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Attitudes towards the Region of Öresund among transnational work commuters

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the region of Öresund and the aspects of work commuting in particular. The purpose is to investigate attitudes and opinions towards the region among work commuters and then apply them to various theories relevant for the questioning, such as globalization, regionalization, ethnicity, nationalism, culture and identity. To investigate the attitudes towards the region we have done a number of interviews with commuters, using qualitative and semi-structured questions. The analysis is divided into three different parts; In Body and in Mind, Us and Them, the Future; and consists of a discussion of our informants' answers related to the theoretical aspects of the earlier mentioned theories. Our results show that our informants feel a geographical connection to the region but that more common cultural references are needed to be able to speak of a mental connection within the region of Öresund.

Keywords: The region of Öresund, Identity, Globalization, Regionalization, Ethnicity, Nationalism, Culture.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation of subject

Lately the strained and uncomfortable situation of the work commuters traveling from Malmö to Copenhagen by train has been enlightened in one of the main newspapers within Skåne, Sydsvenska Dagbladet (SDS). The reactions from responsible actors, such as Skånetrafiken, the work commuters themselves and the newspaper readers have been many and relevant. Skånetrafiken is of the opinion that the frequency of work commuting across the sound has increased in a surprising and unexpected way and from this situation, the problem with overcrowded train compartments has aroused. Figures and numbers from Öresundskomiteen and Øresundsbro Konsortiet show that Skånetrafiken is correct in their observation because since the opening of the Öresund Bridge in the year 2000 there has been a major increase of the numbers of commuters every year. According to oresundsregionen.org the work commuting has five-folded since the opening. Does this mean that the feeling for a common region and identity has increased as well? Due to this question at issue, we wonder about the attitude towards the region of Öresund among work commuters and affected organizations.

Figures do only tell about the circumstances, not the reasons behind it or people's opinions, attitudes and emotions. As students of humanistic and sociological subjects, we are more interested in human beings than in numbers and therefore would we like to know the reasons behind the statistics. What do the actual work commuters feel about the region? Since the building of the bridge of Öresund began, tradesmen and politicians at both sides of Öresund have had a request and a wish for a well-functioning region, first and foremost by economical reasons. One of the aims has been to create a common sense of belonging to the region of Öresund. Politicians may have requests, but it is the people in the area that make the actual region happen. Therefore we have decided to investigate the attitudes among work commuters since they travel on a daily basis. People, who travel across the sound to go to a museum, an art exhibition or to go shopping, are in this case uninteresting for us since they travel sporadically. In brief, we wonder if it is possible to create a region across the borders of two nations, Sweden and Denmark. Is it possible to create a new form of connection that has not existed like this before i.e. a feeling of solidarity within the region of Öresund?

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to investigate the opinions and feelings towards the Region of Öresund among transnational work commuters and organizations involved in the commuting and whether a conformity and sense of belonging of Öresund exist. Furthermore we will analyze the answers of our informants and investigate if those are applicable with theories and concepts that deal with questions regarding this, i.e. identity, globalization, regionalization, nationality, ethnicity and culture.

1. 3 A short introduction to the region of Öresund

The decision to build the bridge of Öresund was taken in 1991 as an effort to make the Copenhagen region and Skåne appear as more attractive to investors and visitors. Both areas had since the 1980's faced a reality with high unemployment rates and an obsolete structure within the industry. In connection to this, the European Union carried an idea of building regional networks which were supposed to act across nations. The visions and expectations were many but difficult to put into practice, it turned out. The tunnel between Calais in France and Dover in Great Britain was built with a request of creating a transnational and dynamic region but it did not work out as planned. Due to this, the expectations on the region of Öresund were high mostly because the prerequisites were different; this was a collaboration between two small nations that appeared to be alike and this, the spokesmen believed, could be a reason of success for the region of Öresund. According to the EU, the region of Öresund was considered being a model and an example for further cultural and economical integration within the EU, and an example of "the new Europe without borders" (Löfgren in Gustafsson 2002:8-9).

The Öresund region consists on the Swedish side of Skåne and on the Danish side of Sjælland, Lolland-Falster, Møn and Bornholm. The number of inhabitants on the Danish side of the region is 2 437 491 and on the Swedish side 1 160 919 inhabitants in January 2005. The total number of inhabitants in the region is therefore approximately 3.6 millions according to oresundsregionen.org. The Öresund region is a so-called Interreg project created by the European Union and the organization works in favor of strengthen regions all over Europe. During the years 1994 until 1999 the region of Öresund has been an Interreg IIA project and the purpose has been to enhance and promote the co-operation of regions across national borders. The European Union and national, regional and local actors have financially supported the creation of the region. The aim has been to increase the integration in the region. It has also been important to create new circumstances for collaboration and to intensify and escalate them, but also to promote the regional development of the business world (Öresundskomiteen 1999:5).

In the year of 2000 until 2006 the region has moved into an Interreg IIIA project. With the help of Öresundskomiteen, a plan for the venture has been created together with the actors in the region. The plan looks upon the strength, weaknesses and the possibilities of the region.

Questions that involve different aspects of the region such as the labor market, education, business, housing as well as leisure time is considered most important, as well as the inhabitants of the region. All of this is supposed to help make the region into one of the most integrated transnational regions in Europe (Öresundskomiteen 2001: 5).



The geographical region of Öresund.

2 Method and discussion of concepts

First we will give a short summary and background description of the building of the bridge and the expectations around it. Then we will give an account of a few theories that we find being relevant for this study and for the creation, development and well-being of the region of Öresund. A concept that is considered being both foundational and relevant in this connection is the concept of integration. The word integration can be defined as a process within social science, which leads to the uniting of separate units. The term is often used when referring to processes of which societies are created, preserved or by several societies united into bigger parts (Nationalencyklopedin).

The first of the six concepts to be discussed more essentially is the concept of identity since it is foundational in this discussion. We will try to give an account of the complexity of identity and the different levels, such as individual identity and group identity, all from a sociological point of view. It is difficult to discuss 'identity' without a context though because it is best discussed with a stand point from different notions. For this paper we have chosen to explain identity on the basis of globalization, regionalization, nationalism, ethnicity and culture.

The second theory we will discuss and analyze is the concept of globalization and the globalization process. We will then apply the concepts of the process onto the circumstances of the Region of Öresund which we will also discuss deeper in the analysis. We find the globalization process from an Öresund perspective interesting because of the fact that the region, from a Swedish point of view, ties together our little piece of Europe with the rest of the continent. The concept regionalization lies close to globalization because in some aspects, regionalization can be considered being a decreased form of globalization. Regionalism is fundamental for this study because of its subject. We will mainly discuss regionalization and take it into consideration as it is used by Fredrik Nilsson in his book about the region of Öresund.

The fourth concept that we have decided to discuss, analyze and apply to issues regarding the processes in the region is the concept of nationalism. This is interesting since the region is supposed to connect two national states or at least parts of two national states. Therefore the region intrudes upon national consciousness, both physical aspects such as geography and psychological aspects such as values and traditions.

The fifth concept we will discuss is the concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity takes into consideration the social relationships between people, language, values and traditions, which helps to identify members of a group. Ethnicity is interesting since it is, just like the other concepts, a dynamic one which means that the self-identification of a group changes over time and because of social and historical processes.

The last concept which we will discuss and analyze is the concept of culture and cultural identity. Culture is important for the feeling of belonging and kinship. Cultural values help people to identify and feel interlinked with each other e.g. by celebrating an event a certain way we can feel connected to people on the other side of the world though we have nothing else in common but that single celebration.

The concepts are difficult to absolutely apart from each other. They are dependent on each other and one is a prerequisite for the other to exist. Many of the fundamental arguments concerning a certain concept is applicable for any other concept, such as the tendency for every concept to change over time and space, be reflexive and deep down be subjective to every individual i.e. there might be norms and general references to what each and every concept is about but in the end it is up to each individual person to decide its content. The point is therefore not to split up the concepts but to discuss them in relation to each other though placed under different headings to facilitate for the reader. It also helps us to pin point at specific phenomenon's, mainly in our analysis of the interviews. The fact that all concepts melt together and reflect each other will make the headings a bit deviant since a discussion of regional identity requests a discussion and an understanding of nationality and national identity. The same concepts and arguments will therefore be repeated several times through out the study, within different chapters.

To answer the purpose of our study, we are going to do qualitative interviews. This because, as mentioned before, we want to find out about the work commuters view and opinion towards the region of Öresund. We do not expect that a quantitative research would give us the well-developed answers we would like to receive. As students of sociological topics, we are interested in the reasons behind our informants answers, why they feel or do not feel like an 'Öresundare' i.e. a person who identifies him or her self with the Öresund region. By doing semi-structured interviews we are able to follow pre-established questions but still expand on the questions to make the informants elaborate on their answers. A qualitative deep interview

becomes more of a dialogue between us and the informant. A structured interview would appear to be more like a survey, while a semi-structured interview allows people to answer questions more on their own terms. It still provides a great structure for comparability than a focused interview though. We are familiar with the benefits doing focused interviews and it could be a way to fulfill our purpose with this paper i.e. to investigate work commuters attitude towards Öresund. The reason to why we chose to do semi-structured interviews, which can be used as a foundation for comparison, is because we are interested in people's opinions and whether they share the same view on the region of Öresund. This since integration between the two parts does not happen when one person feels like he or she belongs to the region of Öresund, but many.

The criteria we have used when searching for informants has been only one: that the informants commute on a regular basis between the two countries to either work or study. There is one exception to this request though and that is the woman who works at one of the organizations that deals with promoting vacant jobs in Denmark to Swedes and therefore also encourages work commuting.

When searching for informants we have chosen not to differ between men and women because we do not think that work commuting in our study is a matter of gender. Of course being either a man or a woman could be an important aspect when studying work commuting dependent on the type of job that is offered to Swedes in Denmark and contrary, but we are not interested in that, but instead the work commuter's attitude toward the region irrespective of gender. We believe that the age structure of our informants is satisfying because it stretches mainly over a normal working age i.e. about 20 until 65 years old.

We have conducted the interviews with our informants at places where we believe they felt comfortable, such as at home, at university and at work. Therefore we have received well-founded and comprehensive answers just as we wanted to. We have visited our informants in Malmö, Lund and Copenhagen. We think that we have gathered responses that are honest and reliable, not only because of the level of comfortness but also because of the character of the questions; none of them are very private or delicate though we ask for their emotions and attitudes.

The interviews have taken about 45 minutes up to one hour each to complete. The used language for questioning and conversation has been mainly Swedish though we received answers in Danish from two of our informants. Here we had a bit of a trouble with the understanding from time to time but careful and repeated explanations helped us out. The language difficulties have been a minor delimitation to our study.

The questions we have chosen to ask our informants are all concerned with the informants own feelings and attitude towards the region of Öresund. First of all we want to know the answer to a very foundational but yet important question; is the informant aware of the geographical boundaries of the region of Öresund? At first this might seem like a trivial question but it says a lot about inclusion and exclusion, who people consider be a part of the area and who is not and how people conduct them selves to the ones they find being a part of the region. Secondly we wonder about what the region means or *is* to the informants. The reason to why this question is so unspecified is because we want the respondent to think freely around the term “region of Öresund” and inform us of what ever comes first to his or her mind. Our third question concerns the informants’ attitude towards the region, which is our aim, and whether it is positive or negative. A follow up question here would be why the informant finds the region being positive or negative and which other factors that contributes to his or her answer. Further we would like to know whether or not the informant feels more or less Swedish or Danish (dependent of origin) because of the new region. This question comes from an assumption made by a Japanese theorist, Ohmae; in a world which appears to become more and more homogeneous and which keeps changing faster and faster due to globalization, some people tend to start looking at them selves from an intensified local context, to what differs them from all the other people. This would then be a reaction to a more conformed society. What we also find interesting is whether the informant feels like a part of the geographical region in body and in mind and the reasons behind the answer; why does the informant feel like a part of the region or why does he or she not? What does it mean for the single individual to feel like they belong or not? Another question is concerned with the informants’ opinion and suggestion of how the feeling of a common region can be improved. Is there anything they feel is missing to consider them selves a part of the region? When it comes to the informants relationship with the other individuals that live in the geographical region, we are curious about their connection to these people and whether they feel more connected to them than others, e.g. people living north or east of Skåne or at Jylland.

As a final question we are interested in the informants' thoughts about the future of the region and its possibilities.

In our chapter of analysis we will give an account for the answers of the informants and apply those to the different theories presented in the chapters of the theoretical background. The purpose with this is to see whether the opinions of the work commuters and others involved within organizations that deals with these questions, are comparable to theories concerning identity, globalization, regionalization, nationalism, ethnicity and culture. We believe that these theories are fundamental in the creation of an Öresund identity and further we believe that the theories should be visible in the answers of our informants. In an attempt to present our analysis in a structural way, we have split the chapter into three parts namely, *In Body and in Mind*, *Us and Them* and *The future*. The first deals mainly with Identity, Globalization and Regionalization. Within we discuss the complexity and difficulties concerning physical and psychological identity i.e. the geographical and the mental. The second part is named Us and Them. Here we want to analyze the different ethnical and national circumstances and how this affects the region and the construction of it. Therefore does this part principally contain the concepts Nationalism, Ethnicity and Culture. Our last part, labeled The Future, looks at possible upcoming aspects and the hypothetical development of the region with a point of departure from the answers of our informants and the theoretical concepts.

It is important to keep in mind that the opinions and judgments used in the analysis come from our informants and are not in any way general or valid for all the inhabitants of the region but only them selves. It is also essential to remember that the informants working within the two organizations in question primarily represent them selves but still their answers can be influenced by their job tasks, both employed at organizations working to promote the benefits of the region to others.

As we have said, it is substantial not to consider the study normative or a representation of the whole truth but as an example of how the region of Öresund has shaped and affected a few individuals that lives within, and take use of, the region.

2.1 Delimitations

We are aware that two of our informants work at organizations that benefit economically from the region and work to promote the same to the inhabitants within. On the other hand it is difficult to find the opposite i.e. an organization that works to prevent work commuting. As one of our informants says, organizations that do not have the same approach towards the region know little about it.

One delimitation has been that we have not presented our survey to people living in eastern Skåne e.g. Kristianstad. We have chosen to exclude them because we believe that there are not as many work commuters in that area as there are in Malmö and Copenhagen.

Another delimitation in our work has been a lack of time to fully implement what we intended to do, regarding the number of interviews. Due to insufficient contacts with work commuters and especially Danish employees it has been difficult to accomplish a wide range of opinions and answers from all aspects and point of views. The main part of our informants has turned out to live in Sweden. To this we can add the language barrier that arose when we did an interview with a man of Danish origin and when visiting Øresundsbro Konsortiet in Copenhagen for an interview with a woman there, which do not only tell something about our language skills but the obstacles and challenges the region of Öresund faces.

3 Theoretical Background

3.1 Identity

Identity in general, claims the social anthropologist Anthony Giddens, refers to the understandings and expectations people have about themselves, their own identity and what is meaningful and important to them. These understandings are based upon a foundation of certain attributes which people find more prominent than other attributes or sources of meaning. Some of the most important derivations of identity are gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity and social class. Identity consists of distinguished characteristics or qualities of a person or a group. Both individual identity and group identity are determined by social codes. Giddens state that such a “simple” thing as your name can be an important part of yourself and your identity. To be “Swedish” is an example of an important designation and an example of a person’s group- or social identity. Social identity does also consist of characteristics or skills that other people ascribe to you. Through a person’s social actions and characteristics, you can relate to him or her and maybe feel a sense of belonging to the same group as this person. Therefore social identities indicate that a person is “the same” as the others. Common identities that share the same fundamental aims and visions, values and experiences are an important foundation of social movements and a common social identity is an important source of meaning as well (Giddens 2003:44).

The social anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen states that the feeling of “we” is dependent on others, either “we” create “them” to strengthen our inner cohesion, or “they” create “us” by looking upon “us” as a homogenous group. Mostly the creation of “us and them” is a two way process (Hylland Eriksen 2004:55). Further Hylland Eriksen writes about the relevance of common experiences, a common language and a common religion to create a strong feeling of “we”, but adds that it is not enough. Hylland Eriksen also claims that it helps to live at the same place and within the same area but still a strong sense of “we” requires more. If an individual is involved in a common project with a future purpose where the effort and commitment of the other members are highly important for the individual person’s success, the project helps to create a strong sense of “we”. The most effective way, though, is the origin and presence of a common and available enemy because this urges a loyal feeling of “we”, which lasts as long as the common threat exists.

Going back though to Hylland Eriksen's thoughts about a common project being the one of the main reasons to create a feeling of "we" since this is comparable with creating the region of Öresund; The author believes that when the common project is carried out and the feeling of "we" is weakened it can still remain as long as the members of the group and the project maintain the relations that are necessary for its survival (2004:51). A common project, Hylland Eriksen says, works at its best when there is a lot at stake. The more the sole individual has invested in a common identity or a common project the more will he or she sacrifice to preserve or strengthen it. At the same time, Hylland Eriksen points out, it is important to remember that we do not all choose our fellow ship of identity at the same level which can make the outcome uncertain.

To have a sense of belonging to a certain place, so called "identity of place", whether it is a continent, nation, region or a village, create patterns of identification. Many people, claim Jonas Stier in his book "Identitet. Människans gåtfulla porträtt", feel connected to geographical places, i.e. a place where they feel rooted. A certain dialect, a citizenship, a village or a football team can be reasons to why a person feel connected to one place more than another. This gives rise to a particular identity of place. A geographical place or area may cause inclusion and exclusion due to its nature as being an actual place. Whether a person finds him- or her self being on the inside or the outside, the outcomes are different. The border itself is maintained by both parts, the included and the excluded, because of prejudices or stereotypical representations concerning culture, ethnicity, and nationality. A place identity within the area is based upon definitions from the outside and self-experienced similarities between the people within, but also differences experienced towards the society outside (Stier 2003:77).

Öresundskomiteen claims that a sense of place identity works at local, regional and national level yet in the context of the region of Öresund, the region is never a question of being geographical but cultural. The region is supposed to be a cultural space defined by the inhabitants themselves. Contrary to Stier, Öresundskomiteen thinks that a geographical region can never itself produce emotions of cultural belonging and identity unless the people within contributes with it. When the region is filled with mutual content it becomes a place within the notions of culture. Therefore, believes Öresundskomiteen, is cultural integration essential for integration within all other areas. It is important to stress though that the particular

Öresund identity is not supposed to replace the Swedish or Danish identity but be additional i.e. be used parallel with the national identity (Öresundskomiteen 1999:4).

The feelings that arise when someone experience like he or she belongs to a nation can be the same as when someone feel like they belong to a region, since the two is both about factual geographical places, unlike culture or ethnicity which are abstract and a state of mind. Place and identity, Nilsson says, are united through an emotional engagement and therefore applicable to any geographical location or area. Similar to emotions, memories are central parts of a person's impression and experience of fellow ship and what a he or she remember or have forgotten helps to create strong feelings of either inclusion or exclusion. What makes the correlation in Öresund so interesting from this aspect of place identity, Nilsson continues, is that the bridge itself becomes an activator of things people thought they had forgotten. The bridge both visualize and makes the movement practical within the geographical area that is labeled 'the region of Öresund' (Nilsson 1999:23).

3.2 Globalization

A simple thing such as a bag of rice from Asia at the local grocery store in Malmö tells about the globalization process and the large-scale procedure of changes which connects different parts of the world. Some theorists claim that the relation between the global and local is rather new in the history of man and that the process of globalization has become more intense since the industrialism, while others claim that the process has always been present, it is just the actual term “globalization” that is rather new (Giddens 2003:63-65).

Globalization is an important factor when we look at our contemporary world; it is possible to use the concept in any discussion and at any level. Globalization itself is not a static condition but a word that consists of many processes that change over time and space and which are shaped and influenced of the events of the world. The term globalization refers to a dynamic procedure, which consist of changes within social, political, cultural and economical aspects. Globalization is often described as an intensification of the world wide relations and this occurrence can be explained with an example where a local event can be shaped by an event that occur far away and vice versa therefore, the two opposing processes of globalization and localization imply each other (Giddens in Steger 2003:11). Fredrik Nilsson discusses the theory behind “the global village” in his text, saying that globalization leads to a society where lifestyles, symbols and values inevitable cross borders due to a much more globalized and commercialized world and furthermore does not only social groups change or even stop to exist but also boundaries between the local, regional, national and international (Nilsson 1999:18). On the other hand, globalization can be seen in terms of being a concept that creates and increases the number of social networks and activities that are able to manage and function over traditional political, economical, cultural and geographical boundaries.

The globalization process can be seen in reference to economical aspects because of its connection with trans- or multinational companies whose global activities crosses national borders and the companies’ use of international distributed work force. Many current financial markets stretch around the world and in connection with the expanding information- and communication technology, this helps to develop and speed up the process and in turn the actions generate a great flow of capital around the world. The project of creating the region of Öresund can easily be connected with the terms of economical globalization since one of the

aims with it all has been, and still is, to create a better market for tradesmen and facilitate in general for greater economical transactions.

The political aspects of globalization are visible in international, national and regional systems of government, here exemplified by the European Union and the United Nations. These are two international organizations which unite nations in a common political forum. By becoming a member of the EU, nations refrain from a number of sovereign functions and submit to directives, regulations and verdicts taken by different authorities within the EU, but nations can also profit from economical, social and political benefits from a membership. Some theorists claim that due to globalization the nation state and the national identity can become weaker and of less importance, while others say that the globalization process can give arise to a reaction where people instead want to draw attention upon their local identity, because in a world that changes fast, people search for security and for something they can relate to (Ohmae in Giddens 2003:382).

The life of the individual is highly affected by the globalization process since both the power and later on the consequences of the process becomes a part of a person's daily life and local context. According to Giddens, globalization forces us to reconsider our relations toward our personal identity, gender and sexuality, family and most importantly, our collaboration with other people. In the post-modern society the individual construct his or her identity through active choices, which is an indirect consequence of globalization since people today are affected less by the local context in favor of the global. Traditional references of identity are dispersed and new patterns of identity are able to arise and develop. The former 'social codes' which used to affect people's choices and actions are today weaker than they used to be; we are less tied up by boundaries; people tend to live more openly and reflexive (Giddens 2003: 72-73). To conclude, many people fulfill and give meaning to their own identities irrespective of the surrounding. If a person wants to be or feel like a part of something or not is just a matter of perspective and frames of references.

3.3 Regionalization

A contemporary national state can today be challenged not only by globalization but by regionalization as well. A former bipolar world becomes multipolar; regions become independent actors within the international system and this regionalization helps promoting the regional character within the greater competition between different parts of a globalized world.

The concept of regionalization is a type of decentralization, mostly within national states and often comes from an initiative taken at a governmental level. This means that the nation state convey some political functions to authorities at a less central level. Consequences of regionalization can therefore be an origin of a new region or increased power to an already existing one. The region itself becomes something between the local and the national and an organ with many administrative tasks or also a territory for a realization of governmental politics.

Veronica Trépagny concentrates in particular on how to shape regions in the era of globalization. The national state has not lost its importance or power but globalization forces the national state to realize that politics and political decisions are not only based upon the national state. Globalization has led to a post-national era where the national and democratic legitimacy do not always harmonize with each other. This happens when capital and capitalism become global because the nation states possibility to act is limited. The social side effects of this can not be prevented since globalization makes many economical relations and transactions unreachable for the nation state (Trépagny 2003:66-69). It is possible to relate what Trépagny referred to in terms of the weakened nation state by an allegation of Uffe Palludan and Henrik Persson, authors of the book “Öresund. Bakgrund. Verklighet. Möjligheter”. Palludan and Persson say that the bridge of Öresund and the speeded up process of globalization have put a pressure on the two national states; Denmark and Sweden (Palludan 2003:84). Further they state that regionalization can be a consequence of a development in society such the building of a bridge. The political decision to build the bridge of Öresund gave rise to an idea and later on the creation of the region in question. This is an example of when processes in society leads to new conditions, changes and breaks the already existing structures of society.

The Finnish geographer Anssi Paasi gives an account for two different types of production and reproduction of a region: the collective level and the individual ditto. The term 'Regional identity' refers to the construction of a region seen from a collective perspective where the history of society is important. Regional consciousness on the other hand, gives rise to similar questions at issue but starts from the individual's perspective. Both these levels and aspects are dependent on each other since the establishment of a region assume that a general but yet individual propensity to identify oneself and the others within the territory is developed. Idvall may speak of numeric and generic/qualitative values of identity but what we find relevant and useful in our discussion and analyze later on, is his arguments saying that some groups and individuals within a region find themselves more rooted in the region and also more conscious about the same, than others. This rooting of different measures and awareness can itself be connected to time, space and social context. A region therefore gives rise to various types of attachment to the existence of the region (Paasi in Idvall 1997:150).

Nilsson discusses regionalization in general and regional identity in particular from the viewpoint from the region of Öresund, saying that for a region to be a reality, it is a prerequisite that people and capital are able to cross the border frequently and more often than before and here the bridge is the symbol and the supposed engine in the regional machinery. Furthermore, Nilsson claims that the point with the region of Öresund is for the inhabitants within to feel like home irrespective if they live or work in Sweden or Denmark, Malmö or Copenhagen. If a person feels like home, Nilsson believes, and if a person feels like they belong to any place within the region it implies that he or she feel a nearness, belonging and affinity living in the same area. For the region to become a reality, the inhabitants of Skåne need to feel solidarity and conformity with the inhabitants of Sjælland and vice versa. A sense of regional identity and solidarity is created through an emotional engagement and similar to emotions, a sense of connection helps to create strong feelings of either inclusion or exclusion. The bridge of Öresund becomes not only the machinery but an activator of a regional identity because the bridge both visualize and makes the movement practical within the geographical area that is labeled 'the region of Öresund' (Nilsson 1999:12-23).

The future regional development for the individual when it comes to the region of Öresund in particular, Palludan & Persson say, is threatened by the inhabitants lack of knowledge of the people living on the other side of the sound. This is emphasized in a study from Öresundskomiteen, assuming that real structural differences may be erased through time, but

imagined and symbolic differences i.e. stereotypes, might replace them and continue flourishing. The key to an intensified integration in the region believes Öresundskomiteen are decreased structural obstacles because this will automatically lead to an increased cultural collaboration and understanding (Palludan & Persson 2003:93, Öresundskomiteen 1999:4).

3.4 Ethnicity

According to Anthony Giddens the concept of ethnicity is dynamic, which means that it is constantly changing, or as Giddens expresses it, produced and reproduced over time and space. Further Giddens considers the concept of ethnicity to refer to group identification of them selves and that the concept therefore changes in relation with, or the influence of, different processes such as historical, economical, social or political processes. Traditions are transferred over generations not only within the family but also within the large group. This is visible in the celebrations of St. Patrick's Day, where Irish traditions are celebrated with an American touch, Giddens says. With this illustration Giddens claims that the concept of ethnicity, despite calling attention to tradition and cultural values, are adaptable and adjustable i.e. that customs can stay the same but still change depending on context (Giddens 2003:229-230).

Gerd Baumann discusses ethnicity from two different standpoints. The first one looks upon ethnic groups as having primordial ties, that ethnicity is based on language, territory and kinship. This implies that ethnicity should be static and absolute and not dynamic and reproduced as Giddens considers the concept. The other viewpoint considers ethnic groups as being a social construction or being a process that is created and reshaped in and through different historical contexts and events. But as Baumann says, those who view them selves as primordial groups has often, or almost always, created or constructed a notion of primordial kinship and blood relations. Here the view of ethnicity as a social construction has been used in order to be able to claim an essentialist stand. In this way the primordialist's contradict them selves, Baumann claims and says at the same time that ethnicity in one way or the other always is constructed (Baumann 1999:91).

As we discussed above the concept of ethnicity is often discussed from different standpoints and as such the concept itself does not have a definition. Max Weber is one person who has tried to define the concept of ethnicity. Weber calls

'ethnic groups' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (Weber in Guibernau & Rex 1997:18-19).

Everyone belongs to an ethnic group, which means that all people have an ethnicity, no matter how small or how great the group is. Although it is common to speak of ethnicity when talking about minority groups, ethnicity is not about how many you are but about social relations. According to Giddens cultural features, which members of a group have in common, are also used in order to distinguish them from other groups in the area. At the same time the features are used to guarantee and secure who belongs to the ethnic group and who does not (Giddens 2003:229-231, Hylland Eriksen 1993:11).

Thomas Hylland Eriksen does not distinguish between race relations and ethnicity (Hylland Eriksen in Guibernau & Rex 1997:35). Instead Hylland Eriksen believes that to reinforce ethnicity, the different ethnic groups need to have a very limited contact with the other groups and so ethnicity should be of minor importance in the multicultural society of today. On the other hand, the author says that the groups have to, or need to, think about them selves as being different from the other group for ethnicity to exist and in this way Hylland Eriksen argues for the notion that ethnicity is not a group property but instead “an aspect of a relationship” (Hylland Eriksen 1993:12). This can mean that two groups who live next to each other and on the ‘outside’ seem to share the same cultural values, still have an interethnic relation between them. This relation can be of a minority and majority relation within a country as Samis and Swedes, but also between ethnic groups across the borders of the nation states, as Serbs and Croats, after the war on the Balkan (1997:39). Just as an interethnic relation can exist between groups within a nation it can as well be on a different level, i.e. proto-nations. An example of an ethno nationalistic movement is for instance the Kurds who want their own nation state and to be able to rule it them selves. Looking at a nation like Turkey, there can be said to exist an ethnic relation between the Turks and the Kurds, ‘belonging to’ a proto-nation (1997:40).

Ethnic identity can be ambiguous or mixed but that does not mean that the aspect of culture goes missing or that the person who belongs to more than one ethnic group loses his or her roots. Ernest Gellner means that in some societies the choice of identity is greater than in others and further, that a sense of strong identity to a territory implies an existing shortage in mobility and that people are tied to family- and place relations. Further, Gellner claims in an industrial society, social mobility is of significance. The choice of the individual person is of major value here. Even if identity is an ongoing process, the process continues onward in different speed depending on what context is looked at according to Giddens. Identity is also a

classification that is dependent on the level of difference between two groups, according to Hylland Eriksen. Further, when you differentiate from each other by not mixing, at the same time as cultural differences regularly plays a part in the interaction between members of the groups, then the social relation possesses an ethnic element, Hylland Eriksen claims. In this way social distance becomes important when measuring the differences, i.e. a Swede is further away from a German than from a Dane counting the social distance on the scale who is most like “us”.

Ethnic identity is also maintained by different symbols connected with the way of life but it also share a link to religion or language. Hylland Eriksen claims that ethnic identity in this way is strengthened when it becomes threatened by a change from the outside, such as a change in the economy or industrialization. In the same way new formations of ethnic identity and ethnicity can arise and Hylland Eriksen says that an already existing identity can be extended. Norwegian ethnic identity is one example of when an ethnic identity has been created. In the late 19th century, before Norway became independent from Sweden in 1905, the construction and escalation of Norwegian identity was created. An argument that was stressed for their uniqueness in relation to the rest of Scandinavia was “an imputed genealogical continuity with early medieval Viking chiefs”. In brief it is possible, Hylland Eriksen claims, to create a new sense of ethnicity (Hylland Eriksen 1993: 12-69). This can be done by emphasizing on former ties and characteristics that made the particular group unique compared to others. These mutual characteristics can be gathered from a history far back to be reproduced and used as motivation for a connection in the contemporary society, just as happened in Norway after the break-up with Sweden in 1905.

3.5 Nationality

According to the ideology of nationalism, the state should coincide with the nation. More specifically, the physical boundaries should agree with the geographical spread of the inhabitant of the state. An ideology about the commonality among the members of the nation is needed for the nation state to function and historically, nationalism has been seen as a tool which makes the inhabitants of the nation state homogenous. Nations tend to continuously show direct traces to ancient times and earlier ethnic groups because of a common history, common cultural identity and a connection to a physical country of origin, with a few exceptions (Smith in Giddens 2003:379).

According to Gellner nationalism is a product of the modern civilization and originates from the industrial revolution that occurred in the end of the 18th century. Industrialism created a need for a more effective system regarding the state and the way it was supposed to be ruled. In the modern state, the base of the community has shifted from the local village or city to a significant larger unit, which in turn means that all individuals have to ensemble and interplay with strangers. Education on the basis of the official language of the schools is the main tool of which a large society is organized and held together (Giddens 2003:378-379). Gellner claims that the emotions connected to nationalism are “new” i.e. the emotions did not occur in the traditional societies but are a consequence of the industrialization; therefore these emotions and feelings of nationalism do not have deep roots in the mind of humanity. Gellner’s theory has been questioned and his critics say that his theory cannot explain the strong feelings and emotions that nationalism often give rise to. Further the critics also point out that emotions and feelings for the national state is important in the creation of a persons’ identity and not only in the context of education (2003:379). Geller and his assumption that nationalism as a concept originates from the industrialization, is by critics said not to be probable since identity is not static but is reproduced through time and space. Therefore it has existed long before the industrialism. Instead some of Gellner’s critics claim that it is better to focus on the existence of common symbols as a way of expressing mutual feelings, solidarity and understanding. When speaking of symbols that connect people to a certain nation, Michael Billig claims that small words and gestures rather than grand memorable phrases creates a feeling of national belonging as well as reproduces it. Examples of these minor symbols are coins and bills, stamps, idioms and expressions which often are explicit and unique for each nation (Billig in Hylland Eriksen 1993:101).

Contrary to Gellner, Benedict Anderson calls his theory on nationalism 'imagined communities'. This because Anderson claims that it is impossible for a member of a community to have met a majority of the other members of that community or nation. Anderson means that this is true for all but the smallest primordial communities (Anderson in Guibernu & Rex, 1997:44). Due to this, Anderson asks why the imagined community of nationalism have the attraction it has, and why people tend to sacrifice their life, blood and dear ones for people they have never met (1997:45).

Same as Gellner, Anderson views nationalism from an historical point of view and says that the rise of nationalism needs to be understood from the concepts of enlightenment and of modernization. According to Anderson the world languages used to be undermined and the vernacular languages were strengthened by what he calls print-capitalism, which involved dictionaries and other mass produced texts, so called "print-language" (1997:47). People who share the same language and read the same texts also share the same frames of references and therefore print-capitalism is considered being important for the condition of nationalism and national consciousness (Hylland Eriksen 1993:105). As the vernacular language became a language of power, Latin had got competition and thereby the "imagined community of Christianity" declined, secularizing religion (Anderson in Guibernu & Rex 1997:49). When religion was pushed away, nationalism took its place as a contribution of the building of a nation. So, to answer the question asked above why people sacrifice themselves for people they have never met, the answer must be that an imagined community confers solidarity and brotherhood to its members. When people imagine solidarity and identification with others they are willing and prepared to commit self-sacrificing acts for the nation or in the name of the nation (Baumann 1999:38-39).

National identity is in a way connected to a feeling of belonging and the identity of a nation is being constructed in relation to others, outside of the nation, who is not members of the group. In this sense it is a dichotomy of "us and them", which has a history of being constructed in and through warfare. As wars between nation states has decreased during the last decades and instead given rise to interstate conflicts, sports has many times taken over the arena of dichotomizing "us and them" and constructing contemporary national identity (Hylland Eriksen 1993:110). During the world cup soccer tournament in 2006, the media attention was massive and a national 'hubris' was created, at least in Sweden. Media as we see it is an extension of Andersons' print-capitalism and the effect has been multiplied. Many people

within the nation-state watched the same news, presented in the same manor and in the same language. This created a strong sense of unity among the members of the nation-state, but since it was a competition, it unified the states against each other as well. Further, the Swedish national team was dressed in blue and yellow which are the colors of the Swedish flag, as well as sharing the language with the TV-viewers and a feeling of unity was created.

The future status of the nation state is questioned in relation to the more intensified process of globalization. Theorists claim that nationalism has resurrected in the age of globalization and Castells says that the resurrected 'new' nationalism can be a challenge to the established nation states. But globalization can also challenge the creation of an identity construction, which is based on nationality (Castells 1997:41). Veronica Trépagny claims that people also often use to search for something which they can relate to, that feels secure when there are big changes in society and so a persons local identity would be strengthen at the same time as the national identity will be weakened. Another challenge for the nation state is the necessity to realize that not all decisions are based on the nation state in a globalized world (Trépagny 2003:66-69). In brief, this could mean that the future nation state can become weakened or strengthened, dependent on the circumstances.

3.6 Culture

Just as the concepts mentioned earlier, also the concept of culture is dynamic, produced and reproduced over time and space as well. Sociologists, Giddens says, look upon the aspects of culture that are taught and not hereditary. The taught concepts within culture are rites and codes such as traditions, ideas, values and behavior. But it is also about symbols and signs from where it is possible to gather common values. Foundational for all cultures are the ideas and the understanding that together define the aspects which are considered being of major importance, being valuable and desirable for the people that are a part of that particular culture. These both abstract and concrete ideas of what culture and cultural identity signifies are meaningful to the individuals within and guide them in their interactions with others and play a part in how they look at each other. The cultural norms become an indicator of how a person should act, to either fit into the pattern, or how not to (Giddens 2003:37). Uffe Palludan and Henrik Nilsson consider culture being a common strategy of how to handle and relate to the society and its contexts. In the modern society many different cultures work in coexistence and the importance is, Palludan stresses, that we are able to discover and take use of the different cultures strengths and weaknesses and to use them in a way, which Palludan considers being the “right way” to benefit from the distinctive features (Palludan & Persson 2003:131).

Cultural symbols and signs can also be pictures and images, music and language. A contribution to shared and common images and music is due to the affection of the globalization process on culture. The phenomenon of popular culture, so called pop-culture, are often lead by multinational companies which encourage people all over the world to share a common life style. Examples of companies like these are Nike, Coca-Cola, McDonalds and H&M. Two separate nations can feel a common fascination and interest for a third nation e.g. Danes and Swedes can find them selves in a mutual context of being interested in movies from Hollywood, which in turn is an effect of a globalized world where certain things are available for many. The fewer but more powerful media moguls in the world creates a homogenous frame of references when it comes to what people see and read. Many of the news programs show more or less the same features all over the world, only with local differences. In this way, the globalization of culture contributes to a feeling of kinship among people with different cultural preferences (Steger 2003:70-71).

Within culture, stereotypes and people's presumptions of "the other" play an important role. To categorize others is by Hylland Eriksen referred to as a standardized application of notions of a group in terms of cultural distinctiveness. This classification helps the individual to create order in a fast changing and complicated world and gives a person the impression that he or she understands the society (Hylland Eriksen 1993:23-25). Nilsson believes that activating or creating a stereotype is a way to position oneself in a certain context and to connect a person to a place, to show that we are nothing like them. Though at the same time as a categorization of "them" is conducted, an indirect categorization of who "we" are is conducted as well. This is how an identity is constructed, because to construct an identity something needs to be contrasted and this is where the existence and usage of "the other" is useful. Fredrik Nilsson claims that in reference to a common third part, e.g. the EU, differences between Sweden and Denmark could be slightly forgotten about in order to maintain or bring forward a certain notion of unity for display. Thereby Nilsson points out the importance of stereotyping in constructing a regional 'element' such as the region of Öresund (Nilsson 1999:30). In their book, Palludan and Persson refer to the same thing as Nilsson, namely that a definition of national culture is a product of a two way process and the wish to categorize others from a perspective of stereotypical descriptions always has occurred. Uffe Palludan and Henrik Persson therefore give an introduction to the historical connections between Denmark and Sweden. The authors tell that historically, Denmark has used Sweden as a reflection to view them selves in a much larger extent than the other way around. The stereotypical Swede is, according to the Danes, considered being socially insecure, afraid of conflicts but also rational and serious. Further a Swede is seen as a hard working and effective person though suppressed by authorities. Contrary to this representation Danes find them selves being the opposite i.e. a person free from the influence of the government and with a free and independent mind (Palludan & Persson 2003:135-138).

Contemporary Sweden and Denmark are in many ways very similar when looking at culture and the differences that can be found are by many people considered being rather trivial. Öresundskomiteen processes from the conception that decreased structural obstacles will automatically lead to an increased cultural collaboration and understanding. Öresundskomiteen believes that this is the key to an intensified integration in the region. On the other hand though, assume the organization, while the real structural differences are erased, the imagined and symbolic differences i.e. stereotypes might replace them. The fact that the bridge of Öresund nowadays connects Sweden and Denmark in a concrete way,

something that can be seen as a structural obstacle which has been vanquished, does not mean that people automatically will start to see each other as equals, or that differences, imagined or real, will be wiped out (Öresundskomiteen 1999:4). Palludan and Persson emphasizes though that the imagined stereotypes do not always have to be a weakness as long as the different characteristics within culture are acknowledged. Instead they can strengthen in order to be able to make use of the cultural differences in a positive way. It is therefore necessary to learn to understand other cultures and how they are related to your own. Only then a bridge can be built across cultural differences and the inhabitants will be able to take advantage of its positive effects (Palludan & Persson 1999:157).

4 Analysis

We will give an account for the answers of the informants and apply those to the different theories presented in the chapter of the theoretical background. The purpose with this is to see whether the opinions of the work commuters and others involved within organizations that deals with these questions, are comparable to theories concerning identity, globalization, regionalization, nationalism, ethnicity and culture. We believe that these theories are fundamental in the creation of an Öresund identity and further we believe that the theories should be seen in the answers of our informants.

At first it might seem like the opinions brought forward are general and appeal to all people living within the geographical region but it is important to remember that the informants who have contributed with thoughts and opinions about the region are all work commuters on a daily basis, with one exception. The purpose of the organizations we have been in contact with is to present the region in a positive way and to encourage others to share their view which is important to keep in mind. In short, it is necessary for the reader not to consider the results being normative or the whole truth but as examples of how the region has shaped and affected a few that lives within, and take use of, the region.

Our first informant Boel represents one of many organizations that were established in the beginning of this millennium due to the building of the Öresund Bridge. Boel works daily with recommending mainly young Swedish people to apply for jobs in Denmark and therefore works to benefit work commuting from Malmö to Copenhagen. Boel is 56 years old, born in Denmark, is a Danish citizen, but lives since about forty years in Sweden. Boel says that she feels more Swedish than Danish today because Sweden and Malmö feels like home to her though the Danes see her as a Dane whenever she visits Denmark. A contributing factor is that it is in Sweden Boel has lived the longest and the fact that she speaks Swedish fluently. The organization that Boel works for is a temporary project, which works to inform future work commuters about the circumstances when working in the region of Öresund.

Our second informant Ingrid works as an analyst at another one of all the organizations established due to the building of the bridge. The company works to promote the region, facilitate for work commuters and launch the Danish capital to Swedes. In practice the job consists of investigations and observations of the difficulties and obstacles surrounding the

bridge, which often mostly involve work commuters. The purpose is then to present the results to concerned and interested politicians and wish for a change. Ingrid is a 39 year old Danish citizen who quite recently moved with her family from Copenhagen to Malmö. She is originally from Lolland but has lived for many years in Copenhagen, where she still works.

Our third informant Alice is a Swedish 27 year old woman living in Malmö, Sweden. She is interesting in our survey mainly because she works as a bartender in Copenhagen.

Our fourth informant Peter is 37 years old and a Swedish citizen. Peter thinks that the housing market in Copenhagen is more similar to the one in Stockholm and it was therefore more attractive for Peter and his girlfriend to choose Copenhagen over Malmö when they left Stockholm. Peter works as a social worker within the municipality of Copenhagen but also studies at the University of Malmö which means that he commutes regularly and that is why we choose him to be a part of this study.

Our fifth informant Christian is a 30 year old Danish citizen living in Lund. Christian is principally a student at Lund University but works part time at Kastrup airport outside of Copenhagen and this makes him interesting to us. Christian has commuted from Lund to Copenhagen since 2004.

Our sixth informant Jenny is a 28 year old Swedish citizen and lives in Malmö. She moved to Malmö four years ago to study at the university and currently works in Copenhagen.

We are aware of the fact that our study consist of more female informants than male but when searching for informants we have chosen not to differ between the genders because we do not think that a work commuter's attitude toward the region primarily depends on the gender and also, that would be a totally different study. Considering the age structure being similar to a general working age, about the age of 20 until 65, we find it satisfying enough. Another reason to why age is not important is because we are not going to compare informants of a similar age to each other but mainly the informant's answers in relation to the theories.

4.1 In Body and in Mind

A person can feel excluded or included both physically and psychologically, or as we refer to it; in body and in mind. To feel included geographically is not necessarily a prerequisite for feeling included mentally. A common social identity is an important foundation for social movements and it is also an important source of meaning. A social identity is many times based upon the same fundamental aims and visions, values and experiences. A geographical place or area can cause inclusion and exclusion due to its nature as being an actual place. The border itself is maintained by the included and the excluded, because of prejudices or stereotypical representations concerning culture, ethnicity, and nationality. Öresundskomiteen claims that a sense of place identity works at local, regional and national level yet in the context of the region of Öresund, the region is never a question of being geographical but cultural. The region is supposed to be a cultural space defined by the inhabitants them selves.

The process of globalization brings together the global and the local e.g. can a news report from South Africa reach a person as fast as news about your own village. In this way people are able to feel connected to people living on the other side of the globe as well as on the other side of the sound. A consequence of the globalization process, in terms of news and TV programs, is that a global society gives rise to common preferences and possibly, in the end, an increased understanding of each other. It can also create an even wider gap if the stereotypical opinion people have does not agree with the medial representation. Television can be seen as a medium that brings people together since this creates a common frame of reference but only if people watch, and later discuss, the same programs and presented events. With several TV-programs and plenty of channels available the effect of television as a forum that connects people has decreased. Though its impact is still great, conformity is more difficult to find. The contemporary programs that might attract both Danes and Swedes are the Eurovision Song Contest, The Olympic Games and other sport or entertainment events. The problem with this though is that it is all about competitions and in the end a creation of the dichotomy of “us and them”. Programs concerned with international competitions are about nations showing their independent strength and uniqueness and according to us this does not benefit a feeling of connection across borders but the contrary. Also, a solution to create a sense of regionalization would be to create a team, preferably within sports or entertainment that represents the region of Öresund against opponents to achieve loyalty towards the area because, as Jonas Stier writes, a sports team can be a reason to why people

feel connected to one area more than another (Stier 2003:77). In addition, Thomas Hylland Eriksen says that nationalism and its symbols can be used in the creation of national hubris e.g. when it comes to sport events and maybe it is possible to create a regional ditto as well, using mutual frames of references (Hylland Eriksen 1993:110). Besides, as Fredrik Nilsson enlightens, a sense of identity and solidarity is shaped with the use of emotional engagement and can be increased with the help of restrictions of what is considered being included or excluded i.e. who is a supporter of the team and who is not (Nilsson 1999:23).

It is possible to say that Boel is affected by the regionalization that surrounds the idea of the region since she claims that she feels connected with others living and working in the region; she claims that she is “a true Öresundare”. This is mainly because she is still a Danish citizen, has Danish relatives and the fact that some of her family members work commute daily to Denmark. Despite this Boel is not entirely sure that a common notion of identity between Swedes and Danes exists because a lot of things are still Danish and Swedish such as the mentality and, Boel adds, there *should* be some differences between the two nations. This, we believe, exposes the paradox that surrounds the term of globalization i.e. the globalization process is about creating conformity and solidarity with all the people around the world just as much as it strives for an understanding and an acceptance of each others differences and a creation of diversity. But, as mentioned earlier on, the point has never been to create an identity that will replace people’s Swedish and Danish identities but create a sub identity. In brief, the desirable “Öresund Identity” is supposed to be added on top of all the other identities.

One of the aims with the region of Öresund has been to create a greater economical market and facilitate for monetary transactions as well as human capital to cross the borders. By simplifying for the people, the imaginable outcomes could be a simplification for the money and vice versa. If people are not satisfied with the economical solutions they will not spend money and less spending means less business for the companies. A consequence of this could be then that a great part of the region will fall because of uninterested economical support. Our informant Alice experiences that it is very difficult to handle the issues with two bank accounts and would like to see an improvement. If globalization is about collaboration across the national borders, Alice thinks that it does not work properly within several areas. She wishes for better railway communication and lower charges for cars to travel by the bridge. Using her mobile phone frequently, Alice asks for a better system regarding the

telecommunication network, which would maybe decrease the prices on transregional phone calls. A development of this would facilitate for the globalization process and in return the regionalization as well. For the informants the globalization process seems to be about simplification of their daily life. When they do not experience that, they wonder where the ideas of globalization went. With our study in mind, we get the impression that the ones responsible for the origin of the region, mostly politicians, tend to focus too much on the companies and not enough on the people. On the whole, the region of Öresund is as dependent on the companies as the people and together they are all each others prerequisites to exist and sustain. Therefore, we firmly believe, it is of major importance that the resources and solutions benefit all parts to create a harmonized region.

Regionalization is one of the corner stones in the Öresund project since it is about creating a new transnational region. When our informant Boel speaks of the feeling she has of being “a true Öresundare” she is with words expressing what has been the aim with it all; to make people within feel like ‘Öresundare’. Furthermore she gives her reasons to why she considers herself being a part of the region; except for being involved through work she thinks that traveling sporadically between the two countries to shop is also a part of being an Öresundare. Her attitude and point of view expand the number of possible Öresundare dramatically because, just as Boel, many people know someone who work commutes or they feel like a part of it despite the irregular trips. Ingrid agrees with Boel and mentions people in her surrounding who feel like they are a part of the region though they only travel within it during vacations. With these statements, Boel and Ingrid enlighten an important issue i.e. it is important that all people within the region and not only the work commuters feel like a part of the region. Not only should the minor percentage, which is represented by the work commuters, feel like a part of it for the project to function, but all inhabitants. Peter on the other hand does not at all feel like an Öresundare despite traveling across the sound more often than Boel, being Swedish and living in Denmark. This particular circumstance is emphasized by Idvall when he speaks of the fact that some groups and individuals within a region find them selves more rooted in the region and also more conscious about the same, than others. This rooting of different measures and awareness can itself be connected to time, space and social context. A region therefore gives rise to various types of attachment to the existence of the region (Idvall in Alsmark 1997:150).

When working as an employment agent in Sweden Boel finds two types of job-seekers among her clients; the positive ones and the negative ones or in other words, the ones doing this voluntarily and the ones that have been more or less forced by the Swedish Employment Agency to apply for a job in Denmark. Reasons to why people may have a negative approach could be because they find the actual commuting tiresome and exhausting or they find the Danish labor market much more insecure and tough than the Swedish one. This statement can be referred back to Thomas Hylland Eriksen's theory about a common project as a trigger for a sense of belonging. A common project, Hylland Eriksen says, works at its best when there is a lot at stake. The more the sole individual has invested in a common identity or a common project the more will he or she sacrifice to preserve or strengthen it. A person who voluntarily looks for a job in Denmark might be more eager to make sacrifices than someone who is forced to do it. Therefore is he or she more positive than the latter individual. Because, as Hylland Eriksen points out, it is important to remember that we do not all choose our fellowship of identity at the same level which can make the outcome uncertain (Hylland Eriksen 2004:51). This theory is comparable even to Boel and her colleagues. Within her main organization, promoting cross national work commuting, most people are positive and involved in what Boel refers to as "Öresundstänket" ("Öresund thinking", a way of including the region of Öresund into the daily routines), while other organizations that do not work specifically with the region have a rather insignificant attitude. The Swedish Employment Agency in general does not share Boel's opinions regarding the region of Öresund and neither does the Swedish Taxation Authority or any other governmental organization, Boel feels. It has not yet become a part of their natural activity. Ingrid, working at another organization involved in commuting, speaks of the same phenomenon as Boel, saying that people at her work place are all positive and involved in the work, while the ones who are not professionally engaged in the region are less interested but with a few exceptions.

Among our informants, all six of them feel connected to the region because, as they say, they live in the geographical area and therefore they belong to it. Only one of them does also feel connected mentally, and not only geographically, to the region. Boel thinks that whether a person feels like a part of the region or not, many times depend on where he or she lives. People living in municipalities such as Trelleborg, Vellinge and Malmö are mostly positive towards commuting within the region of Öresund while eastern Skåne, e.g. Kristianstad, do not share this interest, probably because of their geographical location. The bridge can be seen as the origin and upholder of the Öresund identity and it is assumed that the one who does not

use or have access to the bridge therefore finds it harder to feel a sense of belonging. Our informant Ingrid divides the region into three parts where she proceeds from the bridge. The first one, which she calls the core or the main part, consists of Malmö and Copenhagen. In the second part she includes Helsingborg and Helsingør and in the third the remotest area. She considers this division being relevant since the distance, she believes, is of great importance when it comes to a feeling of belonging to the region. Our informant Peter confirms this when he reveals that he does not feel closer to Malmö than Stockholm emotionally but geographically just because the first city lies closer. Moreover he suggests how the geographical sense of belonging to the region can be increased. The solution is to start thinking in broader terms when it comes to the labor market and the housing market, says Peter. It is desirable to make people think above the national borders and that people see the possibilities that the region offers and become both globalized and regionalized. If being frequently exposed to the possibilities within the region, eventually the region itself will become natural, he thinks. In brief, Peter does not believe that a natural region exists yet but still he feels like a part of the geographical region in body, though not in mind. Does this mean that the geographical region that seem to exist according our informants is not considered being “real”? Does the region have to exist in both body and in mind to appear genuine? The fact that our informants do not feel a cultural connection but a geographical one is contradictory compared to Öresundskomiteen’s idea that the region of Öresund should be based upon common cultural references. Without being aware of Öresundskomiteen’s desire of what the region should proceed from, Christian mentions that what is missing for speaking of an Öresund identity are common cultural references and in general our informants have a lot more to say about the geographical connection than the cultural; the first one seem to exist among them but not the latter. In a text from Öresundskomiteen, it is said that a geographical area itself can not give rise to a sense of belonging unless the people within fill it with cultural aspects. According to our informants’ answers, this is not correct. They feel this “impossible” geographical connection though the cultural content is still missing (Öresundskomiteen 1999:4).

A theory we have taken into consideration was concerned with an idea that when the world becomes more globalized and conformed and changes fast, people tend to look for security and comfort by looking towards local characteristics and through this the local identity is strengthen. Ingrid rejects this idea. Her opinion is that the Swedish and Danish nationalism does not increase when the two parts are tied together. Instead she feels even more Danish

when being in Sweden and the opposite when she is in Denmark. Further she feels like a “Köpenhamnare” (a person from Copenhagen) when she visits Lolland but not when she used to live in the Danish capital. Again she emphasizes that the size of the area, in this case the city, is what can make it difficult to feel a connection; it was easier to belong to a certain block or community than an entire city when she lived in Copenhagen, she says. Ingrid’s opinion goes against the idea of an imagined community or nation where a person is, according to Benedict Anderson, supposed to feel an imagined connection with other because of living within the same boundaries, both geographical and cultural (Anderson in Guiberteau & Rex 1997:44). To conclude, she means that identity is an issue which changes depending on the context and therefore it is possible for a person to have several identities. It is possible to feel both Swedish and Danish. Where Ingrid and Boel feel like their mental identity depends on the circumstances, Christian finds himself always being a “Jyllänning” (a person from Jylland in Denmark) in mind, irrespectively whether being in Copenhagen or Lund. Alice claims that she feels more connected to Sweden than she does to the region of Öresund, which corresponds with Peters’ opinion about not feeling as a part of the region but where he lives i.e. in Copenhagen. Our informants feelings regarding the geographical and mental identity, *in body and in mind*, is reflected in Markus Idvall’s arguments when he claims that some individuals and groups within a region find themselves more rooted and also more conscious about the region, than others. This awareness is connected to time, space and social context. A geographical place, such as the region, can therefore give rise to various types of attachment (Idvall in Alsmark 1997:150).

Consequently this leads to a more profound and fundamental discussion of identity and how people consist of not only one but many identities which change due to the circumstances. A person can consider him or her self being a man or a woman, a parent, a student, a house owner or a dog owner long before he or she finds him or her self being an “Öresundare”. Our impression is that the informants have not reflected actively over their possible Öresund identity of mind until we asked them to do that. The exceptions are the two women who work at organizations which encourage people within the area to consider a common identity and take part of the possibilities that the region creates. Firstly, this confirms Ingrid’s assumption that the region of Öresund as a project mostly interests people who works with it, not only within it (i.e. work commuters). Secondly, this gives rise to a few questions about the project and its establishment among the inhabitants, the ones who are supposed to make the region happen, and the establishment among the well-informed organizations. The reasons to this,

we believe, are many but one is indisputable concerned with time. Looking at a region which crosses national borders and cultures from an integration perspective, five years are not long time enough to create a well-functioning process, states an editorialist in an article in *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* in 2005 and this statement, we think, is still valid in the end of 2006 (SDS, 2005.07.01).

When asked what it means to be a part of the region our informants mention several accounts namely freedom, greater possibilities and having a wider range of choices, as well as the region being an eye opener to a larger surrounding. In detail, the possibilities mentioned are broader accesses to work as well as new housing and study possibilities. The people who take use of the possibilities, we believe, are the ones who invest in the project that the region really is (referring to Thomas Hylland Eriksen 2004:51). They might not find them selves being a part of a project or being the ones who make the region happen but think more of their own personal gain from it, such as a better job or a better house. To facilitate for the people is to facilitate for the creation of the region. Apart from better infrastructure and thereby improved train- and telecommunication networks, our informants wish for amended details. In practice, it should be easier to use credit cards and a mutual system regarding recycling or, as Christian mentions, a common way to unplug light bulbs. Öresundskomiteen is aware about this and agree with the informants, saying that decreased structural obstacles could lead to increased cultural collaborations and thereby benefit the future development and the creation of the region (Öresundskomiteen 1999:4).

What further needs to be done, when asking our informants, are many times to re-consider the infrastructure. In reality they are dissatisfied with the train connections and the train departures. Other factors that could facilitate for further integration and in the end a deeper regional connection are similar fiscal legislations and to be able to pay tax where you live instead of where you work, propose both informants involved in the region through work as well as work commuters. The possibility to be able to work part-time in Sweden but still keep a job in Denmark is another element that should be revised, our informants believe. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the region consists of two countries with slightly different well-fare systems that will probably never be harmonized. Boel speaks of the difficulties with synchronized fiscal legislations with the explanation that Sweden is ruled from Stockholm, while Denmark is ruled from Copenhagen, which is a part of the region of Öresund while Stockholm is not. A change in tax payments to fit Skåne and the rest of the region would

inevitably affect the rest of Sweden and the country's relationships with Norway and Finland. This problem is noticed in an article written by Carl-Magnus Hyltenius in Sydsvenska Dagbladet (SDS, 2005.07.01), who claims that there would be no difference if Stockholm was placed in Skåne because an authority like the government need to take into consideration what is best for the entire country, not just a region.

4.2 Us and them

Culture, Ethnicity and Nationalism are all concepts that are affected by the surrounding and has the ability to be produced and re-produced over space and time and therefore change due to the circumstances. Included in the notions of culture are aspects such as language, traditions, values, dress codes and media e.g. radio or TV-programs.

Our first informant Boel says that in order to facilitate the integration in the region of Öresund and be able to talk about a common identity in the region, she suggests that Swedish and Danish children should be taught each others language already in primary school. This, Boel believes, would make the language of one another become more natural. Her opinion is comparable to Steger's assumption that language is one of several important aspects of a common culture (Steger 2003:70-71). If we consider English and neither Swedish nor Danish being the mutual language between the two countries the outcome is, we believe, that this will benefit a sense of global culture and not a regional one. To be able to speak a common language which is not natural to anyone does not necessarily tie people together, or at least not connect the Danes and Swedes to each other more than e.g. the Danes with the inhabitants of an English speaking country, such as the United States of America. For this to happen we have to look at several other cultural aspects where Swedes and Danes have things in common which itself is separated from other cultures. The usage and knowledge of each others language is a benefit for the regionalization while the English language restrains the regionalization and instead benefits the globalization process. This fear is emphasized in a text from Öresundskomiteen where it is said that with English being the shared language among Danes and Swedes it is easier to call one self European instead of "Öresundare" (Öresundskomiteen 1999:23).

Another cultural aspect but language is media, for example news papers, TV-programs and music. Thinking of her own generation, Boel remembers that it used to be more natural to watch Danish TV-programs in Sweden or listen to Danish radio because the range of programs were not as great as it is today. "Instead of watching MTV, children watched the channels provided by the government, DR and SVT", Boel remembers. A common TV-channel like MTV, which is neither Swedish nor Danish but comes from a third country, still provides a homogenous frame of reference but, just as the English language, probably benefits the globalization more than the regionalization within Öresund. The point is, after all,

to create a region, something that excludes the ones outside. Our informant Christian develops Boel's thoughts and puts them into a contemporary context, saying that the existence of a mutual TV-program, radio channel or daily news paper today, that does not emerge from a third country, may create a sense of connection. In conclusion, we have reasons to believe that a common TV-program presented in Swedish and Danish would benefit the region and the connection better.

Within culture and cultural identity the construction of stereotypes is foundational and inevitable. Despite many people's wish not to generalize it still occurs, many times subconsciously. Through her work at the Swedish Employment Agency, Boel has become aware of the fact that Swedes sometimes are considered of less worth by the colleagues and not being of as high a class as the Danes when working at the Danish companies or organizations. Therefore, the Swedes are sometimes subjected to bullying while the employers think differently. The reasons for bullying vary but it all comes down to the picture of "the other" i.e. stereotyping. A typical Swede is, according to the Danes, considered being socially insecure, afraid of conflicts but also rational and serious. Further, a Swede is seen as a hard working and effective person though suppressed by authorities. The stereotypical Dane is presented as being the opposite, i.e. a person free from the influence of the government and with a free and independent mind. Not to fully understand the Danish society, the language or other hidden codes that exists at a working place results in exclusion. Through exclusion and inclusion people can create and maintain orders within a society which appears to change fast and to activate a stereotypical picture of someone else is a way to show that "they" are nothing like "us" and bullying arise. Our informant Jenny on the other hand has never experienced bullying at her work place and tells that people are accepted irrespective of Swedish or Danish origin. Jenny does not experience a separation between the two, neither does Alice. Instead Alice claims that it is a benefit to be Swedish and this positive attitude exists among both colleagues and co-workers. It could be possible then to consider the Danish employee looking upon Alice or anyone else as the stereotype, but this time the generalized representation is an advantage.

Nationalism is by many theorists considered being an important factor to use when the aim is to maintain a nation state. This, because the ideology itself is based upon the idea that people share the same foundation e.g. history, language, culture. As mentioned, Ingrid speaks of three different geographical parts that together create the region of Öresund. The first part,

which Ingrid refers to as the main one or the core, is the area consisting of Copenhagen, Malmö, the actual bridge and the near by surroundings. Benedict Andersons' theory of nationalism as an imagined community is applicable to the transnational region we believe; people are able to feel kinship with people within an area though they have never met each other (Anderson in Guiberneu & Rex 1997:44). Ingrid on the other hand rejects this theory claiming that the further away you are from the core, the less is the feeling of belonging. Ingrid, who is originally from Lolland, knows by her own experience that very few living at the Danish island feel like "Öresundare", probably because Lolland is sited in the periphery. Because of this a sense of belonging might be missing, due to both physical and psychological obstacles. In practice this would mean that Swedes living in eastern Skåne and Danes living at Lolland find it difficult to feel like they belong when they are not able to interact within the region as a whole on a daily basis because of the distance. With this in mind it would be easy to think that a region of a smaller size would be more efficient when creating a sense of conformity but on the other hand the inhabitants of a great country such as the United States of America are gathered under common symbols and values. What connects the inhabitants in Florida with the ones in Alaska is probably not a sense of common life style but a connection to (higher) patriotic symbols, such as the flag and the constitution. This destroys the illusion that the size of a shared area is what is missing for creating a "we". In short, there has to be other values and reasons but geography that combines people. Even this statement can in some aspect be contradictory when put into consideration the answers of our informants to the question whether they feel a geographical and/or psychological connection. They do feel a geographical connection without the psychological. Still, we wonder if our informants would have felt this geographical connection if the bridge did not exist. The bridge is what has made the work commuting, and the greater availability of the countries, possible. The bridge of Öresund is the activator of the geographical identity because the bridge visualize and makes the movement practical within the area in a way the ferries never did, apparently, since the idea of the region did not exist at the current level before the building of the bridge. The higher patriotic symbol in this sense is neither a flag nor a constitution but the physical bridge, we believe.

Representing only him self and not an organization that works to facilitate for work commuters, Peter thinks differently than Boel and Ingrid about being a part of the region. When asked if he feels connected to other people living in the region Peter answers that "we do not have anything special together, we are nothing special". Whether Peter refers to the

people living in the region as “we” without being aware of it, or because we have asked the question incorrectly we do not know but we do know that our other informants have not responded like him. Therefore this raises the question if he, despite what he says, still thinks of the region as a united part, but subconsciously. Unfortunately we can not here develop this further but it is, without a doubt, an interesting thought. Irrespectively either way, Peter does not feel more connected to the inhabitants in Malmö than he does with the ones in Stockholm for example other than that the people in Malmö live closer. Peter says that he is not primarily an “Öresundare”; maybe it would be different though if he had moved here recently and not almost ten years ago, he says. This statement is somehow contradictory with the idea that a feeling for a regional, or national, connection is something that is created through time and produced over time and space. In short, where Boel and Ingrid talk of the sense for the region being “only a matter of time”, Peter speaks of the opposite.

Our informant Boel speaks of the strong feeling of nationalism that the Danes possesses and says that many Danes do not appreciate enough when someone in Sweden speaks Danish, like they take it for granted. Another aspect is the strong sense of Danish nationalism which is reflected when Boel speaks of Danes as not wanting to maintain a social life in Sweden but only hold on to their Danish relationships. For many Danes, Sweden becomes a place where they “just spend the night”. This together with the fact that she experiences that many Danish children does not want to learn Swedish in the Swedish primary school, gives her the impression that very few Danes want to be integrated into the Swedish society. This is a sign of the Danish nationalism, the habit among Danes to see them selves as being the centre of the universe or, using a Danish expression “er sig selv nok” Boel concludes but adds that this nationalistic behavior is more obvious among Danes than Swedes. Ingrid who, just as Boel, is a Danish citizen but has lived in Denmark until recently has not reflected over this statement about Danes seeing them selves as the center of the universe. There are probably several reasons why she has not. Firstly, it is very difficult to see and reflect over the acts of one self and the society one is a part of because it is an accustomed structure and a way of life. Secondly, the statement could be a way of generalizing and stereotyping as Hylland Eriksen talks about it in the chapter of Culture.

Another thought of why many Danes think of them selves being “close to complete” on their own, may be a reaction to the common assumption that Malmö needs Copenhagen more than Copenhagen needs Malmö. A reason for this can be the fact that Copenhagen is a capital city,

contrary to Malmö being the third largest city in Sweden with not even half the population of Copenhagen. According to figures, the number of Swedes commuting to Denmark exceeds the number of Danes buying houses in Sweden. In theory it looks like Sweden has more to gain than Denmark from a transnational project. This is also the reason, Ingrid says, to why people in Skåne and Malmö are more interested in the region than people living on the other side of the sound. Furthermore she also refers to historical events when she argues for her opinions, claiming that a common identity is possible since Skåne used to belong to Denmark and that Skåne many times before has possessed itself away from Stockholm in favor of Denmark and the Danish capital. Due to this, it is in Skåne one should look for a common identity for the first time, Ingrid concludes. Again this can be referred back to Hylland Eriksen's assertion that the more each individual can gain or benefit from a common project, the more positive he or she often becomes and the more will the person sacrifice to preserve or strengthen the project (Hylland Eriksen 2004:51). In conclusion we can assume that Ingrid thinks that the Swedes are more positive because they probably obtain the most from it. Whether this is because the Danes are not interested or do not find the region advantageous enough, or they have just not yet discovered the personal benefits of the region in the same extension as the Swedes, we do not know.

Again, nationalism is based upon the idea that people share the same foundation e.g. history, language, culture. As said earlier, our informant Boel thinks that it is of major importance that the people within the region learn each others language at an early age in order to be able to create conformity. Her observations correspond to Gellner's statement that education on the basis of the official language of the schools is the main tool of which a large society is organized and held together. Therefore is an understanding for each others languages basic in terms of both the creation and the sustention of the region. Gellner further claims that language is one of the most important parts when it comes to create a sense of nationalism while his critics claim the opposite i.e. not only language but symbols as well as feelings and solidarity are as important. According to Gellner's critics, the theory does not explain the strong emotions and feelings that give rise to nationalism (Gellner in Giddens 2003:378-379). Boel agrees with the critics in this sense when she claims that there would be a greater understanding within all aspects (e.g. values, traditions, language) if Swedes and Danes are able to speak each others languages. A way of learning each others languages except in school, Boel says, is to watch each others TV programs. Media in general and TV in particular can be traced back to Andersons' print-languages, where the author claims that when people watch

and read the same mass produced texts and broadcastings, a common frame of reference is created (Anderson in Guiberneu & Rex 1997:47).

An often foundational corner stone for a democratic western nation state is the right to vote. In many parts of the world this is not taken for granted and some people sacrifice their lives to achieve a legal voice. When Danish citizens move abroad e.g. to Sweden they lose their right to vote, Ingrid says, because it is said in the Danish constitution that to have the right to vote a person needs to live within the Danish nation state. Does this mean that a person's economical situation and possible monetary benefits are more important than the right to vote? As we in the previous chapter found out, the work commuters are only considering themselves being a part of the region geographically, for personal gain and do not invest much mentally. This means that the favorable economical solutions appear to be one of the main pillars of community in the region. If people do not find economical benefits they will not be interested in the region.

Ethnicity is about social relations, which means that everyone belongs to an ethnic group, even Swedes and Danes. What include members of the group are the features that they have in common but it is also about the characteristics that exclude others from being a part of the group. Giddens considers the concept of ethnicity to refer to the self-identification of a group and this identity can change when historical symbols are brought forward (Giddens 2003: 229-230). This can be done with the purpose to refer back to a nation or an area e.g. Öresund. Gerd Baumann also discusses the concept of ethnicity and comes to the conclusion that ethnicity is always something constructed (Baumann 1999:91). With his arguments in mind, we are able to look upon Swedes and Danes as being national products of the same ethnical origin. This point of view is discussed by Ingrid who says that it was just a coincidence that Skåne became Swedish instead of Danish in the year of 1658. Further Ingrid develops this thought and says that it is probably another coincidence that Denmark did not follow Skåne that time. Therefore, Ingrid considers there are few differences between people from Skåne and from Denmark but the differences that exist and produced are constructed by the national state. What benefits the region even more, Ingrid thinks, are the historical parallels and mostly the fact that the people in Skåne are aware of the fact that Skåne used to be Danish. With this representation in mind Ingrid does not see any difficulties finding similarities to be used as a foundation for the creation of a contemporary region. Hylland Eriksen investigates the use of old symbols and characteristics as a reason and solution to create a sense of belonging among

individuals in a contemporary society. The author comes to the conclusion that reproducing history to fulfill current needs is common when the purpose is to create a sense of belonging (Hylland Eriksen 1993:68-69).

Max Weber's definition of ethnicity argues that if we choose to see or maintain the similarities between us, then blood relations does not matter (Weber in Guibernu & Rex 1997:18-19). His definition of ethnicity, we think, leaves space for people to find and define their own ethnicity which increases the chances of creating a common identity. Though creating a new form of ethnicity never has been the purpose, a person's ethnicity is a part of the identity as much as anything else e.g. nationalism and culture. The aim is, as said, to add an identity of Öresund, to create a sense of kin ship within the region. Therefore is the discussion of ethnicity of major importance within this context and also in the context of identity.

For an ethnicity to be strengthened and survive, the ethnic groups should have as little contact as possible with each other, according to Hylland Eriksen. Through work commuting and even more through marriages between Swedish citizens and Danish citizens, the ethnical boundaries between the two nations decrease. At the expense of this, the cultural similarities have probably increased. When looking at it this way it would be possible to argue that ethnicity is of less importance when it comes to the region of Öresund due to the fact that the two nations appears to be the same in many aspects. Still, for ethnicity to loose its meaning, Thomas Hylland Eriksen says, both groups have to consider them selves being one (Hylland Eriksen 1993:12). Referring to the region of Öresund, aspects of ethnicity still exist since none of our informants have answered that they feel connected to each other. A rare but still possible outcome of the regional development could be that if Swedes and Danes continue to consider them selves as two different groups, the stereotyping can increase and the already existing differences becomes stronger. What can cause this expansion of stereotyping is, according to Palludan and Persson, the lack of knowledge among the inhabitants (Palludan & Persson 2003:93). Öresundskomiteen also makes the conclusion that symbolic differences might continue flourishing whereas real structural differences may be erased through time (Öresundskomiteen 1999:4). The solution is therefore to diminish structural obstacles because this will automatically lead to an enlarged cultural collaboration and understanding. The structural obstacles within the region is not yet at a desirable level if we take into consideration our informants answers but, just at the Swedish ambassador in Copenhagen,

Carl-Magnus Hyltenius pointed out; integration, and to create a sense of belonging, takes time and six years are not long enough (SDS, 2005.07.01).

Since ethnic identity can be ambiguous in the sense that a person can belong to more than one ethnic group, it means that a person can be a Swede and a Dane or a Swede and an Öresundare at the same time. According to Gellner, it is in the end the individual persons' own choice whether he or she wants to identify him or her self in a certain way or to a certain place. A reason to why some societies are strongly connected and identified to a particular territory can be, Gellner says, isolation and/or a shortage in the existence of mobility. This certain idea can be applicable to the answers of our informants whether they feel connected to Öresund or not, depending on the circumstances. Speaking of mobility as a reason to why people feel less connected to one place only, Ingrid's statement that people at the Danish island Lolland does not have the same sense of belonging to the region can be explained by Gellner's theory; if the availability to the bridge and in the long run the mobility within the region is difficult to reach or achieve, the territorial identity might turn out to be stronger among the inhabitants at Lolland than among the inhabitants in e.g. Malmö (Gellner in Hylland Eriksen 1993:66). The opposite to this would be that the bridge which increases the mobility between the countries make people not consider their territorial identity as much, which in the end will benefit the region.

The expression that Boel uses to describe her experiences of the Danes, "er sig selv nok", could be a generalization or something that has existed a century or more but we are going to interpret the attitude that the expression describes from an ethnic perspective, and with the assumption that it originates more or less from the building of the bridge, to see how it affects the current relations within the region. It is said that an ethnic identity can be strengthened when there is a threat against it, such as changes from the outside. Threats against an ethnicity could be great economical reforms or, looking at history, the industrialism. A new threat can be globalization. The process often gives rise to a sense of a more conformed world that changes fast in which, claims Ohmae, people tend to search for security and for something they can relate to, maybe a new found loyalty with the local or perhaps national circumstances (Ohmae in Giddens 2003:382). A strengthened presence of Swedes in Denmark, due to the bridge, could actually increase the Danish ethnical identity or nationalism and from that the emotional significance of the expression "er sig selv nok" has come up. Through time the attitude that the Danes are considered being a bit arrogant might decrease due to more frequent

communication and thereby greater understanding or it could be the contrary. We believe though, that the imagined threat of the Swedes is not as great against the Danish self-consciousness and national image as much as the imagined threat of many other social groups in the Danish society.

4.3 The future

When it comes to the future we can only be analytical and think hypothetical. People can think of the future region of Öresund in terms of either a utopia or a dystopia. Current analyses have shown that the assumptions which once surround the region, and in particular the transnational work commuting, already has exceeded the expectations. An example is the statement that the future City Tunnel in Malmö, build to facilitate the railway communication, and therefore also for the work commuters, is not big enough to handle the situation since the work commuting itself has increased more than expected (SDS, 2006.11.29).

Our informant Boel says that the need for work labor in Denmark will increase but, she adds, nothing is for sure. The basic condition for creating a regional identity is the possibility to work commute between the two countries and without that possibility, the integration would probably disappear, she believes. With the assumption that the work commuting will increase, Boel does not see many obstacles for a regional identity in the future. She compares the region of Öresund with the Benelux area which consists of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. Though the Benelux area is sometimes considered being a precursor to the European Union, Boel refers to the fact that it is a region consisting of three countries, in other words a transnational region, just as the Öresund region.

Alice thinks that it will be easier in the future to work and live on both sides of the sound and therefore she is optimistic when it comes to the regional future and a future regional sense of belonging. What can prevent the development of the region though, Alice believes, are things such as higher fees for traveling across the sound or complicated rules and legislations. She shares her positive attitude with all of the informants though they all have different ideas of what needs to be improved or what will be of significant meaning in the future. Christian and Peter both speak of the importance of a region but with two different outcomes. The first one talks in favor of the region at the expense of the national state and believes that people in the future would rather refer to the region than the nation state and find the region more important than the latter one. Peter on the other hand, thinks that people within will not think in terms of regions or nations but organizations that work together. What they have in common is the occurrence of a weakened national state which Veronica Trépagny, Uffe Palludan and Henrik Nilsson speak of in their texts. While Christian considers the regionalization being the threat against the national state, Trépagny thinks of the globalization process in the same way i.e.

the globalization process is what will replace certain parts of the national states' politics and political decisions (Trépagny 2003:66-69, Palludan & Persson 2003:84).

The future according to Peter is a region consisting of only one municipality. Therefore, he believes that to support the future region a harmonization of laws and rules is necessary. Especially when it comes to taxes, salaries and regulations regarding part-time jobs, Peter believes that a harmonization would make it easier for all in the region. Peter is aware of the questions concerning the difficulties with harmonizing national legislations but still considers this to be the most important question for the region. Also Boel is aware of the difficulties of a harmonization regarding fiscal legislations and labor markets rules but says that they will never be synchronized. This because a change of the relationships between Sweden and Denmark would demand a change of the commuting regulations between Denmark and Germany as well as between Sweden, Norway and Finland, because not only in Öresund is commuting over borders a fact. The changes that need to be done to facilitate for the regional development should be done at national level and because Skåne is sited in the periphery compared to Stockholm, Boel says, the politicians are not as interested as they could be. The Swedish ambassador in Copenhagen, Carl-Magnus Hyltenius, argues on the other hand that it would not matter whether Stockholm was placed in Skåne or not, because a government, Swedish or Danish, needs to take into consideration the interests of the entire nation, not only a region (SDS, 2005.07.01).

Fredrik Nilsson believes that for a region and a regional identity to become a reality, people and capital need to cross the border between the two countries frequently (Nilsson 1999:12). The bridge then becomes both the physical and the psychological symbol for what he calls the regional machinery. The solution to increase the feeling for solidarity with and within the region among the inhabitants would be then, we think, to build another bridge between Helsingborg and Helsingør. Firstly, because this would probably benefit the housing market and work commuting in that area. Secondly, another "core area" would be created. Ingrid speaks of the area around Malmö and Copenhagen being the core since the bridge is sited there and by building a bridge another core area could arise, not as strong as the first one but still with a certain potential. If looking at the development of the mobility across the borders before and after the bridge, another one would probably intensify the regional integration further.

Ingrid claims that communication and interaction between people is necessary for a common identity to be created and grow stronger in the future. If the current interaction within the region continues, Ingrid believes that there is a possibility for a common regional Öresund identity to exist in 20 to 30 years from now. Integration is something that happens gradually and with the multiplied numbers of people having both Danish and Swedish citizenship at the same time the sense of belonging to the region will increase, it is just a matter of time. Ingrid is convinced that history can be used when shaping the region and speaks of the usefulness and advantage of emphasizing Skåne's former belonging to Denmark in the 17th century. As mentioned, Skåne has earlier turned away from Stockholm in favor of Denmark and there are few reasons why it can not do that again, Ingrid concludes. No one of our other informants mentions the history between Skåne and Denmark and therefore it seems as if they do not put so much relevance into history when it comes to creating a sense of belonging within the region. Though none but Ingrid mentions the history of Skåne in relation to Denmark when asked about a possible future region we get the impression that all of them still keeps this in mind when answering; a former (national) kinship is possible to repeat and therefore they are positive towards a future region.

Denmark's ageing population combined with a low birth rate produces a request for more foreign workers, says Boel, and many of them will derive from Sweden she thinks. The consequence can be a so called brain drain in Sweden within a certain profession e.g. bus drivers or post men who choose to work in Denmark because of higher salaries. We suspect that this outcome will not create a positive notion towards the region among people in Skåne. It can also lead to an expansion problem and be a hindrance to recruitment in the Swedish labor market in the future.

Again, any opinion or judgment in this chapter is only a speculation since the future only can be analyzed on the basis of the contemporary frames of references.

5. Summary and Conclusion

Our main purpose was to investigate the opinions and feelings towards the region of Öresund among work commuters and organizations involved in the commuting and whether conformity in the sense of belonging exists. Our analysis has given us several results regarding this questioning, some of them which we will present in this summary. Our purpose has also been to analyze the answers of our informants and investigate if those are applicable with theories and concepts of identity, globalization, regionalization, nationality, ethnicity and culture. There are several examples in our study where the informants answers are applicable to the theories and concepts put forward in the chapter of theoretical background but as always there are exceptions. An exception is the theory of Ohmae, who says that people may tend to strive for increased local connections when the world becomes more conformed and global but this effect is not possible to discern among our informants (Ohmae in Giddens 2003:382). We understand the discussion and reasoning by Ohmae but it is obviously not applicable to the region of Öresund or at least not to our informants since all of them responded the question and the discussion surrounding it with indifference.

Öresundskomiteen speaks of a cultural space that needs to be filled with content to create a sense of belonging but this is not yet a reality to our informants since they do not consider the region being a cultural space or that a common frame of cultural reference exist. As the feeling of belonging is principally connected to geography and the geographical region according to our informants, the region does not exist in the terms that Öresundskomiteen wishes. Our informants' claim that they feel as a part of the region because of their roles as work commuters and that they feel like a part of the geographical region too, since they know that they live within it. None of them but one feels that there are any cultural or infrastructural connections, only geographical. Furthermore, our informants agree indirectly with the theorists when they claim that the concepts globalization, regionalization, nationalism, ethnicity, culture and most of all identity are produced and re-produced over time and never are static. This, since our informants believe that it is possible to add an identity on top of the already existing ones, and to create a sense of belonging within the region in the future. This is somehow contradictory though; our informants speak of changeable and multiple identities but they divide the geographical and mental identity and think of them differently in terms of being produced and re-produced. In brief, a number of informants feel that identity regarding geography change but the identification of mind is somehow static. Also, when asked about

identity, our informants firstly speak of their psychological identity instead of their physical. The former one seem to always be higher valued and more important to them, than the latter. This shows that it is the psychological identity that has to be reached and changed, not only the geographical. “Body” means less to our informants than “mind” and therefore they are willing to speak of another geographical identity. The so called psychological Öresund identity that is supposed to be added on top of the national Swedish or Danish identity and which is requested by Öresundskomiteen, does not exist in the mind of our informants but one. Another aspect of identity and its ability to be produced and re-produced over time and space is the fact that all of our informants are positive towards the future of the region of Öresund. They say that “anything” can happen and it is possible to create a new region and new premises though it has not existed before, or at least not for several generations and about 400 years. Our informants are aware about the history of Skåne in relation to Denmark and the approach to use history as a way to create belonging in a contemporary society, a method which Thomas Hylland Eriksen discusses.

As mentioned earlier, a feeling of belonging can occur in a person irrespective of being a work commuter or not. Therefore is Idvall’s theory, saying that some groups and individuals within a region find them selves more rooted and more conscious about the same than others, confirmed in the study. Furthermore, also Gellner claims that in the end it all comes down to the individual person’s own choice and opinion and how he or she wants to define him or her self. Two of our informants think that it is important that even people who travel sporadically across the sound feel like a part of the region, and not only work commuters. The two informants also claim that this is the case among many of their acquaintances. Therefore is a possible result then that there is a future for the region that is not too far away and Ingrid’s statement that within 20 to 30 years we will be able to think of the region as one, is not so wrong. People do not have to work commute between Sweden and Denmark or vice versa to feel like they belong but it is an advantage.

Through our survey we have seen a pattern that confirms that Ingrid and Boel, who are engaged professionally in the development of the region, have a lot more to say about the project and have given it a lot more thought. This is visible throughout the analysis where the two are quoted more frequently than the others. A person who has invested in the project that the region of Öresund in many aspects is, are more interested in and informed about the region than people who does not work with the region but within. This is visible even within

the organization where Boel works; the departments that are directly involved are a lot more interested than the ones who does not consider the region being a part of their daily work routines.

Communication in general and language in particular are important in order to create a region. This is something that many of our informants have brought forward during their interviews, as does also the theorists we have chosen to use in this study, because using English would benefit globalization more than the region, Boel considers. As has been said in the analysis, the contemporary television and radio broadcasting are as powerful as print-languages during the 18th century when it comes to representation and presentation of international events e.g. sport. One result we got from our analysis is that our informants believe mutual medial references would be a way to create a feeling of belonging and solidarity between people. They are all aware of the power of media and they know how well it can be used to create new common standpoints.

All of our informants believe that practical obstacles such as tax regulations, fiscal legislations, too high fees to travel the bridge, dissimilar telecommunication networks, the necessity of two different national bank accounts and other problems regarding the commuting, are problems for a mutual region. Our informants believe that better solutions to the problem surrounding infrastructure would benefit the region of Öresund and create a stronger notion of belonging to the region than the geographical boundaries does today. The informants share this point of view with Öresundskomiteen, which says that a simplification and diminished structural and practical obstacles are something that could lead to a better cultural connection and understanding.

When it comes to Swedes on the Danish labor market there are contradictory opinions. One informant believes that Swedes get bullied on the labor market in Denmark, while another believes that it is an advantage to be Swedish and Ingrid does not see that there is a difference and adds that she has never reflected upon this. Stereotyping arises in different ways in our study. The notion that Swedes get bullied at the work place does not mean that stereotyping is involved but Boel's view that many Danes bully Swedes, generalizing the issue, is a notion of stereotyping. The statement that all Danes think they are the centre of the universe is another generalization and implies a negative stereotypical claim. Other informants instead experience positive stereotyping at the work place and never hear a bad word about being Swedish, but

the contrary. Though not all speak of stereotyping, other informants do not even mention the concept of stereotyping but claim that nationality is not visible in their work area at all.

In conclusion, our informants are not strangers to a future region though they have not thought of it actively; they just act and enjoy the benefits that come along without considering why. The exceptions are, clearly, the two informants who work with promoting the region daily. Even if a sub-identity does not exist in mind at the moment, it is there geographically and will according to our informants accelerate in mind first when language and medial references becomes mutual. Integration takes time and the people living within need time to adjust to later on feel connected to the region, not only in body but also in mind.

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Appendix

Survey Questions

Background questions:

1. Age.
2. Nationality.
3. Place of residence.
4. When did you move to Sweden or Denmark and why?
5. Professional status.

Questions at issue:

1. Are you aware of the geographical boundaries of the region of Öresund?
2. What does the region mean to you?
3. What is your attitude towards the region?
4. Do you feel more Swedish or Danish when there is an obvious region?
5. Do you feel like a part of the region?
6. What does it mean to you (not) to be a part of the region?
7. What do you personally think would benefit the region?
8. Do you feel a connection with other people living within the region?
9. If there is a connection, how is it comparable to the connection you feel for Sweden or Denmark?
10. Do you think or feel that a common identity exists? How is it configured?
11. What do you think is missing to be able to speak of a common identity within the region?
12. What do you think of the future of the region and the possibility of a common identity or patterns of identity? What do you think are the obstacles for a common identity?

Organizations:

1. Do you encourage people to work commute across the sound?
2. In what way and why?
3. Which are the advantages and disadvantages?
4. How do you consider the attitude toward the region being among your colleagues and work commuters?