

# **The differential distributions of grievability in Swedish welfare discourse**

A study on welfare chauvinism in the Swedish right wing continuum



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

Master's thesis in Gender, Migration and Social Justice, GNVM03

Department of Gender Studies, Lund University

Supervisor: Ov Cristian Norocel

**FELICIA HÄGERBÄCK**

# Abstract

In the context of increasing welfare chauvinism in the Swedish right wing, and a mainstreaming of far right nationalist ideology, it has become increasingly important to analyze the racialized and classed implications of restrictive welfare discourse. Anchored in the feminist, antiracist and postcolonial theoretical field, this thesis analyzes welfare discourse in officially published political texts and budget proposals by three Swedish right wing political parties. The results show that the parties, conceptualized here as the Swedish ‘right wing continuum’, construct borders around welfare access that are rooted in racialized and classed notions of nativeness and labor market value. While the parties attempt to construct welfare as something that should be provided for all people in order to make everyone's life livable, the analysis reveals that such egalitarian notions are not extended to those perceived as migrants. Instead, welfare access is bordered as an extension of a neoliberal national project. Subsequently, the lives of those perceived as migrants are constructed as fundamentally ungrievable as no political regard is shown for their livability.

## Keywords

*Welfare chauvinism, right wing politics, discourse analysis, bordering, grievability*

## Nyckelord

*Välfärdschauvinism, högerpolitik, diskursanalys, gränsdragande, sörjbarhet*

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>1</b>
Keywords	1
Nyckelord	1
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Political care in the European context	8
1.2 Purpose and research questions	10
<b>2. Theoretical field and concepts</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 The field	14
2.2 Theoretical concepts	18
<b>3. Methodology and methods</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1 Discourse theory	26
3.2 Ethical knowledge production	28
<b>4. Empirical material</b>	<b>31</b>
4.1 The materials	35
4.2 Practical approach	36
<b>5. Analysis</b>	<b>37</b>
5.1 The egalitarian welfare conceptualization	43
5.2 The restrictive welfare conceptualization	53
5.3 Results	53
<b>6. Concluding discussion</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>7. Bibliography</b>	<b>57</b>

# 1. Introduction

In 2020, the party leader of Sweden's third biggest political party declared that, due to the “irresponsible” pro-immigration policies of the Social Democratic government, the Swedish welfare system had collapsed. Jimmie Åkesson, the representative of the far right party the Sweden Democrats, stated in the interview that:

The price is paid by *our* elderly, *our* sick, and by paid employees who, despite having fought their whole lives, have to witness the welfare system collapse when they most need it.

(Åkesson 2020a, translation and italics mine)

Another example is when he tweeted in 2020 that allowing high school students with temporary residency permits to apply for work- or school related permit extensions, is an upright ‘Afghan amnesty’ that diminishes “*our* security and welfare” (Migrationsverket 2021; Åkesson 2020b, translation and italics mine). These statements align with a discerning trend within far right movements in the Nordic region where parties that previously paid little attention to welfare-related issues, have begun using welfare as an arena for furthering their xenophobic and nationalist agendas (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 356). This trend is not exclusive to the Nordic countries, but rather follows a development in all of Europe where migration is increasingly discussed in relation to the integrity and perceived validity of the welfare system (Barker 2017, ch. 1; Sainsbury 2012, p.1-3). In the Nordic context however, where welfare engages a strong sense of pride and constitutes a central part of the national identity, the framing of migration as a financial burden and a threat to the welfare system has been especially prevalent (Keskinen 2016, p. 353-356). The consequences of such welfare related anti-immigration claims can be detrimental from a social justice perspective as it enables demands for restricting migrants social rights based on racialized and classed imaginaries (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen 2016, p. 353-354). Political demands for specifically restricting welfare access for those perceived as migrants is commonly referred to as ‘welfare chauvinism’ within the migration field (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen, Norocel & Bak Jørgensen 2016). Generally, as is shown in the Åkesson quote above, these kind of claims adhere to racialized and classed notions of deservingness, in which those perceived as migrants are deemed undeserving (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen, Norocel & Bak Jørgensen 2016).

In the context of welfare chauvinist political claims in Swedish politics, and the immediate risk they pose to the lives of those perceived as migrants, analyzing welfare conceptualizations in the Swedish right wing seems all the more urgent. This is especially the case as the 2022 Swedish election rapidly approaches. Therefore, this thesis focuses on representations of welfare chauvinism in the ‘policy and budget texts’ of three of Sweden's parliamentary parties, namely the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats. The ‘policy and budget texts’ consist of each party's submitted budget proposals from 2018 to 2022, as well as supporting policy texts found on the parties official websites. Specifically, these supporting texts consist of each party's alphabetically structured lists of political suggestions as well as their official ideological documents<sup>1</sup>. The three parties are conceptualized within the thesis as the Swedish ‘right wing continuum’ and in the section below I argue for the importance of conceptualizing it as such in a context of increased mainstreaming of far right anti-democratic ideologies all over Europe. Furthermore, the potential political implications of a far right welfare chauvinism is conceptualized using Judith Butler's framework on differentially distributed political care for human lives. By analyzing it through such a framework, I am able to fully analyze the racialized and classed underpinnings of welfare discourse in the right wing continuum.

## 1.1 Political care in the European context

This thesis examines the conceptualizations of welfare in the Swedish political context, specifically by analyzing welfare chauvinist themes in what I refer to as ‘policy and budget texts’ published or submitted by three Swedish right wing parties. The parties analyzed in this thesis are the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats and are conceptualized within this thesis as a ‘right wing continuum’. In this section I discuss this conceptualization in depth, and argue for the importance of analyzing these specific parties as a continuum. At the end of this section I also discuss the political restriction of welfare access from the perspective of differentiating notions of human life, subsequently introducing Butler's theoretical contributions to this thesis.

---

<sup>1</sup> The official ideological document, referred to by the parties as principle programme or idea programme, are documents in which the parties present their overall ideology and central political claims.

### 1.1.1 The mainstreaming of the far right

The conceptualization of the three parties as a right wing continuum is inspired by Ov Cristian Norocel's (2018) 'conservative right wing continuum' that points to the ideological space where conservative and neoliberal right wing politics meet across Europe (Norocel 2018, p. 44). The term 'continuum' enables a conceptualization of the different parties as part of a pattern in political ideology in a wider context (Norocel 2018, p. 44). I am not using the term 'conservative' in this project as it deals with nationalist or nativist notions of welfare, rather than conservative ideologies. The importance of conceptualizing the parties as a continuum stems from the recent political shift in Swedish politics in which the far right Sweden Democrats have been invited to collaborate with the Moderates and the Christian Democrats. As of 2021, the three parties are officially collaborating on their budget proposals. Important to note is that there are two other parliamentary parties in Sweden who are generally considered right wing parties, namely the Liberals<sup>2</sup> and the Centre Party<sup>3</sup>. These are however not included in the right wing continuum referenced in this thesis as my use of the phrase refers to the increased collaboration between the mainstream and the far right. Perhaps it could be referred to as the 'nationalist right wing continuum' or 'nativist right wing continuum' but the phrase 'right wing continuum' sufficiently points to the joined political space of the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats. It also enables me to conceptualize them as part of a wider trend of welfare chauvinist discourse in Sweden and Europe.

The collaboration between the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats is especially notable because of the events that have preceded it. The Sweden Democrats is a conservative and nationalist party (Sverigedemokraterna 2019), not seldom described as fundamentally racist and xenophobic (Mulinari & Neergaard 2014, p. 44). Since their first entrance into parliament in 2010 they have grown substantially and at the 2018 election, they became the third largest party (Valmyndigheten 2021). Despite their size, all other parties have avoided any sort of collaboration with them, making a clear stance against their undemocratic views (Bergman & Bäck 2015, p. 29). This is not typical of Sweden's political landscape as the governments of Sweden have generally adhered to the bloc political pattern in which parties have collaborated freely within [and sometimes across] the left-right

---

<sup>2</sup> Official website: <https://www.liberalerna.se/>

<sup>3</sup> Official website: <https://www.centerpartiet.se/>

blocs (Bergman & Bäck 2015). Nevertheless, all other parties have refused to collaborate with the Sweden Democrats at all. This has included the right wing parties the Moderates and the Christian Democrats as well. For example, Ulf Kristersson, who shortly thereafter became party leader of the Moderates, stated during his candidacy campaign in 2017 that:

The values of the SD [the Sweden Democrats] are not aligned with my own values, the values of the Moderates or the values of the Alliance<sup>4</sup>. We will discuss and compromise with “value-friends” (Kristersson cited in Börjesson & Åkesson 2017, translation mine).

In the statement Kristersson makes clear that the Sweden Democrats do not share the values of the Moderates or of the 2006-2019 right wing coalition ‘the Alliance’ (Börjesson & Åkesson 2017). He states that they will only collaborate with those who share their values, i.e. those he refers to as “value-friends” (Börjesson & Åkesson 2017). Similarly, party leader Ebba Busch declared in 2018 that the Christian Democrats were saying “no to negotiating and cooperating with the SD [the Sweden Democrats]” due to differences in values (Kristdemokraterna 2018, translation mine). These sentiments were apparently forgotten by 2021, when the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats declared that they were collaborating on a budget proposal (Sverigedemokraterna 2021; Moderaterna 2021; Kristdemokraterna 2021). The contrast between the previous statements emphasizing the impossibility of collaboration with the Sweden Democrats and the current situation in which they have presented a joint budget, point to a shift in the Swedish political climate.

This shift is happening against the backdrop of a gradual dismembering of the previously hegemonic Social Democratic welfare regime (Larsson et al 2012, p. 3-8), as well as a mainstreaming of the far right across Europe (Ekman & Krzyżanowski 2021; Kallis 2013, p. 55-56). Following the “turn to the Right”, a trend traced back to the late 70s when the centre-right party formed their first coalition government in nearly 50 years, the Social Democratic welfare model began deconstructing (Larsson et al 2012, p. 3-8). Although the centre-right government initially declared allegiance with the Social Democratic “redistributive” ideology, they imposed several changes to the system (Larsson et al 2012, p. 3-8). According to Larsson et al, these included “individualization of the pensions systems;

---

<sup>4</sup> The ‘Alliance’ is the political coalition between the Moderates, the Christian Democrats, the Liberals and the Centre party that held up from 2006 to 2019 <https://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/l%C3%A5ng/alliansen>

marketizations, decentralizations and privatizations of education, healthcare, and social services; in addition to deregulations of the labour market, infrastructure and the financial markets” (2012, p. 7-8). With the centre-right coalition being elected for two consecutive terms in the 2006 and 2010 elections, the hegemony of Social Democracy was over (Larsson et al 2012, p. 4). Although Sweden is still a Social Democratic state, this turn has resulted in a gradual “neoliberalization” of the Swedish welfare state (Larsson et al 2012, p. 8). Parallel to this turn from socialist political values to a neoliberalization of the welfare state, an even more violent process of mainstreaming the far right has been happening (Ekman & Krzyżanowski 2021; Kallis 2013, p. 55-56). Unfortunately, Sweden is just one example of the overall ‘mainstreaming of the far right’ in Europe in which far right parties are popularized to the point where their ideologies are adapted into the mainstream political debate (Ekman & Krzyżanowski 2021; Kallis 2013, p. 55-56). The 2021 right wing budget collaboration marks such a shift in Swedish politics in which the values of the previously untouchable Sweden Democrats have made it into the mainstream. The conceptualization of the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats as a right wing continuum is therefore especially useful when analyzing the time period in which this shift has happened.

Sometimes, Kallis argues, the far right framework activates latent ideas within the population or political mainstream, while also acting as a catalyst for such views (Kallis 2013, p. 56). This means that although the three parties might not necessarily have similar views on all topics, their collaboration points to a vulnerability to far right ideologies within the Moderates and Christian Democrats politics. Subsequently, far right political claims become mainstream and the borders between the political demands of the mainstream and the far right become blurred, and demands pertaining to ideas that were previously unthinkable become activated (Kallis 2013, p. 55-58). The possible implications of the mainstreaming of the nationalist, conservative and racist far right party the Sweden Democrats and the acceptance of such views by the Moderates and the Christian Democrats, must therefore not be underestimated. In this thesis I am analyzing the joint conceptualizations of welfare within the right wing continuum, focusing specifically on 2018-2022, i.e. the time period during which the Sweden Democrats got apparently accepted into mainstream right wing politics.

What is at stake here is the frightening possibility of a mainstream conceptualization of welfare that is influenced by the racist and xenophobic ideologies of the Sweden Democrats and that might gravely affect the social rights of those perceived as ‘migrants’ (Bak Jørgensen



& Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen 2016, p. 353-354). To conceptualize these implications, and formulate research questions that reach the racialized and classed depths of this issue, I am using two of Judith Butler's central concepts from *Frames of War* (Butler 2016). Specifically I am focusing on the terms *livability* and *grievability*, as are introduced below (Butler 2016).

### 1.1.2 Livability and grievability

In this section I am introducing the conceptual starting point of this thesis, namely Judith Butler's theoretical framework on racialized and classed distributions of political care for human lives (Butler 2016). The welfare discourse within the Swedish right wing continuum is conceptualized in this thesis through this framework specifically using the terms *livability* and *grievability* (Butler 2016). These terms are central in emphasizing the urgency of this project, framing the purpose and research questions as well as in conceptualizing the severe implications of welfare chauvinist discourse in the Swedish right wing continuum. At the basis of Butler's framework is the notion that lives need certain levels of care and protection in order to be *livable* (Butler 2016, p. 13-15, 21). A life that is livable, Butler argues, is a life that is made bearable through access to food, shelter, medicare, aid and protection (Butler 2016, p. 21). The acknowledgement that lives can be livable or unlivable subsequently acknowledges that lives need specific circumstances to be livable (Butler 2016, p. 21-24). Butler argues that care for the livability of certain lives is constructed in political discourse through the process of ascribing *grievability* to those lives (Butler 2016, p. 21-24). When a life is constructed as grievable, the loss of its livability is grieved (Butler 2016, p. 13-15). The political frames through which this grievability is ascribed affect our sense of loss for when a life are made unlivable, which subsequently affect our political demands and senses of responsibility regarding that life (Butler 2016, p. 21-24):

[...] Frames are operative in imprisonment and torture, but also in politics of immigration, according to which certain lives are perceived as lives while others, though apparently living, fail to assume perpetual form as such (Butler 2016, p. 24)

Butler points to the acceptance of torture and inhumane immigration policies as directly related to political frames of whose life is understood as grievable (Butler 2016, p. 24). This

theoretical framework is further described in the theory chapter but through this framework the welfare chauvinist claims in which access to the welfare that makes life livable is restricted for those perceived as migrants, can be understood as a differential distribution of *grievability*.

## 1.2 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is to explore the distribution of grievability in the welfare discourse of the Swedish right wing continuum. The study aims to add to and further develop the critical body of literature dealing with welfare chauvinist discourse from a feminist, antiracist and postcolonial perspective that are discussed more thoroughly in chapter two. This thesis also attempts to conceptualize the relationship between welfare chauvinist discourse and racialized and classed distributions of political care. By analyzing the interconnectedness of welfare discourse and political care for those perceived as migrants, I am able to examine the racialized and classed underpinnings of the welfare concept within the Swedish right wing continuum (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen et al 2016; Norocel 2016, Keskinen 2016). The research questions of this thesis is:

- In what ways are the welfare conceptualizations present in the ‘policy and budget texts’, published by parties in the Swedish right wing continuum since 2018, distributing grievability in racialized and classed ways?

I wish to make a short note on terminology before I introduce the disposition of the thesis. Within the empirical materials the parties frequently use different versions and Swedish translations of the term *immigrant* to describe people they perceive as migrants. The kinds of terminology used to describe racialized others in Western societies have been criticized and conceptually challenged by scholars such as Bridget Anderson who points to the “migrantization” of citizens and people of color (Anderson 2019). In this thesis, I do not wish to further the “migrantization” or differentiation of people perceived as migrants and I will therefore not use the terms used in the ‘policy and budget texts’ that are analyzed. Instead, when I have to, I will reference people who are differentially racialized and classed as *people who are perceived as migrants*.

### 1.2.1 Disposition

In terms of disposition this thesis consists of six chapters, including this first introduction. In the second chapter, *Theoretical field and concepts*, I present the research field that this thesis falls within, some of the recent studies within the field as well as its central concepts. In the chapter I also present and discuss the theoretical concepts I use in the analysis of the empirical material, further explaining Butler's concepts as well as other relevant terms. The third chapter, *Methodology and methods*, includes methodological discussions such as ethical and epistemological considerations as well as a discussion of this thesis' method for analysis, *discourse theory* (Laclau & Mouffe 1985; Laclau & Mouffe 1990). In the fourth chapter, *Empirical materials*, I describe the 'policy and budget texts' in detail and briefly describe my sorting and coding process, as well as other practical considerations. In the fifth chapter, *Analysis*, the analysis of the materials is thoroughly presented using the methodological tools of Laclau and Mouffe, and the theoretical concepts presented in the second chapter of the thesis. At the end of the chapter the results of the study are presented. Chapter six, *Concluding discussion*, concludes the project, emphasizing its especially notable contributions.

## 2. Theoretical field and concepts

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first part, named *The field*, position this thesis within a broader field of feminist, antiracist and postcolonial research by discussing the thesis' relationship to the field and presenting some recent studies done within the field. This section also includes discussions about the contributions of this thesis in relation to the wider field. The second section of the chapter, *Theoretical concepts*, focuses instead on presenting the specific theoretical concepts that guide the analysis of this thesis.

### 2.1 The field

Gender studies, namely the theoretical background of this thesis, have come a long way from dealing primarily with the oppression of women to being a multidisciplinary and intersectional field (Harding 2006, p. 66). Two hugely influential examples of antiracist and postcolonial interventions are Kimberlee Crenshaw and Chandra Mohanty who both criticized the feminist project for its disregard of issues pertaining to race, colonialism and class (Crenshaw 1991; Mohanty 1988; 2002). An area where this intervention becomes especially prevalent is in the feminist, antiracist and postcolonial epistemological perspectives on ethical knowledge production. This is further developed in the methodological chapter. With the integration of feminist studies with Marxist, postcolonial, queer and critical race perspectives, the feminist field is no longer only concerned with gender (Harding 2006, p. 66). Diana Mulinari is a current example of a scholar who combines feminist studies and transnational feminisms with critical race and migration studies (examples: Keskinen, Stoltz & Mulinari 2021; Martinsson & Mulinari 2018; Mulinari & Neergaard 2014; Sager & Mulinari 2018). Another influential scholar is Nira Yuval-Davis who has written thoroughly about gender, nationalisms and racialized belonging and whose theoretical contributions to this study are further explained in the second section of this chapter (examples: Yuval-Davis 1997; Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy 2019). Of course there are countless other multidisciplinary influential scholars in the field, many of whom are referenced throughout this study. I view this thesis as a product of this collaborative body of research within the feminist, anti-racist and postcolonial traditions.

### 2.1.1 Recent studies

In this section I give an overview of some of the research that has been done in the field over the last few years. I specifically focus on the research most influential to my own study. One majorly influential concept used in the field is ‘welfare chauvinism’ that was briefly presented in the introduction. The term is used to describe the specific way in which nationalist right wing ideologies mobilize the concept of welfare to regulate the social rights of those perceived as migrants (Keskinen et al 2016). The concept is sometimes also used to describe the public's views on the right to gain access to welfare services for people perceived as migrants (Keskinen et al 2016, p. 322). Several studies have dealt with this issue in a European context, for example the collection of works appearing in the 2016 edition of *Critical Social Policy* in which welfare chauvinism is analyzed in the context of the post-recession era since 2008 (2016). The studies deal with the rearticulation of migration policies, race, identity and welfare values in light of the financial crisis (Keskinen et al 2016, p. 325-326) specifically within liberal and Social Democratic welfare regimes as conceptualized by Esping-Andersen (1990). One of the scholars is Suvi Keskinen who has analyzed the use of welfare related arguments in immigration policies in a Finnish context (Keskinen 2016). Keskinen specifically differentiates between welfare nationalism, welfare chauvinism and welfare exclusionist rhetoric and finds that the different conceptualizations have different roles in the overall discourse (Keskinen 2016). In the study, Keskinen finds that welfare chauvinism and welfare exclusionary discourses that glorifies Finnish culture were present in the far right *True Finns* rhetoric, and that welfare nationalism influenced even mainstream parties policies (Keskinen 2016, p. 366-367).

Ov Cristian Norocel's contribution to the edition deals with the conceptualisation of welfare chauvinism in the Sweden Democrats' party documents and subsequently in their parliamentary motions during the 2010-2014 time period (Norocel 2016). One especially interesting contribution is Norocel's analysis of the mobilization of *folkhem* in the Sweden Democrats' discourse. *Folkhem* is a Swedish term commonly used in political ideology to construct the traditional Swedish culture and societal order in a nostalgic way (Norocel 2016) and roughly translates to ‘the peoples home’. Norocel's study found that the party attempts to construct a nativist ideology around welfare where only “native” Swedes are constructed as worthy of welfare services, through the usage of *folkhem* (Norocel 2016, p. 372). In their contribution to the collection, Martin Bak Jørgensen and Trine Lund Thomsen look at welfare

chauvinism in the Danish context (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016). In the study they identified two different kinds of rationales for welfare chauvinism. One such welfare chauvinism constructed “others” as undeserving for cultural or economic reasons, and was conceptualized by the scholars as the neoliberal rationale. The other one, predominant in the centre-left, was rather based on a nationalist kind of solidarity (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016, p. 345-347). The fourth study in the collection was conducted by Simon Guentner, Sue Lukes, Richard Stanton, Bastian A. Vollmer and Joe Wilding who analyzed welfare chauvinism in the United Kingdom in a similar manner, establishing that constructions of undeservingness are racialized and classed at the core (2016). The study also shows that governments and service providers adhere to this agenda, and subsequently act on it, despite anti-discriminatory laws preventing it (Guentner et al 2016). In addition to the collected works discussed above, scholar Laurentz Ennser-Jedenastik has studied welfare chauvinism in a broader European context. One notable work is a comparative study on different welfare regimes' vulnerability to welfare chauvinist discourse (Ennser-Jedenastik 2018). In the study Ennser-Jedenastik compared immigration policies in the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK and found that welfare regimes that adhered to a universalist or needs-based mode of redistribution were more vulnerable to welfare chauvinist and nativist discourse (2018).

These studies on welfare chauvinism are part of a wider field of studies dealing with migration, migration policy and perceptions of migration in Europe. Many of these studies have dealt with the welfare aspect of the migration debate, several of which are referenced throughout this study (for example Anderson & Hughes 2015; Barker 2017; Sainsbury 2012; Yuval-Davis et al 2019). Nordic welfare discourse in the context of the rise of far right political movements and migration debates relating to welfare is a recurring focal point within this part of the field. One such example is Markus Ketola and Johan Nordensvard (2015) who studied this in the Swedish and Finnish context and found that far right populism clings to the welfare state as a way to mobilize racist and xenophobic views (2015). The scholars argue that these movements do so by constructing the welfare state as something belonging to the nation (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 356). Interestingly, the study found that these far right populist rhetorics still argue for generally progressive redistributive politics (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 372). Of course, these redistributions were compromised by nationalist notions of belonging (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 372). This relates to another study in the field in which scholars Suvi Keskinen, Unnur D Skaptadottir and Mari Toivanen (2019)

critically analyzed the notion of cultural homogeneity in the Nordic region and the role it plays in understandings of community. Marilena Geugjes' study on Sweden and Denmark's respective discourse on collective identity is another study focusing on nationalist ideals and self-images (2021). Mulinari and Sagers (2018), and Mulinari and Neergaards (2014) texts are two other examples of studies dealing with racist, xenophobic and nationalist agendas articulated within Swedish political discourse, especially focusing on the Swedish far right.

Another branch within the field focuses on the Swedish political climate from the perspective of Swedish 'exceptionalism', i.e. the view of Sweden as a front figure for progressive, egalitarian politics (Dahlstedt & Neergaard 2019; Keskinen, Stoltz, Mulinari 2021). The process of mainstreaming the far right and the general 'turn to the right' referenced in the beginning have been argued to mark the end of such exceptionalism (Ekman & Krzyzanowski 2021; Kallis 2013; Larsson et al 2012, p. 3-8). For example, scholars Magnus Dahlstedt and Anders Neergaard (2019) have analyzed the infiltration of right wing xenophobic and racist ideologies into the mainstream, focusing on the context of Swedish migration politics. They have argued that a neoliberalization of the welfare state and the European 'solidarity crisis' has marked the end of Swedish exceptionalism (Dahlstedt och Neergaard 2019, p. 12). Worth mentioning is also Keskinen, Stoltz and Mulinari (2021) who have explored the feminist movements interaction with the rise of neoliberal globalisation and the far right in the Nordic region. The scholars conceptualize current feminisms against the backdrop of decolonial critique and critical perspectives on welfare state ideologies (Keskinen et al 2021).

### 2.1.2 The contributions of this thesis

As presented above, this research is positioned in a field of critical welfare and migration studies that falls within a wider feminist, antiracist and postcolonial scholarly tradition. The studies presented above deal with welfare chauvinism and the rise in anti-democratic right wing ideologies in the European and Nordic context. These studies offer a stable stepping stone for this thesis in which I build on central conceptualizations and thematic focal points in the field such as welfare chauvinism, deservingness, the neoliberalization of welfare and right wing ideology in Sweden. In this thesis I extend these conceptualizations to the time-period during which the new Swedish right wing continuum has formed. By conceptualizing the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats as a right wing continuum I am able to understand the specificities of welfare chauvinist, nationalist and racist discourses

present in the Swedish mainstream today. Analyzing this new constellation in Swedish politics and conceptualizing it as a continuum is one of my study's key contributions to the field.

Furthermore, this thesis conceptualizes welfare chauvinist discourse through Butler's conceptualizations of *livability* and *grievability* (Butler 2016). Through this framework, welfare chauvinism can be conceptualized as a lack of political care for those perceived as migrants. Butler's contribution to this thesis enables an analysis of the welfare chauvinist discourse's interaction with the process of constructing the grievability of human lives in racialized and classed ways. This thesis is therefore able to analyze welfare chauvinism within the Swedish right wing continuum as linked to notions of human life and differential distributions of care for different lives.

## 2.2 Theoretical concepts

In this section I introduce the specific theoretical concepts that guide the analysis of this thesis. There are three concepts that are of central importance to this thesis: *livability*, *grievability*, and *bordering*. These concepts enable me to analyze the interconnectedness of welfare chauvinist discourse in the Swedish right wing continuum and the racialized and classed political constructions that inform it. The three terms have different functions in the thesis. *Livability* and *grievability* enables a conceptualization of the political framings through which certain lives are cared for politically, while others are not (Butler 2016, p. 15). The term *bordering*, introduced in the second part of this section, has a different function. *Bordering* points to the processes through which borders are drawn in social and political life (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1-3). In this thesis I apply the term to the restriction of welfare access for those perceived as migrants as a way of conceptualizing it as an extension of geographical bordering processes (Yuval-Davis et al 2019). Through the conceptualization of *livability* and *grievability* in welfare chauvinist discourse I am able to analyze welfare restriction as a bordering process that is fundamentally linked to racialized and classed hierarchies (Butler 2016, p. 31-32, Yuval-Davis et al 2019).

### 2.2.1 Livability and grievability

This thesis is concerned with welfare chauvinist discourse that constructs the deservingness of access to welfare services in differentiating ways. As discussed in the introduction, there



has been an increased focus on welfare in anti-immigration debate where racialized and classed constructions of deservingness are central (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 356; Keskinen et al 2016). These constructions of deservingness are continuously informed by notions of entitlement to welfare services based on nationalist notions of belonging (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016). The rhetoric showcased by the Sweden Democrats in the introduction is an example of this, where immigration is constructed as a threat to the integrity and success of the Swedish welfare state (Åkesson 2020a; 2020b). Of course, welfare chauvinism and anti-immigration discourse greatly affects the social rights of those perceived as migrants, restricting their access to welfare services (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Barker 2017). In this section I dive into Judith Butler's theoretical framework on *livability* and *grievability* and discuss its role in conceptualizing the welfare chauvinism in the Swedish right wing continuum.

The starting point of Butler's theorization is the argument that life is precarious (Butler 2016, p. 21). Butler states that to say that life is precarious “is to say that the possibility of being sustained relies fundamentally on social and political conditions and not only on a postulated internal drive to live” (Butler 2016 p. 21). The term points to the vulnerability of life, and the fact that life needs external factors in order to be sustained (Butler 2016, p. 21). Basically, life requires social and political support such as medical care, food, shelter, protection and aid (Butler 2016, p. 21). For life to be upheld long-term in a sustainable manner, it therefore needs to be made *livable* (Butler 2016, p.13-15, 21). *Livability* goes beyond the possibility of life to simply continue, i.e for the life to be ‘survivable’, and points instead to politically and socially endorsed factors that makes life bearable (Butler 2016, p.13-15, 21). To put it shortly: the acknowledgement that life is precarious, and that there is a difference between life being survivable and being livable, is an acknowledgement that life is reliant on politically and socially endorsed protections and aids (Butler 2016, p. 21-24).

The recognition of life as precarious and therefore in need of conditions that make it livable subsequently enables political demands for policy that provides humans with such conditions (Butler 2016, p.24-25). Unfortunately, life, livability and precariousness are constructed in hierarchical ways in politics (Butler 2016, p.15-32). This is where Butler's term *grievability* becomes central (Butler 2016, p. 13-15). A life that is *grievable* is a life that is regarded as living, and that would be grieved if lost or injured (Butler 2016, p.13-15). Whether or not a life is perceived as grievable greatly affects our feelings of responsibility, respect, shame,

guilt and loss towards it (Butler 2016, p. 21-24). This is because the loss of a life is only regarded as significant from a political perspective if the life was understood to be *grievable* in the first place (Butler 2016, p.13-15).

Butler argues that a determining factor in whether or not a life is understood as grievable is its politically constructed *recognizability* (Butler 2016, p. 5-15). A life can easily be apprehended as precarious, without being fully recognized as such (Butler 2016, s. 2-5). It is not enough to simply apprehend the precariousness or vulnerability of life because apprehension can simply mean ‘to acknowledge’ (Butler 2016, p. 2-5). Acknowledging life as precarious is insufficient for inciting political senses of responsibility for the apprehended lives (Butler 2016, p. 2). Recognizability, on the other hand, enables a sense of responsibility (Butler 2016, p. 5). The recognizability of lives depends on the societal norms that categorize and hierarchize subjects in differential ways (Butler 2016, p. 5-6). However, these societal norms and conventions that construct subjects in ways that make recognition possible, are preceded by the fact that they are already recognizable (Butler 2016, p. 5-6). This is because there is a difference between the act of *recognition*, and its predecessor *recognizability* (Butler 2016, p. 5-6). Recognizability is the foundation on which recognition can happen, and when recognition and recognizability are enabled, a life can be seen as grievable (Butler 2016, p. 5). This means that societal norms and categorizations, for example racialized divisions, make certain lives as recognizable so that they can be regarded as grievable, while others fail to do so (Butler 2016, p. 5-6).

Butler refers to the continuous act of prescribing grievability in differential ways as an act of framing (2016 p. 23-32). Framing is an editorial act that directs the viewer's vision in specific ways (Butler 2016, p. 8). As discussed in the introductory chapter, Butler views frames as the operative mode through which lives are perceived in differentiating ways, as exemplified by inhumane immigration politics in which certain lives are not regarded as lives at all (Butler 2016, p. 24). Framing is therefore the direct operationalization of power through which the sense of care, responsibility and loss for certain lives gets minimized through differential distributions of grievability (Butler 2016, p. 24-25). These oppressive frames subsequently affect policy-making and the social rights of those perceived as un-grievable (Butler 2016 p. 24-25).

The terms *livability* and *grievability* contribute majorly to conceptualizations of welfare chauvinism. To summarize Butler's framework, she argues that the conceptualization of life as precarious acknowledges that it relies on certain external factors to be sustained (Butler 2016, p. 21-26). Life is livable when it is sustainable, i.e. when it has access to things such as health care, shelter, food, rest, protection and aid (Butler 2016, p. 13-15, 21). These are all services that the Swedish welfare system provides or enables. The political sense of responsibility to provide such care relies fundamentally on the political frames that construct certain lives as grievable and others as un-grievable (Butler 2016, p. 13-15). Welfare chauvinist discourse that constructs those perceived as migrants as undeserving of welfare access can therefore be understood as an act of framing, in which certain lives are constructed as un-grievable. The term *livability* further enables insight into how responsibility and care for the livability of lives is placed upon the shoulders of the welfare institution within the Swedish right wing continuum. Against this backdrop, the term *grievability* enables a scrutiny of the differential distributions of care that take place through welfare chauvinist discourse. By conceptualizing these distributions as differential prescriptions of *grievability* I can further understand the nationalist, racialized and classed intricacies of welfare chauvinism in the Swedish right wing continuum. As is further discussed in the section below, nationalist safeguarding of welfare can be understood as a fundamentally oppressive act that is rooted in global racist and neoliberal inequalities (Anderson & Hughes 2015; Yuval-Davis et al 2019). In the sections below, I introduce the term *bordering* that enables a conceptualization of the differential distributions of *grievability* in welfare chauvinist discourse and global and local racialized and classed inequalities as fundamentally interconnected.

### 2.2.2 Bordering

In this thesis I use the term *bordering* as developed by Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss and Kathryn Cassidy (2019) to conceptualize the process through which welfare is safeguarded in nationalist political discourse. The term, as is more thoroughly discussed below, is originally conceptualized by the authors in a broader context of territorial, regional, political and social borders (Yuval-Davis et al 2019). In this thesis however, the logic that underpin this broader conceptualization is applicable to the welfare chauvinism of the Swedish right wing continuum. To complement the theorization, I am also referencing Bridget Anderson, Vanessa Hughes, Laura Brace and Nandita Sharma and their theorizations on the racialized and classed migration processes of western societies (Anderson 2015;

Anderson & Hughes 2015; Brace 2015; Sharma 2015). The concepts presented in this section enable a conceptualization of the bordering of welfare access as a racialized and classed multiscale process that is fundamentally informing the political processes of the nation. Furthermore, when welfare chauvinism is understood as a process through which welfare is *bordered*, it becomes possible to conceptualize unequal distributions of grievability as a nationalist project that is mobilized around the concept of welfare. In the sections below I introduce the central influences from the frameworks, and discuss their role in my thesis.

The framework on bordering starts off in a context where neoliberalisation on a global scale has fundamentally altered the role of borders in the world (Yuval-Davis, Cassidy & Wemyss 2019). The scholars reference Etienne Balibar's (2004, p. 1) comments about bordering processes being "dispersed a little everywhere" (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1). The comment points to the fact that borders nowadays have moved from their original location, namely the actual geographical border of a state, territory or jurisdiction, to the center of political life (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1). Today, border controls and border processes are happening everywhere from the housing market, where landlords are asking for identification-papers, to train stations and airports outside of state territory (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1). Yuval-Davis et al argue that bordering processes have moved from the periphery to the center of society, which has a grave effect on global inequalities (2019, p. 1-3, 18). Central to this process is the fact that the neoliberal states of today have been designed to keep certain racialized and classed subjects out, giving borders a significant regulatory role in creating racialized and classed hierarchies (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1-28). Furthermore, the mechanism of modern day bordering goes far beyond determining who does and does not stay within the geographical area of a nation, and works to regulate the political and social rights of people perceived as migrants within nations as well (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1-3). The potential of conceptualizing welfare chauvinism as a bordering process becomes apparent here, as a central aspect of bordering is the restriction of social rights for those perceived as migrants (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1-3). Subsequently, Yuval-Davis et al argue that bordering processes have to be understood as conscious processes of governing, rather than a consequence of a natural world order in which borders simply exist (2019, p. 1-3). Through this understanding of bordering, welfare chauvinism can be understood as a politically motivated governing practice in which geographical, political and social borders are reproduced. Yuval-Davis et al reference criminology and migration scholar Alpa Parmar (2018) who views modern day western borders as a reflection of the west's attitude to

racialized others (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18). Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy state that:

One needs at the same time to analyse the transformative function of borders in conjunction with their aim to preserve, all across the world, those local and global hierarchies, both racial and colonial, that govern mobility for some but not for others (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18).

Bordering is conceptualized as a governing process that functions to reproduce global hierarchies (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18) and such a conceptualization enables an understanding of welfare chauvinism as a process through which globally anchored inequalities are upheld. In the latter part of the quote Yuval-Davis et al points to the regulation of mobility as central to this process (2019, p. 18). The scholars argue that today's neoliberal regulation of movement is a fundamentally racialized and classed process that is designed to differentiate between different migrating subjects (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18). Brace argues in Anderson and Hughes (2015) that this process regulates movement based on capitalist imaginaries about labor market value and that immigration policies are increasingly structured around the perceived labor market value of migrating subjects (Brace 2015, p. 23-24). Anderson adds that wealthy bureaucrats and business people who move across national borders for work or lifestyle purposes are not even really considered migrants anymore, and can receive one-day visas on a whim (Anderson 2015, p. 44). While the valued workers are wanted, the racialized, unskilled workers/non-workers are unwanted from the perspective of neoliberal western nations (Sharma 2015, p. 98-99, Brace 2015, p. 23-24, Andersson 2015, p. 44). This labor dimension of migration is further exemplified by the increase in labor-related criterias for residency permits and citizenship within European countries (Anderson 2015). Yuval-Davis et al further argue that neoliberal economies are in fact dependent on this very differentiation between unwanted and wanted migrants because certain types of migration are necessary for the elite's capital accumulation (2019, p. 18).

Although the immigration controls of western democracies claim to not be racist, they have never denied that they are designed to keep out the global poor (Anderson 2015, p. 44). The classed dimension of bordering and migration control can therefore not be read as disconnected from its racialized dimensions (Sharma 2015, p. 98-100; Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18). The racialized and classed global inequalities of today's neoliberal globalized

world, born from imperial and colonial orders, make immigration controls fundamentally racist and classist (Sharma 2015, p. 98-100; Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18). As discussed above, these racialized and classed bordering processes infiltrate the centre of political and social life, and central to this process is the notion of belonging (Anderson & Hughes 2015, p. 2-3; Sharma 2015, p. 99, 108-109; Yuval-Davis et al 2019). The right to legally stay within the borders of a nation, does not even guarantee the social position of belonging, or in fact equal access to social rights (Anderson & Hughes 2015, p. 2-3). Anderson and Hughes argue that belonging has generally been believed to consist of legal belonging to a state through citizenship (Anderson & Hughes 2015, p. 2-3). This naive notion of belonging has been that citizenship guarantees political and social belonging and equal rights, but this is of course not true since states are not containers of society (Anderson & Hughes 2015, p. 2-3). Rather, Anderson and Hughes argue that society consists of 'communities of value' in which a shared sense of common values inform structures of belonging (Anderson & Hughes 2015, p. p. 2-3). Sharma conceptualizes this similarly, but rather emphasizes that the nation is understood to consist of a set of 'races', i.e. people belonging to one another racially (Sharma, 2015 p. 99, 108-109). Today, racial differentiation is not based solely on an imagined biological determination of 'race' (Sharma 2015, p. 99, 108-109). Fundamental to the construction of today's nation states is rather 'neo-racism', i.e. the notion that cultural differences determine belonging (Sharma 2015, p. 108-109). Differentiation based on race, whether it be imagined biologically or culturally, is necessary for the migration regulation and overall structure of the neo-liberal world, Sharma argues (Sharma 2015, p.98-100, 108-109). The fact that those perceived as migrants might be subject to disproportionately strict criterias for welfare access in welfare chauvinist discourse, can therefore be conceptualized as motivated by racialized and classed notions of belonging.

To summarize, bordering is understood in this thesis as the political and social process through which the welfare access of those perceived as migrants is constructed. The racialized and classed regulations of movement that are central to modern day capital accumulation are understood to be interconnected with this process. Furthermore, the structures of belonging that inform welfare chauvinist claims and the subsequent restriction of the social rights of those perceived as migrants are conceptualized here as fundamentally racialized and classed. Bordering processes are not merely the technological hands-on practice of regulating access to the institutions of a nation, but rather a social and political process aiming to construct a specific social order (Yuval-Davis et al 2019). Welfare

chauvinist claims can therefore be understood as something that goes beyond restricting welfare access, as it also constitutes an intricate process through which the political and social world is structured in racialized and classed ways. By conceptualizing welfare chauvinism in this way, and by connecting it to Butler's concept, I am able to understand the differential distributions of grievability in welfare chauvinist discourse as something that is fundamentally interconnected with racialized and classed inequalities. The conceptualization of welfare chauvinism as a bordering project in which grievability is differentially distributed enables an understanding of the racialized and classed implications of such discourse.

## 3. Methodology and methods

In the first section of this chapter I present the method for analysis that is used in this thesis, *discourse theory*, as developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985; 1990). This is followed by a discussion about the methodological considerations of this thesis, especially issues pertaining to ethical knowledge production from a feminist, antiracist and postcolonial perspective.

### 3.1 Discourse theory

In this section of the chapter I present the method that is used to analyze the empirical material. This thesis is concerned with welfare chauvinist discourse in text published by parties in the Swedish right wing continuum. Discourse is a disputed term, but generally it refers to structured patterns in language that humans interact with within different social domains (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2000, p. 7). Among discourse analysts, language is not understood to reflect a universally “real” world, but is rather produced and reproduced through social interactions (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2000, p. 7, 11-13). Therefore, language and discourse interact with our understanding of the world (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2000, p. 7, 11-13). There are several different methodological frameworks for doing discourse analysis that differ on a practical, theoretical and epistemological level (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2000, p. 7-9). The method for analysis used in this thesis is *discourse theory* as developed by political philosophers Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985; 1990). The main sources are Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) and Laclau's *New Reflections on The Revolution of Our Time* (1990). In the latter (Laclau 1990), mainly the chapter *Post-Marxism without Apologies* that is co-authored by Laclau and Mouffe is referenced (Laclau & Mouffe 1990). Below, I introduce the theoretical grounds of the framework, its methodological potentials and argue for its contributions to my thesis.

#### 3.1.1 Hegemony and the material world

Central to the theoretical conceptualizations that define discourse theory is the notion of discourse as something that goes beyond the linguistic realm (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 100). According to Laclau and Mouffe, even the material world is discursively constituted and the term discourse includes both linguistic and nonlinguistic domains (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 100). Laclau and Mouffe illustrate their conceptualization through the example of two people



building a brick wall (Laclau & Mouffe 1990). The argument is that both the act of asking your partner for a brick and the subsequent act of placing the brick on the wall are discursive acts:

This totality which includes within itself the linguistic and non-linguistic, is what we call discourse. [...] What must be clear from the start is that by discourse we do not mean a combination of speech and writing, but rather that speech and writing are themselves but internal components of discursive totalities' (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 100).

Instead of viewing discourse as solely linguistic, Laclau and Mouffe understand language to be a part of discourse. This conceptualization of discourse has several Marxist influences that Laclau and Mouffe credit throughout their works (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. x-xi). According to Laclau and Mouffe, discourse theory can not be viewed as strictly following Marxist tradition however, due to central ontological differences (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. x-xi). Laclau and Mouffe mainly take issue with the Marxist ontological understanding of the *base* that consists of the structural space of the working class, and the *superstructure* through which the base is ideologically expressed (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 24). In Marxist tradition, the base is viewed as a determined material reality but Laclau and Mouffe oppose the assumption that the metaphysical world can be detached from the construction of it (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 24; Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 129). The *being* of material conditions, especially in modern day capitalist society, cannot be understood as detached from the social construction of it (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 129). Rather, in modern day capitalism, discursive understandings of “the reality of objects” constructs *being* in historically and politically specific ways (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 119). According to Laclau and Mouffe, the base/superstructure conceptualization does not sufficiently deal with the processes that enable power to be hierarchized in certain ways, nor does it deal with the interconnectedness of linguistic and nonlinguistic acts (Laclau & Mouffe 1985; 1990).

In the context of welfare chauvinism this intervention has a significant impact. Instead of viewing the *being* of restricted welfare access for those perceived as migrants as detached from the specific linguistic act of expressing welfare chauvinist views, discourse theory enables a more nuanced conceptualization. According to discourse theory such a *being* must be interpreted as ultimately intertwined with the linguistic articulation of welfare chauvinism.

Central to this conceptualization is the term *hegemony* which is the most central concept within discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe 1985; 1990). Hegemony is the privileging of a specific political articulation, and Laclau and Mouffe argue that it needs to be at the centre of analyzing politics (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. x). Laclau and Mouffe's issue with Marx becomes abundantly clear here as they use the term hegemony to break with the notion of power as determined by material relations (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xvi). Specifically they discuss political problematizations of globalization and state that:

Indeed, scrutinizing the so-called 'globalized world' through the category of hegemony elaborated in this book can help us to understand that the present conjuncture, far from being the only natural or possible societal order, is the expression of a certain configuration of power relations. It is the result of hegemonic moves on the part of specific social forces which have been able to implement a profound transformation in the relations between capitalist corporations and the nation-states. This hegemony can be challenged (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xvi)

Contrary to Marxist conceptualizations of power, discourse theory offers an understanding of power as a politically active discursive process through which certain power relations are enabled (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xvi). The term hegemony enables an understanding of discourse as continuously articulated and ever changing (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 136-138). From this perspective, welfare chauvinism can be understood as a political attempt to hegemonize racialized and classed welfare conceptualizations. The stakes immediately rise as the interconnectedness of the *being* of restricted welfare access for those perceived as migrants and welfare chauvinist political claims are brought to life through Laclau and Mouffe's theorizations.

Laclau and Mouffe accuse their predecessors of being essentialist when they assumed that there can ever be a determined differentiation between the social and the metaphysical, and that the social can ever be "closed" (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. 136-138). They argue instead that:

the limitation and interaction between spheres cannot be thought in terms of the category of 'determination [and] there is no *last instance* on the basis of which

society can be reconstructed as a rational and intelligible structure, but rather that the relative efficacy of each sphere depends on an unstable relation of antagonistic forces which entirely penetrates the social (Laclau & Mouffe 1990, p. 115)

The critique of deterministic distinctions between linguistic and nonlinguistic acts, and between the social and metaphysical world, constitute Laclau and Mouffe's central intervention to other conceptualisations of discourse and power (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xvi; Laclau & Mouffe 1990 p. 115). Laclau and Mouffe offer a conceptualization of discourse as an all-encompassing articulation of power from which the material “reality” of the social world can not be detached (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). To summarize, according to Laclau and Mouffe power is productive and structures the social in specific ways (Laclau & Mouffe 1990). Hegemony is merely a given fixation in discourse at a given time and can be rearticulated through antagonistic processes in which alternative meanings and understandings are articulated (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 134-145). Antagonisms are expressions of alternative meanings, and the term refers to the impossibility of ever reaching a final fixation of meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xiii-xvii). Current configurations of power have been created as a result of hegemonic shifts that can be re-articulated at any time (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. xvi).

In the context of my thesis, Laclau and Mouffe's framework enables an in depth conceptualization of welfare chauvinism as an articulation of power through which welfare access is regulated. The conceptualization of discourse as something that exceeds linguistic acts enables a fuller comprehension of what is at stake when political parties attempt to restrict the social rights of those perceived as migrants. When discourse is viewed as an active process of power through which attempts to hegemonize meanings are articulated, welfare chauvinism can properly be conceptualized as an attempt to transform the social reality of those perceived as migrants.

### 3.1.2 Methodological tools

In this section I present central terms that Laclau and Mouffe use to describe different components of a discourse, specifically focusing on the ones I use in this thesis (Laclau & Mouffe 1985; Laclau & Mouffe 1990). Laclau and Mouffe views a discourse as a specifically structured relationship between different signs (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). On a

technical level, Laclau and Mouffe are interested in the meanings of signs, specifically focusing on how certain meanings are attached to privileged signs within a discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). For example, *welfare*, *need* and *citizen* are central signs within the welfare discourse of the Swedish right wing continuum. The signs relate to one another in specific ways, and these relations determine the structure of the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. 105). There are a few technical terms used in discourse theory to refer to signs. For this thesis, the terms *sign element*, *moment* and *nodal point* are most central. Elements are signs that the discourse has not attached a fixed meaning to (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). In the Swedish right wing continuum the sign *citizen* can be understood as such an element, in which there is conflict surrounding its meaning. Elements are articulated into moments within a discourse, a process through which their meaning is totalised in that given domain (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). For example, the sign *need* can be interpreted as a moment within the discourse as its meaning is agreed upon and fixed in the discourse. In a discourse, there is generally a privileged sign around which other signs are structured (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. xi; Laclau 1990, p. 28). This sign is called a *nodal point* and is a moment within the given discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. xi; Laclau 1990, p. 28). In the Swedish right wing continuum the nodal point is the sign *welfare*, as all other signs relate in specific ways to that particular sign. There are of course no permanently fixed meanings of signs, as a discourse can never be eternally fixed and stable (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). *Hegemony* is the temporary fixation of a discursive *articulation*, and *antagonism* is the mode of conflict through which struggles for hegemony manifests (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xiii-xvii, 134-145). By using the terms *hegemony*, *articulation*, and *antagonism*, I am able to point to the attempts to make certain meanings hegemonic in the discourse, and to the articulations that counteract such attempts (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. xiii-xvii, 134-145).

The terms described above guide the analysis of this thesis, as they enable me to reference the role of specific signs in the discourse. In the analysis I structure the analysis around the central signs in the discourse. Furthermore, I take inspiration from Marianne Winther Jørgensen and Louise Phillips who suggest asking a set of questions when using Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (2000, p. 36-37):

- What meanings are established through putting signs in set relations to one another and what possible meanings are excluded?
- Do any articulations put into question the moments of the discourse?

- What articulations are foundational to this specific discourse?
- What signs are privileged in the discourse? How are they defined in relation to other signs?

By asking these questions to the empirical materials I am able to understand the hegemonic conceptualizations of welfare in the Swedish right wing continuum and analyze them as political articulations of welfare chauvinism.

## 3.2 Ethical knowledge production

In critical research, the ethics of knowledge production have been a major focal point (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 102-104). In this section I discuss methodological transparency and present some interventions against traditional views on knowledge production. Firstly, however, I wish to make a few notes on methodological transparency. Methodological transparency is a central part of ethical knowledge production and entails addressing the methodological and ethical choices made throughout the research (Israel 2015, p. 3; Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 103-104, 120-125). When it comes to dealing with empirical materials, transparency also includes being clear about discrepancies in the materials and sufficiently communicating those in the analysis (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 120). By revealing considerations and choices made throughout the research, the knowledge claims of the research becomes clear for the reader (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 103-104). Another central aspect of ethical research is making sure that the knowledge that is produced ‘does good’ (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 102). The traditionally positivist notion that a researcher can stand on the outside of the research topic and study it from an objectively neutral position has had dangerous effects on global inequalities (Haraway 1988, p. 581). Research that is conducted uncritically within a society that is already structured in a gendered, racialised, classed, colonial and imperial way, will reproduce those very structures (Harding 2006; Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 98-104). It has therefore been of central concern for feminist, antiracist and postcolonial scholars to combat this notion (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 98-104). Popularly, this notion has been referred to as ‘the God Trick’, as coined by Donna Haraway (1988, p. 578-581). The inequalities inherent in the power of the God Trick have been of central feminist concern over the years (Haraway 1988, p. 581; Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 98-104). Haraway argues that it is an issue of an unproblematized vision, in which the researcher claims to be able to see without being seen (Haraway 1988, p. 581). Instead, Haraway argues for an embodied knowledge production

that makes the vision visible (Haraway 1988, p. 583). The perhaps most wellknown tool in feminist research for combatting the reproduction of inequalities through research has been Feminist Standpoint Theory (Harding 2004). The idea is that women have the “truest” view of the social world since we see both our own position and that of the oppressor, while the oppressor only sees their own (Harding 2004). Feminist Standpoint Theory argues that this gives women and scholars who research women the unique ability to research something “from below” (Harding 2004). Feminist Standpoint Theory has been criticized however by scholars such as Donna Haraway (1988) who argue that researching “from below” does not free the researcher from the burden of reflection (Haraway 1988, p. 583-584). Haraway's concept “situated knowledge” has been presented as an alternative approach that combats irresponsibility and invisibility in research (Haraway 1988, p. 583):

I would like to insist on the embodied nature of all vision and so reclaim the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into a conquering gaze from nowhere (Haraway 1988, p. 581).

Haraway argues for a “situated and embodied knowledge” that is traceable and can be called into account (Haraway 1988, p. 583). The approach enables a political anchorage of the research and promotes knowledges that are thoroughly reflected upon and made clear to the reader (Haraway 1988, p. 589-590). While Haraway mainly criticizes traditional positivist research, she also takes issue with postmodern relativist approaches to research. Relativism, Haraway argues, is a way of claiming to be everywhere, subsequently disconnecting oneself from responsibility, accountability, visibility and politics in the research (Haraway 1988, p. 584). This is no different from the traditional positivist claim of researching from nowhere (Haraway 1988, p. 584). Harding and Haraway have both argued that the dedication to neutrality in research disarms the social sciences of their social justice potential (Harding 2004, p. 5; Haraway 1988, p. 584-585). Research has the opportunity to further the rights of oppressed groups, but this potential gets lost when the research is not politically anchored (Harding 2004, p. 5). By adopting a “situated knowledge” approach, Haraway argues, the researcher is able to promote a politically anchored, embodied and reflected upon position (Haraway 1988, p. 584-585). In this thesis I politically anchor my thesis by positioning it in a broader research field that aims for social and political justice. Furthermore, this thesis will be presented at the Department of Gender Studies at Lund University and defended as such. The feminist, antiracist and postcolonial perspective that guides this thesis are anchored in the

field of Gender Studies and the thesis must be viewed as fundamentally opposed to the nationalist and xenophobic welfare chauvinism of the far right. The Marxist underpinnings of the thesis also mean that the neoliberalization of the Social Democratic welfare regime is not unproblematicized by the thesis. The turn to the right as well as the mainstreaming of the far right does not align with the social justice aims of the theoretical field that this thesis falls within. By making this critique clear in a way that is anchored within a wider tradition of critical research, and by being fully transparent about the aims of my study, I stay true to its political potential.

## 4. Empirical material

In this chapter the empirical materials of this thesis are presented. As mentioned in the introduction, the materials are referred to as ‘policy and budget texts’ and consist of each party's annually submitted budget proposal from 2018 to 2022 as well their official ideological documents and their self-published alphabetically structured list of political ideas. The alphabetically structured lists are referred to on the parties websites as the Swedish equivalent of “Our politics A-Z”, but I simply refer to them here as the “A-Z” texts. In this chapter I present the empirical material in detail and argue for their role in the thesis. Included in the chapter is also a discussion about ethical considerations regarding the materials as well as a description of my practical approach to sorting and coding.

### 4.1 The materials

This research analyzes three distinct sets of empirical materials published by the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats respectively. In this section of the chapter I present these empirical materials in detail, starting with the budget proposals that constitute the largest body of empirical materials, followed by the official ideological documents and the A-Z segments.

#### 4.1.1 The budget proposals

The first body of empirical materials consists of each party's annually submitted budget proposal from 2018-2022. The proposals for the following year are submitted during the fall but for simplicity I refer to the proposals by the year they were intended for. A budget proposal submitted during the fall of 2021 is therefore referred to as a 2022 budget proposal and so on. The budget proposals were accessed by searching among “documents and laws” on the Swedish parliament's official website<sup>5</sup>. In the search function I used the filters “motions” followed by “party motion(s)” and each party name. I sorted the results based on date of publication and downloaded each budget proposal from 2017 until the fall of 2021.

The 2022 proposals mark the first official collaboration between the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats. Since 2018, the mainstream parties the Moderates and the Christian Democrats have begun collaborating with the far right party the Sweden

---

<sup>5</sup> Official website: <https://www.riksdagen.se/>



Democrats. The two parties have previously criticized the Sweden Democrats for their values and stated that they would not consider collaborating with them (Bergman & Bäck 2015, p. 29). These statements were made as late as in 2018 when the last election was held. However, for their 2022 budget proposals, the parties collectively formulated the main issues they wanted to focus on and distributed resources accordingly (Sverigedemokraterna 2021; Moderaterna 2021; Kristdemokraterna 2021). During the late fall of 2021 they submitted their budget proposals that vary in format and design, but that are built on their agreed upon focal points and distributions of resources (Sverigedemokraterna 2021; Moderaterna 2021; Kristdemokraterna 2021). This shift in Swedish politics align with broader trends within Europe and has been conceptualized as a mainstreaming of the far right where far right parties and ideologies are adapted into the mainstream political field (Kallis 2013; Ekman & Krzyżanowski 2021). The parties are therefore conceptualized in this thesis as a right wing continuum, pointing to the new right wing constellation in Swedish politics in which the far right Sweden Democrats have been mainstreamed. The 2022 proposals that officially tie the parties in the Swedish right wing continuum together, as well as the proposals that were submitted during this four year shift, therefore constitute major relevant empirical materials to study when analyzing welfare chauvinism in Sweden. The budget proposals have been chosen for their ability to showcase the welfare chauvinist discourse and possible discursive discrepancies within the Swedish right wing continuum during the 2018-2022 time period. As Norocel (2016) argues as well, welfare chauvinist rhetoric can be found all throughout the budget proposals and official party motions, even outside the areas that explicitly deal with health care, education, pensions or other specifically welfare-related topics (Norocel 2016, p. 377-378). The trend within far right movements to display an increased concern for welfare issues as a way of mobilizing racist and nationalist agendas (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 356) and further emphasize the need for analyzing texts that do not explicitly deal with welfare when analyzing welfare chauvinism (Ketola & Nordensvard 2015, p. 356, Norocel 2016, p. 377-378).

In the table below I present all the submitted budget proposals that are analyzed in this thesis. The original titles of the proposals can be found in the footnotes. In the analysis I reference the different proposals by the initials of the party, the letter B for budget, and the year the proposal was designed for. For example, when I reference the 2018 budget proposal submitted by the Sweden Democrats during the fall of 2017, I include in the parenthesis “SD, B 2018” as well as the page number. The proposals are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budgetproposition for 2018<sup>6</sup> (SD, B 2018)</li> <li>- Budgetproposition for 2019<sup>7</sup> (SD, B 2019)</li> <li>- We secure the welfare - the Sweden Democrats' suggestion for State Budget 2020<sup>8</sup> (SD, B 2020)</li> <li>- Invest in Sweden - the Sweden Democrats' suggestion for State Budget 2021<sup>9</sup> (SD, B 2021)</li> <li>- Now it is time for Sweden - the Sweden Democrats' suggestion for State Budget 2022<sup>10</sup> (SD, B 2022)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We believe in Sweden - the Moderates' budget motion 2018<sup>11</sup> (M, B 2018)</li> <li>- Sweden should stick together - reforms for increased growth and a reinstated community contract<sup>12</sup> (M, B 2019)</li> <li>- Reinstatement of the community contract - a budget for Sweden<sup>13</sup> (M, B 2020)</li> <li>- Combat unemployment and fight against crime - the Moderates' budget motion for 2021<sup>14</sup> (M, B 2021)</li> <li>- Increased safety and more people in employment - the Moderates' budget motion for 2022<sup>15</sup> (M, B 2022)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Welfare promise - a budget for care and safety<sup>16</sup> (CD, B 2018)</li> <li>- Reforms for care, employment and safety - the Christian Democrats' budget motion for 2019<sup>17</sup> (CD, B 2019)</li> <li>- The Christian Democrats' budget motion for 2020 - A Sweden to trust - safety and welfare<sup>18</sup> (CD, B 2020)</li> <li>- The Christian Democrats' budget motion for 2021 - Sweden deserves better<sup>19</sup> (CD, B 2021)</li> <li>- All of Sweden should work - the Christian Democrats' budget motion for 2022<sup>20</sup> (CD, B 2022)</li> </ul>

Table 1

In the section below I present the part of the empirical material that consists of the respective parties' official ideological documents and their alphabetically listed political ideas "A-Z".

<sup>6</sup> Budgetpropositionen för 2018

<sup>7</sup> Budgetproposition för 2019

<sup>8</sup> Vi tryggar välfärden – Sverigedemokraternas förslag till statsbudget 2020

<sup>9</sup> Investera i Sverige – Sverigedemokraternas förslag till statsbudget 2021

<sup>10</sup> Nu är det dags för Sverige – Sverigedemokraternas förslag till statsbudget 2022

<sup>11</sup> Vi tror på Sverige – Moderaternas budgetmotion 2018

<sup>12</sup> Sverige ska hålla ihop – reformer för ökad tillväxt och ett återupprättat samhällskontrakt

<sup>13</sup> Återupprätta samhällskontraktet – en budget för Sverige

<sup>14</sup> Knäck arbetslösheten och bekämpa kriminaliteten – Moderaternas budgetmotion för 2021

<sup>15</sup> Ökad trygghet och fler som arbetar – Moderaternas budgetmotion för 2022

<sup>16</sup> Välfärdsloftet – Budget för vård, omsorg och trygghet

<sup>17</sup> Reformerna för vård, jobb och trygghet – Kristdemokraternas budgetmotion för 2019

<sup>18</sup> Kristdemokraternas budgetmotion för 2020 - Ett Sverige att lita på – trygghet och välfärd

<sup>19</sup> Kristdemokraternas budgetmotion för 2021 – Sverige förtjänar bättre

<sup>20</sup> Hela Sverige ska fungera – Kristdemokraternas budgetmotion för 2022

#### 4.1.2 Official ideological documents and “A-Z”

The second part of the empirical material consists of each party's official ideological document and the A-Z text segments, both of which are published on their official websites. In January of 2022 I downloaded the official ideological documents and copied all A-Z text segments from the parties respective websites. In the analysis I refer to the official ideological documents as OID, and the A-Z segments are shortened to AZ. As an example, the official ideological document of the Sweden Democrats will be referred to as “SD, OID, p.x” while text segments from their A-Z texts will be referred to as “SD, AZ”. When referencing the A-Z texts I will include the headline in a footnote.

The official ideological documents function as a way of presenting the fundamental ideals and principles that inform the policies of the party. The Sweden Democrats and the Christian Democrats refer to their official ideological document as a “principle programme”, while the Moderates call it an “idea programme”. In the table below the titles of the documents are specified, as well as their publication date. The original titles can be found in footnotes.

The Sweden Democrats Published in 2019 (SD, OID)	Principle programme - The Sweden Democrats' principle programme 2019 <sup>21</sup>
The Moderates Published in 2021 (M, OID)	Freedom and responsibility - a ‘moderate’ idea programme for the 2020s <sup>22</sup>
The Christian Democrats Published in 2015 (CD, OID)	Principle programme <sup>23</sup>

Table 2

Worth noting is that the Christian Democrats' most recent official ideological document was written in 2015, and published in 2017. This was before the time period of this study. However, it is the latest official ideological document available on their website.

Included in this part of the empirical material is also each party's alphabetically structured list of political topics. These lists are available on the parties websites and function as a way to

---

<sup>21</sup> Principprogram - Sverigedemokraternas principprogram 2019

<sup>22</sup> Frihet och ansvar - ett moderat idéprogram för 2020-talet

<sup>23</sup> Principprogram KD

pedagogically communicate central political claims to the reader. The length of text per each headline varies across topics and parties, but generally stretches from 1-2 sentences to half a page of text. In the A-Z texts, the headlines of each text segment might also reveal specific welfare conceptualizations as they point to the respective parties' chosen framing of the issue. I view the official ideological documents and the A-Z text segments as similar with regards to the “work” they are doing in the discourse. These texts communicate directly to the reader and possible voter, and emphasize the party's main ideological underpinnings and policy suggestions. Using the methodological tools and theoretical perspectives described above, I am able to understand the dimensions of the welfare chauvinism of the Swedish right wing continuum. In the section below I discuss some ethical considerations I have made regarding the empirical materials.

### 4.1.3 Ethical considerations

The Swedish Research Council [Vetenskapsrådet] states that included in good research conduct is informed consent and handling sensitive information ethically (Vetenskapsrådet 2017). The issue becomes a bit vague however, when one is studying publicly available material published by political parties. The empirical materials analyzed in this analysis are publicly posted official documents or texts by the respective parties. The official ideological documents and “A-Z” texts are not signed by any individual person, but are published under the name of the party. The budget proposals are published by the parties but signed by one or several persons, generally stating the motion name, motion number, and something like “by X, Y and Z, \*party name\*”. There are only six different people credited by name in all the budget proposals, three of which are the parties respective party leaders, and three of which are elected party representatives that at the time of their involvement in the budget proposals held (and still hold) parliamentary positions. Political views can be regarded as sensitive information (Vetenskapsrådet 2017) but in this case, nothing personal or compromising is revealed. My assessment is that although the findings of my research will be traceable to certain budget proposals that are associated with specific people, the individuals this concerns are elected politicians who to my knowledge have purposefully and consensually agreed to have their name published in this way. I have anonymized the materials to the extent that it is possible by crossing over the names when I collected the empirical material, and I do not mention any names in the analysis or in any other part of the thesis.

## 4.2 Practical approach

In this section I summarize the practical aspects of the analysis, specifically the sorting and coding process as well as my approach to language-related challenges. The collected body of empirical material amounted to approximately 2000 pages of text, including the five budget proposals of each respective party (2018-2022), their full official ideological documents and all A-Z texts from the parties websites [accessed in January of 2022]. The Sweden Democrats generated approximately 600-700 pages, the Moderates 650-750 pages, and the Christian Democrats 800-900 pages. In the initial sorting I selected all cohesive text-segments of the policy and budget texts that expressed ideas about the supposed role of welfare, the nature of its accessibility and its relation to people perceived as migrants. The budget proposals constitute a large body of text within which major overlap occurs from year to year. This means that several of the cohesive sections of text dealing with the issues described above were incredibly similar. This data saturation (Leavy & Harris 2019, p. 182) means that if segments from two different budget proposals, submitted by the same party, exhibit the same conceptualization of welfare, I was able to select only one version. After the sorting I started coding the texts by dividing them into major themes such as “welfare and needs” or “welfare and citizens”. After I had identified the central conceptualizations of welfare within the discourse I structured the discursive constructions using Laclau and Mouffe's methodological terms. In the analysis chapter the findings are presented using the concepts from Laclau and Mouffe's *discourse theory*, as well as the theoretical concepts presented in the theory chapter. All the ‘policy and budget texts’ are in Swedish but when I reference segments from the empirical material in the analysis I have translated it to English. All quotes from the materials are translated by me. When quoting larger segments of texts I include the original Swedish quotes in footnotes.

## 5. Analysis

This thesis is concerned with welfare chauvinist discourse in the Swedish right wing continuum and its racialized and classed distributions of grievability. The analysis is presented in a manner that combines methodological and theoretical perspectives. The methodological terms presented in the methods chapter are *sign*, *element*, *moment*, *nodal point*, *articulation antagonism* and *hegemony* and are used to explain the role of different expressions in the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985; Laclau & Mouffe 1990). The sign of greatest importance in the discourse is *welfare*, and it is therefore the nodal point of the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985 p. xi, Laclau 1990, p. 28). A moment is a sign that has a fixed meaning within a discourse at any given time (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). Elements, on the other hand, are signs that are subject to differing definitions and meanings (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). In the discourse, there are a few central signs as well as additional, less central signs that complement the central ones. These are all signs that attempt to construct the nodal point *welfare* in specific ways. The signs are presented throughout the texts and are referred to as either moments or elements, depending on their role in the discourse. Some of the moments are not used by all parties equally, but are understood as moments as there is no conflict surrounding them. For the sake of methodological clarity I italicize the signs when referring to them throughout the chapter. The analysis also engages with the theoretical concepts throughout. The dialogue between the methodological and theoretical analysis of the empirical material enables a dynamic and multidimensional analysis in which the central discursive articulations can be continuously interpreted through a theoretical lens.

The analysis reveals two contrasting conceptualizations of welfare within the Swedish right wing continuum. On the one hand, the parties attempt to construct welfare as something that offers aid to those in need, in which *need* and *life/live/living* are the central moments. In this articulation, welfare is displayed as something that caters to the livability of all lives. These articulations attempt to emphasize that there is political care for the livability of all lives. By doing so, the articulations construct grievability as equally distributed to all. I refer to this conceptualization as the ‘egalitarian welfare conceptualization’ as it attempts to emphasize the egalitarianism of the welfare model promoted by the parties. On the other hand, there is a contrasting welfare conceptualization within the discourse that overshadows the egalitarian claims of the first. In this conceptualization, the element *citizen* is central. Overall, this

conceptualization reveals that the apparently egalitarian distribution of grievability articulated in the first conceptualization, does not apply equally to those perceived as migrants. Furthermore, within this conceptualization, there are more apparent antagonisms between the parties as the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates attempt to hegemonize the truly restrictive aspects of the welfare conceptualization, while the Christsian Democrats construct it differently. I refer to this conceptualization as the ‘restrictive welfare conceptualization’ as it works to explicitly border welfare access for those perceived as migrants, subsequently limiting the political construction of grievability for those lives. These two conceptualizations reveal a racialized and classed distribution of grievability within the Swedish right wing continuum in which those perceived as migrants are excluded from all egalitarian welfare claims. By structuring the analysis according to these conceptualizations, the true violence of the welfare conceptualizations they attempt to hegemonize can be properly analyzed. Within each conceptualization’s section, the different parties' are analyzed together in order to make the similarities between the parties clear.

## 5.1 The egalitarian welfare conceptualization

In the welfare conceptualization that attempts to construct welfare as an egalitarian enterprise, welfare is constructed as something that is provided based on need, and that enables a certain standard of living. The articulation of egalitarianism that defines this conceptualization can be interpreted as an attempt to display an equal distribution of grievability while the true sense of grief within the Swedish right wing continuum is actually unequally distributed. The central moments are *need*, *life* and *live/living* and there is no apparent conflict between the parties or over time regarding their meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). *Life* and *live/living* are analyzed as interchangeable signs, as they do the same work in the discourse. The signs *vulnerability*, *all/everyone* and *dignity* complement these moments in their construction of welfare.

### 5.1.1 Needs and livability

The moment *need* is used within the discourse by all parties and across time to construct welfare as something that caters to the needs of people, especially the vulnerable ones. There is no apparent conflict between the parties regarding this, and the sign *need* is therefore a moment in the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). The sign is used to point to the fact that [some] people need welfare, and to emphasize the role of the welfare system to provide

such aid. All parties construct the population to be in need of various kinds of aid. The Sweden Democrats state in their 2022 budget proposal that the “*Need* for welfare services increase as the population lives longer” (SD, B 2022, p. 13) emphasizing the role of welfare to cater to these needs. They also state in their A-Z texts that everyone should have access to elderly care and palliative care when *needed* (SD, AZ<sup>24</sup>). In their official ideological documents they also state that health care should be given based on *need* and should be accessible (SD, OID, p. 21). The term is used throughout the empirical material from the Sweden Democrats in this way (for example SD, B 2019, p. 29; SD, B 2022, p. 88; SD, OID p. 22; SD, AZ<sup>25</sup>) and it is interpreted in this analysis as a way of emphasizing the *needs* of the population. Subsequently, welfare is constructed as responsible for meeting those needs. The Moderates articulate it in the same way, claiming in their 2018 budget proposal that:

Old age does not mean that the ability to take initiative or action disappears, but sometimes there is a *need* for help with everyday tasks. Home care should fill that need without creating unnecessary insecurity because of a lack of continuity in personnel. [...] The *need* for health care also increases with age, and for people with multiple illnesses it often entails many visits to Emergency Care (M, B 2018, p. 83<sup>26</sup>).

Similar to the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates point continuously to the *needs* of the population and to the responsibility of the welfare system to provide aid. They state for example in the A-Z texts that welfare should “be accessible to all who *need* it” (M, AZ<sup>27</sup>). Similar statements are made throughout the empirical material that constructs welfare as something that caters to the needs of the population (for example in M, B 2018, p. 82; M, B 2020, p. 3; M, AZ<sup>28</sup>). The Christian Democrats attach the same understanding of *need* to the nodal point *welfare*. For example they state in the official ideological documents that:

---

<sup>24</sup> Headlines: Retirement home; Palliative care (Swedish: Äldreboende; Palliativ vård). SD, AZ

<sup>25</sup> Headline: The rights of elderly people (Swedish: Äldres rättigheter). SD, AZ

<sup>26</sup> “Ålderdom innebär inte att initiativ och egen handlingsförmåga försvinner, men ibland behövs hjälp med vardagssysslor. Hemtjänsten ska fylla det behovet utan att skapa onödig otrygghet på grund av bristande personalkontinuitet. [...] Behovet av sjukvård ökar också med åldern, och för multisjuka äldre innebär det ofta fler besök på akuten”. M, B 2018, p. 83

<sup>27</sup> Headline: elderly care (Swedish: äldreomsorg). M, AZ

<sup>28</sup> Headline: disability and LSS [the Swedish law that regulates support for disabled people] (Swedish: funktionsnedsättning och LSS). M, AZ



Everybody should be able to trust that the care they will eventually *need* will be readily available. Access to health care when *needed* is generally speaking a right for all inhabitants (CD, OID, p. 63<sup>29</sup>).

They also state that geriatric care should “be available to all those who *need* it” and that the welfare system should be able to promise available care for those in *need* (CD, B 2018, p. 33; CD, B 2020, p. 3-5). The Christian Democrats attach these meanings to the moment *need* throughout the empirical material (for example in CD, B 2021, p. 3-4; CD, AZ<sup>30</sup>; CD, AZ<sup>31</sup>; CD, AZ<sup>32</sup>). Within the discourse, the moment *need* aids in constructing welfare as something that is sensitive to the needs of the populations and that caters to it. Such a conceptualization of *need* points to an understanding of life as precarious (Butler 2016, p. 13-15, 21). The recognition of life as precarious, i.e. as “in *need*” of being sustained, incites a political responsibility to provide aid and care (Butler 2016, p. 21-24). Simultaneously, by constructing welfare as responsible for catering to the needs of the population, life is acknowledged to be precarious, as it is understood to be “in *need*” of external aid (Butler 2016, p. 21).

This articulation of welfare, in which it is understood as catering to the precariousness of life, is further articulated within the discourse through the moment *vulnerability*. *Vulnerability* is translated from the Swedish word *utsatthet* that is used within the discourse to point to social precarity rather than an individual persons vulnerability in a given situation. For example, the Sweden Democrats state that “the guaranteed pension is aimed at the most financially *vulnerable* elderly” (SD, B 2021, p. 25). The Moderates state similarly that they wish for welfare investments that especially focus on those who experience the greatest level of “social *vulnerability*” (M, B 2018, p. 1-2). The Christian Democrats express that they “want to improve things for the *vulnerable* and ease individual families that fight to make everyday life work” (CD, B 2021, p. 3-4). *Vulnerability* is interpreted to be put relation to *need* as welfare is understood to provide care for those in *need*, especially the *vulnerable* as is exemplified by the statement about the guarantee pension by the Sweden Democrats above (SD, B 2021, p. 25). Within the discourse, welfare is constructed as a provider of aid, that

---

<sup>29</sup> “Alla ska kunna förlita sig på att den vård och omsorg man en dag kommer att behöva då står till förfogande. Tillgång till hälso- och sjukvård vid behov är i vid mening en rättighet för alla invånare”. CD, OID, p. 63

<sup>30</sup> Headline: child care (Swedish: barnomsorg). CD, AZ

<sup>31</sup> Headline: LSS [the Swedish law that regulates support for disabled people] (Swedish: LSS). CD, AZ

<sup>32</sup> Headline: health care (Swedish: sjukvård). CD, AZ

relieves people of their vulnerability and aid those in need. The acknowledgement that life is dependent on such external factors to be livable is an acknowledgement that life is precarious, i.e. vulnerable (Butler 2016, p. 13-15, 21). By constructing life as “in need” and vulnerable, the discourse further acknowledges that life needs external aid to be livable while simultaneously conceptualizing welfare as the provider of such aid. As Butler argues, the recognition that life needs certain factors to be livable, incites political responsibility to provide aid (Butler 2016, p. 21-24).

In addition to the signs *need* and *vulnerability* that are presented above, the central moments *life* and *live/living* further constructs welfare as something that makes life livable. In addition to constructing life as precarious and in need of external aid for livability, the signs strengthen the idea that life needs to be of a certain quality in order to be livable. *Life* and *live/living* are understood as synonymous here as they are used interchangeably in the empirical material. The signs are interpreted here as moments within the discourse, as all parties conceptualize them and use them in relation to welfare in similar ways. For example the Sweden Democrats state regarding the Swedish social service law<sup>33</sup> that:

There is a need for a new law that gives elderly people in need of care and aid a stronger stance. The term “reasonable standard of *living*”, that is not good enough, should be removed and replaced by “good standard of *living*” (SD, AZ<sup>34</sup>).

The Sweden Democrats argue for a replacement of the measurement of life-quality that makes sure that all people have a reasonable standard of living. Instead they argue that a good standard of living is preferable, further strengthening the construction of life as precarious and of welfare as something that enables livability. The Sweden Democrats also argue that when someone is unable to care for themselves, the state should step in and aid them in “*living* a safe and meaningful *life*” (SD, OID, p. 22), once again constructing life as precarious and in need of external aid. The Moderates state similarly that “Health care should be there when we fall sick. Care services should make sure that all people, regardless of circumstances, are able to *live* a dignified *life*” (M, B 2018, p. 1-2). They make several similar statements constructing *life* as dependent on welfare, for example regarding elderly

---

<sup>33</sup> Socialtjänstlagen (2001:453)

<sup>34</sup> Headline: the rights of elderly people (Swedish: äldres rättigheter). SD, AZ

care (M, B 2018, p. 83) and disability aid (M, AZ<sup>35</sup>). The Christian Democrats are no different, declaring that the Swedish law regulating support for disabled people enables livability:

LSS<sup>36</sup> is the greatest freedom reform for people with disabilities. [...] Fraud must be forcefully and efficiently counteracted, but we wish to restore the purpose of LSS so that those who need the benefits can *live* and not just survive (CD, AZ<sup>3738</sup>).

The Christian Democrats emphasize that *life* is something that moves beyond survival. This cements the idea of life as precarious and in need of external aid to be livable (Butler 2016, p. 21-24). The parties strengthen this construction using the moment *dignity*. For example the Sweden Democrats state that “all people should be able to age with *dignity*” when discussing welfare sanctioned elderly care (SD, OID p. 22). The Moderates emphasize similarly that all elderly should have a right to a “*dignified life*”, stressing that elderly care should provide this (M, B 2018, p.1-2). The Christian Democrats state that society is ultimately responsible for making sure that everybody “can live a safe and *dignified life*” and that “society should enable people to grow up and age in a safe and *dignified* manner “(CD, OID, p. 9; CD, OID p. 58). The understanding of welfare as something that enables livability is abundantly clear here, as life is understood as something that is dependent on welfare and that moves beyond surviving.

The moment *all/everyone* is used to further emphasize the idea of welfare as something that should aid all members of society. As *all* and *everyone* fulfill the same role in the discourse and are translated from the same Swedish term, “*alla*”, they are understood here as one single sign. As there is no conflict surrounding it, it is a moment (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 105). The moment puts emphasis on the responsibility of welfare to provide the aid that is needed to *all* and *everyone* who *needs* it. For example the Sweden Democrats state that:

---

<sup>35</sup> Headline: disability and LSS [the Swedish law that regulates support for disabled people] (Swedish: funktionsnedsättning och LSS). M, AZ

<sup>36</sup> Swedish law that regulates support for disabled people

<sup>37</sup> “LSS är den största frihetsreformen för personer med funktionsnedsättning. [...] Fusk måste motverkas kraftfullt och effektivt men vi vill återställa intentionen med LSS så att de som behöver ersättningen kan leva, inte bara överleva”. CD, AZ

<sup>38</sup> Headline: LSS [the Swedish law that regulates support for disabled people] (Swedish: LSS). CD, AZ

The party suggests a [welfare model] that is based on the idea that *all* children, no matter their family history, place of residence and the income of their parents, should have a good opportunities to succeed in life and where *everyone* should be able to trust that society steps in when they, for different reasons, are unable to stand on their own [...] (SD, OID, p. 21<sup>39</sup>).

The party emphasizes the role of welfare in enabling good life opportunities for *all* children, and that *everyone* should be able to trust the welfare system to step in when needed. The Moderates make similar statements, for example stating that “*everyone* should be able to trust that high quality health care is available” when needed and that “*Everyone* should have access to our collectively financed institutions”, such as welfare (M, B 2018, p. 2; M, AZ<sup>40</sup>). The Christian Democrats add that *everyone* should be able to rely on accessible welfare when its needed and that elderly care should be available to “*all those who need it*” (CD, OID, p. 63; CD, B 2018, p. 33). Through this moment, Butler’s term grievability is brought into light. By constructing life as precarious, and welfare as responsible for providing livability to *all* lives, political care is displayed for the livability of all lives. The parties emphasize that they grieve equally for all lives, subsequently strengthening their attempt to construct their welfare conceptualization as egalitarian.

### 5.1.2 Equal grievabilities

The attempts to construct welfare as an egalitarian enterprise constitutes one of two contrasting conceptualizations within the discourse. This conceptualization is centered around the nodal point *welfare*, the central moments *need*, *life* and *live/living*, as well as the complementing moments *vulnerability*, *all/everyone*, and *dignity*. There is no apparent antagonism surrounding these signs within the empirical material. These signs together construct life as precarious by acknowledging that life relies on external, socially and politically endorsed conditions to be sustained (Butler 2016, p. 21). In the Swedish right wing continuum such a view of life is revealed by the construction of the welfare system as something that caters to the *needs* and *vulnerability* of people. When life is understood as precarious it is understood to be in need of conditions that make it livable (Butler 2016,

---

<sup>39</sup> Partiet förordar en [välfärdsmodell] där utgångspunkten är att alla barn, oavsett familjebakgrund, bostadsort och föräldrarnas inkomst, skall ha goda grundförutsättningar att lyckas i livet och där alla skall kunna lita på att samhället träder in och hjälper en när man av olika anledningar inte kan stå på egna ben [...]. SD, OID, p. 21

<sup>40</sup> Headline: a safe and collective welfare (Swedish: en trygg gemensam välfärd). M, AZ

p.13-15, 21) and within the egalitarian welfare conceptualization welfare is understood to be the provider of such conditions. Furthermore, a life is constructed as grievable when it is framed politically as lose-able or injurable, and when such a loss or injury is deemed worthy of grief (Butler 2016, p. 13-15). In the articulations of welfare as egalitarian, the parties articulate that they care for the livability of all lives, subsequently constructing their welfare conceptualization as equally grieving for all lives. All central signs within this conceptualization are moments, and there is no apparent antagonism surrounding their meaning, neither between parties or across time. This conceptualization of welfare is interpreted as an egalitarian welfare conceptualization, because it articulates the signs in ways that attempt to display it as such. Important to note, however, is the fact that the articulations of the moments within the discourse are often made in relation to the elderly. Given that the elderly population consists predominantly of people born in Sweden (SCB 2022), there might be tacit racialized dimensions to these articulations. This might especially be the case for the Sweden Democrats who have been criticized previously for fabricating a conflict between the elderly and those perceived as migrants. One example of this is the quote presented at the beginning of this thesis in which the party leader Åkesson states that welfare access for those perceived as migrants diminishes care for “*our* elderly” (Åkesson 2020a). Another example is a controversial video that the party released for their election campaign in 2010, in which racialized people were portrayed to compete with a white elderly woman for resources (Poohl 2010). The focus on elderly care within the empirical material can therefore be interpreted as a subtle extension of previously explicit welfare chauvinist claims by the Sweden Democrats. The naming of this conceptualization as egalitarian does not mean that the underlying racializations and differential distributions of grievability are unproblematized. Rather, this interpretation points to the attempts within the empirical materials to construct welfare as an enabler of livability for *all*. As is shown below, the restrictive welfare conceptualization makes the latent racializations of this egalitarian welfare notion impossible to miss. When read together, the explicitly restrictive welfare conceptualization and the tacit racializations that influence the egalitarian welfare conceptualization, reveal the attempts within the discourse to hegemonize welfare restrictions. In the next section I introduce the restrictive welfare conceptualization that constructs the welfare state as a societal contract between state and individual, in which criterias pertaining to labor, citizenship and residency are emphasized.

## 5.2 The restrictive welfare conceptualization

The restrictive welfare conceptualization contrasts the egalitarian one. Through the articulation of this conceptualization, welfare is no longer constructed as responsible for the livability of all lives. While there are little to no antagonisms regarding the meaning of the central signs that constitute the egalitarian welfare conceptualization, this conceptualization is subject to great internal conflict. While the Christian Democrats are careful in uttering explicitly restrictive understandings of welfare, the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates attempt to hegemonize a welfare conceptualization that greatly differentiates between lives. Instead of distributing grievability equally to *all* lives, welfare is constructed as something that is given to the population based on conditions pertaining to national belonging and labor market participation. This reveals a bordering process that constructs certain people as undeserving of welfare based on neoliberal and racialized notions of the nation. One set of signs, *contract*, *promise* and *solidarity* constructs welfare as an exchange between individual and state in which labor and taxes enable welfare. These signs are understood as moments here as there are no antagonisms surrounding them. This agreed upon conceptualization of welfare as an exchange, lays ground for the attempts by the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates to seriously promote welfare restrictions for those perceived as migrants. The construction of welfare as something that is built on the payment of taxes enables an argument for the restriction of welfare access to those who are not perceived as valuable to the labor market. As is shown in the analysis, this group greatly coincides with those perceived as unwanted migrants. The element *citizen* is central in the attempts by the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates to hegemonize these restrictions. The signs *labor/work* and *right* complement this sign in constructing welfare as conditioned on performances of nativeness and/or labor. Contrary to the egalitarian welfare conceptualization, where all central signs are agreed upon moments, the signs of the restrictive welfare conceptualizations are all elements.

### 5.2.1 The exchange

The signs *contract*, *solidarity* and *promise* are used within the discourse to construct welfare as an exchange between individual and state in which taxes are traded for welfare access. These signs collectively reveal the first major conflict between the egalitarian and restrictive welfare constructions, as they greatly undermine the idea of welfare as unconditionally equal and needs-based. These signs play a central role in constructing welfare as an exchange that

depends on a performance by. The conceptualization lays the foundation for welfare chauvinist claims within the discourse where people are differentially burdened with performing their side of the bargain. While none of the signs are used throughout all the empirical material and by all the parties, they all have the same function within the discourse, i.e. to emphasize the exchange. The signs are therefore interpreted as moments. *Contract* is used by the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates, *promise* is used by the Moderates and the Christian Democrats while *solidarity* is used by the Sweden Democrats and the Christian Democrats. The Sweden Democrats state about welfare services that they are central for the purpose of the societal *contract*:

These areas are central for the citizen to see the relevance of the societal *contract*. Without adequate health care or if the citizens lack a sense of security [...] there is no reason for the citizens to support the state through taxes (SD, B 2018, p. 10<sup>41</sup>).

Welfare is constructed to be an exchange between state and individual in which taxes are traded for welfare services. The Sweden Democrats also state in their 2019 budget that the state is expected to provide support for its citizens through sickness, parenthood and retirement as part of the societal *contract* (SD, B 2019, p. 24; SD, B 2022 p. 69). The Moderates understand the sign similarly to the Sweden Democrats, but put a slightly stronger emphasis on taxes:

This is the core of the societal *contract*. That citizens work and pay taxes. And that the state upholds safety - in all parts of the country. That municipalities are able to provide the welfare we all have the right to expect (M, B 2020, p. 20<sup>42</sup>).

They further emphasize the reciprocity of the societal *contract*, stating that citizens have a right to expect that the state provides adequate welfare services, because they pay taxes (M, B 2019, p. 17). The Moderates state also that “the societal *contract* is threatened” when municipalities and counties fail to provide the “welfare that citizens should be able to expect”

---

<sup>41</sup> “Dessa områden är centrala för att medborgaren skall se relevans i samhällskontraktet. Utan en fungerande vård samt om medborgarna känner otrygghet [...] finns heller ingen nytta för medborgarna att uppbära staten genom att betala skatt”. SD, B 2018, p. 10

<sup>42</sup> “Det är kärnan i samhällskontraktet. Att medborgare jobbar och betalar skatt. Och att staten upprätthåller tryggheten – i alla delar av landet. Att kommunerna klarar av att tillhandahålla den välfärd som vi alla har rätt att förvänta oss”. M, B 2020, p. 20

(M B 2020 p. 16). Similar attachments of *contract* to the nodal point *welfare* are made throughout the empirical material (for example: M, B 2019 p. 17; M, B 2020, p. 3; M B 2020 p. 16; M B 2020. p. 32; M, OID, p. 46). Already here, the welfare conceptualization in which welfare is constructed as an egalitarian need-based enterprise begins to crack. Welfare is clearly not fully conceptualized as something that enables livability for all lives, when taxes and labor are introduced as an expected performance from the population. The articulation of welfare as an enabler of livability for all, as it is articulated in the egalitarian welfare construction, rings false when taxes are constructed as a prerequisite for welfare.

The Christian Democrats do not use the specific sign *contract*. However, the two other signs *promise* and *solidarity* attach similar meanings to the nodal point welfare as they point to the exchange of taxes for welfare between individual and state. *Promise* is a sign used by the Moderates and the Christian Democrats that constructs welfare as a promise to the population that is conditioned on labor and taxes. The Moderates state that “Welfare is one of society's central *promises* to its citizens” (M, B 2018, p. 1-2). Attached to this sign is an emphasis on the state's promise to the public and a pessimism about the state's ability to uphold this promise today. The Moderates emphasize that despite millions of people contributing to the welfare state everyday, the state has been unable to keep their “welfare *promise*” (M, B 2018, p. 1-2). The Christian Democrats suggest reforms and increased resources to rebuild a “reliable welfare *promise*” emphasizing the exchange between individual and state in which the state promises welfare in return for labor (CD, B 2019, p. 7). Once again, taxes and labor are understood to be prerequisites for welfare. The sign *solidarity* has a similar function to the previous *contract* and *promise*, and is used to construct the payment of taxes as an act of solidarity that makes welfare possible. In Swedish, the word *solidarity* has several inflections, and the quotes are translated so that they make sense in English. However, in Swedish the phrases are more similar to “collectively financed”, pointing to everybody helping and contributing via their taxes. This sign is used by the Sweden Democrats and the Christian Democrats. For example the Sweden Democrats state that “health care should be financed through *solidarity* via taxes, be given based on need, and be accessible” (SD, OID, p. 21). The Christian Democrats state similarly that “Sweden should have egalitarian healthcare funded through *solidarity*. This is at the core of welfare” (CD, AZ<sup>43</sup>). The Christian Democrats also add that:

---

<sup>43</sup> Headline: privatized care (Swedish: privat vård). CD, AZ



Compassion and love are fundamental values that inspire *solidarity*. The *solidarity*-principle motivates us to take collective responsibility for all people, especially the vulnerable ones (CD, OID p. 95-96<sup>44</sup>).

Solidarity is conceptualized as the mode through which people are motivated to pay taxes and fund the welfare system. Through the signs *contract*, *promise* and *solidarity*, the parties attach an understanding of consensual agreement to the nodal point *welfare*, in which welfare is understood to depend on a performance from the population. The attempts to articulate welfare as an egalitarian enterprise is overshadowed by this as the livability of all is constructed as second to the integrity of the exchange.

### 5.2.2 The rights of citizens and workers

Whereas there are no antagonisms surrounding the construction of welfare as an exchange, the sign *citizen* is subject to great conflict. *Citizen* is a central element in this welfare conceptualization and the articulations of it throughout the empirical material are interpreted as attempts to construct welfare as something that primarily regards citizens. The far right Sweden Democrats are more radical in their claims than the other two parties here, as they state explicitly that welfare should be primarily for citizens:

The position of the Sweden Democrats is that the welfare institutions of Sweden, including health care, exist primarily for the benefit of Swedish *citizens*. The implication of this is that non-*citizens* generally do not have the same access to the Swedish welfare systems, and in a time where people move frequently across the border, it is important to emphasize this (SD, B 2018, p. 17<sup>45</sup>).

They emphasize here that welfare is for citizens, and should be restricted for non-citizens. Subsequently, the sign *citizen* works as a way to differentiate between those who should and should not receive welfare. The Sweden Democrats make similar statements all throughout

---

<sup>44</sup> “Medmänsklighet och kärlek är grundläggande värden som inspirerar till solidaritet. Solidaritetsprincipen motiverar oss att ta gemensamt ansvar för alla människor, i synnerhet de utsatta”. CD, OID, p. 95-96

<sup>45</sup> “Sverigedemokraternas utgångspunkt är att Sveriges välfärdsinstitutioner, inklusive sjukvården, i första hand finns till för svenska medborgare. Detta implicerar att icke- medborgare generellt sett inte har samma tillgång till de svenska välfärdssystemen, och i en tid när människor rör sig mer över gränserna finns all anledning att tydliggöra detta.” SD, B 2018, p. 17

their materials (for example: SD, B 2018, p. 49; SD B 2021. p. 32; SD, OID, p. 21). The two signs *labor/work* and *right* complement the sign *citizen* throughout the Sweden Democrats' materials. For example, the Sweden Democrats argue that there is a difference between people who migrate to Sweden and do not work or pay taxes, compared to those who contribute to the labor market:

There should be a differentiation between people who come to Sweden to *work* and people who reside in Sweden for other reasons. The Sweden Democrats strongly oppose a situation in which a growing number of non-*citizens* reside in Sweden without *working*, and we do not think that these people should have an unlimited *right* to the Swedish welfare system (SD, B 2018, p. 17<sup>46</sup>).

The complementing signs *work* and *right* plays a crucial role in the discourse as they state that non-working people, who they perceive as migrants, should not “have a *right* to the Swedish welfare system” (SD, B 2019, p. 53). This conceptualization builds on the agreed upon notion of welfare as an exchange, as it has clearly moved away from egalitarian notions of welfare and into the realm of labor-related conditional welfare. The connection between the notion of an exchange and the restrictive welfare suggestions of the Sweden Democrats is even further cemented by their suggestion that non-citizens who work in Sweden should continue receiving work-related benefits while non-working non-citizens should not receive such benefits (SD, B 2022, p. 86-87). The intersection between labor, citizenship and welfare becomes clear as the condition of citizenship for welfare access is relieved by labor market participation. This differentiation can be understood as a differentiation between ‘wanted’ and ‘unwanted’ migrants (Anderson 2015, p. 44; Brace 2015, p. 23-24; Sharma 2015, p. 98-99). As Western democracies try to keep out the global poor, subsequently keeping out subjects who are classed in specific ways, neoliberal economies are able to regulate specific kinds of migration (Anderson 2015, p. 44; Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 18). Yuval-Davis et al argue that this differentiation between wanted and unwanted migrants is crucial in upholding neoliberal economies and such processes are at the core of modern day bordering (Yuval-Davis et al 2019, p. 1-3, 18). The suggested restriction of welfare access for those

---

<sup>46</sup> “Samtidigt bör man skilja mellan personer som kommer till Sverige för att arbeta och personer som befinner sig i Sverige av andra skäl. Sverigedemokraterna motsätter sig med kraft en situation där ett stort och växande antal icke-medborgare uppehåller sig i Sverige utan att arbeta, och vi anser inte att dessa personer ska ha full rätt till det svenska välfärdssystemet”. SD, B 2018, p. 17

perceived as migrants based on citizenship and/or labor market participation can therefore be understood as something that, at its core, aims to uphold borders. These bordering processes are informed by nationalist, classed and racialized senses of belonging and labor market value and are designed to “keep out” ‘unwanted’ migrants (Yuval-Davis et al 2019). This process determines the social rights of racialized and classed others, even within the territorial borders of a state (Yuval-Davis et al 2019). This is even further emphasized in the first quote by the Sweden Democrats above, as they express explicitly that “in a time where people move frequently across the border” it is even more important to regulate welfare access for those perceived as migrants (SD, B 2018, p. 17). This statement extends the territorial border to the welfare institution, by explicitly arguing that increased migration demands stricter regulations regarding welfare access. The bordering dimension of welfare chauvinism in the Swedish right wing continuum becomes explicitly clear here, as the extension of the territorial border to welfare accessibility as well as the differentiation between wanted and unwanted migrants are revealed.

The interconnectedness of labor, citizenship and welfare is clear in the texts by the Moderates as well. These common logics are revealed by their similar conceptualizations of the element *citizen* and the complementing signs *work/labor* and *right*. The Moderates state for example that:

A person that is new to our country should have to qualify for access to Swedish welfare by *labor* or permanent residency and *citizenship*. To have a job should always generate more benefits than not having a job would (M, B 2020, p. 43<sup>47</sup>)

The Moderates state that labor should be a criteria for gaining access to welfare institutions, unless you have a permanent residency permit or citizenship (M, B 2020, p. 43). There is a differentiation made between the performance required by those “new to our country” and those who are not new (M, B 2020, p. 43). The Moderates make many similar statements throughout the materials, for example in their budget proposals where there are complete segments of the texts dedicated to the issue of qualifications for welfare access (for example: M, B 2019, p. 43; M, B 2020, p. 43, M, B 2021, p. 31; M, B 2022, p. 44). The Moderates also

---

<sup>47</sup> “Den som är ny i vårt land borde i stället kvalificera sig in till den svenska välfärden genom arbete eller genom permanent uppehållstillstånd och medborgarskap. Att ha ett arbete ska alltid ge fler förmåner än att inte ha ett arbete”. M, B 2020, p. 43

state that “newly arrived people” should not have an unrestricted *right* to welfare benefits, subsequently articulating the sign *right* in a similar manner to the Sweden Democrats (M, B 2021, p. 31). It is clear, through their articulation of the signs *citizen*, *work/labor* and *right* that the Moderates also attempt to border welfare access. There is no apparent antagonism between the parties in their articulations of the signs *work/labor*, *citizen* and *right* in relation to welfare, and something that is especially worth noting is that the Moderates' articulations have developed over time. In their 2018 budget proposal they suggest that long term residency or citizenship could be introduced as qualification grounds for welfare (M, B 2018, p. 56). In their 2022 proposal, these suggestions are no longer suggestions and they state that:

In Sweden there are major residency-related welfare benefits. This means, in practice, that a person who lives here has access to all benefits from day one. This is not reasonable. The person who is new to our country should instead qualify to Swedish welfare by *labor* or a permanent residency permit and *citizenship* (M, B 2022, p. 44<sup>48</sup>)

Within the Swedish right wing continuum there are therefore representations of increased attempts to hegemonize a welfare conceptualization that restricts welfare for those perceived as migrants in racialized and classed ways. By constructing welfare as something that belongs fundamentally to those perceived as natives and/or those who contribute to the neoliberal labor market, the welfare conceptualization works as an extension of national borders. The border processes present in the Sweden Democrats' and the Moderates' welfare conceptualizations can be understood as attempts to hegemonize a racialized and classed restrictive welfare conceptualization. The grievability that is apparently afforded to all lives in the egalitarian welfare articulation is all of a sudden compromised, as the lives of those perceived as migrants are not included. There is no political care shown for these lives, as their welfare access is unapologetically restricted.

The party that stands out in this discourse are the Christian Democrats. They articulate the signs *citizen*, *labor/work* and *right* slightly differently than the other two. There are, however,

---

<sup>48</sup> I Sverige finns ett stort antal bosättningsbaserade välfärdsförmåner. Det betyder i praktiken att den som bor här har tillgång till alla förmåner från dag ett. Det är inte rimligt. Den som är ny i vårt land borde i stället kvalificera sig in till den svenska välfärden genom arbete eller genom permanent uppehåll och medborgarskap. (M, B 2022, p. 44)

traces of similar logic in the empirical material by the Christian Democrats. For example, they emphasize the rights of *citizens* in their texts about welfare. For example they state “welfare is for *citizens* and *citizens* have a *right* to affect its design” when discussing privatization policies (CD, B 2018, p. 33). They add that the Swedish welfare, that “all *citizens* have a *right* to” is important to uphold (CD, B 2018, p. 33). Contrary to the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates however, they state that everybody, including undocumented people, should have a *right* to basic health care and that this should be put into legislation (CD, AZ<sup>49</sup>). This is the only explicit statement the party makes of welfare in relation to those perceived as migrants and it is unclear whether or not “basic” health care exceeds emergency care. Even the Sweden Democrats state throughout their texts that emergency care should be available to everyone who needs it, including for those perceived as migrants (for example SD, B 2018, p. 17; SD, B 2020 p. 15; SD, B 2021, p 32). The Moderates make no explicit statements on the issue of emergency care for those perceived as migrants however. It is therefore unclear whether the parties differ greatly in this regard. Similarly, with regards to the sign *work/labor* the Christian Democrats neither oppose the conceptualization of the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates, nor confirm it.

The statements of the Christian Democrats can not be interpreted as completely conflicting with those of the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates, as the issue of welfare for those perceived as migrants is rarely mentioned throughout their materials. The attempts by the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates to hegemonize a conceptualization of welfare that restricts access based on nativeness or labor, is therefore not explicitly opposed by the Christian Democrats. However, the statement about health care to undocumented people by the Christian Democrats constitute a potential opposition towards the other parties' conceptualizations, and is understood here as the manifestation of the antagonisms between the Christian Democrats and the two other parties. The signs *citizen*, *work/labor* and *right* can therefore not be understood as moments, as the articulations of the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates are not sufficiently supported by the Christian Democrats. Contrary to the signs *contract*, *promise* and *solidarity* that all parties articulate to construct welfare as an exchange, there is too much uncertainty about the signs *citizen*, *work/labor*, and *right* in the discourse to interpret them as moments.

---

<sup>49</sup> Headline: Health care for undocumented people (Swedish: vård till papperslösa). CD, AZ

### 5.2.3 Restrictive distributions of grievability

Two main building blocks define the articulation of the restrictive welfare conceptualization within the empirical materials. On the one hand, there is the foundational idea that welfare is conditioned by taxes and labor. This idea is articulated through the moments *contract*, *promise* and *solidarity* that emphasize the labor dimension of the welfare exchange. These signs are, despite not being used explicitly by all parties, as they work to construct welfare in the same way, i.e. as an exchange between individual and state. This notion of an exchange acts as a stepping stone from which the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates attempt to hegemonize a construction of welfare in which access is restricted for those perceived as migrants. These attempts are defined by explicitly welfare chauvinist claims that aim to extend national borders to the welfare arena. These bordering processes differentiate between wanted and unwanted migrants, and distributes welfare access based on racialized and classed notions of nativeness and labor market value. All parties are actively overruling the attempted construction of welfare as an egalitarian enterprise by articulating welfare as an exchange. Subsequently this enables the truly explicit welfare restrictions articulated by the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates. The political distribution of grievability that includes *all* lives according to the egalitarian welfare articulations, is compromised as it no longer includes those perceived as migrants.

## 5.3 Results

The analysis has revealed that there are two dominant articulations of welfare represented in the empirical materials. On the one hand there is the egalitarian welfare conceptualization in which the moments *need*, *vulnerability*, *all/everyone/everybody*, *life/live/living* and *dignity* attempt to articulate distributions of grievability that includes all lives. The moments *need* and *vulnerability* point to the precariousness of life and the articulation of these signs within the empirical material construct welfare as responsible for catering to this precarity. This notion of life acknowledges that life relies on politically and socially endorsed external factors to be *livable*. The signs *life/live/living* and *dignity* further articulate an emphasis on the precarity of life, as they aid in constructing life as something that goes beyond survival. Simultaneously, welfare is constructed as responsible for enabling livability for all, which is especially emphasized using the moment *all/everyone*. These articulations, and the lack of antagonisms surrounding them, point to an attempt within the Swedish right wing continuum to construct the loss of livability, for any life, as grievable. Through the articulation of the

signs that construct the egalitarian welfare conceptualization, the parties communicate a sense of grief for the loss of anyone's livability.

On the other hand, there are representations of restrictive welfare conceptualizations in the empirical material in which the signs *contract*, *promise*, *solidarity*, *citizen*, *labor/work* and *right* aid in distributing grievability unequally. The moments *contract*, *promise* and *solidarity*, construct welfare as an exchange between individual and state in which labor and taxes are emphasized as central building blocks. Simultaneously, an explicitly restrictive welfare conceptualization is articulated through the elements *citizen*, *work/labor* and *right*. While the Christian Democrats express some antagonistic articulations of these signs, the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates attempt to hegemonize the restrictive welfare conceptualization. These attempts are aided by the notion of an exchange as it articulates that the population's labor market participation is foundational for welfare. In their attempts, the Sweden Democrats and the Moderates border welfare access, subsequently extending the racialized and classed borders of today's globalized world into the welfare realm. The interconnectedness between the notion of welfare as an exchange and the more explicit restrictive welfare suggestions reveal shared logics that influence the welfare conceptualizations of all three parties.

While there are representations of egalitarian constructions of welfare within the Swedish right wing continuum that display a distribution of grievability that includes all lives, these representations are overshadowed by articulations of racialized and classed differentiations between lives. These articulations attempt to make such differentiations hegemonized. Given the possible implicit racializations underpinning the focus on 'the elderly' as a group "in need" of welfare, as well as the explicitly racialized and classed articulations of welfare as conditioned by citizenship and/or labor, the results are clear. The attempts within the discourse to construct welfare as egalitarian, while simultaneously introducing criterias relating to labor and citizenship ultimately compromises the distribution of grievability so that it does not include those perceived as migrants. While care for the livability for *all* lives is proudly displayed, the discourse is constituted by racialized and classed differential distributions of grievability. It reveals, truly, the lack of political care that is afforded the lives of those perceived as migrants within the Swedish right wing continuum.

## 6. Concluding discussion

As political claims that aim to restrict welfare access for racialized and classed subjects have become a staple in anti-immigration debates, the importance of researching welfare chauvinism seems all the more clear (Bak Jørgensen & Lund Thomsen 2016; Keskinen 2016; Keskinen, Norocel & Bak Jørgensen 2016). This thesis has established its anchorage in the broader feminist, antiracist and postcolonial field by critically analysing welfare conceptualizations in the Swedish right wing continuum using theoretical concepts developed by multidisciplinary scholars in the field. By analyzing welfare chauvinism from the perspective of livability and grievability (Butler 2016), this thesis has been able to scrutinize how care for lives is differentially distributed within the Swedish right wing continuum. By using Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy's (2019) term bordering, this thesis has been able to point to the manifestation of racialized and classed global and national inequalities in the welfare debate. The bordering of welfare access has been conceptualized as an extension of territorial borders that works to differentiate between lives, and affords fundamentally different levels of care for racialized and classed subjects. By applying these perspectives the analysis has shown that the political sense of grief within the Swedish right wing continuum for when a life loses its livability is fundamentally racialized and classed.

This study is conducted in the context of a shift to the right in the Swedish political arena. This shift has been conceptualized as a combination of the neoliberalisation of the Social Democratic welfare regime, and the recent inclusion of the far right Sweden Democrats into the mainstream political arena (Ekman & Krzyżanowski 2021; Kallis 2013, p. 55-56; Larsson et al 2012, p. 3-8). This inclusion, made official by the 2021 budget collaboration between the Sweden Democrats and the two mainstream parties the Moderates and the Christian Democrats, has marked the beginning of a new era in Swedish politics. The three parties have been conceptualized in this thesis as the Swedish 'right wing continuum' and the welfare related political claims of the parties have been conceptualized as a joint political space. By conceptualizing the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates and the Christian Democrats as a continuum, this thesis has extended the potential of Norocel's (2018) 'conservative right wing continuum'. By applying the concept of a continuum to a specific set of parties within the Swedish context, the analysis was able to offer insight into the ideological underpinnings that join the three parties. Subsequently, the extension of Norocel's conceptualization enabled a



multidimensional analysis of the implications of the welfare chauvinist claims that exist both in the Swedish far right as well as in the centre-right.

Furthermore, the analysis of the budget proposals, official ideological documents and alphabetically listed political suggestions of the parties, published during the 2018-2022 time period has offered valuable insight into the conceptualization of welfare that informs the parties policy suggestions. In addition, the methodological framework has offered tools that have enabled an analysis of the specific signs and meanings that constitute the discourse. By using a different method for analysis, for example Carol Bacchi's (2009) 'what's the problem represented to be?', I would perhaps have been able to point more to the specific problem representations that exist in the welfare conceptualizations of the Swedish right wing continuum. However, discourse theory made a more thorough analysis of the central discursive building blocks possible. It also enabled an analysis of the articulations and meaning making attempts that were made throughout the discourse.

To conclude, this thesis has added to the feminist, antiracist and postcolonial field by using Laclau and Mouffe's methodological tools (1985; 1990), an extension of Norocel's conceptualization of an ideological 'continuum' (2018), as well as theoretical perspectives that conceptualizes welfare chauvinism as an extension of global and national bordering process that differentiates between lives on racialized and classed grounds. Going forward, there are several routes to take to further add to the field. For example, the theoretical framework provided by Butler enables conceptualizations of welfare chauvinism as something that works to differentiate between lives. By analyzing the political understandings of what makes life livable, future research on nationalist projects can better understand the implications of restrictive politics for discursive constructions of the lives of those perceived as migrants. Furthermore, by conceptualizing political actors who take up a joint ideological space within national, regional or global constellations as a continuum, future research can analyze the manifestation of racialized and classed notions of life on a broader political scale. My final conclusion is regardless that, in a time when far right ideologies grow all across Europe, the importance of politically motivated critical research that promotes feminist, antiracist and postcolonial social justice perspectives can not be underestimated.

## 7. Bibliography

Anderson, Bridget. 2015. Immigration and the Worker Citizen. In Anderson, Bridget & Hughes, Vanessa (eds.). 2015. *Citizenship and its others*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 41-57

Anderson, Bridget. 2019. New directions in migration studies: towards methodological de-nationalism. *Comparative Migration Studies* 7(36)  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0140-8>

Anderson, Bridget & Hughes, Vanessa (eds.). 2015. *Citizenship and its others*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bacchi, Carol L. 2009. *Analysing policy: what's the problem represented to be?*. Frenchs Forest, N.S.W.: Pearson

Bak Jørgensen, Martin & Lund Thomsen, Trine. 2016. Deservingness in the Danish context: Welfare chauvinism in times of crisis. *Critical Social Policy* 36: 330 - 351.

Balibar, Étienne. 2004. *We, the people of Europe?* Princeton University Press.

Barker, Vanessa. 2017. *Nordic Nationalism and Penal Order: Walling the Welfare State*. 1st ed. Routledge.

Bergman, Torbjörn & Bäck, Hanna. 2015. The parties in government formation. In Jon Pierre (ed). *The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics*. doi:  
10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199665679.013.12

Brace, Laura. 2015. Reflections on the Good Citizen. In Anderson, Bridget & Hughes, Vanessa (eds.). 2015. *Citizenship and its others*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 10-27

Butler, Judith. 2016. *Frames of war: when is life grievable?*. London: Verso

Börjesson, Robert & Åkesson, Lovisa. 2017. Ulf Kristersson: Ska inte samarbeta alls med SD. *Expressen*. 1st of September.  
<https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/ulf-kristersson-ska-inte-samarbeta-all-s-med-sd/> [Accessed 18.05.2022]

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1991. Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241–1299.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>

Dahlstedt, Magnus. & Neergaard, Anders. 2019. Crisis of Solidarity? Changing Welfare and Migration Regimes in Sweden. *Critical Sociology* 45(1): 121–135. doi:  
10.1177/0896920516675204.

Ekman, Mattias & Krzyżanowski, Michał. 2021. A populist turn? News editorials and the recent discursive shift on immigration in Sweden. *Nordicom Review* 42(S1): 67–87  
<https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2021-0007>

Ennsner-Jedenastik, Laurenz. 2018. Welfare Chauvinism in Populist Radical Right Platforms: The Role of Redistributive Justice Principles. *Social Policy & Administration* 52: 293-314.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press.

Geugjes, Marilena. 2021. *Collective Identity and Integration Policy in Denmark and Sweden*. Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

Guentner, Simon; Lukes, Sue; Stanton, Richard; Vollmer, Bastian A. & Wilding, Jo. 2016. Bordering practices in the UK welfare system. *Critical Social Policy* 36(3): 391-411.  
doi:[10.1177/0261018315622609](https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018315622609)

Haraway, Donna. 1988. Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies* 14(3): 575-599  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3178066>

Harding, Sandra (ed.). 2004. *The feminist standpoint theory reader: intellectual and political controversies*. New York, N.Y.: Routledge

Harding, Sandra. 2006. *Science and social inequality: feminist and postcolonial issues*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press

Israel, Mark. 2015. *Research ethics and integrity for social scientists: Beyond regulatory compliance*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Kallis, Aristotle. 2013. Breaking Taboos and ‘Mainstreaming the Extreme’: The Debates on Restricting Islamic Symbols in Contemporary Europe. In Wodak, Ruth, Khosravi-Nik, Majid & Mral, Birgitte (eds.). *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 55-70

Keskinen, Suvi. 2016. From welfare nationalism to welfare chauvinism: Economic rhetoric, the welfare state and changing asylum policies in Finland. *Critical Social Policy* 36(3): 352–370 DOI: 10.1177/0261018315624170 csp.sagepub.com

Keskinen, Suvi; Norocel, O. Cristian, & Bak Jørgensen, Martin. 2016. The politics and policies of welfare chauvinism under the economic crisis. *Critical Social Policy*: 36: 321-329.

Keskinen, Suvi; Skaptadóttir, Unnur D. & Toivanen, Mari. (eds.). 2019. *Undoing Homogeneity in the Nordic Region: Migration, Difference, and the Politics of Solidarity* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Keskinen, Suvi; Stoltz, Pauline & Mulinari, Diana. 2021. *Feminisms in the Nordic Region : Neoliberalism, Nationalism and Decolonial Critique*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan

Ketola, Markus & Nordensvard, Johan. 2015. Nationalist Reframing of the Finnish and Swedish Welfare States - The Nexus of Nationalism and Social Policy in Far-right Populist Parties. *Social Policy & Administration* 49(3): 356–375. doi: 10.1111/spol.12095.

Kristdemokraterna. 2018. *Ebba Busch Thor om dagens ställningstagande i regeringsfrågan*. <https://kristdemokraterna.se/ebba-busch-thor-om-dagens-stallningstagande-regeringsfragan/> [Accessed: 18.05.2022]

Kristdemokraterna. 2021. *Gemensamt budgetalternativ från KD, M och SD*. 16 Nov. <https://kristdemokraterna.se/budgetreserv22/> [Accessed: 26.05.2021]

Laclau, Ernesto (ed.) 1990. *New reflections on the Revolution of our time*. London: Verso

Laclau, Ernesto & Mouffe, Chantal. 1985. *Hegemony & socialist strategy*. London: Verso

Laclau, Ernesto & Mouffe, Chantal. 1990. A Post-Marxism without apologies. In Laclau, Ernesto (ed.). *New reflections on the Revolution of our time*. London: Verso. pp. 97-135

Larsson, Bengt; Letell, Martin & Thörn, Håkan. 2012. Transformations of the Swedish Welfare State: Social Engineering, Governance and Governmentality. In: Larsson, Bengt; Letell, Martin & Thörn, Håkan (eds). *Transformations of the Swedish Welfare State*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. pp. 3-22

Leavy, Patricia & Harris, Anne. 2019. *Contemporary feminist research from theory to practice*. New York: The Guilford Press

Martinsson, Lena & Mulinari, Diana (eds.). 2018. *Dreaming global change, doing local feminisms: visions of feminism : global North/global South encounters, conversations and disagreements*. London: Routledge

Migrationsverket. 2021. *Gymnasielagen*. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/Privatpersoner/Skydd-och-asyl-i-Sverige/Gymnasielagen.html> [Accessed: 22.03.2022]

Moderaterna. 2021. *Moderaterna, sverigedemokraterna och Kristdemokraterna presenterar gemensam budget*. 16 Nov. <https://moderaterna.se/nyhet/moderaterna-sverigedemokraterna-och-kristdemokraterna-presenterar-gemensam-budget/> [Accessed: 18.05.2022]

Mohanty, Chandra T. 1988. Under Western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Feminist Review*.(30): 61-88. doi: 10.2307/1395054

Mohanty, Chandra T. 2002. "Under Western Eyes" Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28(2): 499-535 doi: 10.1086/342914

Mulinari, Diana & Neergaard, Anders. 2014. We are Sweden Democrats because we care for others: Exploring racisms in the Swedish extreme right. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 21(1): 43–56. doi: 10.1177/1350506813510423.

Norocel, O. Cristian. 2016. Populist radical right protectors of the folkhem: Welfare chauvinism in Sweden. *Critical Social Policy* 36: 371 - 390.

Norocel, O. Cristian. 2018. Antifeminist and "Truly Liberated": Conservative Performances of Gender by Women Politicians in Hungary and Romania. *Politics and Governance* 6(3): 43-54. doi: 10.17645/pag.v6i3.1417

Parmar, Alpa. 2018. *Borders as mirrors: Racial hierarchies and the politics of migration*. Paper presented at the conference 'Borders, Racisms and Harms', University of London, 2 May.

Poohl, Daniel. 2010. Val 2010: Internt mejl avslöjar strategi bakom SD-film. *Expo*. 2 Sep <https://expo.se/2010/09/val-2010-internt-mejl-avsl%C3%B6jar-strategi-bakom-sd-film> [Accessed: 25.05.2022]

Sager, Maja & Mulinari, Diana. 2018. Safety for whom? Exploring femonationalism and care-racism in Sweden. *Women's Studies International Forum* 68: 149-156 <https://lup.lub.lu.se/record/8bc6e96e-0ed4-4e50-9287-edbb2d945702>

Sainsbury, Diane. 2012. *Welfare States and Immigrant Rights: The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion*. Oxford University Press.

Sharma, Nandita. 2015. Racism. In Anderson, Bridget & Hughes, Vanessa (eds.). 2015. *Citizenship and its others*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 98-118

Statistiska Centralbyrån. 2022. *Folkmängd efter kön, ålder och födelseland 1970 och 2021 samt framskrivning 2070*. 13 April.

<https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/befolkning/befolkningsframskrivningar/befolkningsframskrivningar/pong/tabell-och-diagram/folkmangd-efter-kon-alder-och-fodseland-och-framskrivning/> [Accessed: 25.05.2022]

Sverigedemokraterna. 2019. *Principprogram: Sverigedemokraternas principprogram 2019*.

<https://ratatosk.sd.se/sd/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/16092141/Sverigedemokraternas-principprogram-2019.pdf> [Accessed: 18.05.2022]

Sverigedemokraterna. 2021. *Gemensamt budgetalternativ från Moderaterna, Sverigedemokraterna och Kristdemokraterna*. 16 Nov.

<https://sd.se/gemensamt-budgetalternativ-fran-moderaterna-sverigedemokraterna-och-kristdemokraterna/> [Accessed: 26.05.2021]

Valmyndigheten. 2021. *Valresultat 2018*.

<https://www.val.se/valresultat/riksdag-region-och-kommun/2018/valresultat.html> [Accessed 18.05.2022]

Vetenskapsrådet. 2017. *God forskningssed*. Available online:

<https://www.vr.se/analys/rapporter/vara-rapporter/2017-08-29-god-forskningssed.html> [Accessed: 18.05.2022]

Winther Jørgensen, Marianne & Phillips, Louise. 2000. *Diskursanalys som teori och metod*. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1997. *Gender & nation*. London: Sage

Yuval-Davis, Nira; Wemyss, Georgie & Cassidy, Kathryn. 2019. *Bordering*. Polity Press.

Åkesson, Jimmie. 2020a. Äldre och sjuka betalar priset för invandringen. *Aftonbladet*. 24

Nov.

<https://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/a/R95BXW/aldre-och-sjuka-betalar-priset-for-invandringen>

[Accessed 18.05.2022]

Åkesson, Jimmie. 2020b. *En afghanamnesti urholkar både tryggheten och välfärden. Vänsterliberalerna och socialdemokraterna prioriterar alltid invandring före välfärd och trygghet. Därför måste de bytas ut. #sydol* [Twitter]. 24 Nov.

<https://twitter.com/jimmieakesson/status/1331176187805241344> [Accessed 18.05.2022]