them as political heirs to the emancipatory aspects of folkhemmet, connects them to its shadier sides. As Andersson points out, some of the traits of the ideology of folkhemmet were policies of correction, expulsion and disciplining as well as a notion of normative Swedishness (Andersson 2007: pp. 31-48). Indeed, a fundamental premise of the Sweden Democrats discourse on folkhemmet is that the alluring 'paradise lost' can only be regained within the safe boundaries of a stipulated 'Swedishness'. Consequently, the expulsion of elements of difference, i.e. immigrants and immigrant culture, becomes defendable since they are positioned as threats against the needed stability for the realisation of folkhemmet.

To go back to the theme of time, I would argue that a focus on folkhemmet displays historical linkages in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. The party's messages on the matter rely on visions of earlier periods in Swedish history. This makes them highly context-bound as well as provides an explanation to their appeal – the power of nostalgic memory. At the same time the party's rhetoric of folkhemmet reveals the selectiveness of the use of history as a resource for political projects. Some aspects of history are highlighted while others are disavowed for the sake of political argument and justification.

6.2.2 Swedish Space, Foreign Space

According to de los Reyes and Mulinari, an example of a spatial intersection is the interplay between the division of the world into different regions and ideas of people's inherent biological and/or cultural differences (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005: pp. 18-26). The Sweden Democrats convey a close to organic relationship between the country Sweden and the population of Swedes. Country and people are intimately connected argues the party, as in the following excerpt:

> People and country[6] belong closely together. A country would not be what it is without its people, and a people would not be what it is without its country. Fundamental for the nationalist principle is that no people have the right to infringe upon another people, neither culturally nor territorially. Every people has the right to freedom and self-determination, to its identity and to its country. By this the Sweden Democrats do not mean that we Swedes are better than others but that Sweden is the only place on earth where we have an absolute right to act and can develop our distinctive character and identity. Sweden is the country of the Swedes. (SD 2005d)

The territory of Sweden belongs to the Swedes and country and population mutually define each other, according to the text above. This particular place is both intended for and necessary for the development of 'Swedishness'. In other

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[6] Land

words, Swedish identity, culture and character are tied to a certain geographical space, defined by national boundaries. Conversely, other populations are tied to other geographical areas and should, according to the Sweden Democrats, preferably remain there. In the quotation below the reception of refugees is depicted as a problem for Western countries. The party finds the solution to the refugee-problem in locally given help instead of international migration:

> The problems of global refugees cannot be solved through continuous, enormously expensive and destructive mass-immigration to Sweden and other Western countries. [...] A considerably more efficient and fair way to help people in distress is to concentrate the help to the immediate surroundings of the distressed areas. In that way problems are avoided in the receiving countries while, at the same time, considerably more people can be helped for a certain amount of resources and the process of reconstruction will be faster once the crisis is over. (SD 2007)

Similarly, party leader Jimmie Åkesson forwards locally given aid above generous asylum politics:

> We believe that we can have a relatively generous system of aid, even more generous than today, if it is increased concurrently with a decrease of the costs for mass-immigration. Further, we believe that the asylum politics should be clearly directed at aid, that people who are given temporary protection in Sweden can and should be engaged in various aid-projects that can be of use when the refugees return. We argue that Swedish asylum politics of today is inhumane and inefficient and that significantly more people can be helped if the asylum politics is changed and directed towards help to self-help locally in the immediate surroundings. (Åkesson 2010b)

At first, the intentions behind the party's and Åkesson's suggestions regarding international aid may seem benevolent to people experiencing difficulties in their home-countries. Åkesson, for example, describes today's asylum politics as inefficient and inhumane and proposes instead aid to people in their immediate surroundings. At a second glance, however, the suggestion of locally given aid and Åkesson's proposals in the field of international aid reveal themselves to be less concerned with help to people in distress but rather to keep people out of Sweden and other Western countries. In other words they are aimed at safe-guarding the Western and the Swedish geographical territory from the consequences of international migration. Interestingly, the problems that potential refugees experience in their home-countries are described by use of the word crisis. This suggests that difficult situations which make people flee their home-countries are temporary and do not require definite relocation to other places. On a similar topic, Åkesson refers to temporary protection and the return of refugees. These wordings surround the stay of migrants in Sweden with precariousness by suggesting that refugees are visitors within Swedish space rather than new members of the population residing in Sweden.

Within the Sweden Democrats' texts examples are also found of spaces where multicultural society, as the party envisions it, is manifested. Two such spaces are

the cities of Södertälje and Landskrona, respectively. Within these spaces negative developments, such as an increase of criminality, are claimed to take place. This negativity is closely related to immigration. Concerning Landskrona, it is stated in an article in SD-Kuriren:

> The football team BoIS, the island Ven and the Citadel. Of course we have Landskrona in mind, the little town on the west coast of Skåne situated between Malmö and Helsingborg. A city with many beautiful buildings and much history. But unfortunately, this is not the matter of conversation when speaking about Landskrona. Criminality, integration and great social problems are instead the subjects that are now associated with Landskrona. Landskrona is now on top of all the charts. However, we are not talking about the good charts but about the charts concerning most robberies, assault and battery, and burglaries. (Engström 2010, p. 11)

In the quotation above, a chain of association is established between criminality, such as battery, assault and robbery, integration and great social problems. Further, an image is conveyed of a city which has many positive features but now is in a negative process of decline and violence due to these aspects.

In the case of Södertälje, immigration is once again targeted as a reason for the city's deterioration. However, this time immigration is paired with the embracement of gay rights.

> Södertälje has [...] developed towards becoming a miniature-Chicago. That is to say a city where violence and damage have become a "normal" part of everyday life and the inbreeding of municipal politics is a real political problem. Traditionally Södertälje is one of the cities that praise themselves on prosecuting a so called generous refugee politics. But once the refugees are there little is done to make them a part of Swedish society; integration politics works badly or not at all. In addition, the first signs of islamization are visible. Further, it is a fact that the traditional values that once held Swedish society together have now been more or less abolished by those in power, in Södertälje as well as elsewhere. Well-tried norms about family and marriage have now been given in at the advantage of gay-marriage and other types of woolliness. (SD-kuriren 2010, p. 1)

The description of Södertälje as a place of violence and criminality is here associated with immigration, lack of integration, islamization and the dissolution of traditional values in the form of heteronormative family values.

The nation-state as a closed space reserved for a particular population defined by cultural (and/or biological) distinctiveness is a central political goal for the Sweden Democrats. Within their political discourse there are examples of Swedes' propriety vis-à-vis the geographical space of Sweden as well as expressions of preference for 'others' stay in their, by the party, assigned geographical spaces. The spatial divisions of the world – based on the concept of nation-states – help upholding imaginary boundaries between people and collectivities and serve as an argument against international migration. Further, there are constructions of 'foreign' spaces within Sweden, for example Landskrona and Södertälje. The descriptions of the situations in these spaces serve

as warning examples against breakage of the link between geographical space and the belonging of populations. Interestingly, in the case of Södertälje, the signs of deterioration slide from immigration to a change in values concerning family life and sexuality. Hence, the distinctive character of Swedish culture and people whose development is tied to Swedish space, excludes not only 'immigrant culture' but also sexuality beyond heteronormativity.

6.3 'Swedes' and 'Others'

Researchers within the field of critical whiteness studies claim that in order to understand relations of power and dominance it is not only sufficient to analyse the position of subordination and exclusion. It is equally important to consider positions of privilege and the categories of power creating it (Lykke 2009: pp. 112-114). In this section my aim is to explore one of the central positions of privilege in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats, namely the figure of the 'Swede'. How are 'Swedes' depicted in the discourse of the party? Conversely, I will examine positions of 'otherness' vis-à-vis the 'Swede'. What individuals and groups cannot occupy the position of privilege associated with the 'Swede'? Last, I will focus on positions of ambivalence in relation to these discursive figures. By positions of ambivalence I mean positions which, in some sense, could fall both within and outside the categories of 'Swede' and 'other', respectively.

6.3.1 The 'Swede'

This text is an attempt to approach the figure of the 'Swede' in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Arguably, the 'Swede' is a central discursive figure - the party builds their national politics around 'Swedes' and their interests. Nevertheless, despite its centrality the 'Swede' is never explicitly defined. Here, my intention is to come to a description of the figure of the 'Swede' through the party's writings, particularly in the field of economical resources and welfare-benefits.

In a speech at the election conference the 27th of March 2010, subsequently published as a blog-post, party leader Jimmie Åkesson declared:

> We choose focus in accordance with what we think is important and of course according to the lacks of other parties but also how we see that the people of reality[7] understand their reality. Reality forms our agenda – not taboos and political correctness. (Åkesson 2010c)

First, Åkesson's declaration suggests that the focus of the Sweden Democrats is in tune with the world-view of the people of reality. Second, in contrast to

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[7] Verklighetens folk

understandings formed by taboos and political correctness he claims that this understanding of the world *is* reality. Accordingly, the politics and priorities of the Sweden Democrats are in tune both with the views of the general public and reality, portraying them as highly relevant.

The expression 'people of reality' is intertextual. The most known usage of the expression is by the Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna*), one of the parties in the current Swedish government alliance[8]. Göran Hägglund, party leader of the Christian Democrats claims that the expression refers to "the Swedish public at large who live completely ordinary, honourable working-lives and to whom politics come second." (Hägglund 2009). He directs harsh critique against the cultural elite whom he claims looks down upon ordinary people and wishes to control their lives in detail through rules and regulations. A comparative analysis of the messages of the Sweden Democrats and the Christian Democrats is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, by adopting the concept 'the people of reality' the Sweden Democrats appeal to an image of an average 'Swede' who do not share the views of various elites, particularly those identified with the left and the cultural sector. Åkesson also implies that his own party can and does represent the opinions of these groups – the Swedish public at large.

Sweden Democrat Lars Isovaara adheres to a similar description. In his text in the jubilee book *20 röster om 20 år* (2008) he suggests an increased support for the Sweden Democrats among ordinary people:

> I have a feeling of a change in views in relation to our party among ordinary people. [...] People ask themselves: What do the Sweden Democrats want? Can the Sweden Democrats be something for me? Maybe the politics of the Sweden Democrats is simply more adept for solving parts of the great problems brought on by mass-immigration? Why has family politics been neglected? Where do all our tax-money disappear? (Isovaara, 2008 p. 46)

Here Isovaara points to certain areas and issues of the politics of the Sweden Democrats which may appeal to 'ordinary people', namely mass-immigration, family politics and the use of tax-money.

According to Rydgren (2004) expressions such as 'ordinary people' are generally preferred over 'workers' when populist radical right parties address potential voters. Rydgren argues that this is due to the monolithic image of 'the people' in populist ideology which often interplays with a denial of class differences (Rydgren 2004: p. 243). Class, according to Anthias and Yuval-Davis ""relates to the sphere of production processes but can't be reduced to the economy. [...] Exclusion and subordination characterize class relations, but its prime relation is that of economic exploitation." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: pp. 17-18). However, the main focus of populist radical right parties is not on economic exploitation caused by class inequalities. Rather, when the sphere of

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[8] However, the expression 'people of reality' is also used by the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights (abbreviated Rfsl in Swedish) in a current campaign. By taking over of the expression and giving it a different meaning than the Christian Democrats, Rfls wishes to demonstrate how present laws and practices exclude people and fails to acknowledge and recognise their realities (Rfsl 2010b).

economy is addressed, the focus is on problems of the welfare state which are blamed on immigration costs. In this line of argument, immigrants are normally depicted as illegitimate competitors for scarce resources (Rydgren 2007: p. 243).

In the following quotation by Björn Söder, however, the term 'worker' is used. Nevertheless, the problem is derived from the politics of established political parties which Söder claims open up for the hiring of cheap foreign work-force at the expense of Swedish workers.

> Those Swedes who in the age of recession end up outside the labour-market will have an even harder time finding a way back in since right now the labour-market is opened up for the entire world to come to Sweden and compete about jobs. The Swedes will end up in a disadvantaged position since foreign labour is cheaper for the companies although it says in the law that the employers shall offer "salaries as stipulated" or a salary which is "customary in the line of business". [...] The government has let the Swedish workers down. The opposition in today's parliament has let the Swedish workers down. Nobody in the corridors of power represents and safe-guards the Swedish workers. We Sweden Democrats are therefore needed in the parliament. (Söder 2009a)

Hence, although Söder's text is directed to the rights of Swedish workers it does not critique class differences. Its focus is on competition over resources in the form of employment, and its populist message is directed against labour migrants and at the Sweden Democrats political opponents. Instead of primarily targeting the worker – employer relation Söder concentrates on the relation between native and foreign worker and effectively foments antagonism between the two groups and their presumed interests.

Party leader Åkesson pin-points an explicit economic conflict between 'Swedes' and immigrants in the following argumentation against healthcare for undocumented migrants: "Wherein is the justice in the fact that poor Swedish tax-payers are forced to pay for something given for free to illegal immigrants?" (Åkesson 2010a). Here Swedish tax-payers are described as poor while the immigrants are explicitly designated as illegal. This conveys a picture of exposed Swedish tax-payers and of immigrants posing illegitimate claims. On the same topic Anna Hagwall from SD-women play off Swedish female pensioners against undocumented migrants. Hagwall writes:

> Now there is a loud-voiced group demanding rights for illegal refugees. The concept refugee does not correspond with the truth; many of these people defy the law and stay illegally in Sweden since they have been found to be without need for protection. Contrary to these groups we have a number of older Swedish women who have been house-wives and have not gathered any ATP-points[9]. Almost everyone has, in their family, a mother, an aunt, or grandmother who belongs to this category. They are large in numbers. These our 'mums' live under strained financial circumstances but suffer in silence and are ashamed over their needs and try to hide their exposed situation. [...] Is there nobody who wants to struggle loudly for THEIR rights? (Hagwall 2010a)

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[9] ATP is an abbreviation for allmän tjänstepension i.e. general supplementary pension.

As Åkesson, Hagwall uses the word illegal to describe the immigrants. She also undermines the migrants' refugee-status by suggesting that they are without need for protection and are staying in Sweden without just grounds. Her description of the pensioners is charged with emotion. She conveys the image of an old, female person who suffers in humble silence. These old people appear as victims of the immigrants' illegitimate claims – resources are taken from them and directed to the 'fake' refugees. Through conjuring an image of familial relations between the receptor of her message and these women by use of words such as 'grandmother', 'aunt', and 'our mums', Hagwall proposes that struggle for immigrants' rights is absurd compared to a struggle for the rights of this group of women.

In sum, the above analysis of a selection of the Sweden Democrats' texts addressing the 'Swedes' conjure an image of the 'Swede' as an 'ordinary', 'average' person who shares or may be willing to share the world-view of the Sweden Democrats. In contrast to elite groups, the Sweden Democrats argue, they experience the problems addressed in the party's political discourse. In addition, they are talked of as tax-payers and workers who have contributed to the welfare system but gets or risk getting little in return for their efforts. According to the party this is due to the consequences of mass-immigration and detached political decisions originating from the opinions of cultural and political elites uninterested in their opinions and well-being. In sum, this figure of the 'Swede' is surrounded with victim-hood and, in a sense, a flavour of innocence.

Ahmed (2004) argues that the feeling of 'national love' can be stronger when the promise of rewards for investment in a loved object is not fulfilled. In order to suppress disappointment for the lack of fulfilment the absence of rewards is often explained through the presence of national 'others', who often take the shape of 'foreigners' or 'immigrants' (Ahmed 2004: pp. 122-123, 131-133). In the political discourse of the Sweden Democrats, the Swedish nation-state occupies the place of one of the primary loved objects. A possible reward for an investment in this 'loved' object is rewards in the form of welfare-benefits for the national population. In cases when rewards do not fulfil expectations explanations are given in the form of the presence of immigrants and/or the actions of elites who are portrayed as directing scarce resources to immigrants rather than its 'true' beneficiaries – Swedish tax-payers with unquestioned belonging in the national collectivity.

6.3.2 'Others' and 'Swedes' in Ambivalent Positions

According to Yuval-Davis (2006), the (immigrant) 'other' is pointed out as the alien or threatening enemy within cultural fundamentalist movements. Within the racist discourse of these movements, separatism is advocated for the preservation of national and cultural uniqueness and welfare (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 64). Below I will focus on the figure of the 'other' in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Who occupy the position of the 'other'?

In a blog-post the 31st of December 2009 Åkesson links to an article written by him and published in the Swedish paper *Aftonbladet (*Åkesson 2009b). The article, entitled "The Muslims are our greatest foreign threat", conveys Åkesson's views regarding the presence of Muslims in Sweden (and Western Europe). Åkesson writes:

> Twenty years ago I believe most Swedes would find it hard to imagine that Islam would be Sweden's second largest religion, that Swedish artist who criticise or joke about Islam would live under constant death-threats, that around ten Muslim terror- organisations would come to be established in Sweden, that leading Muslim representative would demand Sharia-laws in Sweden, that Swedish county councils[10] would use the tax-payers money in order to cut off the foreskin on completely healthy little boys, that Sweden would have the highest number of rapes in Europe and that Muslim men would be greatly over-represented among the perpetrators, that separate hours for men and women would be introduced in the public baths, that Swedish municipalities would consider the introduction of gender-segregated swimming instruction in the schools, that the refrigerated counters would offer halal-slaughtered meat at the same time as Swedish preschools stop serving pork, that Swedish schools would introduce new holidays in order to celebrate the end of Ramadan while graduation ceremonies in the church become forbidden in more and more schools. All this is today part of Swedish reality. The question is what the situation will be in a few more decades, when the Muslim population, if the present pace is maintained, has multiplied in size and many of Europe's bigger cities, including Malmö, most likely has a Muslim majority. The multicultural societal elite may regard this future as a colourful and interesting change of a Sweden and a Europe where people, every now and then, deny that there has ever been something that has been 'Swedish' or 'European'. As a Sweden Democrat I regard this as our greatest foreign threat since the Second World War and I will do everything in my power to change the trend at the elections next year. (Åkesson 2009a)

Here Åkesson paints the picture of the Muslim as the complete cultural 'others' whose existence in Sweden has started a process of fundamental change of 'Swedish' society, culture and values. His view of Muslims is without compromises – a large Muslim population in Europe will inevitably change Sweden and Europe beyond recognition in all areas. To take a few examples change will occur concerning freedom of speech, gender-related practices, the legal system and food-related customs. The changes are overwhelmingly negatively portrayed. The Muslim presence, for instance, means Muslim men's harassment of women and death-threats directed at Swedish artists. The image of threat associated with Muslims is enforced by references to a rapidly increasing Muslim population which implies that the situation will worsen in the future. Åkesson also describes the Muslim immigration as a threat compared to the Second World War - assuredly one of the most difficult times for the populations in Europe, and several other parts of the world, during the 20th century.

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[10] Landsting

However, not only Muslims are placed in the position of 'others' in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. In the following text non-Western migrants in general are targeted:

> Mass-immigration to Sweden, and the lack of an assimilation process has created great conflict and several other problems in Swedish society. In order to counter-act these problems the immigration of people from culturally distant countries shall be limited to a minimum. However, if today's mass-immigration is allowed to continue it may be necessary with a complete stop of non-Western migration, until the situation in the country has been so stabile so that a restrictive Sweden Democratic immigration politics can begin to be implemented. (SD 2007)

Non-Western migrants may, and probably do, include Muslim immigrants. However, the expression suggests that migrants, who according to the Sweden Democrats do not have a culture built on Western values and norms, are also placed in positions of 'otherness' and difference.

In addition to Yuval-Davis' writings on cultural fundamentalism Åkesson's discourse can be understood in relation to the theories of Ahmed (2004). Ahmed writes that hate is reformulated into love for the nation and its subjects who both are portrayed as under threat from national 'others'. These 'others' are perceived as harmful to the nation and are taking away its resources or attempting to take the place of the national subject (Ahmed 2004: pp. 43-44). The loved 'objects' for Åkesson are the nation of Sweden and the Swedish culture whose very existences are perceived to be threatened by the presence of national and cultural 'others' – the figure of the Muslim immigrant and non-Western migrants from culturally distant countries. It may go without comment that Åkesson fails to acknowledges nuances, grey-scales and differences in identities and positions in his depiction and demarcation of groups such as 'Swedes', Europeans, and Muslims.

In the very beginning of this section I asked whether there are positions of ambivalence to be found in the Sweden Democrats' texts. I would suggest that one such position of ambivalence is found in the position of 'Swedes', whose personal and family history could, and probably would, place them in the position of 'ethnic Swedes' according to the definitions of the Sweden Democrats but whose convictions or activities make them opponents of the party and their politics. Examples of people from these groups are left-wing supporters (from Social Democrats to radical leftist groups) and critically attuned media-representatives.

In the text below history professor Dick Harrison is in focus and associated with the extreme left. He is described as 'controversial' and driven by political/ideological motives:

> The extreme left is writing the nation's new history. I have already conveyed that a new standard work about Swedish history is in the making. The work is directed by the controversial history professor Dick Harrison who also is the main author to the second and third volume in the series. According to Harrison himself political/ideological motives is the primary motif behind the new standard work. Harrison and his hand-picked

colleagues wish to write a new history that cannot be *"misused by Sweden Democrats"* (Karlsson 2010)

However, in the quotation below a range of spheres and people, particularly Social Democrats, are described as working against the Sweden Democrats:

> Based on our own experience we knew what to expect; only hostility from the establishment, parties, media and their willing henchmen on all levels. We knew for example that the person who openly engaged himself against Swedish immigration politics would be hit by a close to total career-stop in most work-places and, worst of all, were excluded from civil service professions completely against the law with very few possibilities to further employment. And the worst practitioners in this unprecedented persecution were Social Democratic bigwigs on all levels [...] possible to completely ignore the thoughts and opinions of the Swedish people in election after election. (Wiklander 2008: pp. 162-163)

A common trait of both these excerpts of texts is that the opponents of the Sweden Democrats are discredited and it is claimed that they are conveying an inaccurate image of the world. Between the lines, Harrison and his colleagues are accused of re-writing history according to their own ideologies while the Social Democrats are accused of persecution of dissidents, namely Sweden Democrats whose opinions mirrors those of the Swedish people.

The rhetoric regarding opponents of the Sweden Democrats is populist yet follows certain logic. The views and practices of people and groups opposed to the Sweden Democrats must be conceptualised as deviant and/or extreme in order to legitimise the Sweden Democrats conceptualisation of the nation, and claim to speak for the nation and the people of the nation. The Sweden Democrats solution is, as already suggested, to portray these people as an elite detached from the general public. They are 'ethnic Swedes' yet not representative of the broader segments of this group.

Last, people who do not fulfil heterosexual norms could also be said to be placed in a position of ambivalence. They can be 'ethnic Swedes' yet do not enjoy the full privileges of heterosexual members of the 'Swedish collectivity. However, the position of these individuals and groups will be discussed further down.

6.4 Reproduction

A basic meaning of the verb 'to reproduce' is to "produce a copy or representation of" (Pearsall and Trumble 1996: p. 1224). However, the word carries several connotations and can also refer to the production of offspring (Pearsall and Trumble 1996: p. 1224). Reproduction also covers practices of birthing, nurturing, and care. Feminist anthropologists Faye D. Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp use the term 'stratified reproduction' which covers childbearing, provision of care and nurture as well as the passing on of culture. Most importantly, however, is that

'stratified reproduction' refers to structures of power in relation to these practices. As a consequence of social inequalities, some groups are empowered to reproduce while others are not (Ginsburg and Rapp 1995: p. 3).

This section focuses on the discursive messages of the Sweden Democrats surrounding cultural as well as biological reproduction of the national collectivity and its defining traits. The formations of the 'entities' culture and nation have been discussed on a general level above. Here emphasis is put on how their passing on is envisioned in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Reproduction of nation and culture is further put in relation to the position of different individuals and groups. Ultimately, drawing on my analysis of cultural reproduction as well as biological reproduction, I approach the issue of racism.

6.4.1 Cultural Reproduction

As shown in the previous section, the conceptualisation of culture is contradictory in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Culture is both described as something which is being formed and as something obvious that can be taken for granted. In contrast, Yuval-Davis (2006) sees culture as "a dynamic contested resource" (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 63). As such, culture can be used differently by different people and in different projects (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 63). In line with Yuval-Davis' conceptualisation, this sub-section analyses how notions of culture and cultural practices are deployed in order to fix a certain version of 'Swedish' culture which is in line with the Sweden Democrats' nationalist political project. Here the issue of inclusion and exclusion is actualised; which cultural traits and practices are included and excluded, respectively, from 'Swedish' culture? Which cultural traits are seen as desirable, respectively, undesirable to pass on?

A definition of Swedish culture is provided by Jens Leandersson in an article in SD-kuriren. Leandersson understands Swedish culture as the "sum of cultural expressions sanctioned by use within the historically defined Swedish collectivity living or having lived in Sweden and Denmark" (Leandersson 2009b: p. 3). Although demarcated to a certain population in a given geographical area this could, arguably, cover very diverse cultural expressions and practices. However, when examining two areas of cultural reproduction, namely cultural policy and the school, a rather narrow and homogenising vision of Swedish culture appears.

The main role of the school, according to the party, is to convey the Swedish cultural heritage consisting of "the Swedish people's common history, culture, traditions, norms and values, language and religion" (SD 2005c). Because of their importance as carriers of culture, school-subjects such as history and studies in the Swedish language should be fore-grounded. Further aspects to be stressed are "the nuclear family, earlier generations collected knowledge and experience, Christian ethics and Western humanism" (SD 2005c). Apart from mentioning the experience and knowledge of earlier generation, which could be interpreted relatively broadly, this enumeration ties the Swedish cultural heritage to certain institutions and value-systems. Thus, cultural reproduction within the educational system is limited to selected traits within a Western European tradition. However,

that is not to say that the institution of the nuclear family, Christianity and humanism has not had profound impact on European society. What I critique is the limitation of Swedish culture and its reproduction to those aspects.

A similar picture emerges in relation to the field of cultural policy. The party wishes to promote certain cultural expressions above others. More specifically, those that serve to preserve the Swedish cultural heritage, enjoy wide popular support and those whose purposes are to "delight, beautify and create unity" (SD 2010). Political measures suggested are increased state-subsidies to associations whose aims are to preserve and invigorate the Swedish cultural heritage and the creation of a cultural canon consisting of "indispensable and particularly important examples of Swedish culture in different areas such as architecture, literature, music, arts and crafts, dramatic art etc." (SD 2010). Positively described cultural expressions within the empirical material give an idea of what the Sweden Democrats could want to include in the canon. Culture described positively are; ancient remains, older Swedish buildings such as churches and convents, folk dance, the Swedish church[11], Nordic mythology and certain Swedish authors, active in the 19th century or in the earlier parts of the 20th century, such as Viktor Rydberg, Selma Lagerlöf, Gustaf Fröding and Erik Axel Karlfeldt.

In contrast, certain cultural expressions are cast in very bad light in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. These are cultural activities whose "purpose is to support the multicultural societal order as well as those cultural expressions whose main purpose is to shock, rouse and provoke […] multicultural, destructive and elitist cultural expressions" (SD 2010). Examples of multiculturalism are conspicuous religious or political symbols such as the veil or the turban, ritual slaughter, and religious buildings "foreign for a Swedish tradition of architecture" (SD 2007). The Sweden Democrats further wish to severely limit the passing on of other languages than Swedish by cutting subsidies to mother-tongue education (other than Swedish). Economic support will be cut for private schools, other than those based on Judeo-Christian values, and for all associations aimed at promoting "foreign cultures and identities in Sweden" (SD 2007). In a blog-post by Björn Söder (2010) examples of 'destructive' cultural expressions are given. One of them is the display of American artist Andres Serrano's exhibition "A History of Sex" at the museum Kulturen in Lund in 2007. "A History of Sex" featured photographs of people involved in heterosexual as well as homosexual sexual acts. The exhibition was vandalised by a group of national socialists claiming that it's 'perversions' entailed a degeneration of Swedish culture (Kempe 2009).

At this point I wish to remind the reader about Yuval-Davis' thoughts on cultural fundamentalism. Cultural fundamentalism, according to Yuval-Davis draws, among other things, upon "a fixed, immutable, ahistorical and homogeneous construction of the collectivity's culture." (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 64). Yuval-Davis' characterization of cultural fundamentalism is, I would argue, very much in line with the inherent logic of the Sweden Democrats' views on culture and the passing on of culture. The Sweden Democrats adopts certain parts of 'Swedish' cultural history and cultural production, generalise them and portray

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[11] The Sweden Democrats, however, direct very strong criticism against leftwing- or liberal tendencies within the Swedish church.

them as representative of a homogeneous Swedish culture. The exaltation of these selected parts supports their nationalist project since they fit a discourse of national romanticism and/or are suitable for an idolisation of Swedish culture and, consequently, the Swedish nation.

Again, boundaries are deployed in order to demarcate and support the creation of a certain version of reality. Cultural traits associated with an immigrant (Muslim) 'other' are all subject to exclusion from Swedish culture. Further, policies are suggested to obstruct the passing on of 'immigrant' culture, for example the cut-back on funds for the education of children in mother-tongues other than Swedish. Boundaries are also upheld in relation to cultural expressions not associated with immigration. These are works that, like the exhibition "A History of Sex", do not fit the Sweden Democrats' vision of Swedish culture. If these kinds of works would be acknowledged as part of Swedish culture they would challenge the homogeneous cultural vision conveyed through the discourse. Therefore, they must be positioned as "destructive", "provoking" and/or "pornographic", hence deviant, and not representative of Swedish culture per se.

In the sub-section below biological reproduction will be discussed. Ultimately, reflections in relation to racism and forms of racism will be provided.

6.4.2 Biological Reproduction

The Sweden Democrats strongly demarcate between themselves and racist- and Nazi groups which openly base their politics on notions of biological difference. The party argues that they embrace a vision of an 'open Swedishness' and claims that people with other origin than Swedish can become part of the nation, albeit this can take a substantial amount of time (SD 2005d). Nonetheless, the Sweden Democrats describe human reproduction as the "basis for each nation's continued existence" (SD 2005d). A declared political goal is therefore to "increase the low nativity rate of the country" (SD 2005d). However, as the quotation below demonstrates the nativity rate of some population groups within Sweden, namely unspecified groups of immigrants, is conceptualised as a problem for the nation rather than an asset:

> Mass-immigration, together with the high nativity rate among certain groups of immigrants and the lack of assimilation-policy, signifies that the Swedes run the risk of becoming a minority within their own country in a few decades. This development will affect all aspects of social life and transform our country past recognition. (SD 2007)

Here the picture conveyed is of a potential future where 'Swedes', by becoming physically outnumbered, loose their majority status to immigrant populations in the country. The reference to assimilation-policy implies that only direct disciplining measures directed against the immigrant population would be able to break the, otherwise presumed, link between biological heritage and cultural heritage.

In an blog-post by Richard Jomshof, the rhetoric is taken a step further. On the one hand, threats in the form of a growing immigrant population are specifically linked to Islam. On the other hand, children with one parent born abroad are taken as examples of demographic change. References to statistics give the information in the blog-post an air of 'truth'. Jomshof writes:

> But one thing is sure, which should be clear to us; Europe's Muslim population has more than doubled during the last 30 years and will have doubled again in the year 2015. Since 2002 the net-migration has been on up to two millions yearly, this according to EU-figures, which is a triple increase in a few years. Therefore the trend is clear: The low nativity among Europe's peoples in combination with an increased mass-immigration and a substantially higher nativity rate among certain immigrant groups, will 'fundamentally' change what we today call European culture and society, if something drastic is not done. […] England, which today has 20 million people less than Germany, is foreseen to be the most densely populated country in the European Union in the year of 2060. This as a consequence of the large-scale immigration and the higher nativity rates of these groups. One speaks of the fact that the 'white population' for example will be a minority in Birmingham in the year 2026, and even earlier in Leicester. Further, 2007 28 percent of all children in England and Wales had at least one parent born abroad, in London the figures were as high as 54 percent. (Jomshof 2009b)

Several things are noticeable in the quotation above. First, Jomshof establishes a clear link between the biological composition of the European population, the cultures of Europe and the form of European society. Second, the figure representing demographic change is slipped from Muslims to children with one parent born abroad in the example of England. Here the majority population running the risk of becoming a minority in some British cities is described in terms of skin colour by the use of the word 'white'. Although put within brackets the discourse approaches an image of a 'white' majority population threatened by the growth of a 'non-white' population'. Inclusion and exclusion going hand in hand, a sub-text is, arguably, that 'non-whites' are excluded from the definition of the majority population, including children growing up in England, but with 'mixed' ancestry defined in terms of parental origin. Within Ahmed's theory of fear she uses the concepts of objects of love and objects of fear (Ahmed 2004: pp. 67-68). It could be argued that the 'white population' here figures as an object of love while the 'immigrant population' or 'children of mixed ancestry' figures as an object of fear whose presence represents the possible 'death' of 'white culture'.

According to Anthias and Yuval-Davis the construction of categories of 'race' is "always grounded on the separation of human populations by some notion of stock or collective heredity of traits." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 2). The message inherent in the discourse in Jomshof's blog-post and article is that consistency between biology and culture is desired in order to fully safe-guard the 'right' reproduction of the nation and its values, as if cultural values can be guaranteed through the right 'racial' composition of the population. The reference to children of 'mixed' ancestry further suggests that biological belonging can be defined in rather strict terms: 'difference' in terms of biological background can

jeopardize belonging in the national collectivity irrespective of place of upbringing.

As shown in this sub-section as well as the previous one, both cultural and biological criteria are called upon to define and demarcate the national collectivity and its proper reproduction. The reproduction of the nation is stratified in the sense that certain groups are encouraged to reproduce themselves and the nation as well as selected cultural traits. However, the reproduction of other groups, both in a biological sense as shown above, and in a cultural sense, i.e. language and customs, is discouraged. 'Ethnic' Swedes embracing cultural values coherent with the Sweden Democrats' vision of Swedish culture are, above all, empowered to reproduce the nation and its cultural values while immigrants and 'cultural' dissidents are not. Arguably, the power balance is in favour of (some) 'Swedes'.

Last, I wish to comment on the issue of racism in relation to the Sweden Democrats. Anthias and Yuval-Davis argue "that all those exclusionary practices that are formulated on the categorization of individuals into groups whereby ethnic or 'racial' origin are criteria of access or selection are endemically racist." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 16). In line with Anthias' and Yuval-Davis' conceptualisation of racism my conclusion is that the discourse of the Sweden Democrats is indeed racist, particularly in the field of nativity politics. Moreover, the racist messages of the Sweden Democrats display features, and sometimes interplaying features, of both cultural fundamentalism and biological racism. Populations are divided according to (semi)-biological criteria. A causal relation is then established between biology and cultural values and expressions. According to this division, and presumed relation between biology and culture, reproduction is encouraged for some groups and counterfeited for others. Therefore, I would argue that the party's dissociation from biological racism is not trustworthy.

In addition to immigrants, homosexuals are placed in an ambivalent position with regards to national reproduction. However, comments on homosexuality and national reproduction have largely been omitted above. Instead, issues of gender, sexuality and the family, and their interplay with the nationalist project of the Sweden Democrats are discussed in the following section.

6.5 The Family, Gender and Sexuality

This section focuses on issues of sexuality and gender within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. In the first sub-section the Sweden Democrats' views on the family is analysed in relation to discourses of sexuality. In the second sub-section examinations of (different) positions of womanhood are fore-grounded. Last, expressions of masculinity and masculine discourse are discussed in the third sub-section through a focus on what I call the 'subject of defence'.

6.5.1 Family Politics

The family is depicted as one of the fundamental units of society by the Sweden Democrats, as is clear from the following quotation:

> Since the birth of mankind, and in practically all societies, the nuclear family has been the fundamental unit upon which society is based. The loving relationship between man and woman, and their children, is the necessary prerequisite for harmonious societal relationships. The family is the inner core of society and the very prerequisite for human reproduction. The family's function as a base for society is a prerequisite for a positive societal development. The good family gives us happiness and security, it teaches us responsibility and morals, conveys culture and traditions, gives us identity and belonging and creates love and respect between generations. The Sweden Democrats claims that the traditional nuclear family is a deeply rooted and natural community which cannot be replaced by any constructed collectivities. (SD 2005a)

According to sociologists Elizabeth B. Silva and Carol Smart (2004) political rhetoric (at least from a North American and Western- European perspective) tends to conceptualise the family as an institution where a particular family form is idealised, namely the heterosexual co-habiting married couple with biological children. This particular family constellation is naturalised and advocated as the basis for strong and functional communities. Consequently, it is argued that, for the good of society, it must not be changed (Silva and Smart 2004: pp. 2-4). This commonly held view of the family has many similarities with the Sweden Democrat's conceptualisation of the family shown in the quotation above. The family referred to in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats is evidently the heterosexual nuclear family which is conceptualised above through wordings such as 'a fundamental unit', 'an inner core of society' and a 'deeply rooted and natural community'. These formulations bestow upon the nuclear family the characteristics of primordiality and permanency, beyond time and context, which effectively excludes alternative family practices from the concept of family.

The roles and aims of the nuclear family are multiple according to the party; it is the unit for human reproduction, the passing on of culture and a central building-stone in their envisioned form of social structure. The effective accomplishment of the aims of the nuclear family are dependent its main characters; the man, the woman and the child. The 'casting' of the characters man and woman is deducted from notions of sexual difference. These notions can be traced in the following quotation:

> Central for the Sweden Democrats is that all people, irrespective of sex[12], should have the same rights and possibilities. Men and women are, however, not created in the same way

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[12] The Sweden Democrats uses the Swedish term 'könstillhörighet'. The first part of the term, the word 'kön', can refer to biological sex, social sex or a fusion of the two connotations. I have chosen to translate the term to sex instead of gender since my understanding is that the word primarily carries biological connotations within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats.

and can, therefore, take different starting-points and do things in different ways. Men and women complement each other, and for that reason all children's right to a mother and a father is of central importance. (SD 2005a)

On the one hand, the party here assures that people, irrespective of sex, shall have the same rights and possibilities. On the other hand, they underline differences between how men and women are created, thus asserting a binary view of sex/gender. Anthias and Yuval-Davis claim that gender works with notions of natural relationships between biology and social effects (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996: p. 18). Arguably, this kind of logic is at work in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Based on notions of sexual difference they suggest that men and women (can) have different ways of thinking and acting. This alleged difference is the basis for a notion of a need for sexual completion, which, in turn, effects upon the party's view of ideal parenthood. Sexual difference, namely, is the foundation for the assertion of complementary dual-sex parenthood and the argument that "a mother and a father" is the right of the child.

The child is the third central character of the nuclear family. As argued above, notions of how to achieve its well-being underpin the elevation of the heterosexual nuclear family. The child also embodies one of the goals of the Sweden Democrats' family politics – its birth and upbringing is one of the central cornerstones in the nationalist project because of its promise of national and cultural contingency. The link between family politics, children and national reproduction can be discerned from the following quotation taken from Richard Jomshof's blog:

> Even if it is not the task of politicians to decide how and when people choose to have children, it is of outmost importance that politicians conduct sound family politics and arrange society in such a way that the inhabitants of the country can form families and have more children. At least in a situation where the nativity-rate is so low that it can come to threaten the entire Swedish welfare-society. (Jomshof 2009a)

The main goal for families is assuredly, according to Jomshof, the having of children. Here Jomshof relates his call for the need for more children to the demographic underpinnings of the welfare-society. However, as shown in an earlier section, in other texts Jomshof refers to the need for an increased nativity rate among the majority population (i.e. 'ethnic Swedes') in order to counteract the high birth rates of minorities (i.e. biological and cultural 'others'). Thus, it is likely that the desire for demographic maintenance of the welfare-state applies to the majority population and not ethnic minorities.

Ahmed (2004) highlights the centrality of the figure of the white child in nationalist and racist discourse. It represents futurity, promises national and racial contingency as well as possible rewards to come for subjects' investment in national love. In other words, its very existence infuses hope in a future where the position of white collectivity can realise the dreams of the nationalist subject. In this narrative racial 'other' are other prominent figures. On the one hand they figure as threats against the 'white' nation and its future. On the other hand they

represent explanations for the lack of reward for the subject's investment in the nation (Ahmed 2004: pp. 122-123, 131-133). In the discourse of the Sweden Democrats a nostalgic vision of an ethnically homogeneous 'Swedish' folkhem (a-historic nationalist utopia) represents the rewards to come for the nationalist subjects' investment in national love. However, according to the discourse of the party the striving for this nationalist goal is hindered by multicultural society and other destructive and subversive societal influences. The emphasis on biological reproduction of the majority population as well as the discourse of threat surrounded the nativity of 'ethnic' minorities may be understood with inspiration from Ahmed's theory. The birth of children of the 'right' ethnicity, according to the parameters of the party, promises the possible achievement of their nationalist 'utopia' while the birth of children of ethnic minorities precludes it. Consequently, positive emotions are 'stuck' to the nativity rate of the majority population while the nativity rate of ethnic minorities is steeped in negativity.

In addition to ethnic minorities, individuals and groups that, in one way or another, do not practice the normative formula for coupling consisting of one man-one woman are also excluded from national reproduction. Marriage, the most elevated form of relationship within the party's discourse, as well as children, the desired outcome of relationships and family-life, are primarily reserved for heterosexual couples. [13] The Sweden Democrats write:

> The Sweden Democrats think marriage should be reserved for man and woman. [...] Extremely central is also that the best interest of the child is considered in all areas of family politics. For these reasons the party is opposed to demands from single people as well as same-sex couples or polygamous groups to adopt children, except for certain cases of adoption by relatives. For the same reasons they party is opposed to lesbians' rights to insemination.[14] (SD 2005a)

These political suggestions in the area of family politics place single people, homosexuals and polygamous groups[15] in a position of lack in relation to rearing. Parenthood, when conducted by these individuals and groups, is not seen as being in the best interest of children. The reference to the best interest of children is intertextual. It associates and wraps the political message of the party in a discourse of children's rights enabling a concealment of its exclusionary effects towards acts and individuals beyond a heterosexual norm.

According to Rosenberg (2002) heteronormativity can be defined as "the institutions, structures, relations and acts which uphold heterosexuality as something uniform, natural and all-embracing." (Rosenberg 2002: p. 100). Within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats notions of sexual difference interplaying with notions of desirable reproduction and rearing are executed through the

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[13] Since the 1st of May 2009 same-sex couples can marry according to the Swedish law (Rfsl 2010a).

[14] According to the Swedish law you can apply for adoption if you are married or a registered partner, irrespective of whether you are heterosexual or homosexual. If you are co-habiting or single you can only apply for adoption as an individual person. Several people can not apply for adoption together. Insemination is allowed for women who are co-habiting, married to or registered partners with another woman (Rfsl 2010a).

[15] I am uncertain which groups the Sweden Democrats refer to here. In the programme "Invandringspolitiskt program", however, the custom of polygamy is associated with immigration (SD 2007).

institutions of heterosexual marriage and the heterosexual nuclear family. All in all, they create a framework where heterosexuality is constructed as the norm and acts related to and resulting from heterosexual coupling are defined as normal. Practices and configurations outside the heterosexual norm are, however, constructed as deviant. As Rosenberg explains, deviants from the heterosexual norm are subject to various forms of punishment, for example violence and/or marginalisation (Rosenberg 2002: pp. 100-101). Here individuals and groups who are not fulfilling the prerogative of sexual completion are marginalised from notions of proper relationship configurations as well as 'good' parenthood. Their possibilities to marry and/or become parents would be delimited compared to today, would the political proposals of the Sweden Democrats be realised.

Jomshof's use of the adjective 'sound', with its connotations of healthy and viable, in relation to family politics is also worth commenting upon. It can be assumed that "sound family politics", according to Jomshof, are the kind of family politics represented by his own party, in other words to advocate the heterosexual couple and their having of children within the framework of the nuclear family. Opposites to sound are 'unsound' or 'unhealthy'. Interestingly, metaphors of 'ill-health' and its interrelated notions of disease and/or degeneration have been and are common stereotypes attached to homosexuals. After the decriminalization of homosexuality in Sweden in the year of 1944 diagnoses of pathological conditions were used to detain homo- and bisexuals in mental institutions until their 'recovery'. Not until the year of 1974 homosexuality was removed from the register over diagnoses at the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (Rfsl 2010a). Thus, it may be significant that words such as 'sound' are used in relation to family politics by a representative of a party which advocates a politics that entail the marginalisation of homosexuals.

Ultimately, I wish to highlight Ahmed's (2004) discernment of a connection between narratives of heterosexuality and racist narratives. She writes:

> What needs closer examination is how heterosexuality becomes a script that binds the familial with the global: the coupling of man and woman becomes a kind of 'birthing', a giving birth not only to new life, but to life that is already recognisable as forms of civilisation. It is this narrative of coupling as a condition for the reproduction of life, culture and value that explains the slide in racist narratives between the fear of strangers and immigrants (xenophobia), the fear of queers (homophobia) and the fear of miscegenation (as well as other illegitimate couplings). (Ahmed 2004: pp. 144-145)

Above and in previous sections I have established that those who are not fulfilling the norm of heterosexual 'ethnic' Swedishness (i.e. primarily immigrants and homosexuals) are excluded from the otherwise highly desired reproduction of the nation in the form of giving birth to children and passing on cultural values by rearing them. A possible key to the logic of reproductive inclusion/exclusion is found in Ahmed's text. I would argue that the combination of 'Swedishness' and heterosexuality is perceived by the Sweden Democrats as resulting in what Ahmed's calls "life that are already recognisable as forms of civilisation". Moreover, and possibly more importantly, it is also considered to result in the

desired forms of civilisation - Swedish culture and the one of its 'central units', the nuclear family (and safe-guard its reproduction over the generations to come). Hence, the marginalisation of immigrants as well as homo- and bisexuals is very much in line with the inherent logic and goal of the Sweden Democrats' nationalist project - the preservation of the nation as an un-changing and closed entity through time.[16]

6.5.2 Women and Nation

Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that nationalist projects are gendered projects to a large extent. (Yuval-Davis 2006: 1). This sub-section centres on positions of women and conceptualisations of gender equality in the Sweden Democrats' political discourse. First, it should be mentioned that women feature in the roles of party representatives in pictures from SD-kuriren, on pamphlets or on political posters. Some of these women are simultaneously depicted in their professional roles, for example as an assistant nurse or as an owner of a small enterprise. Hence, these women are portrayed as active participators in the nationalist project and, sometimes also, in professional life. However, the image of womanhood changes when put in relation to the family-ideology of the Sweden Democrats. The party writes:

> The Sweden Democrats look with worry upon the societal developments of the last decades where the importance of the traditional family and the values of family life have been increasingly questioned and depreciated by destructive forces within society. Parents who choose to stay at home with their children are discriminated against for ideological reasons compared to other child-care alternatives, the state has taken over the fostering and nurturing roles of the parents (SD 2005a)

In order to counteract the development outlined in the quotation above the Sweden Democrats suggest actions within the field of family politics. Through tax-reductions and benefits the party wants to make it easier for parents to care for children at home. The party is also opposed to the current design of the parents' insurance where sixty days are reserved for each parent, and wishes to completely hand over the allocation of the parents' insurance to the parents[17]. As shown by sociologist Joan Acker (2006) unpaid labour in the home is generally done by women (Acker 2006: pp. 56-61, 170). Sweden is not an exception in this case. According to statistics from the Swedish Social Insurance Office men's usage of

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[16] In an article in *Aftonbladet* the 30th of March 2010 party leader Jimmie Åkesson and second deputy party leader Catarina Herrstedt claim that the Sweden Democrat's current politics is consistent with respect for sexual minorities. They further argue that the party enjoys an increased support among homo- and bisexuals due to these groups' worries about the possible consequences of Muslim influence upon their rights (Herrstedt and Åkesson 2010). It is uncertain whether the article mirrors a real change of policy vis-à-vis homo-and bisexuals. Rather, its main motif may be to support the party's immigration critique by playing out homo- and bisexuals against Muslims.

[17] If parents have joint custody, they are entitled to 240 days of parental benefit each. 60 of these days are reserved for each parent, while the other days can be transferred to the other parent (Försäkringskassan 2010).

the parents' insurance has increased during the first decade of the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, in the year of 2009 men only used 22.3 percent of the parents' insurance days (Försäkringskassan 2010). Thus, political proposals which provide incentives for an earner-carer family model may reinforce the already disproportioned male/female ratio vis-à-vis paid and unpaid labour. It may be assumed that the Sweden Democrats, through these proposed actions, wish to establish a stronger connection between women and the domestic space.

These political proposals must be related to one of the outspoken goals of the Sweden Democrats' family politics which is the augmentation of births among the majority population. The family politics of the Sweden Democrats have some resemblance with the discourse 'people as power' but also with the 'eugenicist discourse' as described by Yuval-Davis (2006). According to Yuval-Davis the growth of the nation is central in the 'people as power'-discourse. Consequently, women are positioned as biological reproducers of the nation. In the 'eugenicist' discourse the quality of the nation is at focus, giving it a quality of 'selective breeding'. Often members of the hegemonic collectivity are encouraged to reproduce while minority populations are not (Yuval-Davis 2006: pp. 30-32). As shown in earlier sections the Sweden Democrat's call for an increased nativity rate in Sweden while expressing concerns over the nativity rate of immigrants, especially Muslims. Population-wise they desire national growth, or at least contingency. However, only the growth of certain segments of the population is desirable – the hegemonic collectivity whose envisioned strength in number will ensure the reproduction of a specific culture and way of life that the 'immigrant' population threatens to subvert. Inevitably, in order to achieve this goal, women of the majority population, i.e. 'ethnic Swedish women', need to bear more children, which positions 'Swedish women' in the role of national biological reproducers. In contrast, the very same logic places 'immigrant' women in a position of undesired reproducers within the 'Swedish' nation.

The Sweden Democrats' desire to delimit women's reproductive rights by sharpening the Swedish abortion law can be understood along the same line of thought. According to the party, abortions entail a "loss for society, the parents and above all the unborn child who loses its chance to continued life" (SD 2005a). Abortions should therefore be forbidden after the twelfth week of pregnancy, if not medical or other weighty reasons exist.[18] Here I specifically wish to emphasis that abortions are described in terms of a 'loss for society'. Possibly, abortions are conceptualised as societal loss partly because they are believed to counteract the Sweden Democrats' goal of an increased nativity rate.

According to Yuval-Davis (2006), women are often positioned as 'embodying' the nation or as 'symbolic border guards'. As 'border guards' women's behaviour, acts and dress et cetera come to symbolise inclusion in and exclusion from the national collectivity (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 23, pp. 40-67). In the discourse of the Sweden Democrats the position of women plays a vital part for the demarcation between 'Swedish culture' and 'immigrant culture'. Swedish culture is linked to

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[18] According to the Swedish law on abortion from 1974 women have the right to decide to do an abortion until the 18th week of pregnancy. After week 18, abortions can be granted by the National Board of Health and Welfare if there are exceptional circumstances (Regeringskansliets rättsdatabaser 2010).

notions of 'gender equality' while immigrant culture, especially Muslim culture, is linked to oppression of women. Below follows a quotation from an article by Anna Hagwall, founder of the network SD-women:

> Who is a feminist? Simply those who safe-guard the interests of women. What can be more fundamental than to not have to be battered, raped or murdered? The facts of the matter are frightening. The amount of rapes increases like an avalanche. […] Authorities, mass-media are trying to keep people in the dark about the fact that the perpetrators often have a foreign background. […] Another problem is honour-related violence. According to the feminists there is no difference between violence exercised by Swedish men and Muslim men. However, the difference is that the violence of the Swedish man is not sanctioned by those around him. If his actions are revealed, a great shame falls upon him. In the case of honour-related violence, the opposite apply. Shame can fall upon the rest of the family if they do not punish the woman who considers her body her own. Remarkably many immigrant girls have 'fallen off' the balcony. The disobedient daughter has been thrown to her death. Do such 'cultures' really belong in Sweden? The feminists answer the question with silence. […] Honour-related violence is practiced by whole collectivities and is sanctioned by those nearest. Those who do not strongly dissociate themselves from such values, brutal violence and do not dear to discuss the issue, are not feminists. (Hagwall 2010b).

Hagwall's text is centred on rape and honour-related violence, both actions and practices which are linked to 'foreigners' (particularly Muslims). Hagwall argues that honour-related violence against women is sanctioned by the surroundings. In comparison, the violence exercised by Swedish men is subject to social condemnation. Accordingly, Swedish men's violence is tied to individual perpetrators while the violence of 'immigrants' is portrayed as a characteristic of whole cultures and collectivities. Violence against women is a serious offence and needs to be counteracted independent of context. However, it could be questioned whether Hagwall's article is written in the interest of women who suffer violations or whether it rather underpins a racist discourse whose main purpose is to erect strict boundaries between 'Swedish' and 'immigrant' culture and exalt the former above the latter. Noticeable in the quotation is also Hagwall's co-option of feminism and feminist discourse. Her references to traditional feminist issues such as women's rights to their bodies and violence against women can be seen as intertextual. By paraphrasing feminist discourse Hagwall imbues her messages with legitimacy. Simultaneously, she undermines the position of feminists in general by suggesting that they do not act on their values and therefore are not really feminists. Instead, according to the quotation, feminist are those who 'safe-guard the interests of women', namely Hagwall and those sharing her analysis.

The rape propaganda is highly recurrent in my empirical material. In Hagwall's article the increase of rape is explained by the presence of foreign perpetrators generally. An article in SD-Kuriren refers to a statement of the Sweden Democrats' party leader Jimmie Åkesson who is explicit concerning the identity of the perpetrators and their victims:

We can no longer ignore that the increase of rapes in Sweden are intimately connected to the immigration from Africa and the Middle East. [...] In order to be able to solve the problem we must acknowledge its roots and begin to examine more closely what ideas, values and motives make men from some cultures want, to a greater extent than others, to violate and degrade women from the majority population. Everything else would be a betrayal of Sweden's women. (SD-Kuriren 2009: p.9).

Here the perpetrators are men from 'specific cultures', namely immigrants from Africa and the Middle East. The victims are women from the 'majority population', i.e. 'Swedish women'. It is for the sake of 'Swedish women that the cultural dimensions of rapes must be acknowledged and counteracted according to Åkesson. In other parts of the empirical material, the discursive figures of the 'foreign' perpetrator and the Swedish female victim are enforced through the use of imagery. An example is a drawing illustrating an article in SD-Kuriren entitled "Immigrants are overrepresented when it comes to rape – why is that?" (Leandersson 2009a: p. 5). In the image, the face of a dark, almost devilish-looking, male figure appears behind the shoulder of a light-skinned and fair-haired woman. The woman's head and the upper part of her body is visible in the image. Her torso is naked. The man covers her mouth with one of his hand while he pulls her hair with the other. This image conveys a very strong message of perpetration linked to immigrant masculinity and, conversely, victim-hood linked to 'Swedish' femininity.

As pointed out by Yuval-Davis, women's 'embodiment' of the nation manifest itself, for instance, when sexual contacts with male 'others' are seen as a threat against the nation and its honour (Yuval-Davis 2006: p. 23, pp. 40-67). According to Ahmed (2004), the emotion of hate in British right-wing discourse is linked to figures of 'perpetrators' and 'victims'. Here hate is reconstructed into a discourse of love for the white subject depicted as under threat from national 'others'. This threat is often conceptualised through metaphors of rape. Interestingly, the figure of the threatened 'white' subject often takes the form of a 'white' woman. The image of a 'white' woman molested by a foreigner comes to embody the vulnerability of the national body to its 'others' (Ahmed 2004: pp. 43-44).

I would argue that a similar kind of logic is at work in the rape propaganda, as that described by Yuval-Davis and Ahmed. The party's discourse of the threat posed by 'foreign' masculinity against 'Swedish femininity transfers to a metaphor of threats against the nation due to 'foreigners' presence. Further, the portrayal of the meeting of the figure of the 'Swedish' woman and the 'foreign' man can be seen as a symbol of the party's conceptualisation of certain cultures complete incompatibility as well as their presumption of disastrous consequences originating from their mixing. I especially wish to highlight Åkesson's motivation to target men from 'some cultures' in order to solve the alleged rape-problem – it must be done because otherwise it would mean a *betrayal of Swedish women.* Put differently, Åkesson's critique of men from other cultures is reformulated into a discourse of concern for Swedish women. There is a similarity between Åkesson's line of arguments and Ahmed's analysis of British right-wing discourse. Racist critique of foreign 'others' is turned into concern for the national subject in form

of the 'Swedish' woman – a discourse of 'hate' is turned into a discourse of 'love'.

However, generally I would argue that within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats both 'Swedish' women and 'immigrant' women figure as victims. The victim-hood of 'Swedish' women comes across clearly in the rape-propaganda. Nevertheless, the portrayed oppression of 'immigrant' (especially Muslim) women positions them as victims of their own culture. Moreover, the Sweden Democrats' image of their situation is made into a defining characteristic of immigrant culture. Symptomatic of this discourse is that most of the pictures illustrating articles about immigration in SD-Kuriren feature veiled women. This feature of women's dress serves to demarcate the boundary between immigrant culture and Swedish culture. Here 'immigrant' women come to embody 'immigrant' culture and the Sweden Democrats' dark vision of a future where it dominates society and culture in Sweden

In sum, women and notions of womanhood play central roles in the nationalist project of the Sweden Democrats. Some women support the project as active transmitters of the nationalist messages and as practitioners within the party. However, on a more general level 'Swedish' women are positioned as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation, particularly within the framework of the nuclear family. Moreover, the perceived situation of 'Swedish' women compared to the situation of 'immigrant' women vis-à-vis gendered oppression is a central line of demarcation between 'Swedish' culture and immigrant 'culture'. Here notions of gender equality per se play a central role. Sweden is characterised by gender equality while 'foreign' cultures are not. The imagined threat posed against the Swedish model of gender equality symbolises the threat against the Swedish culture and nation in general. Thus, discourses of gender equality function as a border guards upholding the boundaries between 'Swedes' and 'others'.

In conclusion, the sub-text to the Sweden Democrats' discourse of gender equality is a script held together by gendered racism. Notions of 'Swedish' gender equality and 'foreign' gender inequality are drawn upon for the construction of a cultural boundary which upholds the image of national specificity and superiority, some of the central foundations for the party's nationalist project.

6.5.3 Masculinised Defence

The presence of men in the material from the Sweden Democrats is apparent. For example, the vast majority of pictures of party representatives in SD-Kuriren portray men in various political functions and activities. Men are also the authors of most articles in the paper. Most probably this mirrors the party's gender gap: the majority of electives in the Sweden Democrats are men. Yet, with the notable exception of immigrant men, for example found in the position of the 'foreign perpetrator', men's actions as men are not explicitly commented upon. Thus, compared to the position of women, and immigrant women in particular, the male position is strangely elusive within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats.

However, regarded from a feminist perspective this is not surprising. Focus tend to fall upon that and those defined as specific and 'different' while that and those defined as the norm and general escape attention. For instance, political scientists Maria Wendt Höjer and Cecilia Åse (2003) demonstrates how the male norm help concealing men's power and influence within the political sphere while women are placed in a position of specificity and difference. Naturally, other axes of differences such as ethnicity and sexuality may also mark out individuals and groups as deviants in relation to the general norm. However, while more directly inaccessible than the position of women, my intention here is to focus on men and masculinity. However, I will do so through a discussion of what I call masculinised defence.

Within what Ahmed calls the 'politics of fear', objects of love are identified as being under threat by objects of fear. This production of crisis effectively justifies actions of defence of the loved objects (Ahmed 2004: pp. 67-68). In this sub-section I depart from Ahmed's theorising of fear and relates it to the Sweden Democrat's discourse of threats and defence regarding Sweden. In addition to Ahmed's theoretical concepts of object of love and object of fear, respectively, I also wish to suggest the discursive presence of a third figure, namely the subject of defence. The characteristics of this subject of defence, I argue, are highly masculinised.

In the jubilee book *20 röster om 20 år* (2008) motivation for political engagement in the Sweden Democrats is given in texts by various party members. A recurrent tendency is dissociation from racism and/or extremism. Instead, grounds for engagement are deduced from a will or obligation to save Sweden from peril. As former party leader Mikael Jansson puts it: "I think there was a common thought among us who joined. There was nothing more important than to save Sweden. It was more important than our own selves and it was our duty" (Jansson 2008: p. 49). Party member Runar Filper expresses a similar line of thought: "I can't stand to just stand by and watch while my native country/fatherland[19] is demolished piece by piece." (Filper 2008: p. 23). In the following quotation from Anna Hagwall's text the peril can be identified as ideology embracing 'the foreign' and multiculturalism.

> To me a completely strange and wrong ideology has spread the last decades. The contempt for one's own and the glorification of the foreign, an ideology which has been rooted the most deeply in Sweden. To let oneself get effaced and despised in one's own country has mobilised an enormous passion for fight in me and defiance against the system. We who are Sweden Democrats have realized the destructivity of the multicultural chaos. (Hagwall 2008: p. 137)

In Ahmed's theoretical terms, Sweden, the fatherland and, what Hagwall calls, 'one's own' can be said to figure as the 'loved objects' within the excerpts of discourse provided above. These loved objects, however, are under threat from objects of fear, here represented by 'the foreign' and multiculturalism. The crisis

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[19] Fädernesland

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evoked by the discourse of threats calls upon and justifies actions of defence of the loved objects – they must be saved from peril and (further) injury. But who are called upon to perform these actions of defence? Who are the 'subjects of defence' and what are their characteristics?

Hagwall claims that the Sweden Democrats have realised the danger of multiculturalism. In other words, they have identified the threatening object of fear. In the following excerpt written by Mattias Karlsson the saving of Sweden is specifically linked to the political engagement and actions of himself as a member of the Sweden Democrats:

> The background to my engagement in the Sweden Democrats is that [...] I reached the decision that it is my duty towards earlier, present and coming generations to not only ponder but also to do what I can to safeguard Sweden. I have sometimes thought that my years in the Sweden Democrats actually resemble my years as a military serviceman to some extent. [...] Just as during my years as a military serviceman, I have during my years in the Sweden Democrats devoted almost all my waking hours learning to defend Sweden and everything that I love [...] What I have seen above all is a spirit of self-sacrifice, a power of perseverance, a dignity and a courage that I thought no longer existed in our country (Karlsson 2008: pp. 81-82)

In this text, Karlsson depicts his engagement as a duty and himself as a person whose obligations stretch backwards as well as forwards in time. He is obliged to safeguard Sweden (and everything that he loves), thereby ensuring both the administration of earlier generations creations and the reproduction of the national 'entity' for the sake of future generations to come. Further, the militaristic metaphors used by Karlsson are noticeable. He likens his political activities to his years as a military serviceman and uses wordings such as self-sacrifice, perseverance, dignity and courage to describe the attitudes of his fellow political comrades. To me, these words bring forward a stereotypical image of the soldier or fighter ready to sacrifice himself for his country. Not surprisingly, Karlsson ends his text with the following declaration: "We are in a fair way to write history, and if we only keep our course, I am convinced that we will take the final step from the muddy trenches to the chamber of parliament in 2010." (Karlsson 2008: p. 84). The reference to 'muddy trenches' clearly evokes the image of war and strongly confirms the soldier metaphor Karlsson applies to himself and his fellow party members.

The highly militaristic tone is enforced by former party leader Mikael Jansson's references to Vikings as well as the Swedish kings Gustav II Adolf (1594-1632) and Karl XII (1682-1718), both known for extensive warfare. [20] Below follows two excerpts from Jansson's text:

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[20] Karl XII and Gustav II Adolf are both celebrated as national symbols within Swedish neo-Nazi movements and feasts are held annually by the movement in order to celebrate the memory of the two kings. Similarly, Viking-mythology and the Old Norse heritage are central parts of Swedish national socialist mythology (Lööw 1998: pp 385-411, 417). Jansson's embracement of Vikings and the two kings as national symbols suggests a stronger inter-linkage with the Sweden Democrats' Nazi heritage than the party of today publicly admits.

All nations have hero-kings that are celebrated. Of course, we Swedes should be able to do the same. Karl XII represents courage and a will to self-sacrifice for the nation, to lead, and to take the fall if necessary. (Jansson 2008: p. 57)

Vikings, soldiers of Karl XII[21], and Sweden Democrats – every era needs its heroes. We have born the role of the hero in Swedish contemporary politics, and we will bear it henceforth. The field-hymn of Gustav II Adolf could be ours:

Do not be terror-struck, little crowd,
Although the noise and cries of enemies,
Resound from all directions!
They rejoice in your ruin,
But their joy will not be long,
For let not courage fail you. (Jansson 2008: p. 80)

In the two excerpts Sweden Democrats are likened to Vikings, soldiers of Karl XII and, through the field hymn, also to soldiers of Gustav II Adolf. To Jansson these figures are national heroes with great symbolic value whose heritage the Sweden Democrats shoulders. In the case of Karl XII, Jansson claims that he represents a will to self-sacrifice for the nation, to lead, and to take the fall. In the case of the field hymn of Gustav II Adolf, courage in the face of mocking enemies is celebrated

The underlying message of the kind of discourse, for instance in Karlsson and Jansson's texts, is that the Sweden Democrats have realised the threat against Sweden. Trying to save Sweden despite the obstacles facing them (being named racists and extremists for example), they are courageous and self-sacrificing heroes. Further, to be engaged in the Sweden Democrats is to be a saviour and a defender serving a higher cause which is noble, glorious, and exciting – similar to going to war for the defence of one's country.

Nagel (1998) argues for a view of nationalism as a primarily masculinist project. She writes:

[T]he culture of nationalism is constructed to emphasise and resonate with masculine cultural themes. Terms like honour, patriotism, cowardice, bravery, and duty are hard to distinguish as either nationalistic or masculinist since they seem so thoroughly tied both to the nation and to manliness. My point here is that the 'microculture' of masculinity in everyday life resonates very well with the demands of nationalism, particularly its militaristic side. (Nagel 1998: pp. 251-252)

Drawing on the insights of Ahmed (2004) and Nagel (1998), I would like to further deepen the interpretation of the discourse of the Sweden Democrats presented in this sub-section. In the party's 'politics of fear' there are the loved objects which are Sweden, the nation and the country. There are also objects of fear which are the foreign and multiculturalism. Ultimately, there are "subjects of

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[21] Karoliner

defence" in the form of the party's own members. The characteristics of these subjects of defence are derived from the area of war. They are fighters and soldiers with typically masculinised traits: perseverance, courage, and a will to self-sacrifice. These traits are personified in the figure of the military serviceman, the Viking, or historical kings and their soldiers – 'heroes' whom the Sweden Democrats mirror themselves in. Arguably, the subject of defence embodied in the Sweden Democrats' party member appears in the discourse as a masculinised subject. However, as the quotation by Anna Hagwall shows, this does not preclude women from identifying with this form of subject and its fight.

Lastly, I wish to draw attention to a short yet meaningful excerpt of text from the Sweden Democrat's principle programme (2005). In defence of the nationalist principle the Sweden Democrats proclaim: "[T]he nationalist principle [is] central and should be aimed at to the highest extent possible all over the world. Let all peoples be masters of their own house[22]." (SD 2005d). Here the use of the words "masters" and "house" is especially significant. Through them the nation is likened to a home and its people to masters – the masculine form of the head of the household. The use of this kind of wording as a simile for the self-determination of the national population indicates a desire for a system of national power characterised by patriarchal power-structures. Interestingly, Connell (2005) regards nationalist movements as one of the important arenas where defence of gender inequality and patriarchal structures take place (Connell 2005: p. 2015). In conclusion, I would suggest that the Sweden Democrat – as a masculinised subject of defence – defends the Swedish nation and culture in the sense of a specific ethnocentric and patriarchal system of power.

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[22] [D]en nationalistiska principen [ä]r central och bör eftersträvas i största möjliga utsträckning över hela världen. Låt alla folk vara herrar i eget hus.

7 Concluding Remarks

The aim of this thesis has been to present a critical feminist analysis of the discourse of the Sweden Democrats through a focus on axes of differences and their intersections, emotions and power relations. Through the following research questions I have strived to reach a critical feminist understanding of the party's texts: How are axes of difference, such as gender, sexuality, class, 'race', ethnicity and nation, manifested in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats? How are power relations articulated within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats and how are different individuals and groups positioned within these discursive power structures? What role do emotions play in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats? Below I will summarise my conclusions in relation to each of these three research questions before I proceed to remarks on a more general level.

Arguably, the nation is a highly central axis of difference within the analysed empirical material. For the Sweden Democrats the nation and the nationalist principle are central factors around which their politics revolve. Indeed, the nation surfaces in the discourse again and again and is repeatedly called upon to legitimise opinions and political proposals. However, the category of nation is very hard to differentiate from 'race' and ethnicity, respectively. These three categories are strongly interwoven and mutually define each other. Preferably, according to the discourse of the Sweden Democrats, consistency should exist between the biological composition of the population, the ethnic composition of the population and the geographical boundaries of the nation-state.

To claim that the Sweden Democrats prefer a certain biological or 'racial' composition of the population within the nation-state may be controversial. However, as I have shown, certain biological heritage are believed to 'ensure' certain cultural traits, values and identities, while other biological heritage are believed to preclude them or make their realisation substantially harder. This belief in a connection between biology and cultural identities and practices make me conclude that a desire for 'racial' purity runs as an undercurrent in the discourse of the party. In other words, the party's dissociation from racism is not entirely trustworthy.

The discourse surrounding gender and sexuality can partly be understood in relation to the desire for consistency between biology, culture and nation. The Sweden Democrats position the reproductive heterosexual relationship with traditional roles between the sexes as the most successful formula for an ensured high nativity rate and the successful nurturing of children. Since the birth of children is believed to be central for the reproduction of the national population and in the longer run national survival, the party must emphasise a complementary dual-sex model and heterosexuality.

The above mentioned axes of differences can also be understood in relation to the production of boundaries. In various ways these intersecting social categories are drawn upon to construct demarcations between individuals and groups. Notions about ethnic traits, surfaced most clearly within the discourse about the cultural differences between 'Swedes' and immigrants (especially Muslims), are used to legitimise a discourse of ethnic separation. Here gender intersects with ethnicity to form one of the most powerful 'signs' of cultural difference. Perceptions regarding the position of women and cultures' different accomplishments in the field of gender equality serve as proof of ethnic incompatibility, particularly between Muslims and 'Westerners' and/or 'Swedes'. Further, notions of 'other' cultures' patterns of inequality between women and men are used to legitimise certain culture's lower placements within a form of cultural hierarchy. In other words, 'gender-equal' cultures are placed higher while 'gender-unequal' cultures are placed lower. It is also suggested that the alleged 'under-development' of other cultures could influence upon the native 'Swedish' culture and ruin its achievements.

Sexuality has a somewhat different function within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats than gender, although the two social categories are inevitably bound up with each other. As already argued, the Sweden Democrats' resistance to reproductive rights can be understood in relation to their belief in the necessity of heterosexual reproductive couple-hood for the biological survival of the nation. However, the negative attitudes towards homosexuality may also reflect the desire to preserve a particular logic to the social system. Homosexuality or other expressions of sexuality beyond heteronormativity challenge notions of essentialism and given norms. By disrupting the given, such as dual-sex couple-hood, queer expressions open up for alternatives and change. Acknowledging fluidity of any kind is dangerous to the Sweden Democrats since it could lead to the questioning of one of the fundamental premises for the party's image of the world – the existence of essential 'entities' (identity, culture, nations), norms and values that are consistent through time and space.

The category of class has surfaced most clearly in my analysis of the 'Swede' and *folkhemmet*. The image of the 'Swede' is that of an economically underprivileged person, albeit with an unquestioned belonging in the national collectivity. A focus is put on this figure's precarious economical position while its strengths in terms of 'ethnic' resources are neglected. In contrast, the class-position of immigrants is rarely mentioned except in cases of alleged conflict between the interests of 'Swedish' and 'foreign' workers. The result is an ignorance of potentially unfair economic structures and class-relations within Sweden. Instead, emphasis is put on images of ethnic conflict. As a consequence, immigrants are blamed for 'Swede's' potentially difficult economic position. For instance, in the discourse on folkhemmet, rhetoric efforts are concentrated upon the problem of the immigrant 'other' instead of upon class-related oppression. As a consequence, the 'Swede' is victimised, also compared to 'immigrant' members of the working-class, and its victim-hood is used to legitimise the party's racist rhetoric regarding resources directed at 'immigrants' instead of native members of the population. Therefore, rather than class being an axis of difference creating

inequality within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats, class-rhetoric is played upon in order to legitimise inequality between the ethnic 'Swede' and the foreign 'other'.

The image of the 'Swede' as a victim brings me to the question of power. Despite the party's attempts to portray the 'Swede' as a victim of the consequences of immigration, the position of the 'Swede' is, arguably, a position of power. The discursive power surrounding the 'Swede' originates primarily from this figure's embodiment of the norm. The 'Swede' and 'Swedish' culture is the parameter against which everyone else and everything else are judged and sorted. Accordingly, demands for integration are refuted for 'ethnic Swedes' while immigrants are required to undergo processes of assimilation.

The power of the 'Swede' also has a more concrete material aspect. Citizenship means the right to physical presence within a given area, in this case the Swedish nation-state. It also entails the rights to welfare benefits, such as medical care. However, in the discourse of the Sweden Democrats, an immigrants' acquirement of a 'Swedish' citizenship does not ensure her/his existence in Sweden on equal terms with ethnic 'Swedes'. According to the party, resources in the realm of education and culture, such as language and customs, should be reserved for practices associated with the traditions of ethnic 'Swedes'. Also, as already mentioned, the discourse surrounding the nation's biological reproduction has an aspect of power – ethnic, heterosexual 'Swedes are empowered to reproduce while the reproduction of immigrants and homosexuals is cast in negative light and/or hindered compared to the reproduction of heterosexuals.

In relation to the question of power, I also wish to highlight the position of the Swedish man. The heterosexual 'Swedish' man is the only figure within the discourse that escapes being placed in positions of lack, such as immigrants and homosexuals, or of complementariness or as national symbols, such as Swedish women. Generally the 'Swedish' man is peculiarly invisible within the discourse of the Sweden Democrats. Yet, when he appears it is as a defender of the very structure which places him in a position of completeness. Therefore, I would suggest that the 'Swedish' masculinity can be seen as a central node of power within the analysed material.

Intersectional theory in general and Yuval-Davis' (2006) theory about gender and nation have been central tools for my analysis of the structure of the Sweden Democrats' discourse. However, Ahmed's (2004) theory of emotion has given answers concerning the appeal of the rhetoric of a populist radical right party such as the Sweden Democrats. The emotions of fear, love and hate give the discourse of the Sweden Democrats a feeling of urgency and importance while, simultaneously giving an air of legitimacy to speech and acts that could otherwise appear intolerant or even hateful.

The emotional aspect of the party's discourse appears most clearly within discourse concerning threats against and defence of the nation and/or the national population. A fusion of the emotions of 'love' for the 'Swedish' nation and the 'Swedish' collectivity and fear of their destruction, justifies actions for their defence. As shown, what I have chosen to call the masculinised subject of defence is surrounded by an air of nobleness – rather than being an advocate of racist

speech or acts he is a symbolic soldier acting in defence of his country and his peers.

It is my belief that the emotional aspect is what may make the populist radical right and its messages alluring to its supporters. I would therefore suggest further research on emotions in relation to adherents to these and similar movements. A deeper understanding of the appeal of racist sentiments may be especially important in projects whose goal is to counteract people's adherence to racist thought. Put differently, by identifying the deeper mechanisms behind the racist subjects' commitment to racism, strategies to work against these mechanisms may be found and, hopefully, the commitment to racism may be challenged. Naturally, the same may apply to commitment to other oppressing intersecting structures such as sexism and/or homophobia.

On a deeper level, the discourse of the Sweden Democrats can be seen as an example of a commitment to, and defence of, essentialism and fixity in the social realm. Hence, the party's strong embracement of the given and the refutation of change. This logic can be seen as one of the primary barriers against the realisation of antiracist and feminist visions of hybridity and the transgressing of oppressing social boundaries. Gender may not be the axis of difference which defines the discourse and practices of the populist radical right. Yet, because populist radical right party such as the Sweden Democrats can be seen as a hindering force against the realisation of progressive social change in several areas with importance for the feminist movement, their existence cannot be ignored by feminist theoreticians.

Conversely, I would argue that the questioning of given norms and existing power structures common within gender studies can be a fruitful contribution to the traditional study-field concentrating on the populist radical right. For instance, Rydgren's (2004) thoughts on the monism of the populist radical right have been a useful point of departure for my study. At the same time, perspectives brought with me from the field of gender studies has enabled me to analyse the monist structure of the Sweden Democrats in a deeper way, as well as pointed to nuances within the structure with regards to the different axes of difference nation, ethnicity, 'race', gender, sexuality and class. They have also pointed me to a possible explanation of the appeal of the monist structure – the power of emotions as cultural phenomena.

Last, I wish to briefly return to my own role as a research subject. The researcher's starting-points and choices inevitably influence the results of a research project. This analysis as well as my conclusions are, above all, characterised by my critical attitude towards the Sweden Democrats and my desire to present a critical understanding of the party's discourse, a desire originally arising from an ethical stance against unequal social relations. However, as in all research, influence is inevitable and does not necessarily de-validate the research. My theoretical perspectives and choices of focus and method have enabled me to reach certain partial insights in relation to my subject. It is my hope that it can be of value for anyone with an interest in the phenomenon of populist radical right parties in general, the Sweden Democrats in particular and the issues actualised by these parties' presence on the social scene.

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