Humanism in Swedish political debate

A discourse analysis of the Swedish elections 2014

Magdalena Karnebäck
Abstract

In the run-up to the Swedish national election 2014, humanism became a central concept in the debate. Foreign policy is normally not very prominent in Swedish election debates, but ongoing developments in the surrounding world and intensified domestic polemics regarding immigration, generated focus on aid and refugee reception. In this debate, political parties as well as other key representatives repeatedly used words such as human, humane, humanity and humanitarian in order to describe a situation or to motivate a certain position. This thesis seeks to answer questions about how these concepts are used in the debate, what they mean and how the discourse forms policy and politics. The investigation is guided by a critical constructivist theory, and the analysis consists of four parts: Quantitative mapping of how the words are utilized; Semiotic analysis of the meaning of certain elements in the discourse; Analysis of representation; Discussion about how discourse forms reality.

The results indicate that humanism is unanimously accepted as holding a positive meaning, or at least something that parties want to be associated with, which ought to differ it from other isms. There is a strong connection between discourse, political action, and reality. The study identifies a number of contexts where humanism occurs, namely: 1) Description of the Swedish society; 2) Support for Human Rights; 3) Sweden's responsibility to provide support; 4) Labelling certain politics, policies or reforms; 5) Description of situation in another country; 6) Description of another party; 7) Without direct reference to politics. In all categories of utilization of humanism, there were layers of meaning in the word choice or way a certain language was used. Differences in total frequency of humanism including all related key words can neither be explained by size of the party nor by the left-right political scale. There are however a number of factors that appear significant to understand variations in frequency, word choice and underlying norms and messages, including: normative context, political position (opposition/government), political color, media format, development norms, preconceived stereotypes, power-relations.

Key words: Humanism, election debate, discourse, political parties
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1 Introduction

“Sweden is a humanitarian superpower and shall so be.” Those words were used repeatedly the Swedish national election debate 2014. Whilst international issues are rarely given much attention in Swedish elections, this year’s campaign was marked by the ongoing events in the world, mainly the refugee situation following the civil war and Islamic State’s (IS) advances in Syria and northern Iraq, causing suffering for millions of civilians. This put international development, and Sweden’s obligations to respond, at the core of the election campaign. In the related debate, which came to focus on refugee reception, the concept of humanism was repeatedly used, making the campaign discourse unusually value-based.

Something that came to shape the final part of the election campaign, and that has been given a lot of weight in the post-election analyses, was the so called summer speech held by then Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt\(^1\). The speech came to formulate Reinfeldt’s own personal legacy as well as influence the general discourse about refugee reception in Sweden, as he urged Swedes to open their hearts for those in need, while he also acknowledged the financial implications of a generous – and well-motivated – immigration policy.

Based on a critical theoretical approach, this study aims to analyze the discourse and interpret the meaning of humanism in the contemporary political debate in Sweden, with a focus on foreign policy, aid and refugee reception. This is motivated by the understanding that discourse matters. The contents of the election debate will be analyzed as a social practice, based on the understanding that the use of language both reflects and creates meaning, and shapes reality. The utilization and meaning of humanism in the election campaign may also mirror a more general cultural approach, not limited to a certain political election campaign.

Explicit references to traditional ideologies and isms are not very common in contemporary political debate. Maybe that is because parties and voters tend to be increasingly mobile and issue-oriented rather than ideological. Another reason to refrain from ism- etiquettes could be that words like socialism, liberalism or capitalism are likely to deter some groups of voters, as they are not unanimously considered positive. Humanism on the other hand, appears to be a case-winner and considered so widely cherished that all parties want to be associated with it. This gives another reason to look closer at the concept.

The results of the 2014 national elections in Sweden and the political after play turned out more complicated than anyone expected. The new Government announced that it would call for an extra election as their budget did not pass the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag. The Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna, SD) announced that they will vote against every government that does not comply with their more restrictive immigration policy. Only a few days before this thesis was submitted, the announced extra election was cancelled due to a last minute agreement between the Government and the opposition, but the fixed positions on immigration and refugee reception that caused the governmental crisis remains. Questions about humanism and the Swedish role and self-image in relation to the surrounding world are likely to remain at the core of Swedish political debate.

\(^1\) TV4’s website: Speech by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, held 16 August 2014 in Stockholm.
1.1 Studying the Swedish general elections 2014

The Swedish general elections were held on Sunday 14th September 2014, including elections to the three levels of government on the same day: Riksdag (national parliament), county council assemblies and municipal assemblies. The election day had been proceeded by intense campaigning which started earlier than usual due to the coincidence with the European Parliament Elections earlier the same year. The 2014 election resulted in change in power balance among the 8 political parties represented in the Riksdag. A major shift was that the previous minority right/center alliance/coalition (Alliansen2), lost their government position to the Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterna, S) who managed to form a minority government together with the Green Party (Miljöpartiet, MP), with some support from the Left Party (Vänsterpartiet, V). The nationalistic Sweden Democrats doubled their support and became the third largest party in the Riksdag. The new Feminist Initiative (Feministiskt Initiative, FI) did not manage to gain enough support to exceed the 4 % limit to enter the Riksdag.

1.1.1 Table 1: Result of National Elections in Sweden 2014 and 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderates</td>
<td>23,33 %</td>
<td>30,06 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center Party</td>
<td>6,11 %</td>
<td>6,56 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>5,42 %</td>
<td>7,06 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Democrats</td>
<td>4,57 %</td>
<td>5,60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrats</td>
<td>31,01 %</td>
<td>30,66 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Party</td>
<td>5,72 %</td>
<td>5,60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>6,89 %</td>
<td>7,34 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden Democrats</td>
<td>12,86 %</td>
<td>5,70 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist Initiative</td>
<td>3,12 %</td>
<td>0,40 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a political campaign, a huge amount of messages are being formulated and texts are produced, representing different political views and ambitions, in the format of strategic documents, election manifestos, interviews, debates and speeches. Words and formulations are rarely spontaneous or random in this context, but strategically outlined in order to describe a situation, to illustrate a problem or to put a certain filter on a course of actions. The whole idea of an election campaign is to represent a certain party in a way that gains support, votes and eventually political power. The extent of communication produced and the fact that it gives a strong indication of the current political debate climate in Sweden, make the election campaign a relevant topic for different kinds of cultural, social and political content analysis.

There is extensive research carried out on the elections, not least within the field of political science, focusing on the results, statistics and voter trends. This study examines some aspects

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2 The government alliance/coalition Alliansen consists of the Moderates (Moderaterna, M), the Liberals (Folkpartiet, FP), the Center Party (Centerpartiet, C) and the Christian Democrats (Kristdemokraterna, KD).

3 Swedish Election Authority’s website
of the contents and images that are produced and reproduced in the course of the campaign communications, with regards to humanism.

1.2 Addressing political communication from a ComDev perspective

Election campaign discourse is highly relevant from a Communication for Development (ComDev) perspective, considering development not only as a process taking place in distant countries, but rather a transition dynamics affecting all parts of the world. Within the ComDev research field focus is often on communication or communication technology as a tool for development of countries or societies. But communication is also a means of shaping images and relations, which makes communication about development or societal transitions a fundamental aspect in order to understand power-relations and social, cultural and political structures in a society. Questions about the meaning of discourse, the utilization of value-loaded words, as well as representations and descriptions in political debate, is therefore at the core of the ComDev research field.

The 2014 election takes place in a transition which is both domestic and global, and in a time of globalization where global and domestic issues are increasingly integrated. Seemingly distant development, such as the current humanitarian situation in Iraq and Syria and the need for shelter by refugees, has intensified the debate and awareness about international humanitarian responsibilities, development cooperation and about the public costs of such efforts. Meanwhile, a nationalistic party is successful in opinion polls, although being refused and described as a threat by all other political parties. When the election result was announced in September 2014, many were surprised. The Sweden Democrats who had argued for restrictions of the immigration to Sweden, had more than doubled their support among the voters, becoming the third largest party and a new political power in Swedish political landscape.

In this environment, humanism became a core concept in the political debate – which is problematized in this study with regard to societal transition, power-relations and representation. It is carried out through analyses of the election discourse. Research about humanism and political communication can also inform further studies within for example political science, and allow for wider comparisons over time and between countries, but also comparisons between different political levels as well as between male and female politicians.

1.3 Core theories

This study will present an analysis of the contents of the Swedish 2014 election discourse. Studying discourse and meanings is however a matter of interpretation. It is not occurring in a vacuum, but rather a result of the researcher looking at the world through a filter of cultural awareness, assumptions and experiences. The interpretation is also guided by theoretical considerations and approaches, which are introduced here and further developed in chapter 3.

The whole idea of studying and revealing the meaning of humanism and the implications of such meaning, is based on the notion that social and political dynamics are embedded in the language, and that they can be revealed. This study is guided by a critical theoretical approach, as it aims to reveal social/political dynamics and reproductions of power-relations.
There is a focus on how communication and interests are created, and there is an ambition to point out the changeability of these structures.

Related to critical theory, and with a global perspective, is a post-colonial understanding of power-relations. This will be a useful starting-point when analyzing the underlying images, norms and stereotypes, not least about geographically distant people and places. The politics of representation, will be explored in terms of how language is used – with or without intention – to represent the own party, the political opponent, the receiver of humanitarian aid or the Other who is subject to our humanity.

Another starting point is the constructivist approach, meaning that language shapes reality, and that political interest and behavior is constructed by social norms and structures. The contents of the election debate will be analyzed as a social practice, based on the understanding that the use of certain language both reflects and creates meaning, and shapes reality.

1.4 Research questions and design

The theoretical approaches above guides the design of the study, with the purpose of addressing a number of research questions. These questions are also guided by theoretical assumptions about what is relevant and meaningful to study. The aim is to investigate the meaning and utilization of humanism in the contemporary political debate in Sweden – within the area of foreign policy, aid and refugee reception – how this meaning is shaped and how it in turn shapes political action and self-image. In order to do this the material, i.e. key documents such as statements by party representatives and election manifestos will be read as texts – deconstructed and interpreted into meanings. The research design consists of four parts, which all aim to answer certain questions:

1. **Quantitative mapping**
   The first part of the analysis has a quantitative nature in order to map and give an overview over the material and the discourse. Addresses the following questions:
   - To what extent is the concept of humanism present in the political debate in Sweden, i.e. in the national election campaign 2014?
   - In which context, in terms of content, does the concept of humanism occur?

2. **Identifying elements and interpreting meaning**
   The second part looks at the semiotics and interprets certain elements and expressions into meanings. Addresses to the following questions:
   - Which are the signs and codes creating meaning in the use of the concept humanism? How are these signs used and how do the form meaning?
   - How are norms and values integrated in the use of language?

3. **Decoding representation**
   The third part decodes representation and looks at how certain groups or phenomena are represented in the discourse. Addresses to the following questions:
   - What does the discourse represent, what stereotypes are reflected and revealed?
- What are the power-relation implications of using the concept of humanism in the political debate?

4. Discourse – political action – reality

The fourth part focuses on the connection between discourse - political action - reality. The analysis is looking at possible consequences of a certain discourse. Addresses to the following questions:

- How is the concept of humanism used as a political act?
- How can discourse shape political action and reality?

The analysis is qualitative, but a quantitative compilation can point out trends and tendencies. The quantitative mapping will therefore be the initial processing of the material, followed by identification and sorting of elements to decode. Based on this analytical processing, there will be a discussion and conclusions drawn, guided by the theoretical approaches that are elaborated in chapter 3.

1.5 Material and limitations

The current political debate is in this study operationalized as the last part of the period before and immediately after the national elections in September 2014, as it can be considered reflecting the views of the political parties as well as their expectations about the public opinions. As this work is limited in terms of scope, resources and time frames, the material needs to be narrowed down and selected. A number of key statements from the elections are analyzed as texts, and are presumed to say something about the contemporary political debate and environment in Sweden. During the period running up to the elections, numerous debates and interviews were conducted on different political levels and in different media contexts. Many documents were produced and speeches were held.

What to consider as key statements can be discussed, and with a more extensive material, more questions could have been addressed. It would indeed be interesting to make comparisons for example over time or between the local, regional and national levels of the party hierarchies. The selected material will however be limited to two debates among party leaders, two sets of interviews, three key statements at the occasion of the official opening of the Riksdag and the parties’ election manifestos.

The selection of debates and interviews is based on the aim to include a diversity of broadcasted media formats, and media that was produced towards the end of the election campaign. One of the debates was broadcasted by Sweden’s largest privately run TV station (TV4), and the other debate was broadcasted as web TV and produced by one of Sweden’s largest newspaper (Aftonbladet). In order to capture possible variations depending on format, also individual 30 minutes radio interviews with the eight party leaders in public service radio (Sveriges Radio SR), are included. These comprehensive interviews cover the specific topics that the journalists considered relevant for each party, which in most but not all cases include aid and/or refugee reception. As a supplement to these interviews, a series of short video interviews by the Swedish Red Cross, shared on YouTube, are also part of the material – limited to the party representatives’ answers to the specific question “what does humanity mean to you?”. These interviews are far from being key statements in the election campaign – they are neither widely spread nor featuring the party leaders (but party representatives). They
do however directly and explicitly address to question of humanity in politics, and give all parties a chance to elaborate on their take on it, which adds a value to this study.

With this selection, some media events were left out of the material, but then another similar format is included. For example, the public service TV debate (Sveriges Television, SVT) was not included, as public service was exemplified by SR and the TV debate format was exemplified by TV4. The newspaper Expressen’s party leader interviews were not included as newspaper’s web TV was exemplified by Aftonbladet, and the individual interviews were exemplified by SR. Traditional print media not included, partly because the limitation to broadcasted audio/video media made the study more focused and practically doable in this limited format, and partly because key articles did not easily fit in to the principle of focusing on the last part of the election period and not duplicating the formats. For example, the newspaper Dagens Nyheter (DN) published interviews with the party leaders but already a few months before the election, Svenska Dagbladet (SvD) made individual interviews but these were published live on the web and thereby not entirely different from the individual radio interviews or web TV. The media selection hence focused on different broadcasted formats – TV, radio and web TV.

Since the study takes interest in the political debate as a whole and the wider discursive context in which the election debate takes place, a few other key statements in connection with the election have also been included. The sermon given by the Archbishop in the traditional church service in Stockholm Cathedral (Storkyrkan) on the day of the opening of the Riksdag was given a lot of attention, partly because it caused a loud debate after the 2010 elections when the Sweden Democrats left the church in protest against what they considered a politicized sermon. The 2014 sermon by Arch Bishop Jackelén was also frequently quoted and analyzed. The same goes for the annual speech by H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf during the official opening of the Riksdag, which is usually uncontroversial but often touches upon current issues or trends in the Swedish society. The last key statement that is included in the analysis is the Government Declaration that was presented by the new Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to the Riksdag. As a statement of political intentions for the coming four years, the declaration is the Government’s interpretation of the political mandate the voters have given them. It is therefore one of the interesting temperature meters of the current political climate.

Neither the King’s speech nor the Arch Bishop’s sermon can be considered strictly political or representative of the public. They did however render a lot of media attention and were analyzed by political commentators. They were also, together with the Government Declaration, part of the official opening of the Riksdag immediately after the election, which marked the end of the election campaign and the beginning of a new political period, summing up current issues in the society and looking ahead. The thesis aims to explore “the contemporary political debate” which is not necessarily limited to the political parties, although their statements dominate the material selection, being the key actors in the election. The political debate is however limited to the debate surrounding the election. The additional statements contribute to the understanding of the more general debate climate – not as representatives for the public, but as given by the media and commentators a central role in the conclusion of the election period. Thereby their statements say something about the debate climate, and can function a temperature meter. The three statements that are not made by party representatives constitute a small share of the 29 statements/debates/interviews/documents that are selected, and the mapping design still allows for comparisons between the
parties when it comes to frequency and word choice. In the analysis of contexts, these three statements are not separated from the political representatives’ – but here is the general debate climate, the theme/contexts, in focus rather than comparisons between actors/parties.

In order to not only include the party leaders reactive statements in response to questions from journalists or attacks by political opponents, also the parties’ election manifestos are included in the material. Seven out of the eight political parties who have qualified to the Riksdag, have produced individual election manifestos. As the Moderates, the by far strongest party within the coalition Alliansen, chose to only present the joint manifesto, this is treated as the Moderate’s manifesto in this study.

The selection of material allows for comparison between parties. All eight parties were represented in the debates and had equal time at their disposal in the interviews, and they all had the opportunity to present an election manifesto. There is a potential imbalance in what questions are asked and thereby how much time is dedicated to international or immigration issues, in the interviews. The comparisons do not take into consideration the length of the manifesto documents, which might exaggerate the scores for parties with extensive documents.

The “contemporary political debate” could have included for example editorials, commentators, tweets and online discussion forums. This had required a considerably larger selection of material and a more complex analytical design, which had been more suitable for a more extensive project than this degree thesis. With the current limitations, it can however still say something about the political debate, although more in the form of one-way communication. The public is not included in this interpretation of political debate, but public opinion research informs the discussion on the normative context in which the politicians give their statements.

All material is analyzed as texts, and video and audio material has been transcribed into written text documents. The videos and audios have been processed in full, but only the parts that were considered relevant as they have an international angle such as foreign policy, aid and refugee reception, have been transcribed word by word. This means that there might have been other political areas, such as welfare or climate policy, where humanism occurs in the debate although it is not covered by this study.

1.6 Language and interpretation

It is a challenge to conduct a discourse analysis when the texts and contents are in another language than the one used to present the analysis and discussion. Even more so when it comes to defining and understanding nuances in a number of terms and key words. The language challenge requires clear and transparent presentation of how words and expressions are interpreted between Swedish and English. All the core material (statements, interviews, speeches, manifestos) are in Swedish, and so are the written transcriptions of the audio and video material.

The words, sentences and expressions that are all originally in Swedish will be plotted into an English scheme. I have chosen not to translate each and every phrase of the raw material, but

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4 Annex 1
as the phrases are categorized in the coding scheme, the key words’ English translation will be indicated. The relevant full phrases in Swedish are available as appendices.

Using *humanism* as the comprehensive umbrella term for the wider concept was not an obvious choice. The concept humanism, as operationalized and defined in this thesis, includes not only terms and practices relating to *humanistic, human and humane*, but also relating to *humanitarian* and *humanitarianism*. The definition and operationalization of humanism will be further developed in the next chapter, together with a short list of word translations.

Using terms like foreign policy, aid and refugee reception might as well be problematic since they carry meanings and associations. This counts not least for the concept *aid* as it could easily be subject to post-colonial discursive critique for distancing the donor from the victimized passive receiver. The word choices in this context are however motivated by the fact that they reflect the Swedish terminology of the policy areas, as generally referred to in the debate – being “*utrikespolitik*” (foreign policy), “*bistånd*” (aid) and “*flyktingmottagande*” (refugee reception).
2 Literature review and existing research

The theoretical approaches based on literature will be elaborated on further in the theory chapter.

2.1 Election and opinion research

Swedish elections and voting behaviors are continuously analyzed, as part of a well-researched field mainly within political science. This means that there is already existing knowledge about public opinion in areas of international development support, humanitarian aid and refugee reception, which can contribute to the understanding of the societal norms that shape political discourse.

The most prominent hub for election related research is the Swedish National Election Studies Program\(^5\) (Valforskningsprogrammet), which is a research network for empirical studies on parties, media and voters, gathering researchers from the political science field as well as from the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication at Göteborgs Universitet. The Swedish National Election Studies produce comprehensive data sets, which are used not least for comparative analyses. There are also studies carried out on voter values and attitudes, and the contents of party manifestos.

There is also the SOM (Society Opinion Media) Institute\(^6\), which has collected Swedish opinion related research data, and publicly presented annual trend analyses since 1980’s. Their focus is on attitudes and behaviors in Sweden. In 2010 the SOM Institute released the book *Nordiskt Ljus*, which contains in-depth analyses in a number of areas, out of which some relate to elections and attitudes towards immigration and humanitarian aid.\(^7\)

Based on this data about attitudes, Ulf Bjereld discusses the role of foreign policy in the Swedish election debate. He confirms that international issues and foreign policy is rather marginalized in terms of voters’ priority in elections.\(^8\) According to an analysis of the media’s role in the 2010 elections conducted by Kent Asp\(^9\), media in general has a limited interest in reporting on foreign policy issues. In the 2010 election, issues about immigration and integration was given a low priority both by the media and the parties – with exception for the Sweden Democrats.\(^10\) It is presumable that a similar analysis of the 2014 election would give a very different picture, as the discussion about not least refugee reception had a prominent role in the debate running up to the elections.

Hans Abrahamssson and Ann-Marie Ekengren sketch a context which is useful when studying humanism in the political debate. Based on opinion surveys over time, they state that the

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\(^5\) The Swedish National Elections Studies’s (Valforskningsprogrammet) website

\(^6\) SOM (Society Opinion Media) Institute’s website

\(^7\) Holmberg & Weibull (Eds.), 2010

\(^8\) Bjereld in Holmberg & Weibull, 2010:99 pp.

\(^9\) Asp, 2011

\(^10\) Asp, 2011:64
attitudes towards aid has fluctuated since the late 1950’s up until 2009, but that there is a general weakened willingness towards aid over time.\(^\text{11}\) On the other hand Marie Demker describes how the Swedes’ attitudes towards immigrants have become increasingly tolerant over the past few decades. While 44 \% of the Swedes, think it is a good idea to receive fewer refugees, 78 \% are worried about an increased xenophobia.\(^\text{12}\) Both these trends are relevant to bear in mind when trying to understand the structures that shapes political discourse and how this discourse shapes reality.

The comprehensive *Svensk migrationspolitisk opinion 1991–2012*, elaborates on the trends in the Swedes’ opinions towards refugees and humanitarian aid. The attitudes turn out to vary less over time and more along other dividing lines, such as the understanding of the concepts of equality, freedom and brotherhood.\(^\text{13}\) One finding, relevant to this study, is that the understanding of the concept of brotherhood – interpreted as humanism and trust in other people – seems to be one of the major explanatory factors to differences in people’s opinions about development aid, refugee reception and engagements in distant conflicts. The authors argue that the creation of public opinions about international humanitarian issues, and likely also national issues of humanitarian character such as social and health policy can be explained by the value brotherhood.\(^\text{14}\)

Within the field of media research, there are a number of publications and projects that have studied election related communication in Sweden. Kent Asp and Johannes argue in their book about the media election campaign that there is a gap between the core contents of politics (taxes, economy, employment) on the one hand, and the media’s focus on a broad spectrum of more tangible issues such as welfare issues on the other hand.\(^\text{15}\)

Niklas Håkansson and Peter Esaiasson who have contributed substantively to this field of elections communication, for example by their publication *On Trial Tonight – Election Coverage in Swedish Radio and TV* which goes into depth with the historical relationship between politicians and the media, focusing on the election periods.\(^\text{16}\) They have also conducted extensive contents analyses of radio/TV debates with party leaders, election speeches and party manifestos with regard to various aspects. The gathered data, which ends by the 2006 elections, is includes coding categories that border to the concept of humanism and humanitarianism, such as immigration and refugee policy, multiculturalism, military defense, security policy, international cooperation.\(^\text{17}\) What have been published based on these studies does not elaborate on the mentioned categories. The data material does nevertheless exist and it would be both relevant and interesting, in a possible extension of the present thesis, to further process and analyze this material, as it could provide useful input not least for comparisons over time.

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13 Bjereld & Demker in Demker (Ed.), 2013: 169,174
15 Asp & Bjerling, 2014/Press Release Ekerlids Förlag 2014-08-26
16 Esaiasson & Håkansson, 2002
17 E-mail conversation with Nicklas Håkansson 2014-10-20
2.2 Humanism

2.2.1 Operationalization, definitions, and translation

*Humanism* is here operationalized to include a number of key words that all relate to the more comprehensive concept of humanism. Humanism was selected because of the thought-provoking fact that in a time when explicit references to isms and traditional ideologies are so rare, humanism was repeatedly utilized in the last election. The selection of related key words (humane, human, humanity, humanism, humanitarianism) is an attempt to limit the study to words that are linguistically close to humanism and the notion human value. The distinction between the selected words and those excluded is based on that the selected are literally similar to humanism, while other words although they might have a similar meaning are excluded. Word choices appeal different emotions and associations, and it matters whether the politicians argue for a *human* immigration policy or an immigration policy based on solidarity, if the state Sweden as a *humanitarian* superpower or a superpower within the development sector.

The following is an attempt to address the language challenge and clarify and make transparent the interpretations of some of key words that together constitute the concept of humanism, as presented throughout this thesis. It indicates how the key words are grouped in the mapping of the material, how different phrases and text extracts are categorized according to key words, as a basis for further analysis. The meanings and academic definitions of the key concepts will be elaborated, but the following table explains how the words are translated and grouped. The interpretations are guided by the Oxford Dictionaries but they are not always directly transferred, as the definitions are adjusted to the Swedish meaning of the word(s).

### 2.2.2 Table 2: Translation of key words from Swedish to English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Oxford Dictionaries definition – adjusted according to context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humane</td>
<td>- Human</td>
<td><em>Having or showing compassion or benevolence.</em> / <em>Characteristic of people’s better qualities, such as kindness or sensitivity.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human (rights,</td>
<td>- Mänsklig/t/a</td>
<td><em>Something relating to, or characteristic of people or human beings.</em> / <em>Characteristic of people as opposed to God or animals or machines, especially in being susceptible to weaknesses.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dignity, value,</td>
<td>- Människors (rätt,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffering,</td>
<td>värde, lidande)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community)</td>
<td>- Människo- (värde)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human/brotherly</td>
<td>- Medmänsklig</td>
<td><em>Showing affection or concern.</em> / <em>Characteristic of people’s better qualities, such as kindness or sensitivity.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Medmänniska</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mellanmänsklig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanity</td>
<td>- Humanitet</td>
<td><em>The quality of being humane or benevolent.</em> / <em>Human beings.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Medmänsklighet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mänsklighet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanism</td>
<td>- Humanism</td>
<td><em>An outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters.</em> / <em>Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Humanistic)</td>
<td>- (Humanistik)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 Oxford Dictionaries online
As illustrated by the translation table, there are numerous words that relate and weave into each other – both in Swedish and in English. The border lines between groups of key words that are very similar in Swedish may not always follow the same borderlines in English, and some words have more than one meaning. The application of the table above will allow for transparent interpretations, consequent groupings and necessary simplifications, but it may still be useful to highlight the following fundamental terminological distinctions.

2.2.3 Humanism as a value or a philosophy

A first distinction to make is between the different meanings of humanism itself. As used in this thesis, and throughout the election debate, it is not referred to as a non-religious philosophy of life. It is rather a comprehensive term that represents the value and goodness of human beings and the emphasis on common human needs, and possibly the seeking of rational ways of solving human problems. As will be elaborated further on, humanism could in this more value-oriented sense also be understood as empathy and brotherhood.

Humanism in its philosophical non-religious meaning is indeed an interesting take on questions about humanitarian aid, refugee reception etc., but it appears clear that the way that humanism is used in the election debate is not as a confession of a certain belief, but rather a humane approach towards other people. To simplify, these definitions will here be referred to as the distinction between a value-oriented humanism on the one hand and a philosophical non-religious on the other. The value-oriented take on humanism makes it relevant to broaden the reading of the material in this study, and also include existential expressions relating to human rights, dignity, and value in the analysis.

2.2.4 Humanism and humanitarianism

*Humanism* was not originally the obvious candidate for umbrella concept. The inspiration to the study was the many expressions in the election campaign relating to Sweden as *humanitarian* superpower, arguments about what is the most *humane* or *humanistic* political action etc. As these examples and the table of terms above illustrate, there is a diversity of words, which are interrelated and sometimes even used synonymously. At a closer look, a distinction appears, at least theoretically, between variations of humanism (humane, humanistic etc.) on the one hand and variations of humanitarianism (humanitarian) on the other. As for how these two concepts are utilized in the debate, there is a blurred line between them, which may be caused by linguistic carelessness or intentional conceptual integration. Humanitarianism tends nevertheless to stand for international interventions, foreign aid in catastrophes, provision for basic human needs and description of certain situations for humans, while humanism is used to describe values, attitudes and relation between humans.

Based on this generic and simplified distinction, humanism appears as the wider and more inclusive concept of the two. Humanitarianism, as actions concerned with seeking human

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19 This word does not exist in the Swedish language according to *The Swedish Academy Dictionary* (SAOL13), nor is it used in the election campaign.
welfare, can go under the umbrella of humanism, while the other way around is less feasible. This makes humanism more useful as an umbrella concept.

Humanitarianism remains however one of the most central concepts in this thesis and will therefore be examined more in detail. Although more action-oriented than humanism, it is difficult to separate the normative claims from humanitarianism, as it is also based on certain values and views – as Martha Finnemore formulates it: “the humanitarian worldview asserts that individuals have status and worth independent of their relationship to states.”

Nor do Michael Barnett leave out norms and values when he presents three phases of development: Imperial humanitarianism (colonialism, commerce, civilization missions); Neo-humanitarianism (nationalism, development, sovereignty); and Liberal humanitarianism (liberal peace, globalization, human rights). But in addition to these norm-based development phases, he looks at practices when discussing the transition from providing life-saving relief interventions to getting increasingly involved in governance support. Barnett asks whether politics have been humanized or if humanitarianism has been politicized, although his own position is neither romantic nor cynical. He treats humanitarianism “as a morally complicated and defined by the passions, politics, and powers of its times even as it tries to rise above them.” More critical perspectives are also acknowledged, and contribute to the critical approach in this thesis. For example, some consider humanitarianism as a feel-good ideology that helps maintaining global inequalities that substitute radical changes with charity, or discuss humanitarian imperialism which “reduces humanitarianism to the interest of the powerful.”

Also humanitarianism communication has transformed over time, as discussed by Chouliaraki. She points out the shift from the early shock effect images of suffering, via glossy positive imagery campaigns, to more recent humanitarian branding. There has been a move from emotion-orientation to styles of appealing that privilege low-intensity emotions and short-term forms of agency.

2.2.5 Humanism in opinion research – brotherhood and equality

Swedish opinion research has dealt with the concept of humanism, mainly in a value oriented sense. In the recent study on Swedish migration policy opinions, brotherhood-humanism is highlighted as a key value for understanding variations in opinions on aid, refugee reception and engagement in geographically distant conflicts. Brotherhood is here considered an expression of humanism, a positive approach towards people and mankind, and is a value concept that explains a person’s opinion on refugee issues or aid. The study shows that also the value equality can help explaining patterns in opinions on international issues. A positive approach towards aid and refugee reception among the Left Party supporters is explained by equality, while the same positive opinion among the Liberals’ supporters is explained by brotherhood. The weak attachment by the supporters of the Moderates to these values would explain their historically reluctant approach within this area.

References to humanism,

20 Finnemore, 1996:71
22 Barnett, 2011:7
human values etc. are frequently used by party representatives from both left and right, which indicates that these are considered shared and universal values, although motivated by different underlying priorities.

2.3 Sweden as a humanitarian superpower

One starting-point for this thesis was the repeatedly used statement “Sweden is a humanitarian superpower” – in Swedish “Sverige är en humanitär stormakt”. When utilized, the phrase is often a catchy and strong way to underline a line of reasoning, leading to an argument for a certain political action or support of a certain political party. The Swedish word stormakt also leads the thoughts to a period 1611-1721 in Swedish history called Stormaktstiden, which was characterized by national glory days in terms of military conquests.

The description of Sweden as a humanitarian superpower has appeared occasionally in different contexts over the past years, for example in parliamentary debates, Op-Ed articles and in Ministry briefings – but also in various blogposts and online forums. A Google search of the phrase indicates that it has been most intensely referred to in connection with the annual Foreign Policy Declaration in February 2013, and with the summer speech by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt in August 2014. In the Foreign Policy Declaration presented to the Riksdag, Foreign Minister Carl Bildt gave examples of Sweden’s achievements and international contributions, and stated proudly that Sweden is a humanitarian superpower.

When then Prime Minister Reinfeldt gave his, by some now considered legendary, key note speech by the end of the 2014 election campaign, he used the picture of Sweden as a humanitarian superpower to underline the importance of his main message – to urge Swedes to open their hearts for people in our world who suffer and flee for their lives.

Whilst the Government uses “humanitarian superpower” to gain support for its foreign policy, others use the expression to illustrate statistics and international comparisons. United Nations Association of Sweden argues, supported by statistics from OECD, that Sweden is a humanitarian superpower – being one of the world’s largest international donors and the world’s second largest donor per capita.

Although the humanitarian superpower image seems more popular among politicians on the right half of the political field, there are also examples of others using it to make a political point. In her 1st May speech 2011, the then chair of the Social Democrats’ youth organization Jytte Guteland referred to the legacy of former Prime Minister Olof Palme who contributed to positioning Sweden as a humanitarian superpower. Per Garthton from the Green Party, argues in a polemical article that Carl Bildt in his role as Foreign Minister gave a false image of his own intentions when stating Sweden as humanitarian superpower. According to

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26 Myndighetsverket. Statement in the Riksdag by Cecilia Widegren 21 September 2011. Meeting minutes
27 Svenska Dagbladet (SvD). Opinion article by Cecilia Widegren, 16 April 2011.
30 TV4. Speech by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, held 16 August 2014 in Stockholm.
Garthon, Bildt had shifted the foreign policy from the Palme legacy in his strive to put an end to Sweden’s role as moral superpower.\textsuperscript{33} Interesting to note here is that there is no questioning of that it is desirable to be considered a humanitarian superpower – the debate rather concerns under whose leadership Sweden lives up to this epithet.

\textsuperscript{33} Aftonbladet. Opinion article by Per Gahrton 30 September 2014.
3 Theory and methodology

In order to investigate the utilization and meaning of humanism in the contemporary political debate, this study maps and analyzes the contents and the discourse of the 2014 election campaign. As presented in the Introduction, the study is designed to address the research questions in four steps, in order to reveal underlying meanings and practical political implications of the discourse.

Studying description, depiction and discourse is a matter of interpretation. Which questions are being asked, how the study is designed and how the material is read is a result of the researcher looking at the world through a filter of cultural awareness, assumptions and experiences. In this case, the pre-understanding is based on Sweden as a relatively wealthy and open society, with a long history of playing an active part in global solidarity movements and of receiving immigrants. The political context has also been described, with the Sweden Democrats as a new and increasingly influential actor, which all the other parties distance themselves from. The analysis is not only based on the cultural awareness, but also on deliberate theoretical assumptions. These assumptions will be presented here, together with its methodological implications.

The theoretical starting-points have in common that they deal discourse, and from a critical perspective. The critical stances will be discussed further, but it might be useful to start by defining discourse. The “contemporary political debate” is in this thesis understood in terms of its discourse, which goes beyond the text and language, as it also includes its social and political practice and situational context. This interpretation emphasizes “the processes of producing and interpreting speech and writing, as well as the situational context of language use”35, and makes a connection between text/language and its social/political purpose.

3.1 Constructionism

The definition of discourse as not only reflecting social relations, but also constructing them, is related to this study’s first theoretical starting-point, namely that political action is constructed by social norms and structures, and that these structures can be revealed and understood through analyzing discourse. The constructivist approach means that language is considered to shape reality, by reflecting or reproducing underlying norms and is therefore also useful in understanding the connections between discourse, politics and reality.

One focus for constructivism in political science is the socially constructed nature of international politics. It considers political interests and behaviors as created rather than given, which makes it relevant to study structures of meaning and social interactions. Martha Finnemore argues that social structures and norms have powerful impacts on national political preferences and thereby on international outcomes.37 Political behavior within the areas of

34 Fairclough, 1992:3 pp.
35 Fairclough, 1992:3
foreign policy, aid and refugee reception is not only constructed by domestic public opinion and cultural structures, but also by international humanitarian norms. As international values are generally considered valid simply by the virtue of individuals’ humanity, independent of their relations with national states, these norms could function as a form of higher value which political parties want to associate their policies with in the election debate. Humanitarian interventions are specifically discussed by Finnemore, arguing that the pattern of interventions cannot be understood apart from the changing normative context in which they occur.

This constructivist approach in this thesis means that the interests of the political parties are not taken as given. It motivates an investigation of the driving forces, norms and values behind the political parties’ way of utilizing humanism in the debate, as well as the normative context.

### 3.2 Critical theory

Underlying norms and structures do not only construct political behavior. They are also bearers of power-relations and social/political/economic dynamics that can be revealed and ultimately transformed. Critical theory, often referred back to Marxist thinking or the Frankfurt School of Critical theory, highlights the changeability in power structures and comes often with a social change agenda. For example, from a linguistic point of view, this can be expressed through an aim to connect language, power, critical consciousness and social change.

Applying a critical theoretical approach in this thesis suggests that power, understood as relations, dynamics, and domination between groups in the society, is reproduced through discourse. The utilization and the meaning of humanism should therefore be understood in this context. According to Norman Fairclough, a critical stance connects the concepts of power and ideology, as ideology is a modality of power, representing aspects of the world which can establish, maintain and change social relations of power, domination and exploitation. It this sense, ideology as well as discourse, is considered critical rather than descriptive.

The critic that comes with the applied critical theory has to do with the non-critical neglect of power-relations in the society, manifested for example through discourse. 'Critical' implies showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change.

This study does not have a world-changing ambition, but wants to reveal how norms and values are integrated in the use of language, and how that is connected to power-relations and images of the self and the other. It will also illustrate how the discourse around humanism is potentially changeable. Therefore, critical theory related to discourse is a relevant theoretical

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42 Fairclough, 1989: 4
starting-point in this study. The aspects of domination and potential exploitation will be further developed under the sections on post-colonialism and representation.

Under the umbrella of critical theory, critical *development* theory highlights power dynamics that relate to for example control over resources, human rights and global exploitation.\(^{45}\) It questions binary distinctions between the traditional and the modern, between the Third World and the First, the superior donor and the passive receiver.\(^{46}\) The Swedish election debate touches upon several of these aspects when addressing issues like humanitarian interventions and refugee reception, which makes critical development theory useful in this thesis.

### 3.3 Post-colonial approach

#### 3.3.1 Post-colonialism and development

Post-colonialism is a critical approach towards development and international relations, acknowledging the unjust and unequal power-relations that were established through colonialism, and that are reproduced continuously. It focuses on cultural and intellectual consequences of the colonial legacy, rather than on the ex-colonies in a political sense.\(^{47}\) It problematizes categorizing and grouping that is based on negative stereotypes.\(^{48}\) This post-colonial understanding of power-relations is a useful starting-point when analyzing underlying images, norms and stereotypes that are reflected in discourse on foreign policy, aid and refugee reception.

Cheryl McEwan’s presents a scheme which details the differences between a compassion-based and a post-colonial approach towards development.\(^{49}\) A compassion perspective focuses on helplessness, addresses lack of development, appeal to our responsibility to care through awareness raising and promotion campaigns – which may motivate support for development initiatives but reinforce colonial assumptions and relations. A post-colonial take would rather focus on inequality, address exploitation and disempowerment, appeal to our sense of justice through engagement in global issues through ethical relationships – which aims to achieve responsible actions, but risks generating guilt and critical disengagement.

The post-colonial critique of euro-centrism and paternalism in development practice has also influenced development practitioners. This is reflected in the partnership discourse itself, where images of a superior Western donor co-exist with a counter-discourse which questions these colonial assumptions.\(^{50}\)

#### 3.3.2 Post-colonialism and the Other

As central part of the post-colonial critique of development, which can be applied to political debate within areas like international relations and refugee policy, is how *the Other* is described. Scholars argue that there is a tendency to accentuate differences between ourselves


\(^{46}\) Schech & Haggis, 2007:37 and Eriksson Baaz, 2007

\(^{47}\) Schech & Haggis, 2007:58,81

\(^{48}\) McEwan 2009:121


\(^{50}\) Eriksson Baaz, 2007
and the Other. McEwan calls this Othering and Hall talks about the the Spectacle of the Other. Stereotype differences is a compelling theme, as it engages emotions and attitudes, which is an efficient tool in political debate.

Also Eriksson Baaz highlights the description of the Other as part of the post-colonial critique, where the resourceful and developed Donor is positioned in contrast to the suffering and inferior Other. Translated into development practices, this is reflected in the contradiction between the discourse of partnership which emphasizes equality, and the discourse of development which highlights differences between the partners when it comes to the stage of development and enlightenment. There is a strong connection between discourse and power dynamics: “The partnership discourse itself – through the ideas of aid dependence – reproduces images of a passive Other whose responsibility and agency has to be activated. While the partnership discourse, in this sense, re-cycles long-standing images dating back to the colonial history, it also reflects new ideas of what constitutes ‘proper strategies of upbringing’.”

The opposite of accentuating differences in relation to the Other would be recognizing hybridity. Eriksson Baaz argues that viewing development and international relations as “an encounter between separate, bounded cultures is problematic, since it neglects the hybridity of cultures. This perspective restricts possibilities of identification and masks similarities between and differences within the supposedly bounded cultures.”

Scholars point out that there has been a change in the development discourse, and thereby also in the description of the Other. As previously mentioned, humanitarian communication has transformed over time. The images of suffering were replaced by positive imagery campaigns and humanitarian branding. Portrays of powerless victims and empathy discourse shifted towards momentarily engagements and “playful consumerism”. While all these styles of humanitarian communication have in common that suffering is represented as a cause for certain emotion and action, the distancing practice is particularly problematic as it reproduces colonial relationships. The post-colonial critique in this thesis will have a wider application than the discussion on partnership vs paternalism in international development practices. The critical approach will problematize the relationship between Sweden as a donor on the one hand, and the individuals/groups of immigrants or potential receivers of support on the other.

This should all be seen in the context of globalization. McEwan argues that colonialization provided the basis for globalization, and that post-colonialism reworks globalization as interdependency. A consequence of globalization ought to be an increased focus in political debate on issues with implications beyond the Swedish borders, as globalization means not only increased movement of capital and goods, but also of people, ideas, norms, opportunities and crises. What differs globalization from internationalization is that the former suggests deepened and far-reaching interactions more independent of continents and regions, while the

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52 Hall, 1997: Chapter 4 (223-279)
53 Eriksson Baaz, 2007
54 Ibid, 2007
55 Chouliaraki, 2010
56 Chouliaraki 2014:107
57 Chouliaraki, 2010:107, 111
58 McEwan, 2009:88, 106
latter still functions within and across national geopolitical borders. In the context of election discourse, this would imply an increased interest in addressing issues beyond national character, and an increased focus on mutual dependence between Sweden and the surrounding world, rather accentuating difference and distancing towards the Other.

### 3.4 Representation – discourse and semiotics

Closely connected to post-colonialism and description of the Other is the language of development and the power of representation. As elaborated by McEwan, post-colonialism strives to remove negative stereotypes about people and places that are formulated through representational discourse. Imagined worlds are created in representations through rhetoric, association and metaphors. Power-relations and stereotypes are produced and reproduced.

According to Nederveen Pieterse, representation means articulating or privileging particular interests and cultural preferences, while Hall describes it as the production of meaning through language, discourse, signs and images and outlines theories about how language is used to represent the world. The starting-point for this thesis is that language is more than simply reflective of existing objects, people and events. Language is intentional in the sense that it may express what it is intended to mean, what speaker wanted to say. In a study on political communication, it is reasonable to consider the language at least partly intentional, as it is a fundamental tool for generating support and is often subject to careful consideration. But in line with the discussion on Constructivism in section 3.1, this thesis will also consider meaning as constructed and through language. This motivates in-depth investigations of the symbolic practices that are used in representation.

Constructivism can be divided into a semiotic and discursive model, and both these will contribute to this analysis of humanism in the Swedish election debate. While semiotic analysis reveals how language produces meaning, discourse analysis focuses more on the politics of representation, its effects and the consequences of representation. As explained in the Introduction and as reflected in the research questions, this thesis include both semiotic and discursive aspects in order to better understand the utilization of humanism in the political debate, its meaning and practical implications.

#### 3.4.1 Representation as political act

Discourse and identity is never apolitical or irrelevant, argues Eriksson Baaz, and discourse analysis can reveal effects and consequences of representation. In the texts that are subject to investigation in this thesis, language is used to represent the own party, the political opponent, the distant Other or the situation in another country. The politics of representation is a useful tool with potential impact on power-relations as well as formulation and implementation of policy – by some research naming is in itself considered a political act.
That is also why post-colonial studies are concerned with revealing and challenging politics of representation that continues to use colonizing strategies in describing the third world and problems of development.⁶⁷

According to Peter Hamilton, complex systems of representation can be termed a *dominant representational paradigm*. This means that different elements, such as word choice, rhetoric tricks, substantial context or associations can be used to produce a certain conception of a phenomenon, group or situation.⁶⁸ By introducing and upholding such paradigm, stereotypes are reproduced, conceptions are sustained and representation can become a political act.

### 3.4.2 Semiotic approach to representation

The semiotic analysis’ focus on how meaning is produced builds on the understanding that discourse and cultural practices comes with a meaning which is conveyed with through signs – which are interpreted.⁶⁹ These signs exist in various forms: pictures, words, objects, gestures, phenomena, actions, and they are explored individually or as systems and structures.

Applying a semiotic approach in this study means that attention is given not only to the descriptive level – *denotation*, but also to the interpretative level – *connotation*, i.e. moving from the question of what we see/hear/read to asking questions about the meaning of it.⁷⁰ For example, a statement by one of the party leaders in an election debate can be understood literally: *The Liberals’ party leader Jan Björklund states in a TV debate that Sweden is a humanitarian superpower and one of the largest donors.* But in order to reveal the wider cultural meaning, we could also ask what it tells us that Jan Björklund states in a TV debate that Sweden is a humanitarian superpower and one of the largest donors.⁷¹ Such messages – with an interpretation based on a cultural, historical and social pre-understanding – could be: *Sweden used to be a successful military-political conqueror under the so-called “Stormaktstiden” (superpower era) which we still applaud in our national anthem, although we are now insignificant – apart from within the area of humanitarian support, which we should be careful not to lose. Sweden has remained strong with the Liberals in the Government and you don’t want to risk this by supporting the opposition in this election. The Liberals are by the way not afraid of using military metaphors as we are the only party left in Sweden who speaks out in favor of a strong military defense, while we at the same time care for peace and international reputation.*

The meanings and connotational codes may however vary due to cultural differences and according to the contexts in which they appear. It may be determined by the specific situation, place, time and purpose of communication or the specificity of senders and receivers.⁷² This also illustrates the limitation of semiotic analysis as interpretations can vary greatly and as a totally fixed meaning cannot be reached. It is however this analysis that furthers the constructivist idea, by revealing and problematizing representations and opinions.

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⁶⁷ Schech & Haggis, 2007:58  
⁶⁸ Hamilton in Hall, 1997:76  
⁶⁹ Hall, 1997:36  
⁷⁰ Ibid:38  
⁷¹ Ibid:39  
⁷² Gripsrud, 2002:104-105
3.5 Methodological starting-points and considerations

The critical theoretical approach is the basis for the methodological considerations in this thesis. In addition, it has been outlined how there are also post-colonial and representational aspects of this critical approach. These are all useful in responding to the research questions about meaning of discourse, representation and norms, power-relation implications and discursive construction of political action. These starting-points have methodological implications and motivates a textual analysis in the form of a critical discourse analysis. The analysis is designed to serve the purpose of both identifying patterns in the discourse (word use and context) as well as analyzing the meaning of it, which motivates a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology.

3.5.1 Critical discourse analysis

Based on the notion of discourse as a form of social practice, supported by critical theory and post-colonial and representation aspects, discourse cannot be analyzed only from a descriptive perspective. As pointed out by Hall, there are layers of meaning in a text that can be revealed through contextual interpretation.\(^73\) A similar reasoning is at the core of Fairclough’s take on critical discourse analysis, arguing that the concept of discourse is three-dimensional and includes 1) text; 2) discursive practice; and 3) social practice. In other words, discourse has not only a descriptive dimension, focusing on language analysis of texts. It has also an interpretative dimension which looks as the context in terms of the processes of text production and interpretation. The third and explanatory dimension of discourse focuses on the institutional or socio-historical circumstances in which the discourse takes place and how they shape discourse, but also how discourse shapes the social circumstances.\(^74\)

Critical discourse analysis suggests that ideological representations can be identified in texts, and that these do not only describe social groups, but bear also references to power-relations between such groups. This approach is therefore useful when studying how utilization of certain language, for example humanism, relates to the image of the self and the other. With a critical approach, textual analysis needs to consider the language and the texts in terms of their effects on power-relations.\(^75\) The social practice dimension has similarities with what is argued from the constructivist theoretical approach, as it considers discourse as not just a reflection of, or constructed by, social relations, but as something that constructs these relations.\(^76\)

One important reason for applying discourse analysis in this thesis is that it recognizes that messages and meanings are produced through words and semantics, as well as through context and practice. A critical take on discourse analysis emphasizes “processes of producing and interpreting speech and writing, as well as the situational context of language use”\(^77\). Language is in focus in this thesis, but looking at the contexts in which it is used gives a deeper understanding of the meaning and possible implications. As argued in this section and also throughout the theoretical discussion, a critical approach towards discourse is highly

\(^{73}\) Hall, 1997:38 pp.
\(^{75}\) Fairclough, 2003: 9
\(^{76}\) Fairclough 1992: 3
\(^{77}\) Ibid, 3 pp.
relevant when investigating meaning of language and discourse, how it is constructed and its political implications – particularly when related to power-relations.

### 3.5.2 Combining quantitative and qualitative method

As already discussed, the focus on *discourse* rather than on semantics, means taking the analysis further than only looking at the contents in terms of language and word use. This is why the initial quantitative mapping is followed by a more in-depth qualitative analysis, where the context in which the words occur is given a prominent role.

The methodological design of the study and how this responds to the research questions is presented in the Introduction, and illustrates how the quantitative and qualitative methods are combined and applied in this study. Quantitative methods are often, at least within social and cultural studies criticized for being simplistic and unreflexive, but there are also strong arguments that quantitative and qualitative methods can mutually enhance each other.\(^{78}\)

Combining quantitative and qualitative methods has the strength of both grasping a relatively large selection of data to facilitate conclusions about trends and patterns (through quantitative mapping), and also allowing further interpretation of the quantified information (through qualitative discourse analysis). The combination of methods can also partly compensate for weaknesses of the two. For example, whilst qualitative methods suffer from being harder for other researchers to check, the quantitative data can more easily be reconstructed. Quantification can highlight patterns and give a better overview, while the qualitative analysis usually covers fewer samples. A limitation of quantification within social studies is that strict categorizing does not necessarily reflect a more dynamic and complex reality, and the statistical data may therefore by misleading, whilst qualitative discourse analysis can problematize the quantitative results. By combining the two, qualitative method can compensate for some of the lack of in-depth understanding generated in the quantitative mapping, and help understanding what is behind the data and the patterns.\(^{79}\)

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4 Analysis and discussion

4.1 Content mapping and reflections about patterns

In order to identify patterns and tendencies in the utilization of humanism, the material has been mapped into a scheme (see Annex 1-4), which has mainly a quantitative nature. This is in order to present and systemize the selected part of the material where humanism and related key words occur, and to systemize it according to certain factors. This initial processing gives an overview and a basis for further qualitative discussions. The occurrence of humanism is here limited to the context of development, aid and refugee reception. Some parties refer to for example humanity when presenting their welfare priorities, but for practical reasons and in order to keep the international focus, this is not included in the study. There are mainly two patterns that are explored in this mapping. Table 3 shows the occurrence of humanism in the election discourse\textsuperscript{80}, specifying the frequency of the different words and per party. Table 4 shows in which context the words are used – simplified into five main categories.

4.1.1 Table 3. Occurrence of humanism in discourse, word frequency per party\textsuperscript{81}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Humane</th>
<th>Human (rights dignity, value, suffering, community)</th>
<th>Human/ brotherly</th>
<th>Humanity</th>
<th>Humanism (Humanistic)</th>
<th>Humanitarian Humanitarianism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M Moderates</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Social Democrats</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP Green Party</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD Sweden Democrats</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP Liberals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Center Party</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V Left Party</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KD Christian Democrats</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.M. The King</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Arch Bishop</td>
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<td>Gov. Declaration</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

80 TV4 Debate, SVT Debate, SR Interviews, Red Cross short Interviews, Party Election Manifestos. In addition: Speech by H.M. the King, Sermon by Arch Bishop and Government Declaration.

81 The scores represent the number of times the words occur in the material.
Table 3 illustrates that the concept of humanism, is frequently used in the Swedish election discourse, by all parties. Also the speech by H.M. The King, the sermon by the Arch Bishop as well as the Government Declaration contain elements of humanism, humanity and humanitarianism. The word human (in connection with rights, dignity, value, suffering, community) stands out as the most frequent among all parties and speakers. This can mainly be explained by the frequent use of human rights which is part of all parties’ election manifests. In the Arch Bishop’s sermon, focus is not so much on rights but on the human identity – seemingly not far from the Oxford definition “Characteristic of people as opposed to God or animals or machines, especially in being susceptible to weaknesses”82.

It is also notable that the total utilization of the concept of humanism varies significantly between the parties. The mapping does not take size of the party into consideration, as all had equal time at their disposal for interviews (although they were not in control of the questions asked), and all were in charge of the length of their own election manifests. There is a possibility that the two large parties, the Moderates and the Social Democrats, had better chances of making themselves heard in the debates. This however, does not seem to explain the frequency of occurrence of humanism, as the largest party, the Social Democrats is placed at the bottom of the scale being together with the Center Party, whilst the Moderates tops the frequency. Neither does the left-right scale nor the government-opposition position seem to explain the differences on the total, as both sides are found at both ends of the frequency scale, with the Sweden Democrats in the middle.

Looking at specific words however, the two political blocks tend to be likeminded internally when it comes to word choice. For example, none of the then opposition parties (Social Democrats, Green Party, Left Party) used human in the meaning of brotherly, or humanism – while these were generally used by the other parties, including the Sweden Democrats. The frequency sheet has its limitations, as it is preselected which words the texts and statements are scanned for. It is not unlikely that the results had been different if other value-loaded words such as freedom, solidarity or equality would have been included. Neither is frequency measured in relation to the length of the election manifests – which varies between 10 pages (Left party) and 65 (Moderates). This has probably contributed to the Moderates high frequency score, but also the other parties gained quite high numbers from the manifesto category. That the length of the manifests cannot alone explain the variations is also illustrated by the fact that the Left Party referred to humanism as many times as the Green Party did in their three times longer manifesto.

This compilation also reflects the party leaders’ personalities, as well as the vocabulary of their speech writers and press officers. However, the overall frequency and the political spread over the scale indicates that humanism in its broader sense is generally accepted - and adopted in the discourse as a useful tool when seeking support for political ideas. Most words in the election campaign are carefully selected and humanism would not be utilized unless it was considered favorable.

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82 Oxford Dictionnairies online http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/american_english/humanism
2014-12-10
4.1.2 Table 4. Contexts in which humanism is used in the discourse

The scores in the table indicate frequency of certain contexts, when using humanism and related key words.

Table 4 gives an overview and responds to the question about in which context, in terms of contents, the concept of humanism occurs. Although all quotes where humanism or related key words occur are unique, there are certain patterns in how and in which context they are utilized. Some quotes are not as easily coupled with as others, but the seven categories presented in the table cover to a large extent all occurrences of humanism and reflect the patterns of utilization.

Just like in Table 3, the dominating category in Table 4 deals with the human rights. This confirms that reference to human rights is the predominant way to approach humanism, as operationalized here. The scores in Table 4 do not represent occurrence of the key word human rights but the occurrence of humanism (all related key words included) in the context of expressing support for human rights. The categorization is a matter of interpretation and there are not always clear distinctions between the categories. In order to better reflect that dynamic, a few quotes that clearly falls into more than one category, have accordingly added scores to more than one category. One such example is “Now it’s time to stand up for human rights and a human migration policy”, which falls under both categories 2 and 4. The purpose of Table 4 is to present the identified categories and give a hint of the distribution of occurrences per category.

Table 4. Contexts in which humanism is used in the discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summarized per context</th>
<th>1 Description of the Swedish society, how it looks today.</th>
<th>2 Support for Human Rights.</th>
<th>3 (Argument for) Sweden’s responsibility to provide humanitarian support, aid, show humanity.</th>
<th>4 Labelling certain politics, policies, reforms (existing or suggested).</th>
<th>5 Description of situation in another country.</th>
<th>6 Description of (or positioning against) another party.</th>
<th>7 Philosophic reflection about the meaning of humanism, without direct reference to politics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M Moderates</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>S Social Democrats</td>
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<td>MP Green Party</td>
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<td>V Left Party</td>
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<td>H.M. The King</td>
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<td>Arch Bishop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gov Declaration</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

83 The scores represent the number of times the words occur in the material.
84 MP Election Manifesto 2014
Since all quotes are from the election campaign the ultimate purpose of these statements, and the utilization of humanism, is assumed to be to gain the public’s support for the own party. For example, descriptions of the Swedish society (Category 1), of the situation in another country (Category 5) or of another party (Category 6) are not neutral, passive statements, but holds layers of meanings. These meanings will be analyzed in the next section, but before going into that, a few points need to be made about the challenges to define the categories.

While the majority of the parties’ quotes are rather concordant in each category, the Sweden Democrats’ statements stand out as more difficult to categorize. One example is the statement that the party strive for a Sweden that “is aware of its place in the Nordic, European, Western, Christian and human community”85. This qualifies into the material as it refers to Sweden’s foreign policy and contains human community. With some difficulties, the quote is sorted in under Category 1. It is not really a description of the current Swedish society, but it is a description of a society which the Sweden Democrats strives for. Rather than a call for global human responsibility, the quote highlights a responsibility towards the immediate surroundings, the own country and its citizens – a rationale that occurs throughout the Sweden Democrats’ discourse – the focus is still on the Swedish society.

Another example of the Sweden Democrats’ individuality and the challenge of streamlining the categorization, is the connection between humanism and aid costs/efficiency. Only by the Sweden Democrats, humanism-related key words are used in arguments for increased aid efficiency and reallocation of funds from refugee reception to other policy areas. Quotes exemplifying the party’s combination of humanism and efficiency are: “An efficient and human aid policy”86 and “by abandoning inefficient aid [...] and increasing humanitarian aid with focus on the most urgent needs, we believe we could liberate funds for Swedish welfare and make at least as much good for the world’s poor and refugees...”87. Although the speech by Prime Minister Reinfeldt in August opened up for a general discourse where financial implications of refugee reception was acknowledged, all parties except for the Sweden Democrats seem to separate humanism from efficiency and effectiveness. Both short-term costs and long-terms benefits of refugee immigration were mentioned by most parties in the election debates, but the majority of parties chose to give humanism as a valid reason for supporting people in need irrespectively of financial aspects, and they separated the two in the discourse.

4.2 Identifying and understanding signs and elements of meaning

The utilization of humanism produces conceptions about the society, refugees, political opponents, aid and Swedish tradition. Norms and values are integrated in the use of language. Theories of semiotics suggest that political discourse and election practices come with a meaning, and that this meaning is conveyed with help from signs – which in turn can be interpreted. The production of meaning could be unintentional by the person who uses humanism, but there is often an idea behind a certain statement. In the election campaign, words and formulations are prepared in advance and a result of careful balancing.

85 SD Election Manifesto 2014
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
This part of the analysis concerns semiotics, and aims to interpret expressions into meanings. Each statement is not scrutinized individually, but the analysis follows the categories to find significant elements for each one of them. In order to address questions about meaning, an interpretative level (connotation) will be added to the descriptive (denotation).

4.2.1 1. Description of the Swedish society

In order to present a setting for, or underline the relevance of, certain political proposals, humanism is used to describe the Swedish society. The parties representing the Government in the election campaign talked about Sweden as a country which “has showed it possible to put humanity first and open the door for those in need of shelter”\textsuperscript{88} and “is built on solidarity and humanism”\textsuperscript{89}. Also the expression “Sweden is a humanitarian superpower\textsuperscript{90}” is used in this context. These statements imply a political self-praise and a proud national self-image. The first quotes produce the conception of a friendly, safe and open society – norms and values that are presumably supported by a majority of the voters. Using the expression humanitarian superpower is very effective as it is associated with power, achievements and national pride – but it also polarizes inexplicitly with military force as a means of making a difference in the world.

An interpretation could be that the meaning of these descriptions is that Sweden is a desirable society that we should be proud of, and the purpose of conveying this positive image is to underline the importance of continuation with the same politics, since the desirable current situation would otherwise be at risk. It was not until the Government Declaration, when the campaign is over and the Social Democrats had taken over as representative of the State, that they chose to describe the Swedish society in terms of humanism, signaling affinity and strength: “The last years, people around Sweden have risen against racism, for all humans’ equal value\textsuperscript{91}”.

4.2.2 2. Support for Human Rights

Expressing general support for human rights or stating that certain rights (sexual, refugees’) are also human rights, is the most frequent context for humanism to occur in the election debate. At a closer look however, it turns out that it is only in the election manifestos, the specific humanism-focused Red Cross interviews and the Government Declaration that such expressed support for human rights occur. Possibly these expressions are considered too ideological and general to qualify for broadcasted debates or in individual radio interviews. Expressions such as “Sweden shall be a strong voice in the world for freedom, peace, human rights and solidarity\textsuperscript{92}” or “The respect for human rights must be strengthen in the EU-countries”\textsuperscript{93} can however indicate a policy direction and give an ideological context for more specific political proposals.

\textsuperscript{88} Moderates (Alliance) Election Manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{89} Annie Lööf (C) in TV4 Debate
\textsuperscript{90} Jan Björklund (FP) in TV4 Debate
\textsuperscript{91} Government Declaration 2014
\textsuperscript{92} Government Declaration 2014
\textsuperscript{93} Liberals (FP) Election Manifest 2014
The very concept of human rights can be read as a sign, bearing the meaning of something absolute, indisputable and good. Once it is stated that an argument is based on human rights, it becomes politically difficult to oppose it.

4.2.3 3. Sweden’s responsibility to provide support

In this category, the statements are encoded with an appeal to the receivers’ sense of responsibility, justice and compassion. The arguments for Sweden’s responsibility to act unselfishly and to contribute globally are often based on a reasoning about the safety and welfare we enjoy in Sweden – put in contrast to descriptions of catastrophic situations in other countries and of people in need. Strong emotional expressions such as “crying needs”\(^\text{94}\) are often used.

Being the party that calls for courage, such as “\textit{We must be brave enough to show humanity in this situation}”\(^\text{95}\), sends the signal that whilst other parties hesitate, this party stands for responsibility and strength. Also the Archbishop and the King call for courage, and appeal to the newly elected parliamentarians to make use of the possibility they have been entrusted with, and to remember the human perspective and the less privileged.

The statements in this category seem to convey a feeling of guilt. Using signs and metaphors of \textit{doors, borders} and \textit{sanctuaries}, receivers of the message can easily picture themselves in a favorable position – with the possibility and obligation to help their vulnerable fellowmen.

4.2.4 4. Labelling certain politics, policies or reforms

As a means to convey a message, as a bearer of a meaning, or even as a political act in itself, naming and labelling is a practice that is subject to semiotic research.\(^\text{96}\) Labelling certain policies or reforms is a tool for self-description, formulation of collective opinions or ideological discourse.

When labelling is used in the debate, it is to associate the own party’s suggestions and policies with words that carries a positive meaning and that gain support. There are many examples where humanism and related key words are used by the parties in the election campaign, as this kind of positive labelling: “\textit{humane asylum policy}”\(^\text{97}\); “\textit{generous aid […] immigration policy characterized by humanism}”\(^\text{98}\); “\textit{humane and generous refugee policy}”\(^\text{99}\); “\textit{effective and human aid policy}”\(^\text{100}\); “\textit{humane and open policy}”\(^\text{101}\); “\textit{humane reforms}”\(^\text{102}\).

It seems that the parties often combine humanism with other concepts that they want to be associated with – such as openness and generosity. As discussed in 4.1, the Sweden Democrats stand out in their utilization of \textit{effective} in this context. However, it could have been interesting to make a comparison with other policy areas, to see if other words were used

\(^{94}\) Sweden Democrats (SD) Election Manifesto 2014  
\(^{95}\) Jan Björklund (FP) Aftonbladet Debate  
\(^{96}\) University of Tartu’s website \url{http://www.flfi.ut.ee/en/department-semiotics/research-department-semiotics}  
\(^{97}\) Government Declaration 2014  
\(^{98}\) Christian Democrats (KD) Election Manifesto 2014  
\(^{99}\) Left Party (V) Election Manifesto 2014  
\(^{100}\) Sweden Democrats (SD) Election Manifesto 2014  
\(^{101}\) Green Party (MP) Election Manifesto 2014  
\(^{102}\) Fredrik Reinfeldt (M) TV4 Debate 2014
for labelling. In policy areas like education, public finances or health care we might have seen a broader spectrum of labels from all parties, such as successful, stable, long-term, efficient or equal.

A human policy within the area of aid and refugee reception seems to be unanimously positive and desirable in the current Swedish political discourse. Not even the immigration critical Sweden Democrats advocates for an inhuman immigration policy. They seem however, to differ from the view that a human refugee policy equals to a generous, which is otherwise the dominant representational paradigm of humanism in this context.

4.2.5 5. Description of situation in another country

Strong and emotional descriptions of situations in other countries, as well as images of catastrophes and urgent needs convey a feeling of emergency and compassion. The receiver of such messages need to relate to this and may be eager to support a solution presented by a political party. Examples of such expressive descriptions are “many more than before are put to flight from war and terrible massacres”\textsuperscript{103} or “Oppression of ethnical and religious minorities increases and people’s freedom of religion is violated”\textsuperscript{104}. Also the King chose to use emotional expressions to describe the situation in other parts of the world: “It is with sorrow and pain that we see and follow the human suffering”\textsuperscript{105}.

In the debates, speeches and election manifestos, many are inclined to use humanism to describe the situation in the world. Worth noting is however that in the individual radio interviews, almost all parties talk about people in need, people who flees from war and oppression etc., but it is only the Left Party that describe the situation in terms of humanism – “humanitarian catastrophe”\textsuperscript{106}. This is the one single occasion, in all individual radio interviews à 30 minutes, where humanism or related key word occurs.

4.2.6 6. Description of another party

Considering that there is a general conception that humanism is something good it is important for the parties to depict themselves in these terms – and if possible to make the opponents appear less associated with humanism. One interesting example is when then Prime Minister Reinfeldt debates against his challenger Löfvén, and says that “it is a shame that Stefan Löfvén now began the evening with the first cynicism. I believe more in humanism”\textsuperscript{107}. This was a response to Löfvén’s attempt to associate Reinfeldt with the Sweden Democrat’s leader Åkesson, by claiming that the two were the only ones who connected refugees with costs. Hence, both prime minister candidates use association (with cynicism and Åkesson respectively) as a means to reproduce a negative picture of the other.

That the Sweden Democrats’ party leader is considered a negative association is based on the perception of him as xenophobic, a label that both Reinfeldt and Löfvén want to dissociate themselves from. It cannot be ruled out that the election turnout, making the Sweden Democrats the relatively most successful party may in the long run change this negative association.

\textsuperscript{103} MP Red Cross Interview 2014
\textsuperscript{104} Moderates (M) Election Manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{105} Speech by H.M. The King 2014
\textsuperscript{106} Lars Ohly (V) SR Interview 2014
\textsuperscript{107} Fredrik Reinfeldt (M), Aftonbladet Debate 2014
4.2.7 Without direct reference to politics

This category differs slightly from the others, as the statements appear to have other purposes than direct political arguments or proposals. It is not very surprising that the some of the Arch Bishop’s statements falls into this more philosophical, ideological rather than political category. The same goes for the party representatives’ responses in the Red Cross interview.

A number of expressions utilized by the party representatives make implicit or explicit religious and ideological references. For example, both representatives from the Christian Democrats and the Green Party use the Biblical golden rule “treat others like you want to be treated”\(^{108}\) when elaborating on the term humanism, and the Social Democrats’ representative talks about trying to “see yourself in your neighbor”\(^{109}\). Also the Left Party representative make ideological references, although rather inspired by Marxism than by Christianity, when underlining that “I am not free if not everyone is free”\(^{110}\). These ideological formulations give a learned impression and produce conceptions of well-founded opinions, which in turn create confidence for the sender of the message.

4.3 Decoding representation

As discussed, the election discourse produces a number of conceptions that are conveyed through signs and codes, explicit and implicit. Some of these reflect stereotypes about different groups and phenomena. Since this study focuses on issues related to foreign policy, aid and refugee reception, it is relevant to take a closer look on how the international partners, aid recipients and refugees are represented and to what extent power-relations are reproduced.

It has already been summarized and analyzed how opposition parties, the Swedish self-image, and the situations in other countries are represented in the election discourse. The following is a discussion on patterns in representation through the discourse, from a critical post-colonial perspective and in terms of power-relations.

4.3.1 Post-colonialism and the superior Donor

The tendency among the parties to describe the peaceful and prosperous Swedish society and put it in contrast to the catastrophic situation in other countries, is an example of what Hall calls the Spectacle of the Other.\(^{111}\) Stereotype differences is a compelling theme, as it engages emotions and attitudes – an efficient tool in political debate. When describing the current humanitarian situation in Syria and Northern Iraq, strong words such as war, persecution, oppression and crisis are probably fair and motivated. But it also creates a distance when underlined differences, positioning Sweden as the resourceful and developed Donor in contrast to the suffering and inferior Other, as argued by Eriksson Baaz.\(^{112}\)

Another way to explain how the power-relations are reproduced is the politics of pity, which Chouliaraki finds in humanitarian communication.\(^{113}\) Also in the Swedish election debate, communication of pity is utilized in order to awaken a sense of emergency that motivates

\(^{108}\) KD and MP, Red Cross interviews 2014
\(^{109}\) S, Red Cross interviews 2014
\(^{110}\) V, Red Cross interviews 2014
\(^{111}\) Hall, 1997: Chapter 4 (225 pp.)
\(^{112}\) Eriksson Baaz, 2007
political measures. Examples of language with characteristics of pity, or underlining differences between the Donor and the Other are: “Sweden can be a humanitarian superpower by offering people a sanctuary from suffering and persecution”\textsuperscript{114}; “…those who suffer, who need humanity and a helping hand”\textsuperscript{115}; “Many more than before are forced to flee from war and horrible massacres, chemical weapon, bombs against schools and children”\textsuperscript{116}; and “We are horrified by the killing and we suffer with all children who flee from their homes and with all who flee for their lives”\textsuperscript{117}.

This kind of emotion-oriented discourse has good intentions and calls for universal justice, but it also creates negative emotions that ultimately dehumanize the sufferer.\textsuperscript{118} Turning the Others into figures and statistics may also have dehumanizing effects, especially in combination with holding financial support to the mass of refugees against the Swedish welfare, as in this quote by the Sweden Democrats: “What kind of humanism is that, spending tens of billions Swedish crowns to help 1,6 ‰ of these 50 million refugees. And at the same time you let the welfare deteriorate.”\textsuperscript{119}

There are however examples of statements that focus more in the rights of the Other, which may have a more positive connotation than needs, and make the Others more of active agents than passive recipients: “It is simply about that people who flee have the right to apply for asylum. That is a human right.”\textsuperscript{120} “Every human being has the right to live in freedom”\textsuperscript{121} and ”For us, every person’s right to choose their own way does not stop by the nation border”\textsuperscript{122}.

In the format of election debates, interviews, election manifestos and speeches – no space is given to the Others to represent themselves. Aid recipients and people who are put to flight are normally not running for Parliament and do not participate in the political debates. The politics of representation does therefore take place within the narrow circle of politicians, and the struggle over meaning focuses rather on the different parties than on those who are subject of the political proposals.

4.3.2 Global interdependence

In contrast to the emotion-oriented and difference-focused representation practices, there are other arguments used in the election debate although they are rare. According to post-colonial criticism, development discourse tends not to recognize hybridity of cultures, and similarities between and differences within supposedly bounded cultures.\textsuperscript{123} This in turn reproduces the role of the Other as a victimized recipient rather than a partner.

The post-colonial criticism is highly relevant also for the Swedish debate on humanitarian aid or refugee reception. But there are examples of acknowledgement of global interdependence, where the focus is neither on the suffering nor on our responsibilities, but on the fact that

\textsuperscript{114} M Election Manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{115} M Red Cross Interview 2014
\textsuperscript{116} MP Red Cross Interview 2014
\textsuperscript{117} Speech by H.M. The King 2014
\textsuperscript{118} Chouliaraki, 2010: 120
\textsuperscript{119} Jimmy Åkesson, SD, Aftonbladet Debate 2014
\textsuperscript{120} MP Red Cross Interview 2014
\textsuperscript{121} FP Election Manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{122} C Election Manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{123} Eriksson Baaz, 2007
immigration and a more secure world, also contributes to Swedish welfare and prosperity, at least in the long run. For example, the Christian Democrats state that "A world that is doing better – where more people can enjoy welfare, democracy and human rights – is also a more secure world."\textsuperscript{124}

There are also more philosophical expressions of interdependence such as: "I am not free if not everyone is free"\textsuperscript{125}; "We are not the world’s Good Samaritans, but we are also in need of the other, the unknown, the rejected – to become truly human [...] We are all radically in great need, radically dependent on each other and we have all something to give"\textsuperscript{126}.

Another take on interdependence is the question of domestic consequences of humanitarian crises and refugee flows. Several parties have pointed out the long-term economic gains of immigration throughout the election campaign. But with Prime Minister Reinfeldt’s summer speech, a partly new discourse was introduced, acknowledging that the current humanitarian situation in the world had practical implications for Swedes, as it implied increased spending on refugee reception.

The fact that refugee reception and aid is given such prominent role in the debate is in itself an expression of globalization, and to some extent interdependence. Global and national issues not separated, and seemingly distant conflicts impacts the Swedish election debate and Swedes’ daily lives.

4.4 Discourse – political action – reality

Words, representations and discourses do not only reflect underlying norms and meanings. They can also have practical consequences as they articulate political actions and thereby shape reality. The discourse analyzed in the previous sections of this chapter, carries different ideological visions and political opinions, which turned into politics have far-reaching implications on people’s lives.

One aspect of how discourse shapes the political reality is the role that language has in the election process. It is through media appearances, debates and statements that the parties communicate to the public and that form the public’s conception of the parties. The messages that are conveyed and how they are perceived by the potential voters are likely to decide the distribution of mandate in the Riksdag, and ultimately which political proposals becomes implemented and affect people’s daily life – be it Swedes, refugees or recipients of development support in other countries.

Within certain policy areas, discourse seems to be considered more sensitive than in others, and one such are is immigration and refugee policy. As presented, research has showed that over time, the Swedes’ attitudes towards immigrants have become increasingly tolerant, even including the period after the election 2010 when the Sweden Democrats was elected to the Riksdag for the first time, and the run-up to the latest election when they further strengthened their position. There is now an ongoing discussion and evaluation in the media and within the other parties, on whether or not the Sweden Democrats description of reality was allowed to take too much of the space in the debate, if the problems and fears related to increased refugee

\textsuperscript{124} KD Election manifesto 2014
\textsuperscript{125} V, Red Cross interviews 2014
\textsuperscript{126} Sermon by Arch Bishop
flows were too prominent in the debate in relation to potential gains. Some claim that Reinfeldt adopted the Sweden Democrats’ rhetoric and played into their hands when acknowledging the financial implications of refugee reception, whilst others on the contrary explain the Moderates’ loss on Reinfeldt’s clear stance for openness and a generous immigration policy. No one knows what different election turnout another discourse would have given, but the post-election discussion shows that discourse is considered key to understanding politics and elections.

The connection between norms, culture, discourse and politics is also subject to Finnemore’s research. Political action is socially constructed in the sense that it is not predetermined, but shaped by interactions, norms and values. These are in turn reflected, produced and reproduced, through discourse.\(^\text{127}\) This suggests that the politicians’ interpretation of humanism, and the public norms surrounding it, contribute to the formulation of policies. On the same note, the normative context – the Swedish self-image of being an open society and an increasing general tolerance in Sweden towards immigration\(^\text{128}\) – is also a driving force for formulation of generous and human and political approaches in this area. This normative context might even explain why the immigration critical Sweden Democrats chose to argue against the other parties by just claiming that their humanism was hypocritical: “What kind of humanism is that, spending tens of billions Swedish crowns to help 1,6‰ of these 50 million refugees. And at the same time you let the welfare deteriorate.”\(^\text{129}\) “You take money now [...] make reductions of the aid budget to help some thousands of people in Sweden [...]. I don’t understand that logic, because it is not humanism”\(^\text{130}\).

The political situation in Sweden does however, by the end of 2014, partly point in another direction when it comes to attitudes and public discourse around immigration. Many political commentators predict that the bipolar distinction in discourse and proposals between the Sweden Democrats and all the other parties might not be maintained as the Sweden Democrats strengthen its parliamentary position and actually respond to immigration skepticism among the public which goes beyond the party’s 13% of the voters. The fact that 78% of the Swedes express concern in opinion polls about an increased xenophobia might however explain the resistance towards accepting the Sweden Democrats as an ordinary party.\(^\text{131}\)

Finally, the very utilization of humanism can be interpreted as a political act. Power-relations and stereotypes are produced and reproduced through representation with consequences for those who are depicted as distant and passive Others. New power-balance can be formulated and realized by shifting focus to rights instead of needs, to partnership instead of donor-recipient relationship. The utilization of humanism to label a policy or describe other parties (in terms of their lacking humanism) are other examples of how a vocabulary can be a political act in itself. But perhaps the most obvious connection between discourse and political reality is when it is applied to urge certain concrete actions, which is exemplified with the statements in category 3 – where humanism was used to stress Sweden’s responsibility to act and take measures.

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\(^{128}\) Demker & Sandberg in Oscarsson & Bergström (Eds.), 2014:72

\(^{129}\) Jimmy Åkesson, SD, Aftonbladet Debate 2014

\(^{130}\) Jimmy Åkesson, SD, Aftonbladet Debate 2014

\(^{131}\) Demker & Sandberg in Oskarsson & Bergström (Eds.) 2014:72 pp.
5 Conclusion

5.1 Key findings

The aim of this study has been to investigate the meaning and utilization of humanism in the contemporary political debate in Sweden, within the areas of foreign policy, aid and refugee reception. The study also aimed to help understand how meaning in this context is shaped and how it in turn constructs political action, self-image and reality.

Although the frequency of the occurrence of humanism in the election campaign was not compared with the frequency of other words, this study has established that humanism and related key words such as human, humane and humanitarian were repeatedly used in the debate, in a number of different contexts. Humanism occurred in statements by all political parties, as well as in the Government Declaration, in the speech by H.M. the King and in the sermon by the Arch Bishop, although the frequency and word choice varied.

A number of contexts, in terms of content, where humanism occurred were identified. These were mainly: 1) Description of the Swedish society; 2) Support for Human Rights; 3) Sweden's responsibility to provide support; 4) Labelling certain politics, policies or reforms; 5) Description of situation in another country; 6) Description of another party; 7) Without direct reference to politics. In all categories of utilization of humanism, there were layers of meaning in the word choices or in the ways certain language was used.

When it comes to variations of frequency, word choice and underlying norms and messages, a number of factors seem to matter, including:

- **Consideration of the normative context, i.e. public opinions and attitudes**: Increasing general tolerance towards immigrants, interpreted as a human immigration policy – explaining why the Sweden Democrats chose to question the humanism in the other parties’ positions.

- **Political position, i.e. oppositions or government**: Not until the previous opposition turned into government, they used humanism to describe the Swedish society.

- **Political color, i.e. left or right**: The two respective blocks make similar word choices internally. For example, none of the then left wing parties used human in the meaning of brotherly or humanism – while these were generally used by the others, including the Sweden Democrats.

- **Media format, i.e. focus on ideology or current politics**: General expressions of support for human rights were absent in debates and interviews, while occurring frequently in election manifestos, the Government Declaration and in the more philosophical Red Cross interviews.

- **Media format, i.e. individual interviews or competition of space**: In all the individual interviews, humanism occurred only once, although the same topics were covered as in the debates and election manifestos where the key words were used repeatedly.
• **International relations and development norms i.e. differences vs interdependence:** Polemic descriptions of prosperous and safe Sweden on the one hand, and humanitarian catastrophes and suffering on the other focuses on differences and obligations to help, while others argue for interdependence and claim that Sweden gains from providing support.

• **Stereotypes and power-relationships i.e. needs or rights:** Some discourse focus on the needs and victimization of the Other, which creates an image of the superior Donor and passive receiver. In the debate this is combined with rights-based arguments, which on the contrary depicts people who flee from other countries as active agents, with rights rather than needs.

• **Worth noting is that when it comes to the total frequency of utilization of humanism and all related key words, neither size of the party does nor the left-right scale seem to explain the differences between the parties.**

The analyze of patterns in the utilization of humanism, guided by literature on critical discourse theory and representation, contributes to understanding the construction of political action. There is a strong connection between language and its discourse practice and social/political implications, and hence between discourse, political action, and reality. Discourse can in itself constitute a social or political act. This is exemplified by discursive practices such as labelling or reproduction of power-relationships and stereotypes, as these practices are in themselves political actions. The analysis showed how wordings, contextualization and associations not only put certain topics on the agenda but also conveyed notions of emergency, guilt/responsibility to act, trust/distrust in political alternatives and not least of how we approach the Other. These notions matter in turn in terms of political currents, public opinions, election results and relations in the society.

Another illustration of discourse’s political implications is that international and development issues became increasingly present in the election, through the debate. Bringing these issues into the domestic political arena made them part of new political agendas, and turned global issues into national and local. This indicates that globalization is driven by, or at least expressed through a changing discourse. The global issues are not necessarily new, but it is not until integrated in the domestic discourse that they have actual political implications in the election.

Also the post-election debate, emphasizing the question of whose description of reality that was allowed to dominate the discourse, confirms the awareness of the potential political power of discourse. Public discourse and debate climate matters for the formulation of policies within the area of foreign policy, aid and refugee reception.

Although one party differs from the others’ view that a human refugee policy equals to a generous one, it seems to be unanimously accepted that humanism holds a positive meaning. Unlike other ideological isms to which the parties may subscribe, such as liberalism, socialism, capitalism or nationalism, humanism is something that is considered a case-winner, and that applies to and fancies the great majority of the public.

The findings presented here illustrate that studies like this are highly relevant within the Communications for Development field. Representation of the Other and the power implications between donor and receiver are often subject to ComDev research, but usually
from a cultural or artistic angle. Taking political election communication as starting-point highlights the public debate climate, and helps understanding the connection between discourse, political actions and reality. The thesis highlighted the integration of international issues into the domestic debate, as an expression of globalization of politics. But it pointed also out that there were different approaches towards aid and refugee reception, emphasizing either differences or interdependence, where the former insists on the national identities in relation to the Other, while the latter applies a more borderless view of the world.

This study has argued that discourse matters and that communication about development therefore can never be insignificant or apolitical.

5.2 Reflections about the design

The research design consisted of four parts, which together served to purpose of investigating the utilization, meaning and political implications of humanism. The four parts followed a logical thread and informed the analysis continuously.

The initial quantitative content mapping was useful in order to give an overview of the material and to point out trends and tendencies. It is however a challenge to quantify and strictly categorize a material which is subject to the researcher’s own interpretation. Counting occurrences of a certain word is one thing, defining the context is more complicated as it sometimes depends on how much of the surrounding text that is included. For example, a description of a catastrophic situation in Syria could also be part of a longer reasoning about why another party is wrong in their assumptions. In order to avoid complicated and non-transparent interpretations of the wider contexts, it was only the narrow parts of the quotes, in direct connection with the key words that were included in the material.

As discussed continuously, there have been certain practical limitations and possible factors outside the scope of the study, that may have affected the results and partly give other explanations to different patterns. A more inclusive selection of material, including for example all party leader debates and printed interviews that were published during a longer period before the election, might have had effects on the result. Another example is the selection of key words, which is the core of the study. With other or more key words, the result may have been more complex and comprehensive, but the concentration on humanism as defined here made the study practically doable in this format and the analysis more focused. Other potential weak points that have been acknowledged concern for example the Swedish-English translation, the potentially subjective reading of contents, the risk of unbalance in what questions the parties were asked in interviews, the fact that only some policy areas (international) were covered and the possibility that the smaller parties in the then government Alliance relied on the joint manifesto and considered their own as supplementary etc. Nevertheless, the design was suitable for this kind of discourse analysis, and could point out a number of interesting patterns.

5.3 Future research

The debate about Sweden’s role in addressing the severe humanitarian situation in the world has not subsided during the course of the work with this study, and the handling of refugee flows to Sweden is on the top of the political and medial agenda. A lot of attention is given to
the meta-aspect of the discussion, i.e. which discourse is appropriate and which is not? In what critical terms can refugee reception be discussed without crossing the line for xenophobia? Does explicit acknowledgment of financial implications of immigration favor the hardliners or are mainstream politicians rewarded for frankness? This development confirms that discourse matters, and issues humanism remains relevant in foreign policy, aid and refugee reception.

There are a number ways to develop this study further, and it could benefit from being extended in different direction. One would be to take a more comprehensive look at a broader range of words – including other value-loaded words such as equality or liberty. Another way to expand this study, with maintained focus on humanism, would be to also include domestic policy. For example, it was noted in the course of this work that the total (domestic + foreign policy) utilization of humanism varied a lot in the election manifestos, which was not necessarily reflected in the selected material on international issues.

As providing research about humanism and political communication, this thesis could also inform further studies within for example political science, and allow for wider comparisons over time and between countries, as well as between different political levels and between male and female politicians. Not least international comparisons would be interesting as ideologies tend to have different sounds depending on the country’s history and political landscape. The main part of this thesis has been written in France – a country where someone proclaiming themselves as a humanist would automatically be placed on the left of the political scale.

When this study was initiated, the Swedish election campaign was over, the new government of Social Democrats and Green Party was entering office. At the time for writing, Sweden was in the middle of a governmental and parliamentarian crisis, and was facing an extra election in 2015. Media reported how the party headquarters and local party organizations prepared for the third election in less than a year. By the time for submission of the thesis, the extra election had been cancelled after a last minute agreement between the Government and the opposition parties. It remains to be seen to what extent humanism will have a prominent role in the future political discourse, but there are no signs pointing at a declining focus on refugee reception or interest in discussing different views of human value.
6 References

6.1 Literature and articles


http://lcst3789.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/pickering_ed__research_methods_in_cultural_studies.pdf


### 6.2 Online sources

- **Aftonbladet.** Opinion article by Per Gahrton, 2014-09-30.
  [http://www.aftonbladet.se/kultur/article19619079.ab](http://www.aftonbladet.se/kultur/article19619079.ab) (2014-10-20)
- **Håkansson, Nicklas** (2014) E-mail conversation 2014-10-20
- **Myndighetsverket.** Statement in the Riksdag by Cecilia Widegren, 2011-04-16.
- **Swedish Academy (Svenska Akademien).** *Svenska Akademiens Ordlista, SAOL13*.
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- **Swedish Election Authority (Valmyndigheteten)**
- **Swedish National Elections Studies’s (Valforskningsprogrammet)**
  [http://www.valforskning.pol.gu.se/english/](http://www.valforskning.pol.gu.se/english/) and
- **Swedish Social Democratic Youth League (Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Ungdomsförbund, SSU).** Speech held by chair Jytte Guteland, 2011-05-01.
- **TV4.** Speech by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, 2014-08-16.
6.3 Material


Aftonbladet Debate: Web-TV streamed on Aftonbladet’s website 1 September 2014  

Election Manifestos: All 8 parties' election manifests. In the Moderates' case, it is the joint Alliance coalition manifesto.

SR Interviews: Individual interviews in Swedish public service radio (SR) with each party leader, between 18 and 29 August 2013.  

Archbishop: Sermon held by Archbishop Antje Jackelén in Stockhilm Cathedral, 30 September 2014  

H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf: Speech by H.M. the King when Opening the Parliamentary Session at the Riksdag, Stockholm 30 September 2014.  
[http://www.kungahuset.se/kungafamiljen/hmkonungcarlxvigustaf/tal/hmkaretstal/hmkonungstenstalvidriksmotetsoppnande2014.5.4c3e6be7147afe8be9fd14b.html](http://www.kungahuset.se/kungafamiljen/hmkonungcarlxvigustaf/tal/hmkaretstal/hmkonungstenstalvidriksmotetsoppnande2014.5.4c3e6be7147afe8be9fd14b.html) (2014-10-24)

Government Declaration: The new Government’s Declaration presented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in the Riksdag, 3 October 2014  

Youtube Red Cross: Red Cross short video interviews with party representatives about humanity, all available on Youtube.  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2l498eTn20MNr1K-0vZ0v3VL_ZC0_YP5](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2l498eTn20MNr1K-0vZ0v3VL_ZC0_YP5) (2014-10-24)

6.4 Illustration

Front page illustration: Created on [http://www.wordle.net/](http://www.wordle.net/), based on contents from election manifests, selected statements and extracts from interviews and debates that constitute the material for this thesis.
7 Appendices

Annex 1:
Table with selected raw material, quotes where humanism is being used. Divided according to forum, party and key word.

Annex 2:
Table quantifying selected material per party and key word.

Annex 3:
Table with selected material. Divided according to party and category/context.

Annex 4:
Table quantifying selected material per party and category/context.
### Annex 1: Table with selected material. Divided according to forum, party and key word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media/forum</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>SWEDISH</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Humane</th>
<th>Human</th>
<th>Human/brotherly</th>
<th>Humanity</th>
<th>Humanism/humanistic</th>
<th>Humanitarian</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
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<tr>
<td>TV4 Debate</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**S:** Vi har också utsträckt så att vi har skapat bättre förutsättningar, tillsammans med miljöpartiet och Alliansen när det gäller att få sjukvård, tillgång till utbildning till dem som är i Sverige utan tillstånd. Vi har gjort flera humane reformer, vi är nu beredda att ge ännu mer pengar till svenskundervisning, satsa ännu mer på att företagen ska kunna växa.

**M:** Ska det vara ett samhälle präglat av värme mellan människor, där vi ser varandra i ögonen och känner tillit?

**S:** Sverige är en humanitär stormakt, vi är en av de absolut största givarna i världen till biståndsinsatser i de här länderna.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SR interviews</th>
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<th>x</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Det räcker till 20 spänn till varje flykting i världen. Snacka inte om humanism. Sverige är byggt på solidaritet och humanism.</th>
<th>x</th>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>(Människot som flyr för sina liv...)</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Men vi tycker att möjligheten att söka asyl under ordnade former är så viktig, det är en humanitär katastrof som vi ser framför oss.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attonbladet Debate</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Det är ju synd att nu Stefan Löfven började kvällen med den första cynismen. Jag tror mer på humanism.</td>
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</table>

Därför att ska vi verkligen klara den humanitära katastrof som ni pratar om, så får vi inte fortsätta stänga ute människor i de massakrer som Jan Björklund nämner.

Sedan statsministerns sommartal har 366 människor gått under i de vågorna i Medelhavet. Vi talar om flyktingarna som en katastrof för oss, men där är den pågående humanitära katastrofen.

...räcker er solidaritet till att också säga att ifall ni får förtroendet att bygga en ny regering så tänker ni agera i EU för att det blir lagliga vägar in i EU, så att vi inte behöver se fler flyende som går under i Mellanöstern. Det är den pågående humanitära katastrofen.

| SD | x | x | x | x | x |

Jag undrar vad det är för humanism att man då riktar in sig på att lägga 10-tals miljarder kronor på att hjälpa 1,6 promille av dessa 50 miljoner flyktingar. Och samtidigt låter man väldfärden urholkas. Man tar pengar nu, ännu mer, ännu fler avräkningar från biståndet för att hjälpa ett antal tusen människor i Sverige, 1,6 promille som Annie Lööf sa. Jag förstår inte den logiken för det är inte humanism.
<table>
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Vi måste våga visa medmänsklighet i denna situation. Det är så ofattbart och det här snacket om att vi ska stänga våra gränser eller att det här ska vi inte prata om, jag förstår det inte överhuvudtaget. Detta är den viktigaste humanistiska frågan att diskutera i den här valrörelsen.
Istället för att sluta oss mot omvärlden har vi sagt att Sverige ska föra en human asylpolitik och vara en fristad för dem som flyr undan förföljelse och förtryck.

Vi ska främja demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter och hållbar utveckling och hävda internationell rätt och jämställdhet.

Vi vill ha ett EU som i alla sammanhang slår vakt om demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter.

Vi vill att Sverige och EU ska fortsätta att verka för demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter och rättssatens principer i en alltmer globaliserad värld där värden som dessa ofta ifrågasätts.

Att stärka demokratin och jämställdheten samt öka respekten för mänskliga rättigheter ska vara vägledande värden för det svenska biståndet.

Förtrycket av etniska och religiösa minoriteter ökar och människors religionsfrihet kränks.

Alla människors lika värde är fundamentalt och yttrande- och religionsfrihet är centrat för ett öppet och fritt samhälle.

Sverige kan vara en humanitär stormakt genom att erbjuda människor en fristad från våld och förföljelser.

Sverige är och ska vara ett öppet land som tar stort humanitärt ansvar.

Vi vill verka för att stärka det humanitära stödet vid kriser och katastrofer.
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<td>Sveriges röst för fred, rättvisa och mänskliga rättigheter ska åter höras i världen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätt, internationell nedrustning och kamp mot terrorism och massförstörelsevapen ska vara hörnstenar i svensk utrikespolitik.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sverige ska åter bli en stark röst i världen för frihet, fred, mänskliga rättigheter och solidaritet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovärdering kränks.</td>
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<th>MP</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vi kommer alltid att arbeta för en mer human och öppen politik och vi kommer aldrig att göra det svårare för människor att komma till Sverige.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nu gäller det att stå upp för mänskliga rättigheter och en mänsklig migrationspolitik.</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>All utrikespolitik ska utgå från att sexuella rättigheter är mänskliga rättigheter.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Främja mänskliga rättigheter och miljöhänsyn i internationell handel.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Så inleds FN:s deklaration om mänskliga rättigheter.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Ett Sverige som värnar om goda relationer till världens nationer, men som inte räds att sätta ned foten när våra intressen hotas eller när mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätten, suveränitetsprincipen och andra viktiga värden kränks. Ett Sverige som är medvetet om sin plats i den nordiska, europeiska, västerländska, kristna och mänskliga gemenskapen. ...ökta Sveriges insatser för att mildra det mänskliga lidandet som uppstått som ett resultat av konflikterna i Syrien och Irak.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Genom slopandet av ineffektivt bistånd, genom att sluta använda bistånds-medel för att finansiera mottagandet av invandrare i Sverige, genom att öka det humanitära biståndet och sätta fokus på de mest skriande behoven […] och omallokering av biståndsmedlen […] tror vi oss kunna frigöra medel till svensk välfärd samtidigt som vi gör minst lika stor nytta för världens fattiga och flyktingar som vi hittills har gjort. Det nuvarande laget i världen är dock så alarmerande och behovet av humanitära insatser så skriande att vi under de närmaste åren är beredda att tillfälligt overskriva vårt eget budgetmål/…/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FP

EU ger oss möjlighet att lösa gränsoverskridande problem, trygga demokrati och främja frihet, underlätta ekonomisk utveckling, förbättra miljön från mänskliga rättigheter och bekämpa brottslighet.

Respekten för de mänskliga rättigheterna behöver stärkas inom EU-länderna. EU borde årligen rapportera om situationen för de mänskliga rättigheterna i varje medlems- och kandidatland. EU-länder som bryter mot mänskliga rättigheter ska kunna straffas ekonomiskt och politiskt.

Varje människa har rätt att leva i frihet. Därför ska Sverige vara en röst för global frihet och solidaritet.

För oss stannar inte varje människas rätt till att välja sin egen väg vid nationsgränserna.

Rätten till skydd undan förföljelse är en individuell mänsklig rättighet och den får aldrig tillåtas påverkas av konjunktur eller arbetskraftsbehov.

Vapenexport till diktaturer, krigförande stater och länder som begär grova och omfattande brott mot de mänskliga rättigheterna ska förbjudas.

Det är bedrövligt att många länder i Europa sviker sitt medmänskliga ansvar.

C

Sverige ska föra en human och generös flyktingpolitik.

En human flyktingpolitik och lagliga vägar för asylsökande

V

Situationen i Mellanöstern skapar ett stort humanityt lidande.
Fortsätta och fördjupa en human flyktingpolitik.

En värld som mår bättre – där fler får del av välstånd, demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter -- är också en säkrare värld.

Biståndet bör tydligare inriktas på att främja mänskliga rättigheter, inte minst religions- och yttrandefrihet.

Klimat, miljö, demografi, energiberoroden, kärnvapenspridning, terrorism, bristande respekt för mänskliga rättigheter och internationell organiserad brottslighet är globala företeelser som kan påverka vår säkerhet. Försvarets huvuduppgift är att värna människors liv och frihet.

Därför förespråkar vi kristdemokrater ett generöst bistånd som när fram, en flyktingpolitik som präglas av humanism och medmänsklighet och en politik som främjar handel och ökade möjligheter till rörlighet över gränserna.

Vår solidaritet och medmänsklighet får inte göra halt vid nationsgränsen.

Det är väldigt viktigt att förstå att när vi ser på medmänniskor och vi speglar det mot upplevelser och erfarenheter, då kan vi kanske också bättre förstå vårt behov av att stå upp för dem som kanske inte har det så gott ställt.

Det som kanske är nödlidande, som behöver medmänsklighet och en hjälpande hand. Det är väldigt viktigt att förstå kopplingen mellan medmänsklighet och humanism.

Det som kanske är nödlidande, som behöver medmänsklighet och en hjälpande hand. Det är väldigt viktigt att förstå kopplingen mellan medmänsklighet och humanism.
Och det handlar ju helt enkelt om att människor som flyr har rätt att söka asyl. Det är en mänsklig rättighet.

Och just nu är det särskilt viktigt när vi ser att många fler än tidigare tvingas på flykt undan krig och fruktansvärda massakrer, kemiska vapen, bomber mot skolor och barn. Och då är det ortroligt viktigt att stå upp för humanitet och medmänsklighet.

Ja humanitet och medmänsklighet för mig betyder att man vill göra någonting för den som har det sämre ställt.

Det betyder att man står upp för sina medmänniskor och framförallt att man finns där för sina medmänniskor i de svåraste tiderna tycker jag.

**MP** | x | x | x | x | x | x | 3
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---
**SD** | x | x | x | x | x | x | 2
**FP** | x | x | x | x | x | x | 2
**C** | x | x | x | x | x | x | 1
**V** | x | x | x | x | x | x | 3
| KD         | x | x | Slutet sammanfattat – behandla andra så som man själv vill bli behandlad. Inte minst vi som har haft förmånen att växa upp i ett land i världen som längst har varit i fred, vi har faktiskt en möjlighet att sträcka ut en hand till medmänniskor och hjälpa till. | x | x | x | 1 |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf | x | Det är med sorg och smärta vi ser och följer det mänskliga lidandet. Vi förfasas över dödandet och lider med alla barn på flykt från hus och hem och med alla andra som flyr för sina liv. | Ni – ledamöter av Sveriges riksdag – kan skapa förutsättningarna för ett samhälle där dessa frågor diskuteras. Ett samhälle där alla vet vad det innebär att vara både en medmänniska och en samhällsmedborgare. | x | x | x | 3 |
Det är inte vi som är världens bargärige samarier utan också vi är i behov av den andre, den främmande, den ratade för att bli sant mänskliga.

Låt oss inte förneka vårt livs dikeserfarenheter. Med all smärta och förödelse, så visar de något av det sant mänskliga.

Dikesperspektivet tar fram det sant mänskliga hos oss alla: alla är vi radikalt behövande, radikalt beroende av varandra och alla har vi något att ge.

Hur kan vi bygga en mänskligare värld? Genom att komma ihåg dikesperspektivet.
Genom att ta emot grannar och bli grannar, genom att ta emot omsorg och ge omsorg. Och Jesus säger: "Gör det, så får du leva!"

För en mänskligare värld behövs mer tillit och ökad samhörighet. I det är beslutsfattare beroende av det nätverk och engagemang som finns i civilsamhällets religiösa gemenskaper och ideella organisationer.

Samtidigt som vi kan ångåa alla de gånger vi bytte sida för att slippa möta en medmänniskas nöd.
Sverige ska ha en human asylpolitik och vara en fristad för dem som flyr undan förföljelse och förtryck.

Sverige ska vara en stark röst i världen för frihet, fred, människa rättigheter och solidaritet.

Mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätt, internationell nedrustning och arbetet mot terrorism och massförstörelsevapen ska vara hörnstenar i svensk utrikespolitik.

Det senaste året har människor runt om i Sverige ställt sig upp mot rasismen, för alla människors lika värde. Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovärdet kräns.

Den irakiska regeringen och Kurdistans regionala regering är i akut behov av humanitärt stöd för att kunna hantera situationen.

7.2 Annex 2: Table quantifying selected material per party and key word

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Number of occurrences per party</th>
<th>Humane</th>
<th>Human</th>
<th>Human/brotherly</th>
<th>Humanity</th>
<th>Humanism/humanistic</th>
<th>Humanitarian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3 Annex 3: Table with selected material. Divided according to party and category/context.

(1) TV4 debate; (2) SR Interviews; (3) Aftonbladet Debate; (4) Election Manifestos; (5) Red Cross Interviews

Red = Occurring in more than one category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Description of the Swedish society, how it looks today</th>
<th>Support for Human Rights</th>
<th>(Argument for) Sweden's responsibility to provide humanitarian support, aid, show humanity</th>
<th>Labelling certain politics, policies, reforms (existing or suggested)</th>
<th>Description of situation in another country</th>
<th>Description of another party</th>
<th>Without direct reference to politics, more philosophic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>FP</td>
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<td>V</td>
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<tr>
<td>HM King</td>
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<td>Arch Bishop</td>
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<td>Gov Declaration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of occurrences per key word</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
M

Ska det vara ett samhälle präglat av värme mellan människor. (1)
Vi har visat att det är möjligt att sätta medmänskligheten i första hand och att öppna dörren för dem som behöver skydd. (4)
Sverige är och ska vara ett öppet land som tar stort humanitärt ansvar. (4) (D)

Vi ska främja demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter. (4)
Vi vill ha ett EU som i alla sammanhang slår vakt om demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter. (4)
Vi vill att Sverige och EU ska fortsätta att verka för demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter... (4)
...öka respekten för mänskliga rättigheter ska vara vägledande värden för det svenska biståndet. (4)
Alla människors lika värde är fundamentalt och yttrande- och religionsfrihet är centralt för ett öppet och fritt samhälle. (4)

Sverige kan vara en humanitär stormakt genom att erbjuda människor en fristad från våld och förföljelser. (4)
Vi vill verka för att förstärka det humanitära stödet vid kriser och katastrofer. (4)
Sverige är och ska vara ett öppet land som tar stort humanitärt ansvar. (4) (D)

Vi har gjort flera humana reformer... (1)
Sverige ska föra en human asylpolitik (4)
...öka respekten för mänskliga rättigheter ska vara vägledande värden för det svenska biståndet. (4)

Mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätt, internationell nedrustning och kamp mot terrorism och massförstörelsevapen ska vara hörnstenar i svensk utrikespolitik. (4)

Sveriges röst för fred, rättvisa och mänskliga rättigheter ska åter höras i världen. (4)
Mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätt, internationell nedrustning och kamp mot terrorism och massförstörelsevapen ska vara hörnstenar i svensk utrikespolitik. (4)

Sverige ska åter bli en stark röst i världen för frihet, fred, mänskliga rättigheter och solidaritet. (4)

Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovården kräns. (4)

Sveriges röst för fred, rättvisa och mänskliga rättigheter ska åter höras i världen. (4)
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Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovården kräns. (4)
| MP | All utrikespolitik ska utgå från att sexuella rättigheter är mänskliga rättigheter. (4)  
|    | Främja mänskliga rättigheter och miljöhånsyn i internationell handel. (4)  
|    | ...så inleds FN:s deklaration om mänskliga rättigheter. (4)  
|    | Och det handlar ju helt enkelt om att människor som flyr har rätt att söka asyl. Det är en mänsklig rättighet. (5)  
|    | Nu gäller det att stå upp för mänskliga rättigheter och en mänsklig migrationspolitik. (4) |
| SD | Ett Sverige som är medvetet om sin plats i den nordiska, europeiska, värsterländska, kristna och mänskliga gemenskapen. (4)  
|    | [Ett Sverige som]...inte räds att sätta ned foten när våra intressen hotas eller när mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätten, suveränitetsprincipen och andra viktiga värden kräns. (4)  
|    | Det nuvarande läget i världen är dock så alarerande och behovet av humanitär bistånd att man vill göra någonting för den som har det sämre ställt. (5)  
|    | Jag undrar vad det är för humanism att man då räkter in sig på att lägga 10-tals miljarder kronor på att hjälpa 1,6 promille av dessa 50 miljoner flyktingar. Och samtidigt låter man välfärden urholkas. (3)  
|    | Man tar pengar nu, ännu mer, ännu fler avräkningar från biståndet för att hjälpa ett antal tusen människor i Sverige, 1,6 promille |
| FP | Sverige är en humanitär stormakt, vi är en av de absolut största givarna i världen till biståndsinsatser i de här länderna. (1) | EU ger oss möjlighet att lösa gränsöverskridande problem, trygga demokrati och främja frihet, underlätta ekonomisk utveckling, förbättra miljon främja mänskliga rättigheter och bekämpa brottslighet. (4) | Vi måste väga visa medmänsklighet i denna situation. (3) | Situationen i Mellanöstern skapar ett stort humanitärt lidande. (4) | Det är så ofattbart och det hör snart att det inte prata om, jag förstår det inte överhuvudtaget. Detta är den viktigaste humanistiska frågan att diskutera i den här valrörelsen. (3) | Det betyder att man står upp för sina medmänniskor och framförallt att man finns där för sina medmänniskor i de svåraste tiderna tycker jag. (5) |
| V | Rätten till skydd undan förföljelse är en individuell mänsklig rättighet och den får aldrig tillåtas påverkas av konjunktur eller arbetskraftsbehov. (4) Vapenexport till diktaturer, krigförande stater och länder som begär grova och omfattande brott mot de mänskliga rättigheterna ska förbjudas. (4) Det tycker jag är vad mänskliga rättigheter handlar om, att vi faktiskt ser till att alla har grundläggande mänskliga rättigheter att leva och vara en del av samhället. (5) | Sverige ska förna en human och generös flyktingpolitik. (4) En human flyktingpolitik och lagliga vägar för asylsökande. (4) | Men vi tycker att möjligheten att söka asyl under ordnade former är så viktig, det är en humanitär katastrof som vi ser framför oss. (2) | För mig så betyder humanitet egentligen rätten till ett värdigt liv på lika villkor, för absolut alla (5) |
| KD | Inte minst vi som har haft förmånen att växa upp i ett land i världen som längst har varit i fred, vi har faktiskt en möjlighet att sträcka ut en hand till medmänniskor och hjälpa till (5) | En värld som mår bättre – där fler får del av välstånd, demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter ---- är också en säkrare värld. (4) ... bristande respekt för mänskliga rättigheter och internationell organiseringen är globala företeelser som kan påverka vår säkerhet. Försvarets huvuduppgift är att värna människors liv och frihet. (4) | Vår solidaritet och medmänsklighet får inte göra halt vid nationsgränsen. (4) Inte minst vi som har haft förmånen att växa upp i ett land i världen som längst har varit i fred, vi har faktiskt en möjlighet att sträcka ut en hand till medmänniskor och hjälpa till (5) | Fortsätta och fördjupa en human flyktingpolitik. (4) ... ett generöst bistånd som når fram, en flyktingpolitik som präglas av humanism och medmänsklighet och en politik som främjar handel och ökade möjligheter till rörlighet över gränserna. (4) |
Det senaste året har människor runt om i Sverige ställt sig upp mot rasismen, för alla människors lika värde. Sverige ska vara en stark röst i världen för frihet, fred, mänskliga rättigheter och solidaritet. Mänskliga rättigheter, folkrätt, internationell nedrustning och arbetet mot terrorism och massförstörelsevapen ska vara hörnstenar i svensk utrikespolitik. Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovärden kräns.

Sveriges röst ska alltid vara klar och tydlig när människovärdet kräns.

Sverige ska ha en human asylpolitik och vara en fristad för dem som flyr undan förföljelse och förtryck.

Sverige ska ha en human asylpolitik och vara en fristad för dem som flyr undan förföljelse och förtryck. Den irakiska regeringen och Kurdistans regionala regering är i akut behov av humanitärt stöd för att kunna hantera situationen.

7.4 Annex 4: Table quantifying selected material per party and category/context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Description of the Swedish society, how it looks today or to strive for</th>
<th>Support for Human Rights</th>
<th>(Argument for) Sweden’s responsibility to provide humanitarian support, aid, show humanity</th>
<th>Description of certain politics, policies, reforms (existing or suggested)</th>
<th>Description of situation in another country</th>
<th>Description of another party</th>
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