The Political Elites' Discourse of Right-Wing Populist Parties in Denmark and Sweden

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Preface

The dissertation finishes our master degree in Development and International Relations with the headline "The Political Elites' Discourse of Right-Wing Populist Parties in Denmark and Sweden". The dissertation has been carried out as a comparative study of Denmark and Sweden, focusing on the mainstream parties' acceptance of right-wing populist parties in each country. It is examined by a discourse analysis based on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory supplemented by Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse'.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our supervisor Wolfgang Zank for his educational inputs and dedication.

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Abstract

The emergence of the new party family of right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden has been widely researched in recent years as these parties continuously increase their electoral support. However, the literature to some extent fail to incorporate the importance of how the established political parties accept or reject the appearance of these parties in national politics. This dissertation thereby aims to examine *how the two political systems in Denmark and Sweden have reacted to right-wing populist parties*. This is especially interesting as the two countries are politically, socially and economically very much alike.

h alike, and yet, there seem to have been fundamental differences in the way the political elite (mainstream parties) have reacted to the right-wing populist parties in each country (the Danish People's Party and the Sweden Democrats).

The study approaches the problem area through an comparative case study of the political elites in Denmark and Sweden in order to determine if the discrepancies can be explained by the use of discourse theory in a. The research design is thereby made up of a document analysis containing relevant articulations from the Social Democratic parties, the Liberal Party in Denmark and the Moderates in Sweden, which represent the political elite in this dissertation.

Since the discourse theory (based on Laclau and Mouffe with a supplement from Fairclough) is a diffuse analytical framework, the study has tried to overcome certain barriers by explicitly defining how the concepts derived from the discourse theory are to be understood in this study. In order to limit the empirical material it has been chosen to focus on immigration policies as the right-wing populist-parties are largely defined by their critical stance to immigration. The study makes further use of direct articulations regarding the right-wing populist parties.

Based on the focus on immigration and direct articulations about the right-wing populist parties, the study focuses on four central areas to the problem area: multiculturalism versus nationalism and political correctness versus open debate. We find that these four components largely influence the political elite's acceptance or rejection of right-wing populist parties in the two countries.

The study is an empirical contribution to the field of discourse and we believe that our explicitly formulated conceptualisations of the discourse theory can work to enhance the possibility of applying the diffuse discourse theory on empirical contexts in comparative situations.

Introduction

The political environment in the Nordic countries has changed in recent times as a new party family of right wing populist parties are gaining momentum in national politics. In Denmark the populist party is represented by the Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti, DF). The party functioned as support party for the Liberal-Conservative government for 10 years between 2001 and 2011 and thus secured the parliamentary foundation for the minority coalition. In Sweden, however, the populist movement has faced much more difficulties on national level. The current populist party, the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna, SD), has been politically isolated ever since they managed to get into Riksdagen (the Swedish parliament) in 2010. The election in 2014 proved difficult for the established parties as the Sweden Democrats increased their share of the vote creating a parliamentary crisis. Neither of the established political parties wanted to join forces with the Sweden Democrats and agreed on new legislation that managed to maintain the Sweden Democrats in political isolation. This raises the question why two otherwise similar political systems in welfare-Scandinavia have reacted fundamentally different to right-wing populist parties. Seen from the outside, Denmark and Sweden are politically, socially and economically very much alike; both countries are well-functioning multi-party democracies with large public sectors and universal welfare states with large redistributions of wealth.

The two parties, the DF and the SD, position themselves as social-conservative, nationalistic and against the multicultural society. Especially the latter topic is something that can turn friendly bantering among the two countries into a more serious discussion as we today see Danish homogeneity colliding with Swedish multiculturalism. The political environment in Denmark in terms of immigration policies has the last decade been criticised by their Swedish neighbours for their collaboration strategy with the DF.

The purpose of the dissertation is to examine how the two political systems have taken different paths in dealing with right-wing populist parties over the last couple of decades. This is done by initiating whether there exist a dominant discourse in Denmark and Sweden in relation to the political elite's acceptance of right-wing populist parties in national politics. It is followed by a discursive comparison between the two countries. It is achieved by applying the theoretical framework of Laclau and Mouffe supplemented by Fairclough. In doing so the usefulness of the chosen theoretical perspective is also methodologically examined. The elementary puzzle is why there has been such a fundamental difference in terms of the right-wing populist parties' status and their political influence in two otherwise similar political systems. Societal and historical differences may partly explain the contrast between the two countries.

Problem Area

Problem statement and modification

The dissertation has come about due to the recent political development in Denmark and Sweden regarding right-wing populist parties. We have seen that these kinds of parties have gained momentum throughout Europe and Scandinavia during the last decade, and yet, in Sweden, the established political parties maintain their resistance towards letting a right-wing populist party establish itself in national politics. We have therefore chosen to ask the following:

> *How have the two political elites in Denmark and Sweden reacted to right-wing populist parties?*

Based on the above problem, or puzzle, the study aims to determine how the reactions from the established, mainstream parties in Denmark and Sweden have accepted the influence of the right-wing populist parties' in national politics.

The dissertation is a comparative case study of the two political elites, intended to initiate if there exist a dominant discourse regarding the acceptance of right-wing populist parties among the mainstream parties: the Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne) and the Liberal Party (Venstre) in Denmark, the Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterna) and the Moderates (Moderaterna) in Sweden. First we want to examine if it is possible to establish whether there is a dominant discourse in Denmark and Sweden followed by a comparison of the two cases. Discourses develop over time and are not sedimented from one day to another. Yet, we are interested in the current discourses in Denmark and Sweden. If we find that there is a difference between the dominant discourses regarding the political elites' acceptance of right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden, then we are interested in discussing possible explanations out of many as to why this difference appear. It is done within the framework of our scientific stance regarding Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. In order for us to answer this problem statement we have chosen to outline a historical, empirical overview of the political elites in the two countries, as discourses are sedimented over time.

The analysis will be carried out based on the following hypotheses:

> *Hypothesis 1: There exist a dominant discourse in the political elite in Denmark and Sweden regarding right-wing populist parties*

Hypothesis 2: There exist a difference between the political elites' dominant discourses in Denmark and Sweden regarding right-wing populist parties

Initially the paper is outlining the methodological considerations followed by the theoretical framework of discourse analysis inspired by Laclau and Mouffe supplemented with a concept from Fairclough. In connection with this we explicitly define the way we understand the concepts from Laclau and Mouffe based on a critical perspective related to the boundaries of the theory within our problem area. It is underpinned by an explicit analysis strategy before the actual analysis is presented. Subsequently an analysis and discussion will be carried out to answer the problem formulation and belonging hypotheses.

Methodology

In this chapter the methodology of the dissertation will be described and scientific considerations will be presented. First, an overview of the dissertation's structure. Second, an argumentation for the dissertations relevance and for the choice of our case study. Third, there will be a more methodological argumentation for the chosen approaches and data collection. Finally, the scientific considerations will be outlined.

Project specifications

1. Problem area: The political elite in Denmark and Sweden has reacted fundamentally different to right-wing populist parties creating different leeway's in national politics for the two parties.

2. Methods:
    1. Comparative case study
    2. Inductive and deductive approach
    3. Qualitative research
    4. Social constructivism

3. Theoretical framework: The dissertation is inspired by Laclau and Mouffe's contributions to discourse theory and partly Fairclough's critical discourse analysis with his notion 'order of discourse'.

4. Empirical material: Data and information is collected from Danish and Swedish media, universities and databases of relevance.

5. Analysis: The analysis is a comparative case study of discourses regarding mainstream parties' acceptance of right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden with the purpose of determining *how* they have reacted in order to understand *why* the reactions have been different in the two countries.

6. Conclusion: Presents the result of the discourse analysis.

The design figure list how the study is designed based on our problem area and clarifies the point of departure as a comparative case study of the political elites in Denmark and Sweden. The emphasis is on the discourse of mainstream parties towards right-wing populist parties. Combining inductive

and deductive approaches in this study seek to present a comprehensive portrayal of the historical state of the mainstream parties and aforementioned issues linked to right-wing populist parties in the two countries. The starting point is inductive as relevant and available empirical material has been examined with the purpose of outlining discursive development among the mainstream parties within the subject of right-wing populism. Consequently, Laclau and Mouffe's contributions to discourse analysis have been chosen as the theoretical framework to analyse the cause and consequences of political articulations regarding right-wing populist parties and thus follows a deductive approach.

The choice of methodological documentation is made from the assessment that using already existing empirical material, the analysis will be based on empirical material that have specific relevance for the study of our problem area. Due to limited resources and careful considerations on how they would contribute to the study, other approaches such as interviews, focus groups, surveys etc. have been excluded. There is no doubt that interviewing top politicians from the mainstream parties in both countries would have helped clarifying how they as politicians and their belonging party perceive and react to right-wing populist parties in both countries. However, as it has been election year in Denmark with the election being carried out in June 2015, it has not been possible to get in contact with the relevant political parties. On top of that, the study unfolds in a limited period and we have therefore chosen not to conduct our own interviews, but rely on interviews from the media where we will extract direct quotations that are in relation to our problem area. Moreover, it is supported by relevant policies. The additional qualitative methods could have helped to clarify complications related to the problem area and at the same time reduce biases. However, it is important to underline, that the chosen approach of document analysis not only is chosen as it is an extended related advantage, but also because it is the most relevant methodological approach to use in the study of the problem area.

Case study: Comparative

The study of the dissertation is build around two particular cases in a comparative study of Denmark and Sweden. Assuming that political processes create and change social phenomena and thereby are part of social reality, a case study, in collaboration with our theoretical framework of discourse analysis, gives an opportunity to study the social phenomenon of our problem area (Antoft & Salomonsen 2007).

According to Robert K. Yin a case study is an empirical study that examines a temporary, current or

historical phenomenon of its own life. In this case it is assumed that there exists a link between the social phenomenon and the context in which the phenomenon plays out and where more data sources are used (Yin 1994[1]). In this case our research design, document analysis, gives the opportunity for studying two political elites and their reactions to right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden. This can be classified as a social phenomenon studied within a context (De Vaus 2001). To put it in another way, we find it interesting that the right-wing populist party (DF) and its politics in Denmark have been accepted as a credible political player as the party functioned as support party for the Liberal-Conservative government for 10 years (2001-2011). On the other side of Øresund, however, the Swedish right-wing populist party (SD), has on the contrary been experiencing political isolation ever since it got into Riksdagen in 2010. The reactions can be seen as social phenomena within politics where articulations get institutionalised in the social reality and thus change or create new policies over time depending on the context.

Since we are operating with a comparative case study of two countries' mainstream parties' acceptance of right-wing populist parties, it is based on a multiple case study. By using this study design we have the opportunity to go in-depth in terms of the respective two political elites. Specifically the mainstream parties and front-running politicians through their political articulations about the right-wing populist parties. The study will take form based on observations by looking at empirical material derived mainly from media (Brymann 2008)[2].

In terms of the generalisability of the dissertation it is important to remember that we are working with a case study, which limits the possibilities for generalising. Generalisation is as such not the aim of the dissertation as we are working with a comparative case study. Additionally, we work in a social constructivist point of view throughout our dissertation, which states that results and conclusions are contextual, meaning that the analysis must be seen in the theoretical light in which it is performed.

Choice of discourse analysis as theoretical approach

This study has used a deductive approach in terms of selecting a relevant theoretical framework in which to understand and analyse the political elites in Denmark and Sweden regarding acceptance of right-wing populist parties. It draws upon Laclau and Mouffe's contributions to discourse theory,

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[1] Yin's definition: *"A case study is an empirical inquiry that: Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident"* (Yin 1994:13).
[2] You also distinguish single case study with one unit or more embedded units to analyse, which again is dependent on the aim of the study (Yin 1994).

and is based on the assumption that language and the way people with impact, here politicians, articulate is highly influential to how public debate and discourses are shaped. It is thus embedded in social constructivism, which states that reality is socially constructed (see section: Scientific Stance).

We believe it is possible to strategically compare the discourses in the context of Denmark and Sweden by looking both from a micro- and macro-level perspective. The macro-level analysis connects discourses to their societal and historical contexts as well as describes and criticise the discursive world that people inhabit. Micro-level analyses, in turn, entail very detailed studies of social interaction, which can sometimes come rather close to conversation analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2011). Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory incorporates both micro- and macro-level analysis, and thus allow us to analyse both the context and perceptions of particular words relevant to our problem area. However, we have excluded other contributions to discourse theory that could have been relevant as well such as Foucauldian discourse theory and analysis, psychological discourse analysis or the full theory of Fairclough's critical discourse.

When Laclau and Mouffe developed their discourse theory it was intended to analyse political processes (Laclau 1990). Therefore we find it relevant to try this theory on our empirical study that is concerned with analysing the political elite.

Choice of empirical material

Our research strategy is a document analysis and because of our limited resources, as presented in the projects specifications, we are working with already existing empirical material with relevance to our problem area, hence, our documents have to be analysed carefully. There are always certain biases that must be kept in mind when doing the analysis, especially in this case where we are working with a comparative case study of two countries. The dissertation is based on secondary material, which can therefore be action oriented and the author might consequently influence the reader (Kristensen *et al.* 2007). Thus, documents in general play a societal role because the articulations can affect actors (Duedahl & Jacobsen 2010).

When choosing empirical material it is kept in mind to find material that says something about *how* the two political elites in Denmark and Sweden have accepted right-wing populist parties and *how* the populist parties are perceived. We have tried to find material that contain interviews or in other ways have content that contribute with valid material about the mainstream parties and their front-

running politicians in the two political elites. The unfolded empirical material differs between Denmark and Sweden as the countries have undergone different discursive developments throughout history despite their similarities.

We have used the following databases: Infomedia (Denmark) and ArtikelSök (Sweden) and searched on key words in order to find articles containing articulations that are useful for our problem area. The key words include, but are not limited to, the mainstream parties, right-wing populism, nationalism, multiculturalism, xenophobia, and immigration. When searching in two different databases in two different countries some limitations appear, as it cannot be expected that the same things are articulated in two different contexts. For instance, it was possible to find more articles where the mainstream parties are articulating *about* the populist party in Sweden compared to Denmark. Because of this, we have chosen to put a focus on immigration policies and how the mainstream parties articulate these as this area is an essential part of the right-wing populist discourse (for more about right-wing populism see: Analysis Strategy). It is worth noting here that there is no clear distinction between refugees and immigrants in Denmark or Sweden. In the effort of preparing an adequate study of the problem, we have tried to meet the biases that might occur, as we ourselves generate new empirical evidence based on already existing empirical material.

Choice of Analysis Strategy

Laclau and Mouffe's theory provides tools to be interpretive in terms of empirical material. We have therefore chosen to formulate an analysis strategy in order to explicitly clarify our interpretations of Laclau and Mouffe's concepts and how we are going to use them in the analysis. This is supplemented by Fairclough's concept of 'order of discourse', which will be operationalised in terms of our problem area (cf. section: The field of discourse).

In our analysis strategy we follow a hypothetical-deductive method where the aim is to draw hypotheses in terms of our problem area. Specifically we draw hypotheses from our theoretical field of discourse in which we want to try our empirical situation in order to make logical deductions based on empirical material. If the empirical consequences are different from what we observe, the hypotheses can be falsified. If a hypothesis cannot be falsified we can choose to accept working with it (Brymann 2008).

In order to try our hypotheses we compare texts by substitution. Substitution involves substituting one word with a different word, which means that two versions of the text can be compared with

one another. By doing so the meaning of the original word can be interpreted into meanings (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). It is important to note that we initially have an open approach to the selected empirical data. This means, we allow ourselves to follow concrete articulations, nodal points, moments, elements etc. that are the core concepts of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (see section: Field of Discourse). The analysis is as such carried out in a micro-perspective that is close to linguistic analysis as we emphasise articulations of certain words.

The analysis is followed by a discussion that incorporates the macro-level perspective. It seeks to give an idea of why there is a discursive difference between the mainstream parties' acceptance of right-wing populist parties, and find explanatory answers in the societal and historical contexts of the two countries.

Scientific stance

The following section outlines the scientific position of the dissertation. The scientific stance is built around Laclau and Mouffe's contribution to discourse theory. As our theoretical approach is based on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, we are working within social constructivism with a post-structuralist focus. We are also using Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse' from his contribution to critical discourse analysis in our theory appliance although he is not a post-structuralist as Laclau and Mouffe. Here it is worth mentioning that Fairclough distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive processes in which Laclau and Mouffe disagree. However, both theories are categorised within the field of social constructivism and agree on the functioning of discourses: discursive practices is a social practice that shapes the social world (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

This chapter starts with a short presentation of the ontological standpoint, and a description of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in a scientific perspective. Afterwards an argumentation of the chosen scientific stance will appear by looking at the epistemological implications of the dissertation.

Discourse in a theoretical scientific perspective

The notion *'discourse'* has an unclear and very broad definition. The philosophical roots of discourse theory is embedded in social constructivism creating a rather unclear and broad definition of what *'discourse'* actually is. Further, there exist many different discourse theories, however, they

have one thing in common, which is their starting point: social constructivism. This is seen through a critical approach to knowledge, which is reflecting social constructivism's ontological standpoint as no knowledge of the world can be said to be an objective truth. All knowledge about the world is a product of historical and cultural exchanges, views and interchanges among people, and the way in which the world is perceived and constructed is thus through social processes and thereby creating a shared reality. When individuals realise they live in a shared reality created by social processes, a discourse can determine which actions are considered being natural and which actions are considered unthinkable. The truth is therefore a discursive construction, determined by different systems of knowledge (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002).

Structuralism and post-structuralism

The analytical approach to discourse theories is rooted in structuralism and post-structuralism. Common to the two is the emphasis on the significance of language. Language is understood as the carrier to access reality as language gives meaning to objects; that is, language is used to convey meanings. The post-structuralists retain the structuralists' belief that all social systems can be represented as *"coded systems of meaning rather than direct transactions with reality"* (Whisnant 2012)

Going back to the beginning and meaning of language, the French linguistic and semiotician, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), laid the foundation for the many significant developments in linguistics and semiology[3] in the 20th century and thereby also the discourse analysis. He argued that words are never objective and can therefore not exist outside discourses (Saussure 1966). Words are products of social processes and take part in social structures. The meaning of a word is thereby never inherent in the word itself as it is the social construction that gives meaning to the word. The importance in terms of words as a product of social processes is that the meaning of a word is further defined by the words from which they differ (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002).

The post-structuralists have further developed Saussure's theory of words as never being objective and added that it is not only a matter of words made up of characters but also the mutual difference in a structural network that creates meaning (see section: The field of discourse) (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002). Where the structuralists argue that the mutual relationship between words are fixed, implying a closed system, the post-structuralists on the contrary argue that words change meaning

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[3] Semiology is the study of sign, sign processes and the meaning of the signs. It belongs to the Sausserian tradition. E.g. Robins writes Saussure's statement of *"the structural approach to language underlies virtually the whole of modern linguistics"* (Robins 1979, p. 201)

depending on the social structure the words are used in. Post-structuralists thus challenge the closed system adopted by the structuralists.

The post-structuralists argue that it is not possible to fixate the meaning of words; what may not have been socially acceptable to say in 1950, might be acceptable today and vice versa. However, post-structuralists do accept the notion hegemony as it can create temporary stability. This means, the social structures words are used in always exist in a temporary state (See section: Field of discourse for a definition of hegemony) (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002).

There is a pronounced difference between discourse theories in general in terms of whether they mostly draw upon structuralism or poststructuralism as just presented. These differences have consequences for the theories and thus the strategy of analysis. One aspect where it is clear is in terms of the distinction between discourse and not discourse, thus a distinction between whether everything is discursively or whether there are other social practices that can be argued to stand outside a discourse. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory stems from post-structuralism and they are critical of the above differentiation as they believe everything can be understood discursively - when non-discursive practices are articulated, the more obvious it becomes that they are not objectively given but that they can be discursive articulations (Torfing 1999). Laclau and Mouffe see discourses as determining for everything – thereby, all knowledge is socially constructed (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002).

Initial on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory

Laclau and Mouffe have constructed their discourse theory by combining post-Marxism and post-structuralism (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002). It can be difficult to use the notion discourse theory in terms of Laclau and Mouffe's work, as they have never themselves fully operationalised their conceptual contributions. Furthermore, it is not useful to call their work a discourse analysis as the conceptual meaning refers to an analytical toolbox, which their theory is not. It is important to emphasise that Laclau and Mouffe's theory is not a theory in a strict sense as such because there is (for instance) no deductively derived hypotheses:

> *"(…) the theoretical propositions of Laclau and Mouffe are substantively empty, in the sense that they are not organised around a set of substantiated claims about, say the development of advanced industrial societies; and second that we should conceive of ourselves as bricoleurs – willing to use the analytic tools at hand, and prepared to store them for later use if their truth value is seriously questioned"* (Torfing 1999, p.

12).

Working with bricolage means in its essence to use what you have available to solve the tasks and challenges you face. As the above quote argues; individuals only have the resources available, which can be deduced from the discourse. One can thus argue that individuals see problems and solutions from the discourse they are a part of (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002). Thus, discourses work as the setting in terms of individuals' understanding of reality. It is within the boundaries of the discourse that individuals experience reality but, as mentioned above, discourses are not fixed closed systems but conversely changeable.

Epistemological implications

The dissertation builds on the basis of social constructivism. It is the language in the empirical material, the way the language is used and how the language constructs the reality, which is the focus. The empirical material is based on political documents, news articles, political speeches and citations regarding mainstream parties' acceptance of right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden. From the empirical material, the dissertation seeks to analyse whether Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is applicable in terms of explaining why the established political parties have reacted fundamentally different to right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden respectively.

From a social constructivist optic it is neither possible nor intended to reach into what (in this case) the politicians or political parties really mean by what they say in terms of the actual truth. It is what is being articulated (language) that can be examined and through which opinions are constructed in articulations as well as the social consequences of meaning. It is not the truth behind articulations that results in social consequences and creates meaning - it is the language used in the policies behind the political parties that construct the world through a spoken or written reality. The world is socially constructed and it could have looked different if other articulations were brought into play (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). In this context the dissertation is not objectively written because it is examined within a discourse. Therefore, the dissertation should be seen from the reality in which it is written and from the theories and methods used. It is not possible to produce true knowledge as true knowledge can only be said to be true in relation to and based on something due to:

> *"The researcher (always) has some position relative to the field, and the position is to determine what he or she can see and what he or she presents as results. And there*

are always other positions from which reality would have looked different" (Phillips & Jørgensen 1999, p. 32)[4]

A widespread criticism of social constructivism is that everything can appear to be relative. One must hereby distinguish between:

> *"(...) On the one hand scepticism, understood as "the view that we can never achieve true knowledge about the world," and on the other hand relativism "are not initially denying the truth as such, but insists that statements can only be said to be true with respect to some, for example, a particular conceptual framework or a specific ideological perspective"[5]* (Kjørup in Rasborg 2009, p. 381).

When the truth is relative it is not necessarily to be non-existent. However, you need to be aware of the fact that the truth is dependent on the context in which it occurs. In terms of the dissertation this will result in the conclusion being contextual as stated above. This means that the dissertation must be seen in the light of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory with supplementation from Fairclough and the empirical material the analysis is based on.

Laclau and Mouffe's contributions see discourses as ways to set the public agenda. This further means that certain actors are formally creating the discourses through articulations. Therefore there are no objectively existing structures. However, the structures can appear objectively in terms of sedimentation - a state where the structures are not articulated and thus appear to be taken for granted (objective). Sedimentations appear as institutions and take the shape of an institutional order (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Therefore, despite the fact that the actors are formally creating the discourse, the actors are vice versa influenced by the structures through hegemonic discourses - however sediments are only temporary because conflicting articulations can make the discourse unstable. This relationship between actors and structures is to be reflected in the dissertation's analysis (see more in section: The field discourse).

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[4] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Forskeren (altid har) en eller anden position i forhold til genstandsfeltet, og den position er med til at bestemme, hvad han eller hun kan se, og hvad han eller hun fremlægger som resultater. Og der findes altid andre positioner, hvorfra virkeligheden ville tage sig anderledes ud"* (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002, p. 32-33)

[5] Translated from original language, Danish: *"(...) på den ene side skeptisme, forstået som "det synspunkt vi aldrig kan opnå sand erkendelse om verden," og på den anden side relativisme "som ikke i udgangspunktet fornægter sandhed som sådan, men derimod insisterer på at udsagn kun kan siges at være sande i forhold til et eller andet, fx et bestemt begrebsapparat eller et bestemt ideologisk perspektiv" (Kjørup, 2001: 6) (Rasborg, 2009: 381)*

The field of discourse

This chapter seeks to deepen and operationalise the concepts that will be used in the dissertation's analysis. It is thereby not the whole theory of Laclau and Mouffe that will be outlined as to the same with Fairclough's critical discourse analysis but just those parts that are relevant to answer the problem statement. The chapter starts with a presentation of the field of discourse. Afterwards we define Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of the notion of discourse and their corresponding concepts: nodal points, logic of equivalence, the subject, hegemony, political sedimentation, antagonism and agonism. It is followed by Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse'. Finally a summary followed by our own conceptualisation of the theories.

Unfolding the concept of discourse

The notion discourse has been a fashionable term and has been used in many different scientific debates. The concept of discourse is rather different with different meanings used in different contexts. Though, there is a general idea of discourse, which is that language is structured in terms of different patterns that actors more or less follow. Also said in another way: *"a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or aspects of the world)"* (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 1).

Two approaches to discourse analysis

In this chapter two different approaches to social constructivist discourse analysis will be introduced: Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis and parts of Norman Fairclough's commandment critical discourse analysis. The approaches share the same starting point regarding our ways of talking which don't neutrally reflect our world, identities or social relations but in contrast play an active role in creating and further changing them.

The two discourse analyses have similarities while having it's own content. Though it is possible to create and combine elements from different discourse analytical perspectives. Such work is called multi-perspectival work. By doing so we can make a discourse analysis with different perspectives providing different forms of knowledge to answer our problem statement so that the analysis can provide a broader understanding (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 4).

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is the purest poststructuralist theory of the two. The theory's starting point is that discourse constructs the social world and that language can never permanently be fixed. No discourse is a closed entity, which means that discursive struggles occur constantly to

transform other discourses. The aim is to obtain hegemony that is to fix and dominate the meaning of language in their own way.

Norman Fairclough's version of the critical discourse analysis also emphasises the active role of discourse in constructing the world. On the contrary Fairclough states that discourse is one among many social practices, which means that he distinguish between discourse and non-discourse practices. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is thereby less poststructuralist than Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory.

Though there are differences it is still possible to combine the two approaches to discourse theory as just presented. The way in which we will do that is by mostly drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's theory and supplementing their discourse theory with Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse'. We are aware of the fact that Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is operating on a more abstract level, not having so many practical tools for textually oriented discourse analysis as Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, but we believe that it is possible to perform a discourse analysis with the right operationalisation of Laclau and Mouffe's notion. Why we chose to do it in such a way is because of Laclau and Mouffe's focus on the interaction between meaning and politics, which we are highly interested in in terms of our problem area. Further we are working with social phenomena and thereby see the logic in not distinguishing between discourse and non-discourse practices.

Fairclough's main priority in his critical discourse theory is the concept of change. Since this dissertation is not focusing on change, we have chosen to only use Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse'. We believe that our way of combining the two approaches by using Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory with the concept from Fairclough will be fruitful to our analysis thus take more account for the complexity of the phenomena.

The following sections will contain conceptualisations of Laclau and Mouffe's notions. Fairclough's concept will be presented in terms of the critics and missing of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, more specifically the concept *'order of discourse'*.

The individual discourse and its notions

Laclau and Mouffe consider discursive processes as being everything social. This includes not only language but also actions. A discourse is understood as a partial fixation of meaning within a particular context. Discourses are results of articulation processes where articulations are:

> *"(We) call each practice articulation, which establishes a relation between the elements in such a way that their identity is transformed as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality, which is the result of the articulatory practice, we call discourse. As far as the differential positions articulated within a discourse, we call them moments. By contrast, we call any difference that is not discursively articulated, the element"* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; italics in original)

To understand this more clearly it is necessary to go through the different notions of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory to what a discourse is.

Nodal point

A nodal point, which in this case is the key signifier is a characteristic of a discourse. It is a supreme value in nature, a symbolic core, which further concepts is assigned to and form chains of meaning (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Elements and moments

The by-standing concepts are called elements and moments. Elements also called floating signifiers are concepts that do not have a fixed meaning (according to the discourse) but in contrast are fluent. Moments are elements that have achieved fixation in a chain of equivalence. To put it another way, there has been significant retention of the elements meaning. Moments are concepts that achieve significance of and through the nodal point in which they are associated. So the discourse is clear if the elements are transformed into moments, which is the purpose. The discourse seeks to perform a closure and a fixation of the moments in order to avoid ambiguities in terms of the concepts. A discourse is as stated established by nodal points. Some nodal points eliminate conceptual meanings over others. Thus, there is a reduction in the possibilities of different meanings and those excluded are in what is called the *discursive field* (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Discursive field

The discursive field contains excess meaning i.e. all the meanings that are not to be admitted in the discourse but meanings, which may be included in other discourses. The field of discourse is thereby a surplus of meaning. Since discourses are constituted in relation to what they are different from, the discursive field is always a threat to the discourse due to alternative fixations of conceptual meanings. Discourse will obtain a temporary closure but the closure is not final. This is because of

the transformation from elements to moments never stop, which is why the external threat is always present (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Chain of equivalence

The chain of equivalence is a linguistic logic that works to find similarities between different elements that characterise the discourse. To enhance the effect of the chain of equivalence it is set up against what is called the chain of difference containing meanings that stand in contrast to the discourse of the chain of equivalence. Thus, the chain of difference gives further symbolic strength to the chain of equivalence. The chain of equivalence oversimplifies the social reality and antagonistic relationship is useful to give symbolic meaning to phenomena such as *Danishness* and *strangeness.*
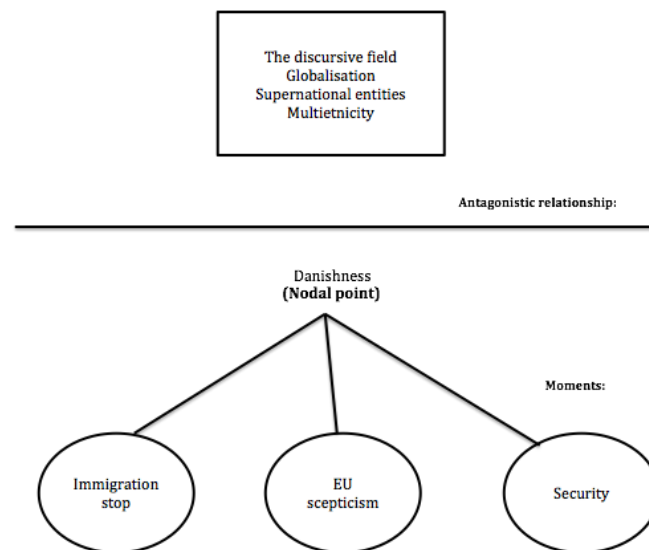
The concept of discourse (according to Laclau and Mouffe) is thereby a discursive attempt to transform elements to moments and maintain them in a temporary fixed meaning. The discourse establishes a closure, a temporary stop to all fluctuations in the meaning of the signs but closure is never definitive: *"The transition from the "elements" to the "moments" is never entirely fulfilled"* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 110). This aim is though never completely successful as the possibilities of meaning to the discursive field always threatens to destabilise the fixity of meaning. Specific articulations challenge the existing discourses by fixing meaning in particular ways. Because of that, every verbal or written expression is also (to some extent) an articulation although it draws on earlier fixations of meaning – that is existing discourses (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Structures

The importance of the concept of discourse is comparable to the concept of structure, but note, they are not the same. Structures are defined as complex deeply embedded patterns of social meaning, of contexts and conditions as well. The structures are expressed through social interaction, which is why structures refer to collective and not individual behaviour whereas discourse refers to both. Structures are accumulated through social interaction therefore collective behaviour, which can take place both directly and indirectly. The concept of discourse can be explained by the same definition. The difference is that discourses affect the cognitively learned strategies of action and -rationales that underlie social action as just presented above. The structures are working through the already learned strategies of action and -rationales and thereby constructed discursively (Laclau and Mouffe 1985)

Now the first notions are laid out for a concrete discourse analysis. The theory behind suggests a focus on specific expressions or articulations such as: what meanings get established by positioning elements in a specific relationship with one another or which signs have a privileged status as a nodal point? Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is interested in analysing *how* the structure, in the form of a discourse, is constituted and changed, which the following sections will outline.

Political precedence and the weighted importance of actors

For Laclau and Mouffe it is the political processes that are the most important and have the greatest impact in the social as it is political articulations that determine how individuals think and as a result of individual action in society (Laclau 1990). This does not mean that everything should be understood as language or actions and that the material aspect is not to be included. As previously written, Laclau and Mouffe sees everything as being discursively. This is to be understood, as discourses themselves are materialistic (Laclau and Mouffe 1985):

> *"(...) children in modern societies are seen as a group which in many ways is different from their groups, and this difference is not only established linguistically. Children are also materially constituted as a group in physical space: they have their own institutions such as nurseries and schools, their own departments in libraries and their own play areas in parks. These institutions and physical features are part of the discourse about children in modern societies"* (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 35).

Laclau and Mouffe do not deny the existence of mental and physical objects; but our understanding and acknowledgment of them and of reality happens through systems of meaning. Not all discourses are political but conversely are everything political discursive as it is results of discursive articulation. Political processes create and change social phenomena, thus they are also directly a part of the social reality. The results from the processes of articulations get institutionalised in the social reality and sedimented to a greater or lesser extent. This is why politics cannot be seen in a strict sense. Laclau and Mouffe see politics as the way in which the society constantly unites in a *certain* way that excludes alternative ways in which the society *could* have been organised. Policy is a social organisation that is a product of political processes (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Subject (actors)

Laclau and Mouffe see, as other constructivists, that phenomena at any given time do not have to occur, as it is the actors' types of action, perceptions of reality and attitudes, which underlie the phenomenon - but the actors could have chosen differently. Therefore the actors have perspectives of actions; they can select and deselect. In terms of the subject and thereby the identity their theory states that the subject can be understood in several ways. The subject is fundamentally split because the identity is represented discursively. The subject thereby positioned and is determined by the discourses the subject is a part of as a result of the belonging discursive structures. The subject is thereby changeable depending on the differently specific discursive situations (Laclau & Zac 1994).

Hegemony and political sedimentation

Like the concept of discourse can be difficult to cover so can the concept of hegemony be a bit diffuse. Jacob Torfing captures the following:

> "*One lexical meaning of Hegemony is 'leadership, authority and influence, especially of one state in a group of states' (…) This definition and usage of the concept of hegemony captures the important aspect of leadership, but fails to include the constructivist aspect highlighted by the discourse-theoretical analytics of Laclau and Mouffe. That is to say, the political as well as moral intellectual leadership of hegemonic force (state, class, movement, or other) hinges on the construction of a discourse formation that provides a surface of inscription for a wide range of demands, views and attitudes*" (Torfing, 1999: 101).

Hegemony is an expansion of a discourse (or discourses) and it has a dominant role in social orientation and thus action (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Hegemony is comparable to discourses in the sense that both concepts represent a restraint of the elements through articulation. Laclau and Mouffe define articulations as being all practices where a relationship between elements converts these same elements. The difference on hegemony and discourses is that hegemony extends across multiple discourses and becomes dominant. It is also through disarticulation, that another discourse can achieve status as the hegemonic discourse - this is called a dislocation (Laclau 1993). Dislocation means; the way you previously articulated is being dissolved and a discursive *battle* will take place. Attempts to take over the dominant hegemonic status of a discourse is conflicting and there will always exist oppressive factors; as the discourses that do not achieve hegemonic status remains inferior and oppressed until they (or rather if) through dislocation can take over the hegemonic status of a discourse.

A period in which a particular discourse obtained hegemony is being described as a period of sedimentation. By sedimentation, a hegemonic discourse is getting more and more accepted. These sedimented discourses which achieve a kind of general acceptance and thereby becomes natural is also referred to as being objective. Objectivity is a historic achievement of political articulations and hides the alternatives. Battles of politics can be *forgotten* and in this way achieve objectivity through quiet consensus. By extension, the concept of power comes into play. Power should be understood as producing the social. It is power that creates the knowledge and identities of individuals in the society and relationships between individuals. Objectivity is all power where power lies as an indirect factor, hence enabling Laclau and Mouffe to equate objectivity and ideology (Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Antagonism and agonism

The discourse theory's starting point is that no discourse can be established completely. Discourses may be objective as described above, but they cannot be more established than moments can be converted into elements again, which can occur in new processes of articulations (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). In this context, the term antagonism comes into play. An antagonism is referred to as a conflict that prevents social order in a political society. Conflicts occur in a society when groups align themselves with different interpretations and identities in reality. An antagonism presupposes diversity and tries to promote an understanding of the reality that a group in society is linked to rather than another. You will find antagonisms exactly where discourses collide. However it is possible to have different identities without being in an antagonistic relationship. Thomsen (2008) gives

an excellent and simple example: *"Socialism and liberalism are different, but it is not necessarily an antagonistic relationship. A such relationship is only triggered if one group deliberately tries to exclude the other, and prevent supporters of the other group to live out their own values"*[6] (Thompsen, 2008: 77). Antagonisms are dissolved when hegemony is achieved.

Chantal Mouffe has subsequently expanded the concept of antagonism, which she has seen as necessary due to the development of the modern pluralist democracy:

> *"Not so long ago it was during much noise and fanfare told us that liberal democracy had won, and that the story was over. Unfortunately, the fall of communism, has far from created a smooth transition to pluralist democracy. By contrast, it has in many places opened up for the nationalist resurgence and for new antagonisms"* (Mouffe, 2002: 185)

Society has changed but it is an illusion to think that contradictions no longer exist. According to Mouffe, it is precisely these conditions that construct the pluralistic liberal democracy. In the pluralistic liberal democracy there must appear a recognition of individuals having the power to influence coupled with a recognition of the logic of difference. Mouffe argues that it is directly dangerous and self-defeating for a pluralistic liberal democracy to ignore contradiction as it: *"(...) makes us unprepared to unrecognised antagonistic manifestations"* (Mouffe, 2002: 186). The reality is that you have to realise that there are different kinds of antagonisms - one of the most important in a modern pluralist democracy, elections precisely, because the electoral vote is a clear-cut boundary between an *us* and *them*. To understand the antagonisms of modern pluralistic liberal democracy, it is necessary to look at some kind of antagonism that takes a different form - called *agonism*. Agonisms have an *us* and *them* perspective. However an agonism appears differently because it does not seek to undermine its opponent, it recognises the others right to be present. In other words, we acknowledge the other as a legitimate opponent (Mouffe 2002). In the dissertation, the concept agonism is used as it considers political opponents as being legitimate which is the setting for the dissertation and further also a condition for a modern democratic society.

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[6] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Socialisme og liberalisme er forskellige, men der er ikke nødvendigvis tale om et antagonistisk forhold. Et sådant udløses først, hvis den ene gruppe bevidst forsøger at udelukke den anden, og vil forhindre tilhængere af denne i at udleve disses værdier"*

Discourse and order of discourse

By now it should be clear that everything is contingent in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. This basic premise has provoked criticism among other discourse theorists. The criticism should be understood in terms of them (Laclau and Mouffe) overestimating the possibility of change. Fairclough (1941) for example says that Laclau and Mouffe overlook the fact that not everybody have equal possibilities for re-articulating elements in new ways in terms of creating change. Individual's discourse is often subjected to existing constraints from structural relationships of dependency. Structural conditions such as class, ethnicity or gender can in general limit actors' possibilities. Fairclough argues that Laclau and Mouffe overlook these structural constraints because they focus so much on contingency (everything is flux and can change).

On the other hand, even though everything can change it does not mean that everything is flux or that change is easy. What is important to remember here is that Laclau and Mouffe distinguish between the objective and the political order because there is always an objected field of discourse of sedimented discourse although everything is contingent. Furthermore they actually recognise that not all actors have the same possibilities for re-articulating in new ways and that is accepted. In their discourse theory actors are understood as subject positions determined by discourses. However one could argue that Laclau and Mouffe under theorise this perspective in terms of social practice. Because of the fact that the recognition of social stability and contingency is present in their theory and no specification of how fixations can be identified and examined in different domains one could argue that the concept 'order of discourse' from Fairclough's version of critical discourse analysis could be optimal to introduce here.

The problem with Laclau and Mouffe's theory is that the 'discursive field' (surplus of meaning, everything that is excluded from the specific discourse) is unclear. Why the concept is unclear is because it refers to any meaning outside the specific discourse and not narrowly refers to potential competing systems of meaning to the specific discourse (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 64-71). Order of discourse mean: *"the configuration of all the discourse types which are used within a social institution or a social field. Discourse types consist of discourses and genres"* (Fairclough, 1995: 66) which basically means that you somehow divide discourses into orders or systems but not in a structural way. For example you have the order of discourse of the media or health service or football. A genre is a certain use of language such as interviews, news genres etc. Within an order of discourse there are specific discursive practices, which you either constitute to (the system of discourses) or reproduce to. So an order of discourse is the sum of all discourses and genres, which are used in a specific domain of social practice or field. By concentrating on the different competing

discourses within the same social domain or field it is possible to analyse which discourse is dominant, where there is a struggle between different discourses and which are shared. Orders of discourse are also open and can change when discourses and genres from other orders of discourses are brought into play (Fairclough 1995)

Summary

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory seeks to provide tools to analyse political phenomena with an understanding of the social and political seen as discursive constructions. In the theory of discourse it is central that social and political phenomena never is understood completely. Their meaning can never be absolutely fixed as contexts of meanings and significant correlations are constantly changing, making room for social battles over autonomy in the society. Discourses are for Laclau and Mouffe all social – i.e. everything is discursively constructed and must therefore be recognised discursively. Discourses are articulations, which seek to create context between elements so that they temporarily are maintained as moments in a chain of equivalence where the terms and concepts are defined by their differences from other concepts. Chains of equivalence give sense to nodal points, which is characteristic of the discourse.

Discourses affect individuals' social actions. A hegemonic discourse is a discourse, which is sedimented by being temporary objective, and that creates an immediate stability. These are structures - structures are discursively constructed but they are never stable as meaningful contexts and ranking among the concepts are constantly changing.

Sedimented discourses are getting dissolved through disarticulation. This is because the sedimented discourses are getting challenged and thereby seek new meaning to the moments that form parts of the chain of equivalence. This process is referred to as a dislocation. In the instability appear antagonisms, which symbolise relationships of conflict between discourses and the elements inherent in the discursive field (agonisms may also occur). The discursive field is always a threat to the discourse but in the case of hegemonic discourses there are no antagonisms as there exist an objectivity that is taken for granted.

Politics are discursively constructed, as it is results of discursive articulations. Political processes create and change social phenomena and are thus directly a part of the social reality. Results from the processes of articulations are being institutionalised in the social reality and sedimented to a

greater or lesser degree. Another key aspect is that phenomena do not need to occur. The actors have a perspective of actions that underlie the phenomena but the actors could have chosen differently. Also, the actors are themselves part of a discursive reality they are affected by.

As Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical tools are at a relatively high level of abstraction, it is the user of the theory that interprets the concepts under a concrete analysis. Therefore, we create a conceptualisation of their analytical toolbox. It means that the conceptualisation is our interpretation of Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical tools, and that there are certainly other possible ways to understand the theory. Furthermore Fairclough's concept of order of discourse will be supplemented in our analysis as an analytical tool.

Our conceptualisation of the field of discourse

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory operates on an abstract level and therefore it may be difficult to translate their concepts in the use of an analysis. The following section therefore seeks to further conceptualise their notions. There are up to several concepts that may be difficult to use in an actual analysis, as there are no instructions included in the theory and the concepts therefore appear diffuse. Furthermore, parts of the theory assumptions may be further questioned.

By now it should be clear that everything is contingent in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. This basic premise has provoked criticism among other discourse theorists. The criticism should be understood in terms of them (Laclau and Mouffe) overestimating the possibility of change. Fairclough (1995) for example says that Laclau and Mouffe overlook the fact that not everybody has equal possibilities for re-articulating elements in new ways in terms of creating change. An individual's discourse is often subjected to existing constraints from structural relationships of dependency. Structural conditions such as class, ethnicity or gender can in general limit actors' possibilities. Fairclough argues that Laclau and Mouffe overlook these structural constraints because they focus so much on contingency (everything is flux and can change) (Fairclough 1995).

We do to some extent agree with Fairclough's criticism towards Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. First we argue that our chosen subjects in the dissertation, the political elite, are to be expected to have the right preconditions regarding structural conditions in terms of our problem area. We are examining two cases Denmark and Sweden respectively, which are both countries that operate in welfare-Scandinavia with well-functioning multiparty democracies, large public sectors, universal welfare states with large redistributions of wealth and thereby to some extent both politi-

cal elites' have equal opportunities in overcoming issues related to the structural conditions. There will always be some differences to designate in a society but the disparities are less compared to other EU countries (Eurostat 2015).

Furthermore, in terms of Laclau and Mouffe's theory one could argue that even though everything can change, it does not mean that everything is flux or that change is easy. What is important to remember here is that Laclau and Mouffe distinguish between the objective and the political order because there is always an objected field of discourse of elements although everything is contingent. Furthermore they actually recognise that not all actors have the same possibilities for re-articulating in new ways. In their discourse theory actors are understood as subject positions determined by discourses as just presented above.

With that said there is no specification to how fixations can be identified and examined in different discourses, also discourses that overlap each other. In terms of our problem area we have chosen to overcome this identification problem by supplementing Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory with the concept 'order of discourse' from Fairclough's critical discourse analysis.

The problem with Laclau and Mouffe's theory is that the 'field of discourse' (surplus of meaning, everything that is excluded from the specific discourse) is unclear. The concept is unclear as it refers to any meaning outside the specific discourse and not narrowly refers to potential competing systems of meaning to the specific discourse. Order of discourse mean: *the configuration of all the discourse types which are used within a social institution or a social domain. Discourse types consist of discourses and genres"* (Fairclough 1995, p. 66) which basically means that you somehow divide discourses into orders or systems but not in a structural way. For example you have the order of discourse of the media or health service or football. A genre is a certain use of language such as interviews, news genres etc. Within an order of discourse there are specific discursive practices, which you either constitute to (the system of discourses) or reproduce to. So an order of discourse is the sum of all discourses and genres, which are used in a specific domain of social practice or field (Fairclough 1995).

In our case we argue that our order of discourse is centred on right-wing populism as the central focus of our dissertation. Our genre is wide in terms of our empirical material consisting of secondary conducted interviews and policies on the immigration area whereas our domain is centred on the political elites' acceptance of right-wing populist parties. By concentrating on the different competing discourses within the same social domain, which in this case is the political elite's acceptance of

right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden, it is possible to analyse which discourse is dominant, where there is a struggle between different discourses and which are shared.

In relation to this, one could ask more directly where the limitations are in terms of dominant discourses; when is a discourse dominant? Based on the above argumentations we find that a discourse is dominant when, as in this case, a majority of the political elite adhere to the same discourse regarding right-wing populist parties. However, some biases are connected to this argument as our empirical material focus on articulations from current or previous prime ministers and/or mainstream party leaders in the two countries. We thus assume that the party leaders are representing their belonging party's policies regarding the immigration area as well as the party in general.

The boundary between a dominant discourse and Laclau and Mouffe's concept of hegemony can be further discussed. Laclau and Mouffe explain it by *"The difference on hegemony and discourses is that hegemony extends across multiple discourses and becomes dominant"* (Laclau 1993, p. 281). In this sense we refer to the concept order of discourse as just presented. In our specific case we argue that hegemony is present if in Denmark's case both mainstream parties (the Liberal and the Social democrats) have the same discourse in terms of accepting the right-wing populist party, DF, based on shared alliances and ideologies and vice versa in Sweden. If this is not the case we cannot talk about a hegemony, but on the contrary it could be different discourses in play (order of discourse).

To determine if this is the case we need to distinguish between the existence of antagonisms and agonisms in our comparisons between Denmark and Sweden. The theory suggest that the difference between antagonisms and agonisms is that both concepts have an *us* an *them* perspective, however, an agonism appear differently because it does not seek to undermine its opponent, it recognises the other's right to be present. In our analysis we will distinguish between the two concepts by looking at articulations that are negative and condescending in a way that the opponent is not being recognised or legitimised. There must appear an either or relationship in the articulation before determining whether it is an antagonism or agonism.

Now all the concepts and assumptions that are diffuse in a way that it may be difficult to use when analysing our problem area are laid out in our own conceptual way. To see more specifically how we are going to analyse our problem area see Analysis Strategy.

Empirical Overview

This chapter goes through the empirical framework of right-wing populism in Denmark and Sweden. First, looking at the DF outlines the situation in Denmark and its roots in Danish politics followed by how the established political parties' discourses have evolved over time. Here we have included the Danish Conservative Party as it used to be an influential party of the political elite and has thus been part of forming the discourse of right-wing populism over time. Secondly, the situation in Sweden is presented by looking at the SD and its breakthrough into Riksdagen. It is followed by some contextual factors as to why it has been difficult for right-wing populism to break through in Swedish politics as well as the discursive development of the mainstream parties in Sweden.

Denmark

The history of right-wing populism in Denmark flourished during the 1970's as a reaction against high taxes and has since then developed into a stance against immigration. The mainstream parties tolerated the movement early while letting the populist party determine much of the political debate in recent years. The following section outlines the DF, its history and influence in Danish politics.

The Right-Wing Populist Danish People's Party

The foundation of the Danish right-wing populist party has its roots in the 1970s when Mogens Glistrup formed the Progress Party (Fremskridtspartiet). The Progress Party emerged on the political scene in a landslide election in 1973 with almost 16% of the vote. The main motivation for the Progress Party was a mobilisation against bureaucracy and an escalating tax burden that in their opinion was heading out of proportion. It was not until the 1980s they mobilised against immigration as well. Rydgren (2010) argues that Denmark did not get a pure radical right-wing populist party until the foundation of the DF in 1995. The Danish People's Party belongs to the group of national- and social conservative parties with a populist outset. It was founded by Pia Kjærsgaard (former party leader), Kristian Thulesen Dahl (current party leader), Poul Nødgaard and Ole Donner as a break-away fraction from the Progress Party due to ideological discrepancies, which made the Progress Party disappear completely from the political scene the following years.

In DF's first election in 1998, the party received 7,4% of the vote, and in 2001 the share of the vote increased to 12%, when the party became the third largest player (Voxmeter 2001). The success was achieved with the strategy of distancing itself from the anarchist elements and positioning itself as a credible political alternative. In the parliamentary elections of 2005 and 2007, DF increased the share of the vote at around 13%, gaining 24 seats in 2005 and 25 seats in 2007. Between 2001 and

2011, DF played a supporting role to the minority government of the Liberal-Conservative coali-
tion. This turned out to be a smart strategy as it gave the party a special position to assert its will
and ideas. The party has proved longevity within the Danish party system with repeated success in
the 2011 elections, when it gained 12,3% and 22 seats in parliament (Klein 2013). At the recent
election in June 2015, the party became the second largest party in parliament with 21,1% of the
vote (Berlingske Barometer 2015). A significant increase since the 2011 election.

Electorate

DF's success the past 10-15 years has mostly been at the expense of the Social Democrats (Klein
2013). In the elections in 2001, 2005 and 2007 DF increased its share of voters from the working-
class milieu. Rydgren (2010) for instance mentioned that the proportion of workers among the DF
voters was 56% in 2001. However, since the 2001 election, there has been a growth in support in all
age groups, though support for the party is particularly prevalent among male workers.

As Denmark became wealthier, socioeconomic issues have lost significance of society's prefer-
ences when choosing leader (Klein 2013). Instead new issues such as immigration, preservation of
culture and questions of European integration has replaced the old, traditional voting class structure
and has taken a more central role in political and social debates. It has created fertile grounds for a
party like DF and according to these frames; social problems should largely be interpreted in ethnic
terms.

DF Policies: Anti-immigration, anti-EU, the welfare state

The core elements of DF's policies are that Denmark and Danish culture according to the party is
threatened by immigration and supranational entities like the EU. The politicisation of immigration
began in the mid-1980s and was led by the Progress Party. Denmark had not previously had a histo-
ry of immigration before the arrival of guest workers during the 1960's post-war economic boom.
Until then Denmark had been a relatively homogene society without large ethnic differences
(Rydgren 2010).

During the 1980s Denmark faced a dramatic increase in asylum seekers, which made it easier to
shift towards an ethnic interpretation of social problems (Skidmore-Hess 2001; Kein 2013; Rydgren
2007, 2010). The increase in asylum seekers was largely due to Denmark's ratification of various
international conventions[7] and the formation of the Migration Act in 1983, which made it easier to

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[7] E.g. the UN Convention Relating to Status of Refugees (1951)

seek asylum in Denmark. Consequently, refugees especially arrived from the conflicted Muslim Middle East in the 1980s and 1990s (Institut for Kultur & Samfund 2015). This gave rise to heated debate where press and state television presented immigration to the audience as a problem, and in the 1990s, it became the dominant topic in newspapers, political discourses and public debate. The DF and the Danish Association, a far-right circle of intellectuals, played a key role in this process. A part of the reason why immigration issues came to dominate Danish political- and mass media discourse since the mid-1990s also had to do with the fact that many of the mainstream political parties joined the discourse, and thus, recognised the legitimacy of the party and its issues (see section below: Discursive development in mainstream parties). Information from 2001 furthermore shows that almost 20% of voters mentioned immigration as the most important problem for politicians to address (Rydgren 2010).

The DF started its political carrier by campaigning for stricter legislation on asylum and immigration already at the election in 1995. The party has since then among other things planned to combat forced marriages, introduce stricter family reunification rules for immigrants and quicker deportation for foreigners with criminal backgrounds. During their time as support party for the Liberal-Conservative coalition (2001-2011) the party for instance managed to contribute to the implementation of the so-called twenty-four-year rule that requires both the Danish resident spouse and the new immigrant spouse to be at least twenty-four years old to be granted residence permit as a means to prevent forced and arranged marriages. (Mouritsen & Olsen 2011)

Different from the early populist parties in the 1970s, the DF is a great supporter of the welfare state and redistribution of taxes. However, in its concern for the welfare state, their effort for more social help vanishes when the debate turns to benefits for immigrants and refugees (Klein 2013). The party has a tendency to rhetorically combine costs in the welfare state with the costs of refugees and immigrants.

In DF's political programme it is stated that the purpose of the party is to assert Denmark's independence and sovereignty. The main strategy for the DF in foreign policy has been to distance itself from the EU and it has been able to benefit from an EU-sceptical niche. The party will not allow Denmark to give up sovereignty and thus opposes the European Union where one of many concerns has been uncontrolled immigration from Eastern Europe (Skidmore-Hess 2003; Danish People's Party 2015). According to the programme, they aim to protect Danish cultural heritage including Danish history, faith, language and customs. Overall the party works to strengthen what they denote as 'Danishness' and claim strong ties to Folkekirken, the common Danish, Christian church with

roots in protestant Christianity, which they believe is inseparable from Danish life and culture (Danish People's Party 2015).

The DF has taken up a more leftist protectionist stance in terms of economic and social policies. There has been a clear development from a tax-protest party to a welfare party. Instead of demanding lower taxes, the party works for an expansion of the welfare state. Especially expenditure on the elderly population should be increased along with education and healthcare services (Klein 2013). DF is as such an untraditional party that is rather difficult to place on the traditional political scale. With regard to the welfare state, the party shares many similarities with the Social Democrats and Socialistisk Folkeparti (Socialist People's Party) while the party is much more radical and conservative when it comes to immigration policies.

Discursive development in mainstream parties

In order to understand the political elite's reaction to the DF, this section outlines the discursive development of the Social Democrats, the Liberal Party (Venstre) and the Conservatives (Konservative).

The origin of the Social Democratic Party and its ideology

The Social Democratic Party in Denmark was a key player in Danish politics throughout the 20th century and an essential actor for 50 years around the middle of the century. In the beginning, the Social Democrats was inspired by Marxism, socialism and class struggles that had come about at the end of the previous century. However, though the Social Democrats ideologically is rooted in Marxists theories, the party chose a reformist path towards the end of the 20th century proclaiming that the democratic socialism should gain momentum from reforms and not revolution. Since 1924 the Social Democrats held office alone or in collaboration with the centre-left parties almost without interruptions until 1982, where the Social Democrats was in opposition for nine years until 1993 (see Appendix 1). It gave rise to internal discrepancies in the party where the main debate in the 1980s and 1990s was an ideological one between the traditionalists and the reformists concerning a reorganisation of the party. The core of this debate concerned how large a part the public sector should play in terms of controlling the market (Den Store Danske 2015).

The struggle between Socialism and Neoliberalism

Already in the 1970s, the Social Democratic dream was challenged by Mogens Glistrup and the Progress Party (Fremskridtspartiet). Back then the populist rhetoric was characterised by a mobili-

sation against high taxes that was the prerequisite for the Social Democratic welfare state. He managed to shake the foundation of the Danish mainstream parties, especially the Social Democrats, by articulating the reality in a new way questioning the tax system, the bureaucracy and the welfare state. Later also immigration. He thus challenged the Social Democratic political discourse on several areas of the time and some argue that the party has still not recovered from Glistrup's outspoken questioning of the Social Democratic welfare project (Allarp 2014).

The 1980s and 1990s was characterised by internal struggles in the Social Democratic Party as the dominant discourse of Marxism and socialism was challenged by market oriented neoliberal articulations within the party that was trying to create a new form of socialism more fit to the modern, competitive society. Regarding the immigration policy, strict became the key word and dominating association with the immigration policy. This was clearly marked when the Social Democratic Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen in 1997 replaced his Minister for Domestic Affairs who opposed stricter immigration (Danmarks Historien 2015).

It was especially with the formation of the DF in 1995 that the issue of immigration became a large part of the public debate as worldwide conflicts largely increased the refugee influxes. The DF was predominantly awarded from voters due to their critical and strict stance on immigration policy and support for the welfare state, which led the Social Democrats becoming increasingly divided over the issue of immigration during the 1990s.

The Social Democrats used to be a defender of refugee immigration and (some sort of) multiculturalism but it changed during the 1990s and the divide within the party became evermore evident when the former MP and leader of the Social Democratic Party group, Mogens Camre, stated the following on a TV show aired in September 1998:

> *"Many of the immigrant women are wrongly fed, because their men want to show their wealth and fortune by keeping their women big and fat. When I see immigrants driving around in big cars, it pops into my mind that they have not earned their money in a way I can accept… They are highly criminal; they drive around in big cars, wear too expensive clothes, and their fat wives give birth to lots of kids"*[8] (Camre 1998)[9]

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[8] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det er en kendsgerning, at mange af indvandrerkvinderne er undertrykte og fejlernærede, fordi mændene gerne vil vise deres rigdom, ved at kvinderne er store og tykke"* (Camre 1998)
[9] Mogens Camre left the Social Democrats for the Danish People's Party in 1999

Poul Nyrup Rasmussen had taken over the role as Prime Minister in 1993 after the Conservative leader Poul Schlüter stepped down due to the so-called Tamil Scandal[10]. In an attempt to distance himself, his party and its values from the DF policies, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen established a counter-offensive against the DF. During the opening speech in Parliament in 1999, Nyrup held a speech where he addressed "The Danish People's Party"[11] 8 times, "view on humanity"[12] 9 times, and "values"[13] 7 times only to conclude with the famous comment: *"Therefore I say to the Danish People's Party: No matter how much effort you put into it - in my view - housebroken, you will never be"*[14] (Poul Nyrup Rasmussen in Statsministeriet 1999). This comment resonated in some years and upheld the position of the Social Democrats that the DF was far outside their policy. However, instead of hunting the DF as an unserious party, the comment has negatively lingered to Poul Nyrup Rasmussen.

The Social Democratic government from 2011

The Social Democratic Party has undergone some ideological changes throughout its time as history changes. From being a mass party deeply rooted in Marxism, the party has slowly adopted the neoliberal market oriented discourse and rhetoric. It became clear when the reformist Helle Thorning-Schmidt in 2005 took over leadership of the party from Poul Nyrup Rasmussen who traditionally had been from the "old school". Helle Thorning managed to lead the party to victory in the 2011 parliamentary elections and the period have largely been characterised by liberal policies. One of the most distinctive comments supporting this came from Bjarne Corydon, Minister of Finance, in 2013, where he specified that *"the Competitive State"*[15] was the goal of the Social Democrats: *"I believe in the Competitive State as the modern welfare state"*[16] (Politiken 2013). According to the Minister of Finance, the 'competitive state' is a modern version of the welfare state, and *"it has come to stay"*[17] (Corydon in Politiken 2013). The competitive state was introduced in Denmark by

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[10] The Tamil Scandal refers to a case of family reunification for Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka. The case prompted the conservative-led government to resign after the release of the Tamil report by Mogens Hornslet in January 1993.
[11] Translated from original language, Danish: "Dansk Folkeparti" (Nyrup 1999)
[12] Translated from original language, Danish: "menneskesyn" (Nyrup 1999)
[13] Translated from original language, Danish: "værdier" (Nyrup 1999)
[14] Translated from original language, Danish: *"derfor siger jeg til Dansk Folkeparti: Uanset, hvor mange anstrengelser, man gør sig - set med mine øjne - stuerene, det bliver I aldrig!"* (Nyrup 1999)
[15] Translated from original language, Danish: "konkurrencestaten" (Politiken 2013)
[16] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Jeg tror på konkurrencestaten som den moderne velfærdsstat"*
[17] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Den er kommet for at blive"* (Politiken 2013)

professor Ove Kaj Pedersen and has with its focus on efficiency and productivity a purpose to trim the welfare rather than expanding it.[18]

With the Social Democratic movement from socialism, Marxism and welfare to liberalism and competition, a space was created for the DF. The DF thus combined the notions of the welfare state with the immigration debate where the Social Democrats were already divided. Not surprisingly, the Social Democrats lost a lot of voters to the DF that rhetorically combines the cost of immigration with losses in the public sector while patenting the notion of 'Danishness'. In 2008, the former Minister of Integration for the Social Democrats, Henrik Dam Kristensen, expressed in an interview with Information that they had not been good enough to stand against the definition of 'Danishness' put forward by the DF, while further stating that the DF had been very competent in politicising the notion. Dam Kristensen further argues that the Social Democrats have not been sufficiently attentive to this issue whether when it comes to the EU, globalisation or environmental policies (Information 2008).

After the election in 2011 the Social Democratic discourse has been characterised by reforms in the public sector in collaboration with the liberal-conservative opposition. The Social Democrats have tried to readopt the reformist rhetoric and policies as a Social Democratic phenomenon. However, due to the constant battle for voters with the DF, the Social Democrats have also adopted some kind of populist rhetoric (Rydgren 2007).

In the annual new years speech 1. January 2015, PM Helle Thorning-Schmidt addressed the issues of children, civil society, security and refugees in Denmark, and stated, *"We live in the best country in the world"[19]*. But in order to maintain that status, Denmark would have to be able to keep up with the increased influx of refugees. She therefore announced that the government want to further tighten immigration policies, for instance refugees' ability for family reunification, in line with the DF's stance on immigration policies. The speech was aimed to another spectre of the voters, hence it had the lowest lix number of all Thorning's speeches and "Denmark"[20] was mentioned up to 17 times (DR 2015e).

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[18] The Competitive State is a concept derived from political science and refers to the reforms of the welfare state taking place in the late 1980s as trade agreements broke down the national governments' control over labor and capital, and launched a competition between nations about their peoples' ability to develop skills and their companies' ability to change. It was introduced in the book "Konkurrencestaten" (2010) by professor Ove K. Pedersen (Den Store Danske 2014)

[19] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Vi lever i verdens bedste land"* (Thorning 2015)

[20] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Danmark"* (Thorning 2015)

The DF has been successful in drawing on the Danes' national feeling, and thus it might be argued that the Social Democrats have taken up this strategy. In turn it seems the DF and the Social Democrats are not politically too far from each other, and instead of creating a boundary between the Social Democrats and the DF like her predecessor Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Thorning keeps an open mind to collaborating with the DF: *"I would like to corporate with the Danish People's Party. There is always an open door to the Danish People's Party"*[21] (TV2 2015). Concerning the question whether Thorning could imagine a governmental corporation, her answer was; *"that should be a question to the DF as they are the ones appointing Lars Løkke Rasmussen as Prime Minister instead of me."*[22] Thereby, she did not disregard the possibility of forming a government supported by the DF (TV2 2015).

Table 1: Core political issues (Jyllands-Posten 2007, DR 2015f)

The Social Democrats	The Danish People's Party
- Children and the elderly	- The elderly
- Safety and security	- Safety and security
- Refugees and immigrants	- Refugees and immigrants
- Health sector	- Health sector

Looking at the core political issues for the Social Democrats and the DF, it becomes clear that they have several similarities (Table 1). The DF cares for the elderly, the health sector and works for a stricter immigration policy in order to maintain the 'Danishness' in society. The Social Democrats wants to be reformists with the same purpose: to secure the welfare state, create security and follow a strict immigration policy to maintain the current standards of society. The rhetorical key is the on-going comparison of the cost of immigration to cost in the public sector. The DF have been fairly successful in mobilising the fear for the multicultural society through populist articulations, and the Social Democrats have adopted some of the same rhetorical strategies, which was especially evident after a debate on TV where both prime minister candidates answered a clear "no" to the question of whether Denmark was a multicultural society (DR 2015a). It was not surprisingly as the Social Democrats had launched an anti-immigration campaign right after New Years where the slo-

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[21] Translated from original language, Danish: *"jeg vil gerne samarbejde med Dansk Folkeparti. Der er altid en åben dør til Dansk Folkeparti"* (TV2 2015)

[22] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Du skal jo egentlig ikke spørge mig om det, men Dansk Folkeparti. For uanset hvad der sker, så ønsker de, at Lars Løkke Rasmussen skal være statsminister"* (TV2 2015)

gans were *"if you come to Denmark, you must work"* and *"harder rules for asylum seekers"*[23] (Socialdemokraterne 2015).

The Liberal and Conservative party: Uffe Ellemann-Jensen and Per Stig Møller in the 1990s
Uffe Ellemann-Jensen was party leader of the Liberal Party, Venstre, from 1984-1998 where especially the election in 1998 is of interest. The DF was as previously mentioned formed in 1995, and 1998 was therefore the party's first parliamentary election. During the election campaign the DF was invited to be the parliamentary foundation would a Liberal-Conservative coalition be able to form government after the election. However, the engagement was much more distant than what is seen today. In several statements to the media, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen made his political stance towards the DF very clear. It was important for him to articulate a distance to the DF as both the Liberal and Conservatives had been punished in the election in 1994 when they more openly had announced influence to the Progress Party, which had shown negatively in opinion polls and resulted in lost respect from the centre-parties (Jyllands-Posten 1998).

Already in 1997 when the Progress Party had put forward a set of demands[24] for a future Liberal-Conservative government, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen stated in a press release:

> *"The Liberal Party will not bend for this form of blackmailing. We will not make such an agreement with neither the Progress Party nor the Danish People's Party. If they rather see a Social Democratic government continue, that is their choice and their responsibility"*[25] (Reuter Finans 1997)

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen was convinced that the immigration policy was best formulated with a broad agreement in parliament. However, he also noted that the hard line already put forward by the Social Democrats was going to continue under his influence.

During the fall in 1997 both V and K made an effort in distancing themselves from Pia Kjærsgaard and the DF. Both party leaders announced that the DF would get no influence on the immigration-

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[23] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Kommer du til Danmark skal du arbejde"* and *"Strammere regler for asylansøgere"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015)
[24] The demands included that refugees and immigrants should be cut in social benefits, that Bosnians should return home, that kindergarten and elderly care should be privatised and that the gross tax should be changed (Reuter Finans 1997)
[25] Translated form original language, Danish: *"Den form for afpresning vil Venstre ikke bøje sig for. Der bliver ikke tale om en sådan aftale med hverken Fremskridtspartiet eller Dansk Folkeparti. Hvis de så hellere vil se en socialdemokratisk regering fortsætte, er det deres valg og deres eget ansvar"* (Reuter Finans 1997)

and rights policies in a VK-government. In Jyllands-Posten (1997) it was argued that the two large opposition parties were trying to wipe off the bogeyman of *"the dark gathering"*[26] that was being painted by the Social Democratic government. Uffe Ellemann-Jensen and Per Stig Møller had no contact with Pia Kjærsgaard throughout the fall, and Ellemann announced that: *"The role of Pia Kjærsgaard will remain the same as that of the far left party Enhedslisten when they appoint Nyrup (as PM red.), but then gets no concessions by the end of the day"*[27] (Ritzaus Bureau 1997)

The discourse during the late 1990s where Uffe Ellemann-Jensen and Per Stig Møller was party leaders of the Liberals and Conservatives respectively was rather clear. Neither parties was interested in rhetorically opening up to the DF due to the fear of losing voters and centre-parties for future corporation. Especially Uffe Ellemann-Jensen was not afraid to explicitly and sometimes rather harshly distance himself to the DF when speaking out in the media, this despite the fact that he knew he would need them as parliamentary foundation should the opposition get majority. The Social Democrats was trying to paint a picture of "the dark gathering"[28] that definitely hurt the opposition as the political discourse at the time towards the DF was characterised by reluctance and hesitation though the party was polling to be the 4th largest party in parliament.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Anders Fogh Rasmussen took over leadership from Uffe Ellemann-Jensen when he lost the election in 1998 and resigned. Anders Fogh Rasmussen turned out to be a prominent politician with a great talent in shaping a new structure within the political discourse. The parliamentary election in 2001 that instated Anders Fogh Rasmussen as prime minister form a milestone in Danish politics: for the first time since 1920, the Social Democrats was no longer the largest party and the election became the biggest landslide victory since 1973. It resulted in substantial change in power relations between the right and the left where value-policy became a determining factor - particularly the immigration policy (Hansen 2011).

Cultural battle, and repression versus human freedom

According to Lykkeberg in his book *"Kampen og Sandhederne"* (2008) was part of the result in the 2001-election *also* a result of the right-wing's success in constructing the left-wing as dominating,

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[26] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det sorte sammenrend"* (Jyllands-Posten 1997)
[27] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Pia Kjærsgaards rolle vil være den samme, som Enhedslisten spiller, når den peger på Nyrup, men så iøvrigt ingen indrømmelser får"* (Ritzaus Bureau 1997)
[28] Translated from original language, Danish: "den sorte sammerend".

paternalistic and as the peoples' actual opponent in the form of the upper class' *"the panellists"*[29] and its paternalistic, repressive attempt to educate or school *"the common Dane"*[30] (Hansen 2011). Fogh's cultural battle was largely a power struggle that as many other political struggles happened through language.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen's New Years speech on 1.1.2002 became the culmination of an intense cultural conflict that very consistently constitute the overall most unifying factor in Fogh's political career. It was a cultural conflict that had been played out during the last 50 years between on the one side the especially Danish institutionalised alliance between the left-wing cultural upper class and the Social Democrats, and on the other side a number of right-wing politicians and culture critics (Hansen 2011). Rhetorically, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, possessed quite a talent where he managed to combine the right amount of ideology from liberalism with an emotional appeal based on antagonisms in political structures. He created a new reality by drawing a picture of human freedom as being opposite the cultural elite influenced by the Social Democrats and their paternalistic and repressive policies that interfere with Anders Fogh's 'human freedom'; that is the individuals' dignity to make own decisions. This is especially important in understanding the societal differences in Denmark and Sweden, also with regard to right-wing populism's influx in national policies in the two countries.

As such was Anders Fogh Rasmussen's discourse largely aimed to confront the cultural elite, the political correctness and the relationship between citizens and the state. To articulate his new project he managed to stage key words like *"the panelist"*[31] "and denoting *"so-called experts"*[32] and thus questioning their actual expertise.

In Anders Fogh Rasmussen's cultural conflict, the DF became an important associate. An associate that could either damage Fogh's battle or help it. In the summer of 2003, Birthe Rønn Hornbech publicly and harshly criticised Pia Kjærsgaard and the DF, making it questionable whether the DF was constituting a problem for Fogh's cultural battle. In spite of this, the right-wing populist party had been successful in confronting the 'political correctness' and had already changed the public debate (Berlingske 2003).

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[29] Translated from original language, Danish: "smagsdommere"
[30] Translated from original language, Danish: "den almene dansker".
[31] Translated from original language, Danish: "smagsdommere".
[32] Translated from original language, Danish: "de såkaldte eksperter"

Anders Fogh Rasmussen continuously downplayed criticism of the DF and would usually in his characteristic way state *"the line of the government is very clear,"*[33] but he would never invest political clout and passion in rejecting the DF (Berlingske 2003). A number of reasons may explain that, but more importantly is that Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Pia Kjærsgaard, despite large differences, was on the same team in a fundamental cultural battle regarding the political discourse in Denmark. Both were trying to change the public debate culture, and they were succeeding. The opponents of Fogh's broad cultural battle was an inhomogeneous group of university people, organisations, politicians, intellectuals and professional experts, who had often warned against the right-wing's legal- and immigration policy as well as cultural policy and policy towards developing countries. How they were denoted was part of the cultural battle: *"political correctness,"*[34] *"cultural radicalism,"*[35] *"expert tyranny"*[36] and *"the panellist"*[37] are all labels Fogh and the DF successfully put on them and thus weakened the traditional Social Democratic ideology and undermined the so-called culture-elite.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen tried to keep the DF on a leash while associating with them in his own liberal project. However, Anders Fogh Rasmussen's ideological stance was deeply embedded in liberalism, while that of the DF stems from nationalism, which was potentially damaging for Fogh's project. Yet, he chose a corporation strategy with the DF and never loudly criticised nor distanced himself from the party in comparison to his predecessor Uffe Ellemann-Jensen who was very clear about his political distance to the DF and the Progress Party. Here Anders Fogh Rasmussen was convinced that the DF was a lesser evil of the Progress Party, and where he would never corporate with the Progress Party, the DF was a valued partner (Jyllands-Posten 2001).

The VK-government 2001-2011
The DF functioned as the government's parliamentary foundation creating a time where the Liberal-Conservative government joggled between liberalism and nationalism that according to Mouritsen and Olsen (2011) initially followed a neo-liberal path in integration and immigration policy already laid out by its Social Democratic predecessor. The following ten years saw refugee, integration and immigration policy articulated in a new and harsher way as the Liberal Party and the DF succeeded in confronting the political correctness within this subject. The Liberal Party had campaigned for

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[33] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Regeringens linje er meget klar"* (Berlingske 2003)
[34] Translated from original language, Danish: "politisk korrekthed".
[35] Translated from original language, Danish: "radikal kulturalisme".
[36] Translated from original language, Danish: "ekspert tyranni".
[37] Translated from original language, Danish: "smagsdommere".

stricter immigration policies up to the election in 2001, and Søren Pind (V), former Minster of Integration, exemplified in a chronic *"Denmark is not for sale"* in 2009 the government's attitude towards immigration:

> *"But there is no room for leniency or for compromise. Just like democracy cannot compromise with democracy - likewise Denmark cannot compromise with Denmark... simply because we, over the centuries - more than a thousand years - have defended our country against external enemies, and have prevented people from accessing what we considered ours. Because this was our place, from where we - the Danish people - can have our culture in peace and safety. The modern-day migration of people has put this advantage - this right of ownership - under pressure. But naturally it is either or. Either Denmark remains with its culture - or, as seen in plenty of places, the culture will parish and Denmark with it. It is not that complicated"* (Pind 2009)[38]

Søren Pind uses the same strategy of drawing antagonisms and a 'black and white' picture. He articulates an 'us,' the democratic Denmark, and 'them,' the external enemy, that is trying to access what we consider as ours. He paints a frightening picture, that if too many of these no-named external enemies put Denmark under pressure, the Danish culture might as well vanish and be taken over by unknowns. To Søren Pind it is *either or*, and it is quite characteristic of the period and in line with the DF's policies and rhetoric.

It can be argued that instead of adopting a counter rhetorical discourse towards the nationalist movement from the DF, the new government under Anders Fogh Rasmussen, consented to similar nationalist, emotionally appealing wordings that has developed and spread throughout the political system, also after 2011.

The Conservatives on the other hand, despite being in government with the Liberals, was a bit more distant with regard to the DF during the reign. A quick search on Infomedia reveals that most headlines show a conflicting relationship between the two parties. In 2004, the Conservatives expressed a concern for the government's close collaboration with the DF, and announced that in the coming election campaign they would distance themselves from the support party. Many Conservative politicians used the Conservatives' National Congress meeting in October 2004 to express their criticism of Pia Kjærsgaard and the DF in a number of speeches (Ritzaus Bureau 2004). Among others

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[38] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Men der er ikke plads til hverken eftergivenhed eller til kompromis. Såvel som demokratiet ikke kan gå på kompromis med demokratiet – således kan Danmark heller ikke gå på kompromis med Danmark...Fordi vi meget enkelt i århundreder – mere end 1000 år – har forsvaret vort land mod ydre fjender, og har forhindret folk i at komme til, hvad vi opfattede som vores. Fordi det her var vores sted, hvorfra vi – det danske folk – kunne have vores kultur i frihed og sikkerhed. De moderne folkevandringer har sat denne adkomst – denne ejendoms-ret – under pres. Men i sagens natur er det jo et enten eller. Enten består Danmark med sin kultur – eller også, hvad man har set masser af steder, forgår den og Danmark med den. Det er ikke svært"* (Pind 2009)

was Connie Hedegaard, Minister for Environment, who referred with humour to Pia Kjærsgaard's revealed stance on globalisation during the opening debate in Parliament: *"She responded with noteworthy honesty: it didn't actual appeal to her"*[39] said Connie Hedegaard (Ritzaus Bureau 2004). Other criticised the DF's immigration policy towards Muslims. Also the Conservative Youth Party was worried about the ties with the DF: *"It's not a decent line and way of doing policy. It is more about rhetoric than on political results"*[40] (Ritzaus Bureau 2004). However, party leader Bendt Bendtsen did not join the criticism as he acknowledged that the government only existed due to the DF's mandates (Ritzaus Bureau 2004).

The Context

It is worth bearing in mind that several contextual factors may play key roles in the development of the discourse towards the DF. For instance, the terror attack on World Trade Center on 11th September 2001 and the crisis of the Muhammed drawings in Jyllands-Posten in 2005.

Sweden

The history and development of Swedish right-wing populism is quite different from many others. The grounds were potentially fertile for populism to prosper, especially with concern to immigration policies, however, it proved very hard to make a breakthrough. This was among other reasons due to the mainstream parties' strong rejection of cooperating with right-wing populists. In the following section, the Swedish populist party, the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) is presented along with its breakthrough into the Riksdag (Swedish parliament) in September 2010. The section is finalised with the mainstream parties political discursive developments in terms of right-wing populist parties.

The Sweden Democrats

The Sweden Democrats arose in 1988 as a continuation of the Sweden Party *(Sverigepartiet)*, which was an alliance between the Progress Party and the nationalistic and xenophobic organisation Keep Sweden Swedish *(Bevara Sverige Svensk, BSS)* from 1985 (Lodenius 2010). It was a gathering of people partly from BSS that established the Sweden Democrats. As implied, some of the members of SD have roots in these previous far-right parties as well as the neo-Nazi Nordic National party

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[39] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Hun svarede med prisværdig ærlighed: det sagde hende faktisk ikke ret meget"* (Ritzaus Bureau 2004)

[40] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det er ikke en anstændig linje og måde de fører politik på. Det handler mere om retorik end om resultater og politik"* (Ritzaus Bureau 2004)

and other nazi and fascistic sects. However, in the 1990s, the party succeeded in distancing itself from the far-right neo-Nazi connections when party leader, Anders Klarström, a former Nazi who was previously convicted for threatening behaviour, was replaced by Mikael Jansson in 1995 (Rydgren 2002; Lodenius 2010). The focus of the party changed to address the multicultural society, and most of the published texts and pamphlets was now about the problems immigration was considered to bring such as high costs and increased crime (Lodenius 2010). The party is currently the largest anti-immigration party in Sweden and the third largest party in Riksdagen.

Elections and supporters

As previously mentioned, it has been difficult for parties with a populist outset to make a breakthrough in Swedish politics on national level. Then, in the 2002 elections, the Sweden Democrats tripled their national electoral support. In the 2006 elections they doubled their support and finally the party entered parliament in 2010 when they exceeded the 4% threshold with 5,7% of the vote. They gained 20 seats out of 349 parliamentary seats (Sveriges Riksdag 2010). At the local level the party had rapidly increased their support especially in the Skåne region. After the election in 2006, the party was represented in nearly half of the municipalities (in 140 out of 290 municipalities), and in 2010 it increased to 245 meaning that the Sweden Democrats today are represented in almost all of Sweden's municipalities (Dahlström and Esaiasson 2011; Klein 2013). In the 2014 election, the SD gained 12,86% of the vote. A significant increase from the election in 2010 (Valmyndigheten 2014).

Klein (2013) used results from two surveys made by the state broadcaster Sveriges Television and by Rydgren and Ruth and found that the majority of the SD's voters are young, aged between 18 to 30 with a significant number of those who are first-time voters aged 18-21. It is mainly men from the working class or currently unemployed that support the SD whereas support among students, women and civil servants is below average. It shows that the SD gets support from marginalised groups with lower income and lack of education. In some areas, Sweden has higher proportions of immigrants and higher crime rates, and these areas are large supporters of the SD. This is especially in the Southern parts where other right-wing populist parties have been prevalent though never making it to parliament (e.g. Skåne Partiet, *the Skåne Party)* (Lodenius 2010).

In comparison, class does not play a determining role in Denmark any longer concerning the question of where people put their vote. Half as many in the working class today vote for the socialist parties compared to the 1960s (Lodenius 2010). In Sweden however there is a much more evident class tradition and faith in what the politicians say. This is according to Arvidsson (in Larsen 2007)

related to the success of the Social Democrats that predominantly has been in power since 1932 (see Appendix 2; Larsen 2007).

Ideology and programme

The SD presents itself as a social conservative party with a nationalist ideology. According to Jungar and Jupskås (2014), the party has always held a centrist or centre-left position in the socioeconomic dimension in combination with an authoritarian approach as it has its roots in right-wing extremism. Immigration and law-and-order issues are the primary focus of the party. The SD supports moderate state regulation of the market and a tax-based redistributive welfare state where they claim the proper people should be prioritised.

The SD has largely in recent years benefitted from the economic, financial and Euro crisis where the population has been confronted with fears about unemployment and excessive immigration. The party is a defender of Swedish national identity and the national state as well as the protection of society through strengthening the rule of law and is as such a big opponent to external entities like the EU (Sverigedemokraterna 2015). Where many other European right-wing populist parties have risen against higher taxes and state bureaucracy, the main goal for the SD is fighting the multicultural society as they see immigration processes as a serious threat to the once homogeneous Swedish nation. Their advocacy involves a limitation of immigration and also the repatriation or assimilation of immigrants. In the beginning, their rejection was mainly targeted Muslim immigrants, however, in recent years, the party has also positioned itself on topics such as labour immigration, family reunification and abuse of the asylum system. One of many arguments is that the Swedish government spends too much money on immigrants instead of helping the elderly (Klein 2013).

Populism - hard to break through

In order to understand the SD's position in Swedish politics, the following section outlines the historical context of Sweden with the notion of 'Folkhemmet' as well as the developments in immigration, multiculturalism and political correctness.

Folkhemmet

Sweden is a special place when looking at social issues, economic welfare and the role of the state in peoples' lives. For many Europeans Sweden is perceived as a Utopia and is often described in idealistic terms with a successful combination of social policies and a capitalist economy. During the 1950's and 1970's, Sweden succeeded in maintaining high growth and thus had a chance to cre-

ate a generous welfare system (Björkman *et al.* 2008). In order to understand Swedish political culture and the hardship for right-wing populist parties to breakthrough, it is necessary to understand the concept of the welfare state seen with Swedish eyes and understand what is meant by the concept of 'Folkhemmet' *(the Peoples' home)*.

The term was first introduced by the Conservative party and taken over by the Social Democrats in the 1930s. It expresses a strong concept of organising and control of the community feeling among people. Here the state is responsible for uniting and the state is thus seen as an extension of society. In this point of view it is fair to say that there is a fusion between the state and society. It has, through this feeling of community become common to emphasise that everyone pays taxes to the community, and then the community, hence the state, has the full responsibility for its members (Björkman *et al.* 2008). Sweden therefore seems to have been one of the few countries that have implemented Rousseau's concept of the state as "People's will".

The idea of 'Folkhemmet' incorporates not only that the community must guarantee Folkhemmet's members' social welfare and security, but also the idea of members' equal worth and equal rights to influence. The concept thus incorporated the first notion of 'Swedishness' predominantly defined by the Social Democrats in the form of modernism, welfare state, internationalism and the idea of being best (Larsen 2007). The notion has given a large degree of confidence embedded in the idea of a community project, which recalls a feeling of homeliness and establishes a 'we'. Because of that, political questions are often discussed by referring to a we-form. The 1920's and 1930's industrialisation followed by the 1800's of poverty where large emigration had characterised the country. As the economic up-turn arrived the vision of 'Folkhemmet' developed in tact with increased immigration (Björkman *et al.* 2008).

Immigration, multiculturalism and political correctness

Immigration was important for Sweden to prosper during the industrial boom, and the question thereof has consequently always been a pressing issue in the country. Today, around 15%[41] of the Swedish population consist of people born abroad (Allarp 2014). However, it was only during the 1980s and 1990s, immigration became politicised and in 1993 the perceived importance of the immigration issue largely increased when 25% of voters identified immigration as one of the three most urgent issues facing the country (Rydgren 2002; Rydgren 2010). It was also during this time a process developed in Sweden that gave rise to two new parties on each end of the traditional politi-

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[41] This number refers to all 'first generation' immigrants regardless of Western- or non-Western background (Allarp 2014)

cal scale: the Green Party to the left and New Democracy to the far-right. New Democracy adopted some kind of populist appeal and won parliamentary seats in 1991, but unlike its Nordic counterparts, the party did not maintain its success.

New Democracy mainly worked for lower taxes, a smaller public sector and restrictive immigration policies. However as the party entered parliament, the question of immigration became more outspoken with a clear negative focus on Muslim immigration. It was clearly marked during a summer tour where party leader Vivianne Franzen stated that *"soon all Swedish children will turn their heads towards Mekka"*[42] (Lodenius 2010, p. 15). The party was not considered 'housebroken'[43] and Carl Bildt (Conservative) did not include the party in his government in 1991. Instead he partnered with the Center Party, the Liberal People's Party and the Christian Democrats. In the general elections in 1994, New Democracy disappeared from the political scene and ceased to exist (Fryklund 2013). Hereafter the topic of immigration receded into the background for a decade until the election in 2002 when immigration and citizenship again became one of the most important political topics (Rydgren 2002; Rydgren 2010).

It has been crucial how the established political parties act and reacts concerning immigration and refugees; if they are not interested in debating it, there is no debate. Since the established political parties early rejected to corporate with right-wing populist it has been hard to actually make immigration an important factor. Some argue that the immigration debate has not played a significant role in Swedish election campaigns until 2014 (Jungar & Jupskås 2014). For instance, during the reign of Carl Bildt (Moderaterna) there was no obvious interest in the cost of immigration, as the direct cost for receiving refugees was never really discussed. When the budget was exceeded, the minister simply applied for more funding, which he got without further questioning. In a letter to Immigration Minister Birgit Friggebo, she was asked about the refugee policy during her time as minister. Her relatively short reply largely incorporates that the refugee policy had no limited cost: *"Thankfully, I was part of a government that did not let humanity follow the economic cycles. Economic cycles come and go, but humanity consists"*[44] (Björklund *et al.* 2008, p. 58)

The reason for that may be ascribed to the political correctness that exists in Swedish politics and media, which does not allow for directly addressing the issue of immigration. This is often criticised in Denmark whereas the Swedes accuse the Danish immigration debate for being hateful and xeno-

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[42] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"snart måste alla svenska barn vända sina huvuden mot Mecka"* (Lodenius 2010, p. 15)

[43] Translated from original language, Swedish: "rumsrent"

[44] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Tack och lov sat jag i en regering som inte let humaniteten följa den ekonomiske konjunkturen. Konjunkturer kommer och går men humaniteten består"*

phobic. Seen with Danish eyes, the Swedish debate is hindered in its openness, while the Swedes argue, this form of political correctness is necessary to not make room for right-wing extremists (Larsen 2007). According to moderate critics like Aje Carlblom, lector in social anthropology, the Swedish self-censorship is so evident that real debate is not an actual opportunity.

In Sweden, the notion of 'multiculturalism' does not cling as negatively as it might do in Denmark due to Sweden's history. As implied, Sweden has a long history of immigration, diversity and solidarity. All these are common words to denote the Swedish mind-set.

Political reactions - The mainstream political discourse

The Social Democrats

Since the Social Democratic Party held office for a majority of terms after its founding in 1889 through 2003, it is fair to say that the ideology and policies of the Social Democratic Party have had strong influence on Swedish politics. The party has its theoretical base within Marxist revisionism, but took up a more neoliberal path influenced by Thatcherism and Anthony Gidden's "Third Way" that led to a comprehensive reorganisation of the party in the 1990s. It was due to the economic downturn, which made it difficult for the Social Democrats to get the unemployment rate below the goal of 4%, and especially among immigrants the unemployment rate was high (Björklun *et al.* 2008). Despite the liberalisation of the economy, the words of honour in the Social Democratic Party continue to be 'freedom, equality and solidarity' (Socialdemokraterna 2015).

The Moderates

The right-wing in Sweden is not as strong as in Denmark, since the conservative party (Moderaterna) is the only regular mainstream party. In 2004 they formed the so-called Alliance (Alliansen) with the Centre Party (Centerpartiet), the Liberal People's Party (Folkpartiet) and the Christian Democrats (Kristen Demokraterna). Despite being a conservative party, the Moderates are not conservative in the word's traditional form. Sweden has, as implied, a long tradition within social democracy and it was by campaigning on these values, the Moderates won the parliamentary election in 2006 (Allarp 2014). The Moderates thus agree to the welfare state, that people pay taxes and the community takes care of its members, hence the notion of 'Folkhemmet'.

It is worth noting that due to the weakness of the right-wing in Sweden and the Moderates' position of only mainstream party in that political block, means that they depend on forming coalitions

across the middle. It is therefore not surprising that the Moderates have clearly distanced themselves from the Sweden Democrats, as it would hinder their own manoeuvre space. After the election in 2010, the message was clear from Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt: *"we shall not collaborate with the SD"* (Jupskås 2013). Hereafter the Green Party, which had initially formed a pre-electoral coalition with the Social Democrats and the Left, agreed to collaborate with the centre-right government in order to make sure that the SD could not blackmail the government on immigration policy. However, since the centre-right government was a few seats short of having a majority in parliament, completely ignoring the SD proved difficult. As a result of the 'hung parliament' it is not surprisingly that there was contact between the government and the SD though it was informal, sporadic and marginal (Jupskås 2013).

After being criticised for possibly being in contact with the SD, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt tried to establish his distance in a speech at Stockholm University in 2012. Here he directed a sharp critique of the party and described it as a party of discontent of the type known from other countries; a party that thrives on fomenting discontent and take advantage of people who believe all politicians are corrupt, but then ignore the initial problems. Reinfeldt's perceptions of the party was clearly stated when he said that the SD in Riksdagen is *"a form of costume"* of *"the internet's drums of noise"*[45] (Svenska Dagbladet 2012). Meaning that the SD in parliament is a wolf in sheep's clothing. He further stated that he did not believe, having an open debate with the SD would take care of the phenomenon of the SD. Instead he argued against cooperation and appealed to people understanding that there are social problems linked to integration and immigration, crime, globalisation and restructuring of Sweden that must be solved. According to Reinfeldt, the SD is a beginning of a downturn already visible in other countries, which is why Sweden should isolate them from power, not invite them in (Svenska Dagbladet 2012). However, SD's position as a parliamentary party made it difficult for the mainstream parties to stick to the 'defuse' strategy, simply because the SD continuously are trying to politicising the issue of immigration (Jupskås 2013).

In August 2014, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt held is famous "Open your hearts"-speech that came to play a crucial role in the 2014 election campaign. In the speech, Reinfeldt asked the Swedish people to open their hearts to the world's refugees and show sympathy for the people who flee for their lives. The speech worked as an opening for immigration and refugees to form the political debate where it has earlier been rejected to even discuss the issue of immigration. Reinfeldt was

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[45] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"en förfinad form i kostym"* of *"djungletrummorna på internet"* (Svenska Dagbladet 2012)

trying to make the election about something else than what the government had been criticised for up to the election (Reinfeldt 2014; Aftonbladet 2014a).

It is evident that the issue of immigration had not taken up a lot of media space, but after the speech the average tweets about immigration and refugees rose from 745 to 2438 daily. Prior to the speech the debate about the future of the welfare state had mainly been about jobs, taxes, gains and financing. After the speech, the welfare discussion was now about mass-immigration, immigration and refugees. When searching media databases on articles containing both "immigration" and "welfare" in the same text a similar picture arises. After Reinfeldt's speech there was five times as many articles written about this subject. From an average of 4 articles per day to 23 articles per day, suggesting that the media took up Reinfeldt's problem description, and thus the speech constitutes a "game changer" in Swedish politics by opening up for the immigration debate (Expressen 2014c).

Löfven (S), the Sweden Democrats and the controversial 2014 election
The general election on 14th September 2014 proved to be quite a thriller as neither political block gained a majority on their own. The Social Democrats announced they would seek to form a minority government consisting of the Social Democrats and the Greens supported by the Left Party. However, the three parties did not hold a majority in the Riksdagen and would need support from at least one opposition party in order to pass legislation (Dagens Nyheter 2014b). In the opposition, the centre-right Alliance consisted of the Moderate Party, the Centre Party, the Liberal People's Party and the Christian Democrats. The Sweden Democrats as such held the balance of power. Though they had become the third largest party in Riksdagen, Löfven refused to cooperate with them. Meanwhile Fredrik Reinfeldt stepped down as leader of the Moderate Party (BBC 2014a). The Centre Party and Liberal People's Party had rejected the Social Democrats' overtures for a coalition, and the day after the election Stefan Löfven ruled out the possibility of forming a government with the Left Party (Sveriges Radio 2014). This raised the possibility of a minority coalition of the Social Democrats and the Greens alone (The Guardian 2014), and on October 2nd, 2014, the Riksdag elected Löfven as Prime Minister, heading the Löfven Cabinet consisting of the Social Democrats and the Greens.

In a party leader debate in October, Löfven explained his resistance to cooperating with the SD as he stated: *"I will always stand up against racism and xenophobia"*[46] (Expo 2014). He then prom-

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[46] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag kommer alltid stå upp mot rasismen och främlingsfientligheten"* (Expo 2014)

ised to continue the line of not cooperating with the Sweden Democrats already laid out by his predecessor.

The budget proposal from the Löfven Cabinet was made in cooperation with the Left Party and presented to the Riksdag on 23rd October 2014. The Alliance presented an alternative budget proposal on November 10th. The two budgets were practically similar regarding migration policy, the main issue for the Sweden Democrats (Expressen 2014a). The Sweden Democrats presented their own alternative budget proposal. The usual practice in the Riksdagen is that parties only vote for their primary budget proposal. During the autumn session, the Sweden Democrats said they would consider deviating from the practice by voting for the Alliance's budget after their own proposal failed. On December 3, 2014, the government thus failed to push through its budget as the Sweden Democrats voted with the centre-right opposition with the argument of reducing the Green Party's influence over Swedish immigration policy (Aftonbladet 2014b). It led to Löfven announcing on a press conference that new elections were to be expected and held on March 22[47] (BBC 2014b). In his statement, Löfven said the Sweden Democrats had declared they would be willing to overthrow every cabinet they disagreed with on immigration politics and said this caused a new political situation in Sweden (Expressen 2014b). He followed up a couple of days later when he stated that: *"I will never act in a way that gives power over the country's development to a neo-fascistic party that neither respects human differences or Sweden's democratic institutions"*[48] (Dagens Nyheter 2014a).

On December 27 Löfven called off the snap elections after six-party talks had resulted in agreements where the government and the opposition would seek common grounds on policy (The Wallstreet Journal 2014). Named the "December Agreement" *(Decemberöverenskommelsen)*, the deal effectively lets an absolute minority coalition govern without needing to form a parliamentary majority through a loyal opposition, with only requirement being to become the larger of the two main blocks (SVT 2014a). The deal was rather controversial and criticised for being undemocratic (SVT 2014b).

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[47] According to the Swedish constitution this election could not be called until December 29 (BBC 2014b)

[48] Translated from Swedish: *"Jag kommer aldrig att agera på ett sätt som ger makten över landets utveckling till ett ny fascistiskt enfrågeparti som vare sig respekterar människors olikheter eller Sveriges demokratiska institutioner"* (Dagens Nyheter 2014a)

Analysis Strategy

Working with discourse theory is as previously stated as working with bricolage. This means it is possible to use anything in the analytical toolbox within discourse theory to solve the challenges at hand. Our challenge is to discursively analyse how the mainstream parties in Denmark and Sweden have accepted the existence of right-wing populist parties by drawing two hypotheses and somehow establish an answer out of many as to *why* this is the case seen in the light of social constructivism and discourse theory. Here it is important to note that we as individuals have made conscious choices concerning the resources we have available in the field of discourse and, hence, we will see problems and solutions from the discourse we are a part of.

Hypotheses

Within the political establishment there are several different discourses in constant struggles and confrontations created through old as well as new articulations and connections by turning elements into moments and create temporary fixed meaning. This aim is though never completely successful as the possibilities of meaning to the discursive field always threatens to destabilise the fixity of meaning. In spite of the uncertain process of a discourse it is possible to create temporary stability until new articulations come into play. When temporary stability is obtained, the post-structuralists are talking about the possibility achieving a dominant discourse. The idea of a dominant discourse, is an essential part of our analysis, and we have decided to work with two hypotheses stating:

> *Hypothesis 1: There exist a dominant discourse in the political elites in Denmark and Sweden regarding the acceptance of right-wing populist parties*

> *Hypothesis 2: There exist a difference between the political elites' dominant discourses in Denmark and Sweden regarding right-wing populist parties*

In order to accept or reject these hypotheses we are to analyse the two political elites and their articulations. Here we accept Fairclough's idea that not everybody has equal possibilities for re-articulating elements in new ways to create change, thus not everybody are able to articulate in a way that will establish a period of sedimentation resulting in a dominant discourse. Thereby, in our analysis we understand Fairclough's idea as just presented to give more power to influential politicians and large political parties since they have the right resources and power to turn elements into moments creating a discourse. Therefore we believe that the mainstream parties: The Social Democrats in both countries, the Liberal Party (Venstre) in Denmark and the Moderates (Moderaterna) in

Sweden along with their front-running politicians are the ones with most articulation power. The Conservative Party in Denmark used to have a certain amount of articulative power as outlined in the empirical overview, however, the party has been largely marginalised in recent years and did not get a very good election in 2015. Based on this, we have chosen to not include the party in the analysis.

To establish whether a dominant discourse is present we must analyse if there exist a quiet consensus among the mainstream parties at Folketinget and Riksdagen regarding how the political elite accept right-wing populist parties in national politics. If we come to the conclusion that we accept a dominant discourse exists in Denmark and Sweden within the political elite, we can compare them in order to conclude whether the political elites' discourses are the same or different.

Using the discourse theory

When Laclau and Mouffe identify discourses they are: *"interested in these as abstract phenomena rather than as resources that people draw upon and transform in the practices of everyday life"* (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002). This does not mean that Laclau and Mouffe's theory cannot be used in a more detailed empirical analysis. The concepts that is useful as tools in our analysis are:

- Nodal points
- The concept of chain of equivalence
- Antagonisms and agonisms
- The discursive field
- Hegemony

From the empirical overview presented above it is evident that there exist different discourses and practices between Denmark and Sweden. In the framework of Laclau and Mouffe, we are to establish a nodal point that works as the starting point for our analysis. As we are concerned with how the DF and the SD are being articulated by mainstream parties, the right-wing populist parties are going to work as our nodal points. It may be argued that the DF and SD are not equally comparable as they are two different parties in two different countries. However, we argue that the DF and the SD come from the same party family and it is therefore possible to compare how they have been accepted or rejected in the political contexts they exist in (Jungar and Jupskås 2014). To the nodal points we have chosen the following moments: multiculturalism, nationalism, political correctness and open debate, which are currently fixed meanings through which the mainstream parties articulate the acceptance of the right-wing populist parties. The analysis is constructed based on the an-

tagonisms between these moments and incorporates what is perceived to be decent behaviour in public debate.

Throughout the analysis we are concerned with the micro-level perspective of discourse theory as we are analysing on direct quotations and immigration policies. It is followed by a discussion that incorporates the macro-level perspective where we relate the findings from the analysis to the societal and historical contexts in the two countries.

Physical Objects and Institutions

When everything is socially and discursively constructed, the truth will be dependent on the context in which it occurs and the conclusion will as such be contextual. We accept the existence of physical objects and institutions as a result of embedded structures because everything is socially constructed by actors with perspectives of action. We accept it as being part of the discourse that we are examining and thus acknowledges the institutions of Folketinget and Riksdagen (the Danish and Swedish parliaments) as contextual fields that may form some kind of boundary to our analysis and conclusion. The discourses within the two political institutions are what Laclau and Mouffe would denote as *certain* ways of politics to unite, which exclude other alternative ways, society *could* have been organised (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). When that is said, we also include the subject as actors and their positions working with the political institutions in the two countries in terms of choice: actors can select and deselect through articulations. Thus the two institutions are articulated in such a way that the discourse the institutions are a part of sets a chain of difference containing meanings that stands in contrast to the discourse and thereby creates the discursive field.

Discursive field and order of discourse

We have established the two parliaments as being physical institutions that set some kind of boundary to our analysis. Furthermore, we limit our analysis to the political elite, hence the Social Democrats, the Liberal Party (Venstre) and the Moderates (Moderaterna). We treat the political elite as associated subjects of our analysis. The chain of equivalence is the articulations among the groups and individuals, hence politicians and political parties, being represented in Folketinget and Riksdagen. The discourse analysis is embedded in structuralism and post-structuralism that emphasises the significance of language. Throughout our writings we will not treat mutual relationships between words as fixed. Rather we lean on the post-structuralists point of view, where words change meaning depending on the social structure in which the words are used since discourses are constituted in relation to what they are different from hence the discursive field. A discourse will obtain a

temporary closure but the closure is never final (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). As such we understand the discursive field as those discourses that lie outside the mainstream parties' discourse in relation to right-wing populist parties. The empirical overview reveal some kind of difference in the political influence of the right-wing populist parties, which means that the countries' discursive field may look different from each other. Based on that we have chosen to draw two chains of equivalence, one for each country.

For us to reject or accept the existence of a dominant discourse in Denmark and Sweden among the mainstream parties we have chosen to draw on Fairclough's concept of 'order of discourse'. Through this concept it is possible for us to rank the different discourses within our domain, which in this context is right-wing populism. This is to be understood as us being able to sort among the discourses, see which discourses overlap and exclude those discourses that are not related to our problem area.

Conceptualisations

In order to fully grasp what is meant by the chosen moments the following section outlines our conceptualisations of right-wing populist parties and the chosen moments.

Right-wing populist parties

The Scandinavian right-wing populism is slightly different from what the concept originally entailed. As outlined in the empirical material the first populist parties were highly critical of high levels of taxation and the bureaucratic state in general as well of welfare outlays (Betz 1993). In Denmark and Sweden, however, the populist parties have taken a different path and moved away from the critical stance towards the welfare state and embraced it instead.

The term 'right-wing' is best defined as an ideology that accepts or supports a system of social hierarchy or social inequality. Right-wing populist parties' belief in a clear social hierarchy is most evident in their universal condemnation of immigrants and their claims that the state should not support them the same way it does 'native' citizens (Rodney 2005).

The term 'populist' however is best described by the way ideas are promoted to the general public. According to Betz (1993a), a populist rhetoric is designed to *"appeal to the allegedly superior common sense of the common people against the dominant cultural and political consensus"* (p. 664). A populist party has a deliberately divisive and antagonistic message, often claimed to be on

the side of the working class while demonising the so-called 'elites' of society who are working against their interests. In doing so, these parties are exploiting the frustration of the general public for political gain (Betz 1993a).

Neither of the two terms "right-wing" or "populist" by themselves adequately describe the parties in this family, and Betz stresses that it is only by combining these two terms that one gets an accurate definition of right-wing populist parties. Betz ultimately characterises right-wing populist parties as follows:

> *"They are right-wing in their rejection of individual and social inequality, in their opposition to the social integration of marginalised groups, and in their appeal to xenophobia, if not overt racism. They are populist in their instrumentalization of sentiments of anxiety and disenchantment and their appeal to the common man and his allegedly superior common sense"* (Betz 1993b, p. 413).

Cas Mudde (2007) adds the concept of nationalism as part of what connects all right-wing populist parties. The term "nationalist" is a good encapsulation of far right ideals in that it expresses pride for one's homeland, but it is missing the other half of the equation; right-wing populist parties are defined not just by their belief in 'protecting their own' but equally so by their belief that 'outsiders' are dangerous to the natural order of things. Because of that, Mudde chooses 'nativism' as the core concept of right-wing populist parties, as Mudde defines the term as *"an ideology which hold that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (the nation) and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state"* (Mudde 2007, p. 19). A party within this definition is considered right-wing populist if it campaigns on a platform of nativism, regardless of its economic or foreign policy.

The DF and the SD are accepted as right-wing populist parties in this dissertation as they have a clear belief in social hierarchy where they believe native citizens should be prioritised. Furthermore, they make use of articulations and campaigns that insinuate a fear for outsiders to influence the homogenous nation-state.

Multiculturalism

The concept of multiculturalism has different aspects to it and no clear definition of the term exists among academics (Ellingsen 2009). In this study multiculturalism describes the existence of ethnic diversity and multiple cultural traditions within a society, and additionally the political elite's

acknowledgement of its existence. By acknowledgement is meant the ideological-normative usage of multiculturalism, which emphasises that acknowledging of the existence of ethnic diversity and ensuring the rights of individuals to retain their culture should go hand in hand with enjoying full access to, participation in, and adherence to, and constitutional principles prevailing in the society (Inglis 1996).

Nationalism

The term "nationalism" is generally used to describe two phenomena: 1) the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and 2) the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) self-determination (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy 2014). Nationalism takes on a harmless or even positive sense and a pernicious, negative one. In this study we see nationalism as harmless in the sense that it involves the feeling of comfortability in the physical and cultural environments of a person's nation as well as taking pride in the positive accomplishments of one's nation or of fellow nationals (Cunningham 2007). In this way, our study understands nationalism as attachment to nationalist connotations such as nationality, national history and importantly the advocacy of these elements in political articulations. It stands in contrast to the concept of multiculturalism, and nationalists within this study are to be understood as seeing the territorial state as centrally 'belonging' to one ethnic-cultural group and as actively charged with protecting and promulgating its traditions.

Political correctness

Political correctness is to be understood as a special courtesy to underprivileged groups, and that this responsiveness is expressed through considerate choice of words and pass the use of discriminating terms. Those who adhere to political correctness reject names that show prejudice and lack of respect, and instead construct new names or use certain words on the grounds that the language should be polite, gender-neutral or open-minded. Political correctness can as such be ascribed to language phenomenon where negatively charged words are replaced by something more neutral. However, the linguistic manoeuvre of replacing negatively charged words does not really challenge the taboo (Frost 1998). In this study political correctness is to be understood as a way in which the political elite choose to articulate sensitive subjects in order to not discriminate or directly address a certain problem area based on the assumption that it might course discomfort to some social groups in society.

Open debate

In contrast to political correctness stands the sceptics who criticise and ironies the behaviour of the political correct. It is also these sceptics who have created the term 'political correctness' (Frost 1998). In the notation lies an indictment that this ideology of political correctness is a bit holy and at worst inauthentic; that it is build on opportunistic opportunism and fear of criticism (Frost 1998). In this study we understand open debate as a space where it is possible to articulate sensitive subject areas in direct ways without necessarily adhering to the use of euphemisms. Furthermore, there is a certain element of freedom of speech as open debate is often defended by this democratic concept.

Analysis

This section is intended to examine how the mainstream parties in Denmark (the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party) and Sweden (the Social Democrats and the Moderates) articulate the two right-wing populist parties in each country (the Danish People's Party and the Sweden Democrats) as an expression of the acceptance of right-wing populist parties in Danish and Swedish politics. The analysis is build around two perspectives 1) mainstream parties' articulations about the right-wing populist parties, and 2) stance on immigration policies, as it is a central part of the right-wing populist discourse as presented in the analysis strategy. Here we are interested in analysing if it is possible to talk about a dominant discourse among the political elite in each country and thereby answer the first hypothesis (cf. Analysis Strategy).

Based on Laclau and Mouffe and Fairclough, the second hypothesis will be answered by comparing how these acceptances of right-wing populist parties in Denmark and Sweden are either different or similar to each other (cf. Analysis Strategy). Finally, we will discuss possible explanations to the discrepancies in the two countries regarding right-wing populist parties. There can be many answers to why, however large historical differences have contributed to different developments in politics in the two countries.

Multiculturalism vs. Nationalism

Sweden

> *"I want to remind you that we are nation that before has stood up and been open (7,14) in times when people have endured severe trials. Currently people are fleeing in numbers similar to (7,23) what we had during the Balkan crisis of the early 1990s. Now I appeal to the Swedish people for patience (7,29) to open your hearts to see those people, who under a lot of stress, are fleeing for their lives (7,37). Fleeing to-wards Europe, fleeing towards freedom, fleeing towards better conditions (7,46). Show openness (7,51). Show tolerance when it is said that "there are so many," "it gets so complicated," "it will be difficult" (7,57). Show tolerance and show that you remember that we have done it before (8,05). We have seen people come from stress, escaped from repression, who have then come into our society (8,08) learned the*

Swedish language, found jobs and are now helping to build a better, freer Sweden (8,15)"[49] (Reinfeldt 2014)

As pointed out in the empirical material, Sweden has a longer history of immigration compared to Denmark (see section: Empirical Overview). In the case of Sweden it is to be seen how the mainstream parties appeal to one of the moments, multiculturalism. For instance, during the pre-election period in 2014, former Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt (the Moderates), held his famous speech (the above quote) that has come be known as the 'Open your hearts'-speech, where the PM appealed to people through advocating solidarity, openness and reminding people of Sweden's position as a humanitarian superpower. Throughout the speech Fredrik Reinfeldt asks the Swedes to take a joint responsibility to help those who come to Sweden whether as refugees or immigrants even though it may have a negative influence on the community. Despite the possible challenges following increased immigration, the former PM rhetorically calls the Swedes to welcome refugees and immigrants with open hearts, patience and an open mind. Fredrik Reinfeldt thus prioritises an inclusive society rather than stuffiness as the key words in his speech concern: patience, open minds, open hearts, and solidarity.

The Social Democratic leader, PM Löfven, also states:

> *"This is my mission even as Prime Minister: to work against injustice wherever it appears. I want to realise the Swedish promise: the opportunity for all people to access knowledge, security and equality. So you and I can live free lives, which follows our hopes and dreams, no matter who we are or where we come from"[50]* (Löfven 2014)

In a discursive comparison, both mainstream parties in Sweden thus seem to be large defenders of multiculturalism. Even though the Moderates are considered a conservative party, it seems they

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[49] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag vill påminna er om att vi är en nation som har stått upp och varit öppna förr (7,14) i tider då människor har utstått svår prövning. Vi har nu människor som flyr i antal som liknar (7,23) det vi hade under Balkan-krisen i Början av 1900-talet. Nu vädjar jag till svenska folket om tålamod (7, 29) om att öppna era hjärtan för att se människor i stark stress med hot mot det egna livet som flyr (7,37). Flyr mot Europa, flyr mot frihet, flyr mot bättre förhållanden (7,46). Visa den öppenheten (7, 51) Visa den toleransen när det heter att "det blir så många", "det blir så krångligt", "det blir så svårt" (7,57) Visa toleransen och visa också att ni minns att vi har gjort det förut (8,05) Vi har sett människor komma från stress, fly från förtryck, som sedan kommit in i vårt samhälle (8,08) lärt sig det svenska språket, fått jobb och nu hjälper till att bygga ett bättre och friare Sverige (8,15)"* (Reinfeldt 2014)

[50] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Sådant är mitt uppdrag även som statsminister: ett arbete mot orättvisor oavsett var de visar sig. Jag vill förverkliga det svenska löftet: alla människors möjlighet till kunskap, trygghet och jämlikhet. Så kan du och jag leva fria liv som följer våra för hoppningar och drömmar, oavsett vilka vi är eller var vi kommer ifrån"* (Löfven 2014)

support the Social Democratic tradition of freedom, equality and solidarity. It is exactly these values that, according to the mainstream parties, are being challenged by a party like the SD. For instance, Löfven stated in June 2014:

> *"I will never act in a way that gives power over the country's development to a neo-fascistic party that neither respects human differences or Sweden's democratic institutions"*[51] (Dagens Nyheter 2014a)

And he continues:

> *"It is a party, that does not stand for fundamental values with regard to all people being equal, which now raises its voice and wants to dictate the terms of Swedish politics. I look very seriously at it"*[52] (Dagens Nyheter 2014a)

In the first quote, the current PM Löfven establishes an extreme antagonism between what he calls a neo fascistic party and Sweden's democratic institutions. He is basically saying that in his view it is not possible to combine democracy with a party like the SD. Initially you would associate the SD with nationalism but Löfven takes it even further and denote them as a neo fascistic party in a very negative context. When he characterises the SD as neo fascistic it may be understood as Löfven drawing on the historical background of the party as presented in the Empirical Overview of Sweden. Löfven is thus not willing to compromise the values that he sees as fundamental for democracy in terms of cooperating with the SD. In this sense, what SD stands for is conflicting with Löfven's perception of fundamental values that ensure equal opportunities not only for the Swedish people but for *all* people. He is thereby defining a line between the two moments of multiculturalism and nationalism where the two concepts in his view is politically incompatible and thus constitute an antagonism.

For the mainstream parties in Sweden the inclusive society, where there is room for everyone despite nationality, ethnicity etc. is important. In Sweden it is as such a matter of creating a common community. Reinfeldt stated:

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[51] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag kommer aldrig att agera på ett sätt som ger makten över landets utveckling till ett nyfascistiskt enfrågeparti som vare sig respekterar människors olikheter eller Sveriges demokratiska institutioner"* (Dagens Nyheter 2014a)

[52] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Det är ett parti som inte står för grundläggande värderingar om att alla människor är lika mycket värda som nu höjer rösten och vill diktera villkoren i svensk politik. Jag ser väldigt allvarligt på det"* (Dagens Nyheter 2014a)

"I want to direct this to all the Swedish people, the threats to our open society must be taken seriously. It starts with you. You all have a responsibility to create a society, you yourselves want to live in. It is not going to be 'us' or 'them', just us"[53] (Expo 2014a)

And Löfven have announced that:

"I will always stand up against racism and xenophobia"[54] (Expo 2014a)

Nationalism is the epitome of an 'us' and 'them' perspective (cf. Analysis Strategy). In Sweden the former PM takes a clear distance from dividing society into 'us' and 'them' by saying *"It is not going to be 'us' or 'them', just us"*. He claims the open society as something that has to be protected when the SD challenges it with nationalist ideas. In terms of the multicultural discourse put forward here by both mainstream parties, the nationalist discourse of the SD constitutes what is called the discursive field. In the discursive field, the SD is constantly challenging other discourses, which particularly in this context would be the multicultural discourse of the mainstream parties.

Denmark

In Denmark it seems there is a greater acceptance of the nationalist discourse among the mainstream parties, for instance Lars Løkke Rasmussen (current PM) ended his Constitution Day speech (2015) by coupling the value of equality with being Danish:

"It is not a social democratic value (equality Ed.). It is not a right-wing or liberal ideology. It is just Danish. It is Denmark"[55] (Løkke 2015a)

In the quote from Lars Løkke Rasmussen, a Danish value become an undefined ideal as it is *"just Danish"* and thereby not for everyone to understand. It becomes an excluding statement with appeal to nationalist feelings, which is further supported by his speech at Folkemødet, when he articulated: *"It's all about who has the best proposition of how Denmark continues to be Denmark"*[56] (Løkke 2015b).

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[53] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag vill rikta mig till hela svenska folket, hoten mot det öppna samhället ska tas på allvar. Det börjar hos er. Ni har alla ett ansvar att skapa det samhälle nu själva vill leva i. Bli inte vi eller dem, bara vi"* (Expo 2014a)

[54] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag kommer alltid stå upp mot rasismen och främlings-fientligheten"* (Expo 2014a)

[55] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det er ikke en socialdemokratisk værdi (ligestilling red.). Det er ikke en borgerlig eller liberal ideologi. Det er bare dansk. Det er Danmark"* (Løkke 2015a)

He is excluding any form of multicultural development as he points out that the important thing is to find a way where Denmark can continue being Denmark as it is. Helle Thorning Schmidt continues in this rhetorical line and states in her New Years Speech (2015):

> *"We have, together, decided that Denmark should be a strong community. It has taken many years to build up. And our grandmothers and grandfathers laid the foundation"*[57] (Thorning 2015).

Here she is emphasising the importance of Danish history, heritage and the fundamental work for today's welfare state created by ancestors. Løkke continues this rhetoric by stating that: *"Denmark is build by the Danes"*[58] (Løkke 2015b). Based on the above quotes it may be argued that there exist a financial motive based on the fact that it is ethnic Danes who have build the foundation of the current society and therefore they should be placed at an advantage in terms of redistribution of wealth. Another perspective is that the political elite is not willing to compromise the institutionalised Danish values: Denmark must continue being Denmark. It is the same rhetorical strategy the DF is using. The right-wing populist party often draws on historical ties and appeal to the nationalist, ethnic part of society and compares cost in immigration policies with lack of financial aid in the welfare state. It may be argued that the mainstream parties nationalist rhetoric further contribute to the space in which the right-wing populist party DF is able to manoeuvre and become legitimised as part of the political discourse and public debate.

It became even more clear that a multicultural society in Denmark is not an option, when the two prime minister candidates were asked about the multicultural society in a broadcasted television debate during the election campaign in 2015. It played out as follows:

> *Question: "Is Denmark a multicultural society?"*
> *Helle Thorning-Schmidt: "No, Denmark is not"*

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[56] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det handler om, hvem der har det bedste bud på, hvordan Danmark bliver ved med at være Danmark"* (Løkke 2015b)
[57] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Vi har besluttet med hinanden, at Danmark skal være et stærkt fællesskab. Det har taget mange år at bygge op. Og vores bedstemødre og bedstefædre støbte fundamentet"* (Thorning 2015)
[58] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Danmark er skabt af danskerne"* (Løkke 2015b)

Lars Løkke Rasmussen: "No, we are in danger of becoming (a multicultural society Ed.), if we do not get our act together"[59] (DR 2015a)

Lars Løkke Rasmussen further continues: *"We must ensure Denmark is connected - humanly and in terms of values. Therefore, we must regain control of immigration"*[60] (Løkke 2015b). What he is doing here is saying that in order for Denmark to function there must be control with the immigration area. He creates an antagonism between the Danish society and the immigration area where the two are in a conflicted discursive relationship since Danish society will not be able to function if this particular area is not controlled. He is in this way further articulating that immigration constitute a challenge to Danish values. Lars Løkke Rasmussen is even emphasising that if they do not do better there is a fear of Denmark *becoming* multicultural. By that he is creating a link between 'fear' and 'multiculturalism' and thus establishes a fear *for* the multicultural society. Where the Swedish political elite appeal to the protection of the open society, Løkke is continuously referring to the boundaries of Danish society as constituting the boundaries of Denmark build on Danish values.

Continuing in the same rhetoric, it is seen that the Social Democrats also articulate that they are not *"interested in parallel societies where Danish values and culture do not exist"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 12). Both mainstream parties as well as the DF are thus working against forming a multicultural society. They are interested in maintaining the homogenous nationstate of Denmark. In terms of culture and policies on values there is not much room for ethnic subcultures in society as neither mainstream parties are interested in the development of parallel communities where Danish values and culture are not existing.

Comparing Denmark and Sweden

It is possible to see a difference in the two countries and in between them. One could argue that there exist an antagonism between the two moments 'nationalism' and 'multiculturalism' in the political elite in Denmark and Sweden respectively. When talking about a dominant discourse, it may be argued that the mainstream parties in Denmark partly have adopted the right-wing populist discourse defined by the DF. In Sweden the opposite is the case. Here you see how the mainstream parties refuse to cooperate with the DF's sisterparty, SD. Where it is particularly clear is on the im-

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[59] Translated from original language, Danish: Spørgsmål: *"Er Danmark et multikulturelt samfund?"*, Helle Thorning-Schmidt: *"Nej, det er Danmark ikke"*, Lars Løkke Rasmussen: *"Nej, men det er vi i fare for at blive, hvis vi ikke tager os sammen"* (DR 2015a)
[60] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Vi skal sikre, at Danmark hænger sammen - menneskeligt og vær-dimæssigt. Derfor skal vi genvinde kontrollen med udlændingeområdet"* (Løkke 2015b)

migration area. In the political elite in Denmark it has been possible to legitimise an immigration policy that is build on a protectionist discourse of Danish values. There is, in the political elite in Sweden, a large support for the multicultural discourse, which is in conflict with the nationalist discourse put forward by the SD. When, the political elite in Sweden, perceive multiculturalism as vital, nationalism becomes the antagonistic opponent. It means that the political elite in Sweden have no acceptance of the reality of a nationalist discourse. Conversely, in the political elite in Denmark, multiculturalism is the antagonistic opponent to the nationalist discourse.

Political correctness vs. Open debate

Denmark

Immigration policy constitutes an area of policy that is rather sensitive and thus it makes sense to analyse how mainstream parties articulate this particular area in terms of political correctness or open debate. In Denmark, the Social Democrats launched a pre-election campaign in January 2015 that stated *"If you come to Denmark you must work"* and *"Harder rules for asylum seekers"*[61] (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 12). The Social Democrats further articulated:

> *"The Social Democrats believe that people who come to Denmark must contribute to our society and not be on social benefits"*[62] (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 12).

The Social Democrats are thus legitimising the tight immigration policy by drawing on fundamental social democratic values of 'providing before you can enjoy'[63], which emphasises that as part of the Danish society everyone have a duty to provide to the community in order to obtain social benefits. The Social Democrats continue:

Translated from original language, Danish: *"Kommer du til Danmark skal du arbejde" and "Strammere regler for asylansøgere"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 12)

[62] Translated from original language, Danish: *"For Socialdemokraterne gælder, at de mennesker, som kommer til Danmark, skal bidrage til vores samfund og ikke være på passiv forsørgelse"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 12)

[63] Old Danish saying: *"Man må yde før man kan nyde"*

"And if you cannot get a real job immediately, you must, as a new thing, still be of use - for instance through a beneficial-job. Refugees and immigrants must enter employment"[64] (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 14)

The above quotes reveal the tone in public debate in Denmark: *"We want a new direction. Therefore, we are going to set clear requirements"[65]* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 13). There seem to be a larger acceptance of direct, and rather harsh, articulations within the immigration area. Instead of articulating at an abstract level about solidarity, which in turn is a fundamental part of the social democratic ideology, it becomes quite practical regarding the reception of refugees and immigrants. It is okay here to grab what the political elite sees as the root of the problem and directly articulate demands for refugees and immigrants:

"At the same time we must take care of people who come here in a fair and orderly manner. But additionally it is expected that we require something from each other, and that we are honest about what expectations there are to people who come to Denmark,"[66] says Maja Panduro (DR 2015b)

Comparing to the Liberal Party in Denmark, they state:

"The Liberal Party wants a tight and consistent immigration policy that is effective towards those foreigners who will not contribute to the Danish society and respect fundamental Danish values as freedom of belief, freedom of expression and equality between the sexes"[67] (Venstre 2014, p.3)

Both the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party believe that a prerequisite for the Danish society is the notion of "providing before enjoying". Both parties are to a large extent referring to this notion in their articulations regarding immigration policy. In this way the rhetoric becomes somewhat direct within this policy area. It is furthermore directly articulated that there should be oppeness and

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[64] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Og kan man ikke få et rigtigt job med det samme, skal man som noget nyt gøre nytte for sin ydelse – eksempelvis i et nyttejob. Flygtninge og indvandrere skal ud på arbejdspladserne"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 14)

[65] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Vi ønsker en ny kurs. Derfor vil vi sætte klare krav"* (Socialdemokraterne 2015, p. 13)

[66] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Samtidig skal vi behandle de mennesker, der kommer hertil, på en ordentlig og rimelig måde. Men dertil hører også, at vi stiller krav til hinanden, og at vi er ærlige omkring, hvilke forventninger der er til folk, som kommer til Danmark"* (DR 2015b)

[67] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Venstre ønsker en stram og konsekvent udlændingepolitik, der er effektiv i forhold til udlændinge, der ikke vil bidrage til det danske samfund og respektere grundlæggende danske værdier, som tros- og ytringsfrihed og ligeværd mellem kønnene"* (Venstre 2014, p.3)

honesty with regard to expectations suggesting the preference of open debate in Denmark with regard to immigration. This mentality is further seen in the Liberal party's immigration policies:

> *"Our idea is to establish immigration regulations where people from countries with whom we have a provable cultural connectedness and attachment get the easiest possible access to get here. This will mean easier access for citizens from a number of countries such as USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Israel, etc., where the likelihood of successful integration into the labour market and in society in general is great"*[68] (Venstre 2014, p. 3).

The Liberal Party is here talking about several different groups where priorities are carried out between them. Through the Liberal Party's immigration policies an antagonistic relationship is created where those who have provable cultural interconnectedness, attachment to Danish values and ability to financially contribute to Denmark stand in contrast to those with less resources. It is a conflictual relationship where some are perceived to have better resources in terms of assimilating to Danish culture and contribute to the Danish society, while those who do not have the same resources are excluded: *"It would exclude someone"* (Venstre 2014, p. 3). Furthermore, the party states: *"Moreover, the existing possibility to expel foreigners who cannot provide for themselves should be exploited to a greater extent"*[69] (Venstre 2014, p. 4). An articulation that has been prioritised to be in an extreme tone. The rhetorical line within the political elite in Denmark does not adhere to the conceptualised political correctness (cf. Analysis Strategy).

Since the mainstream parties are largely aligned with the right-wing populist party's discourse in terms of immigration policies and the fact that the right-wing populist party is democratically elected, it is not surprising that the Social Democrats keep an open door to the DF:

> *"I would like to corporate with the Danish People's Party. There is always an open door to the Danish People's Party"*[70] (Helle Thorning-Schmidt in TV2 2015).

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[68] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Vores tanke er at etablere en udlændingelovgivning, hvor mennesker fra lande, med hvem vi har en dokumenterbar kulturel forbundenhed og tilknytning, får den nemmest tænkelige adgang for at komme hertil. Det vil bl.a. betyde nem adgang fra borgere fra en række lande så som USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australien, Israel m.fl., hvor sandsynligheden for en vellykket integration både på arbejdsmarkedet og i samfundet i øvrigt er stor"* (Venstre 2014, p. 3)
[69] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Desuden bør den eksisterende mulighed for at udvise udlændinge, der ikke kan klare sig selv udnyttes i højre grad"*
[70] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Jeg vil gerne samarbejde med Dansk Folkeparti. Der er altid en åben dør til Dansk Folkeparti"* (Helle Thorning-Schmidt in TV2 2015)

In Denmark it may be argued that it is considered politically correct to acknowledge the DF as a legitimate party in an agonistic relationship as voters have democratically elected it. The Social Democrats and the DF share some resemblance on certain policies and despite being on separate wings of the political scale, Helle Thorning-Schmidt do not refuse the idea of support from the DF both in political matters but also if they would appoint her as prime minister (TV2 2015).

Generally in public debate in Denmark there seem to be a rather vague boundary between what is allowed to say and what is not. The harsh rhetorical line in immigration matters may be said to have become mainstream and considered normal. It may be ascribed to the political elites' relation to freedom of speech that has been largely vocalised since the Muhammed drawings in 2005. On several occasions politicians have come out and defended freedom of speech and it is often the argument when the debate turns to limitations of public debate. The concept has become a status symbol for the free society and in relation to the latest terror attacks in Paris in January 2015, Lars Løkke Rasmussen declared the following:

> *"It fills me with disgust and shock. It is an attack on the very foundations of our free society, freedom of expression. My thoughts are with the deceased and their relatives"*[71] writes Lars Løkke Rasmussen (DR 2015c)

Furthermore, the Social Democrats state:
> *"Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of our democracy. Therefore, we must by all means fight to maintain the right to freely express opinions in speech and writing"*[72] (Berlingske 2014)

Freedom of speech has become a concept that is being used more and more in the public debate in Denmark. Experts point out that the concept has been expanding and is now also used on issues previously not perceived as freedom of speech issues. Furthermore, the argument of freedom of speech can be used to silence critics as no one wants to appear as an opponent to freedom of expression (Ritzaus Bureau 2008). It can partly explain the reason for the space the DF is given to express harsh rhetorical articulations.

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[71] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Det fylder mig med afsky og forfærdelse. Det er et angreb på selve fundamentet under vores frie samfund, ytringsfriheden. Mine første tanker går til de dræbte og deres pårørende, skriver Venstres formand, Lars Løkke Rasmussen"* (DR 2015c)
[72] Translated from original language, Danish:*"Ytringsfrihed er en grundpille i vores demokrati. Derfor skal vi med alle midler kæmpe for at opretholde retten til frit at kunne udtrykke meninger i skrift og tale"* (Berlingske 2014)

Sweden

In terms of Sweden, the situation is quite different. Here both the mainstream parties have a much more soft and discretely tone towards refugees and immigrants. For stance, what the Social Democrats choose to articulate emphasises the fundamental right for everyone displaced to have the opportunity to seek protection:

> *"People who flee from wars and conflicts must be able to seek protection when they are forced to leave their homes. We, Social Democrats, cherish controlled immigration where the right of refugees to seek asylum is fundamental. Within the EU, refugee reception must be attended to with more solidarity"*[73] (Socialdemokraterna 2015)

The Social Democrats refer to regulated immigration, however, they state:

> *"The migration is increasing worldwide, and Sweden is part of the progress. People who travel to experience, study or work in other countries enriches the world. Migration is basically positive .... Reducing inequality in the world is a major political challenge"*[74] (Socialdemokraterna 2015)

Already here it is possible to see a difference in the way a sensitive subject like immigration is articulated between the political elites in the two countries. In the case of Sweden words like solidarity, positivity and enrichment are used as expressions of their immigration policies. They apply rhetorical words that are not condescending, excluding or prioritising in terms of the immigration area, which is connected to political correctness. They believe, like the political elite in Denmark, that some sort of regulation has to appear for society to be able to keep up with immigration issues, however, this regulation is articulated with a certain degree of political correctness. Not like in Denmark where the open debate can become slightly offensive and direct.

This is further supported by a quote from the current PM in Sweden addressed directly to the SD. Here he articulates that his party cannot cooperate with the SD due to the fact that they are not polit-

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[73] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Människor som flyr från krig och konflikter måste kunna söka skydd när de tvingas lämna sina hem. Vi socialdemokrater värnar den reglerade invandringen där rätten för flyktingar att söka asyl är grundläggande. Inom EU måste flyktingmottagandet bäras mer solidariskt"* (Socialdemokraterna 2015)
[74] Translated from original language, Swedish:*"Migrationen i världen ökar och Sverige är en del av den utvecklingen. Människor som reser för att uppleva, studera eller arbeta i andra länder berikar världen. Migration är därför i grunden positivt .... Att minska klyftorna i världen är en stor politisk utmaning"* (Socialdemokraterna 2015)

ically correct, for instance through the way in which the SD articulates Muslims. Löfven assimilates Nazism with the SD's policies on immigration in a very negative context:

> "You have pointed out Muslims in Sweden, and I quote, as our biggest foreign threat since World War II. Thereby you perceive part of the Swedish population, sometimes my colleagues and friends as a threat comparable to Hitler's terror. Therefore I am not going to collaborate with the Sweden Democrats"[75] (Expo 2014a)

In terms of handling the SD in open debate, former PM Fredrik Reinfeldt shares Löfven's point of view and adds that the SD is a phenomenon that he does not believe is taken care of in open debate:

> "We do not believe that we in open debate will take care of the phenomenon of the Sweden Democrats. We must unambiguously understand that there are social problems linked to integration and immigration, crime, globalisation and restructuring of Sweden that we must solve. We must give people hope that these are problems that can be solved. That is what we are trying to do"[76] (Svenska Dagbladet 2012)

The fact that he articulates that the *phenomenon* of the SD is not taken care of in an open debate is also a sign that the political correctness carries a lot of weight. The SD stands for something that is not considered politically correct, and the mainstream parties will not create a space that makes it possible for the SD to express themselves, which thereby sets another antagonism. The SD political discourse is part of the political elite's discursive field, and creating a space for the SD may give the party a chance to redefine the discourse of what is politically correct, which neither mainstream parties seem to be interested in.

It is important to note that though the Swedes are largely political correct, they are still defenders of freedom of speech. For instance, Löfven explicitly stated after the terror attack in Copenhagen in February 2015: *"Together we will stand up for freedom of expression. Nothing should be allowed to*

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[75] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Du har pekat ut muslimer i Sverige, jag citerar, som vårt störste utländska hot sedan andre världskriget. Du ser alltså en del av de svenska medborgarna, ibland mina, partikamrater och vänner som ett hot jämförbart med Hitlers terror. Därför tänker jag inte samarbete med Sverigedemokraterna"* (Expo 2014a)

[76] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Vi kan inte tro att vi i öppen debatt tar hand om fenomenet Sverigedemokraterna, vi måste i grunden inse att det finns samhällsproblem kopplade till integration och invandring, brottslighet, globalisering och omställning av Sverige som vi måste lösa. Vi måste ge människor hopp om att det är problem som går att lösa. Det är det vi försöker göra"* (Svenska Dagbladet 2012)

stop free speech"[77] (Regeringskansliet 2015). However, there seem to be a different relation to the concept. In a question regarding whether former PM Fredrik Reinfeldt sees a risk for Sweden to go through the same process as in Denmark regarding Muhammed drawings, he said:

> *"I think it's important to say two things. The first is that we have been very careful about Sweden being a country where Muslims and Christians, those who believe in God and those who do not believe in God, can live side by side in mutual respect. We think we've come a long way. I have a responsibility that it can continue and take the initiative to deepen this reciprocity and respect. - At the same time, we are committed to standing up for freedom of expression, which is so constitutional and so natural for us and, which is about that we cannot politically decide what is published in newspapers. I want to defend that we have that system"*[78] (Svenska Dagbladet 2007)

In the citation he is being politically correct and discrete, but at the same time insinuating that freedom of speech should encourage integration instead of exclusion. One might argue that there exist an antagonism between freedom of speech and how the political elite treats the SD in national politics. It is a conflicted situation where the SD are not perceived to live up to fundamental values in Swedish society and the mainstream parties therefore do their best to limit the space in which they are able to express their policies. Yet, they are defenders of freedom of speech, which also constitute the opportunity to express opinions that are not necessarily a part of the general discourse. Fredrik Reinfeldt handles this conflicted situation by pointing out that freedom of expression is constitutional in the sense that it is not politically decided what is published in newspapers. Freedom of expression is thereby a matter of not censuring the media rather than a green card for everyone to express any exaggerated opinion in public space.

Comparing Denmark and Sweden

In relation to the two moments 'political correctness' and 'open debate', it is possible to point out a difference in what the political elites perceive to be decent behaviour in public debate between Denmark and Sweden. Based on the empirical material, there has been an outspoken political cor-

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[77] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Tillsammans ska vi stå upp för yttrandefriheten. Inget ska få stoppa det fria ordet"* (Regeringskansliet 2015)

[78] Translated from original language, Swedish: *"Jag tycker det är viktigt att säga två saker. Det första är att vi har varit väldigt måna om att Sverige ska vara ett land där muslimer och kristna, de som tror på gud och de som inte tror på Gud, kan leva sida vid sida i ömsesidig respekt. Vi tycker att vi har kommit väldigt långt. Jag har ett ansvar för att det kan fortsätta och att ta initiativ för att fördjupa denna ömsesidighet och respekt. - Samtidigt är vi måna om att stå upp för den yttrandefrihet som är grundlagsfäst och som är naturlig för oss och som handlar om att vi inte politiskt fattar beslut om vad som publiceras i tidningar. Jag vill försvara att vi har den ordningen"* (Svenska Dagbladet 2007)

rectness in Sweden, but with the emergence of a right-wing populist party, it has been necessary to explicitly defining where the discursive line is drawn for open debate.

In the framework of Laclau and Mouffe there is a large focus on contingency and the idea of everything being flux and possible to change. However, supported by Fairclough, we argue that not everybody has equal opportunities for re-articulating elements in new ways in terms of creating change (see section: Field of Discourse). Though in this context, Anders Fogh Rasmussen had the right social status to re-articulate the discourse for political correctness in Denmark (2001-2009). He challenged the discourse by questioning the Social Democratic cultural elite (see section: Empirical overview of Denmark). It was as such a mainstream party represented by a leader and prime minister that managed to re-articulate the discourse. His rhetorical succes may also be explained by the grounds laid by Mogens Glistrup already in the 1960s as he managed to challenge the credibility of the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats in Denmark had defined much of the public discourse since the mid-1900, however as the oil crisis came it destroyed the reputation of the party. This crisis, of course, also hit Sweden, but here the first right-wing government in 44 years had just gained power.

Compared to Sweden, it seems like no prominent actors from the mainstream parties have tried to question or challenge the discourse of political correctness compared to Denmark. One could argue that the Swedes to a larger degree adhere to the Social Democratic tradition of freedom, equality and solidarity in public debate. There is no room to challenge these ideals, which may also explain the strategy of political isolation towards the SD as they are not considered rhetorically acceptable in the political elite.

Summary

As we have shown in the above analysis the mainstream parties in each country create articulations about the right populist parties and immigration policies in general, which sets out various antagonisms and agonisms when comparing Denmark and Sweden.

Compared to the first presentation of moments (multiculturalism and nationalism), there are differences to be found in the comparison of the various articulations. The political elite in Sweden positions Sweden as a humanitarian superpower with a large focus on solidarity when it comes to immigration policies. The mainstream parties prioritise an inclusive society and openness to the world, and thus in this context defend multiculturalism. They manage temporary exclusion of new elements in the sedimentation process of the discourses regarding acceptance of right-wing populist

parties by taking distance from the SD and their nationalist discourse. The political elite establishes an antagonism between the elite and the SD by articulating the SD in a negative way stating that the mainstream parties are not going to recognise or legitimise the SD in national politics.

Conversely, in the political elite in Denmark it seems there exist some kind of acceptance of nationalism among the mainstream parties expressed through their immigration policies as well as their articulations about the right-wing populist party, the DF. The mainstream parties are not interested in changing Denmark with regard to the Danish foundation build on Danish values. They see Denmark as a homogeneous nation, which there is a burning desire to continue being. The desire for Denmark to stay the way it is now is in conflict with increased immigration in Europe, and the political elite perceive immigration as a threat, which constitute a fear for Denmark to become multicultural. Therefore, there must be a hard control and prioritisation of refugees and immigrants. The Mainstream parties are in this context interested in working together with the DF. The DF have managed to articulate a discourse regarding the immigration area that both mainstream parties to some extent have adopted. The political elite thus creates a manoeuvre space for the right-wing populist party as immigration represent their core policies. The Social Democrats are founded on the social democratic ideology while the Liberal Party is founded on liberalism. However, in terms of our moments both parties share a strong connection to the DF's discourse regarding immigration as just stated, though it is through their ideological argumentations. It works to legitimise the political elite's acceptance of parts from the right-wing populist discourse through their own values. Said in a discursive way: the mainstream parties' discursive practices regarding right-wing populism are drawn on other discourse practices (order of discourse).
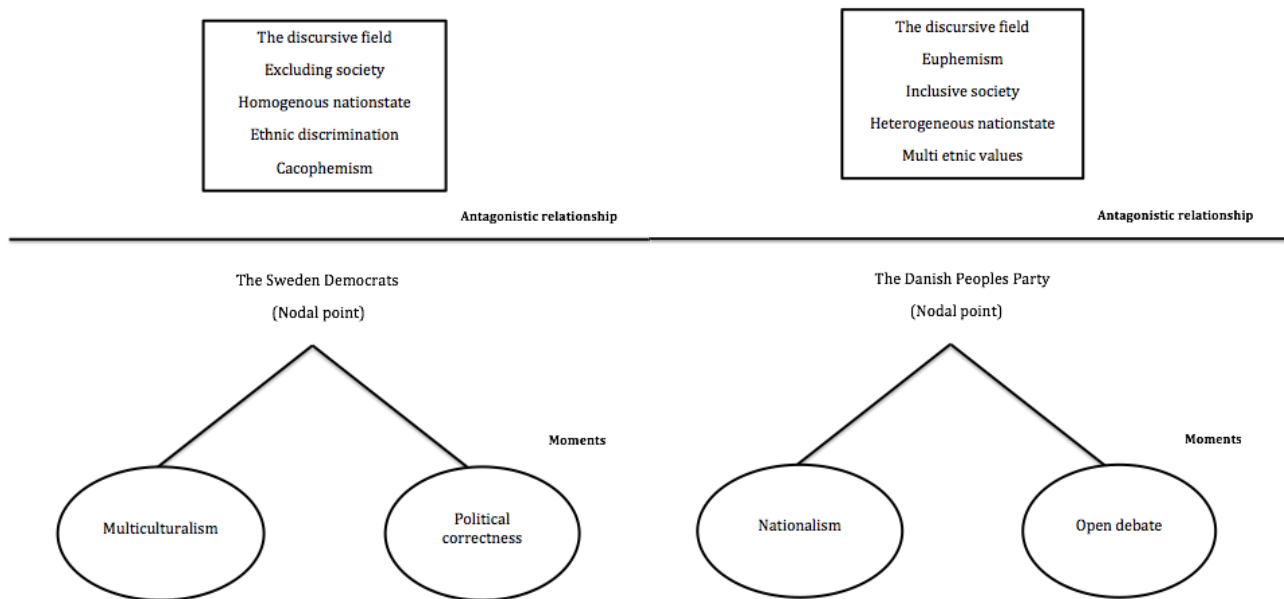
In terms of the next moments (political correctness and open debate) there are also antagonisms to be found in terms of the mainstream parties' articulations about the right-wing populist party. In the political elite in Denmark it seems there exist a broad form of open debate based on freedom of expression. Freedom of expression has become a symbol of the free society (in the name of freedom of expression, it is difficult to isolate a democratically elected party, although it is a right-wing populist party). In relation to immigration, both mainstream parties have a very direct tone towards refugees and immigrants. It is in this context articulated through requirements for refugees and immigrants based on priorities and disadvantage. The hard rhetorical line can be argued to has become mainstream and normal in the political elite. One could argue that there exists a silent consensus about the acceptance of an open debate in Denmark.

The political elite in Sweden is, in relation to the two moments, very inclusive in their articulations in terms of refugees and immigrants. Mainstream parties make use of positive expressions and discrete articulations instead of negative and exclusionary articulations as seen in Denmark. Sweden's mainstream parties take, opposite Denmark, distance from the SD as they do not accept that the party do not comply with the standards of political correctness defined by the political elite. As the right-wing populist party's discourse is a part of the discursive field to the political elite, which is constantly challenging the discourse defined by the mainstream parties, the mainstream parties strive to associate the SD with negative connotations in order to maintain status quo. The political elite thus does not want the SD to redefine public debate in Sweden. Despite the fact that the political elite advocates freedom of speech, it does not seem to equate freedom of speech with unconstrained open debate the same way the political elite does in Denmark.

One could argue that there in the overall analysis can be seen an antagonism between the four moments. In Sweden's case there is an expression of the parties not having any tolerance or acceptance of a right-wing populist party and therefore they are politically isolating the SD. In the case of Denmark there is an expression of the parties' acceptance of the DF. Whether there exist hegemony among the mainstream parties in each country, we argue that there has been some kind of on-going sedimentation process. Though we argue that there exists a dominant discourse between the mainstream parties regarding their acceptance of right-wing populist parties in both countries, a hegemony is to be build of shared alliances and ideologies. The mainstream parties are not build on shared ideologies and it is thereby not possible to talk about hegemony, however, we argue that the political elite in Denmark legitimise their acceptance of the right-wing populist party through a dominant discourse.

When drawing the chain of equivalence based on the chosen nodal points as well as the outlined moments, elements that are part of the discursive field appear. These elements are what the mainstream parties take distance from in trying to maintain status quo and form the 'difference of logic', which gives additional symbolic strength to the chain of equivalence (see figure below). In the case of Sweden and Denmark we find that the chain of equivalence and difference of logic differs, and thereby we argue that two different dominant discourses exist in the two countries.

The chain of equivalence for Denmark and Sweden:

The discursive field		The discursive field
Excluding society		Euphemism
Homogenous nationstate		Inclusive society
Ethnic discrimination		Heterogeneous nationstate
Cacophemism		Multi etnic values

Antagonistic relationship   Antagonistic relationship

The Sweden Democrats (Nodal point) — Moments: Multiculturalism, Political correctness

The Danish Peoples Party (Nodal point) — Moments: Nationalism, Open debate

We argue that there exist an agonistic relationship between the two countries and not an antagonistic one. Most often the mainstream parties do not judgementally articulate how things are done across Øresund. However, it is often found that far-right or far-left parties on the traditional political scale criticise the other's political discourses especially with regard to the chosen moments as there is a clear intersection of differences (DR 2015d). As our focus is on the mainstream parties and we can therefore not conclude that there exist an antagonistic relationship. Moreover, both countries are nation states established in order to manage the nation within limited territory in this case limited to Denmark and Sweden. Though we see a difference between Denmark and Sweden, we accept it as an agonistic relationship based on the above arguments.

Societal and historical context

In this section we seek to discuss the macro-level perspectives of our analysis. As stated in the methodology, the macro-level perspective of discourse analysis connects discourses to their societal and historical contexts. By the end of the section is a critical discussion regarding the applicability of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in relation to our problem area.

Emergence of new discourses

Based on the above analysis, we believe, it cannot be rejected that there exist a dominant discourse in the political elites in Denmark and Sweden. The theory can tell something about how it acknowledges the emergence of new discourses, for instance, Laclau and Mouffe states that new discourses arise when the discursive field challenges the existing discourse with new alternative fixations of

conceptual meanings. It is a process where a discourse becomes dominant when elements are transformed into moments and obtain a partial fixation of meaning within a particular context. In this way no discourse is a closed entity as discursive struggles occur constantly. Looking at it from a political perspective, Laclau and Mouffe argues that battles of politics can be forgotten and in this way achieve objectivity through quiet consensus.

In Denmark it seems there was a political battle between the mainstream parties (the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party) and the DF during the late 1990s where both former PM Poul Nyrup Rasmussen and Uffe Ellemann-Jensen (leader of the Liberal Party) clearly tried to distance themselves from the DF in public debate. During this time the Liberal Party was not interested in being blackmailed by the DF on any policies and the Social Democrats with Poul Nyrup as leader denoted the party as "not housebroken". There was an on-going political battle between the established political parties and the democratically elected right-wing populist parties (DF and the Progress Party) where it was clear that both the Liberal Party and the Social Democrats shared no wish to be associated with them. It may be argued that a form of political correctness defined the public debate in Denmark at the time and the mainstream parties tried to stay within that discourse while the discursive field of the DF was challenging the establishment.

However, times changed after the election in 2001 where the Liberal Party and the Conservative party formed a minority coalition with the DF as parliamentary foundation. It started a new political battle where former PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen challenged the establishment of the cultural elite that he believed had represented the political discourse. The theory of Laclau and Mouffe as well as Fairclough acknowledges the importance of actors having a certain clout to be able to break with dominant discourses. Arguably, Anders Fogh Rasmussen fulfilled these criteria, and he managed to break with the political correctness as also stated in the analysis. He managed to create a new reality by drawing a picture of human freedom as being opposite the cultural elite of the Social Democrats and their at the time paternalistic and repressive policies (see section: Empirical Overview). Anders Fogh Rasmussen thus stepped outside the dominant discourse and became a part of the discursive field where he partnered with the DF on certain areas. This political battle is especially important in understanding the societal differences in Denmark and Sweden, also with regard to right-wing populism's influx in national politics in the two countries.

In Sweden there has not been the same political battle questioning the position of the Social Democratic tradition. Both the Social Democrats and the Moderates have historical roots in the concept of 'Folkhemmet' as outlined in the Empirical Overview and adhere to the fundamental values of social

democracy as pointed out through their ways of articulating. Historically, Sweden has prospered due to the inherent ideas that constitute the notion of 'Folkhemmet' like modernism, welfare state, internationalism and the idea of being best. Especially the idea of being best is something that large-ly prevails among the political elite, also in terms of political correctness, where Sweden are to be the world's humanitarian superpower (cf. the Analysis). Due to this historical background, historian Helle Sanders (in Larsen 2007) argues that it has been historically difficult to catch Swedes on na-tionalist thoughts in comparison to Denmark. In her experience, history is something that has to be explicitly marketed for the Swedes to understand the importance of it as production; economic growth, the good society, morality and solidarity are more important aspects of Swedish society. All of this largely embedded in the Social Democratic rhetoric during the industrialisation, which is also seen today.

Another aspect includes time. The DF has been in Folketinget since 1998 while the SD has only been represented in Riksdagen since 2010. The current debate that is being played out in Sweden is somewhat similar to the Danish debate in the late 1990s before Anders Fogh Rasmussen changed the discourse. It might be that the SD have not had enough time in national politics to yet establish itself as a legitimate political player.

The issue of immigration
In relation to immigration, Helle Sanders further argues that it is difficult for an anti-immigration party like the SD to properly break through as it is not that easy to catch the Swedes on Swedish, national ideals. In Denmark, however, the DF can praise Grundtvig, sing a Danish song and in that way make people happy. It lies in the idea that there is not just a Swedish Sweden, since Sweden is multicultural. In Sweden it is about being best, while in Denmark it is about being Danish (Larsen 2007). One might argue that Sweden has a more social democratic nationalism while the Danes have a more ethnic nationalism.

The different relations to the concept of nationalism may also be explained by the historical aspect of immigration. While Denmark was prospering during the industrialisation, Sweden was poor and experienced large emigrations (cf. Empirical Overview). It was only in the beginning of the 1900s the Swedes found an equation to push economic growth: industry + labour movement = prosperity. Through the historical agreement between the labour movement and the industry, Sweden became industrialised faster than any other European country (Larsen 2007). It further supports that the Swedish 'self' is highly embedded in the Social Democratic tradition compared to Denmark and today have some of the most powerful labour unions.

Due to the large emigrations in the late 1800s and the following pursuit of being best, immigration came to play an important role. The booming industry after World War II meant an increase in the need for labour and thousands of guest-workers was brought to Sweden a long time before the same - though to a much smaller extent - happened in Denmark. Sweden has thereby become an immigration country long before Denmark and the idea of Sweden as homogenous is quite unfamiliar. In Denmark it is much more often referred to 'Danishness' or Danish history in political articulations (cf. Lars Løkke Rasmussen and Helle Thorning-Schmidt's articulations throughout the analysis).

Democratic consequences

In Sweden the mainstream parties have chosen an isolation strategy towards the SD that keeps the party in somewhat political isolation despite the fact that voters have democratically elected the party. The argument is that the SD stands for something that is incompatible with what the mainstream parties recognise the Swedish society to be. The SD as such becomes a contradiction to the establishment, which the mainstream parties work to ignore, and it may as such be denoted as an antagonistic relation. Chantal Mouffe argues throughout the theory, that antagonisms are exactly what constitute the pluralist liberal democracy and further states that it may be directly dangerous and self-defeating for a pluralist liberal democracy to ignore contradictions as it: *"(...) makes us unprepared to unrecognised antagonistic manifestations"* (Mouffe 2002, p. 186). In her view the mainstream parties should thereby recognise the division in the population that is constituted from elections, precisely, as this reveal a clear-cut boundary between an *us* and *them*, and acknowledge the antagonisms in society rather than ignoring its existence as it is self-defeating for the fundament of democracy. It is a legitimate concern that the isolation of the SD may be undemocratic, however, the mainstream parties exonerate it by arguing that there should not be created a space in which extreme opinions, that go against fundamental values and basic human rights, can be expressed. In this point of view that would be more damaging to the democracy.

The DF is democratically elected in Denmark and became the second largest party in parliament in the recent election. The evolved strategy from the mainstream parties towards the DF have clearly changed and today it is evident that the DF is recognised as a legitimate political actor in the pluralist liberal democracy. As explained in the analysis, the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party have discourses based on their own values, which according to Fairclough's concept order of discourse overlap the DF's right-wing populist discourse. The way the DF is legitimised is based on the mainstream parties' own value policy.

This may be ascribed to the societal and historical difference in attitudes towards political correctness and freedom of speech in the two countries. As previously noted, Sweden possess a higher set of moral standards in terms of what is perceived as decent behaviour in public debate. One could argue that due to the discourse of freedom of speech, a Danish news paper (Jyllands-Posten) was the first to print Muhammed drawings, and Denmark thereby became the first country to go through the consequences of that decision. Consequences like attacks on Danish embassies, burning of the Danish flag and dolls of former PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen, boycott of Danish goods, violent demonstrations around the world with deaths and many injured, and an attempted attack on a Danish newspaper cartoonist in his own home (Grøndahl 2015). It became an important conflict to win as it turned out as a struggle for the right of freedom of speech in the free world. Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated in his New Years speech 1. January 2006: "Therefore, the freedom of expression is so vital. And freedom of expression cannot be compromised. It is non-negotiable"[79] (Fogh 2006). Since then there has been a tendency to express borderline opinions in Danish media defended by the right of freedom of expression. Additionally, Denmark has been an active associate to the USA in the 'War on terror' and has experienced the terror threat on own soil. It may be argued that because Denmark has undergone so extreme experiences it may have pushed to the Danish national feeling, and furthermore made freedom of speech a very important aspect of Danish society. Despite the fact that Denmark has been through all these consequences it is an on-going debate whether to keep repeating the publication of Muhammed drawings. A similar situation played out in Sweden in 2007, however, it never reached the same heights as in Denmark. Where Anders Fogh Rasmussen was not willing to compromise and meet with a number of ambassadors from Muslim countries that had requested a meeting after the printing of the drawings and had a chain of demands to the prime minister, the former Swedish PM Fredrik Reinfeldt met with ambassadors from 22 Muslim countries to discuss the issue in Sweden. Reinfeldt said that he had *"explained how Swedish society works and that we don't have elected representatives making editorial decisions",* adding that *"this is an open country, a tolerant country"* (The Local 2007). In Denmark it may be argued that there is a more embedded feeling, that limitations of freedom of speech would be an expression of defeat.

Critical reflections on theory appliance
Possible explanations to why we reach the conclusion that two different dominant discourses exist in Denmark and Sweden have been discussed above. The reason we come to that conclusion may be

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[79] Translated from original language, Danish: *"Derfor er ytringsfriheden så afgørende. Og ytringsfriheden kan ikke gradbøjes. Den er ikke til forhandling"* (Fogh 2006)

assigned to the roots of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. Discursive processes do not only include what we usually think of as sign systems (language in text and speech, visual communication, maybe fashion and architecture). They include the whole social field, and the theory of Laclau and Mouffe about the social is developed through critical readings of Marxist theory. It raises some implications in terms of the use of the Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, as Marxist theory stands in contrast to capitalism, and what has been done throughout this dissertation is using a Marxist theory to explain the discourse of a capitalist elite. The Marxist theory institute differentiation in society based on power relations between the elite and the working class. This power relation is also evident in the discourse theory and is relevant when focusing on the political elite, yet, our conclusions may have looked different if we for instance had used a psychological discourse theory or if we had chosen another social group than the capitalist elite, for instance the population.

In relation to comparing the concept of discourse with its Marxist roots it is relevant to draw on the part of Marxism that is referred to as historical Marxism (Karl Marx 1818-1883). The historical Marxism distinguishes between what is called 'basis' and 'superstructure' in its description of society. 'Basis' is to be understood in relation to materialism and economy. The 'superstructure' in this context is to be understood as the state and its relation to production of meaning. Economy is thus determining the 'superstructure'.

In the Marxist tradition, the capitalist society is divided into two classes with an antagonistic relation as the capitalists exploit the workers. This is possible because the workers' conscious is formed by the 'superstructure' (the state), which is determined by 'basis' (economy). The 'superstructure' creates the ideology in the capitalist system, which is supportive of the capitalist system in order to justify the system and thus create a fake consciousness among the working class. The problem here is that the theory cannot explain what is called the conscious transformation, which is to be understood as the rebellion that will come from the workers in a revolution. Some theorists have tried to solve this problem by pointing out the missing political element in the theory. If you add a political element, the determination in the 'Basis-Superstructure' model does not only go one way. What is happening when adding the political element in the 'superstructure' can now also influence and change 'basis'. But where do we draw the line between these powerful agencies? (Laclau & Mouffe 1985).

Gramsci (1891-1937), whom Laclau and Mouffe were inspired by, was interested in explaining this phenomenon. In this process he used the concept 'hegemony' to explain processes in the 'superstructure' that work to shape peoples' consciousness. Gramsci believed that the formation of opin-

ion is an important tool to stabilise power relations. Through formation of opinion, the power relations can be neutralised in a way where they are not questioned. Hegemony is as such, for Gramsci, a concept that denotes the ruling consensus in society insofar as it obscures peoples' minds. The hegemonic processes are carried out in the 'superstructure' and are a part of the political field. Their outcome is as such not directly determined by the economy, and the 'superstructure' has thereby gained a certain degree of autonomy and may as such influence the structure in 'basis'. In this sense people's consciousness are given a form of autonomy in relation to the economic conditions though still with the idea that in the end it is still the economy that determines peoples' true interests (Laclau & Mouffe 1985).

Gramsci's concept of hegemony implies therefore that there is significant formed processes at the 'superstructure' which is worth studying in their own light. Here is a link to Laclau and Mouffe and their discourse theory, which is a theory of creating meaning. However, Laclau and Mouffe radicalise Gramsci's theory because they believe that there are no objective laws as everything is created in the political discursive processes. The big difference between the two theories is that everything is socially constructed (Laclau & Mouffe) versus Marxist's existentialism.

Our results of the analysis can be explained by the 'superstructure' having a kind of power position in relation to the creation of meaning concerning what is believed to be right and wrong. There is some kind of autonomy in peoples' minds, but in that outcome it is not only determined by the economy but also the 'superstructure'. Since there is no element of the population in our dissertation it has only been possible for us to look at the power position of the 'superstructure'.

Where there is a relation between the applied theory from Laclau and Mouffe, build upon Marxist theory, and the results from our analysis, is that the state is assigned a form of autonomy with respect to the formation of public opinion. We therefore argue that the state possess a power position where formation of opinion about a given area is created. It is thereby possible to assume the emergence of dominant discourses within a political elite.

In historical Marxist theory it is argued that the state creates an ideology in order to establish a false consciousness to make room for capitalism. In terms of our problem area the difference between right-wing populist parties and parties, that base their political values on a certain ideology is that the right-wing populist discourse is created by something that is being constructed without any specific ideological foundation while for ideological parties' discourses are based on something already given; i.e. ideological values. It is thereby possible for the right-wing populist parties within

the two countries to create new meanings within different policy areas since the DF and the SD as right-wing populist parties do not adhere to a given ideology in the same way as the mainstream parties that build their policies on ideologies. When the right-wing populist parties try to create new meanings, the mainstream parties theoretically will have to find supportive arguments in their ideologies to support the right-wing populist party. Conversely, if that is not possible, they cannot accept the right-wing populist party. For example when the Social Democrats launch a strict immigration campaign in line with DF policies, they legitimise their campaign by referring to their ideology (hence, it is only fair that people who come to Denmark take a job and contribute to the community), likewise, the Liberal Party is referring to liberal ideology in their strict immigration policies by saying that everyone are free to come to Denmark as long as they want and can contribute to society and live on the foundation of Danish values. In Sweden both mainstream parties have rejected any kind of cooperation as they do not align the SD with their ideologies.

Thoughtful considerations on the limitations of the theory

After having applied the theory on our problem area in an advanced analysis where we have argued for the usage of the theory, we still see some missing elements. One of the missing elements are the weighted importance of context. There is no script determining the proportion of contextual, societal and historical impacts on a discourse. We can only guess how much certain things have contributed to the formation through what is being articulated. In addition to this, we find that Fairclough's order of discourse should work to overcome some of the limitations found in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory as discourses can collide and overlap. However, it is not clear how contexts and connections to more than one discourse contribute to the discourse that has been chosen to be examined. It is as such not clear what particular parts should be weighted heavier than others in order to evaluate the explanations as to why a certain dominant discourse has become dominant.

Furthermore, Laclau and Mouffe believe that discourses constantly change and that they can be re-articulated. The difficult part in this situation is to determine when a discourse changes and how much it takes to change it. In this regard some kind of time perspective is missing or clear framework for when a discourse gets re-articulated. Some discourses may be harder or easier to re-articulate, for instance, the discourse regarding national feeling in Denmark, which is highly embedded in different discourses in the Danish society.

It is possible to conclude that to some extent the theory is applicable with regard to Laclau and Mouffe's argument of everything being contextual. Yet, we clearly see some theoretical limitations.

Conclusion

The dissertation is based on the question why two otherwise similar political systems in welfare-Scandinavia have reacted fundamentally different to right-wing populist parties. The initial interest was found in the fact that the right-wing populist party (DF) and its politics in Denmark have been accepted as a credible political player as the party functioned as support party for the Liberal-Conservative government for 10 years (2001-2011). On the other side of Øresund, however, the Swedish populist party, the Sweden Democrats (SD), has on the contrary been experiencing political isolation ever since it got into Riksdagen in 2010 although the two countries are politically, socially and economically very much alike. The political area where it is clear that the political elites (mainstream parties) differ within the countries is in terms of immigration policies, which are a large part of the two right-wing populist parties' political agenda. This gave an opportunity to obtain new studies and empirical material within the area. Our problem formulation was:

> *How have the two political elites in Denmark and Sweden reacted to right-wing populist parties?*

During the dissertation we have discursively studied whether the mainstream parties in Denmark (the Social Democrats and the Liberals) and Sweden (the Social democrats and the Moderates) have accepted the right-wing populist parties (the Sweden democrats and the Danish Peoples Party) in the two countries. This has been done through a comparative case study with the assumption that political processes create and change social phenomena within a social reality in collaboration with our chosen theoretical framework. The examination has been based on a document analysis with observations from collected empirical material regarding our problem area. The theoretical framework was based on Laclau and Mouffe's contribution to the field of discourse with a supplement of Fairclough's concept 'order of discourse' to overcome some of the challenges found in Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical conceptualisations. The dissertation was made in a social constructivist manner, which means that the result of our analysis is contextual.

Based on the analysis we can conclude that various antagonistic relationships are to be found within the two countries in the comparison of articulations. In terms of the policy area that we chose to focus on; the immigration area, Sweden is a defender of multiculturalism with a large focus on an inclusive and open society. They distance themselves from the SD since they on the one hand disagree with the SD's nationalist discourse and on other hand do not consider them to be politically correct. The SD is part of the discursive field to the political elite and thus challenges the dominant discourse defined by this elite. The mainstream parties try to maintain status quo in their strive to

associate the SD with negative connotations. The Swedish political elite is articulating an extreme antagonism between them and the SD by implying that the party is incompatible with fundamental values in society and do not adhere to the established dominant discourses of multiculturalism and political correctness.

Conversely, in Denmark it seems there exist some kind of acceptance of a nationalist discourse in the political elite. The political elite sees Denmark as a homogeneous nation build on Danish values while fearing the multicultural development in tact with increased immigration in Europe. There seem to be a strong connection to the DF's discourse regarding a strict immigration policy, which the political elite is legitimising through their own ideological values. Thereby the political elite's discursive practices regarding immigration are drawn within their own discourse practices (order of discourse).

We argue that there has been some kind of on-going sedimentation process with antagonistic relationships in both countries' political elites. This have resulted in the political elite in Denmark having the same dominant discourse in terms of nationalism and open debate, which have resulted in their acceptance of the right-wing populist party, the DF. In Sweden's case there exist a dominant discourse in the political elite regarding multiculturalism and political correctness, which have resulted in the non-acceptance of the SD and thereby its political isolation. We do in this sense argue that there do not exist a hegemony within the two political elites. This is based on the assumption that hegemony is to be build of shared alliances and ideologies, which we do not see between the Social Democrats and the Liberals in Denmark and the Social Democrats and the Moderates in Sweden. In the comparison between Denmark and Sweden we thereby conclude that there exist an agonistic relationship between the two countries. This is based on the fact that none of the mainstream parties have articulated an antagonistic relationship in this period as a snapshot of time.

In terms of the discussion we have tried to establish an answer to why the two otherwise similar countries differ in terms of the political elites' acceptance of right-wing populist parties by looking at the societal and historical contexts. Here we found possible explanatory factors in the political battles as the Liberal Party throughout the 00's joint forces with the DF and challenged status quo of the political establishment at the time. The same battle, where a mainstream party challenges the discourse of the political elite has not taken place in Sweden, where the social democratic tradition is still largely prevailing. Another explanatory factor is the perception of immigration, where Sweden has a much longer tradition of immigration and has historically had a greater need for it compared to Denmark, which may explain the Swedes adherence to the multicultural society, and the hardship of catching the Swedes on nationalist thoughts. For the mainstream parties in Sweden, the

SD stands for something that is incompatible with the fundamental values of society and thereby democracy. This stands in contrast to Denmark, where the DF is often associated with protecting Danish values. In the theory we find that the strategy of the Swedish mainstream parties can constitute a democratic problem, which conflicts with the moral standards imposed by the mainstream parties. As these moral standards have been challenged in Denmark throughout the 00's this can have created a larger manoeuvre space for the right-wing populist party based on the argument of democracy as well as freedom of speech. Especially with regard to freedom of speech, the Danish case seem to have relatively no limitations as to what is allowed to say in public debate.

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Appendix 1: Governments in Denmark 1960 - Current

1960-1962	Regeringen	Viggo Kampmann I	(S, B og E)
1962-1964	Regeringen	Jens Otto Krag I	(S, B)
1964-1968	Regeringen	Jens Otto Krag II	(S)
1968-1971	Regeringen	Hilmar Baunsgaard	(B, C og V) - VKR regeringen
1971-1972	Regeringen	Jens Otto Krag III	(S)
1972-1973	Regeringen	Anker Jørgensen I	(S)
1973-1975	Regeringen	Poul Hartling	(V)
1975-1978	Regeringen	Anker Jørgensen II	(S)
1978-1979	Regeringen	Anker Jørgensen III	(S, V) - SV regeringen
1979-1981	Regeringen	Anker Jørgensen IV	(S)
1981-1982	Regeringen	Anker Jørgensen V	(S)
1982-1987	Regeringen	Poul Schlüter I	(K, V, CD, Q) Firkløverregeringen
1987-1988	Regeringen	Poul Schlüter II	(K, V, CD, Q)
1988-1990	Regeringen	Poul Schlüter III	(K, V, B) - KVR regeringen
1990-1993	Regeringen	Poul Schlüter IV	(K, V) - KV regeringen
1993-1994	Regeringen	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen I	(S, CD, B, Q) - Rødkløverregering
1994-1996	Regeringen	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen II	(S, B) - SR regeringen
1996-1998	Regeringen	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen III	(S, B) - SR regeringen
1998-2001	Regeringen	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen IV	(S, B) - SR regeringen
2001-2005	Regeringen	Anders Fogh Rasmussen I	(V, K) - VK regeringen
2005-2007	Regeringen	Anders Fogh Rasmussen II	(V, K) - VK regeringen
2007-2009	Regeringen	Anders Fogh Rasmussen III	(V, K) - VK regeringen
2009-2011	Regeringen	Lars Løkke Rasmussen I	(V, K) - VK regeringen
2011- 2014	Regeringen	Helle Thorning-Schmidt I	(S, B, SF) SRSF regeringen
2014-2015	Regeringen	Helle Thorning-Schmidt II	(S, B) - SR regeringen
2015 -	Regeringen	Lars Lykke Rasmussen II	(V)

Appendix 2: Governments in Sweden 1969 - Current

1969-1976:	Palme I	Minority	(S)
1976-1978:	Fälldin I	Majority	(Centerpartiet, Moderaterna, Folkpartiet)
1978-1979:	Ullsten	Minority	(Folkpartiet)
1979-1981:	Fälldin II	Majority	(Centerpartiet, Moderaterna, Folkpartiet)
1981-1982:	Fälldin III	Minority	(Centerpartiet, Folkpartiet)
1982-1986:	Palme II	Minority	(S)
1986-1990:	Carlsson I	Minority	(S)
1990-1991:	Carlsson II	Minority	(S)
1991-1994:	Bildt	Minority	(Moderaterna, Folkpartiet, Centerpartiet, KD)
1994-1996:	Carlsson III	Minority	(S)
1996-2006:	Persson	Minority	(S)
2006-2010:	Reinfeldt	Majority	(Moderaterna, Centerpartiet, Folkpartiet, KD)
2010-2014:	Reinfeldt	Minority	(Moderaterna, Centerpartiet, Folkpartiet, KD)
2014- now:	Löfven	Minority	(S, Miljöpartiet de gröna)