On the border of the welfare state

A discourse analysis of Sweden's response to immigration

Isabelle Grebäck

Abstract

This thesis seeks to understand how the restrictive immigration policies – taken by the Swedish Government in 2015 as Europe was facing a huge stream of people seeking refuge – could be justified when research demonstrates that Sweden's national identity is based on humanitarianism and asserts that Sweden has a great commitment to human rights. The nationalistic act seemed paradoxical – however, previous research displays a disputed understanding of the relationship between the humanitarian discourse and the nationalistic discourse. The thesis uses discourse theory to trace how the Swedish Government through its representation of the decision to tighten immigration constructs and reproduces the Swedish national identity. The empirical analysis displays a shift in the focus of Swedish immigration policy from an international (humanitarian) one to a national one. Even though it is not possible to fully assert an identity change the analysis indicates an identity crisis – the analysis demonstrates how humanitarian values acquires meaning within a nationalistic discourse. The thesis also demonstrates how the Swedish Government represents immigration as a contradiction to the Swedish welfare state. The decision to tighten immigration appears as a measure taken in order to rescue the national identity and its main feature – the welfare.

Key words: Sweden, National identity, The Welfare State, Nationalism, Humanitarianism, Immigration, Discourse analysis

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1   Introduction

In a continuously changing world, where globalisation – also understood as internalization – has led to a flow of goods, information, capital and people, cosmopolitan theorists have been questioned the significance of the nation-state – they assert the era as post-nationalism (Breunig & Luedtke 2008: 123; Hettne et al. 2006: 400; Yuval-Davis 2013:59). However, although the role of the nation-state might be a target of globalisation and societal change, the nation-state still function as "[…] the hegemonic political project of belonging of the 20th century" (Yuval-Davis 2013: 53). This became evident when the anti-government protests in Syria in 2011 turned into civil war and caused 6,5 million people to leave their homes. When people arrived in Europe, they were met by fences and controls – the nation-state and its borders were more significant than ever (Amnesty; BBC 1; BBC 2; UNHCR).

Behind the borders, nationalism seems to thrive as the machinery of the nation-state (Hettne et al. 2006: 219, 240). Populist radical right parties opposing immigration has begun to establish themselves in the European political landscape. In Sweden, the support for the populist radical right party Swedish Democrats increased with 7.2 percentages between 2010 and 2014 (Mudde 2013; SCB). Also European parties with another political affiliation have proposed tightening of immigration controls, arguing that controlled migration is a concern of national identity (Yuval-Davis 2013:57).

However, the response by Europe to the refugee flow was quite polarized. The awareness of the hardship for those people who had to flee with boats over the Mediterranean Sea became greater when a little boy was found washed up dead on a beach in Turkey on the 2th of September in 2015 (Aftonbladet 2015; BBC 2). This caused a massive accumulation of the civil society in European countries – people opened up their homes, they arranged events and activities, and the desire to help refugees and migrants became especially evident in Sweden (Dagens Nyheter 2015). It was not just the civil society who made clear that Sweden was

going to open up and help, even politicians adopted an open mind – Stefan Löfven stated in a speech held on September 6th at Medborgarplatsen – after the death of the little boy – that: "My Europe receives people who are fleeing from war, in solidarity and jointly. My Europe does not build walls, we help each other when the need is great" (Löfven 2015-09-06). He also stated that it is a task of the nation to help people fleeing and that: "[…] we should continue to be a country, which carries the solidarity as our greatest pride" (Löfven, Medborgarplatsen, 2015). Thus, Löfven clearly objected to the other EU countries' response to the stream of refugees and migrants.

Based on this initial response, it emerged as a surprise and very puzzling, when the Swedish Government a few months after the speech at Medborgarplatsen decided to introduce border controls and then a few weeks after temporarily adapted Swedish legislation to the minimum requirements of international conventions and EU law. The announcement to limit immigration was carried out by the Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and a crying Deputy Minister, Åsa Romson, who continued to talk about the humanitarian Sweden (Regeringen 2015-11-12; Regeringen 2015-11-24). To some extent it appeared as a political crisis for the Government, and mainly for the Swedish Green Party which before the parliamentary elections in 2014 stated that: "We will always work for a more humane and open policy and we will never make it harder for people to come to Sweden" (Miljöpartiet 2014). However, the political change seemed to oppose not only the Greens party's ideal values, but rather contradict the whole national identity (Sveriges Radio 2015).

Was the change toward restrictive immigration policies instead indicating a national identity crisis? The otherwise humanitarian and open Sweden seemed to have forsaken solidarity and tolerance, and now instead represented a more nationalistic view. Organisations such as the Swedish Red Cross criticised the decision arguing that Sweden neglected human rights (Red Cross 2015). International media was surprised due to their own view of Sweden, stating: "Openness is the closest thing the Swedes have to a national religion […]" (Telegraph 2015-11-12). Previous research on Swedish immigration policy asserts that Sweden has a great commitment regarding refugees, based on human rights, and has been perceived as a country where refugees are welcomed (Demker & Malmström 1999: 146). How could it be that one of the most open countries,

which used to show the most solidarity – by their own admission – could regard immigration as a crisis that needed security measures?

These questions seem to capture a puzzle contained within a paradoxical logic between humanitarianism and nationalism (Balibar 2001; Herzog 2009; Orgad 2015; Yuval-Davis 2013). Previous research has tried to capture the relationship contained between humanitarianism and nationalism, humans right and citizen's right (Balibar 2001; Herzog 2009; Orgad 2015; Yuval-Davis 2013). The perception of *what kind* of relationship – whether it exists one – that exists between nationalism and humanitarianism is widely spread. Scholars disagree about how these discourses interact with each other. Some claim that they in fact are the same phenomena and some scholars still view the two discourses dichotomously (Herzog 2009:192). With this thesis, I intend to contribute to the field of humanitarianism and nationalism by analysing national identity.

I regard the topic of immigration to be of importance to study – not least in order to understand how political decisions taken in order to limit immigration can be justified when scholars argue that immigration and multiculturalism appear as a precondition for a peaceful world (Hettne et al. 2006: 248). Then, it is most preferable something that politicians regard as more important to secure than human life (Yuval-Davis 2013: 54). Previous research on humanitarianism and nationalism highlights how refugees and migrants become a discursive production of otherness (Herzog 2009:192; Yuval-Davis 2013: 65). As the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' have become more evident under globalisation, immigration has emerged as a threat against the nation-state's values and social cohesion (Kymlicka 2011: 281-282). Yuval-Davis argues that: "Migrants, especially forced migrants, challenge the naturalised equation between people, territory, and political community" (Yuval-Davis 2013: 65). Thus, I also regard the topic of immigration to be of importance to study in relation to the discursive construction of the nation-state.

1.1   Aim and Research question

In this thesis I seek to examine how a Swedish national identity is represented and reproduced within the immigration discourse. The aim is thus to explore and understand *how* the Swedish Government creates a reality in which the immigration policies appear as natural and objective, in order to further understand the relationship between humanitarianism and nationalism within the discursive production of a Swedish national identity (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 33). Previous research indicates that the Swedish identity has been influenced by both humanitarianism and nationalism, and thus these discourses provide a historical context in which the analysis of the discursive construction of a Swedish identity today will be based on (Hettne et al. 2006; Heinö 2015; Johansson et al. 2001; Westberg 2003).

The theory of discourse analysis composed by Laclau and Mouffe is applied as a theoretical framework in the thesis. Laclau and Mouffe argue that identities are discursively constructed through chains of equivalence (Jorgensen & Phillip 2002: 43). In theories of discourse analysis drawing on the idea of logics of equivalence, it is stated that within a specific discourse certain political actions are possible and some are not (Bergstöm & Boréus 2005: 337). An identity that builds on specific discourses thus provides a foundation for certain action. Hence, discourse analysis is suitable to apply since I seek to understand how certain immigration polices were possible to announce and how they may appear as natural by relying on a national identity.

Given the theoretical premise, that some actions are only possible within certain discourses, it would suggest that within the humanitarian discourse certain statements are possible to make, and likewise are some statements possible within the nationalistic discourse. However, previous research questions whether nationalism really is opposing humanitarianism, arguing that they are more of one realm (Herzog 2009; Balibar 2001; Orgad 2012) – to explore the relationship between the discourses may thus provide greater understanding for how the political decisions announced in Sweden were possible. Previous research on identity and foreign policy indicates that the link between them have mostly been explored by how policies serve to reproduce identities. Hence, there is still a need

for research on how theories on identity may contribute to an understanding of policies (Waever 2005: 34). With this thesis I seek to contribute with a bidirectional understanding of the relationship. Thus, the research question is:

- How is a possible discursive struggle between a humanitarian discourse and a nationalistic discourse about the definition of a Swedish national identity manifested in the Swedish immigration discourse?

1.2 The proposed measures

On the 12th of November 2015, the Swedish Government decided to reintroduce internal border controls and identity checks for ferry passengers (Regeringen 2015-11-12). On the 24th of November 2015, the Government announced the following measures, in order to "create breathing space for the Swedish refugee reception" (Regeringen 2015-11-24):

- The Swedish legislation will be temporarily brought into line with the minimum requirements in international conventions and EU law
- Temporary residence permits for all persons in need of protection except quota refugees
- Limited right to family member immigration for persons in need of protection with temporary residence permits
- Tougher maintenance requirements
- Persons otherwise in need of protection will not be entitled to a residence permit
- The provision on residence permits on grounds of exceptionally/particularly distressing circumstances will be replaced by a provision allowing a residence permit to be granted on humanitarian grounds in certain very limited exceptional cases
- The Government wants to introduce medical age determination of asylum seekers
- Sweden will soon introduce ID checks on all modes of public transport to Sweden

2 Previous research

In this chapter I will outline how previous research understands the formation of identities within the national setting, i.e. national identities. Then I examine how a national identity discourse may be based on the discourse of humanitarianism or nationalism and how these two discourses in turn interact with each other. Previous research demonstrates that Sweden's identity has been formed between humanitarianism and nationalism, to a large extent. I will then present how previous research indicates that the two discourses are prominent in the construction of a national identity in relation to an immigration discourse.

2.1 The national identity discourse

The link between identity and foreign policy became a research subject as the fields of constructivism and post-structuralism arrived. As 'identity politics' became important after the Cold War and political actions were to be explained in terms of culturalist truism, the need for research, on how nationalism is something that has been taken for granted, became important and a main issue within these fields. Ole Waever argues that there is still a need for studying the meaning of identity for regional security (Waever 2005: 34).

In earlier work, I have examined the paradox of a national identity (Grebäck 2015). Then I referred to David Campbell (1998) when arguing that states are paradoxical entities that do not possess stable identities since the "demands of identity and the practices that constitutes it can never be fully resolved" (Campbell 1998:12). Thus, states are in constant need of reproduction and this reproduction is carried out by practices of representation (Campbell 1998:12). Representations construct knowledge, values, concepts and beliefs, which in turn produce power relations. Nationality is such a power relation, which is reproduced by different representations (Grebäck 2016; Orgad 2012: 25). The representation of the Other, in relation to the Self, involves strategies of symbolic exclusion and

inclusion, which result in certain people and ideas being made visible and appointed as legitimated. Shani Orgad states that: "The same representation, for example, can be both liberating and oppressive" (Orgad 2012:28). In other words, the meaning within representations is relative. The representation of exclusion and inclusion enable people to identify with certain values, such as solidarity and tolerance (Grebäck 2016; Orgad 2012: 28-30). On the other hand, Alexa Robertson argues that:

> Difference needs to be acknowledged and represented if cultural homogenization is to be resisted and something done about the increasing proclivity of Western societies to lower the national portcullis against migrants seeking refuge (Robertson 2015:63).

However, she admits the difficulty of depicting the Other without stereotyping. This indicates that the discursive production of difference leads to oppression, by reproduction of power relations, as well as it is needed in order to achieve a humane society. Acknowledgement of difference is advocated within multiculturalism – a concept I account for further down (Grebäck 2016; Robertson 2015:63).

Politicians in position of power are said to create the identity discourse through representation according to the concept of 'difference' provided by Jacques Derrida (1978) (Grebäck 2015; Howarth 2000:40-41). Most of the research on identity formation acknowledges the concept of difference as Derrida presents it. Bergström and Boréus assert that even though the identity formation occurs within the discourse, the formation is not possible without an opposite (Bergström & Boréus 2005:327; Grebäck 2015). David Campbell argues that identity is always constituted in relation to difference, and difference is composed in relation to identity – neither of them is a given unit, but rather contingent. The identity of a Self and "domestic" is constituted in contrast to an Other and a "foreign" (Campbell 1998:9; Grebäck 2015). The identity of a national state should then be understood as "tenuously constituted in time… through a stylized repetition of acts, and achieved, not through a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition" (Campbell 1998:10). Marianne Jorgensen and Louise J. Phillips are also asserting that a group's identity, the Self, takes formation in relation to the Other (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 41, 43-44). Orgad claims that

representations of the Other are necessary in order to imagine ourselves (Grebäck 2016; Orgad 2012:82-83). However, Waever argues that the Other (identity) does not have to be studied by the premise of the ordinary 'Self-Other' relation – the Other may be the other 'we's. For instance, a national identity may depend on how the identification with the nation interacts with the identification as human (identify with humanity) or citizen (identify with the nation) (Waever 2005: 38). The identity is then constructed through struggles between different discourses (Westberg 2003: 23).

To identify with the nation is to identify with the idea of being e.g. Swedish (Waever 2005: 38). Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, Jorgensen and Phillips assert that: "People's identities (both collective and individual) are the result of contingent, discursive processes and, as such, are part of the discursive struggle" (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 34). Thus identities are never objectively given, rather contingency – they change within discursive processes and may thus differ between different times (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 33, 43). Power is the main source of the creation of social orders and hence identities. It excludes the possibility of existence for certain identities at a given time (Clohesy M. 2005:180). Words (myths) that comprise a national identity discourse, such as *the people* and *the country*, are used in order to ascribe the society an objective content and therefore makes national politics possible. Although society, and the nation, is verbalised as a totality it still remains an imaginary entity since it is a social construction (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 39, 40).

Several discourses may struggle at once to position a specific space, such as the country. The nation Sweden may be positioned as humanitarian or nationalistic, depending on the articulation. Which position that appears as relatively fixed – naturalised – depends on a hegemonic process where possible positions have been excluded. Identity is equal to the identification of a position within a specific discursive structure (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 41, 43-44). An identity carries an implicit understanding of specific behaviours. Thus, if Sweden is positioned within the humanitarian discourse it entails a human behaviour, i.e. to provide hospitality for people in need (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 43; Orgad 2012:111).

Antagonism can occur between two identities when the two discourses that the identities are positioned in, are part of each other's field of discursivity. The

exclusion of one discourse in the construction of an identity may be a threat to the hegemonic discourse's fixity of meaning. An identity, which includes more, should therefore be less likely to be threatened (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 47; Torfing 2005: 16). For example, a national identity that includes the discourse of multiculturalism might not be threatened by immigration. However, Laclau identifies the paradoxical with enrichment of meaning. Laclau talks about "[…] the destruction of meaning through its very proliferation" (Laclau 2014: 20) – suggesting that the expansion of signs in a chain of equivalence consist of an increased meaning, but the result is opposite:

> "[…][I]f I have to specify what all the links of the equivalential chain have in common, then the more the chain expands, the more the differential features of each of the links will have to be dropped in order to keep alive what the equivalential chain attempts to express" (Laclau 2014: 19-20).

Given this premise, it would suggest that an expansion of the meaning of a national identity might be perceived obscure or paradoxical – i.e. to safeguard both the nation and humans rights.

Hegemonic discourses may be exposed to new events that they can not integrate and domesticate. The discourses then become dislocated and hegemonic struggle occur, and this leads to the articulation of new hegemonic discourses. A hegemonic struggle over the floating signifier, *the Swedish nation*, aims to fix the meaning of the signifier by articulating it with new nodal points (Torfing 2005: 16). Jacob Torfing argues that: "[a]rticulations that manage to provide a credible principle upon which to read past, present, and future events, and capture people's hearts and minds, become hegemonic" (Torfing 2005: 15). However, antagonism and hegemonic struggles may not only occur between identities (discourses), but also within identities – Laclau and Mouffe talks about fragmented identities. Antagonism is here understood as an obstacle in the process of solid identities (Bergström & Boréus 2005: 320).

Jacob Westberg terms the national identity as 'national political identity', when it is formulated by politicians. I only refer to national identity, but Westbergs' argumentation proves the importance of political representations of the nation in the construction of a national identity. The national identity is vital in order to vitalize democratic governance and make people share the common

vision of holding the society together (Westberg 2003:22). Orgad is also arguing that the symbolic construction of national identities is vital in politics, since it help organize it (Orgad 2012:82-83). Politicians have a key roll in the construction of such an identity. They have the power to maintain, reinforce or deconstruct the national identity in such a way as it benefits their goals. According to Westberg the articulation of a collective identity is an ongoing struggle between political opponents (Westberg 2003:22). This is assumed within discourse theory as well – political opponents deal with the same issues and use related concepts but struggle to reformulate the key terms (Waever 2005: 36). However, within discourse theory politics refer to the struggle between discourses and how the society is organised in ways that exclude other possible ways – politics does not refer to specific political actors. Therefore, it is possible to consider the articulation of identities as a struggle between discourses. Nevertheless, Jorgensen and Phillips stress that discourse theory asserts that within discursive struggles, different actors such as politicians may promote different politics (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 36).

If the political argumentation about a collective identity shall be accepted as the national identity it has to be embraced by the people as well (Westberg 2003:22). The national identity has to contain at least one common denominator as the different political parties share – a sort of ideology above all – since the political struggle may cause different self-images of the nation. For example, Swedish political parties may have the same perception of the importance of those values associated with a Swedish welfare state (Westberg 2003:23). In Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, ideology is akin to objectivity. Objectivity then refers to those established discourses that due to unexposed contingency have been naturalised (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 36, 37).

As for the politicians, the national identity is a source of legitimacy. Politicians tend to formulate images of the nation favouring certain measures. If a political party can interconnect proposed measures with national traditions, the party may be able to further implement the measure and gain trust. Further, if the given image corresponds with the people's image the decision appears fair and acceptable. But if politicians represent the nation as being too different compared to the habitual perceptions, the citizens may not recognize the features of the community (Westberg 2003:24, 27, 36).

2.2 Nationalism and Humanitarianism

In the era of globalization and cosmopolitanism the nation-state has begun to be questioned. Some scholars argue that the nation-state is no longer significant since a transnational understanding and distribution of power, politics, economy and culture mark the era of globalization. The European Union defines the archetype of what scholars call post-national state institutions (Balibar 2001: 19). However, the nation-state still function as a discursive category of human belonging, where the hegemony of social consensus thrive (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 32; Yuval-Davis 2013: 53). Current research on humanitarianism and nationalism highlights how humanitarian action (mostly humanitarian intervention) reinforces current power relations and bolster nationalism, and how humanitarian language and practise are conducted in favour of the nation (Herzog 2009:192; Yuval-Davis 2013: 65).

2.2.1 Nationalism

The division of the world into nation-states, marked by borders to demonstrate sovereignty, is a separation of both territorial boundaries as well as normative values (Balibar 2001: 16). According to Etienne Balibar (2001), borders can be defined as: "[…] a 'sovereign' or non-democratic condition of democracy itself […]" and "[…] mainly works as an instrument of security controls, social segregation, and unequal access to the means of existence, and sometimes as an institutional distribution of survival and death: it becomes a cornerstone of institutional violence" (Balibar 2001: 16). Here sovereignty can be understood as by Laclau, which asserts, "[…] sovereignty should be conceived as hegemony" (Laclau 2014: 218).

The nation-state building involves the formation of a 'people' with a collective national identity (Westin 2008: 37). The legitimacy of the nation-state is dependant on the citizens' rights provided by the state (Hettne et al. 2006: 222). The nationality that comes with a citizenship is a construction built on cultural, religious, ethnic and political identities. Groups that do not match the national identity are usually excluded from the community. Within a national political

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logic, refugees are treated as an exceptional category, subordinated to the nationalistic discourse, in need of specific policy decisions of the nation-state (Herzog 2009: 190).

Ben Herzog (2009) asserts that 'the Western geopolitical imagination' provides the nations with normative significance. Thus, for the nation-state, the significance of borders lies both in the imagination of territorial divisions as well as in social divisions between 'us' and 'them' (Herzog 2009: 188).

The idea of the nation as imagined and not given has been adopted by several scholars, but was developed by Benedict Anderson who coined the concept 'imagined communities' (Mottier 2005: 259). The West European welfare state is based on this imagination of equality and uniformed communities (Hettne et al. 2006: 242). The welfare state is perceived as the highest goal and stage of the nation-state – i.e. the welfare state and nationalism are mutually dependent. The welfare state entails social responsibility provided by the state for the citizens (Hettne et al. 2006: 222, 400). In this sense, nationalism works at providing a political order (Herzog 2009: 188). Véronique Mottier asserts that the "[…] construction of the nation as an ordered system of exclusion and disciplinary regulation is central to the workings of modern welfare and the formation of national identity" (Mottier 2005: 260).

According to Andreas Heinö (2015), the opposite of nationalism has through out history been multiculturalism – arguing that the nationalistic strive is to merge the nation with the state and endeavour homogeneity. Multiculturalism on the other hand endeavours heterogeneity and cultural diversity, which mean that several ethnic and national groups should share the state (Heinö 2015:3, 2; Yuval-Davis 2013:60). However, some scholars argue that multiculturalism function as the transformation of the welfare state in the post modernity society into a pluralist state – multiculturalism is then understood as a project of the nation. Proponents of multicultural societies have argued that cultural diversity enriches and strengthens democracy (Yuval-Davis 2013:60). Some adherents criticize that the universal principles of human rights are taken for granted (Hellgren 2008: 87). Critics of multiculturalism have questioned if it is possible to include cultural rights in the welfare state due to the difficulty of defining cultures and cultures rights (Yuval-Davis 2013:60). Multiculturalism has come to dominate Western societies for a long time. However, Yuval-Davis argues that we now see the

decline of multiculturalism in the post 9/11 security environment (Yuval-Davis 2013:60).

2.2.2 Humanitarianism

The discourse of humanitarianism is part of a broader cosmopolitan logic and based on the moral principles and norms that constitute the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (UN 1; Balibar 2001: 16-17). The Declaration states that everyone has the right to seek asylum from persecution (UN 1). The principles of international solidarity are based on normative justification for accepting immigration (Boräng 2015: 222). Within the humanitarian discourse the refugee is thus understood as a victim of forced immigration. Humanitarianism builds on cosmopolitan morality and a claiming of universal values. Human rights have been developed as protection of humans regardless of their citizenship or nationality. This logic is thus constituted by a moral obligation to help people regardless of ideological or political beliefs, i.e. without discrimination (Clohesy M. 2005: 170).

In another essay where I outlined how immigration is perceived within the humanitarian discourse, I stated that immigration is represented as an opportunity through words such as tolerance, acceptance and openness to cultural differences (Grebäck 2016). Immigration is represented as beneficial, both for the migrant and the host country, and hospitality is seen as a moral obligation. Within the humanitarian discourse a common identity of being human based on universal principles – cosmopolitan ethos – is emphasized (Orgad 2012:111, 113).

However, in Western countries humanitarianism is carried out as a state policy within a broader security agenda. Politicians are often influenced by this humanitarian intent in both policy implementation and rhetoric (Herzog 2009:189). As in the nationalistic discourse, refugees are perceived as persons out of place. However, the humanitarian discourse – in contrast to the nationalistic logic – view "[…] humanitarian action as aid provided to human beings in crisis according to their needs, irrespective of their identity or social position. As such, it is conceptualised as global, universal, neutral, independent and impartial" (Herzog 2009: 190). Actions taken by governments in the name of humanitarianism has been criticised by scholars as ways of maintaining

hegemonic power. Western countries justifying their actions through rhetoric based on universal principles may be free to exercise and conduct favourable policies. The principles of human rights have first and foremost been criticised within the field of relativism, arguing that there is no such thing as a universal morality. On the contrary, scholars promoting universalism accuse adherents of relativism for producing practices that justify autocracy (Balibar 2013: 20).

2.2.3 Nationalism and Humanitarianism - the disputed relationship

At an abstract level – but still political – the interaction between humanitarianism and nationalism concerns different claims that balance between politics and morality. It is also a relationship balancing between global and local matters. Herzog means that the understanding is divided between two theoretical camps, where some argue that the two discourses contradict each other and others argue that they are included in the same realm. Scholars within the first camp claim that they may influence each other, but it is on the expense of the other – they contradict each other. National governments adopt humanitarian language and practices to cover up for national and material interests (Herzog 2009:190). However, humanitarian practices may start as a cover but still be in favour for those in need, meaning that moral claims are priority to political claims even though it is just an euphemism. Some argue that humanitarianism is not just a cover and euphemism. Humanitarian principles – universality, independence, neutrality and impartiality – do oppose nationalism as such as they bring legitimacy to humanitarian action (Herzog 2009: 191).

The other camp is arguing that they do not contradict each other, but rather they are one realm. Advocates of this theoretical standpoint claim that political and national interests seem to be above humanitarian interests – i.e. there are no humanitarian actions that do not derive from nationalism (Herzog 2009: 191).

According to Orgad, the relationship between humanitarianism and nationalism captures a dialectic:

> [N]ations and their governments often embrace a humanitarian and cosmopolitan narrative of a 'common humanity' to explain their migration policies (although their acts may not match up to it). In so doing, they

> simultaneously construct their moral superiority and uniqueness, and celebrate their belonging to a humane, moral nation." (Orgad 2012:116).

Thus Orgad argues that the humanitarian discourse is utilized by nations to prove their moral obligation, as well as appropriated by nations in order to reinforce a national imagination. The nation is represented as having 'unique awareness' of the situation of refugees. Thus, it exists both contention and mutually reinforcing between cosmopolitan – humanitarianism – and nationalism. (Grebäck 2016; Orgad 2012:116).

Many scholars study immigration (asylum and migration) in order to gain knowledge about how nationalism and humanitarianism interact. Several Western scholars regard immigration – as a consequence of international population flows – as one of the most unmanageable issues that face Western countries today. Policymakers today even perceive the flow of people, migrants and refugees, as a threat to the security of the nation (Herzog 2009: 186) – this construction of threats has been studied within a field called securitization (Yuval-Davis 2013: 57).

In another essay, I have explained how politicians regard immigration as constituting a threat to the values within a society (Grebäck 2016). In 1990, policymakers started to talk about immigration as a security issue and "[o]nce these flows were named as such, then they had to be thought about as potential security threats and action had to be taken to secure them." (Hoskins and O'Lloughlin 2010:166). When an issue is represented as such, they are 'securitized'. This suggests that certain policy decisions can not be legitimized without representing the same situation as a threat which warrant these actions (Hoskins and O'Lloughlin 2010: 166-167).

To label an event as a crisis can be equated with the representation of a situation as a threat, since a crisis implies that fundamental values and norms of a system are threatened (Boin et al 2005:2). This may explain why the daily nationalism becomes more patriotic in times of crisis. Shared values become more important and categories such as Self and Other strengthened (Orgad 2012:84-85). If immigration is labelled as a crisis, politicians can choose to consider the situation as a threat for the refugee's survival or as a threat to the nation's values. When treated as a threat to the nation's values – limitation of immigration – it is a

discursive construction of threatening otherness (Torfing 2005: 16). The threatening Other is "[…] morally and existentially outside 'us', a site of strangeness, hostility and danger" (Orgad 2012: 53). Exclusion of people results in social antagonism – the excluded poses a threat to the hegemonic order. Political frontiers are productions of this social antagonism (Torfing 2005: 16).

However, in a globalized world, refugees and migrants are not only security issues but also civil and political targets for humanitarian action – i.e. an issue treated within the humanitarian discourse. The Other is then, someone 'we' share a common humanity with and, 'just like us'. How the Other is depicted, is thus by most research understand in binary terms (Orgad 2012: 53).

Herzog criticises current research on the interrelation between humanitarianism and nationalism, claiming that the perceived dichotomy is false and that the discourses never have contradicted each other but rather are intimately intertwined and share the same characteristic. The distinction between global, humanitarianism, and local, nationalism, is not a clear cut – instead Herzog addresses the concept 'glocal'. He argues that the current distinction that exists has political motivations. According to Herzog, the definition of 'refugee' is divided between these different logics – the humanitarian, which invokes universal global values, and the national logic (Herzog 2009:186, 191). Herzog contradicts that humanitarianism is just a 'cover', which works to serve nationalistic practices, arguing: "[…] [H]umanitarianism and nationalism are the same social phenomenon with the same means and ends" (Herzog 2009: 187). The definition of refugee depends on an understanding of the world as constructed and divided by nation-states. The nation-state assumes to offer protection of the population. Someone can be defined as a refugee because of hegemonic international divisions of territory and identities, and thus are (Herzog 2009:188) "[…] refugees […] the product of nationalism" (Herzog 2009: 199)

Balibar asserts immigration as one of the 'crucial cosmopolitan issues' today, which has to be studied in order to understand the interplay between civility and democratic citizenship (Balibar 2001: 16). To some extent, the relationship between nationalism and humanitarianism is orbiting around democratic citizenship, as 'political rights', and 'human rights' (Balibar 2001: 17). Political rights are preserved within the nationalistic discourse, while human rights are protected within the humanitarian discourse. Other scholars such as Hannah

Arendt (1943) and Yuval-Davis have advocated this claim as well (Yuval-Davis 2013: 65). Yuval-Davis arguing: "[…] refugees embody the border-zone between the citizen and the human (Yuval-Davis 2013: 65). According to Balibar, human rights can no longer be regarded a precondition and basis for political rights, but rather political rights serve as the foundation for the definition of human rights (Balibar 2001: 17-18). Political rights or citizen's right – enjoyed by a membership of a national community – to some extent command human rights. Refugees who do not enjoy a democratic citizenship may be overlooked even if they are the ones that are in need of the protection by human rights (UN 2). Balibar argues that it becomes impossible to protect human rights when it demands democratic citizenship, and therefore citizen's right should be organized beyond the membership in one community (Balibar 2001:28).

Drawing on Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' and referring to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999), Balibar states that nation-states are heterogeneous communities already consisting of difference, where people have to live next to one another. Meaning that people can neither fully unite in cultural ideals nor deviate because then they would risk 'mutual destruction'. Given the idea that the world consist of heterogeneous imagined communities, the human population is forced to tolerate each other's existence' (Balibar 2001:28).

Even though tolerance has become one of the most significant values within the liberal democratic society, the meaning of it has been widely disputed. Given the condition of a heterogeneous – multicultural – society, toleration is needed in order to coexist with people who have other ideas about what is good and bad. The concept tolerance has emerged and developed from a multicultural view within liberalism. The distinction between tolerance and intolerance assumes a predetermined understanding of what is good and bad (Heinö 2015: 16, 32; Heinö 2009: 198). The definition of tolerance does not in itself request a value ground. However, the practice of toleration requires a combination of cognitive dissonance and social acceptance (Habermas 2004: 10). Hence, we can only tolerate what we have already rejected – we tolerate something we do not like (Heinö 200): 198). Andrew Jason Cohens defines an act of tolerance as: "an agent's intentional and principled refraining from interfering with an opposed other (or their behaviour etc) in situations of diversity, where the agent believes she has the power to interfere" (Cohens 2004: 69). What is advocated, can not

simultaneously be tolerated – for example, people advocating immigration are not in need of tolerance since they already accept it, and in contrast, people advocating reduced immigration may have to tolerate generous immigration, if that is carried out. This implies that tolerance can first be practiced when a society comprises of practitioner and values that 'we' do not like – it is a prerequisite of its existence (Heinö 2009: 198).

2.3   Historical review over Sweden's national identity

As a national Self, Sweden has often identified itself as more humane than other countries in the world. Sweden has showed more solidarity, openness and tolerance than other countries – this has been the prevailing self-image among many politicians (Demker & Malmström 1999: 153; Legrain 2008: 36). The party programme of the Social Democrats in 1990 stated that Sweden and the Social Democrats had "built a more humane society than perhaps anywhere else" (Johansson 2001:8).

The humanitarian discourse has been the dominant one in Sweden for the last four decades. The humanitarian self-image has not least been evident within the immigration discourse. Immigration has most often been discussed in moral terms and politicians have adopted the humanitarian language. The dominant strategy of Swedish immigration policy has built on visionary rhetoric advocating a better world, moral obligations and the need of tolerance (Heinö 2015:16; Legrain 2008: 36). As prime minister and leader of 'Alliansen', Fredrik Reinfeldt stated that there was as much space in Sweden as one can imagine, and further asserted that those who argue that the country is full have to show were it is full. This statement clearly exemplifies an adoption of the humanitarian language (Heinö 2015:16).

Sweden has been supporters of universal norms and human rights. The Swedish refugee policy has built on principles of international solidarity (Demker & Malmström 1999: 153). Values such as solidarity and tolerance have been connected to an international commitment, which has resulted in a generous

immigration policy that has been perceived as natural (Demker & Malmström 1999: 148,154).

But it was not until after the Second World War as the humanitarian discourse entered the political arena. As a result of the implementation of humane immigration policies after the war, a new openness to the world occurred and humanitarian ideals became part of the Swedish self-image (Heinö 2015:33). Discrimination was replaced by a support of equal rights, as the awareness of the unfavourable conditions for migrants and refugees grew. As the first country to give non-citizens voting right, Sweden was pioneering within policies that promoted equal rights (Heinö 2015:33-34). A sense of being one of the most modern countries in the world thus formed the national self-image after the Second World War. The feeling was founded on a belief in the own superiority of development – Sweden was prominent within technology, science, aid and equality. The belief in the own superiority led to the assumption that other countries should measure themselves against Sweden in order to develop. Other European countries were regarded as lagging behind (Johansson 2001:8,14-15).

The end of modernity meant the end of superiority, which became evident when Sweden joined the European Union. However, the egalitarian features became more distinct in comparison with other aristocratic European countries and values such as tolerance and democracy were advocated (Johansson 2001: 16).

Despite the humanitarian ideals, Sweden has a long history of being a homogeneous nation-state and a short history of being a country of immigration and multiculturalism (Heinö 2015:23). As a result of homogeneity, people have lacked a sense of common threats. Due to common values and homogeneity there have been a willingness to believe people of good, but cast suspicion of deviant behaviour (Heinö 2015:32; Johansson 2001:13). Nevertheless, this does not imply that Sweden has not been a country of immigration, or minorities – Sweden is no longer ethnically homogenous (Legrain 2008: 36). However, the Swedish nation-state has throughout history been striving for assimilation, rather than multiculturalism, and thus been able to maintain a relatively homogenous population (Hettne et al. 2006: 224).

Most researchers agree on the impact of the Swedish 'folkhemmet', in order to understand the national identity as well as immigration policies conducted in

Sweden throughout history (Hettne et al. 2006; Heinö 2015; Johansson et al. 2001; Legrain 2008; Westberg 2003;). The concept of 'Folkhemmet', represents the political construction of the Swedish welfare state. At the time of the building of 'folkhemmet', Sweden was one of the world's most ethnic homogeneous societies. Norms that still characterize Sweden were conceived within the construction and the political implementation of 'folkhemmet'. Since the building of 'folkhemmet', immigration, multiculturalism and racism have been contentious topics in Sweden and have been met by ambivalence from politicians (Heinö 2015: 7-8). The political idea behind 'folkhemmet' was constructed and implemented by The Social Democrats and the party leader Per Albin Hansson. However, politicians with another political affiliation have also represented and been users of the word 'folkhemmet' earlier in history (Hettne et al. 2006; Heinö 2015: 7.8; Westberg 2003:39).

When the concept was adopted by the Social Democrats it became to represent equality, solidarity and political/social rights as well as the creation of a social safety net (Legrain 2008: 36; Westberg 2003:39). It was built around a vision of equality with influences of nationalism, such that the nation should comprise of a single and uniformed people (Heinö 2015:33). A desire to unify the nation and solve the social problems has always been prominent in Sweden (Johansson 2001:10). Egalitarian ideals have entailed policies of solidarity, constructed for the poor and have thus entrenched the welfare state. Safety has been priority – the society has ensured all citizens protection. A precondition for the welfare state has also been a homogenous society where everyone works and behaves well (Johansson 2001: 11). Nationalism has been considered as essential, but only if combined with internationalism (Johansson 2001:10). However, research shows how nationalism through out history has been perceived as the antithesis of internationalism, which pinpoint the paradoxical relationship between humanitarianism and nationalism (Brattström 2001:175).

Although it was never outspoken, the Swedish 'folkhemmet' was supposed and formed for ethnic Swedes (Hettne et al. 2006: 400). The forced sterilizations of eugenic reasons have it origins in 'folkhemmet', and have caused people to questioning the humanity of the welfare project (Johansson 2001: 15).

Research on the relationship between the welfare state and immigration has asserted that the relationship contains a problematic paradox. This paradox has

been presented as welfare chauvinism – refugees and migrants are perceived as burdens, and compete with the citizens about the scarce resources provided by the welfare stat (Boräng 2015: 217). Sweden has been influenced by welfare chauvinism, although it has been camouflaged with rhetoric based on solidarity (Hettne et al. 2006: 218). Philippe Legrain asserts that the Swedish welfare state partly hampers the benefits of migration (Legrain 2008:41).

Forced migration has throughout history challenged the welfare state's claims of solidarity (Boräng 2015: 219). Within theories about welfare chauvinism it is asserted that forced migration has compelled states to choose between showing solidarity and protect the capacity of the welfare system. The ambition to protect the welfare state has resulted in restrictive immigration policies. The welfare state has, on the other hand, been described to have a moral obligation to help those people who are in vulnerable situations – showing solidarity (Boräng 2015: 221). Boräng asserts that: "[…] accepting forced migrants is an act of solidarity which shares many features with the everyday tasks of the welfare state" (Boräng 2015: 221). Other studies also assert that there is no contradiction between the welfare state and a multicultural society (Legrain 2008: 38). Boräng argues that immigration does not have to be a challenge for the welfare state:

> "[…] [S]tates that have made a strong commitment to protect the well-being of individuals may simply be more likely to extend that commitment also to non-citizens in need of protection. Solidarity, then, could become state business in more than one way" (Boräng 2015: 222).

Studies show how the welfare state includes non-citizens within the concept of solidarity but also how the welfare state makes a distinction between 'us', citizens, and 'them', refugees and migrants (Boräng 2015: 222). Since the welfare state has been said to be dependant on social solidarity, some research shows that a multicultural society challenges the social (cohesion) solidarity and thus the welfare state – however other claim that there is no trade-off between immigration and solidarity (Legrain 2008: 37).

Thus, theories about welfare chauvinism stresses how the welfare state in order to protect the system leads to restrictive immigration as well as the opposite – the welfare state embeds solidarity which may be expanded to non-citizens seeking refuge, and thus lead to more generous immigration (Boräng 2015: 221).

3   Theory and Method

In this chapter I will outline epistemological considerations and the ideas behind Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory as well as methodological issues such as the procedure, demarcations and material. In the section 'discourse theory', I will outline the theory continuously with the methodological procedure. Questions of theory and method are developed and explored continuously together since theory and methodology are interconnected in discourse analysis (Grebäck 2015; Howarth 2000:11).

3.1   Epistemological considerations

When adapting discourse analysis as a method, there are some fundamental epistemological approaches that have to be considered. Scholars, drawing on findings from constructivism, claim that there is no such thing as an objective reality, but rather the 'reality' should be understood as a construction granted (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 2). However, this does not imply that the world does not exist out there, but rather that an objective truth does not exist (Torfing 2005: 13).

The discourse analysis developed by Laclau and Mouffe is influenced and developed from post-structuralism – a subcategory of social constructivism. Within post-structuralism it is assumed that language constructs and shapes, rather than reflects, the social reality (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 25). The way we talk about phenomena is integrated and merged with how it actually is. In other words, the way an actor or agency talks about a phenomenon thus constructs and becomes the social and political reality. However, neither actors nor their underlying motives are vital in the analysis of discourses. The importance is which imperative norms that are created, and how they are shaped. Thus, discourse analysis comprises of both a theoretical point of view, and a

methodological approach – where it is used as a tool to analyse texts (Bergström & Boréus 2005:305-306, 326; Grebäck 2016). The meaning of language and words can never be fully fixed, as it is contingent, changeable and dependant on the relation between words within a specific discourse. The aim of discourse analysis is to systematically describe how words may gain fixed meaning and become naturalised (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 11, 25, 31, 36).

Critics of post-structuralism question how it is possible with multiple 'truths' – they assert that it will be impossible to recognize negative as opposed to positive. However, within post-structuralism, the aim is not to assert what is true or not, but rather to study how representations come to construct power relations – e.g. identities – and hence our understanding of the world (Grebäck 2016; Orgad 2012:23-24).

3.2   Discourse theory

The discourse analysis developed by Laclau and Mouffe's is termed discourse theory. The theory not only comprises language, but rather includes the whole social field – for example, political decisions are regarded as discursive practices which acquire meaning in relation to other decisions or acts (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 11, 25, 31, 36). The abandonment of a distinction between discursive and non-discursive is what distinguishes discourse theory from other theorists advocating post-structuralism, as Foucault for example (Torfing 2005: 9).

A normative perspective is embedded in almost all kind of discourse analysis, meaning that a critical position in relation to the research object is taken. Those power relations created by discourses have to be analysed in order to understand how discursive production entails to maintain knowledge, identities, social relations, norms and values. These discursive categorises are not to be treated as objective truths but instead products of history and contingent social constructions. It is partly the aim of discourse analysis to deconstruct those categorises that we take for granted (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 2, 5, 48). As discursive categories are products of history, the analysis must include the historical conditions for the formation of a national identity (Torfing 2005: 10). Hence, the thesis comprises of a historical review, where I try to identify those

discourses and key signs that have been distinguished for a Swedish national identity throughout history. In order to study a possible reversal of the discursively inscribed hierarchy between humanitarian and nationalism, I try to identify how the meaning of discourses and key signs may have changed (Torfing 2005: 10).

The target of the analysis in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is the *discursive production of meaning* (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 33). By adopting discourse theory it is possible to analyse how discourses are constituted and how they change. When applying the analysis tool derived from the theoretical framework established by Laclau and Mouffe certain concepts are vital – they will be explained in this chapter in detail. The representation of discourses and identities can be understood through a logic of simplification of the social field that Laclau and Mouffe calls equivalence, and can be analysed by *chains of equivalence* (Laclau 2014: 21).

Jorgensen and Phillips mean that according to Laclau and Mouffe, a *discourse* is understood as "the fixation of meaning within a particular domain" (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002:26). Torfing, on the other hand, interprets Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of discourses as "relational systems of signification" (Torfing 2005: 14) – which is a similar definition. Discourse theory suggests that discourses are constituted and transformed by *articulations* (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 30). Referred by David Howarth, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) states that an articulatory practice is "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice" (Howarth 2005: 326).

A discourse consists of *signs* – words – and certain fixed *nodal points*, which are specific signs that form the discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 26). Signs contain different meanings, which they acquire in relation to each other and the nodal point (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 26). It is possible to study discourses just because signs are understood in every day life as if they "[…] had a permanently fixed and unambiguous meaning in a total structure" (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 33). In opposite, discourses are changeable just because they are constructions of signs, which may bear different meanings (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 25). Nodal points are in themselves *empty signs* – they acquire no meaning before they are inserted in a discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 28). By identifying the nodal

point around which a Swedish identity is organised it is possible to identify which collective subject positions that are relevant in the discourse. To be able to trace the meaning of Sweden/Swedish, the nodal point must be equated and contrasted to other signs (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 47; Bergström & Boréus 2005:337). Within different discourses the same nodal point can be defined differently. These signs, which bear different meanings between discourses, are termed *floating signifiers* (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 30). Empty signs and floating signifiers are central in the operation of chains of equivalence (Laclau 2014: 21).

By exploring the floating signifiers it is possible to trace the struggle between discourses over the meaning of signs. By analysing discourses it is not only possible to identify the floating signifiers, but also signs with relatively fixed meanings. Hence, a potential competition about the definition of the Swedish national identity between the humanitarian discourse and the nationalistic discourse may be traceable if the floating signifiers are identified. A potential transformation by any of the discourses is also possible to identify (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 30). By excluding all other possible meanings of a sign it is possible to fix the meaning of a sign. It is not until all signs are fixed in relation to each other, the discourse is established as a totality, which de facto is an impossible reality according to Laclau and Mouffe (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 26, 39).

The excluded, potential, meanings constitute the *field of discursivity*. Since a discourse is a unity of meaning, signs that have a different meaning within another discourse are excluded to the field of discursivity through articulation (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 27). Which signs and discourses that can be dismissed to the field of discursivity, have been questioned. Since discourses are constituted by the exclusion of other discourses, they will always be targets of change – the signs can always gain another meaning. The concept of *element* explains how signs yet without fixed meaning may bear multiple meanings. A *closure* – a temporary stop – is established when elements transform into signs with fixed meaning – *moments*. However, since these stops are only temporary, the discourse can always change by resistance from meanings within the field of discursivity (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 28).

Because signs bear different meanings within different discourses they must be placed next to another sign in order to gain meaning. The sign *Swedish* do not

gain meaning until it is placed within a discourse, adjacent to another sign. The meaning of the word Sweden/Swedish is depending on which word Sweden/Swedish is put in relation to – i.e. the meaning of Sweden differ between several discourses depending on which signs that are positioned next to Sweden. The sign Sweden is both a nodal point – one of the most important signs in the Swedish national identity discourse – an element – it may carry different meanings within different discourses – and a floating signifier – different discourses struggle to empower it with their meaning, for example a humanitarian discourse contra a nationalistic discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 28; Bergström & Boréus 2005: 337).

Floating signifiers, such as *the nation*, *the country* and *Sweden*, and other signs that ascribe the society as a totality, is also termed *myths*. Myths are represented spaces, in contrast to represented subjects (e.g. man/men and woman/women) (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 39). An identity is established through linked nodal points in chains of equivalence – in identity construction these nodal points are termed *master signifiers*. I choose to use the terms nodal point and floating signifier. Since meaning most often is constructed through equivalence, as well as the logic of difference, the sign Sweden must preferably both equals and differ from another sign, when identifying the position of a Swedish identity (Torfing 2005: 14). By analysing the construction of identity based on chains of equivalence it is possible to identify the boundaries of the discourse, and thus grasp which political actions that are accommodated within the discourse. It is also possible to trace the coherence of a Swedish national identity (Bergström & Boréus 2005: 337).

3.3   Analytical procedure

In the chapter 'previous research' I identified the characteristic of humanitarianism and nationalism and further showed how the discourses had been prominent in the Swedish identity. The material will be analysed based on these discursive identity constructions. Although other discourses might have built the Swedish identity, humanitarianism and nationalism appear as characteristic. Especially the humanitarian discourse seems to have been indicative regarding

immigration over the last decades. These two discourses provide a ground for the analysis of the empirical material. The humanitarian discourse has constructed an idea of Sweden as a protector of *human rights*. The nationalistic discourse has raised an idea of Sweden as a protector of the *welfare state*. By having identified these nodal points in each of the discourses it might be possible to trace how they potentially are linked together into a more comprehensive identity formation by tracing them in the empirical material.

The signs, which will be identified in the empirical material, might also be elements, which may bear different meanings within different discourses, and floating signifiers, which different discourses struggle to empower with their meaning. I thus examine how the Swedish Government understands signs, and how the signs in turn construct the chain of equivalence.

When identifying signs, nodal points and floating signifiers in the material, I will first look for the following signs: Sweden/Swedish, we/our, the people/population, the citizen, the country, the nation and the human. Previous research argues that these signs are the starting points in a chain of equivalence constructing a national identity, which is why I will start to identify them in the texts and further examine which signs they are linked to – i.e. which signs are used to describe Sweden (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 26; Reyes 2005: 244). I do this by examining how Sweden, the Self, is depicted and also how the Other is depicted – i.e. what is Sweden put in opposition to.

It is possible that both the humanitarian discourse and the nationalistic discourse appear in the material, as well as it is possible that only one of them or none of them are manifested. In order to examine whether a struggle between the discourses are manifested I will try to identify the floating signifiers – it might be possible to trace an identity crisis or change if I find those floating signifiers that the discourses struggle to empower with their meaning. Finally I will relate how the identified chain of equivalence relates to previous research and the historical context. The chain of equivalence manifested in the material may provide an understanding of how the political decisions were possible.

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3.4   Methodological considerations

Since I am investigating national identity I choose to apply Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework – the logic of equivalence is well recognised and established as a method for analysing identities (Bergström & Boréus 2005:336).

The chosen time period, 2015-10-30 to 2015-12-19, is relevant to study since the immigration flow had become greater at this point in time, and the Government then chose to announce and implement certain measures. The chosen time period from which the material is selected is very short. However, since the aim is to examine how the specific decisions during the fall was justified, there is no additional value in analysing material long before or after the decisions. Instead of having selected a longer time period, I choose to focus on the specific decisions and base the analysis of them on historical conditions. I argue that the historical context gives both a wider and deeper understanding for the preconditions for such decisions. It became clear that politicians considered the situation as unique when it was labelled as a crisis (Küchler 2015). Whether the refugee situation was a crisis or not is not relevant in this thesis – since discourse theory claim that the truth does not exist – but the labelling is relevant – since discourse theory argues that language and action create a kind of imagery truth (Waever 2005: 35).

The historical review showed that the humanitarian discourse as well as the nationalistic discourse had been prominent in a Swedish immigration discourse throughout history, whereof I have chosen to analyse these categories in the empirical material. Nevertheless, this does not imply that I conduct a deductive method – I still let the material display how the Self is represented and who the representation indicates that the Other is. For example, it is not my aim to study how, the national Self, might be represented in terms of cultural activities or such – the midsummer discourse might constitute a Swedish identity, but I do not strive to map the 'whole' identity. Even though Sweden's identity discourse is not solely constructed of nationalism and humanitarianism – through the process and representation of immigration – these discourse are important to study regarding the immigration policies and the communication around the refugee situation in

the autumn of 2015, since the refugee discourse provides a context for the relation between humanitarianism and nationalism (Herzog 2009: 187).

I regard the discourses as mutually exclusive regarding the Swedish view of immigration. This does not imply that they are opposites, rather that they presumably cover all kind of standpoints regarding how to respond to immigration and how Sweden positions itself in relation to immigration – the national identity.

Finally – it is neither possible, nor what I aim at, to formulate an objective result. I am aware of my own participation in the discursive production of hegemonic structures as I aim to investigate such categories. When choosing to analyse national identity, I take part in the discursive process of categories such as the nation-state. However, I strive to be open about my interpretations and how these, in turn, are part of a bigger context, or discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 49).

3.4.1 Material

The choice of material is based on the research problem – the puzzle. When choosing material it is important to put the problem in centre. Since the announcement of limiting immigration on the 24th of November is the focus of the thesis, this date provides the base for the selection of material (Howarth 2005: 337). The chosen material is representative for how the Government represented the situation around that time and how the decisions came to be justified. The material thus constitutes of documents that were released on the Governments website www.regeringen.se, articles in the newspaper, the announcement delivered by Stefan Löfven and Åsa Romson at a press conference, status updates on Facebook, interviews and official speeches. The immigration discourse as empirical material is relevant since a Swedish identity, to a large extent, has been based on how to accommodate refugees and migrants. The Swedish identity has been constructed, in particular, vis-à-vis migrants since the 50's (Heinö 2015:33). The immigration discourse is also significant in the study of humanitarianism and nationalism (Herzog 2009: 187).

4 Analysis

In this chapter I seek to explore, by using discourse theory, how the Government represents Sweden. The analysis of the material is based on the discursive production of the humanitarian discourse and nationalistic discourse. I seek to explore whether and how they interact with each other into a more comprehensive identity. Those words that I consider being signs, nodal points and floating signifiers that construct the chain of equivalence are italicized, both in quotes and the analysis. Information, which I consider being vital, but is not quotations, is written within parentheses. Furthermore, I have translated the quotes by my self from Swedish into English.

4.1 The nationalistic discourse

The chain of equivalence identified in the Swedish nationalistic discourse is:

Sweden – regulated immigration – no racism – good reception – responsibility – safe society – takes care – egalitarian – no one left behind – safety net – solidarity – the welfare state – opportunity to contribute – do one's parts – employees – high standard of living – good establishment – opportunity to start new life – opportunity to learn Swedish – tolerance – equality

At the press conference on the 24th of November, the Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and the Deputy Minister Åsa Romson announced restrictive measures in order to "create breathing space for the Swedish refugee reception" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). The actual decision itself is a discursive practice and acquires meaning in relation to the status quo before. The decisions to limit immigration and implement ID controls appear as acts taken in favour for a national agenda, not in favour for a humanitarian one. When Löfven is talking about Sweden's humane refugee policy, he declares that:

> We have had these rules for a long time [see humane refugee policy] and it has worked, but when the refugee crisis increases this much, then something entirely different happens. We need to relate to reality (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

The status quo is a humane refugee policy (generous immigration), according to Löfven – the decision to limit immigration thus appears as a discursive change towards a nationalistic discourse. Löfven represents the situation as a crisis, and when Sweden is facing this crisis a humane refugee policy is no longer possible. The citation illustrates how the Government creates a reality that is equal to a crisis.

The nationalistic discourse appears very distinct and clearly in the material. On the 12th of November when the decision to reintroduce internal border controls was announced, the Government states that: "More refugees are now trying to reach Sweden than ever before" and "the present situation poses acute challenges to vital functions in society" (Regeringen 2015-11-12). Due to the situation the domestic security is under threat, according to the Government.

> The Police Authority considers that in the present situation, public order and domestic security are under threat. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency points to major strains on several vital public services (Regeringen 2015-11-12).

Thus, the Government declares that the nation – the domestic security – is under threat due to the stream of refugees – the foreign. This illustrates how the construction of the nation is done. The stream of refugees threatens the domestic security. Let us assume a world without borders (or a Europe without borders), then the stream of people would not be a threat to domestic security, because there would not exist a category such as domestic. It clearly shows how the imagination of a national Self becomes possible when representing a community as threatened due to the stream of people from other communities.

Löfven asserts in his Christmas speech on the 19th of December that:

> I am a Social Democrat. I believe that a nation is more than a group of people in a geographic area. It is a community where we feel *responsible* for one another, where we support each other in life's setbacks, and lays the foundation for each other's successes (Löfven 2015-12-19).

The collective community is represented as significant, and the community is joined together through *responsibility* – responsibility is here understood as a link between citizens, i.e. national. It is evident that it is the core function of the nation-state that is threatened – the welfare – according to the Government. At the press conference Romson states that:

> Many municipal services are overstretched, and they are facing major challenges. Further work of the Government must prioritise the protection of the *welfare* activities, which the Government also intends to meet (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

Due to the crisis – huge streams of refugees – many municipal services are strained, according to Romson, and the *welfare* activities are considered threatened – they need protection. The welfare is prioritised over generous immigration polices, and hence the interests of the nation is a priority before humanitarian actions. The significance of the *welfare* is recurrent – it is obvious that it is a nodal point in the Swedish identity discourse. The overstretched system caused by the stream of refugees seems to be the problem. Romson states in an interview with Swedish radio that: "Focus […] must be on increasing and improving the reception capacity – 900 people shall not share 6 toilets in Sweden (Romson 2015-11-28). Sweden is here represented as a country where it is *not* acceptable with a *low standard of living*.

Furthermore, the Government represents Sweden as *tolerant* and it seems to be a nodal point in the Swedish identity discourse. Toleration is understood as something that is achieved by prioritising the welfare – thus toleration acquires meaning within a national setting, not within the humanitarian discourse. Romson asserts that:

> Sweden stands for *tolerance*, and a need for efforts to combat *racism* and *discrimination* follows from a huge refugee reception. In accordance with that, the Government will, among other things, protect the services provided by the *welfare* state and provide recourses to the municipals. We conduct an offensive to *combat racism* and *discrimination* and to increase the capacity of the Swedish reception system in order to provide *good reception* and *good establishment* (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

Toleration for refugees is represented as characteristic for Sweden but is only achievable through the *welfare* state. It is stated that, what follows from a huge

refugee reception might be *racism* and *discrimination*, which is *not* something that Sweden stands for. Löfven states in his Christmas speech that: "The wave of hatred against the society's most vulnerable, as we have seen during the year, vandalism, threats, arson against our asylum centres – it is disgusting, pitiful, abominable" (Löfven 2015-12-19). He then states that we have to combat this hatred and racism (Löfven 2015-12-19). In order to decrease racism and discrimination *good reception* and *good establishment* is needed. This implies that in order to achieve what Sweden is represented as – tolerant – the welfare system is necessary. It also appears that the welfare services are necessary for the integration process – thus the integration/assimilation process is vital in order to achieve toleration, which appears as paradoxical since toleration requires differences, according to research. The welfare is in need of protection due to the huge stream of refugees, and thus toleration is achieved by limiting immigration. Löfven states that:

> Sweden's strength lies in being an *equal* and *egalitarian* society; which, not despite, but because of its *solidarity* and *tolerance*, is rich, modern and a brilliant leader in the world's development (Löfven 2015-12-19).

Sweden is represented as having moral superiority and uniqueness, and due to our features as having *solidarity* and *tolerance* we can combat racism – however it is stated that we might not be able to show tolerance and solidarity if the welfare services are being cut. Löfven states that we will get an unequal society if the refugee crisis results in 'shadow communities' and if we do not prioritise the welfare:

> It is not possible to lower some wages, without lowering everyone's wages eventually. It is not possible to abolish the welfare for some, without damaging the general welfare. It is not possible to attack the Swedish model, without damaging what makes Sweden strong" (Löfven 2015-12-19).

It here becomes clear that if the welfare is beginning to deteriorate, then the nation-state Sweden, and the identity – tolerance and solidarity – is under threat. Löfven also stresses what happens if not all have the same access to the welfare services – "inequality" (Löfven 2015-12-19) – thus nodal points in a Swedish identity discourse seem to be *equality* and *egalitarian*. The importance of integration (or assimilation) is stressed and Löfven states that people should be

provided "not just shelter" but rather "a home". People shall be able to study and make a living "not as second class citizens – rather as equals". He states that we owe them that, but they are also "obliged the Swedish society" (Löfven 2015-12-19). Romson declares in the interview with the Swedish Radio that: "After all, we want people who come here to be able to – if they are not able to return [...] – establish themselves and help build our society" (Romson 205-11-28). Löfven states at the press conference that we have to give people "the best chance *to enter* (see integrate) our Swedish society" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). This also illustrates how the Swedish society is represented as ours – however, we do offer people to enter if they integrate to the Swedish.

Toleration within the nationalistic discourse is thus a means, which is required before Other people becomes like the Self. Toleration, is understood as having tolerance for the time that it takes for people, that is not like 'us', to become like 'us' – i.e. toleration as represented here, is not equal to toleration for generous immigration. When representing Sweden as tolerant, it assumes that there is a difference between the Self, the citizens, and the Other, the refugees. Given the theoretical idea behind toleration, it supposes that we do not have toleration for people not being like us, but we have toleration for the fact that it takes time for people to establish themselves and become like us.

Furthermore, the Government represents refugees as people who are in need of care, and hence Sweden is positioned as a nation-state that *takes care* of those people who are in the country. Romson states that: "Sweden has [...] received more asylum seekers than ever before, 80.000 in just two months. In a very short period, it is very many people today who have to be *taken care of* in a good manner [...]" (Regeringen 2014-11-24). *To take care of* can be understood as the same as good establishment and integration – thus *good establishment* seems to be a nodal point. Because of the representation of the refuge as someone who the state must take care of, it appears as obvious and natural that the welfare services must be protected since the refugees are in need of the services – refugees are not able to take care of themselves. The function of the welfare state thus becomes legitimate, since people living in Sweden are represented as being in need of its services. A huge reception of refugees threatens the system of the welfare state and since these services are represented as crucial, to both citizens and refugees, the limitation of immigration seems to be the only solution.

Thus, the integration process – the establishment – taking place within the welfare system seems crucial – it is important that people who enter the Swedish society provides good establishment in order to integrate into the society. The welfare state is thus not understood as a multicultural society. Refugees are understood as resources, not just receivers, but they are resources for the Swedish society and welfare state – not resources in order to achieve a more multicultural society. Löfven asserts on his Facebook page that: "[…] the people who come to our country should get a *decent reception*" and "[T]hose people who come to Sweden from war and persecution should be given the opportunity to *contribute, do their part*, and live a good life in *safety*" (Löfven 2015-11-24). A decent reception – can also be understood as good establishment – is represented as *possibility to contribute, do their part* and *safe reception*. This statement represents Sweden as a country where everyone should be contributing to the society. A good society then, is represented as a *safe society*. A decent reception is not represented as equal to the possibility to maintain cultural features. Löfven does not state that people should be given the possibility to preserve and develop their cultural diversity within the Swedish society – multiculturalism is thus not the goal. In a speech about the establishment of newly arrived on the 4th of November at the Swedish 'Quality Fair' Löfven declares that:

> We have a great need of manpower. Within ten years, roughly 500.000 new employees will be recruited in the *welfare* system. Many of those new employees are found among those who now come to Sweden. Even today, the welfare system would not survive a single day without all the *employees* who have come to Sweden from other countries (Löfven 2015-11-04)

The refugees and migrants are thus also resources for the welfare state, and become *employees*, when integrated into the Swedish welfare system. The importance of the integration process becomes evident when Löfven stresses "*education in Swedish*" and the importance of "*doing their part* "(Löfven 2015-11-04). He also states that Sweden is facing a demographic challenge, which in turn shows that multiculturalism stands in contrast to the Swedish welfare state. But if the integration process of the refugees into the Swedish society is conducted well, we give people "an *opportunity to start new lives* in our country" (Löfven 2015-11-04). Thus, Sweden does not give people an opportunity to maintain their already started lives. Löfven states that: "The refugee situation does

not move the Government's focus away from job, schools, and welfare. It is just the opposite. It enhances it" (Löfven 2015-11-04). Immigration is certainly represented as an opportunity and resource, but in moderation. Löfven asserts in a speech that, "the immigration will be a great asset to the Swedish labour market" (Löfven 2015-12-19). The goal of the welfare state is not new, according to Löfven, but rather,

> […] firmly anchored in *solidarity*, *freedom* and *equality*. It is a society where everyone gets the chance, with a school that is *egalitarian*, where *no one is left behind,* neither held back, with a care system which takes great care of the children and the older, and a *safety net* that makes the transition easier in life – which does not expel people, but is there to help (Löfven 2015-11-04).

Here it is obvious that *solidarity*, *freedom* and *equality* are achieved through the welfare system. The *egalitarian* ideals become evident when Löfven talks about that *no one should be left behind*. Solidarity is linked to the egalitarian ideals within the society – thus, solidarity in this sense is not linked to international solidarity, rather it is understood as solidarity between citizens, as well as between the state and the population (akin to the meaning of responsibility). Hence, the scope of the concept *solidarity,* in this sense, comprises of the national – it seems to be a nodal point in the Swedish identity discourse that acquires meaning within the nationalistic discourse.

4.2 The Other

In an interview with Dagens Nyheter on the 30th of October, the Foreign Minister Margot Wallström states that: "We think that a generous society is a good society to live in, but it is also a society which has to work. We need to hold the society *together*, that is our main *responsibility* (Dagens Nyheter 2015-10-30). She thus represents generous immigration as opposite to a functional society. The Government's main *responsibility* is to prioritize the *welfare* system. *Responsibility* appears as a nodal point in the immigration discourse. Romson states that the Government is ready to,

> […] take *responsibility* for Sweden – take *responsibility* for the Sweden where refugees should be able to obtain protection according to international law, in which immigrants should be able to *establish* themselves and be part of building a strong Sweden where the *establishment* must function (Regeringen 205-11-24).

To take responsibility is thus to ensure good establishment – a similar understanding as the one represented by Löfven. Another sign that is used many times to represent the situation is *unsustainable*. The Government claims that important community functions are not able to handle the strains. Authorities are sounding the alarm that the situation is,

> "*unsustainable* to people seeking asylum, for the staff, but also for all those people who should feel confidence in the community functions. Now more people have to seek asylum and be provided protection in *other EU countries*" (Regeringen 2014-11-24).

Löfven states that the unsustainable situation is possible to handle if Sweden does what it is best at – *collaborating*: "If we *collaborate* for real, there are few things that we can not do, and we will get through this too" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). Sweden is thus represented as a nation, which must be *sustainable* and where one of the prominent features is *collaboration*.

When the Government talks about *responsibility* and *collaboration* it appears obvious that Sweden is positioned in opposition to other EU countries – thus, the Other which Sweden's identity is differenced to is other member countries of Europe. Löfven states that: "No one can hesitate about Sweden's will and ambitions to take *responsibility* for people who are forced to flee from war and conflicts. We have received 80.000 people for the past two months. It is by far the most asylum seekers per capita in the EU" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). Romson asserts that she has greater faith in EU's capacity for *cooperation* "than that we should close the border, throw away the key, and say that each country must fend for themselves" and that "we need to urge European countries […] to stand up for the *humanitarian civil society* […]" (Romson 2015-11-28). She states that the international asylum law is threatened and therefore it is important that "Sweden still stands up for international conventions, we shall stand up for European law for humanitarian purposes" (Romson 2015-11-28).

It thus follows that Sweden stands up for *humanity* and is the country that has *done most* of all EU countries. Löfven states that:

> Sweden has become the country that has taking the *greatest responsibility* of all countries, relative to our population, while many other countries are *doing very, very little*. The EU must take control of its external borders and each country must, of course, help to maintain that order, it is a prerequisite for the free movement within Europe. If all of the EU's 28 member countries are involved and take responsibility, then we can handle such a mass refugee situation in a completely different way than is done today (Regeringen 2014-11-24).

The other countries are said to *do very little*, in relation to Sweden, which implies that Sweden is represented as *doing very much* and commits the greatest responsibility. That Sweden is taking *control over its borders* is thus a good act proving that Sweden takes *responsibility,* in contrast to other EU countries. Romson asserts in the interview with Swedish Radio that Sweden's receiving system has not been good enough as a result of "the paralysis in the European Union" and further she states that, "our European neighbours have not done what we fought very hard for them to do, that is taking more responsibility" (Romson 2015-11-28). However, she also states that the Swedish reception system has been "fantastic" but the "capacity is reached" (Romson 2015-11-28). Löfven asserts that: "There is a very large understanding that Sweden must react, and a respect for what Sweden has done and is doing in refugee contexts" (Regeringen 2014-11-24).

The decisions are represented as great acts, which deserve respect, and the decisions hence become naturalised. By comparing Sweden with other EU countries, it becomes possible for the Government to represent Sweden as humane. This proves the significance of the Other. Sweden will always be able to claim humanity – the position as the good one – as long as other countries are represented as doing less – it is a relative relationship. If Sweden was standing alone, there would be no other to compare to – no worse.

The Other are also to some extent other political parties in Sweden. Romson writes on her Facebook page that the temporary residence permits for children may cause unsafely feelings, but have nevertheless important difference in relation to the two main opposition parties, who do not even want to respect

international asylum law (Romson 2015-11-27). Temporary residence permits for children are hence defended and justified based on the Other's acts and opinions.

4.3 The humanitarian discourse

The chain of equivalence identified in the Swedish humanitarian discourse is:

Sweden – generous immigration – humane refugee policies – help and protect – responsibility – peace – moral obligation – compassionate – humane – solidarity – huge effort – doing very much – small country

It is in the representation of the Other as it appears clear that Sweden still is represented as standing for *humanity* and *solidarity*. The humanitarian discourse thus becomes distinct in the representation of the Other. In Löfven's Christmas speech, he says that: "EU must return to solidarity, only through joint solutions, we will develop forward" (Löfven 2015-12-19). It is pointed out that EU does not do anything and must return to solidarity. Sweden is thus represented as doing something and showing solidarity in relation to other EU countries. Löfven states at the press conference: "Sweden is a *small country* that makes a *huge effort*, and the Swedish people have been showing a great *solidarity*, and continues to do so at a difficult time, and what has been conducted is the largest refugee operation in modern history" (Regeringen 2014-11-24). The population is here represented as having great *solidarity*. The sign solidarity is as well used to describe Sweden and the Government – Löfven declares: "We have a very (very) strong heritage and identification for solidarity in our party (see the Social Democrats), thus this is difficult for both parties" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). Here solidarity is understood as showing solidarity for those people whom will not be able to seek asylum in Sweden now – a broad understanding of the concept with focus on international solidarity. He also asserts that:

> "We do have, and should have a *humane refugee policy*, it is important, people are fleeing. These are people – flesh and blood, our sisters and brothers, children – who are fleeing from war and oppression. In such a situation Sweden stands for *solidarity* towards those people" (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

Löfven asserts that the Government conducts a *humane refugee policy* and that Sweden stands for *solidarity*. Here it seems as humanity is to show international solidarity to people in need – people are fleeing from war and oppression – and to give people refuge is a moral obligation. The sign 'people' is here described with signs such as 'flesh', 'blood', 'sisters', 'brothers' and 'children' – i.e. refugees are understood as humans whom the Self, the Swedish people, are equal to. These people are our sisters and brothers and we consist of the same – flesh and blood. Here humanity and solidarity are represented as in the humanitarian discourse – emphasis on a common identity of being human. Romson states on her Facebook page that: "Countries such as our has a *responsibility*, in addition to *peace work*, also to *help and protect* these people (Romson 2015-11-27). Sweden is thus represented as having a *peace identity*, but also a *responsibility* to *protect refugees* – a *humanitarian responsibility*.

Romson asserts that she believes that the decision will "[…] create a shockwave in the *compassionate* Sweden" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). The Swedish population is thus represented as *humane* – being *compassionate*. However, it also indicates that the decisions do not interact with this humanity, because the decisions will cause a shockwave.

4.4   The Swedish identity - the paradoxical logic

The identified chain of equivalence constituting the Swedish national identity discourse is:

Sweden – small country – doing very much – huge effort – collaborating – sustainable – responsibility – humane refugee policy – regulated immigration – open – no racism – good reception – humane – safe society – takes care – egalitarian – no one left behind – safety net – solidarity – the welfare state – opportunity to contribute – do one's parts – employees – high standard of living – good establishment – citizenship – human rights – opportunity to start new life – opportunity to learn Swedish – tolerance – equality

It becomes evident that a humane refugee policy is not equal to generous immigration when Löfven describes what kind of global responsibility Sweden has:

> We work, here at home, with a *humane refugee policy – regulated immigration* – which in a *sustainable*, long-term sustainable way, can make sure that we can do the best both for the society and for people fleeing, and that the community has the opportunity to provide *jobs, housing and education* (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

A *humane refugee policy* is represented as *regulated immigration*, not as generous immigration as it is understood within the humanitarian discourse. The sign *humane* is here understood as *regulated* and *sustainable*, as well as 'jobs', 'housing' and 'educations' – the characteristic for the *welfare state*. To conduct humanity is then equal to the ability to provide those services that are given by the welfare state.

Romson writes on her Facebook page that the Green Party is needed more than ever since they fight for human rights and "these values are humanity's hope when our daily lives and our security is challenged" (Romson 2015-11-27). However, the Government stated that the security was challenged due to the stream of refugees, and thus human rights are represented as provided exclusively for people with citizenship.

Romson and Löfven assert that they adopt these measures because they believe in a humane refugee reception. Romson clarifies:

> We, in the Government, need to introduce this kind of measures, not least in order to ensure that Sweden continues to be a country that believes in *openness* and *regulated immigration*, with *good establishment*, that is resulting in a stronger society (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

Sweden is represented as a country that stands for *openness*. The sign openness is linked to *regulated immigration* and *good establishment*. Thus, openness is not understood as, openness to all people in need of Sweden's protection. ID checks, border controls and temporary residence permits can then be understood as measures in order to achieve an open society and regulated immigration, which in turn ensures good establishment.

Romson declares that the Swedish migration agency asserts that it is not "[…] humanitarian sustainable that 10 thousands of children are coming to our country without registering" and "the capacity in the reception system is simply insufficient and it is the Government's responsibility to act" (Romson 2015-11-27). In contrast to humanitarian responsibility as international, responsibility is here understood as national responsibility – responsibility to protect the system. The humanitarian responsibility as international is thus toned down in favour of the understanding of humanitarian responsibility as national.

At the press conference Romson starts to cry when she states that:

> We have in the recent past had a number of very tough debates in the party, around the reality image. But for the past few weeks I have become convinced that the best way to help my Green Party councillors is still to do something (Regeringen 2015-11-24).

In the radio interview Romson declares that Sweden understands that children need permanent residence. Then she explains that her eyes were filled with tears at the press conference on the 24th of November, when thinking of all the children coming to Sweden seeking refugee, without getting a permanent residence and hence will feel unsecure. She says that the decision to give just temporary residence permit to children is a horrible decision (Romson 2015-11-28). At the press conference on the 24th of November Romson asserts that: "This period in Sweden will be a pride for us when history is written. When authorities warn for the health and life of people, when Sweden can no longer secure a basic reception, well then more countries have to step forward" (Regeringen 2015-11-24). However, the reception system and the Green Party councillors, appear as more important to secure, than the children who are seeking refugee.

This logic is carried out within the nationalistic discourse – as soon as people arrive in Sweden they become an issue for the state. Refugees are thus understood as people who need and require those recourses provided by the welfare state, and compete with the citizens and other refugees about the recourses. If Sweden is no longer able to provide those recourses, the idea and the identity of the Swedish (welfare) nation-state fails. This is the same logic as that of toleration. Sweden is represented as tolerant, but if the society becomes too diverse (see multicultural) the risk of intolerance increase, and hence Sweden must integrate refugees fast

enough before tolerance is replaced by intolerance and the Swedish identity is destroyed. In order to integrate refugees fast enough immigration has to be reduced. The nodal point *welfare* acquires meaning within the discourse of nationalism. This as well applies to toleration – which occurs as puzzling since previous research indicates that toleration is a characteristic for the humanitarian discourse. These signs – characteristics – are represented as threatened by immigration.

There is an on going struggle between the discourse of nationalism and the discourse of humanitarianism about the meaning of the floating signifiers solidarity, humanity and responsibility. Solidarity and humanity are partly understood as international, and partly understood as national. The solidarity identity does not appear to be threatened by the streams of refugees. However, the meaning of solidarity is diverse. Sweden is represented as having embedded international solidarity – Sweden understands the difficulty for refugees – but when the stream threatened the welfare state, then the meaning of solidarity as international is replaced by a meaning of solidarity as national. The national solidarity is represented as an important means to achieve successful integration and establishment. Humane immigration policy is also understood as good establishment and equality, not as increased immigration. However, the humanitarian discourse struggles to empower it with the meaning of *compassionate*.

Löfven states in his Christmas speech that the welfare services have to work otherwise we get "a society torn apart. A society that is more fearful, insecure, where selfishness prevails over solidarity. That is not Sweden" (Löfven 2015-12-19). Solidarity is hence equal to a 'safe society', where 'no one feels fear', and where 'selfishness does not exist'. Solidarity is to provide welfare services to those people within Sweden in order to achieve equality – it is not to protect and offer citizenship to more people. The sign responsibility is also exposed to the discursive struggle between humanitarianism and nationalism. Responsibility is not used as much as 'responsibility to protect humans rights and those people who are victims of war' as it is used as a concept in order to justify the decisions – i.e. the decisions are represented as good acts because they prove that the Government takes responsibility of the nation and protects its citizens.

5   Conclusion

The analysis shows how a discursive struggle between the humanitarian discourse and the nationalistic discourse about the Swedish identity is manifested in the immigration discourse. The struggle mainly includes the floating signifiers: Solidarity, humanity/humane, and responsibility. This partly indicates an identity crisis, since the struggle is so evident. Sweden may still be able to claim humanity and solidarity as understood within the humanitarian discourse, since these values are put in comparison with the acts of other countries. However, the meaning of humanitarianism within the Swedish identity discourse is beginning to change – humanity is no longer equal to human rights, instead it refers to well-conducted integration. The humanitarian language is adjusted in order to justify the actions, which are represented in a way that benefit and fit the goal of the welfare state. This shows how Sweden's focus regarding immigration has shifted from an international perspective to a national one. The analysis also shows how the meaning of the nodal point tolerance acquires meaning within the nationalistic discourse, a finding which appears as puzzling since previous research asserts its belonging within the (international) humanitarian discourse. Tolerance is not linked to generous immigration and multiculturalism – it is linked to the integration process. This indicates that the understanding of humanitarianism and nationalism as opposing logics might be misleading – neither can they be understood as the same phenomena. However, the Government represents immigration and the welfare state as if they contradicted each other.

Nevertheless, throughout the analysis it becomes evident how the nationalistic discourse has acquired a hegemonic position regarding the representation of Sweden and immigration. Although, there is an ongoing struggle about specific floating signifiers, the nationalistic discourse is still most prominent – it is possible to link all signs to the Swedish welfare state. This proves how the Swedish identity stands and falls on the significance of the welfare state. Sweden claims values such as solidarity and tolerance, but if the welfare system fails, these values are no longer obtainable – due to *how* these values are represented as

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characterized for Sweden's identity in relation to the welfare state. Tolerance and solidarity may be achievable in a multicultural society without the welfare services, however, in the representation of a Swedish national identity, they are depicted as depending on the welfare.

The Swedish egalitarian ideals are represented as not compatible with a changing demographic population (multiculturalism). The historical review shows how the welfare state always has been important to secure – thus the decisions do not appear as surprising. However, previous research also shows how the Swedish identity mainly has taking formation within the humanitarian discourse during the last decades regarding immigration. Thus, Sweden may be in the middle of an identity change, if floating signifiers such as solidarity, humane and responsibility will continue to acquire meaning within the nationalistic discourse – then the temporarily adaption of legislation to the minimum requirements of international conventions and EU law might come to be naturalised and status quo.

The Swedish identity is to some extent paradoxical. Since it is based on values such as tolerance and solidarity, it is depending on and in need of other people's suffering. At the same time these values are threatened due to immigration – the source of the Swedish identity is both a need and a threat.

A changing demographic population seems to be the future, the nation-state might proceed, but the people within it will differ. Yuval-Davis claims that we now face the post-multicultural society, due to the fear after 9/11. However, given how many people who are forced to flee their homes due to war, Europe and other nation-states can not continue to obstruct immigration. In order to receive people, national identities might have to be adapted. I assert that more research on the relationship between the (Swedish) welfare state and immigration is needed, in order to address how they can work together. The hegemonic power of the meaning of Swedish welfare is evident, and as long as this sign will acquire its meaning within the nationalistic discourse, Sweden will continue to be a country where nationalism thrives behind the closed borders. The representation of a national Self enhances the hegemonic position of the (welfare) nation-state, which makes more people in need of the nation and its welfare services and in turn makes it even more legitimate. In the pursuit of equality and high standard of living for the citizens, Sweden is willing to leave some humans behind in order to achieve the nation-state's purpose.

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