

How the story of control limits the reproduction of knowledge:

A study of narratives in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan

Jonas Linde

Degree of Master of Science (Two Years) in Human Ecology: Culture, Power and Sustainability 30 ECTS

CPS: International Master's Programme in Human Ecology Human Ecology Division Department of Human Geography Faculty of Social Sciences

Lund University

Author: Jonas Linde Supervisor: Alf Hornborg Term: Spring Term 2020

Department:	Human Geography, Human Ecology Division
Address:	Geocentrum I, Sölvegatan 10, 223 62 Lund
Telephone:	+46 46 222 17 59
Supervisor	Alf Hornborg
Supervisor:	
Title and Subtitle:	How the story of control limits the reproduction of knowledge: A study of narratives in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan
Author:	Jonas Linde
Examination:	Master's thesis (Two Year)
Term:	Spring Term 2020

Abstract:

Responses to combating worsening climate change are legitimized through narratives employed in government policy which build on existing master narratives about climate change produced in the subpolitics of international mega-science mainly influenced by IPCC as an expert authority. In Sweden the climate law forces the government to produce a Climate Policy Action Plan (CPAP) every four years that seeks to show how the set net zero emission target by 2045 is to be reached. This thesis identifies storylines, narratives and the use of archetypical characters employed in the CPAP, focusing on Sweden and climate change. For comparison, material from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and oppositional parties is used to reveal the power effects of narratives and discourse. Sweden is portrayed as a frontrunner that should show how a transition to become fossil-free is possible while maintaining economic growth, competitiveness, and welfare. The results suggest a mutual dependency between the state and industry which can through the theory of 'accumulation by decarbonization' explain the use of narratives that promote Swedish industry exports and policies that seek to redirect state capital to interests of the private sector. The use of universal victim categories has a de-politicizing effect that maintains the post-political condition by avoiding antagonism and endorsing new technology as a solution to manage CO2. Measuring climate change in quantifiable targets is an attempt at a discursive problem closure that allow politicians to maintain an image of being in control, legitimize policy and measure progress. I argue that democratic governments are likely to be biased towards reproducing the universal story of control which suggests that the reproduction of knowledge (in government policy) rests on power rather than truth.

Keywords: Climate Change, Master narratives, Story of control, Discourse, Storylines, Swedish climate policy, Depoliticization, Apocalyptic imaginary, Frontrunner, Sweden, Green Keynesianism, Power, Knowledge

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Flora, the badgers, all my classmates, Alf for supervising and Vasna for the support.

List of abbreviations and actors

CPAP – The Climate Policy Action Plan ("Den klimatpolitiska handlingsplanen"). This refers to the first CPAP produced by the Department of Environment (Miljödepartementet, 2019). The chapters included in the study can be found in the appendices and are referred to as CPAP followed by the number of the chapter. The version of the documents included in the appendices differs from the original with an added indication of numbers (for references), and some sections of text and graphics are removed.

The Government is currently a coalition government consisting of The Greens (Miljöpartiet, MP) and The Social democrats (Socialdemokraterna, S). The Liberals (Liberalerna, L) and the Center party (Centerpartiet, C) are not in government, but act as supporting parties rather than opposition (SVT, 2020). Stefan Löfven (S) is the prime minister and Isabella Lövin (MP) is the head of the Department of the Environment, they are the main signatories of the CPAP.

NVV – Refers to the short version of source material produced by Naturvårdsverket (SEPA) for the government to use as a base for the production of the CPAP, "Underlag för den klimatpolitiska handlingsplanen" (Naturvårdsverket, 2019b).

The oppositional parties:

M - The Conservative Party - Moderaterna. This refers to the policy document: Meijer (2019).

SD – Swedish Democrats – Sverigedemokraterna. This refers to the policy document: Kinnunen (2019).

KD – The Christian Democrats – Kristdemokraterna. This refers to the policy document: Ottosson (2019).

V – The Left Party – Vänsterpartiet. This refers to the policy document: Holm (2019).

- CC Climate Change
- CE Civic Environmentalism
- CPC The (Swedish) Climate Policy Council (Det klimatpolitiska rådet)
- EM Ecological Modernization
- ES Eco-socialism
- ETS Emission trading scheme
- GG Green Governmentality
- GHG Greenhouse gas
- GK Green Keynesianism
- GW Global Warming
- IF Industrial Fatalism
- IPCC Intergovernmental panel on climate change
- NDC Nationally determined contribution
- NET Negative emission technology
- SDG Sustainable development goals
- SEPA Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket)
- SSNC Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (Naturskyddsföreningen)
- UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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Introduction

Climate change is certain yet uncertain. We can witness the consequences through media and scientific reporting, where predictions become reality on a daily basis. The IPCC have gathered the science and produced reports displaying the chances of success following proposed scenario-pathways of emissions reductions (IPCC, 2018). But the IPCC is not only producing neutral science, they are producing what Beck & Mahony calls politics of anticipation that shapes the future through the production of these pathways (Beck & Mahony, 2017). Behind the scenario pathways are models that tell certain stories ready-baked with assumptions and moral choices (Beck, 2018). The dominant story tells us that we can measure and mitigate climate change through national decarbonization, negative emission technologies (NET's), and transfers of carbon on offsetting markets. The story is legitimized by the apparatus of the UNFCCC through the COP (Conference of the Parties) where Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) are constructed and establish normative net zero emissions targets that governments now aim to reach by 2030-2050 (UNFCCC, 2015), based on the IPCC pathways. The subtext of the story tells us that as long as we can quantify global climate change into neatly measurable targets, the crisis can be managed through political reformation. Yet uncertainties remain on the physical possibilities of staying below the 1,5 degrees global average temperature increase target of the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015). It is difficult to translate this abstraction into physical consequences for young and future generations. The UN emissions gap report (UNEP 2019) tells us that the committed NDC's are not sufficient to stay below 1,5C and hitting 2,0C might have potentially irreversible runaway consequences (Steffen et al., 2018). The planned production of fossil fuels (the source of the problem) is nowhere in line with the proposed pathway scenarios (SEI, IISD, ODI, Climate Analytics, CICERO & UNEP, 2019). NET's may not be possible to employ at scale and there are many uncertainties and trade-offs in pursuing such a pathway (Anderson & Peters, 2016). Carbon offsetting has been shown to not contribute to mitigation and has problematic colonial tendencies (Anderson, 2012; Cames et al., 2016; Lyons & Westoby, 2014; Watt, 2017). There are also no guarantees that countries like China, Australia, Russia, Brazil, and others will raise their commitments and follow up on their pledges to the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015). Climate change often seems to be presented as a manageable problem, but is in reality filled with uncertainties, bad trade-offs, and worse outcomes. Yet national legislation moves forward based on the subpolitics of the international mega-science apparatus (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015). In Swedish climate policy, Sweden presents itself as a frontrunner who has adopted a climate law, a net zero emissions target by 2045 (in line with the Paris Agreement), and a will to show that it is possible to transition to a fossilfree economy while maintaining competitiveness and welfare (Miljödepartementet, 2019). This story does not align with a large-scale climate stabilization project that can face the uncertainties of climate change and guarantee the safety of those at risk. The policy plan doesn't add up to the necessary mitigation efforts that industrialized nations agreed on in Paris (Anderson, Broderick, & Stoddard, 2020), nor do the proposed actions allow Sweden to appear in a frontrunner position if climate responsibility is measured as climate debt (Warlenius, 2017). Puzzled by the contradictions of conflicting narratives of climate change from governments and science, this research seeks to analyze the main narratives of climate change in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan (CPAP), the power effects of these narratives, and the forces behind their employment.

Research question

My research question is: What power effects do the central master narratives, more specific narratives, and storylines about Sweden's relation to climate change, as expressed in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan, have and why are they employed?

Orientation, Purpose, and Aim

I am doing research from a climate justice perspective, with the aim of producing knowledge that is valuable not only to academia but to the climate justice movements and citizens. Russel (2015) writes that any claims of science being neutral or apolitical are reproducing dominant subjectivity (Russell, 2015, p. 224). What he calls militant research is the extreme form of recognizing that all knowledge production is political, being radically open about this, and purposefully designing your research. Russel rejects the academic scholar producing disembodied "dead" knowledge and instead wants us to "reimagine the university as a politicized machine that works to produce and amplify different perceptions of the world, to find ways to interrupt and change the rules of everyday lives" (Russell, 2015, p. 227). Burman (2018) writes that "scholar activism asks us to 'identify our deepest ethical-political convictions" and that we should see our research as "the art of producing tools you can fight with" (Russel, 2015) quoted in (Burman, 2018, p. 61). This orients me as a researcher and in turn determines my choice of methods. My purpose is to reveal and critically analyze power dynamics in play in governmental climate policy documents. This is a contribution to activist knowledge that seeks to challenge power. It is also a contribution to the academic discourse on power, narratives, and the social construction and politics of climate change. My intention is to reveal how the current policy regime reproduces power that maintains global climate injustice. My hypothesis is that there are power dynamics and behaviors that influence how the policy-makers produce policy that stands in the way of achieving climate justice. Addressing this might help transform climate policy.

Structure of the thesis

1. I first introduce the field of academics studying the discourse and politics of climate change in Sweden with a literature review and background section. 2. Then I present my theoretical framework based on four different but overlapping perspectives on power, culture, narratives, and politics of discourse. Thereafter I explain three key concepts that I will use in the discussion. 3. The methodological framework, with the focus on revealing power and culture in narrative, is presented. This is based on a narrative ontology, and a comparison between the storyline method and the narrative policy framework (NPF). 4. The data and the method of data collection are presented. 5. The storyline and NPF method is presented in more detail, followed by a critique and limitations of methods and methodology. 6. I present the findings generated by the NPF method as an introduction to the data. 7. Then the interpretation of the results is discussed together with the presentation of the storylines, comparison with previous studies, and the use of key concepts that deepen the analysis in an attempt to answer the research questions. This section is presented in six parts. 8. Conclusions and summary of the contribution of the study.

Literature review and background

The social construction of climate change – or the discursive aspects of it – has been studied with different methods and in different locations that highlight different aspects of the same or similar phenomena. In this context, discourse seems to be generally understood as a "specific ensembles of ideas, concepts and categorization that are produced, reproduced and transformed in particular set of practices" (Hajer, 1995) quoted in (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007). There are more studies that focus on the politics of environmental discourse in the UK (Hajer, 1995), US (Levy & Spicer, 2013) and international discourse (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007, 2019) than on Sweden or other smaller countries, according to Anshelm and Hultman (2015) who have tried to fill this gap. To limit the scope of this literature review and background, I will focus on the Swedish context. The book Discourses of Global Climate Change (2015), by Anshelm and Hultman is probably the most comprehensive study of Sweden. It is based on a large empirical study of 3500 editorials published between 2006-2009, from which the authors identify and categorize four prominent discourses, Industrial Fatalism (IF), Green Keynesianism (GK), Eco-Socialism (ES) and Climate Skepticism (CS). They find IF as the most influential and GK comes second. Both discourses can be seen as part of Ecological Modernization (EM) also studied by Hajer (1995). EM, which had its breakthrough in the 1970's in the UK, portrays environmental problems as calculable through cost-benefit analysis. The anticipation and prevention strategy gained credibility through EM. It treats environmental problems as a positive-sum game that allows economic growth to continue and "assumes that the existing political, economic and social institutions can internalize the care for the environment" (Hajer, 1995, pp. 25-26). Hajer found that EM can be seen as either a technocratic management project (IF) or a form of institutional learning (GK). IF became prominent in Sweden in the 90's. It uses climate change to promote technocratic management solutions, nuclear power, economic growth, and a business-as-usual agenda. Green Keynesianism (GK) treats climate change as an institutional crisis but believes it can be handled through big state investments and regulations. Climate change can in GK be seen as a business opportunity that doesn't threaten the economy (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, pp. 61-75). Based on Hajer's work (1995), another important contribution on the Swedish context has been made by Zannakis (2015), who studied Swedish political discourse on climate change between 1990 and 2010 with a focus on how the image of Sweden as a leader is constructed. Zannakis ties this to the struggle between competing storylines that he calls Opportunity, Sacrifice, and Ecological Justice. He finds the Opportunity storyline being most fully institutionalized in Swedish policies, while the other two have an oppositional position. The Opportunity storyline says "Taking the lead into the carbonfree society implies economic advantages and increased market shares for the (our) industry" (Zannakis, 2015). It suggests that tackling climate change is an economic opportunity. This ties it together well with the GK and EM discourse. Zannakis contributes with a view on how the frontrunner position of what is considered good environmental performers is constructed and made possible by adhering to specific discursive practices, and suggests that it is not simply a trait of EM but a development that comes from EM being challenged by the Green Governmentality (GG) and the Civic Environmentalism (CE) discourse, the latter tied to the Ecological Justice storyline (Zannakis, 2015). Zannakis claims that Sweden's construction of climate responsibility and the very reason behind the central "urge to go ahead" that he found is coming from the Ecological Justice storyline,

which has its roots among the Social Democrats' (S) basic values of equality, solidarity, and justice. But this storyline is no longer institutionalized, as an effect of the previous center-liberal-conservative coalition in government (Zannakis, 2015). The Green Governmentality (GG) and Civic Environmentalism (CE) discourses are also studied by Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2007) in the international context. GG is mutually constitutive with EM, it is the discourse of global centralized multilateral administration of climate change tied to mega-science and the business community, based on Foucault's concept of governmentality (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007). Civic Environmentalism (CE) consists of two strains of counter-narratives, one a reformist version also known as "participatory multilateralism" and the other a discourse of radical resistance against structural inequalities that challenges neoliberal approaches to climate change governance and demands a fundamental transformation of the system (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007). CE can be seen as the closest neighbor to the Eco-Socialism (ES) discourse in the Swedish context, which is opposed to economic growth and large-scale industrial sociotechnical solutions, instead promoting small-scale renewables and decentralization. According to ES, climate change cannot be resolved without creating a different economic system. The ES discourse was marginalized in the 1990's and has remained prominent mostly in alternative media, even within the mainstream environmental movement, where actors such as the SSNC (Naturskyddsföreningen) adhered to the EM discourse and ES was thus no more influential than the Climate Skeptics (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, pp. 81-84). Since 2015 and the signing of the Paris agreement (UNFCCC, 2015), a lot has happened in Sweden and internationally in public discourse with influences from new IPCC reports (2018), the Fridays for future youth movement led by Greta Thunberg, and an increasing number of catastrophic natural disasters with record heat periods, fires, droughts, and floods around the world and in Sweden. These events, one could assume, would also influence the dominant discourse in government and policymaking. But this study will reveal a remarkable continuity from previous studies.

Other related studies of the Swedish context worth mentioning are Knaggård (2014), who has shown that scientific uncertainty only has a marginal influence on Swedish climate policy-making: when dealing with uncertainty the most prominent approach by policy-makers is to rely on established institutional knowledge that only leads to incremental changes by sticking to actions that are seen as politically possible. Malone, Hultman, Anderson, and Romeiro (2017) have found that synchronization of existing national narratives with large-scale energy transformations is a particularly successful government strategy. They write "If government policies, as announced and implemented, explicitly make connections that people accept as relevant, the policies will likely be more effective," which suggests that national socio-political culture and narratives has effect on the success of policy implementation (Malone et al., 2017, p. 75). Isenhour (2013) tries to shoot down Giddens' paradox (see Giddens, 2009) with the example of Sweden as a country that cares for climate justice. Giddens' paradox says that most people will not be concerned with climate change until it is too late, because serious action requires a direct personal and tangible experience of distress. Isenhour argues that Sweden is a case where concern for global climate justice serves as a base for action without direct experience of climate change. As Zannakis (2015) found, there are some basic values of justice in the history of Swedish climate politics, but Isenhour's study is problematic in its tendency to make generalizations about the whole nation as caring for climate justice while,

for example, Anshelm and Hultman (2015) find these concerns marginal. This doesn't translate very well into a general and sufficient care for climate justice. A better explanation for Sweden's urge to "care" for climate might be that a wealthy and privileged society with less immediate trouble of its own has more time and resources to invest in solving future problems and making sure the country is well positioned to take advantage of future markets, as this study will suggest.

Theoretical framework

In order to analyze the narratives in the Swedish CPAP I rest my study on a theoretical framework that is based on a few different but overlapping perspectives on politics, power, and culture: Narrative power (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019), Finding culture in narrative (Hill, 2005), the Fourth face of power (Digeser, 1992), and the Politics of environmental discourse and storylines (Hajer, 1995). Key concepts I am using are: Universal stories of control and helplessness (Stone, 2002), De-politicization (Swyngedouw, 2010), and Accumulation by decarbonization (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008).

Narrative Power and Ontology

Narrative power is the capacity of narratives to produce effects and can analytically be differentiated into layers of narratives where some are more fundamental and change more slowly. The term narrative refers to a form of discourse with a sequential order of claims that connects events in a way that becomes intelligible and meaningful. Narrative can be seen as a subclass of discourse, and narrative power as a subclass of discursive power (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). Narratives matter because they are performative; they give power to actors by defining who has more power and who has less (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019) and by telling us that we have a choice of action (Stone, 2002). If the story presented makes common sense, the exercise of power can be so effective that it goes unnoticed (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). Narratives can also be seen as a storytelling structure with a setting, plot, characters, and moral (Jones, Shanahan, & McBeth, 2014).

The narrative ontology states that the world is imbued with meaning through narratives and master narratives, which are stories that actors tell about themselves and others (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). Actors construct narratives that fit with the master narratives they find themselves in and are disciplined by. This is different from an individualist ontology view where actors employ narratives more freely without being disciplined by master narratives. The individualist ontology is criticized for granting too much agency to individual actors (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). Master narratives are deeply cemented or institutionalized through policies and norms in international politics and national institutions. In order to act strategically in this world of narratives, one must mobilize the existing master narratives that are already accepted by the target audience. This can allow one's position to appear commonsensical and become dominant (Gustafsson, Hagström, & Hanssen, 2019; Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). When a narrative becomes cemented it has the power to make some actions appear legitimate and others not. If a critical mass of actors considers a narrative to be common sense, then it can be seen as a dominant master narrative (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). Counter-narratives that challenge the

dominant master narratives can also be constructed, and their success on the path to become dominant depends on how and by whom they are accepted (Gustafsson et al., 2019).

Finding culture in narrative

The master narratives that I am looking for are a form of implicit cultural knowledge, or how our common sense is constituted by narratives about ourselves. Jane Hill writes that "narratives are not merely overtly 'about' some 'content' such as what happened when, where, and to whom, but that they somehow make public the covert underlying presuppositions that organize the worlds in which speakers live" (Hill, 2005, p. 157). The unspoken assumptions that constitute our understanding of the world that lie underneath the explicit is a form of implicit cultural knowledge. In this sense, master narratives are cultural knowledge and thus a way to identify culture and power in narratives. The cultural in narrative is an agreement within the genre of discourse about what knowledge already exists and is therefore unnecessary to utter or even avoided on purpose, to build coherence. It is the gaps and the silences in narratives that can reveal what is commonly known (Hill, 2005).

The Fourth Face of Power

In the history of theorizing power at least four ways of looking at it have been revealed, here called the faces of power (Digeser, 1992). The first three faces see power as an effect of intentional action where subject A has power over B either through direct means, controlling the agenda, or manipulation. The fourth face of power does not focus on intention, emphasizing instead the unintentional consequence of intentional action. It asks the question: what kind of subjects are being produced? This means that both A and B are produced as subjects by an omnipresent power that is reproduced and continuously constructed by both A and B through practices and interactions that affect norms and values. A does not choose to exercise this power; it is simply part of the interactions that shape the behavior of agents. The fourth face of power has been theorized by Foucault, who did not aim to form a theory of power but rather saw that power exists everywhere in different forms and calls for its own particular analysis (Digeser, 1992). According to theories of the disciplinary effects of power, otherness becomes a target that shapes the norm through self-discipline. Identifying deviation from the norm is a sign of the effects of normalization (Digeser, 1992). This study sees master narratives as a form of disciplinary power. Actors self-discipline their narrativization about themselves and the world as an effect of master narratives that constitute the reality or truth that we live in. Intentional narrativizations (both narratives and counter-narratives) produced by agents operate within the first three faces of power, but they are also disciplined by master narratives and other disciplinary power that shape what it is possible for subjects holding certain positions to utter.

Politics of Environmental Discourse

There is an overlap between the power of master narratives, the fourth face of power, and Hajer's (1995) view on the power of discourse. Discourse is not a medium through which actors can manipulate the world, it is rather part of and constituting the subject (and the subject's interests) and functions to structure behavior by both enabling and constraining it (Hajer, 1995, pp. 48-49). Discourses come with their own disciplinary power through which the discursive order is maintained. What Hajer attempts as a policy analyst is to reveal how actors reproduce and manage their own discursive positions in the world (Hajer, 1995, p. 51). This understanding fits well with a view of actors employing narratives that manage their own positions and being disciplined by master narratives that are present in a specific order of discourse. Hajer writes that we should not treat environmental problems as correctly defined physical issues. Political analysis should seek to find where and how certain perceptions emerge and are reproduced. The discursive strategies used must be seen in the light of the social and cognitive context. The problem is usually contradictory and ambivalent, and when dealing with this, policymakers have to produce credible and acceptable strategies that reduce complexities and generate trust in the solutions. Policy-makers thus need to define the problem in a way that produces proper targets and to find ways to contain the social conflict over the problem. In other words, politicians try to maintain an image of being in control and frame issues in a way that can achieve a discursive problem closure (Hajer, 1995, pp. 22-23). The details of these discursive strategies are found in the narrative elements that act as useful tools to reveal power and uncover how problems are produced and complexities reduced.

Narrative and Agency

Agency is discussed at two different levels in this study. The first is agency produced in narratives given to actors using narrative power that makes some actors appear as more powerful than others. In this sense narrative is performative (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). I call this narrative agency. The second level is the agency of the narrator, whom Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2007) calls the discursive agent, referring to the agent's ability to articulate and set the terms for discourse. I call this agency. Agency can be seen as capacity, i.e., what an actor is capable of doing. Autonomy is the use of agency, which indicates to what degree an actor chooses to act on its capabilities (Digeser, 1992). Hajer writes that actors are not entirely free. They can actively produce and transform discourse, but they must act within existing social structures, political contexts, and discursive constructions (i.e., master narratives).

Storylines and the political power of ambiguity

What Hajer calls storylines are elements of discourse that work as mechanisms for creating and maintaining discourse. Political change can emerge when existing storylines are challenged and new understandings appear. The capability of producing and using storylines is a form of agency which is limited by finding appropriate and acceptable storylines. What is seen as appropriate is an effect of the self-disciplinary fourth face of power and works through expectations of communication within established orders of discourse (or master narratives) regarding what can be said by whom.

It is unlikely that actors in politics are aware of all the smallest details of all problems; this creates a need for translation from scientific discourse to political or non-scientific discourse. In this translation there is a reduction or loss of meaning where the details and conditionality of arguments are lost. Hajer argues that regulatory success depends on this reduction of complexity that allows for multiple interpretation and discursive problem closure. He writes that "story-lines are narratives on social reality through which elements from many different

domains are combined and that provide actors with a set of symbolic references that suggest a common understanding" (Hajer, 1995, p. 62). The point of a storyline is that it works as a metaphor or symbolic reference to a larger narrative that does not need to be explained in full. This creates a simplified discourse with possibilities of forming coalitions. Storylines are in this sense devices through which actors position themselves (Hajer, 1995, pp. 65-66). When storylines are used frequently, they become a form of trope that works to rationalize an approach towards a problem that makes it seem coherent (Hajer, 1995, p. 63). There is always some ambiguity in what these symbolic references mean, and it is partly from this multi-interpretability that the political power of texts is derived (Hajer, 1995, p. 61; Stone, 2002, p. 179).

Key theoretical concepts

Universal stories of decline, helplessness, and control

Previous policy research has identified structures of stories that suggest universal narratives, such as stories of decline, helplessness, and control (Stone, 2002). These universal stories are fundamental layers of narration that produce narrative agency and are related to master narratives.

De-politicization

Swyngedouw (2010) argues that climate change discourse is the main place where the "post-political frame is forged" (Swyngedouw, 2010, p. 216) through the formulation of a global humanitarian project where political aspects are forgotten. The de-politicization happens in the framing of environmental problems as universally threatening and play on ecologies of fear. He writes that "apocalyptic imaginaries are extraordinarily powerful at disavowing social conflict and antagonism." (Swyngedouw, 2010, p. 219) This prevents a proper political framing of the problem and makes climate change into a depoliticized populist imaginary with no proper political subject. It becomes a fight between humanity and CO2 that is managed through dialogical consensual practices where no voice is given to the excluded and alternative futures, and thus any antagonism is removed (Swyngedouw, 2010).

Accumulation by decarbonization

Bumpus and Liverman (2008) apply the concept of accumulation by dispossession to carbon trading and call it *accumulation by decarbonization*. The concept of accumulation by dispossession, as a form of redistribution of wealth, is theorized by Harvey (2005), who used it to explain "the conversion of collective property, such as common land to private ownership, and colonial takeover of natural resources facilitated by the state through law and military authority" (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008, p. 142). Bumpus and Liverman (2008) write that new forms accumulation by dispossession are established through four steps: "privatization and commodification, financialization (especially through speculative trading fees), the management of crises in the interest of the private sector and the state acting as the agent of redistribution and regulation" (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008, p. 142). It is the last two steps that are especially relevant in this study. Due to the profits that can be made in carbon trading and other ways of reducing emissions that also redistribute wealth, this process can be thought of as *accumulation by decarbonization*.

Unit	Definition	Function/Effect
Storylines	A word or short articulation that works as a reference to a common understanding that would be much longer to explain in full.	Small building blocks of/or references to narratives and master narratives.
Narratives/ stories	A sequence of events or claims that becomes intelligible as a whole.	Manages the positions of actors through its telling.
Master narratives	Constitutive of our understanding of ourselves and others in the world, deeply institutionalized and cemented.	Disciplines the construction of narratives (limits the reproduction of knowledge).
Universal Stories	Universal structures commonly found in culturally specific stories.	Produces or reduces narrative agency.
Discourse	Particular ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations	Connects data to previous studies and understandings.

Table 0. Overview of analytical distinctions related to narratives used in the theoretical framework.

Methodology, methods, and limitations

Philosophy of science

Hagström and Gustafsson (2019) side with what they call a critical constructivist position, which states that "the material circumstances ascribed causality in realist accounts do not exercise any power independently of the stories that are told to make sense of them" (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019, p. 388). They recognize that phenomena such as climate change have physical effects that are independent of the stories told about them, but the narratives that unfold around the phenomena have the power to shape policies and the ways we deal with them (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). This view seeks to recognize the power of the researcher as a narrator, who co-constructs or (intra-acts) reality together with the discursive and material dimensions through the construction of certain analytical tools and methods. I suggest that the phenomena under study is real, but this reality is produced through an 'intra-action' by looking at phenomena with tools (methods) that reveal specific aspects of this reality that rely on the stories we tell about them. The use of 'intra-action' rather than inter-action is used to point to the object existing as a product of the relationship between the entities that make the phenomena, the researcher and the object together makes an agential cut the defines the object discursively. There is a pre-existing material reality that matters, but no pre-existing discursive object, and therefore no interaction between separate entities, but an 'intra-action' that co-produces phenomena in reality. Karen Barad (2003) names this Agential Realism, which I would argue is the best description of the underlying philosophical view of science in this research.

Methodological framework

Inspired by Hill (2005) and her approach to finding culture in narrative, I wanted to adapt and apply it to policy documents. To identify the narratives, I combined this approach with a storyline analysis (Hajer, 1995; Zannakis, 2015) and the narrative policy framework (NPF) (Jones et al., 2014), which is explained in more detail below and in appendix 1.1 and 1.2. The methodology follows this procedure:

1. Conduct the storyline analyses and comparisons of all data.

2. Conduct the NPF analysis and comparisons of all data.

3. Compare and combine results of method 1 and 2, guided by a narrative ontology and finding culture in narrative.

4. Write up results and discuss findings compared with previous studies and theory.



Figure 1. Illustration of methodology.

Roe (1994) used a method that compared policy narratives and counter-narratives to produce a meta-narrative that could lead to a shared understanding of a policy problem to enable decision-making in uncertain, complex, and polarized issues. I am using a similar approach but instead of enabling decision-making, I am trying to reveal power dynamics. Hajer (1995) writes that you need to know the counter-positions to understand the meaning of a policy text, since politics is about trying to position yourself and other actors in a certain way (Hajer, 1995, p. 53). I try to identify the meta- or master narratives shared between the actors, some explicitly and some implicitly, in the sense of not being rejected nor repeated but still relied on in the narrative construction as unspoken assumptions. These are, as Hill (2005) writes, a form of common sense that is deemed unnecessary to mention or that is strategically avoided. I try to reveal them as master narratives through comparison that relies on the relationships between the texts as a form of conversation where disagreements are expected to appear and agreements remain unspoken. The storyline method explained below also works to identify references to master narratives. By using analytical perspectives from multiple disciplines (International relations, Political Science, and Cultural Anthropology) that deal with similar aspects of reality (narrative/discourse), I am conducting a form of analytical triangulation that serves to increase the validity of the analytical process (Yin,

2014). By analyzing the empirical data using these methods, I try to identify aspects of narrative phenomena that can reveal a more in-depth understanding of culture and narrative power.

Motivation for choice of methods

In research on advertising, Escalas (2007) argues that narrative transportation can have greater power to persuade consumers than analytical arguments. Within the genre of policy documents, practical argumentation is probably the most important discursive element which actors consciously use and interact through (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2011), but Hill (2005) writes that narratives are often embedded in different types of discourse, for example, argumentative discourse. I believe that applying a narrative analysis on policy documents reveals properties of the text that a practical argumentation approach does not. My choice of methods is grounded in the view that narratives and narrative transportation is based on more fundamental power dynamics related to the fourth face of power. That is why analyzing master narratives, rather than explicit arguments, has a great potential to deal with the unquestioned assumptions (premises) that arguments build on. I believe the power of narratives deserve more attention than it has been given so far.

Methods of data collection, description of data and limitations

Data collection and sampling

The empirical material consists of publicly available governmental documents retrieved from the Swedish government website: regeringen.se, the parliamentary website: riksdagen.se, and the SEPA (Naturvårdsverket) website: naturvardsverket.se. I have used a purposive sampling strategy where the selection is based on the relevance to the research questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 408). This involves strategic sampling through multiple levels of selection. The first level means choosing what documents to include and the second is deciding which parts of the documents to interpret. The strategy used was also a form of snowball sampling, a progressive process that expands as the research goes on (Blaikie, 2009, p. 179). I started from the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan (CPAP) and then chose to include other related texts based on how they would help me answer the research question. This is a form of case study research where the CPAP is approached as a case or a sample where a policy narrative is revealed. By adding more cases (policy documents or sections of text) that can reveal insights about the same narrative phenomena, I could potentially reach a point of theoretical saturation when no further insights would be obtained about the narratives used by these actors. However, due to the limits of time available for the research process, I had to settle for a very limited number of cases. Another way to view this sampling method is to think of the different texts as slices of data that present different views (Blaikie, 2009, p. 179).

Description of selected data and context

I have chosen to study primarily the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan (CPAP) released in December 2019. It is a proposition from the government's Department of the environment in its communication with parliament,

seeking a broad agreement on the proposed climate policies. Since it is a publicly available document, it can also be seen as a way of communicating with the general public, representing the view of the government. The CPAP is a product of the climate policy framework and the Swedish climate law, which says that the government has to produce such a plan every four years, showing how the government plans to reach the climate goals (Miljödepartementet, 2019). The climate policy framework also requires an analysis of the CPAP by the Swedish Climate Policy Council (CPC), which reviews the plan's potential to reach the climate goal (achieving 'climate neutrality' by 2045). The CPC review was released in March 2020, concluding that the plan is not sufficient to meet the climate goal but needs further development to become a proper plan in which the outcome of actions can be measured (Klimatpolitiska rådet, 2020). This does not render the CPAP useless for this study; it reveals a lot about the government's understanding of climate change and the narrative representation of Sweden. The document is a 200-page description of planned actions and strategies to mitigate climate change, but it contains only one policy proposition, for which the government seeks a broad agreement in parliament (Miljödepartementet, 2019). The second level of data selection is choosing what part of the documents to include. For this purpose, the NPF analysis functions as a sampling strategy. A first read of the CPAP with the NPF analysis in mind allowed me to select parts of the policy document that would represent the main narratives and potentially reveal the relations between policy solutions and narrative structures. The other documents included as primary data are the short version of Naturvårdsverket's (SEPA) "Underlag till regeringens klimatpolitiska handlingsplan" (Naturvårdsverket, 2019b), which serves as source material for the production of the CPAP, and the parliamentary counter-proposals written by the oppositional parties as a response to the CPAP. Selecting short versions of longer-format texts focuses the research on the most important narratives chosen by the narrators and is more likely to exclude common cultural knowledge, while it also risks missing out on content from the full version of the documents.

The climate policy action plan (CPAP)

I chose to include chapter 3, 4, 10.1 and 11.2. Chapter three is a summary that represents the whole policy narrative and presents the story of Sweden becoming the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. Chapter four is a retelling of the government's understanding and interpretation of climate change. To be able to understand the relation between the general narrative and the specific policy solutions, I include chapter 10.1, which presents the main policy proposal, i.e., the integration of climate policy in all relevant policy areas and chapter 11.2, which focuses on the industry sector. It is important to note that the results of this study are a product of the data selection method, which means that the study mainly represents the chapters included.

Naturvårdsverket (NVV)

I use the short version of the report 6879, "Underlag till regeringens klimatpolitiska handlingsplan" (Naturvårdsverket, 2019b), which is the source material produced by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) for use by the Department of Environment in the production of the CPAP. The SEPA is an expert governmental agency, not elected by the people, which is assigned by the government to produce this material (Naturvårdsverket, 2020). The inclusion of the material allows for comparison that can reveal which elements of the CPAP derive from the NVV and which are autonomous products of the Department of Environment.

Counterpropositions: KD, M, SD, V

The choice to include counterpropositions from the parliamentary opposition derives from their potential to reveal aspects of power and meaning in the CPAP. Power is always accompanied by resistance, and where resistance is strong the exercise of power becomes clear (Digeser, 1992). Through comparison between the CPAP and the parliamentary opposition, certain power dynamics will be revealed while others remain hidden. The choice to include these actors reflects the need to analyze the dominant political power. The counterpropositions can be seen as part of the official public documentation of communication between actors in parliament and are an important part of the parliamentary process, but they do not represent the full communication between the actors involved. The counterproposals are all somewhat different in their content and structure, due to differences in what is included. KD and V write extensive responses that are more representative of their parties' complete positions on climate politics, while M and SD focus on responding to the specific policy proposal CPAP10.1. This makes comparison slightly more complicated and forced me to leave out some parts of the response from KD and V.

Method for referencing the empirical data

In referring to the empirical data, I use a slightly different system than the standard academic systems otherwise used. This system references lines of text and not pages. I have added numbers to indicate each line in the primary data documents included in the appendices. I use the abbreviation for the document, the chapter referred to, and a number indicating the specific line of text, for example (CPAP3:15), this refers to the Climate Policy Action Plan, chapter 3, line 15.

Methods of analysis and interpretation

This section explains how I use the NPF analysis and the storyline method to interpret the data and identify narratives.

The Narrative Policy Framework (NPF)

The narrative policy framework (NPF) is an analytical approach that looks for structural narrative elements (Beck, 2018; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Jones et al., 2014). My use of the framework differs slightly from the typical use, as I have chosen to focus on:

 Identifying a plot, a sequel of events, typically with a beginning, middle, and end. The plot connects characters and can be described by summarizing the overall development of claims or events throughout the policy text. Previous NPF studies have identified generalizable plots, such as a story of decline, helplessness, or control (Jones et al., 2014; Stone, 2002). 2. Identifying the archetypical characters: these are usually heroes, villains, and victims. The heroes are the potential fixers of the policy problem, the villains are those who (or that which) are/is causing the problem or harm to the victims, and victims are the ones who are harmed or potentially harmed. The characters do not have to be human, as any kind of abstraction can be identified as a character, for example 'the environment' (Jones et al., 2014).

Interpretation of narrative elements

The NPF framework comes from a positivist, structuralist tradition that tries to be systematic and replicable in the attempt to identify the narrative structure. This approach ignores the fact that any reading of text requires interpretation based on the background knowledge of the researcher and what is known about the intentions of the authors (Bruner, 1991). That is why I moved into a more interpretivist direction, where meaning cannot be derived simply from words and letters in the text but is based on my understanding of what the author is trying to say. This is more difficult to do in a systematic and replicable way because it relies on the individual researcher. I base my interpretation on the relationships revealed between the elements described in the studied text, which allows them to be identified as belonging to the categories of heroes, villains, and victims, according to a relatively loose use of the criteria above. A more detailed guide to interpretation is included in appendix 1.1.

Storylines

The storyline method is based on a careful reading of the contents and a search for patterns (Zannakis, 2015). It is similar to the method used by Anshelm and Hultman (2015), who try to identify discourse by finding "particular metaphors and catchphrases that are habitually deployed"(Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 11). Storylines can be seen as a more narrow element of discourse that works to simplify complex chains of articulations, as a form of symbolic reference to a common understanding (Hajer, 1995, p. 62). It is a form of metaphor where the author can call upon a greater narrative just by uttering a word or articulation (Zannakis, 2015, p. 222). I see storylines as references to operating master narratives. Zannakis seeks to understand the different actors' views on which social order is seen as legitimate, who policy actors think they are, what they think is reasonable in the context they appear in, and if there are any incoherent or opposite views (Zannakis, 2015, pp. 222-223). This guided my identification of storylines and my understanding of how they are used. After I identified the storylines, I compared the actors involved to find out which storylines have a dominant position among all actors and which function as counter-narratives. In my analysis, I co-construct the storylines by simplifying complex chains of articulations into generalized claims in order to reduce the size of the data. This is partly why I see the phenomena under study as products of an 'intra-action' between researcher and the text.

Main critique and limitations of methods and methodology

The most substantial limitation of the research design is that the comparison between the different sources of data is difficult due to their different types of content, positions, and essential purposes. This could mean that some narratives are not necessarily shared even if they are not explicitly rejected, which makes it difficult to

identify cultural and common-sense aspects using any policy analysis method. For example, the CPAP has its particular purpose and position, which is congenial with the use of some narratives, while the oppositional parliamentary responses have different positions that apply other narratives simply because they are in opposition towards the government. By taking these aspects into account, assumptions about what is left out become more visible and more reliable research can be generated.

Critique of the NPF

The NPF is a product of a positivist and empiricist political science, in which NPF scholars believe that the research on policy narratives can be given a higher scientific status if it is confirmed through a systematic and falsifiable method that is "clear enough to be proven wrong" (Jones & McBeth, 2010, p. 331). I would argue that the method is still not clear enough to be proven wrong, because the research ultimately relies on interpretations and background knowledge. It is the need to seek approval by an empiricist political science that is the problem. It is problematic because it discredits other ways of knowing and reinforces the status of empiricist science as the only valid way of knowing or producing knowledge. This is a product of the modern/colonial mode of knowledge production (Mignolo, 2009). By using this method, I risk reproducing the status of empiricist science. To counteract this risk, I want to recognize multiple forms of knowledge production as valid on their own terms and declare that I apply this method without according it any heightened scientific truth status. Any attempts to produce replicable science by being systematic are ultimately limited by the interpretations of the culturally biased scientists who identify elements of text and organize them into categories. An approach that includes an openness about the dependence of the interpretations being made on the positionality of the researcher seems much more honest in refusing to pretend that the structures identified are a result of "true science." I agree with Foucault's claims that truth or knowledge rests on power, which means that what counts as knowledge and what is seen as true is an effect of power. This is a challenge to social science aiming to find truth. It means that doing social science is to exercise a form of power that produces a 'truth' based on pre-existing dimensions of power and knowledge (Digeser, 1992). This aligns with Barad (2003), who sees the production of phenomena as an 'intra-action', where the truth or reality produced is dependent on the tools used (including the researcher and existing dimensions of knowledge and power).

Positionality and ethics

I am a white male student of social anthropology, economic history, sustainable development, and human ecology in western (Swedish) universities. I am privileged to have safe access to food, water, education, and many other things. This gives me a limited view and perspective of the world based on my knowledge and experiences. I am also a climate justice activist who has organized politically against fossil capitalism, this informs my position when I do research and interpret data. I do not have any party affiliation. I do not intend to hide my interest in trying to do research that can challenge existing power dynamics. The ethical concerns I must care for are not to reproduce dominant subjectivity, but also not to make assumptions and interpretations that are not supported by the empirical data and that risk misrepresenting the views of the actors presented in this research. This is why I have taken care to be clear about distinctions between empirical data, theory, and interpretation.

Presentation of the findings

First, I will present the results of the NPF method, which will serve as an introduction to the narratives found, and then I will discuss the results of the storyline method together with the interpretations of the NPF method and comparisons with previous studies and theory.

Findings from the Narrative policy framework (NPF)

The identified plots are summarized to represent the main narratives of each text and presented together with a summarized view of the archetypical characters in tables. First, I present a short summary of the whole CPAP narrative, then the individual chapters from the CPAP, then the NVV, and lastly the oppositional actors' responses.

Short summary of the CPAP narrative

The main narrative in the CPAP says that climate change is worrying, but that it is possible to tackle through political reforms and business initiatives. Sweden will be a frontrunner by showing the world how it is possible to transition to a fossil-free welfare society while maintaining economic growth and competitiveness. The government has decided to keep its commitments to the Paris Agreement. This will be done through integration of climate policy with all relevant policy areas and through investment in and cooperation with industry.

CPAP3 - "Sweden will become the world's first fossil-free welfare nation"

Climate change and the changes in the environment are worrying. Leaders of the world have committed to take action, but emissions are not being reduced fast enough, according to the IPCC. The whole of Sweden needs to prepare for change while income gaps and urban/rural difference are addressed. Sweden has taken steps forward to become the world's first fossil-free welfare nation, thanks to political reforms and business initiatives. Sweden's role is to push international ambitions by showing that a transition is possible while maintaining good economic development and welfare. Swedish industry and business have a unique opportunity to produce solutions that can be exported and help other nations transition, due to our frontrunner position and competitive edge. The international credibility of Sweden relies on producing good results. Swedish climate politics must avoid inciting business and emissions to move elsewhere. The government has decided to reach the climate goals and keep to the commitments of the Paris agreement.

Heroes	The government, the industry, all societal actors, export, the countryside, political reforms, sharp
	policy instruments, innovation, investment in fossil free technology, functioning ecosystems,
	emission reductions, powerful actions, economic development, competitiveness, welfare
Victims	Billions of people, coral reefs, harvests, biodiversity, ecosystems, humans, the planet, coming
	generations, the whole of Sweden, citizens, companies, different income groups, the countryside
Villains	Climate change, global average temperature increase, sea-level rise, extreme weather, emissions,
	fossil fuels, climate policy, industry moving elsewhere, countries with lower environmental
	standards

Table 1. Identified archetypical characters from the CPAP3 in a summative view.

CPAP4 – "An account of the knowledge on Climate Change"

Humans cause climate change through the greenhouse effect mainly by burning fossil fuels which substantially raises the concentration of GHG's in the atmosphere compared to pre-industrial times. Global temperature increases rapidly on land and in the oceans. The consequences are getting worse. In 2018, 62 million people were hit by flooding or drought. During 2019, parts of Africa were hit by the worst natural catastrophe that ever occurred on the southern hemisphere. Sweden's temperature increase has been double the speed of the global average and the country has been hit by forest fires, water shortages, and droughts, leading to lower harvest yields and making Sweden vulnerable. The difference between 1,5 and 2 degrees of global warming is substantial and means that hundreds of millions more people will be hit by severe heat, water shortage, and poverty. The current trajectory of the world leads to beyond 1,5 degrees already between 2030 and 2052 and, even with the pledges of the Paris agreement kept, to a three-degree increase by the end of the century. IPCC says that emissions must be zero by 2050. It is the sum of total emissions that affects the strength of the warming effect, which explains why emission reductions need to happen sooner rather than later, and why the near future is especially important. To stay below 1,5 degrees, emissions need to be 40-50% lower by 2030 than they were in 2010. The risk of tipping-points and irreversible changes exists already at today's level of warming but increases rapidly with the temperature increase. Powerful actions must be taken in the near future to fight climate change.

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Heroes	Emission reductions, the near future, 1,5 degrees, the world, powerful actions
Victims	Hundreds of millions of people, parts of Africa, the SDGs, coastal states and small island nations,
	arctic communities, Sweden, ecosystems, biodiversity, coral reefs, arctic sea-ice, health, economic
	growth, food and water supplies
Villains	Humans, burning fossil fuels, other GHGs, GW, temperature increases, extreme weather,
	heatwaves, forest fires, flooding, drought, rising oceans, water shortages, lower yields, difference
	between 1,5 and 2 degrees, tipping points, self-reinforced heating, irreversible changes, poverty,
	3 degrees of GW, total amount of global emissions

Table 2. Identified archetypical characters from the CPAP4 in a summative view.

CPAP10.1 – "Integration of the climate in all relevant policy areas"

Increased efforts to integrate climate policy in all relevant policy areas should be pursued. Actors in all areas on all levels need to contribute to reach the climate targets, which means reducing emissions in all sectors. Other societal goals need to be reformulated to make them compatible with the climate goals. Cooperation is needed to avoid conflicts and enjoy synergies between policy areas. All relevant laws need to be re-assessed in a goaloriented way that enables cost-efficient emission reductions. Consequences for the climate need to be analyzed in policy areas where it is relevant.

Heroes	The integration of climate policy in all relevant policy areas, all actors on all levels in all areas, the
	parliament, the government, reformulation of other societal goals, integration of climate policy with
	the legal framework, investigation to review all laws, cost-efficient emission reductions,
	coordination, analysis of consequences of climate effects
Victims	The climate-system, citizens
Villains	Swedish GHG emissions, damaging changes to the climate system, conflict of interests, negative
	effects from other laws

Table 3. Identified archetypical characters from the CPAP10.1 in a summative view.

CPAP11.2 - "Actions planned for the industrial sector"

Sweden can become a global leader in the transition to a fossil-free society through the use of our leading expert knowledge, built infrastructure, and access to useful resources. Big and long-term investments in new technology and industry are necessary. Minerals need to be produced in a sustainable way and the extraction of fossil fuels prohibited. Environmental legislation and other laws can be great tools with which to reach the climate targets and need to be revised in order to benefit businesses that can help speed up the transition. Swedish industry contributes around 1/3 of total emissions in Sweden, mainly deriving from 15 single-point sources. The industrial process-based emissions are the most difficult to reduce. Successful Swedish industry is a contributor to the global progress on tackling climate change. There are many reasons for the state to coordinate with and support the industry. Capital-intensive investments are needed for companies to compete in the global market. The government is better positioned to make big investments and take big risks than companies. The government needs to create stable conditions to help businesses transition and enable a space for stable long-term investments that promote Swedish competitiveness. Rules and cooperation within the EU are also important. The Hybrit project (fossil-free iron and steel production) is a successful example of a project that can have benefits outside of Sweden. Carbon management technologies are needed and a part of the circular economy. More plastics can be recycled with new technology. The government plans to support the scale-up of renewable fuels production to make it competitive, which increases security of supply, reduces vulnerability, creates employment, contributes to regional development, and can be exported on European markets.

Heroes	Competitiveness, Sweden, new technology, investments (capital intense), business, industry, the
	'fossil free Sweden' business initiative and industry roadmaps, the government, new
	investigations, long term stable market conditions and political commitments, incentives for
	investments, comparative advantages, scaling up export of fossil free steel-production, carbon
	management, circular economy, recycling, renewable fuels, duty of reduction-(of fossil fuels)
	policy, Swedish battery production, Swedish sustainable mining, prohibition of fossil fuel
	extraction, cooperation, research, innovation, shortening environmental trials and processes
Victims	The industry, businesses, Swedish fuel production market, companies with low climate impact,
	competitiveness
Villains	The industry, process-based industrial emissions, cost of constructing new full scale facilities,
	emissions from battery production, carbon leakage, prospecting and extracting fossil fuels,
	industries in the EU ETS, international markets, investments with high risk, market-failures,
	uncertainty of stability in politics/regulations, burning of plastics, jet fuels, countries with lacking
	sustainability standards and high use of fossil fuels, dependency of imported metals,
	administrative burdens, the environmental law

Table 4. Identified archetypical characters from the CPAP11.2 in a summative view.

NVV - "The source material for the CPAP"

The world must transition rapidly, which requires a big shift of capital flows. For Sweden, this is an opportunity to lead the transition through innovation, efficiency, and technological development of Swedish businesses. The plan needs to be national, global, and both short- and long-term. The three central challenges are: 1) to make the transportation system efficient and switch to renewable fuels; 2) to reduce the emissions from industries to close to zero with new technology, energy efficiency, and replacing fossil-fuel use; 3) to develop carbon management technologies.

Climate change is causing multiple global risks, and there is a risk of passing irreversible thresholds that cause self-reinforced warming. The Swedish goal to reach net zero emissions by 2045 sits within the interval of the IPCC's scenarios to limit warming to 1,5 degrees. Existing policy instruments are not sufficient to reach the target. About 2/3 of Swedish emissions derive from industry and transport. Transport emissions have been reduced, while those from industry have increased, the largest part of which derive from a few sources (iron, steel, cement, and refineries). Increased efficiency, new technology, substitution to biofuels, and the increased use of electricity have great importance. Technological developments are slow in progress and will happen closer to 2045. All parts of society need to be involved for the transition to succeed. The transition needs to consider other SDGs and concerns. The finance market and the price on emissions need further guidance. Increased circularity and resource-efficiency is needed. Sweden needs to contribute to reducing emissions outside of Sweden.

Heroes	Sweden, market innovation, new solutions, efficiency solutions, competitiveness, Swedish
	businesses, investments, economic growth, welfare, the CPAP, the government, sharpening of
	policy, emission reductions, renewable fuels, EU's ETS, complimentary actions, carbon
	management, new technology, fossil free iron and steel production, research, price on emissions,
	powerful action, electrification, strategic use of biomass, the finance market's capital resources
	(private capital), regulating finance, circular economy, actions outside of Sweden, spreading
	experience of political processes, control of aid, capacity building projects, international
	cooperation,
Victims	The globe, the earth's temperature, the global space for emissions, emission reductions in Sweden
Villains	Unregulated capital flows, national emissions, fossil fuels, climate change (and consequences of),
	irreversible changes, insufficient targets, lower rate of reduction of emissions, domestic transports,
	the industry, the iron- steel- and cement-industries and refineries, current policies, legal obstacles,
	efforts in other countries, Swedish consumption and international aviation

Table 5. Identified archetypical characters from the NVV in a summative view.

The oppositional narratives

KD

Humans have a responsibility to manage finite resources and values in nature. Based on the precautionary principle, politics should provide conditions for other actors to take the right decisions. The phase-out of nuclear energy undermines the planned climate actions because it increases emissions in the EU. The low impact of the current actions/policies compared with the contributions of industry makes the policies adopted expensive, limiting, and not cost-effective. Phase out of process-based emissions must continue.

Heroes	Politics, cost-effectiveness, the forest and agricultural industries, carbon management technology,
	shortening of environmental trials, electrification and biofuels, nuclear
Victims	Next generation, other societal goals, actions proposed in the CPAP
Villains	Priority of climate goals, closure of nuclear reactors, emissions in the EU, expensive and limiting
	climate policies, process-based emissions from industry, the government

Table 6. Identified archetypical characters from KD in a summative view.

М

Climate change is worrying. Swedish climate action should focus on global targets, cost-efficiency, and avoiding moving emissions elsewhere. This means supporting Swedish industry, strengthening competitiveness and economic growth. The effects of actions need to be measured by the Climate Policy Council. The SEPA should measure the positive effects of Swedish export industry that comes with exported goods competing on international markets with a relatively high CO2-efficiency.

Heroes	Ambitious climate policies, Swedish industry, efficiency, cost-efficiency, measuring effects, high
	level of growth and competitiveness, climate smart production
Victims	Swedish competitiveness, Swedish industry, exports, growth, other societal goals, global emission
	reductions
Villains	Narrow national focus of Swedish climate policy, climate change, priority of Swedish climate goals,
	too slow rate of emission reductions, lack of assessing effects

Table 7. Identified archetypical characters from M in a summative view.

SD

Climate change is a complex and global challenge. Sweden should make efforts at global emissions reductions that are cost-effective. Support of the Swedish export industry and avoiding negative impacts on employment levels and growth should be a priority. It is wrong in principle to prioritize climate goals over other societal goals. Effects of planned actions should be measured.

Heroes	Swedish export industry, Swedish industry competitiveness, Swedish climate politics focused on
	global results, cost-effectiveness, research and innovation
Victims	Global climate change mitigation, employment and growth, other societal goals
Villains	Swedish climate policy too focused on national reductions, prioritizing one societal goal before
	another

Table 8. Identified archetypical characters from SD in a summative view.

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The world is on track to disaster (3 degrees) and Sweden is not doing its part to avoid this scenario. The national climate target should be moved to 2040. Time is running out; action is needed, not further investigations. The plan lacks a perspective on justice. Justice is important for a successful transition. Use the law to hold producers responsible. Consideration should be given to climate, biodiversity, and the environment. Recycling should be increased, and fossil fuel extraction and use avoided. Effects of planned actions should be calculated.

Heroes	Equal share of resources, prohibition of fossil fuel extraction, stopping imports of unsustainably			
	produced materials, recycling, time and momentum, powerful change of political direction			
Victims	Swedish climate action, the environment, the climate			
Villains	Sweden, the CPAP, government inaction, lack of justice, new investigations, EU's plans, producers			
	of plastics, battery and electric vehicle production, fossil fuels			

Table 9. Identified archetypical characters from V in a summative view.

Interpretation, comparison, and discussion of the findings

In the coming chapters I am using theory and previous findings to discuss and point to the different power effects that the identified master narratives, narratives and storylines have in order to answer the research question: What power effects do the central master narratives, more specific narratives, and storylines about Sweden's relation to climate change, as expressed in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan, have and why are they employed?

There is some overlap between the results of the NPF and the storyline method, but the differences show how the methods complement each other by presenting different aspects of the narratives studied. The result of the storyline method is embedded in the discussion below, which is organized thematically in six parts. Part one will examine which discourses represented in previous studies can be found in my results, part two looks into the narrative of Sweden as a frontrunner, part three will deal with the post-political condition and the apocalyptic imaginary, part four will discuss the relation between the state and industry and suggest an explanation using the theory of accumulation by decarbonization, part five will lay out an argument for the identification of the master narrative 'humans can control climate change' and the universal story of control, and part six presents a core political conflict in the priority between societal goals.

Part 1 - Which discourses are dominant?

In general, the narratives of the CPAP and the NVV have most in common with Green Keynesianism (GK) in terms of seeing climate change as a business opportunity that does not threaten the economy and can be managed within existing institutions through heavy state investments and regulations (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, pp. 61-75). This is found in the storyline 'investments in industry and redirection of capital investments are necessary to make the industry transition' (CPAP11.2:44-45,74-75,76,77-79,80-81,95,97-100,101-102,184-186, NVV:3-6,265-266,259-260) and the storyline 'climate change is an opportunity for fossil-free economic growth, competitiveness, and welfare' (CPAP3:18-19, 56, 60, 70, 76-77, 82, CPAP11.2:1-2, 7-8, 70-71, 79-80, 96-97, 214, 215-218, 218-219, 301-303, NVV:8-9, 10-12,13,20-21,16-17,168,182,274). This seems to indicate that the Opportunity storyline that Zannakis (2015) found most deeply cemented still remains, which also fits with the overall narrative of the CPAP being a win-win story where Sweden is presented as a frontrunner. This is also similar to the GK discourse of MP and S from the period 2006-2009, which argues that strong climate action creates competitiveness, export of green technology, and jobs (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015). The CPAP and the NVV narratives align with the interests of industry and promotes new technology as a hero and a necessary development (CPAP11.2:6-7,7-8,55-56,94,95,127,184-186, NVV:13,43-45,88,95-96,100-101, 127, 129-131,132,227-228,253-255,266). This and the promotion of the fundamental transformation of transportation and energy systems fit well with the view of GK that the crisis can be handled within existing institutions (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 69). The dominance of GK represents a difference from the results of Anshelm and Hultman (2015), who found Industrial Fatalism (IF) as the most dominant discourse, but this seems logical since it is the proponents of GK (MP and S) that are now in government and since their study focused on editorials rather than policy. However, the IF discourse is also present in the CPAP, the NVV

and among the right-wing opposition. The storyline 'competitiveness is good because it is necessary' (CPAP11.2:18-20,64-67,69-70,221,301-303,303-304,313-315, NVV:15,20-21,191,274,275, M:138,142) promotes the necessity of maintaining the competitiveness of the Swedish industry both on domestic and international markets, which supports the business-as-usual agenda of IF discourse. This relates to the claim that Swedish industry is already relatively CO2-efficient and therefor contributes to global emissions mitigation efforts by increasing the number of Swedes shares on international markets. This claim is expressed in the storyline 'Swedish industry and exports are beneficial for reaching the global climate change targets' (CPAP3: 68,80, CPAP11.2:49-50,58-59,59-60,112-114,214,218-219,301-303,304-305, NVV:16-17,18-19,95-96, KD:43-47,70-78, M:133-134,134-136,136-137,143-146, SD:30-32,37-38,38-40,43-44), which is used by the right-wing opposition together with the storylines 'focus on the global' (NVV: 230-232, M: 12-14,22-23,62-71,128,139-141, SD:24-25,26-28,32-34,35-36,38-40) and 'current climate policy risks being a threat to Swedish industry competitiveness and global climate targets' (M:14-16,62-71,22-23,129-130,139-141,141-142,146-148, SD: 26-28, 30-31). These work to shift responsibility from the national to the global, indicating that there is a conflict between the levels; a too narrow focus on the national risks having negative effects on global targets, since national policy poses a threat (villain) against Swedish industry (hero), which already has a positive impact on the climate through its relative CO2 efficiency. An effect which M thinks the SEPA should calculate and include in the accounting of Swedish contributions to global targets (M). This fits with IF, which typically shows that the problem is located elsewhere and claims that Sweden already has assumed its responsibility (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015). The storyline 'current climate policy risks being a threat towards employment and growth' (SD:49-51) also signifies IF discourse by promoting less ambitious domestic climate policy. IF thus seems most prominent in the right-wing opposition. This aligns with the Sacrifice storyline identified by Zannakis (2015), which says "reducing GHG emissions implies a significant cost and is thus a threat to the economy and to job opportunities" (Zannakis, 2015, p. 227). But the Opportunity storyline is also vaguely present in M, for example in the storyline 'ambitious climate action is a cheap insurance to soften the impacts of climate change' (M:3-4). The employment of the storylines 'focus on the global' (M, SD), 'cost-efficiency is important' (KD:37-38, M:117-119, SD: 20,32-34,49-51) and 'Sweden is a frontrunner' (M:112-117,117-119) indicates that the Sacrifice storyline might no longer be used to challenge the Opportunity storyline (to the same extent) as Zannakis (2015) previously found. The government's climate policies do imply significant costs, which are critiqued for being inefficient (M:19-20,38-39), but the main counter-narrative from the right-wing opposition is saying that actions have to be focused on the global level in order to make national efforts cost-effective. Thus, I would argue that the main challenge towards the Opportunity storyline is no longer the Sacrifice storyline but the 'focus on the global' storyline. A similar storyline is also used in the NVV but avoids shifting responsibility to the global level by saying that efforts to reduce emissions in other countries should not be done as a substitution for reducing emissions in Sweden. This relates to the storyline 'avoid increasing emissions in other countries' (CPAP3:79, NVV: 248-249, M:139-141), which for M means to avoid reducing Swedish industry exports, because this would increase emissions elsewhere through the reduction of Swedish CO2-efficient shares on international markets. For the CPAP it means to avoid policies that risk making businesses move to other countries while pursuing policies that can reduce emissions in other countries.

The *Ecological Justice* storyline, which says "Industrialized countries have gained by contributing to climate change and thus have the major responsibility to manage climate change" (Zannakis, 2015, p. 227) remains mostly prominent in V, who wants to move the climate targets to 2040 and says Sweden is not taking enough responsibility (V). In Anshelm and Hultman's research (2006-2009), the Green Party (MP) (in opposition, part of GK discourse) critiques the then liberal-conservative government for assigning new investigations that serve to delay real action. The same critique is now used by V against MP in government, where V emphasizes the loss of time and momentum that comes from burying action in new investigations (V:27-29). This shift of discourse among actors seems to imply that some narratives are only possible to employ in certain positions. No sufficient evidence could be found in support for the Eco-Socialism (ES) or Climate Skeptic (CS) discourse.

Part 2 – What does it take to be a frontrunner?

Anshelm and Hultman (2015) write that in the period 2006-2009 Sweden was portrayed as a frontrunner country by the liberal-conservative government and daily press, based on the view that emissions had been reduced domestically since the 1990's while the rate of economic growth had increased. According to the IF discourse this made Sweden a role-model that proved that decoupling emissions from growth was possible. This led to a view that Sweden had already done its homework and should help reduce emissions in other countries instead of being overambitious in domestic policy, which would be harmful to Swedish industry and even increase emissions globally. Therefore, Sweden should instead invest in nuclear technology and enhanced industrial performance (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, pp. 30-38). The image of Sweden as a frontrunner was previously based on having ambitious domestic emissions cuts, but it became a contradiction in the IF discourse and the view changed to using flexible mechanisms (climate aid to reduce emissions elsewhere) as the most prominent climate change mitigation strategy, exemplifying what it meant to be a frontrunner. This view avoided counting the footprint of imported goods and emissions per capita, which in GK is an important feature of being a frontrunner, mainly used by MP (in opposition), who strongly opposed the heavy use of flexible mechanisms (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, pp. 39,44-45). I have found that the storyline 'Sweden is/is becoming a frontrunner and model for other countries' plays a prominent role in the CPAP3(18-19,56,60,70,76-77), CPAP11.2(3-5,24-25,25,44,70-71, 73-74, 154, 267, 313-315), and NVV(7,8,16,21, 234-236, 238-240,242, 243-244, 283-285), and is conditionally repeated in M(112-117,117-119). The story of Sweden is a story of becoming: Sweden is becoming the world's first fossil-free welfare nation (CPAP3:18-19). The policy narrative in the CPAP is the story of the future success of the industrial transition made in Sweden, including a technological paradigm shift where investments in industry, in new technologies, and reformist policy instruments assume the role of hero-characters. In the CPAP3, many storylines about Sweden are employed that support the storyline 'Sweden is/is becoming a frontrunner': 'Sweden's role is to push the speed of the transition and raise the ambitions internationally' (CPAP3:54-55, 68); 'Sweden has a unique chance to influence international climate action' (CPAP3:63); 'Sweden should make efforts to export solutions and contribute to the transition in other nations' (CPAP3:66-67, 80); 'Sweden has the biggest financial support per capita to the UN green fund' (CPAP3:68-69); 'Sweden has taken a few important steps forward' (CPAP3:42); 'By taking the lead, Swedish credibility and ability to influence international politics increases' (CPAP3:70); 'Sweden's credibility relies on good national results' (CPAP3:73-74); 'Sweden will show

that it is possible to become a fossil-free nation while maintaining competitiveness and welfare' (CPAP3:76); 'Sweden should avoid moving emissions to other countries' (CPAP3:79). These all work to produce narrative agency for Sweden and the government as an actor in the story of mitigating climate change. I see these individual storylines as both a product of and the reproduction of the deeply cemented disciplining master narrative 'Sweden is/is becoming a frontrunner'. This narrative is employed in multiple positions and discourses, in which the meaning changes over time and between actors. In this way the ambiguity of what it means to be a frontrunner is an important aspect of political power in that it allows separate actors to find common ground (Hajer, 1995; Stone, 2002). In this case, however, it seems to be the dividing factor that separates actors. There seems to be a broad agreement that Sweden should try to influence global emissions and that the ability to do so relies on producing good results and thus being a frontrunner, but the disagreements lie in how to produce good results. For M, the lack of assessments of cost-effectiveness of climate policies reduces Sweden's ability to appear as a frontrunner (M: 112-117,117-119). The view of Sweden already being a frontrunner, by having CO2efficient industries, is prominent among SD and M who no longer promote using flexible mechanisms, which seems like a more or less abandoned narrative that has gotten a bad image in Sweden (see Röstlund, 2019) and now only occurs under the name of complementary actions in the CPAP(13). Zannakis (2015) argues that the Swedish ability to influence international climate politics is dependent on how climate policies are delivered and suggests that the use of the Ecological Justice storyline could prove beneficial. In Anshelm and Hultman (2015), the GK discourse says the story of Sweden as a frontrunner is a myth, with the argument that Sweden never really decoupled economic growth from emissions, since the calculations excluded the footprint of imported goods. This meant that Sweden first had to do its homework to become a good example and reduce domestic emissions before making demands on others. This is much in line with the findings in the CPAP, where the frontrunner position promises greater influence on global emissions but is dependent on producing good results, which means maintaining growth, competitiveness, and welfare while becoming fossil-free. The shift, among S and MP as representatives of GK, from seeing the frontrunner narrative as myth (in opposition) to making it a central narrative that seeks to gain legitimacy for policy (in government) suggests that the government is disciplined by the frontrunner narrative as an already accepted master narrative (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019). The meaning of the narrative changes from understanding it as a myth to promoting it as an opportunity to become fossil-free, with the conditionality of maintaining economic growth, competitiveness, and welfare. This can be seen as a product of the government's capability (agency) to produce new narratives based on existing master narratives. It could, of course, still be argued that the story of Sweden as a frontrunner is a myth, since the accounting of emissions still does not include footprints of imported goods and Sweden is not taking its share of the responsibility. My results suggest that this narrative is more likely to be used by the opposition (mostly in line with counter-narratives from V), while the government position seems to be disciplined by the frontrunner master narrative. According to ES discourse, Sweden's view of itself as a frontrunner "delimits the possibility of radical critique in the public sphere" (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 95). Dominant discourse works in this way to depoliticize climate change by refusing to view Sweden as a country with a relatively large footprint and responsibility per capita, and instead promotes industry as a hero, which contributes to global climate change mitigation. If the frontrunner narrative was abandoned, a more honest relationship to Swedish

emissions and responsibilities might be established. This has the potential to more openly face the realities of dependencies between countries in the transition. This interdependency storyline is found in the NVV(247-248,249,250), highlighting that Sweden becoming fossil-free is dependent on processes in other nations and thus recognizing that a country becoming fossil-free in itself is insufficient, if that freedom is dependent on heavy fossil fuel extraction and use in production and transportation elsewhere. This storyline is not repeated in the CPAP, which could be seen as an attempt to build coherence (Hill, 2005) in the frontrunner narrative by strategically avoiding to talk about dependencies and the specific conditions that allow Sweden to transition. I suggest that this is because it would threaten the image of Sweden as a role model that others can follow, as the promise of the transition would not be applicable to other countries if national differences and international dependencies were revealed. I argue that the deeply cemented frontrunner master narrative and what it means to "perform well" is a product of EM discourse and the post-political condition (explained below). The quantitative environmental performance literature that reproduce "leaders and laggards" (see Zannakis, 2015, pp. 219-220), are part of the problem because it does not consider the unequal distribution of risks of climate change from a climate justice perspective and the accounting of climate debt (see Warlenius, 2017), nor does it take into account what it really means to deliver on the Paris Agreement (Anderson et al., 2020). This risks reproducing dangerously low expectations of what it takes to be a frontrunner in the climate crisis.

Part 3 - Is the framing apocalyptic and the condition post-political?

Anshelm and Hultman (2015) say that post-Copenhagen (2009), the framing of climate change in Sweden was dominated by the IF discourse maintained by the liberal-conservative government as a form of comic apocalypse with statements such as the "the next climate negotiations is the last chance to save the world" (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 44). This framing suggested that "humans have the capacity to mistakenly influence the end of the world" (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 184). Anshelm and Hultman (hereafter referred to as A&H) argue against Swyngedouw (2010), who claims that the apocalyptic imaginary depoliticizes climate change, and makes it a post-political managerial issue about employing large-scale technology that leads the discussion into how carbon emissions can be reduced from the atmosphere instead of how society can lose the dependence on fossil fuels. Swyngedouw claims that the apocalyptic imaginary works as a populist device that effectively avoids the political discussions (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 184). A&H argue the opposite, that the apocalyptic framing generates the possibility for antagonistic debate in the Swedish context. They say that the politics that come from an apocalyptic framing are not pre-determined, as this framing can make climate justice politics more likely, even if some discourse works to hide differences by presenting humanity as a universal category that is being harmed (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 185). The narratives I found in the CPAP show that 'climate change is worrying' (CPAP3:1-12, CPAP4: 1-23, NVV:53,54,55,56, M:4-5, V:5) but does not have the comic apocalyptic framing that A&H point to being used by the previous, liberal-conservative government. A&H also point out that the apocalyptic framing is not present in the hegemonic discourse today (Anshelm & Hultman, 2015, p. 186). Swyngedouw (2010) writes that the apocalyptic imaginary consists of images of rising seas, the melting ice at the poles, extreme weather, water shortages, droughts, etc. These images are present in the CPAP, but they do not signify a comic apocalypse, saying that civilization will end, but are rather generalized accounts of the effects of

climate change. I recognize how the use of abstract, almost universal victim and villain categories can have a depoliticizing effect, when victims are presented as billions of humans, ecosystems, coral reefs, parts of Africa, Sweden, and Arctic communities (CPAP), and distant threats (villains) depicted as global warming, extreme weather, and global emissions. But my data also supports the argument of A&H, that the political discussion and outcome of these narratives are not pre-determined but can be shaped by antagonistic struggle. The search for consensual dialogue within a hegemonic agreement about the problem definition is what Swyngedouw (2010) names the post-political condition. He says the post-political "disavows antagonism by displacing conflict and disagreement on to the terrain of consensually manageable problems" (Swyngedouw, 2010, p. 225). The narratives I have found in the CPAP can be said to be post-political, because they frame the issue as a universal fight between humanity and climate change (CPAP3:6-8) and the solutions are a managerial technocratic project; new carbon management technologies (CPAP11.2:115-120,122-126, CPAP13.2, NVV:47-48,100-101,118-120,162,168,176-177,282, KD: 49-52,53-59), strengthening Swedish industry's competitiveness and creating costefficient emission reduction policies (CPAP10.1: 42-44,124-131,NVV:pp.40,83,102, KD:37-38, M:117-119, SD: 20,32-34,49-51), that lack the political dimension that Swyngedouw seeks. He says that "'proper' politics must revolve around the construction of new fictions that create real possibilities for constructing different socio-environmental futures" (Swyngedouw, 2010, p. 228). Even if the dominant hegemonic narratives reflect the post-political condition, the entire political field is not free of antagonism and alternative futures. My data show that the apocalyptic imaginary goes hand in hand with antagonistic struggle. The counter-narratives coming from the left present the most apocalyptic framing, viewing the world as on track to disaster and time as running out (V). They are also the only party that points out the lack of considerations of justice and presents alternatives to the dominant Opportunity and frontrunner storylines, promoting the storyline 'opportunity for reducing emissions while reducing inequality' (V:40-43), while advocating concern for equal share of resources, biodiversity, and the environment in dealing with climate change (V). The right also promotes alternatives and sees Swedish climate politics as a threat. In the CPAP and the NVV the interests of different social groups or classes as political subjects are not very visible, but there is at least a mention of concerns about differences in income and about the urban-rural divide (CPAP:20,21,24-25,27, NVV:269-270, V:40-43). This strengthens the argument of A&H, that an apocalyptic framing does not necessarily lead to the post-political condition by default, but rather suggests, as exemplified by the left party, that antagonism can be promoted in combination with an apocalyptic imaginary. A&H thinks that we should embrace an apocalyptic framing because it can open up an opportunity for radical democratic politics. I believe that the dominating discourse of EM, which is post-political, may not be sufficiently challenged without some radical change in the discourse. An apocalyptic framing may contribute to such a challenge, but it may also depoliticize the issue if universal categories of 'humans' or 'billions of people' continue to be used as the main victims. Radical democratic politics seem not to be dependent on the apocalyptic framing but on other master narratives that discipline what is possible to say.

Part 4 - Industry and the State

Is Swedish industry good for the global climate?

Industry is seen both as the source of emissions (villains), the fixers (heroes), and victims in the CPAP11.2. They provide roadmaps for transition, they run transformative technological development projects, they have the potential to increase the production of renewable fuels, they are the partner of cooperation with the government, they are among the most emission-effective (in terms of CO2) industries in the world, and they provide the solutions to their own transformations (heroes). They are also victims of the tough demands from the EU, while having to take financial risks, competing on tough international markets, and having to abide by the control-processes of environmental legislation and to suffer from administrative burdens (victims) (CPAP11.2). The storyline 'Swedish industry and exports are beneficial for reaching the global climate change targets' (CPAP3, CPAP11.2, NVV, KD, M, SD) is a dominant narrative repeated by all actors except V (overlaps with seeing the industry as a hero). In the CPAP it refers to both the positive potential of Swedish export industry in the global mitigation of climate change, once it has accomplished a transition to become fossil-free, and that the industry is already relatively CO2-efficient compared to other nations. The latter is shared among all actors except V and the NVV. In the NVV the storyline is rather based on a general positive account of Swedish business efforts and industry's contribution to reducing emissions. The NVV portrays Sweden, economic growth, maintained competitiveness, and welfare as heroes. It sees the government as the main fixer (hero) that should redirect capital flows invested in fossil fuel-based energy systems (villains). The industry is portrayed more as a villain than a hero, but Swedish businesses are seen as part of the solution (heroes). The NVV narrative can be understood as a communication aimed at the government which explains some of the differences with the CPAP. The right-wing opposition portrays industry as a hero rather than a villain, while the left party wants to hold producers responsible and thus implicitly views industry as a villain rather than hero. Among SD and M the storylines on industry are based on the assumption that if Swedish exports were not present in the international markets, other industries that release more emissions would fill this market demand, replacing the positive effect of Swedish industry. This could be seen as a strategy that naturalizes the logic of the market as something that will be operating in the same way regardless of which actors are present. It also assumes that other actors would release more emissions if they would appropriate market shares from Swedish industries. KD defends the Swedish forest and agricultural industries as heroes, due to their calculated net positive uptake of carbon emissions and compare them with the energy and climate policies of the government (villains), which are presented as contributing to increased emissions in Europe because of its anti-nuclear politics. This generates the counter-storyline 'the energy policy of the government undermines the climate policy' (KD). These narratives downplay the fact that Swedish industries do produce emissions, which must be removed if both the national and global climate targets are to be reached, as stated in the storyline 'reduce industrial emission close to zero' (NVV:121). Even if Swedish industries are relatively efficient, they are still a source of emissions, but this appears unproblematic, hidden in the story of their efficiency and contribution to global markets. According to the IPCC, the total carbon budget is limited, a narrative which seems to be strategically avoided in the CPAP and dominant discourse in general. This is also critiqued in (Anderson et al., 2020), where the authors show the need

to speed up decarbonization in "climate progressive" countries such as Sweden and the UK. In this light, the narrative of Swedish industry as a hero is unhelpful. The post-political condition and the EM discourse deal with the problem of future emissions through the invention of new technological development (CPAP11.2:6-7,7-8,55-56,94,95,127,184-186, NVV:13,43-45,88,95-96,100-101,127,129-131,132,227-228,253-255,266) and complementary actions (CPAP13, NVV:81-82,92-94,165,167-168), also evident in the storyline 'carbon management technologies must be developed' (CPAP11.2:115-120, 122-126, CPAP13.2, NVV:47-48,100-101,118-120,162,168,176-177,282, KD:49-52,53-59). The emissions from Swedish industries can in these narratives be reduced without limiting production volumes. The CPAP focuses on cooperation between the state and industry, investments in technology, and sharpening of political instruments (heroes). The 'reducing the industrial emissions close to zero' storyline is not repeated in the CPAP, which may indicate that it is seen as common sense, unnecessary to utter, or strategically avoided. It serves to hide or postpone absolute reduction of emissions by relying on future carbon management technologies, thus avoiding the discussion of how to get rid of the dependency on fossil fuels which maintains the post-political condition. The only effort to unveil this is found in the NVV storyline 'the potential of technology is great, but it is not certain and comes in the future' (NVV:102-104,104-106), which indicates, together with the storyline 'reduce emissions now rather than later' (NVV:58,59-60), that the promise of solutions through technocratic management projects may not be a path to success.

Why support the industry if they are the source of emissions?

The material power of changing the output of emissions lies with the industries, since they are the source, but they are also the source of Swedish competitiveness, the tax-base for the welfare society, and a large employer of workers. I suggest that the government is operating in a way that is appealing to industry to avoid challenging this interdependent relationship and material base of the welfare society. The four faces of power operate in the relation between industry and the government in a way that shapes the behavior of the government, limiting its action to fit the needs of the industry. Any policy action that would risk the survival of industry will be met with counteractions, either in the next election or by direct means, and would thus challenge the possibility to remain in power. This is one explanation for why the narrative of a strong Swedish industry is being employed; it also means that industry is as much in power over emission levels and politics as the government.

The concept of *accumulation by decarbonization*, understood as a form of redistribution of wealth through the management of crises in the interest of the private sector, could function as a theory to explain state support of the industry, the use of the narrative of Sweden as a frontrunner, and the transition as an opportunity for economic growth, competitiveness, and welfare. In order to make further accumulation possible, capital does not only seek expansion through accumulation by dispossession (see Harvey, 2005), but also through decarbonization as a new niche for capital expansion (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008). Bumpus and Liverman write that "[i]n effect, capital can achieve higher rates of accumulation under carbon trading because it needs to invest less in domestic emission reductions" (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008, p. 142). However, since the time when the use of flexible mechanisms was the most popular mitigation strategy in the global North, carbon trading (flexible mechanism) has gained a bad image in Sweden and no longer fits with the frontrunner narrative. This

leaves the state with the option of redistributing resources in relation to industry and regulating private capital to enable a decarbonization process that also works as accumulation by decarbonization. This is defended in the CPAP with the storylines 'gains from private investments have benefits that reach further than capital-owners' (CPAP11.2:96-97) and 'cooperation between industry and the government' (CPAP3:46-53, CPAP11.2:18-20,26-27,28,33-36,36-38,44-45,60-62,62-64,64-67,67-68,69-70,74-75,75-76,77-79,80-81,97-100,101-102,102-104,175, 184-186,300,301-303,303-304,305-309,309-310, NVV:34-35,129,169-170,175-177,178,179,180-181,180,203-204,206,257-260,264), which are prominent in both NVV and CPAP. These storylines are connected to the role of government spending and the initiative 'Industriklivet', which is a government investment program that supports the industry with 600 million SEK per year to kick-start the transition. It is explicitly stated that the government enforces strict rules for how this money is used. This suggests a need to indicate that the government has power over industry. M employs a counter-narrative about the inefficiency of such a program and the government climate policies in general (M:19-20,38-39,112-115). The NVV and the CPAP say that the government's role is to produce stability by creating longterm rules for the market and political instruments that can direct private capital. The CPAP promotes cooperation and mutual responsibility between the state and the industries, while defending state investments as a necessary move to help the industries kick-start the transition. The CPAP says that the state can take risks that the industries could not take and that there is sometimes a need to provide complementary market capital. The NVV supports this view but emphasizes that the role of government is to redirect private capital flows rather than contributing with capital resources, which should come from the regulation of the private finance market. This difference suggests that the government's narration is more constrained by the relation to industry than the NVV, who can afford to promote a stricter policy proposal that serves to constrain industry rather than contributing with capital. The theory of accumulation by decarbonization suggests a material and economic explanation for the employment of certain narratives that legitimize government spending and the free flow of capital to industries that seek to decarbonize. This suggests that the social construction of climate change is not only shaped by operating master narratives, but that these narratives have a base in the material relations that maintain power.

Part 5 – The story of control

Universal stories of decline, helplessness and control

The 'climate change is worrying' (CPAP3:1-12, CPAP4: 1-23, NVV:53,54,55,56, M:4-5, V:5) storyline is most fully explained in the CPAP and the NVV and only repeated as a reference to a common understanding in M and V. KD and SD do not reject it but reformulate it as 'climate change is complex' (SD) and 'finite resources should be managed sustainably' (KD). In the CPAP the 'climate change is worrying' storyline indicates, through symbols of changes in the environment such as rising seas, melting ice, and extreme weather events (CPAP3:1-2), that 'billions of people are at risk' (CPAP3:4). This is what Stone (2002) calls a universal story of decline. The story of decline is warning us of future suffering, which produces anxiety, and then motivates us to seize control, which produces hope. This way the story of decline sets the stage for the story of control (Stone, 2002). The story of Sweden becoming the world's first fossil-free welfare nation (CPAP3:18-19,56,60,70,76-77,82) is a story of control,

which serves to promote a way of taking control over the story of decline. Stone writes that stories are culturally specific but hold universal elements that tell us that we have a choice (Stone, 2002), thus stories are either trying to give or take away control. The universal story of control produces narrative agency and the universal story of helplessness does the opposite: it reduces narrative agency. The story of helplessness is implied in the story of decline but is usually mitigated by the story of control. I argue that the story of helplessness cannot be used as a main narrative in the CPAP, because any story that reduces narrative agency deviates from what is expected of the government in the role of leading the nation. This means that the narrativizations of the government are not made freely but follow strategic choices that allow it to operate, most obviously by limiting their narrative constructions to fit with what they believe is accepted by their target audience (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019).

Producing narrative agency and measuring climate change

The beginning of the CPAP3 narrative produces narrative agency through the storyline 'the decisions we take now are cardinal for the planet and coming generations' (CPAP3:8-9). The use of 'we' constructs an inclusion of the reader as part of the decision-making process. It is a discursive tool that produces narrative agency for Sweden, the government, Swedish citizens, oppositional parties, businesses, and humans in general that could potentially be included in the 'we'. I argue for an identification of the underlying dominant master narrative 'humans (or Sweden) can control climate change' related to the universal story of control, disciplining what narratives are possible to employ. This master narrative both limits the agency of the government as a narrator and produces narrative agency by emphasizing that what 'we' (the nation or humans) do through our conscious decisions will have decisive effects on future generations and the planet. To show how I see the master narrative 'humans can control climate change' operating as an assumption underneath explicit narratives, I will present the opposite counter-narrative, related to the story of helplessness, that would be 'humans (or Sweden) do not control climate change'. If the CPAP were disciplined by this story, it would generate other narratives or storylines in the text, such as "climate change is escalating beyond our control" and "there is nothing we can do to stop it" or "no matter what we do it is too late". No such storylines are found in this study, but they can be found in other literature (see Jeppsson, 2020; Scranton, 2015; Uddenfeldt, 2016). I argue that the master narrative 'humans can control climate change' disciplines the construction of other narratives used such as 'climate change can be measured in changes of global average temperatures' (CPAP3:3,4,11-12,16,32,33,43-44,81, CPAP4: 48-49, CPAP10.1: 8-9,47-50,132,137,141, NVV:28-29,30,31,51,56-57,62,65-66,68-71,74-77,78-83,84-87,89-92,92-94,273,276, KD:28-29, 30-33, M:6-7,12-14, V:3,4,5,7) and 'the current pathway is assessed as insufficient by an expert authority' (CPAP4:44-45,45-47, NVV:30,63-64,276, KD:39-41,41-42,49-52, M:17-18,20-21,50-54,92-93, V:2-4), which are repeated by all actors except SD. These are attempts to take control or to appear as if in control by suggesting that climate change can be measured and that there are pathways that can mitigate climate change. I suggest that the global average temperature increase is a scientifically constructed abstraction providing narrative agency and narrative power to politics that produce credibility in fighting the causes of climate change and measuring progress. The discursive construction of CO2 emissions and global average temperature measurements can be seen as phenomena produced by 'intra-actions' between scientists and the methods used that discursively define the

material reality of climate change. If researchers can measure climate change in terms of temperature increases and emission outputs in CO2-equivalents, it means that politicians can set targets and measure actions against those targets. This is what Hajer means when he says politicians need to produce a discursive problem closure and proper targets (Hajer, 1995, pp. 22-23). Storylines such as 'the nations of the world have committed to limit global warming to 1,5 degrees' (CPAP3:9-11) is built on the master narrative 'climate change can be measured with global average temperatures' which in turn is disciplined by the underlying master narrative 'humans can control climate change' and the universal story of control. It helps to visualize the relation between universal stories, master narratives, and narratives or storylines as different layers, where individual storylines act as the visible building blocks and are disciplined by the underlying master narrative, which in turn fits within the universal story structure.

Storyline	The nations of the	Sweden has a unique	Billions of people	No matter what we
	world have committed	chance to influence	are at risk	do it is too late
	to limit global warming	international climate		
	to 1,5 degrees	action		
Master	Climate change can be	Sweden is/is	Climate change is	Irreversible tipping
Narrative	measured with global	becoming a	worrying	points are now
	average temperatures	frontrunner		causing self-
	and CO2-equivalents			reinforced heating
Underlying	Humans can control	Sweden can control	Humans are losing	Humans cannot
master	climate change	climate change	control over climate	control climate
narrative			change	change
Universal	Control	Control	Decline	Helplessness
story				

 Table 10. Illustration of relations between layers of narrative structures.

The 'humans can control climate change' master narrative is not concerned with whether humans are responsible for causing climate change, even though this is a related story. Being responsible for the causes is attributed to humans and the use of fossil fuels in the CPAP (CPAP4:1-3), but this is not an indication of being in control even though it usually leads to this conclusion; if humans caused it, we can also control it. I argue that this is not necessarily the case. The story of control, the need to measure, and the strategy of anticipate and prevent was popularized in EM discourse (Hajer, 1995). The use of global average temperatures to measure climate change is a deeply cemented narrative and the need to further measure effects of actions taken is expressed by the political opposition (M:60-61, 83-91, 99-102,120-122,126-127,143-146, SD:35-36, V:26-27,46-50-51) and the Climate Policy Council (Klimatpolitiska rådet, 2020). The difficulty of how to measure the effects of actions taken is a fundamental problem of climate science because it is the totality of global emissions plus the dynamics of the climate system, the existing vulnerabilities and difference between social groups, and adaptation responses that produce effects, not only the emission reductions in Sweden. The use of quantification of effects gives the

narrative performative power of producing control. This is what Hajer means when he says politicians must try to maintain an image of being in control and contain the social conflict over the problem. This is also what Swyngedouw (2010) refers to as de-politicization, the management of CO2 as a universal threat that can be contained without antagonism. Making climate change measurable is a narrative tool in the universal story of control. Policy-makers have to produce credible and acceptable strategies that generate trust in the solutions (Hajer, 1995, pp. 22-23). If climate change and the effects of actions taken can be measured in a quantifiable way, politicians can construct progress towards a target. But the discursive quantification of climate change and the physical phenomena are far from the same thing. Anshelm and Hultman (2015) uses the work of U. Beck (2009) who argues that the risks created by industrialized capitalist society have reached a point where its own operational logic is undermined, and control can no longer be maintained. In this sense society is increasingly forced to confront the self-generated risks and therefore transformed into a world risk society, where everything is about managing risks. Beck says that risk society perceives climate change as a serious and yet calculable risk (Beck, 2009), thus retaining the story of control. The chances of success in staying below 1,5 degrees are, according to the IPCC, 66% if the world sticks to the estimated carbon budgets of 420GtCO2 (IPCC, 2018). The predicted difference between the global average temperature increase of 1,5 and 2 degrees is repeated in the CPAP, but not the chances of success or uncertainty. Jafry and Platje argue that if uncertainty is disregarded in policy, it undermines the robustness of the Paris Agreement (Jafry & Platje, 2016). I argue that by not repeating the uncertainty of and limitations to measuring climate change in terms of global average temperatures and CO2-equivalents, the stories of helplessness and decline is strategically avoided to build coherence and stability in the story of control. The CPAP is producing the illusion of being in control and creates a reduction of complexity that works as a problem closure. The power effect of the story of control produces trust and credibility in the government and proposed solutions as long as they can be quantified against the measured targets. What Knaggård (2014) found about how policy-makers deal with scientific uncertainty was that they most commonly rely on existing knowledge of what is seen as politically possible and that scientific uncertainty only had a marginal influence on their decisions. I argue that what politicians see as "politically possible" is part of the cultural hegemonic knowledge and the common sense of political culture, which is disciplined by the already accepted master narratives and thus limits what actions can be taken, which explains why uncertainty plays such a marginal role. The uncertainty of climate change does not fit with the story of control and is therefore strategically avoided to build coherence (Hill, 2005).

Why employ the story of control?

The stories 'climate change is worrying' (story of decline) and 'humans/Sweden can control climate change' (story of control) have immense power. In the CPAP much of the focus and the story of Sweden is about putting billions of kronor of investments in Swedish industry. This would not be possible with the story of helplessness. Even though the chances of success, according to the IPCC, are only 66% to stay below the 1,5 degree target if the world sticks to the associated carbon budget, the reliance on the 'humans can control climate change' narrative seems to be dominant. There could be many explanations for this, one is that we have not yet grasped the full extent of the irreversible nature of tipping-points. The story of tipping-points and irreversible changes is

present in the CPAP4(54-58) and the NVV(54-55), which shows that the risk of losing control is a perceived threat but does not yet seem to challenge the dominant master narratives. Another explanation is that the government's role in society is considered being a producer of stability for businesses, industry, and the finance market to operate in (CPAP, NVV). This creates an incentive towards reproducing the story of control, because producing stability cannot be done with the story of helplessness. Thus, there is a direct conflict between the perceived role of government in society and some of the narratives of climate change. A third explanation is that no democratic government could rule with the story of helplessness, due to its general normative nonacceptance (operating through the fourth face of power), forces the government to use the story of control. This means that the dominant social construction of climate change discourse coming from governments does not necessarily match the physical reality of climate change, simply because it is unthinkable to run a country on the promise that it is too late and "there is nothing we can do about it." Even if the story of helplessness would be true in a physical material sense (for example that the planet has already passed tipping-points that are irreversible and no matter what any human does now the physical chain reactions of already started mechanisms will lead to absolute and total catastrophe), this story will simply not be told because of the general normative non-acceptance of defeatism and the difficulty of being elected with such a promise in a democratic system. We do not know which universal story matches the physical reality of climate change, or if universal stories are simply products of how humans narratively construct reality. If we think knowledge rests on power and power rests on knowledge (Digeser, 1992), it is likely that what is produced as truth by any democratic government will always be the story of control in the aim for power rather than truth.

Part 6 – The conflict between the goals

Anshelm and Hultman (2015) write that even if the framing of climate change was apocalyptic (2006-2009), the actions proposed were still conservative. This tendency is illustrated by the fact that the only actual policy proposal that the government seeks agreement on in parliament is the proposal to integrate climate policy with other policy areas (CPAP10.1). This seems to be a rather conservative proposal, but still generates strong opposition. The proposal implicitly suggests prioritizing climate goals over other societal goals, which both M and SD reject. SD objects by saying that it is wrong in principle to put one societal goal (climate) over others and M seeks a reformulation that clarifies that climate should not be prioritized above other goals, but rather be integrated with them. While it could be argued that the narratives of climate change in relation to Sweden used in the overall CPAP policy narrative serve to legitimize a prioritization of climate goals, it here becomes clear that this is not legitimate in the eyes of the right-wing opposition. This suggests that the apocalyptic and opportunistic narratives of climate change do not have much power to challenge opposing core values of basic priorities between societal goals. I argue that a discussion that can deepen the insights in this conflict and develop proper antagonistic debate would have the power to dismantle the post-political condition. Even if the CPAP10.1 policy proposal seems bleak on the surface, giving the debate on core values further nutrition might generate constructive results.

Conclusion

Through the omnipresent fourth face of power, master narratives produce and constitute the government as a self-disciplinary discursive agent that limits what narratives are possible to employ in the role of legitimately leading the nation. One of the central but underlying master narratives is the 'humans/Sweden can control climate change' narrative, which acts as a disciplinary force behind several common narratives, among them the narrative of Sweden as a frontrunner, which is reproduced by current and previous government coalitions and opposition alike. What it means to be a frontrunner changes over time among actors, but it is a strongly held belief that Sweden influences global climate change and global emission levels either through its CO2-efficient industries' international market shares or by showing that it is possible to become fossil-free while maintaining economic growth, competitiveness, and welfare. The frontrunner narrative is deeply cemented and together with the EM discourse maintains the post-political condition by undermining the possibility for a radical critique. Challenging it could also challenge the post-political condition. As argued by Anshelm and Hultman (2015), the apocalyptic imaginary could be part of such a counter-narrative, since an apocalyptic framing does not exclude antagonistic politics but rather has the potential to generate it. It cannot, however, be combined with the story of helplessness, even if it would be true, simply because it will likely not generate the support needed. An apocalyptic imaginary must thus come with the story of control because this generates narrative agency and offers hope. This may appear as a trivial conclusion, but the implication is that some forms of knowledge or truth seem incompatible with government narration, which suggest that the reproduction of what counts as truth by governments in consensual democracies is a product of power rather than a product of knowledge.

The interest of the industry is adhered to by the government — supported by the theory of accumulation by decarbonization — which is forced to maintain this relationship in order to control the release of emissions in their efforts to mitigate climate change. The industry is the source of emissions (villains), but also a source of Swedish competitiveness and welfare. They must carry the administrative burdens (victims) and they are the ones who have to reduce the emissions (heroes). This relationship, and the view of the state as regulator and investor that derives from the Green Keynesianism discourse, allows the government to redirect capital in ways that are aligned with the interests of the private sector, promoting a form of decarbonization by accumulation and a redistribution of wealth. Industry and capital owners can thus maintain accumulation and the government can appear to be in control while climate change is being "managed". This is how the narratives used construct a discursive problem closure that produces credibility and legitimacy for the proposed solutions. This may explain why the image of Sweden as frontrunner is so prominent and the industry is promoted as a hero, villain, and victim.

Zannakis writes that previous literature on "leaders and laggards" in environmental performance identifies deliberative democracy as a particularly robust predictor of which countries are leaders. My main argument is that democratic governments are likely to be biased towards telling a story of control, even if the state of the environment is beyond control. Zannakis (2015) quotes Dryzek and Stevenson who write that consensual

democracies perform well because they attempt to "integrate seemingly conflicting values," (Zannakis, 2015, p. 220) which they tie to the relation between EM discourse and consensual practices. I argue that the view of industrialized countries as "performing well" is a product of EM discourse and the post-political condition. To "integrate seemingly conflicting values" is an attempt at discursive problem closure, which produces the image of being in control and allows for the construction of nations being "leaders" (or frontrunners) and "performing well". I suggest that a view of most industrialized nations as laggards might be closer to the truth if one looks beyond the neat construction of the problem as simply staying below a calculated emissions output and thinking that responsibilities are fulfilled once the nationalized climate targets have been reached. This attempt at reducing the complexities of climate change and making it calculable by measuring effects of actions against emissions output creates a false sense of taking responsibility, security, being in control, and believing that everything is fine as long as we do our part, ignoring the actual effects of climate change. I suggest that this could be seen as a form of complex structural denialism. Constructing a narrative that ignores uncertainties and climate justice, while relying on technocratic management and comfortably set national targets rather than the latest science, which suggests that decarbonization must happen by 2035-2040 (see Anderson et al., 2020), is a product of the post-political condition.

I have tried to answer to the research question: what power effects do the central master narratives, and more specific narratives and storylines about Sweden's relation to climate change, as expressed in the Swedish Climate Policy Action Plan, have and why are they employed? The power effects are obviously greater than what I have been able to show here, which makes this study limited in terms of giving comprehensive answers. My effort has been to provide an analysis of the central narratives of the Climate Policy Action Plan and to reveal some of their power effects, in order to begin to understand why they are used. My purpose has been to contribute to the field of studies dealing with the social construction of climate change and how government responses to this phenomenon are based not only on its material properties but on the stories we tell about ourselves. Rather than confining myself to the general level of mapping the struggle between discourses, my aim has been to study the narrative components and provide a framework that can explain some if its power effects. The aim was also to reveal how the current policy regime reproduces power relations that help to maintain climate injustice. I suggest that the mutual dependency between the state and industry and the limited agency of the government to act within accepted master narratives is key to understanding why policy is focused on industrial expansion and growth rather than dealing with climate justice. Further research based on a larger empirical material that could confirm or disprove the argument made in this thesis would be needed to unpack the power of narratives and discern what knowledge is possible to express by democratic governments.

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