Democratic Strength and Cowardly Barbarism?

A discourse-theoretic study on the gendering of terrorism in the Swedish political discourse

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to map out the gendered constructions of terrorism and terrorists within the Swedish political discourse. The starting point of the research are the recent terror attacks in Paris 2015 and in Brussels 2016, a time at which the Swedish government presented a number of new and more aggressive counterterrorism strategies for combating terrorism and Daesh. Seeking to understand how these strategies are justified and legitimized to the Swedish people, the study seeks to contribute to the literature of gender and terrorism, with a specific focus on gendered nationalism and masculinity. Based in the belief that everything in the social world is structured in gendered hierarchies of masculinities and femininities, a discourse theoretic analysis is carried out on Swedish government minister’s speeches and statements. Empirical findings indicate several gendered constructions; a hegemonic masculinization of Sweden and the EU and a subordinate masculinization and feminization of Daesh.

Key Words: Gender, Masculinity/Femininity, Terrorism/Terrorists, Daesh, Sweden, EU, Discourse, Nationalism, Self/Other
Table of Contents
1. Introduction ................................................................................................................. 4
   1.1 Background and Research Question ........................................................................ 4
   1.2 Purpose and Outline ............................................................................................... 6
2. Theory and Method ....................................................................................................... 6
   2.1 Discourse Analysis ................................................................................................. 6
       2.1.1 Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory .......................................................... 7
   2.2 Methodological Setup ........................................................................................... 9
   2.3 Methodological Discussion ................................................................................... 11
   2.4 Data and Sampling ............................................................................................... 12
   2.5 Case Background ................................................................................................. 14
3. Research Debates on Gender ...................................................................................... 15
   3.1 Gender and War ...................................................................................................... 16
   3.2 Gender and Terrorism ........................................................................................... 17
4. Theorizing Gender ....................................................................................................... 19
   4.1 Gender and Sex ....................................................................................................... 19
       4.1.1 Gender and Masculinity .................................................................................. 20
   4.2 Gender and Nationalism ....................................................................................... 20
   4.3 Operationalization ................................................................................................. 23
5. Analysis ...................................................................................................................... 24
   5.1 The Construction of the Self ................................................................................... 25
       5.1.1 A Masculinized Self ....................................................................................... 28
       5.1.2 Gendering and Hegemonic Masculinity ......................................................... 29
   5.2 The Construction of the Other .............................................................................. 30
       5.2.1 Masculinization versus Feminization? ............................................................ 31
       5.2.2 Good versus Evil ........................................................................................... 32
       5.2.3 Dehumanization ......................................................................................... 33
6. Discussion and Conclusion ......................................................................................... 34
   6.1 Interesting Findings ............................................................................................... 34
   6.2 Comment on Normative Assumptions .................................................................... 35
       6.2.1 Alternative Constructions ............................................................................. 36
   6.3 Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 37
7. References .................................................................................................................. 39
Appendix .......................................................................................................................... 45
   Appendix I: Translated and Original Quotes ............................................................... 45
1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Research Question

In November 2015 the Swedish Security Service made the announcement of an increased terrorist threat against Sweden. This announcement came at a time following the Daesh\(^1\) terrorist attacks in Paris and the search for a potential terrorist perceived to be on Swedish territory. The threat level now amounted to a 4 on a five point scale, signifying a “high threat” (SÄPO, 2015a). This was a significant event for Sweden, seeing that it was the first time the threat level was increased since the bombings in Stockholm in 2010 (SÄPO, 2015b).

In the beginning of March 2016 it was reported by the Security Service that the threat level had been decreased to a level 3 again. Yet, this still indicates an “elevated threat” (SÄPO, 2016a). Regardless of this recent decrease, living under a high, and again, elevated terrorist threat has been rather diffuse for the Swedish civilians, not having clarity on what exactly the different threat levels signify and what cautions are to be taken. The police and Security Service meant that there was no concrete threat to any specific places, but rather that it regarded a general threat, and urged people to go on with their lives in a normal fashion. Despite this, some operative changes still came with increasing the threat level. For one, people were told to expect a greater police presence in the streets and in public places (DN, 2015a), and the police was now also allowed to use machine guns when necessary (DN, 2015b). Simultaneously, the Swedish government lobbied for new counterterrorism strategies, such as bills on new laws criminalizing terror travels (Riksdagen, 2015)\(^2\), stricter laws on weapons used in terrorism such as explosives and hand grenades (Ygeman, 2016a), suggestions for new methods of intelligence gathering through covert data reading, expanded video surveillance, and control of biometrical data at the Schengen borders (Löfven, 2015a). Yet, if there was no concrete threat then how are these counterterrorism strategies justified? Why should the Swedish people accept a greater intrusion of their private life? Is terrorism and terrorists presented in a certain way within Swedish political discourse that make these new strategies seem as legitimate responses? Presenting terrorism and terrorists in a certain way could arguably be used in order

\(^1\) Also referred to as IS/ISIS/ISIL. In this study Daesh is used following the Swedish government so as to not give legitimacy to the group’s creation of a “state” \[http://www.svd.se/svenska-regeringen-slopar-is--borjar-saga-daesh\]

\(^2\) The law prohibiting terror travels came into effect April 1\(^{st}\) 2016. See \[http://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/nu-forbjuds-terrorresor\]
to construct the strategies as reasonable responses in relation to the magnitude of the threat of terrorism.

Following previous research, I will argue that the reliance on gendered constructions is used so as to justify the more aggressive counterterrorism measures that the Swedish government is suggesting and implementing. I intend to examine how gender plays a part in the Swedish discourse on terrorism and to see what role it has for establishing a construction of the threat of terrorism. Several scholars argue that gender is part of everything in society. Connell means that wherever we look in the social world, gender always functions as a dividing notions, mainly through creations of masculinities and femininities (Connell, 2005: 72). Likewise, Stern and Nystrand (2006: 34) mean that gender ideologies operate everywhere, from an individual level to a global level, and how gender forms a lens through which people understands the world. This makes it reasonable to examine the role of gender within discourses of terrorism. Thus, I intend to find a solution to the research problem of how the new strategies are legitimized within the literature encompassing the research debate of gender and nationalism, with a particular focus on masculinity, i.e. a nationalism that is read through a gender lens, grounded in constructions of masculinities and femininities. Within previous research on gender and nationalism, several accounts have been provided on the gendering apparent in political discourses (see among others Shepherd, 2006; Khalili, 2011). Discourse analyses have also been done on terrorism yet, the main focus has been on the “War on Terror”. To my knowledge, little research has been done analyzing such practices from a Swedish perspective, and not to mention, nothing specifically with these current and recent events as a basis. Thus, I find it a necessity to examine Sweden due to these previously mentioned events at the end of 2015 and Sweden’s military involvement abroad as these are suggested to be connected to an increased terrorist threat (SÄPO, 2016b).

Following the discourse theoretic logic, I intend to perform an analysis guided by the connection between gender and nationalism in the construction of the threat of terrorism within political discourse in Sweden. For instance, Wilcox means that gendered nationalism often forms a basis for constructions of the self and the other based on notions of femininities and masculinities (Wilcox, 2009). Hence, I will look into how a gendered nationalism is part of the construction of terrorism within speeches and statements by politicians in Sweden. Based on the research problem outlined above, this study seeks to provide an answer to the following research question: “How is terrorism and terrorists gendered within the political discourse in Sweden and how does it enable Swedish counterterrorism policies?”
1.2 Purpose and Outline

The importance of this study comes down to its recentness in time but is also owing to the analytic approach employed and what insights can be yielded from it. The issue being a phenomenon that the people of Sweden is currently living under, with a high or enhanced terrorist threat within the country whilst also being affected by events related to the activities of Daesh in the Middle East and North Africa, makes the relevance of engaging in and examining this further very high. Hence, the purpose of this study is to carry out research in relation to these current phenomena, seeking to examine the gendering of terrorists and terrorism by Swedish politicians, through a discourse theoretic analysis. The main contribution of this study will be to provide the research field of gendered nationalism with a previously unexplored case, i.e. Sweden in relation to the Paris attacks last November and the alleged terrorist in Sweden around the same time, and the attacks in Brussels in March this year. As previous research has not read the discourse surrounding these events through a lens of gendered nationalism, this study should be making a solid contribution. I aim to identify and problematize the constructions of gendered identities within the Swedish discourse of terrorism as a way to justify new counterterrorism strategies. Hence, the study has an explanatory aim, seeking to explain the gendering of terrorism through the mapping out of the gendered discourse. To summarize, in this study I will argue that the reliance on a discourse of gendered nationalism serves to construct the issue of terrorism in a way that makes more aggressive counterterrorism measures seem legitimate.

The study starts off with an introduction of the theoretical fields this research seeks to make a contribution to. The guiding theoretical logics underlying my argument are then presented followed by a presentation of research design including a presentation and discussion of discourse analysis as theory and method, continuing with a methodological outline, case background, and presentation of data. In the following section, the results from the data collection is presented in order to then be discussed in relation to the wider debate. The study ends in a concluding summary.

2. Theory and Method

2.1 Discourse Analysis

This study will examine gendered constructions of terrorism within the political discourse in Sweden. A discourse analysis will be performed on speeches and statements by government
politicians addressing terrorism. Definitions of discourse(s) are widespread, though in general it circles around language and how it is structured into patterns that people rely on when interpreting social worlds. The role of discourse analysis is to analyze these patterns; how they emerge, what informs them, and their effects. This study adopts a definition of discourse by Jørgensen and Phillips as: “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 1). Discourses are generally seen as part of creating and changing social phenomena and identities, leading reality to be accessible through language by providing representations of reality whilst partaking in producing said reality. The way these phenomena are talked about is not just a reflection of social reality. One misunderstanding is that discourse analysis is only one approach, when there in fact are many different approaches (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 1-2, 8-9). Historically, discourse analysis has mainly been developed by Michel Foucault, and the approach by Laclau and Mouffe employed in this study also emanates from Foucault’s ideas (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 12-13, 37).

The study will follow the logic of discourse analysis as both theory and method. Building on Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory (henceforth discourse theory) the theoretical underlying logic will be outlined. Discourse theory builds on a number of concepts, where some are relevant for this study. These are to be elaborated upon more explicitly whereas the less relevant concepts will only be presented. However, discourse theory is theoretically more developed than methodologically. Taking issue with this, Jørgensen and Phillips develop a more accessible methodological process and clarify uncertainties.

2.1.1 Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory

Discourse theory starts with a deconstruction of the theories of Marxism and poststructuralism. For Laclau and Mouffe, the language used to talk about identities and social phenomena is not a reflection of reality, but rather it also partakes in creating the social reality. Their discourse theory is not only focused on spoken language and knowledge, but also the creation of social phenomena. Hence, Laclau and Mouffe do not separate the discursive from the non-discursive; their theory is a theory of the social. To them, all practices are discursive; all objects are objects of discourse (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001: 107-108). Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 33) summarize it as it is not only the structure of language that can never be totally fixed, but that it extends to the non-permanent notions of identities and society.
Laclau and Mouffe mean that the meaning of the social (phenomena) is never total and so, there is an ongoing social struggle of meaning of society, identity, and social consequences; which is what discourse theory seeks to come to terms with. The theory’s aim is to understand the “social as a discursive construction” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 24). Discourse theory circles around a number of concepts which guide the analysis. Laclau and Mouffe compile some of them in the following quote:

We will call *articulation* any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice, we call *discourse*. The differential positions, insofar as they appear articulated within a discourse, we will call *moments*. By contrast, we will call *element* any difference that is not discursively articulated (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001: 105; italics in original).

Discourses consist of different signs, which Laclau and Mouffe label as *moments*. A discourse is thus a “fixation of meaning” of the signs. *Nodal points* are privileged signs around which all the other signs are situated as they gain their meaning in relation to the nodal point (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 112). This is done through a process of exclusion whereby signs acquire their fixed meaning in relation to other signs; by excluding all other possible ways that the signs could have been related and gained meaning. Further, nodal points hold a partial fixation of meaning around which the discourse is constructed. They are *floating signifiers*, elements that have no fixed meaning but are part of a *discursive struggle* between different discourses trying to ascribe them fixed meaning. These excluded meanings are referred to as *field of discursivity* and incorporates the meanings assigned to a sign within other discourses. Hence, discourses become a way of creating a fixed and unified system of meaning. This is labelled *closure* and occurs when a discourse has transformed an outside element into an inside moment; a sign has been given a fixed meaning. However, discourses can always be challenged and never total (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 25-29). Laclau and Mouffe mean that meaning can never really be permanently fixed; discourses are contingent. Hence, discourses are always open due to the instability of language (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 6).

Other concepts of discourse theory include identity, hegemony, and antagonism. These connected to the social part of the theory, focusing on the subject. Whether we are talking about language, identity, or social phenomena, the common denominator is that their meaning is always assigned in relation to an “other”. Meaning is derived through difference and is a
relational definition. The constructed representation of language, identity, or social phenomena is thus based on an exclusion of some meanings that they could have held (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 35-36). The subject that is part of discourse and in constructing the meaning of reality, acquire positions within discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 40-41). The subject is connected to identity by the subject positions and establishes the identity through a process of identification with said positions. Hence, there are also nodal points of identity which fill it with meaning. This process is done relationally through the establishment of chains of equivalence linking signifiers together. For instance, the meaning of man is that which is not the meaning of woman; its meaning is established through a process of difference, excluding the signifiers of the “other”. Whereas this outline has focused the individual identity, the same logic also applies to group identity which too is formed in contrast to other groups (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 42-45).

Hegemony and antagonism are concepts of discursive conflict of ascribing meaning according to Laclau and Mouffe. Hegemony is achieved when one of the competing discourses has succeeded in fixing the meaning of a sign in their way. Thus, hegemony can be seen as a form of achieved dominance of one understanding of the social world over others (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 6-7). Antagonism has to do with identity, and is seen as the process of mutual exclusion of different identities; there is an antagonistic relationship between different colliding identities (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 47-48).

2.2 Methodological Setup

The purpose of the analysis is to map out the political discourse on terrorism and see how it is constituted by gendered nationalism. As discourse theory forms both theory and method in this study it also forms the starting point of the empirical analysis. Yet, I still find it necessary to include more field related theorizing and develop the influence of gender and nationalism on the societal structures. Hence, theories and studies on gender and nationalism will guide the analysis, forming a backdrop against which the empirical data will be evaluated in relation to. The theories provide the study with an overview from which concepts, objects, and themes can be deducted in order to evaluate their presence or lack thereof in the material. Hence, the purpose of this study is not theory testing or development. The focus is on examining how gendered nationalism is part of constructions of social reality which should also be reflected in the political discourse on terrorism. The reason for including these other theoretical notions is also grounded in the logic of discourse analysis. Discourses are part of changing and creating
social phenomena whilst also being informed by reality and discourse analysis thus link
together reality and the constructed world. There is an ongoing reproduction where theoretical
connections to reality can tell what the constructions are grounded in.

As mentioned, Laclau and Mouffe did not develop their theory into a clear methodology.
Hence, Jørgensen and Phillips have transformed the theoretical concepts into tools more easily
used in empirical analyses. The first part of the analysis should focus on the key signifiers in
the social organization of meaning; the nodal points. These will lead the analysis around the
discourse’s objects, focusing on how the different concepts organize discourses, identity, and
social space. Examining how these key signifiers are combined with other signs, which are
what gives them their meaning through chains of equivalency, basically meaning signs that
explain the signifiers. This second step will allow the discourse analyst to start identifying
discourses, identities, and social spaces through the chains of meaning that discourses bring
together. The third step involves concepts of identity. By focusing on identity, it can together
with social spaces be encountered through the combinations of meaning in chains of
 equivalency. The meaning of identities has an important characteristic; an identity is always
created relationally to the identity of an “other” that signifies what the identity of the “self”/”us”
is not. Investigating identity in this relational manner is said to be one way to establish what
the discourse excludes about one’s identity. This allows for an analysis of what social
consequences this exclusion of meaning have. Jørgensen and Phillips suggest that a starting
point for examining identities is to find a nodal point around which an identity is discursively
formed in order to then see how an identity is ascribed meaning in contrast to other signifiers.
The fourth and final step revolves around concepts for conflict analysis on meaning: floating
signifiers, antagonism, and hegemony, i.e. signifiers that might hold different meanings in other
discourses. However, these will not be tended to as the purpose is to map out one discourse,
gendered nationalism, rather than several competing ones. By following this framework,
Jørgensen and Phillips mean that one can uncover how discourses constitute knowledge,

The plan is not to connect the empirical analysis directly to all the concepts of discourse theory,
rather, the focus will mainly be on identifying the key signifiers and see what gendered
identities are constructed around these. To summarize, the analysis seeks to find an answer to
what the articulation of gendered constructions of terrorism look like within political discourse
and see to what extent a gendered nationalism is reproduced. Hence, in the analysis I will
repeatedly refer to the theories on gender and nationalism in order to reflect upon how the empirical material corresponds to them.

2.3 Methodological Discussion

The choice of discourse analysis comes down to its focus on constructions and the analysis of meaning ascribed to them. For this, no other method can be seen as more suitable. Other methods, such as textual analysis, were rejected upon the notion of being too mechanical, not allowing the researcher to approach the material close enough. The focus is not on specific concepts, but rather how these concepts form constructions. Thus, making discourse analysis the preferred method.

The motivations behind choosing the discourse-theoretic approach can be found in its emphasis on the social. The approach encompasses not just spoken or written language but also identity and social phenomena which seem suitable as I want to examine the gendering of terrorism which to me covers all of these aspects. Hence, this approach was chosen over critical discourse analysis. As argued by Shepherd (2006: 20), the discourse theoretic approach problematizes the processes of constructing reality and meaning on a deeper level. Discourse theory is used here in order to reveal how society is constructed in terms of gendered hierarchies, and how these when in relation to national identity can frame terrorism in a certain way and pave the way for new strategies.

As should be clear by now, discourse analysis is particularly suitable when studying constructions of the social world. However, there are also some potential disadvantages of the method that needs to be addressed. Firstly, the role and impact of the researcher should be considered. Discourse analysis is highly subjective, based mainly on subjective interpretations of language and constructions. There are rarely operationalizations to fall back on when assessing the empirical material which could arguably make repeated studies yield different results and hence, affect the reliability negatively. To increase reliability, a shorter section on operational guidelines will be included. These will however risk a lower validity due to issues of establishing pre-determined concepts to be looked for; making the measurements rather diffuse. Yet, as mentioned by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 117) discourse analysis reject objectivism’s scientific demands of reliability and validity. Instead, other measures of validity are relevant, such as fruitfulness, meaning the importance of creating new knowledge. This takes the form of the research providing an ability to generate new explanations to a phenomena, which arguably can be achieved through the great compatibility of the discourse
analytical tool and the theories. These taken together should increase the overall validity by providing an explanation to how terrorism is gendered (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 172). Secondly, whereas neutrality is always desired when approaching the material, discourse analytical scholars mean that it is almost impossible to remain neutral. Discourse researchers partake in reproducing the discourses one investigates (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 175). Whereas I strive to remain neutral, complete neutrality is not possible. Thirdly, another potential disadvantage relates to a major critique of discourse analysis; that it is unscientific. Due to the reliance on talk and language, scholars argue that the knowledge produced through discourse analysis is unusable as it cannot determine the social truth. It is said to produce results that are just expressions of the researcher’s view (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 175-176). I acknowledge that in relation to for instance regression analysis this might be the case. Despite this, discourse analysis is still an established research method (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 1) and its application in this study should thus be valid. Moreover, Sylvester (2013: 52) means that discourse analysis is particularly suitable for feminist research by allowing researchers to approach the material’s subjects closer and can so reveal important insights.

2.4 Data and Sampling

The data to be analyzed covers a time period from the Paris attacks in November 2015 until the aftermath of the Brussels attacks in March 2016. These events are motivated partly due to their recentness in time but also due to their major impact on Europe and Sweden both in terms of political and media attention. It is said that discourse analysis is a highly time-consuming method. As such, decisions regarding delimitations of the study had to be made. Hence, this study will focus on three ministers from the Social Democratic government in Sweden. The ministers that the analysis will be based upon are Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, and Minister for Home Affairs Anders Ygeman. Considering the issue of terrorism as a phenomenon with effects on different societal levels; the nation state, its home affairs and foreign policy, the chosen ministers are motivated through their weight in the government on these issues. They are most likely to be speaking on behalf of the government on events of terrorism; they are the ones with access to discourse, making them those most likely to influence discourse. Following this, all material will be analyzed as one and the same discourse and will not be subject to any distinctions as per each minister. The material is composed by speeches, statements, and interviews following said Daesh terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels and have been chosen in a purposive sample. In general, a randomized sample provides better generalizability of the findings by excluding one source of
bias. However, for discourse analyses the focus is on choosing material that can actually say something, i.e. material representative of the phenomenon. Thus, as this study’s purpose is to examine the gendering of terrorism by politicians, the sampled material seems suitable. Moreover, something of less relevance when sampling data within discourse analysis regards the sampling size. There are no general guidelines on how many texts to include. As mentioned, discourse analysis is highly time-consuming and intensive, thus making it a method particularly suitable for smaller sampling sizes. Whereas the material chosen for analysis in this study might seem “small”, it should still be seen as rather large in discourse analytical terms. It also covers all relevant official speeches and statements relating to the threat of terrorism and thus, any excluded material has been so due to that the context of a speech has been unrelated to the events under study. Hence, speeches and statements not directly related to the terrorist attacks in general or Daesh in particular have been excluded from the analysis. Wood and Kroger (2000: 77-80) mean that even if the sample of actual texts is relatively small, the amount of language instances within the texts is often large and providing a lot to analyze. Hence, few texts may hold much information.

The material is retrieved from the official website of the Swedish government³, where transcribed speeches and statements are available. The media interviews have been collected from several sources, such as SVT Nyheter, Sveriges Radio, Dagens Nyheter, and Svenska Dagbladet. I am aware that all the media have political affiliations, despite outspoken political party neutrality. Anyway, this is of minimal relevance for this study considering that it is not the news texts or opinions I examine, but rather the quotes from press conferences. These have not been tampered with, are not connected to any political debates, and should not affect representativeness. All texts in the analysis have been collected after a general relevance test where a search on each news media was performed, based on keywords such as “terrorism”, “terror”, or ”terrorists”, the ministers’ names, and referrals to the attacks in Paris or Brussels. A similar but more controlled search was made on the official government website, where each chosen minister has its own page where one can search material through filters such as “speech”, “statement”, “combating terrorism”, and “foreign and security policy”. In total, 20 texts have been chosen for analysis. Of these, nine are related to the Prime Minister, six are related to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and five are related to the Minister for Home Affairs.

³ www.regeringen.se for the Swedish material and www.government.se for the material available in English.
Regarding the case selection and time frame of the events of the analysis, I am aware that other attacks have taken place, such as the Beirut attacks November 2015 and the numerous attacks in Turkey during 2015-2016. I do not mean to exclude nor diminish these events. However, as this study focuses on a Swedish perspective I have to examine material that is relevant for this case. These other attacks have not received the same amount of attention among Swedish politicians, seen as there has not been any direct speeches regarding these attacks.

2.5 Case Background

When talking about terrorism there is a differentiation on terrorism as the “enemy within” or an “outside threat”. In the aftermath of 9/11 there was much focus on outside threats, trying to prevent similar attacks from abroad (RAND, 2014: 3). In Sweden, the outside terrorist threat mainly concerns violence-promoting Islamism or al-Qaeda affiliated organizations. Yet, focus on the enemy within has gained more momentum, grounded in concerns of domestic radicalization (SÄPO, 2016b). Regarding the case of Sweden and the timeframe in this analysis, the terrorist threat should thus be seen as both “enemies within” and “outside threats”. However, this has not always been the case according to state law. For instance, according to the “terrorist law” of 1989 (SFS 1989:530) on measures to prevent acts of violence of international character, terrorists were only mentioned in terms of foreigners. Another “terrorist law” from 1991 (SFS 1991:572), the “Special Control of Aliens Act”\(^4\), gave the right to deport foreigners based on suspected connections to terrorism. Hence, the connection was mostly made between terrorism and foreigners, situating terrorism as an outside threat, indicating an exclusion of Swedish nationals as possible terrorists.

The material to be analyzed cover speeches in direct relation to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, and indirect in relation to domestic radicalization and “terror travels”. The attacks by gunmen and suicide bombers in Paris in November 2015 were claimed by Daesh. The group targeted different locations around Paris, killing and wounding hundreds. The events sparked a worldwide outrage and fear, as terrorism had again breached European borders (BBC, 2015). Simultaneously, Sweden was pressured by an internal threat when a perceived terrorist was hunted on Swedish soil (DN, 2015c). At this time the terrorist threat level was increased from an elevated to a high threat (SÄPO, 2015a). The violence by Daesh continued in March 2016 with attacks at the airport and subway in Brussels. Again, suicide bombers had targeted the heart of Europe, killing and wounding numerous people (BBC, 2016). As mentioned, there has

\(^4\) “Lagen om särskild utlänningskontroll”
also been more underlying threats due to increased domestic violence-promoting radicalization, leading around 300 Swedes to leave to train and fight with Daesh, and whose return to Sweden is a potential creation of enemies that could carry out attacks from within (SÄPO, 2015b).

The wider context should also be considered. The strategies labelled aggressive and intrusive might not be seen as such if compared to other state’s counterterrorism. Rather, labelling them aggressive and intrusive aims at the previous strategies in Sweden where the new ones represent quite a drastic change. Moreover, Sweden could arguably be presented as a least-likely case for relying on highly gendered language within the political discourse. Owing to the outspoken feminist government and foreign policy (Regeringen, 2016), one could expect a greater awareness on the language used. This so as to avoid highly gendered language and stereotypical gendered constructions of masculinities and femininities. Hence, softer language is expected from Sweden than it is from states with non-feminist policies.

3. Research Debates on Gender

The research on gender is today widespread covering various topics, among them politics and war. This section will present some of the more general gender works that have been influential for the fields of war and terrorism. The following section will continue with the more narrow and specific debates focusing on the theoretical guidelines for the analysis, namely the concepts of gender and nationalism as war- and politically related phenomena, followed by operationalizations. Whereas this study can be linked back to the large literary field of gender and war, through the narrower field of gender and terrorism, delimiting the previous research is rather challenging as it covers such a wide array of topics. Hence, the research included can be seen as an extract of the spectrum of topics within the fields, of which this study only forms a fraction. As I aim to read the discourse on terrorism through a nationalistic gendered lens, the study also resonates with literature on gender and masculinity, and gender and nationalism. Moreover, the ministers as objects of analysis and the implications for security policy also make it a political science study. Thus, this is an interdisciplinary study within the one overarching field of gender.

To begin, I abide by the notion that gender shapes politics and that nations are gendered institutions (see Nagel, 1998; Enloe, 2014). More importantly, Nagel means that through a feminist analysis only focusing on women one misses how men, manliness, and masculine cultures inform politics. This is the take-off point of this study.
3.1 Gender and War

The research on gender and war has over the years covered numerous issues. As presented by Sylvester (2013: 39, 60), covering feminist IR perspectives on war, war has not always been on the feminist scholarly agenda due to an inherent aversion against violence and war. This has made war a largely neglected topic, even though war in all forms is constituted by gender relations. However, with the recent change in feminist scholarship and adoption of war studies, it focuses mainly on the role of women in war, counterbalancing the traditional war focus on men (See for example, Stern & Nystrand, 2006: 31; Sylvester, 2013). Feminist studies on gender and war challenge the common perception of men as the war centre and women as the centre of peace, being bystanders or supporters in war (Sylvester, 2013: 40-60).

Overall, war and militaries are seen as male practices. Today with the inclusion of women in the military, some argue that it is feminized (Pin-Fat & Stern, 2005: 32-33; Sylvester, 2013: 38). Pin-Fat and Stern mean that with women within a male designated institution, masculinity versus femininity can no longer be clearly separated. Thus, it becomes an emasculating threat as the very presence of women’s bodies (the private) within the military (the public), threaten its masculine identity and capacity. The gendered divisions on which the military is built upon for creating zones of distinctions become disrupted when women’s bodies enter military space, unsettling its masculine identity (Pin-Fat & Stern, 2005: 32-35).

The gender hierarchies of masculinities and femininities within war are also discussed in terms of militarized masculinity. Enloe (2014) maps out militarized masculinity to be when men are socialized into soldiers, as this is not something they are born as. Militarization is a process encompassing cultural, institutional, ideological, and economic transformation and can be summarized as “a step-by-step process by which a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military or comes to depend for its well-being on militaristic ideas” (Enloe, 2000: 3). It becomes a way for evaluating behaviour and attitudes, this acting out of manhood (Enloe, 2014: 149). A consequence of this militarized masculinity is presented by Hague (1997), focusing specifically on the power dimensions of gender in the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Through the construction of the gender and national identities, the perpetrators enhanced their own masculinity by feminizing the victims through genocidal rape.

Connecting gender and war more to political science, gendered hierarchies are evident on a political level. Shepherd analyses the gendering of the Bush administrations’ discourse on the attacks on Afghanistan, finding several gender hierarchically constructed identities. Shepherd’s
argument circles around the production of narratives of “self” and “other” to justify the war through gendered subjects; the nation, symbolizing a masculinization of US identity that valorized “manly” men; the enemy, irrational barbarians (men) or passive victims denied agency (women); and the intervention, as “a unique type of war” incorporating both hard military initiatives and soft humanitarian concerns. Hence, they are connected to values socially constructed as masculine or feminine (Shepherd, 2006: 21-30). Khalili approaches the creation of masculinities and femininities in US counterinsurgency, finding the whole practice to be gendered. Contrasting the hyper-masculine technological warfare, counterinsurgency is gendered feminine as the purpose is to win the hearts and minds of the people. Hence, civilians as contrasted against the military are gendered feminine, making counterinsurgency feminine. This highlights a blurring of the private and public; as the feminine civilian and home are the prime objects of military operations (Khalili, 2011: 1473-1478).

3.2 Gender and Terrorism

Much previous research on gender and terrorism has had an explicit “women” focus and have to a large extent excluded “men’s” terrorism. Yet, this becomes a more sustained fact as traditional terrorism studies have mostly focused on terrorism as a male enterprise, which became clear after the first European woman as suicide bomber in 2005. There was no real knowledge of the active role of women within extremist organizations, having only been perceived as passive bystanders or supporters (Jacques & Taylor, 2008; Cunningham, 2003). Hence, there is a distinct focus on women’s terrorism; what motivates them, if they are victims or agents, and how they are recruited.

Defining terrorism is extremely complex. Today there is no unified and internationally agreed upon definition. Nevertheless, this study has adopted the definition by the EU, seeing as the study encompasses this geographical area and as it is agreed upon by the member states. Terrorism is “[...] acts committed with the objective of seriously intimidating a population, destabilising or destroying structures of a country or international organisation or making a government abstain from performing actions” (European Union, 2002).

Jacques and Taylor (2008: 305) investigate suicide terrorists’ motivations and recruitment, analyzing female terrorists on the personal level. The focus is on how women’s motivations differ from men’s, making men part of the analysis by functioning as a backdrop for comparison. “Female” terrorism is described as distinct from “male” terrorism. More women than men are found motivated to join extremist organizations due to personal reasons or
revenge, whereas more men than women are motivated by religious or nationalistic factors. Moreover, most men are recruited through religious/organizational persuasion, whereas the recruitment strategies of women vary between proactive means, exploitation, and peer pressure (Jacques & Taylor, 2008: 315-320). Continuing, Cunningham emphasizes the increased involvement of women in terrorism. Concluding that women suicide bombers is a strategic advantage as the remembered attacks are those by women, it fulfils suicide terrorism’s purpose of attracting attention. Women suicide bombers also challenge traditional gender norms on the passivity of women, something said heightens the fear factor (Cunningham, 2003: 185-186).

Another topic has covered the terrorist framing in media discourse. Nacos (2005) compares the framing of women in politics and women in terrorism, finding similar frames. Traditionally, women are portrayed as “unlikely” and “unfit” to terrorism which generally is seen as a male enterprise. Nacos means that this is not true as women historically have held high and leader positions within terrorism (Nacos, 2005: 435-436). Nacos finds different media frames of female terrorists. One is based on portraying women through physical appearance related characteristics. Female terrorists are framed through language focusing on their looks, make-up, and clothing. Women are also portrayed in a family connection frame; as wives, housewives, married, engaged, or focusing on their sexual status. Another frame denies women political agency in terrorism; female terrorists do not have a political agenda, rather they are framed as doing it “for the sake of love” for a man (Nacos, 2005: 438-445).

Some research has focused on gender within political discourse. Shepherd is one of those, although focusing on a discourse following terrorism. Others have examined gendered constructions specifically within discourses of terrorism. The majority of this research has had an American perspective, focusing on the “War on Terror” discourse by the Bush administration. Khalid (2011) reads the discourse through a critical lens of orientalism in constructions of the “other”. Arguing that constructions of an orientalized Muslim other is based on a combination of gender and race, Khalid maps out a “gendered orientalism” that is used to legitimize the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Khalid, 2011). Whereas the war on terror appears to be the main point of analysis, little research has been done from other perspectives. Particularly, the events forming the point of analysis in this study have recently occurred and there is no available research yet that has approached them. Hence, why this study focuses on gender and terrorism from a Swedish perspective and so, contributing to existing research by expanding the empirical ground with unexplored material.
It appears that the research on gender and terrorism has taken two directions; one that focuses specifically on women, and another which I and a few others have chosen as seen above. Both these directions rest on the same foundation, the gender theoretical perspective on terrorism, but that is where the similarities end. This study is consequently connected to previous research through this common ground, by being grounded in the same gender based theories applied to terrorism studies.

4. Theorizing Gender

4.1 Gender and Sex

When discussing gender, one needs to clarify the distinction between gender and sex. Stern and Nystrand explain sex and gender as a continuum; the difference being that sex is the natural biological differences between men and women, and gender is a social construction of the labels male and female. Thus, “gender implies the meanings given to the biological differences that are assumed to ‘exist’ (i.e. feminine bodies as weak and peaceful, and masculine bodies as strong and aggressive)” (Stern & Nystrand, 2006: 34). Further, Butler means that gender is culturally constructed, and not as fixed as sex nor a causal result of sex (Butler, 1999: 8).

In this study, gender as a social construction is the focus. I will not examine specific characteristics of “women” or “men”, but rather focus on the prescribed roles and values socialized into femininities and masculinities. Gender should be seen as a relationship of power forming a hierarchy, with the characteristics stereotypically deemed “masculine” occupying a higher value than what is traditionally deemed “feminine”. Gender creates dichotomies where the “masculine” cannot exist without its “feminine” opposite. Hence, gender hierarchies valuing masculinity and devaluing femininity also inform the categorization of other “relations of domination”; sex, race, class, and sexuality, and divisions between “self” and “them”, public and private, etc. (Stern & Nystrand, 2006: 35-36, 45).

Several scholars have highlighted issues with these binary divisions. Butler problematizes the distinction in Gender Trouble, questioning whether one can really talk about a common identity of “women”, and if it forms a stable signifier. Just because one identifies as a “woman” does not mean that one is only a woman; “the term fails to be exhaustive […] because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities” (Butler, 1999: 4). Generalizing all women across the world as “equally” oppressed
under the patriarchy by Western, white feminists has been a process of colonizing women’s oppression by constructing the oppression of women in “Third World” or “Orient” countries as stemming from non-Western barbarism (Butler, 1999: 5-6).

4.1.1 Gender and Masculinity

An important characteristic of gender is that it is dynamic and relational. Gender’s dynamism can be captured under the hegemonic masculinity concept. First presented by Connell (1995), hegemonic masculinity has been defined by Barrett (1996) as an idealized image of masculinity, relational to other marginalized and subordinated masculinities and femininities. The hegemonic masculinity within Western culture today is defined as: “[…] a man who is independent, risk-taking, aggressive, heterosexual and rational” (Barrett, 1996: 130). However, the masculinities that are defined and captured as hegemonic are not permanent, but rather changes over time and in reference to subordinate masculinities and femininities. It functions as a hierarchical relationship of power where hegemonic masculinities operate on a higher level than subordinate masculinities or femininities (Connell, 2005: 74-77).

4.2 Gender and Nationalism

Enloe argues in Bananas, Beaches and Bases (2014) that gender forms relations of power. This means not only to focus on masculinity and femininity but also deeper on the powers that “tell” of where women and men belong. One chapter covers nationalism, defined as ideas and values that allow the nation to stay “cohesive” and independent. The nation is defined as nationalism’s main object, forming a powerful idea of binding people together through a shared past and common future. Nationalism focuses on belonging, as the nation is framed as “us” and requires a “them” (Enloe, 2014: 88, 94). Moreover, connecting nationalism to masculinity, Enloe means that “[…] nationalism typically has sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation, and masculinized hope” (Enloe, 2014: 93). This also exemplifies how gender forms relations of power by connecting nation-building to masculine rather than feminine values. In this study, masculinity is defined following Mosse as “the way men assert what they believe to be their manhood” (Mosse, 1996: 3). Hence, masculinity are values

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5 Enloe describes a patriarchal society as: “a society whose relationships and inequalities are shaped by the privileging of particular masculinities and by women’s subordination to and dependence on men” (2014: 31).
6 Two critiques against Enloe must be presented. Firstly, she appears to see the world in a binary way, where there is only women and men as per the biological sexes. It becomes problematic from a feminist perspective as it implies that all people of the world are either identifying as men or women. Secondly, as has been argued by several scholars (see for example Nagel, 1998), focusing on only women misses how men influence politics.
7 In this study, nation and state are used interchangeably.
stereotypically associated with men, yet remains at the same time a social construction focusing on “normative” patterns of morality and behaviour (Mosse, 1996: 4). Femininity is on the other hand defined as values stereotypically associated with women, and are too socially constructed (Dunphy, 2000).

In her article on masculinity and nationalism, Nagel (1998) explores the linkage between manhood and nationhood. Nagel means that the concepts inforce each other; both historically and presently. It is said how masculine interests and ideologies dominate nationalism, and form interlinkages of cultures of masculinity with ideologies of nationalism (Nagel, 1998: 242). The relationship between masculinity and nationalism came about as they emerged simultaneously in time and place, “[I]t is therefore no surprise that the culture and ideology of hegemonic masculinity go hand in hand with the culture and ideology of hegemonic nationalism” (Nagel, 1998: 248-249). The link can also be found in the most basic definition of nationalism; as nationalism is aligned with the state and state institutions it makes it a political arena that is and have been predominantly dominated by men, in a similar manner that masculinity overall has resonated with and been enacted by men. Hence, the national state is a masculine enterprise characterized by male domination (Nagel, 1998: 248, 251). Nationalism and masculinity are built on the same ground, with the former resonating the cultural themes of the latter. Values of masculinity, such as bravery, honour, and duty, could just as well be values of nationalism and cannot be separated into mutually exclusive categories. Thus, masculinity’s micro-cultures are the same or similar to those of nationalism (Nagel, 1998: 251-253).

Wilcox (2009) extends the gendering of nationalism by examining reasons to perceived offense dominance and overly aggressive military strategies. Tracing the answers to nationalism, she elaborates on how gendered nationalism is part of discourses informing constructions of the enemy. Wilcox points to how nationalism is connected to masculinity and so, part of gendered discourse (Wilcox, 2009: 225-226). Gendering of nationalism take different forms; the enemy being either feminized or masculinized. One aspect of the gender-nationalism connection is that of “othering” or dehumanization of the enemy, meaning how the enemy is constructed as inferior and its abilities underestimated. The nation self and its characteristics is promoted through a national identity produced by gendered ideologies. The nation’s identity is produced as the opposite of the enemy’s identity, with the national identity forming a space that the enemy poses threats to from the outside (Wilcox, 2009: 229-230). This notion is based on Campbell’s (1992) argument that a state’s identity depends on the construction of an inside “self” and an outside “other”. The state identity is distinguished through the exclusion of what
is perceived as an outside threat to national security; done through the construction of discourses of danger with strategies of otherness (Campbell, 1992: 8, 42, 56). Wilcox means that there is a paradox in gendered constructions of the enemy and the threat it poses;

[t]hese outside threats are constructed in terms historically associated with the feminine, such as irrational, dirty, chaotic, and evil. As others are constructed as inferior through a feminizing discourse, their abilities are underestimated, while somewhat paradoxically, and the threat they pose is overestimated (Wilcox, 2009: 230).

Hence, a nationalism gendered masculine, reproducing traditional gender roles, comes about as states perceive and present their “valorized” masculinity, as the direct opposite of the enemy’s “devalued” femininity or subordinate masculinity. The enemy’s subordinate masculinity is seen in contrast to their own idealized hegemonic masculinity. Hence, one needs to protect the nation self from the threats of the enemy other (Wilcox, 2009: 230-231). This also informs the discourse of chivalric masculinity. This discourse of protection sees the world in a binary mode, a battle between the “good self” and “evil other” which chivalric masculinity informs by the need to protect the feminine subjects of one’s own state (Wilcox, 2009: 234-236). To summarize, nationalism reproduces the inside/outside logic informing the state system. The gendering of the outside other as either feminine or subordinately masculine shows the other as inferior to the masculine inside self (Wilcox, 2009: 231).

Using feminist analysis, logics of gendered nationalism can provide an answer to how terrorism and terrorists are constructed in the Swedish political discourse. Reading nationalism through a gender lens, asking questions of how aspects of gender, and also including race, class, nationality, and sexuality, can enable states to construct actors and events in certain ways. This also makes the analysis intersectional, meaning how gender intersects and interacts with other social structures (Connell, 2005: 75). I will argue that through the reliance on gendered nationalism within the discourse of terrorism, the Swedish government is constructing a perception of the “enemy” as an imminent threat to national security that can justify the more aggressive counterterrorism strategies. In seeking to explain the research question of how terrorism is gendered within the political discourse, the study will be structured following several more specific questions. How is gender part of the construction of terrorism and terrorists? What gendered identities are created? How are representations of “self” and “other” constructed? How is the threat of terrorism constructed? How are these constructions related
to gendered nationalism? What constructions of masculinities and femininities are visible? What values attain the hegemonic masculine position?

4.3 Operationalization

Within discourse analysis there are generally no operationalizations. Discourse analysis is a rather deductive method, leaving one unknowing beforehand on what to look for and thus with a difficulty of establishing any measurable concepts. For instance, the nodal points and the signs filling them with meaning are not established or simply formed by single concepts or objects. Rather, the constructions of identities are what is of interest and hence, incorporating many different words rather than one specific as would have been of relevance if doing textual analysis counting words. Hence, the method is not about looking at any pre-determined words, making discourse analysis a case-specific. With this said, operationalizations within this type of study become problematic. However, for the sake of transparency and increased reliability, suggestions on indicators of the different constructions will be provided. A final point on operationalizations is that there are cultural differences in for instance what is masculine or feminine. This study bases its measurements on the ideals of “western” culture.

Building on previous research, a masculinization of an identity will be operationalized as if it is ascribed traditionally masculine values. Previous research has suggested such indicators of masculinity to be rationality, strength, aggression, independence, risk-taking (Barrett, 1996: 130; Stern & Nystrand, 2006: 34), superiority, social advancement, civilization (Shepherd, 2006: 25), willpower, honour, courage, competitiveness, quiet strength, and persistence. These are seen to reflect “masculine ideals as liberty, equality, and fraternity” (Nagel, 1998: 245).

The construct of femininity and feminization is operationalized as indicators of an identity’s femininity. Values that within western culture are stereotypically feminine have been presented in previous research to include weakness, peacefulness (Stern & Nystrand, 2006: 34), passivity, irrationality (Shepherd, 2006: 25), cowardice, unchivalrous, dirty, chaotic, and evil (Wilcox, 2009: 223, 230-232).

Subordinate masculinities are conceptualized as of lower valued than hegemonic masculinities; they are presented as deviant or abnormal. These are operationalized following previous research as barbarism, inferiority, backwardness, uncivilized, untrustworthy, and dangerous (Shepherd, 2006: 26-27). This also encompasses the notion of hyper-masculinity, which following Wilcox will be operationalized as uncontrolled aggression that should be feared and tamed (Wilcox, 2009: 230).
The hegemonic masculinity is operationalized as the values that are idealized within the discourse. A sign of an idealization of values will be coded as such if they are repeated consecutively throughout the material and if portrayed as something right and desirable, something which other values are compared against. These should suggestively be related to the construction of the self, as according to Wilcox, the self valorizes its identity in relation to the other. However, as this is a relational concept, no clear indicators can be provided.

Dehumanization is also a relational construction. Hence, no clear indicators can be provided. An indicator of dehumanization is if an identity is constructed as abnormal or deviant from the “human” norm. This is closely linked to subordinate masculinities as dehumanization often takes the form of ascribing an identity primitive traits, such as barbarism, and so indicates it being less than human. Hence, dehumanization is operationalized as the difference in levels of ascribed humanness to self and other, where it is perceived that the other has less acceptance of basic human values (Struch & Schwartz, 1989: 365).

5. Analysis

An initial overview of the sampled material shows of four (gendered) constructions within the political discourse of terrorism. These are based on two identified key signifiers; the self and the other. The nodal points that the discourse is structured around are Sweden and the European Union (EU), the terrorists, the events, and the response which are the constructions that the discourse circles around. A number of chains of equivalency can be distinguished based on the nodal points of the self and the other. As mentioned, an identity of the “self” is always established in relation to the identity of the “other”. Within the discourse, the constructions of the response and the events are not done independently. Rather, the response is constructed in relation to the self, and the events in relation to the other. A first identified nodal point within the discourse on terrorism are the identities of Sweden and the EU; the nation self and the union self, and the chains of equivalency around them. The signs in the chains that fill Sweden and the EU with meaning and construct their identities are summarized as follows:


As can be seen from these chains of the self, both the nation and union are given meaning by the same or similar signs. The contrasting identity of the other circles around the nodal point of the “terrorists” and their terrorism. The signs filling the “terrorists” with meaning and construct its identity have been identified to create the following chain of equivalency:


5.1 The Construction of the Self

The Nation Self

The construction of the self takes two distinct forms and one can thus see a gendered nationalism for two separate, yet interlinked, identities. A common theme within the discourse appears to be the referral to Sweden as holding overall positive values;

And in these times, the most important thing of all is to remember and stand up for the values that are our beacon in the dark. Sweden is and remains a society that believes in democracy, freedom and equality between people (Löfven, 2015d).

Sweden is the state that should act against the terrorists’ injustices. Sweden is part of the good that can and should combat the evil and is constructed as part of the solution. Prime Minister Löfven stated after the Paris attacks how “today is a day for mourning […]. But also a day for resolve”. There is a focus on togetherness, and how this will guide Sweden in combating terrorism and simultaneously protecting the building blocks of society that the terrorists are trying to destroy: “together we must stand up for democracy and for humanistic values” (Wallström, 2015b). Sweden is as mentioned a state of democracy and freedom, and “terrorism can never shake these values, nor shall it ever do so” (Löfven, 2015d). Something must be done before this evil reaches Swedish territory as “[w]e will never accept terrorists attacking our open societies” (Löfven, 2016b). The nation self is thus generally constructed in relation to the response; what actions Sweden must take in order to combat the threat(s) from the enemy other.

The Union Self

The union self appears on the other hand to be constructed in relation to the events. Both the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels are presented as attacks on all of Europe; not just France and Belgium per se. As captured by Löfven in the immediate aftermath of the Brussels attacks, it is Brussels that has been attacked, yet also how “it is an attack on our democratic Europe”
“what has been attacked is a united and democratic Europe. And it is as a united and democratic Europe we stand up together” (Löfven, 2016c*; my translation⁸), and how the attacks in Paris similarly yielded “terrible hours for Europe” (Löfven, 2015d). This language echoes across the attacks and the ministers. As expressed by Wallström following the Paris attacks, “these acts of terrorism are an attack on democracy and our open societies” (Wallström, 2015b), and Ygeman “the attack on Brussels is an attack on the democratic Europe, we must together rally behind Belgium” (Ygeman, 2016b*). The union self comes out as the righteous one; one that is to do good in combating evil and is also captured as the “protector” of the good, i.e. the people.

This is unacceptable. We will pursue and punish those guilty and we shall also make sure that we rise in the EU and show that we can act and that we can become even more effective in combating terrorism and the anti-democratic forces and that we also protect our populations (Wallström, 2015c*).

Hence, this can be interpreted as two forms of nationalism. As per its definition, nationalism focuses on nations. Yet, the Swedish political discourse on terrorism highlights an extended applicability beyond the state level. The terrorist attacks “on the heart of Europe” bring all nations together to back the targeted nations and promises of support and strength.

Paris is a city many of us hold dear, as a symbol of exuberant culture, joy and freedom. An attack on Paris is an attack on Europe, on the free and democratic world. Sweden stands side by side with France in solidarity at this time, and we have let France know that we stand ready to give them the support that is needed, for which they themselves express the need (Löfven, 2015d).

The Self and the Response

The way the self responds to terrorism takes two forms, one based on the union self in direct relation to the attacks in Paris and Brussels, and another form in relation to the nation self and actions homeland when responding to the more indirect yet, imminent threat that these attacks highlight for Sweden. The first form builds on the union self and what Sweden must do as part of this identity. A focus on solidarity and support follows the ministers. Löfven has repeatedly vowed the support of Sweden as seen in the previous section and also Wallström (2016b) means that whatever support that Belgium inquires about, Sweden will provide. Also Ygeman builds

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⁸ All quotes marked with * are originally in Swedish and have been translated by me. The original quotes can be found in Appendix I.
on the union self when discussing Sweden’s support to Belgium: “first and foremost it is a powerful declaration of solidarity, that Europe stands united in the fight against terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016d*). This type of response has been articulated following both attacks. Sweden should help in any way asked for by the attacked state. It is presented as almost something of a duty for Sweden, or as something self-evident for Sweden to provide, given the common identity of belonging to the EU.

The second form of the response builds on how the threat of terrorism is presented as something greater than the EU experienced attacks. They are constructed as an indication of what might be to come against Sweden, with an interesting parallel being drawn to the people returning from “terror travels”. It appears as if the attacks in Paris brought to life a realization that the threat might already be inside Sweden; an enemy within might be ready to strike. Hence, there is a need to do something at home as well and not just provide help to the country under attack.

Säpo estimates today that Islamist extremists constitute the greatest terror threat against Sweden, but not the only one. We know that approximately 300 Swedish citizens have travelled to Syria and Iraq to fight together with Isil9, we also know that approximately 120 have returned. Säpo makes the judgement that among these people there are individuals that might be dangerous to our society and that also have committed crimes against people in other countries (Löfven, 2015a*).

This form of response is constructed in terms of what the nation self needs to do homeland. There are new strategies for combating terrorism. These require a strong Sweden in the fight against Daesh that “must be fought by force” (Ygeman, 2015a*), a Sweden that should rise above its internal struggles; “when it comes to our country’s security there is no room for party quarrels, party politics” (Löfven, 2015a*), and it is “important to have a large consensus in order to combat terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016e*). Löfven feels that Sweden already can cooperate across differences for the safety of the people: “I am proud over having such a large consensus in the Swedish parliament regarding the importance of that the democratic and the open Sweden will be defended” (Löfven, 2016a*). This in order to ensure that Sweden can “retain the order, security and safety” (Löfven, 2015a*) that it is built upon. When it comes to this response, Sweden will never yield. The nation self must present a stronger face and Löfven focuses on power and a powerful Sweden for combating terrorism; there is a need to “hit hard against terrorism” (Löfven, 2015a*). The evil will not conquer, “terrorism must be opposed”

9 *Daesh in this study
To achieve this, there is a determination that echoes within the discourse. The acts of terrorism “must and will be met with resolve” (Wallström, 2015b) and Ygeman feels “anger and determination to actually win over terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016d*). With this resolve Sweden will continue spreading its fundamental values by “continue being determined in advocating peace, democracy and openness” (Wallström, 2015*). By saying that “we will not let the fear and violence win over us” (Wallström, 2015b*) it further serves to construct Sweden as strong, and built on something that terrorism cannot break.

5.1.1 A Masculinized Self

The gendering within the discourse on terrorism becomes rather clear; the self, whether it be the nation or union, is gendered masculine. Whereas it is acknowledged that “that all societies are vulnerable” (Löfven, 2015d), in which “vulnerability” could be interpreted as a feminine value, there is also a need to construct Sweden as beyond this vulnerability; Sweden as strong enough to overcome it: “Sweden must persist in its work to reduce our vulnerability, independently and together with others” (Löfven, 2015d). Wallström means that we must “show both solidarity and show our strength [...] to stand together” (Wallström, 2016b*). This strength should be communicated by a focus on the union as remaining united in the fight against terrorism, “to show that Europe, our way of life, our democracy, our open societies, that we do not accept that one destroys this” (Wallström, 2016b*). The self also holds a rationality that the other does not;

only an open and free society can mobilize the power necessary to overcome terrorism. For a security service to function in a democratic society it has to have the trust of the people. The open democratic society is actually the key-stone for combating terrorism (Ygeman, 2016a).

This rationality can be discerned as it is obvious that it is the self that must defeat terrorism. Nothing else should be able to achieve this; the rational thing to do is to act, which is also what the self does through the response. Hence, further masculinizing the self.

The new strategies are presented as a drastic change from previous counterterrorism measures; a necessary change to better cope with the imminent threats of today. As such, the strategies are more aggressive and intrusive, by inquiring into the lives of people through covert data readings, increased camera surveillance, and new laws restricting and punishing terror travellers (Löfven, 2015a). This has implications for the gendered constructions the response represents and what is simultaneously reproduced. The strategies are arguably constructed by
more masculinized rather than feminized traits; as per gender stereotypes, the feminine is more often characterized by passivity and diffidence rather than intrusion and aggression. This response thus provides a symbolism to what the self stands for and that subsequently reproduces the self as a masculinized subject. The masculinized response enhances Sweden’s forcefulness and its ensuing resilience against terrorism.

5.1.2 Gendering and Hegemonic Masculinity

It appears that the horror of the events constructs all European states as part of one identity. Common for both constructed identities of the self is that they are described as the hegemonic masculinity. Sweden and the EU are despite being under attack the idealized identities that the identity of the other is contrasted against. The qualities that are to be protected and defended are the ones ascribed to Sweden and the EU; such as their “democracy, freedom, and equality” (Löfven, 2015d). This follows the logic by Connell on hegemonic masculinity as part of a hierarchical relationship where the idealized values occupy a higher position in relation to other subordinate values. Here, it becomes clear that the values of Sweden and the EU operate on a higher level than the values of the other which will be elaborated upon in the next section. Values such as democracy, openness, and freedom, become the idealized values against which the other is contrasted. However, the values that occupy the hegemonic masculine position are not traditional hegemonic masculinity values. However, as hegemonic masculinity is a relational concept, it is not permanent and thus also subject to contextual circumstances. Within this discourse, one can see a softer masculinity, yet a masculinity that still circles around strength, liberty, and equality. The strength of Sweden and the EU is not determined by their military might or weapons arsenal. Rather, the strength comes from the togetherness built on shared fundamental values making the self a righteous protector. This is what makes it powerful. This is what the other is contrasted against.

Hence, the build-up of both Sweden and the EU is part of the storytelling of the valorization of the self as discussed by Wilcox. The construction of the self presents Sweden and the EU in a way valorizing their beings in relation to the threat of the other. This threat forms the base against which the self builds its national and/or unionized identity, and for which is required a strong self to combat this. This can be interpreted as what Wilcox referred to as a “nationalism gendered masculine”. The discourse presents a (soft) masculinized self that is valorized by forming a stark contrast against the devalued subordinate masculinity and femininity of the terrorists. Sweden is constructed as above actions of terrorism and “condemns yesterday’s
despicable terrorist attacks in Paris” (Wallström, 2015b). Sweden is a contrast to terrorism by disassociating itself from such actions, presenting it as an impossibility for Sweden to be anything like the “murderers in Isil” (Löfven, 2015a*); “our society offers no free zone for one that is not in for the fundamental values of all people’s equality. Sweden shall never be a sanctuary for terrorism and terrorists” (Löfven, 2015a*). Hence, despite being attacked, which could be seen as a weakness of the EU, the identities keep being constructed through a valorization of the self contrasting the other’s inferiority. On the question on whether it is possible to evade such terrorist attacks in an open society like Sweden, Löfven answered: “it can never be guaranteed that this does not happen, no. Because then I believe that we have a society that nobody wants. But on the other hand, it is our responsibility and our commitment to do everything we can to prevent it” (Löfven, 2016a*). In fact, it is precisely the reason to the weakness, the openness of the society, that is constructed as the self’s idealized strength.

5.2 The Construction of the Other

*The Terrorists and the Events*

Within the discourse a trend in the construction of the other is evident. Not unexpected, the identity of the other is occupied by the terrorists. To start with, the other is consistently constructed in a negative manner; Daesh “stand for summary executions, rapes and torture” (Löfven, 2015b*), they are an “abhorrent sect” (Löfven, 2015d) performing “barbarity” through “indiscriminate attacks on civilians” (Wallström, 2016a). “ISIS claims aggressively that the human rights should not apply” (Wallström, 2015d*) and is thus constructed as opposite to the humane. Harsh language is common within the discourse; the attacks in Paris were “cowardly, vile acts” (Löfven, 2015c*) and the Brussels attacks “appalling, heinous, cowardly, pitiful acts against people in their everyday life” (Löfven, 2016e*), and there is a “savageness and cruelty” in “these evil and dark forces” (Ygeman, 2015a*). Thus, the construction of the events also serves to construct the terrorist in the same way. As the attacks are vile, heinous, and cowardly, so are the terrorists carrying them out.

The construction of the other also has a wider representation than directly relating to the attacks. There is an explicit focus on the goals of the terrorists and the language around these goals are further part in the construction of the other as what the self is not. Löfven speaks about how “terrorism shall not reach its goals of containment and dissension” (Löfven, 2016a*) and how

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10 *Daesh
11 *Daesh
“it is precisely the open, free, democratic society these terrorists want to destroy” (Löfven, 2015a*). Moreover, Wallström (2015c) means that the purpose of such terrorism is to make us scared by targeting innocent civilians and Ygeman states how “the laws are there to protect the democracy, openness, freedom. That is what terrorism is threatening. The purpose of the terrorist attack in Paris is to instil fear, horror, and make us curl up and not use our openness and freedom” (Ygeman, 2015a*). Hence, the other wants to destroy everything that the self is constructed by.

5.2.1 Masculinization versus Feminization?

The reliance on traditionally negative and inferior values are determined by contrasting them to the positive and superior values of the self. By constructing the other as inferior, one is simultaneously constructing the self as superior and vice versa as the self is what the other is not. The constructions of the terrorists as inferior take different forms however. As has been mentioned, the self is gendered masculine, albeit a somewhat softer masculinity. The gendering of the terrorists is not consequent however. It appears as though the terrorists are feminized and masculinized simultaneously. The representation of the events is as something the other has done to the self. Löfven captures the feminization of the terrorist attacks when describing them as cowardly, vile, heinous, and pitiful acts that have targeted the very openness of our safe societies; “once again is the freedom and openness in Europe attacked” (Ygeman, 2016c*).

Whereas these events are something that have already taken place, their construction within the discourse is also as a greater threat that is maybe even upon us. This is largely relating to the people returning from “terror travels”; “the message to the one who travels from Sweden to commit crimes against humanity in other countries, that is that if they return here they will be met by police, they shall be put to justice and they shall be punished” (Löfven, 2015a*). The terrorists are feminized by being constructed as cowards, irrational, anti-liberty, and weak by targeting innocent civilians that cannot fight back. Also, the representation of the terrorists as evil¹² are part of what Wilcox refers to as “terms historically associated with the feminine” (Wilcox, 2009: 230), especially since their evil seems completely irrational as through the indiscriminate targeting of civilians. Hence, the terrorists are the opposite of the self. These attacks are not signs of strength and they do not appear to hold any superior masculine traits as

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¹² The interpretation of “evil” as a feminine trait is to be considered in relation to the trait of “good” as masculine. This is based on previous research (see Wilcox, 2009) where good versus evil is positioned in relation to each other. With good and evil in relation to each other and taken together, the evil operate on a lower level of power than the good, and is thus feminized in this context.
the ones of the self. This apparent feminization highlights the terrorists as inhumane, as they rely on methods of the weak and target innocent civilians.

Whilst constructed as weak in relation to the strong self, the identity of the terrorists is at once constructed by stereotypically masculine values. They are aggressive, barbaric, and abhorrent, indicating an apparent masculinization rather than feminization. However, when contrasted against the masculine values of the self, it becomes evident that there are different levels of masculinity. The masculinities describing the terrorists are subordinate in comparison to the masculinities of Sweden and the EU; they are masculine countertypes. Generally, barbarism is considered the opposite of civilization and it is said how

Barbarism is good when it involves a rejection of the feminized civilization that begets commerce, industry, and domesticity for the more strenuous pursuits of hunting and war. However, it is considered negative, a lower form of masculinity, when it refers to racial, national, or social others. This subordinate masculinity is associated with uncontrolled aggression, a hypermasculinity that is to be feared and tamed (Wilcox, 2009: 230).

Hence, for establishing the hegemony of the self’s masculinities, the subordination of the other’s masculinities is necessary. The values ascribed to the self as “democratic”, “free”, and “cooperative” (Löfven, 2016d), become the idealized values that are superior to the values of the terrorists; for instance, the rationality of the self as contrasting the irrationality of the other. The terrorists are ascribed values that are subordinate masculinities. They are still masculinities, yet not on the same level as those of the EU or Sweden; they operate on a lower valued level than the idealized values of the self that are desirable. The subordination of the terrorists is consequent throughout the analyzed material.

5.2.2 Good versus Evil

The construction of the threat of Daesh can be seen to be linked first and foremost to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. These attacks signified an entering of the “evil” terrorists into the “good” Europe. Hence, what is constructed within the discourse is a battle between good and evil, with Daesh striking “just next to the European institutions […] striking the democratic hub in Europe” (Löfven, 2016a†). The evil of the terrorists has entered into the realm of the good through attacks on European cities. The constructions of good versus evil can be distinguished in the reliance on language presenting the terrorists as symbolizing a sort of outrageous violence that goes beyond the acceptance of the civilized world; “the choice of
targets that appears to be totally indiscriminate, [...] they are civilians at a concert or at a restaurant” (Ygeman, 2015a*). This behaviour is not something that can be justified, it is pure barbarism and is presented to indicate that such behaviour would never be carried out by the good self. The focus on barbarism and evil in constructions of the other also resonates well with the chivalric masculinity discussed by Wilcox (2009: 234-236). The “good” self needs to protect the innocent people of Sweden and the EU from the barbarism of the “evil” other as seen in the previously mentioned presentation of the union self as a protector of its innocent populations (Wallström, 2015c). These distinctions are clearly visible and is a constant construction throughout the discourse. When focusing on such constructions, it provides a more grounded legitimization of more aggressive responses.

5.2.3 Dehumanization

A discussion on dehumanization will finalize the analysis of the self and other. Whether the enemy is feminized or (subordinate) masculinized, both forms of gendering symbolize a dehumanization. Daesh is constructed as less than human, seen in the adoption of uncivilized behaviour and attacks; carrying out “abhorrent acts of terrorism” and do not stand for humanistic values or democracy, but rather target innocent people (Wallström, 2015a). They cause “human suffering” (Wallström, 2016a) through executions, rape, and torture, as previously mentioned. Following the Paris attacks Löfven used a feminizing, yet more importantly, dehumanizing language to describe it: “[T]he terrorist attacks we witnessed last night reek of a vile hatred and contempt for the value of human life” (Löfven, 2015d). The attacks targeted mankind, seeing no value in human life. Historically, aggression is seen as a hyper-masculine value and in this context it is used to distinguish the terrorists from Sweden and the EU. The “abhorrence” of the terrorists, their barbaric treatment of people in their areas of control is “evidence” of their uncivility as compared to the structure, democratic civility, and righteous behaviour of the Swedes and Europeans, clearly positioning the terrorists as subhuman. This is a clear example of what Wilcox has discussed in terms of the valorization of one’s own identity in relation to the threat posed by the others. In this way, constructing the enemy as weaker, yet still constructing the threat that it poses as very high, resonates well with gendered nationalism. Hence, devaluing the enemy whilst simultaneously and paradoxically overestimating the threat it poses can, too, justify more aggressive counterterrorism strategies (Wilcox, 2009: 230). As the threat of terrorism is constructed as high, one can see how the more aggressive strategies are constructed as legitimate and necessary, despite the terrorists’ inferiority.
6. Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Interesting Findings

The analysis of the Swedish political discourse on terrorism in relation to the Daesh attacks in Paris 2015 and Brussels 2016 has yielded some interesting results. To start with, the analysis has highlighted the construction of the hegemonic masculinity within the discourse. Whereas the self occupies the hegemonic masculine position, it appears that the values constituting this masculinity are not what stereotypically would be seen as masculine characteristics. They focus on strength which is a masculine value. As such, both the nation and union self are constructed as strong, yet not strong in the traditional sense. Instead, a softer masculinity is apparent where strength is defined in terms other than for instance risk-taking or military might. The strength is softer, quieter, stemming from the fundamental values that the Swedish and European societies are built upon. The values providing the self with strength is grounded in society’s precariousness; democratic, free, open, and loyal. The idealized society is the one that Sweden and the EU is constructed as parts of. Whereas the hegemonic masculinity within the discourse evidences as a softer one, the findings can also be used to problematize and challenge the established hegemonic masculinity of western culture as was defined by Barrett as “[…] a man who is independent, risk-taking, aggressive, heterosexual and rational” (Barrett, 1996: 130). Yet as mentioned by Connell (2005), it is always relational and changes over time. This study might thus be an indication that the established hegemonic masculinity is changing, seen in the highly valued softer masculinity. This also relates to Sweden as a potential least-likely case for highly gendered language of masculinities and femininities due to its feminist policies. Whereas the overall language usage is highly gendered despite the outspoken feminism, perhaps the construction of the self by softer masculinities is in fact a result of feminist policies. Connecting this also to the construction of the terrorists; their dehumanization, constructed inferiority and equalling to barbarism; if the language was to mirror the new strategies one could have expected it to be even harsher. But perhaps owing to the feminist policies, the overall language was toned down.

Another interesting finding regards nationalism. Whereas nationalism is traditionally based on the nation state, this study provides an example of a widened applicability. As Sweden also identifies with the EU and its members, one can see a union based nationalism or regionalism forming a wider togetherness. This togetherness appears to be the driving force behind the
promised solidarity and support which makes it necessary to act beyond one’s own national
borders. Hence, it is not simply a gendered nationalism for the own nation.

Also, what is articulated as one of the biggest strengths of the self, both nation and union, is
the openness of the society. Remarkably, this is also what constitutes one of the major
vulnerabilities to attacks as mentioned by Löfven. It is interesting to see how it is presented as
a vulnerable feature of society, yet simultaneously constructed as a strength; giving the self a
strong identity in relation to the other. Rather than constructing it as a weakness, its
righteousness is lifted. An open society is something to strive for and protect, despite it
symbolizing a vulnerability.

Finally, as can be seen in the analysis, the key signifiers and signs have been mapped out and
this sheds light on what has been discursively excluded in the constructed identities. The
findings evidence that what is excluded in the identity of the self is that which constructs the
other, and vice versa. The self is everything that the other is not. For instance, the self comes
out as superior, meaning that being inferior is something that is excluded from the self’s
identity and simultaneously, being superior is excluded from the other’s inferior identity.

6.2 Comment on Normative Assumptions

This section must start with a clarification of the analysis. The analysis and its findings are a
result of the analysis model adopted in this study. By no means do I intend to place the self and
the other on the same value foundation. The language used by me as a researcher might seem
judgmental and dismissive of the Swedish government in its subordination and dehumanization
of the terrorists/Daesh. I do not judge the Swedish government for the language used nor feel
bad for the construction of the terrorists. Yet, in order to remain neutral and as objective as
possible to the material a certain distancing from subjective feelings as a reaction to the findings
is necessary. Hence, the results are only owing to the discourse analytical tool and theoretical
guidelines and do not reflect any personal reactions.

It is perhaps reasonable to question whether or not there is anything unexpected with these
findings. Arguably, the gendered constructions can just be a reaction of grief for the people
who lost their lives; a result of the anger against Daesh for targeting innocents. While this might
be true, the purpose is not to analyze the reasons for the gendered constructions but rather to
map out what a gendered discourse looks like and if it mirrors the more aggressive strategies.
It is also reasonable to question if it is even possible to distance oneself from terrorism in a gender neutral way. Whereas not of value for this study, seeing as it was the gendered constructions that I wanted to examine, it is still a question worth tending to. It would be hard to think of a gender neutral way to approach the issue of terrorism, as would it be any other issue as well. Returning to the introduction, gender is everywhere around us in the social world and gender ideologies are always present, forming a lens for understanding the world (see Connell, 2005; Stern & Nystrand, 2006). Thus, why would there not be any gender related aspects of terrorism? This also touches upon whether or not one can talk about terrorism in a positive way, as in contrast to the overall negative language articulated in this discourse. It is difficult to consider terrorism like this carried out by Daesh to ever be discussed with positive language. However, terrorism can also be a mean for reaching political goals.13 Hence, if the political goal would be seen as legitimate, it could potentially create a more positive language on terrorism. However, as the goal(s) of Daesh is not seen as legitimate, a positive language is highly unlikely.

6.2.1 Alternative Constructions

It appears that the construction of the openness as a strength was one out of two options in how it could be constructed. An alternative construction could instead have lifted the openness as a weakness, yet still relied on it as a desirable state of society. What such an alternative construction would signify is that it instead is the vulnerability that is elevated as something to be protected. But as shown in the analysis, the weakness of an open society is not represented in the discourse. This aspect is noticeably dismissed in favour of constructing it as a strength. This alternative construction would have presented a feminization of the self; constructing it as weak. This would also have indicated that the enemy is constructed as superior to the self, as seen from the theoretical logics where the self always is constructed in contrast to the other. Whereas it is possible for this alternative discourse to construct the threat of the other as great and thus the need for the more aggressive strategies to protect the weak self, it would have indicated a great problematization of the theoretical underpinnings of the study. It should be clear by now that the self’s identity is constructed through the valorization of the masculine self whilst devaluing the other by feminization or subordinate masculinization. If the self instead would have been feminized it implies that its own, rather than the enemy’s, capabilities would have been underestimated. Whereas the need for more aggressive strategies would seem

even more obvious, one could question whether the self’s capabilities would have been enough to provide this given its construction as weaker than the enemy.

Another alternative construction could possibly have dwelled upon constructing the enemy as feminized/subordinate masculinized and even dehumanized, yet without constructing it as a threat. The other could simply have been constructed inferior and its capabilities devalued without the paradox of overestimating the threat. Whereas such construction also would have problematized the argument’s theoretical groundings, a more important aspect is that there would be no need for more aggressive strategies. If the enemy is constructed as weak and less of a threat it should be hard to legitimize the strategies. As of now, when the terrorist threat is constructed as great and imminent, the need for more aggressive strategies seems reasonable. And with the threat constructed as upon us rather than non-existing, one could expect it likelier that people will welcome such strategies. Constructing the threat as great provides more options on what measures can be employed for counterterrorism. Thus, it is not the gendered discourse per se that legitimizes the new strategies. Rather, it is how the constructed threat makes them seem as the right and proper thing, matching the magnitude of the threat. Hence, the gendered discourse visible in this study is born from facts of reality, with the strategies being mirrored by the language based constructions in the discourse. An implication from this is thus that an alternative construction/discourse would have worked against the real politics.

6.3 Conclusion

An implication that can be drawn from this study is that gender hierarchies are reproduced in the Swedish political discourse on terrorism, seen in the different levels of power ascribed to the self and other respectively. One can also see how this gendered discourse challenges traditional gender norms by exemplifying a softer masculinity. Moreover, it becomes clear how gendered nationalism helps create a narrative that constructs the enemy in a way that clarifies the need for a proper counterterrorism response. Returning to the research question, this study has through a discourse theoretic analysis provided an answer to how terrorism is gendered within Swedish political discourse. The purpose of this study was to examine the gendering of terrorism within the political discourse, a purpose that was fulfilled by mapping out the discourse and its gendered constructions. The findings indicate a masculinization of the nation and union selves whereas the other is simultaneously feminized and masculinized. The trend in the construction of the other is that it is inferior to the self, where the latter occupy the hegemonic masculine position. Overall, the other is also dehumanized in relation to the self,
and the threat it poses is at the same time overestimated whilst its capabilities are devalued. Taken together, the constructions of self and other based in gendered nationalism can be seen as a way to legitimize the more aggressive strategies by constructing the threat of terrorism as in need of a more drastic response. The language used to construct terrorism mirrors the need for new and more aggressive strategies. As such, the study has accomplished the contribution it was aiming for, namely to explore gendered nationalism through an unexplored case. Whereas the purpose was not to test the theories but rather have them as guidelines, the study has still contributed to validating these theories of gender and nationalism, and gender and masculinity in yet another case. However, the theory on hegemonic masculinity has instead been problematized and challenged. Thus, making the contribution sound.

To end this study, some suggestions on future research is in place. Future research could preferably extend and develop this analysis in a number of ways. Firstly, one suggestion is to include more ministers from the government, perhaps by choosing as objects of analysis also ministers from other governmental parties or politicians from opposition parties and through a spatial comparison examine if there are any differences and similarities across the political parties and blocks. A second area for future research could be to examine the impact of feminist policies on the (gendered) discourse, perhaps by comparing a feminist government with a non-feminist government. Thirdly, examining the potential alternative constructions might also yield valid information on the role of gender and nationalism within discourse. Finally, a fourth way to further this analysis and research is to do a temporally comparative study, suggestively comparing the discourse over different periods of time when terrorism has been a current topic. One such time could arguably be the 1970’s when terrorism in Sweden was highly topical.
7. References


SFS (1989:530). Lagen om åtgärder för att förebygga våldsdåd med internationell bakgrund (terroristlag)

SFS (1991:572). Lagen om särskild utlänningskontroll


Wallström, Margot, (2016a). ”Utrikesministerns tal vid möte med koalitionen mot ISIL/Daesh”, Regeringskansliet, available:


Appendix

Appendix I: Translated and Original Quotes

1. “what has been attacked is a united and democratic Europe. And it is as united and democratic Europe we stand up together” (Löfven, 2016c).
   - ”Det som attackerats är ett enat och demokratiskt Europa. Och det är som ett enat och demokratiskt Europa vi står upp tillsammans”.

2. “the attack on Brussels is an attack on the democratic Europe, we must together rally behind Belgium” (Ygeman, 2016b).
   - “Attacken på Bryssel är en attack på det demokratiska Europa, vi måste gemensamt sluta upp bakom Belgien”

3. “This is unacceptable. We will pursue and punish those guilty and we shall also make sure that we rise in the EU and show that we can act and that we can become even more effective in combating terrorism and the anti-democratic forces and that we also protect our populations” (Wallström, 2015c).
   - “Det här är oacceptabelt. Vi kommer att förfölja och straffa dem som är skyldiga och vi kommer också se till att vi reser oss i EU och visar att vi kan handla och att vi kan bli ännu effektivare i att bekämpa terrorismen och de antidemokratiska krafterna och att vi också skyddar våra befolkningar”

4. “first and foremost it is a powerful declaration of solidarity, that Europe stands united in the fight against terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016d).
   - “Först och främst är det en kraftfull solidaritetsförklaring, att Europa står enat i kampen mot terrorismen”

5. “Säpo estimate today that Islamist extremists constitute the greatest terror threat against Sweden, but not the only one. We know that approximately 300 Swedish citizens have travelled to Syria and Iraq to fight together with Isil, we also know that approximately 120 have returned. Säpo makes the judgement that among these people there are individuals that might be dangerous to our society and that also have committed crimes against people in other countries” (Löfven, 2015a).
   - “Säpo bedömer i dag att islamistiska extremister utgör det största terrorhotet mot Sverige, men inte det enda. Vi vet att cirka 300 svenska medborgare har rest till Syrien och Irak för att slåss tillsammans med Isil, vi vet också att ungefär 120 har återvänt. Säpo gör bedömningen att det bland dessa personer finns individer som kan vara farliga för vårt samhälle och som också har begått brott mot människor i andra länder”

6. “must be fought forcefully” (Ygeman, 2015a)
   - “Måste bekämpas med kraft”
7. “when it comes to our country’s security there is no room for party quarrels, party politics” (Löfven, 2015a)
   - “När det gäller vårt lands säkerhet så finns det inget utrymme för partikäbbel, partipolitik”

8. “important to have a large consensus in order to combat terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016e).
   - “Viktigt att ha en bred enighet för att bekämpa terrorism”

9. “I am proud over having such a large consensus in the Swedish parliament regarding the importance of that the democratic and the open Sweden will be defended” (Löfven, 2016a).
   - “Jag är stolt över att vi har en så bred enighet i Sveriges riksdag kring vikten av att det demokratiska och det öppna sverige ska försvaras”

10. “retain the order, security and safety” (Löfven, 2015a)
    - “upprätthålla ordningen, säkerheten och tryggheten”

11. “hit hard against terrorism” (Löfven, 2015a).
    - “slå hårt mot terrorism”

12. “anger and determination to actually win over terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016d).
    - “vrede och beslutsamhet att faktiskt vinna över terrorismen”

13. “continue being determined in advocating peace, democracy and openness” (Wallström, 2015c).
    - “Fortsätta vara beslutsamma i att förespråka fred, demokrati och öppenhet”

14. “we will not let the fear and violence win over us” (Wallström, 2015c)
    - “Vi ska inte låt rädslan och våldet vinna över oss”

15. “show both solidarity and show our strength […], to stand together” (Wallström, 2016b).
    - “Visa både solidaritet och visa vår styrka också […], att hålla ihop”

16. “to show that Europe, our way of life, our democracy, our open societies, that we do not accept that one destroys this” (Wallström, 2016b).
    - “Visa att Europa, vårt sätt att leva, vår demokrati, våra öppna samhällen, vi accepterar inte att man förstör detta”

17. “only an open and free society can mobilize the power necessary to overcome terrorism. For a security service to function in a democratic society it has to have the trust of the people. The open democratic society is actually the key-stone for combating terrorism” (Ygeman, 2016a).
- "Bara ett öppet och fritt samhälle kan mobilisera den kraft som krävs för att övervinna terrorism. Ska en säkerhetsstjänst kunna fungera i ett demokratiskt samhälle måste den ha folkets förtroende. Det öppna demokratiska samhället är i själva verket grundstenen för att bekämpa terrorismen"

18. “murderers in Isil” (Löfven, 2015a)
- “mördarna i Isil”

19. “our society offers no free zone for one that is not in for the fundamental values of all people’s equality. Sweden shall never be a sanctuary for terrorism and terrorists” (Löfven, 2015a).
- “Vårt samhälle erbjuder ingen frizon för den som inte ställer upp på de grundläggande värderingarna om alla människors lika värde. Sverige ska aldrig bli en fristad för terrorism och terrorister”

20. “it can never be guaranteed that this does not happen, no. Because then I believe that we have a society that nobody wants. But on the other hand, it is our responsibility and our commitment to do everything we can to prevent it” (Löfven, 2016a).
- “Det går aldrig att garantera att detta inte händer nej, för då tror jag vi har ett samhälle som ingen vill ha. Men däremot så är det vår skyldighet och vår förpliktelse att göra allt det vi kan för att förhindra det”

21. “stand for summary executions, rapes and torture” (Löfven, 2015b)
- “står för summariska avrättningar, våldtäkter och tortyr”

22. “ISIS claims aggressively that the human rights should not apply” (Wallström, 2015d)
- “ISIS hävdar aggressivt att de mänskliga rättigheterna inte gäller”

23. “cowardly, vile acts” (Löfven, 2015c)
- “fega, usla handlingar”

24. “appalling, heinous, cowardly, pitiful acts against people in their everyday life” (Löfven, 2016e).
- “Fruktansvärda, vidriga, fega, ynkliga handlingar mot människor i deras vardag”

25. “savageness and cruelty” in “these evil and dark forces” (Ygeman, 2015a)
- “Råhet och grymhet”; “de här onda och mörka krafterna”

26. “terrorism shall not reach its goals of containment and dissension” (Löfven, 2016a)
- “terrorismen inte ska nå sina mål om slutenet och splittring”

27. “it is precisely the open, free, democratic society these terrorists want to destroy” (Löfven, 2015a).
“Det är precis det öppna, fria, demokratiska samhälle som de här terroristerna vill förgöra”

28. “The laws are there to protect the democracy, openness, freedom. That is what terrorism is threatening. The purpose of the terrorist attack in Paris is to instil fear, horror, and make us curl up and not use our openness and freedom” (Ygeman, 2015a).


29. “once again is the freedom and openness in Europe attacked” (Ygeman, 2016c)
- “Återigen attackeras friheten och öppenheten i Europa”

30. “the message to the one who travels from Sweden to commit crimes against humanity in other countries, that is that if they return here they will be met by police, they shall be put to justice and they shall be punished” (Löfven, 2015a).

- “Så budskapet till den som reser ifrån Sverige för att begå brott mot mänskligheten i andra länder, det är att om de återvänder hit så möts de av polis, de ska ställas inför rätta och de ska straffas”

31. “just next to the European institutions […] striking the democratic hub in Europe” (Löfven, 2016a).

- “Alldeles vid de europeiska institutionerna […] slår mot det demokratiska navet i Europa”

32. “the choice of targets that appears to be totally indiscriminate, […] they are civilians at a concert or at a restaurant” (Ygeman, 2015a).

- “Valet av mål som förefaller ju att vara urskillningslöst, […] det är civila som är på en konsert eller på en resturang”