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Identity motives among supporters of right-wing populist parties in Denmark

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Resumo

Ao longo das últimas décadas, a Dinamarca tem enfrentado diversos desafios ligados à integração de imigrantes, e ao o crescimento eleitoral dos partidos populistas de extrema direita. A literatura sugere alguns padrões comuns nos diversos partidos da direita populista europeia, embora não seja claro o porquê de algumas pessoas apoiarem tais políticas de imigração e o modo como a mensagem e as estratégias destes partidos afetam a identidade dessas pessoas. O objetivo deste estudo passa por analisar os motivos identitários que levam as pessoas a apoiarem a política de imigração dos partidos populistas. Foram entrevistados 16 cidadãos apoiantes das políticas de imigração dos dois maiores partidos de direita populista da Dinamarca. A Teoria do Processo Identitário é a principal teoria utilizada para avaliar os motivos identitários dos participantes e para investigar o grau de influência das estratégias utilizadas por estes partidos. Este estudo sugere que a necessidade de autoeficácia é um elemento chave para explicar tal apoio às políticas de imigração em questão. O estudo também demonstra que os participantes são altamente influenciados pela mensagem e estratégias utilizadas pelos partidos, tal como verificado pela representação social dos Muçulmanos. A análise revela que a perceção das diferenças culturais entre Dinamarqueses e Muçulmanos representa uma ameaça à necessidade de pertença dos participantes. Os Muçulmanos são considerados como desencadeadores de mudança social, conduzindo à incerteza quanto ao futuro da sociedade Dinamarquesa. Por último, existe uma representação comum da Dinamarca, uma vez que todos os participantes consideram o país como uma comunidade homogénea. O medo de perder essa sociedade aparece como o elemento essencial para explicar o apoio destes participantes às posições anti-imigração da extrema direita dinamarquesa.

Palavras-chave: Motivos Identitários, populismo de direita, perceção de ameaça, Islamofobia

Abstract

In last decades, Denmark has been facing major challenges related to the integration of immigrants, along with the fact, that right-wing populist parties, have achieved significant electoral support. Common patterns in Europe among the right-wing populist parties have been previously identified in the literature, yet it is still unclear why some people support such parties' immigration policy and how these political parties' discourses and strategies affect people's identities. The goal of this study was to examine the identity motives, driving people to support right-wing populist parties' immigration policy. 16 supporters of the immigration policy of the two major Danish right-wing populist parties, were interviewed. Identity Process Theory was the leading theory used to examine participants identity motives and to investigate how the right-wing populist parties' strategies influence supporters' identity. The study suggested that participants need of self-efficacy was a key element in explaining the support of the parties' immigration policy. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that the participants seems to be influenced by the parties' discourses and strategies, which was illustrated through the participants social representation of Muslims. The analysis shows that perceived cultural differences between Danish people and Muslims are considered to be a threat to the participants need of belonging. Muslims are considered to be the triggers of social change, leading to uncertainty regarding the future of the Danish society. Finally, participants shared representations of Denmark, as a homogeneous community and the fear of losing such society, appeared as an essential element in explaining the participants support of far-right anti-immigration positions.

Keywords: Identity motives, right-wing populism, perceived threat, islamophobia

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List of abbreviations

DF............... The Danish People's Party (DF)

IPT.............. Identity Process Theory

ITT............... Intergroup threat theory

NB ....Nye Borgerlige

TME ……….Terror Management Theory

The fear of others

"All the different variations of Europe's far right are in the process of developing a common identity by constructing common enemies. The specific common enemy for (…) the Danish People's Party is globalization. (…) the far right defends 'identity' – first and foremost national identity." (Pelinka, 2013, p. 16). This common interest of defending own identity by constructing a common enemy can immediately be seen through the increased interest in controlling the influx of immigrants and refugees in Denmark (Jayananthan & Pedersen, 2018). Especially Muslims are pointed out by the far-right parties, as they have been identified to constitute a threat towards the national identity and welfare in Denmark (Block, 2017; Wren, 2001). There are two far-right/right-wing populist parties in Denmark: 'The Danish People's Party (DF)' from 1995 and a new right-wing populist party 'Nye Borgerlige' *(New Bourgeois - NB)* which was established in 2015. Both parties consider European Union and the other political parties in the national parliament, to be responsible for the perceive danger with immigrants. By academics, DF is mainly described as a radical right- wing populist party (e.g. Mudde, 2013; Rydgen, 2005), whereas no study had yet been conducted about NB. However, DF and NB share common strategies, which will be defined in the dissertation. DF got 12% of the votes in 2001 (Økonomi og Indenrigsministeriet, 2015) and grew gradually after, and became the second biggest party in 2015 with 21.1% of the votes (Folketinget, 2015), where 85.9% voted (Folketinget, 2015). In the national elections of June 2019, DF had a decrease of 12.4% (Folketinget, 2019), possible due to the fact, that several parties in the parliament gradually have adopted similar approaches towards especially non-western immigrants (Andersen, 2018). Another reason to such decrease can be the fact that DF has now competition from NB who received 2.4% of the votes in their first election in June 2019 (Folketinget, 2019). Besides, in 2017 another new extremist right-wing populist party was created, receiving 1.8% of the votes in June 2019 (Folketinget, 2019). In 1983, Denmark had one of the most liberal immigration laws in the world. Legal rights were given to all asylum seekers and family reunification was a legal requirement for asylum-seekers (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2003). Since then, there has been a radical shift and the right-wing populist parties have achieved success in terms of electoral support. This has gradually contributed to changes in the Danish immigration policy. For example, in 2005, Denmark was presented as the country with the most restrictive immigration policy among the former 15 countries in EU (Boeri & Brücker, 2005).

Across Europe, especially since 2009, European right-wing populist parties have experienced a growth in electoral support (Wodak & Khosravinik, 2013). Mudde (2013), stated that the success of the parties already began in the 80's, but confirms likewise that the last decade has been the most successful for right-wing populist parties. Various studies have been conducted with the intent to understand the growing success that all far-right parties have gotten and according to Golder (2016), the far-right parties are now the most studied party family. Factors such as media environment, political structure and anti-immigrant attitude (Golder, 2016) are considered as a key element to explain and understand the increased success of far-right political parties in Europe. Studies stated that anti-immigrant attitude are an important factor linked to the right-wing populist supporters (e.g. Norris 2005; Rydgen 2008). Besides, an important characteristic of the right-wing populist parties is their ethnic-nationalist perception of citizenship, which is reflected in their ideology that "*own people*" must come first (Rydgren, 2005). In principle, multiculturalism is their enemy, that can foster practices of exclusion of immigrants from the host society. Likewise, some common strategies have been identified among the European right-wing populist parties' strategies. In specific, the construction of fear, of immigrants and globalization is argued to be a common strategy among these parties (e.g. Wodak, 2005). Some have been arguing that the rhetoric against the immigration may be responsible for shift societies' attitude in increasingly anti-immigrant direction (Mason, 2018). Even though other studies have shown that the far- right parties' success in Europe not have led to an increase in anti-immigration attitudes across Europe (Bohman & Hjerm, 2016). Nevertheless, the parties increased success has not shown to benefit especially Muslims in Denmark, due to the anti-Islamic voice (Nielsen, 2012; Pedersen, & Rytter, 2011).

Despite the increasing academic interest on the topic, there is still a lack of knowledge on the motives why people support far-right political parties. This is particularly important in a country such as Denmark, where new and old right-wing populist parties are receiving significant public support. Besides, qualitative research is rarely used in studies of populist right-wing parties in Europe (Mudde, 2016), and when it was used, it primarily tends to deal with parties' ideology through analyses of the parties' documents (Golder, 2016). This study is based on an interdisciplinary approach, including studies from areas of psychology, sociology and political science. The core goals of this study are to examine the growing success, that populist right-wing parties have got in Denmark by focusing primarily on their supporters' attitude toward immigration. In total, 16 people who claimed to support the immigration policy

of one of the two major Danish right-wing populist parties, NB and DF, were interviewed. The goal is to examine the supporter's identity motives driving individuals to support the Danish parties' immigration policy in order to understand their perceived threat by immigrants. In terms of theoretical approaches, the study considers major socio- psychological approaches on social identity but focus mainly on the identity motives from the perspectives of the Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 2014). IPT draws connection between multiple identity levels and focus on the process of identity change and developing (Breakwell, 2014). One core idea of the theory is, that in order to understand the identity development and change, it is necessary to understand how the individual react when the identity is threatened (Breakwell, 2014). To understand the individuals' support of the immigration policy, will it therefore be examined, how the participants cope with the perceived threat by immigrants, along with which motives are guiding their beliefs and behavior (e.g. supporting and/or joining a right-wing populist party). The aim is to contribute to the understanding of individuals' meaning-making of immigrants in Denmark, including the beliefs and perceptions leading to perceived threat of the out-group, and how individuals and groups social representations can affect people's identity.

In terms of structure, the dissertation is organized as follows: it will begin by introducing common patterns in Europe, with a particular focus on the ideology and the right-wing populist parties' strategies, followed by studies and theories on individual and collective reaction to threat. Following, the context of the study will be presented, including a description of the immigration policies proposed by both political parties considered in the study. After a methodical introduction of the result, the data will be analyzed and discussed. The analysis is divided into three themes which captures relevant dimensions in relation to the research questions in the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Chapter I

Common patterns among right-wing populist parties in Europe

In social science, much research has been conducted with the aim of providing ample evidence for the current rise of populist right-wing movements in most of the countries in European Union (e.g. Muis & Immerzeel, 2017; Wilson & Hainsworth, 2012; Wodak, 2015). The media environment (Ellinas, 2009) and the identification and growth of immigrant in many European countries (Davis & Deole, 2017), including Denmark (Harmon, 2018), have been discussed as some of the main causes contributing to the parties increased success. European countries have, since the beginning of the century, experienced a growth of the percentage of immigrants, from mostly around 10% (e.g. Denmark, Netherland, France) to a maximum of 50% (e.g. Luxembourg), of the population (OECD, 2016). This can pose a major policy challenge for countries, even though, previously studies found non-evidence that either the actual or perceived number, matters for the development of anti-immigrant attitudes (Hjerm, 2007). A various of socio-economic, sociopolitical, structural and ideological factors contribute to the success in different countries (Wodak & Khosravinik, 2013). Yet, regardless of differences across the European countries, issues of race, national identity, social inequality and immigration, to varying degrees, play a central role in the development of most of the right-wing populist parties (Krzyzanowski, 2017; Wodak & Khosravinik, 2013). These explanations require a further examination of the right-wing populist parties' strategies to increase the understanding of, how the immigrants can play a role for the increased success.

It has been argued that many older and well-known ideologies (e.g. nationalism, conservatism) can be compared to many of the new right-wing discourses, but that the current right-wing populist parties still differ (Mammone, 2009). They do not just reflex one ideology, but rather offer mixed beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes, as the several parties around Europe are based on different political traditions (Mammone, 2009). It is claimed that they combine different strategies by constructing and evoking different forms of identity narratives, through which the populist right-wing parties gain support. For example, the right- wing populist parties focus either primarily on the perceived threat of Islam or perceived threat to national identity (Wodak, 2015). However, according to Wodak (2005), the right- wing populist parties in Europe still have *strategies* in common: They "instrumentalized some kinds of ethnic/religious/linguistic political minority as a *scapegoat* (…) as dangerous and as a threat *'to us'* (…). (Wodak, 2005, p. 2). A process that the author named "*politics of fear*" (Wodak, 2005). Secondly, right-wing populist parties appeal to common-sense, where they also use non-

existing facts as a strategy to get media attention (Wodak, 2005). Finally, other authors have claimed that right-wing populist parties in Europe tend to have charismatic leaders, often new-comers in politics, and that they especially use media and in particular social media to promote themselves (e.g., Van der Brug & Fennema, 2007). Those strategies of creating counterparts in a society through the creating of fear lead to definitions of core aspect of right-wing populism and populist democracy in Europe.

The modern populism was in the 19th century a radical understanding of a democracy governed by the people *(populism)* (Pelinka, 2013). It is based on the idea that the people should govern themselves and secondary be governed by the elite in the political parties. Hence, the political parties are seen as a possible obstacle for a pure democracy (Mouffe, (2005). However, as right-wing populism continuously has become more ethno-nationalistic (Rydgen, 2005), contemporary right-wing populism does not mobilize so much against "the perceived enemy above", as much as the against "perceived enemy from abroad", directed against immigrants, and the 'secondary others' – globalization and Europeanization (Pelinka, 2013, p. 8). The main issue with populism in general is, that it went beyond the distinction of minority and majority, and hereby neglected issues with exclusion and inclusion (Dahl, 1989). The weakness is therefore perceived as lack of understanding of who belongs to the 'Demo', and what are the criterions to be included as part of *the people* (Dahl, 1989). It is the ambiguity of populism, that is rooted in the paradoxical assumption, that 'the people' exist in the homogeneous way (Laclau, 2005). The tradition of modern democracy is on the other hand the history about the need of including excluded people (e.g. slaves or women) (Pelinka, 2013). Populist democracy is in contrast not seen as a result of cultural and social developments as modern democracy, but instead race and national identities are seen as constructed to create the illusion of a natural distinctiveness between them and us. Thus, it tends to be ignored, who belongs to the *demos* in the populist democracy (Betz, 1994). Simultaneously, existing national parties with liberal democratic policies are being perceived as responsible for accepting cultural diversity (Pelinka, 2013). Thereto, right-wing populism tends to reject existing political consensus (Wodak, 2005). Mudde & Kaltwasser (2012) claimed that right-wing - and left-wing populism have in common to "consider society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups 'the pure people' and the 'corrupt elite'". (p. 8).

The construction of fear – of others
Altheide (2017) argued based on a discourse analysis of the US politics and media, that: "Fear begins with things we fear, but over time, with enough repetition and expanded use, it

becomes a way of looking at life. Therefore, it is not 'fear of crime' for instance, that is interesting to me, but rather how fear emerged as a framework for developing identities and for engaging in social life." (p. 3). His discourse analysis suggests how fear is being re- reproduced by media in a various of ways. In this regard, fear become a lens that can determine how individuals understand themselves, and the world around, as it provides systems of meaning, that individuals can identify themselves with. It reflects in politics, for example when politicians legitimize their political decisions through perceived threatening situation (e.g. terror attack) (Altheide, 2017). The recent "ghetto-plan" in Denmark constitutes a clear example of such phenomena (Regeringen, 2018), as it was decided that many buildings in ghettos with a higher population of non-westerns should be demolish, because they are supposed to pose a major threat to the Danish society (Kjølbye, 2003; Regeringen, 2018). This example represents the populist rhetoric, that "*we have to defend ourselves from them*" (Pelinka, 2013; Wodak, 2005). A rhetoric which is a result of many national, historical and socio-political factors, that through time has constructed different *they* (e.g. Roma, Jews or Muslims) (Wodak, 2005). To understand the rise of the far-right populist discourses in Europe and the growing support achieved by the political parties, it can therefore be claimed to be important to clarify the common construction of fear and perceived threat against especially Muslims.

It has been found in many social and political psychological studies, that perceived identity threat is related to right-wing attitudes (e.g. Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Solloway, 2003; Onraet, Van Hiel, Dhont, & Pattyn, 2011). In the process of creating 'identities' (Altheide, 2017), the European populist right-wing parties use different vehicles to construct fear towards the others. For example, they use religion (namely Christianity) as a vehicle to construct a cultural battle against Islam (Meret & Siim, 2013; Pelinka, 2013, Wodak, 2005). The right-wing populist parties use also feminists' values as another instrument to create a parallel to the perceived lack of freedom for Muslim women, for example by clamming that the use of headscarves is promoting women's oppression (Meret & Siim, 2013; Wodak, 2013).

Frustration and threat are centered around the fear of Muslims (islamophobia), immigrants and asylum seekers (xenophobia) (Ekman, 2015; Gale, 2004). According to Taras (2013) religion, ethnicity, culture and race are all constitute variables defining Islamophobia. These variables allow the individuals to not only perceive the Muslims as 'other' but 'inherently dangerous and inferior' (Bleich, 2006, p. 17). The term islamophobia refers to a broad set of negative emotions and attitudes directed at groups or individuals, because of their perceived membership of a group (Bleich, 2011). Islamophobia is defined as "indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims." (Bleich, 2011, p. 1582). Scholars have

argued that anti-Muslims sentiments, among mainstream societies, continuously have gained more acceptance in the last decades (Hafez, 2014). In turn, xenophobia is defined as "a form of attitudinal, affective and behavioral prejudice toward immigrants and those perceived as foreign." (Yakushko, 2009, p. 43). Study has found how xenophobia refers to feelings of dominance and vulnerability (Van der Veer, Ommundsen, Yakushko, and Higher, 2011).

In summary, we have seen that right-wing populist politicians' domination and success is being associated with a strong rhetoric on the need to include or exclude people based on the ethnic and nationalist origin. Simultaneously, by creating identity narratives, right-wing populist parties have been able to mobilize the fear of the "others" (Wodak, 2005). In the following chapter, there will be a revision on how individuals and groups react when they feel threatened by another out-group and how perceived threat can affect identities.

Chapter II

Reactions to perceived threat

From a psychological perspective, threat is defined as a feeling or perception that something aversive is about to happen (Frische & Kessler, 2010). Blascovich and Tomaka (1996) claim that threat is a feeling created in people when they are not able to deal with the anticipated or actual situation. It means that if people assume that they can change the situation, they may feel challenged instead. Scholars in social psychology have shown that people who feel threatened in times of personal or societal crises often tend to emphasize group membership, as it helps to regain a sense of safety and control, and hereby reduce uncertainty (Fritsche, Jonas, & Kessler, 2011). As a result, people tend to support their ingroup conditions of perceived threat and highlight social bonds (Fritsche et al., 2011). Sullivan, Landau and Rothschild (2010) found that having a common enemy also gives individuals a sense of comfort, when they experience uncertainty, as the common enemy can be perceived as the cause, which may can be controlled. A well-known example is the fascist national socialist party in Germany, that promoted hate against Jews by blaming them for the economic crises and the low employment rates in the 1920's (Falter, Link, Lohmöller, Rijke, & Schumann, 2013). This is just an example among many others throughout our history (e.g. Doty, Peterson, & Winter 1991; Mansel, Endrikat, & Hüpping, 2006). Likely, people who feel threatened are more intolerant and prejudiced toward others whom they perceive to be different (e.g. Burke, Martens, & Faucher, 2010; Duckit, Wagner, Du Plessis, & Birum, 2002). Additionally, individuals identify themselves more strongly with the social ingroup if they feel threatened (Fritsche, Jonas, & Fankhänel, 2008). They show higher approval of similar others, and individuals who share same cultural worldviews (Greenberg, Solomon & Pyszczynski, 1997). People exposed to threat seem to act and think more as group members, combined with increased ingroup-favoritism in intergroup comparisons (Castano & Deschesne, 2005). Thus, perceived threat seems to influence not only intergroup relations, but also the intragroup dynamics.

Intergroup threat

People can perceive threat on both individual and collective level of identity (Stephan & Renfro, 2002). According to social identity theory, intergroup antagonism is one reason of the psychological consequences conferred by group members identification (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Group membership boosts the individuals' self-esteem by giving individuals a sense of

belonging and support, along with systems of rules, values, beliefs, roles and norms, which guide human behavior (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). Common values and beliefs increase the individual's sense of distinctiveness from others and make them certain of their place in the world (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

Intergroup threat theory (ITT) (Stephan & Stephan, 2017) is based on the evolutionary idea, that human's own tribe is very important, and therefore humans perceive other tribes, having different values, as a threat, even if the threat does not exist (Alexander, 1974). ITT is concerned with understanding perceptions of identity threat and predicting prejudice. The theory states, that when members of a group perceive another group being in the position to cause them harm, an intergroup threat is experienced (Stephan & Stephan, 2017). The theory distinguishes between perceived symbolic threat – which refers to threat towards the ingroups system of meaning and perceived realistic threat – which refers to the threat toward the physical welfare or resources of the ingroup (Stephan & Stephan, 2017, p. 25). The intergroup threat theory suggests, that regardless of these threats are real, the perceived threat can lead to prejudice (Stephan & Stephan, 2017). Concerning the role of prejudice, psychologist have been arguing that prejudice through the categorization of others, subjectively organizes individuals' environment (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010) and improves the peoples' self-esteem (Fein & Spencer, 1997). Prejudice has been defined as an unfair negative attitude toward a social group or a person who is perceived to be member of that group (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). Definitions of prejudice tend to establish a link between individual- and group-levels of analysis, by examining prejudice as a mechanism which maintains social role differences and status between groups (Eagly & Diekman, 2005).

As being prejudice has become less acceptable in many societies, particularly during the second half of the 20th century, psychological research on prejudice has been focused on how prejudice appears in more subtle or blatant ways (Dovidio, Schellhaas, & Pearson, 2019). Previous studies have shown, that the exaggeration of cultural differences and the defence of traditional values is a part of a subtle form of prejudice (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995).Beliefs, which may lead to culture discrimination, defined as "beliefs about the superiority of a dominant group's cultural heritage over those of other groups, and the expression of such beliefs in individual actions or institutional policies." (Dovidio, et al., 2010, p. 11). In relation to this topic, a study with 17 European countries, including Denmark, found that the belief, that immigrants undermine national values, was a stronger predictor of negative attitudes towards immigrations (McLarsen, 2003). Likewise, as a study among 11 countries, also including Denmark, conducted by Lucassen and Lubbers (2012), concluded that perceived cultural ethnic

threat was a stronger predictor among far-right supporters, compared to perceived economic ethnic threat.

Most societal crises can both evoke collective and personal threat to identity as well as ethnocentric tendencies (e.g. Grenberg, et al., 1997; Sherman, Kinias, Major, Kim & Prenovost, 2007). Fritsche and colleagues (2011) created a model, that explains the effect of individual threat on ethnocentrism. They define the meaning of ethnocentrism as the increased tendency to act and think in terms of group membership, under personal threat, and summarize various ways of thinking and behaviors indicating ethnocentrism: "(1) people think in line with in-group norms, standards, and scale others (individuals and groups) against them, (2) they have positive attitudes towards the in-group, or (3) they are inclined to support or defend the in-group (often on the expense of derogating out-group members)." (p. 105). Other research has proved, that reminding people of their own death increased ethnocentric behavior as ingroup favoritism and identification (Castano & Dechesne, 2005; Harmon-Jones, Greenberg, Solomon, & Simon, 1996). Mortality salience has also proven to lead people to defend their cultural beliefs and to try to meet the culture standards to increase self-esteem, (Arndt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski & Simon, 1997). It hereby confers symbolic- and/or literal immortality, according to the Terror Management Theory (TMT) (Greenberg, Solomon & Pyszczynski, 1997). Literal immortality is provided through spiritual concepts, such as believing in afterlife, and symbolic immortality is provided through "identification with entities larger and long-lasting than the self, such as the nation or the corporation, and through ongoing tangible reflections of one's existence such as children, money, and culturally valued achievement" (Greenberg, et al., 1997, p. 65-66). The core idea of the TMT is, that people need to manage the anxiety of the inevitable death, which they to do by utilizing a faith in shared cultural worldview, that is often rooted in fear (Greenberg & Arndt, 2011). In relation to fear of death, which plays an unavoidable role in the topic of terrorism, a study across several European countries showed that perceived terrorist threat increased discrimination and blatant prejudice toward Muslims (Doosje, Zimmermann, Küpper, Zick, & Meertens, 2009). Besides, terrorist threat increased identification with the in-group (Moskalenko, McCauley & Rozin, 2006).

A major debate on the topic of right-wing populism, is about how the perceived fear and threat of immigrants leads to the increased success (e.g. Wodak, Khosravinik & Mral, 2013). One of the claims is, that the individuals seems to protect their self-esteem and avoid uncertainty, as defined above (e.g. Weise, Arciszewski, Verlhiac, Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 2012). Focusing upon motivational principles (Breakwell, 1986; Jaspel & Cinnirella, 2010; Vignoles, Chryssochoou, & Breakwell, 2002), can offer a more comprehensive understanding

of the Danish populist right-wing supporters' motives, as well as on how people cope with the perceived threat.

Chapter III

Identity process theory

Identity process theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 2011, 2014) provides an integrative framework of identity construction with a particular focus on individual and collective responses to threatened identity (Breakwell, 1986, 2014). According to IPT, the individual is an active agent in the structuration of identity, as identity is seen as a dynamic and heuristic process of thoughts and action (Breawell, 2014). IPT has no sharp distinctiveness between individual and social identity, compared with the traditional social identity theory (Breakwell, 2014; Tajfel, 1974). This is an important aspect, as the traditional theories are mostly concerned with explaining intergroup relationships. IPT allows the researcher to also theorize the relationship between the individual and the social events. Jaspal and Breakwell (2014) argued, that when individuals interact with social contexts (e.g. political upheaval or job- change), individuals construct ways of making sense of their experienced context, life and identity. Accordingly, right-ring populism can be considered as more than just a matter of intergroup relations. The representation of immigrants, and in particularly Muslims, as constituting a threat in Europe can provide the individuals with categories, which can determine how they understand the perceived problems (Altheide, 2017). Categories which may not per se have anything to do with individuals' relation to the immigrants.

Yet, to our knowledge, no study has applied IPT in relation to the far-right supporters' behavior. IPT has been applied either to examine host countries threat to identity, but solely in relation to study of the threat to identity among immigrants (Timotijevic, & Breakwell, 2000). To identify solutions to the major challenges related to the integration of immigrants in Denmark, and the increasing success of right-wing political parties, I believe it is essential to study the beliefs of the parties supporters. In particular, by examining the views about immigrants and immigration, I expect to achieve a more comprehensive perspective of the motives of why people are increasingly supporting right-wing populist parties.

In IPT, the structure of identity is conceptualized in terms of its content, and the meaning and values the individuals give to the content. This constant process happens in interaction with the social surroundings, in which the individual exists (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). The structure of identity is regulated by two universal processes: the assimilation- accommodation process and the evaluation process. The assimilation-accommodation process refers to the absorption and adjustment of new component in the identity structure. In turn, the evaluation process gives meaning and value to the content of the identity (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014).

Moreover, four interconnected identity motives guide these universal processes: 'continuity', 'distinctiveness', 'self-efficacy' and 'self-esteem'. *Continuity* across time and situation and uniqueness or *distinctiveness* from others. In turn, *self-efficacy* is defined as feeling confident and in control of one's life and *self-esteem* refers to the feelings of personal worth or social value (Breakwell, 1986). Along with two other additional identity motives: 'belonging' and 'meaning'. *Belonging* refers to the motive to maintain feelings of acceptance and closeness to other. *Meaning* refers to the need to find purpose and significance in one's life (Vignoles, et al. 2002). Lastly, the *coherence principle* (Jaspel & Cinnirella, 2010), "refers to the motivation to establish feelings of compatibility between interconnected identities" (Jaspel, 2013, p. 5). The theory states, that if the processes of assimilation- accommodation for some reason are unable to comply with one of the seven principles, threat to identity will occur. Identity threat can then lead to a lower level of psychological well- being, as the universal need for maintaining a harmonious identity not can be met (Breakwell, 1986).

If the individual experiences threat to identity, he/she will use coping strategies, which are defined as any activity, in actions or thoughts, that can remove or modify the threat (Breakwell, 1986). Coping strategies can function at three levels: intrapsychic, interpersonal, or intergroup level (Breakwell, 1988). Some forms of threat can, in order to optimize identity processes, motivate individuals to use strategies on multiple levels (Jaspal & Sitaridou, 2013).

IPT recognizes how social representations (i.e. a social construction of the reality), shapes the way social phenomena impacts the identity process (Breakwell, 1993). According to Breakwell (1993), a social representation (Moscovici, 1981) enables individuals to interpret and render the social world, so it becomes meaningful. IPT claims that the identity process will determine how the individual will 'personalize' a social representation, which is to the extent that a social representation is accepted and internalized by the individual. In this way, the social representation shapes the content and value dimensions of identity (Breakwell, 2013). This dimension of IPT, from the social representation theory, is fundamental for examining which identity-motives drive individuals to support the Danish right-wing populist parties. Since in the last decades Denmark has been facing major challenges related to their integration of the growing number of immigrants and refugees (Hedetoft, 2006). According to Hedetoft (2006), in part such is occurring because policies and politicians have been categorizing immigrants (e.g. refugees versus economic migrants, non-Muslims and Muslims, males and female immigrants), and because Denmark, to a great extent, not has been prepared to accept cultural diversity in the country.

Chapter IV

Far-right in Denmark: the context of the study

As presented in the beginning, there is today two major right-wing populist parties in Denmark, DF and NB, who are both presented in the parliament since June 2019. The development of the success of the right-wing populist parties in the Danish parliament has gradually been increasing in last decades. Among Western European countries, Denmark had the third highest growth of populist right-wing parties in terms of electoral support from 1980 until 2011 (Mudde, 2013). According to Kischelt and McGann (1995), the prior party to DF, did already in the 1980's begin to adopt a rhetoric of anti-immigration, a subject which has become the most important issue in Danish politics in the following decades (Rydgren, 2004). A focus also largely represented in the media. As an example, were 42% of all articles in 2001, around the time of election campaign, about addressed questions related to immigrations' integration (Van der Brugge, Jimmy & Henning Voss, 2003). Thomsen (2006) proposed that the attitudes towards immigrants have become the central consideration of partisan choice in Denmark. Besides, a development of the rhetoric against immigrant and Muslim among the right-wing populist parties have gradually appeared (Simonsen, 2017). It is seen as a result of the increased number of immigrants, especially non-western immigrants, in the last decades (Simonsen, 2017). The proportion of immigrants and descendants with non-western background has increased from 1.0% of the population in 1980 to 8.7%, in 2019 (Det national Integrationsbarometer, 2019). A growth which has been recognized by scholars (e.g. Borchorst & Slim, 2016) to challenge the Danish welfare-state and women equality. The reasonings are that the welfare-state was developed based on a homogeneous society, and thus diversity constitute a challenge (Borchorst & Slim, 2016). The conception of the Danish society, as being homogeneous, has a very old history (Østergård, 1992). Shortly, the nations- state was built upon common values, which created the base of the democracy and the welfare-state. These common values created a notion of community in the society, which goes beyond the neighborhoods and locals (Østergård, 1992). A notion which per se can create exclusion in society, if individuals with different cultures and values are living in the same territory.

It has been argued, that a strong sense of community can conflict with diversity, as it is likely to constitute disrespect, because of its base on similar group members (Townley, Kloos, Green, & Franco, 2011). McMillan and Chavis (1986) proposed a definition of sense of community as a "feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their

commitment to be together" (p. 9). The definition is closely formed by social categorization theory (Turner & Reynolds, 2011) and social identity theory (Tajfel &Turner, 1986). Individuals, who feel a sense of community, tend to minimize the differences of the in-group and maximize the differences between groups, as a result of the categorization of themselves and the others as either belonging to the community or not (Mannarini, Taló, & Rochira, 2017). Additionally, a study has suggested, that if individuals with a feeling of sense of community experience a perceived threat of changes, they can maintain a social identity through the use of sense of community (Fisher & Soon, 2002). The sense of community is found to have positive effect on individual's life-satisfaction (Hombrados-Mendieta, Gómez- Jacinto, Dominguez-Fuentes, & Garcia-Leiva, 2013) and well-being (Mak, Cheung, & Law, 2009). Regarding right-wing populism, it is simultaneously however also been recognized that the Nordic countries populist right-wing parties' political agenda are built on the notion that an ideal culture is homogeneous, by presenting immigrants as a threat to the social cohesion (Keskinen, Skaptadóttir, & Toivanen, 2019).

There has been a growing debate in Denmark in the media and among politicians on how "to get the control back" in the global world (Andersen, 2018, p. 317). Not following international obligations regarding immigration policies has marked this debate, particularly in the last decade, as more parties are gradually approaching the same attitude, especially against non-westerns people (Andersen, 2018). In the last four years, after DF has grown with 15 mandates in the parliament, 114 laws have been tightened regarding foreigners (Udlændinge og Integrationsministeriet, 2019). These law changes address especially individuals from non-western countries, for example by giving the possibility of returning "*non-desired foreigners*" to their home countries (Andersen, 2018). These laws contrast to the liberal laws back in 1983, where all people who were granted asylum, also had legal right to family reunification (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2003). In spite of the fact that xenophobic attitudes were already widespread during the 1970's, the immigration topic was not politicized until the 1980's and 1990s (Rydgen, 2010). Also, in the late 1990's issues concerning non-Europeans immigrants, become the dominant topic in newspapers, public debate and discourses, in spite of the small increase in asylum-seekers in Denmark, compared to other European countries (Rydgen, 2010).

Denmark has until the 1960's been an ethnically homogenous country and has not had a history of xenophobia or racism (Moore, 2010). Instead, Denmark had a history of egalitarianism and tolerance through their traditions of equality and social cohesion, which is still considered important values in the society. Those liberal values characterize the Danes welfare state and the country engagement in global humanitarian issues (Moore, 2010). In the

last years, however, the debate about Muslims has gradually become more polarized (Linde-Laursen, 2007). At the same time, Danish politicians have been stressing, that Denmark does not want to become a multicultural society (Hedetoft, 2010). An attitude exemplified by the unfortunate attitude against immigrants, for example the infamous cartoon case (Hedetoft, 2010). The cartoon case is additionally recognized as a reaction of the perceived threat by the non-western countries toward the freedom of expression (Hedetoft, 2006). Besides, the Danish political strategy of forcing people to assimilate, it seen as a tool to avoid a multicultural society (Hedetoft, 2010). The policy implies that the immigrants have to reject his/her own cultural identity (Berry, 2005; Hedetoft, 2010). Additionally, integration can only be freely chosen and successfully pursued by immigrants' groups, when the host society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards diversity (Berry, 2005).

The two radical right-wing parties in Denmark are particularly different in their economic policies and in other subordinate aspects, but both parties' right-wing populistic policy can be recognized through their discriminatory rhetoric and immigration policy. NB core issues are tougher immigration rules, lower taxes and withdrawal from the European Union and international conventions (Nye Borgerlige, 2019a). Compared to DF, NB is different concerning their proposed tax policy. The party claim that lower taxes can be realized, if NB's three undisputable requirements are implemented: Their three requirements are: A total asylum stop, that criminal aliens must be expelled after the first sentence, and finally that all foreign must support themselves (Nye Borgerlige, 2019). It is an undemocratic method, which is characteristic for right-wing populism, which as explained tend to reject existing political consensus (Wodak, 2005). DF wants similarly just to keep foreigners in Denmark *who contribute to society* and points out on their political website: "We need fewer in and more out!" (Dansk Folkeparti, 2019). Regarding asylum seekers, do they represent a plan of helping asylum seekers in their so-called surrounding areas, but not in Denmark (Dansk Folkeparti, 2019a).

The study focuses exclusively on the participants support of the parties' immigration policy, which can be defined as being similar. No previous study has been conducted about the new right-wing populist party NB, but it can be argued that NB, as DF cherish an ethno-pluralist, anti-political and xenophobia nationalism strategy (Rydgen, 2004). As well as it can be argued, that both parties equate immigrant from Muslim countries with Muslim fundamentalist, which defines a radical right-wing party (Rydgren, 2004).

The aim of the study

The aim of this qualitative study is to identify the identity motives, that drive individuals in Denmark to support the right-wing populist parties' immigration policy. By focusing on participants perceived threat, it will be investigated how the participants cope with the perceived threat towards immigrants, along with an examination on the motives that guide the beliefs and the behavior of the individuals. Additionally, the study will look at how the discourses and the political strategies, used by the right-wing populist parties can influence the individual's far-right support and herewith their believes about immigrants.

The purpose is to offer a more complete understanding of how the individuals make sense out of their beliefs concerning immigrants. The central tool to analyze the data is identity process theory (IPT), which can offer a multiple level of understanding. Intergroup threat theory (ITT) will additionally be used to further investigate the various types of intergroup threat. Supplementary, previous concepts used to explain reactions to threat will be used, to analyze the individuals coping strategies.

Chapter V

Method

Participants

Out of the 16 participants, four were females, and 12 males. The participants age ranged from 17 to 70 (average of 46 years). They come from nine different cities in Denmark. 10 of the participants had once been or are politically active, nine claimed to support DF and six claimed to support NB. The individual's participation in politics was not a criterion for participating in the study. However, when recruiting willing interviewees, some individuals appeared to be engaged in politics, which was a result of the use of snowball-sampling (Bloor & Wood, 2006). In table 1, the participants' education and educational level, profession, along with their age, sex and political background are reported.

Table 1. The characterization of participants

ID	Sex	Age	Political Background	Education	Profession
Kenneth[1]	M	58	Supports DF Engaged in local politics	Technologist (Second cycle)[2]	Technologist
Kasper	M	63	Supports DF Engaged in local politics	Butcher (Short cycle)	Salesman
Tine	F	63	Supports DF	Highschool-teacher and translator (First-cycle)	Translator
Bjørk	M	52	Supports NB	Programmer (Short-cycle)	Programmer
Jens	M	25	Supports DF Former participant in local politics	Social Science (Second cycle)	Student
Mikkel	M	17	Support DF Engaged in local politics	High-school	Student

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[1] All presented names are fictitious.

[2] The educational level refers to the European Qualifications Framework: www.ehea.info/page-three- cycle-system

Sten	M	48	Supports NB Engaged in local politics	It-supporter (Short cycle)	It-supporter
Claus	M	23	Support NB Engaged in the local politics	Social science (First cycle)	Student
Christine	F	37	Supports NB	Cross-cultural studies (Second cycle)	Communicatio n
Anna	F	44	Supports DF	Psychology (Second cycle)	School psychologist
Gunnar	M	63	Supports NB Engaged in local politics	Social Science (Second cycle)	Researcher
Lauge	M	47	Supports NB	Installer (Short cycle)	Refrigeration Installer
Dennis	M	30	Supports DF Engaged in local policy	Chemistry (Second cycle)	Works with environmental issues in local party
Hanne	F	53	Supports NB Engaged in local party	Pharmacist (Short cycle)	Coach and artist
Hans	M	70	Supports DF Former participant in local party	Fisherman	Retired
Niels	M	44	Supports DF	Schoolteacher (First cycle)	Cartoonist

Procedure

The main data source of the study consists of semi-structured interviews. One criterion guided the sample requirement - the participants should either claim to support DF or NB's immigration policy. Seven out of a total of 16 participants were assembled through snowballing (Bloor & Wood, 2006). The other nine participants were assembled randomly, through correspondences on Facebook. The participants were found through their participation or membership in some of the many political pages on Facebook of either DF or NB. This method

made it possible to sample participants from different areas of the country. In the message to the participants it was written that I was looking for people, who would like to comment on their opinions about the role of immigration in Denmark, in case they either supported the immigration policy of NB or DF.

The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured guide (Appendix A), consisting of six open ended exploratory questions and two yes/now questions, which they could elaborate on. These questions were used to guide the conversation, but the interviewees were free to introduce other themes or issues they found related or interesting. The interview- guide began with questions regarding participants opinions about the immigrant's rights and the immigrant's position in Denmark, and their views about the present immigration policy, followed by questions about their experiences in society with vulnerable groups and hate- speech. Then, the participants were asked about what they consider is the biggest problem society is facing nowadays. Finally, all the interviews ended with a question whether the participants have contact with the group, they perceive as constituting a treat, with the goal of understanding how or if their views and beliefs were influenced by personal experiences.

Six of the interviews were made through skype-calls, five interviews were made at the participants home and the last four at public places. They all took place between February and March 2019. The interviews were all conducted in the participants native language, Danish. The interviews ranged in duration from 20 minutes to one hour and 27 minutes (average of 47 minutes). All the interviews were audio recorded and orthographically transcribed, of which all participants were informed. The interview quotations, used in the analysis, were translated from Danish to English after data codification in the NVivo Software. All names of the participants have been removed and changed to ensure anonymity.

Chapter VI

Analysis

In the following section, the participants' identity motives, that drive the individuals to support DF's and NB's immigration policy will be explored. This includes examining the meanings associated with such support, and the processes which led them to change, construct or maintain their identity (Breakwell, 2014). The method used to process the data was thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Herewith, three themes were identified, which each captures a relevant dimension in relation to the research questions in the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A combined deductive and inductive approach was practiced (Braun & Clarke, 2006), as some themes and especially sub-themes mainly were driven by the data itself. Other themes were driven by a theoretical base, such as coping strategies (Breakwell, 2014), or aspects from intergroup threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2017), along with other concepts related to the topic. The deductive approach is consistent with the choice of a latent level of analysis, as the aim is to go beyond the surface of the participants assumptions and meaning (Braun & Clark, 2006), and to explore the constructivism of the interaction between the participances' experience and their behavior (Doise, 1989).

The process of identifying the themes began by carefully reading the interviews line by line, before coding the data. A total of 11 codes and 15 sub-codes were analysed through an identification of common patterns in the interviews. Out of the 11 codes, six codes where mainly influenced by theory and five codes were extracted through primarily the data itself. Yet, is must be pointed out, that some of the codes in some cases overlapped. In appendix B, all codes are provided, including descriptions and the distinction between inductive and deductive codes. In appendix C, a figure illustrates which codes and sub-codes mainly are connected to each theme and sub-theme.

Before coding the data, it was decided that especially IPT (Breakwell, 1986, 2011, 2014), along with some aspects from ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2017), would constitute the theoretically base of the analysis. From IPT, the main goal was to identify the participants identity motives (Breakwell, 1986; Jaspel & Cinnirella, 2010; Vignoles et al., 2002), as code 2.1 "belonging" (Appendix B), along with the participants' coping strategies (Breakwell, 1986). (Appendix B, code 6). Coping strategies, which afterwards constituted theme two "Responses to threat" (Appendix C). Code 9 "Change in perception of Muslims" (Appendix B), was based on the aim of understanding changes in the participants' systems of beliefs (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014), which theme three mainly is inspired by (Appendix C).

From ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2017), the goal was to distinguish between "perceived realistic threat" (Appendix B, code 4 and 5) and "perceived symbolic threat" (Appendix B, code 1). These results partly led to the construction of theme one (Appendix C). Besides, code 8 "contact" (Appendix B) was influenced by the intergroup contact hypotheses (Alport, 1954).

Other codes, and sub-codes, were to a greater extent identified through the data itself, constituting emergent codes (Appendix B, code 3, 7, 10, 11). Those codes, including sub- codes, are all included in the three themes. Lastly, code 11 was named, "Either Muslims or Danes" (Appendix B), to identify when the individuals were either referring, explicit or implicit, to Muslims or Danes, but instead were referring to essentially immigrants from other countries. It is illustrated in the sub-theme "sources of threat", in the first theme (Appendix C). The codes demonstrated, that the main perceived threat of immigrants deals with Muslims, as all other 10 codes, besides code 11, refer to the intergroup relation between Muslims and Danes.

The three themes and sub-themes, classified through the three main patterns analysed from the codes and sub-codes, are the following:

- The first theme is the largest, and it forms the base for the subsequent themes. It has the title: "Perceived threat to identity" and is divided into two sub-themes: Sources and meanings. The theme outlines a review of the participants' perceptions of the threat, along with the meaning they give to it.

- The second theme "Responses to threat", illustrates the strategies the participants use to reduce the perceived threatening situation on multiple levels. The theme is divided into three sub-themes: Self and group victimization, cultural superiority and participation in politics.

- The last theme "Changes in self-positioning – accommodation of different perspectives" is divided into two subthemes: personal experience and self-contradictory ideas. This theme illustrates the participants identity change and their adjustment of new component in the identity structure.

Perceived threat to identity: Sources and meaning

According to the identity process theory, threat to identity occurs, when the principles of self-esteem, continuity, self-efficacy, distinctiveness, belonging or meaning are threatened by change in the social context (Breakwell, 1986; 2014). Considering these proposed identity motives, the first theme will focus on the role of threat in constructing and developing far- right political identities in Denmark. This theme is divided into two sub-themes: Sources and meaning. The first sub-theme, source of perceived threat, addresses the participants views of

immigrants in Denmark, and in particular views of Muslims, describing "what" and "who" the participants consider to be the cause or the perceived problem with Muslims. The second sub-theme, meaning of threat, examines the meaning that the participants give to the threat. It will be presented through the two types of perceived threat introduced by intergroup threat theory (ITT): perceived symbolic threat and perceived realistic threat (Stephan & Stephan, 2017).

Sources of perceived threat

In this study and as in previous studies where IPT was used (e.g. Jaspal, & Cinnirella, 2012a), identity threat is a central dimension. When participants elaborated on their thoughts and opinions about immigrants, and in particular regarding Muslims living in Denmark, the perceived threat was the key element. Most participants mentioned that the threat they feel, is a threat toward the Danish society, and some noted that they do not feel it personally. Additionally, according to IPT, in order to evoke action, a threat must have gained access to the individual consciousness (Breakwell, 2014). Four participants mentioned explicitly to have experienced physical threat, attributing to their believes on how Muslims' treat women (Christine, Hanne, Tine & Bjørk). As Hanne explained, perceived threat of Middle Eastern men influences her perceptions of security and safety. Hanne alternated, as most of the participants between mentioning the group as either Muslims or Middle Eastern depending on the subject, which can be argued to be because of their awareness of own prejudice attitude (Dovidio, et al., 2019):

> I decided that I should always have a car. People say: "Well you are drunk sometimes". But yes, I only drive on the small roads. I'm not exposing myself to what's going on - at all. Because there are no women in the street at that time in the night. There is only that particular type of men, who go out at that time, and I know that no one will help you, because they are afraid of retaliation. There is just something about the Middle Eastern men – they have not been educated to understand Danish women's emancipation and equality. (Hanne)

There seems to exist some common and shared understandings among the participants regarding the reasons why Muslims, presented as either Middle Easters or Muslims, represent a threat in Denmark and why immigrants from other non-western countries or Europe, with other religious backgrounds do not represent a similar threat. Participants perceived threat by Muslims, appeared through the meaning they gave and the understanding they had of the out-group, as being culturally different from the Danish culture. The Muslim culture is, according

to the participants, associated with Islam, and intrinsically linked to it.

> On the other hand, the Muslims scripture is sacred, which means, that whatever question you want to ask about those writings, you cannot touch it - you cannot change it because they are sacred. They cannot be pushed or changed. The early scholastic in Europe knew that you can adjust the Bible a little bit. (…). And you could contribute with science already in the 12th century. You could already ask questions about certain things in the Bible. (Kenneth)

All the participants referred to Islam as being a threat and an inferior religion compared to their own. The participants considered, that this religion forces people to behave in a certain way, which deprives those who cultivate it from acting freely and living in accordance with todays' perceived demands in Denmark and other western countries. These views of the Muslims culture appeared particularly through the participants beliefs on how Muslims deal with homosexuality, other religions, and specially women:

> I know that there are also good Muslims. There is a tendency to judge them all at once, and I am a little sorry about that once in a while, because there are also some who behave properly and go to work every day and where both husband and wife work. But there are so many who do not work - their wife is not allowed to go out and work and is chained to the home. She is not allowed to come out and interact with others. (Hans)

Outlined was the meaning, the participant gave to the Muslim culture, by comparing to own culture, generally, what their perceived problems and threat from Muslims in Denmark was based on. For example, in the extract present above, when Hans shared his perceived view of the women's role in the Muslim culture, he compared it to how he thinks that they should behave. All the participants placed Islam as a problem, but it was not only the Muslims in Denmark, who exclusively had the fault, as it can be seen in the statement above.

> We have lots of culture. If we just look at our holidays and [how] they want special treatment. They say we cannot use Christmas trees and we cannot call it Christianity-class, in school, as it must be religion-class. We just had the case with women in swimming-stadiums in Aarhus a few years ago, where some women claimed, that they want to have the swimming-stadium available two hours alone because they can't be with men. They want some rights, which not are Danish culture. In Denmark we have been given away too much and we have been too sweet for too many years and it is a threat. (Kasper)

Denmark is one of the least religious societies in the world (Zukerman, 2008), yet Danes perceive themselves as 'Culture-Christian' (Iversen, 2001), as some participants explained: "We are rounded by a common culture that is Christian" (Kasper). Christianity seems to represent the values of the Danes culture, according to the participants. The majority mentioned to believe that, culture and religion, cannot be separated: "So, religion and culture are connected. I myself am a glowing atheist, but for those who find some salvation or something positive in it (…)" (Sten). In Denmark, Lutheranism is described as having been instrumental in the creation of a political culture that strictly separates religion from politics (Jensen, Helboe Nielsen, Brænder, Mouritsen, & Olsen, 2010). Hereby, it seems to exist a common view that, religion and state must be separated, something that was pointed out by all participants as a fundamental difference between them and the Muslims.

> (…) And I do not care if it is Islam or whether it is Christianity, etc., I just don't want to have societies that are controlled by religion. So, it is the religion - I don't have any problems with the [Muslim] people. (Dennis)

As a way to justify and make sense of their views on Muslim's people, the majority of participants compared Muslims living in Denmark with immigrants from other non-western countries:

> There are many immigrants from non-Western countries who are doing very well. For example, people from Asia. They are very skilled. They have a completely different attitude towards work. They have a completely different attitude towards being a burden on society. (…) The work morale or ethics is high in people coming from Asia. So, it's very hard to put it in a box. I think that we should differentiate between those who do well and those who do badly. Where's the problem? The problem is for example not with people coming from Thailand. It isn't! The statistics show, the problem is with people coming from the Middle East. (Gunnar)

Similar distinctions were made regarding immigrants coming from Europe:
> The last thing I would like to say about the immigration that we see across Europe, people who come here and work – from Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Many of them go back again and they are integrated, you know. I can only clap in my hands over the Portuguese coming to the country. I think it's fine. (Jens)

Lastly, Bjørk explained his differentiation between people from Denmark and immigrants from Europe and non-western countries, by referring to the importance of being close with similar people:

> You can almost describe it as an onion. Who are the closest – so, it is me and my children and my grandchildren and my wife! And then we get further out and then there are the neighbours etc., who we also have to take care of and help. And then it goes further. So, at some point, it comes out in the national community, where we are Danes all together. When I walk down the street, I meet other people and we do not know each other and we do not necessarily greet each other, but we are all Danes. And when we get beyond that, a change of value happens to me, because it is certain that other people in the world also have values – that's not what I say. When children down in Africa starve and we are asked to send money, then it touches me and I send money, there is no doubt about that. But for me, the national community is more important than our commitments to Africa. You can of course also look at some extra layers on that onion and then there is Europe too. And then there are common values with the western countries. (Bjørk)

In addition, participants tend to distinguish between the *bad* and the *good* immigrants. On one hand, some immigrants are perceived as a burden to society, having high demands and being provided economically by the Danish state. In the same line, immigrants are perceived as being criminals with high rates of participation in crime. On the other hand, there is a group of immigrants, who are perceived to contribute to the society through participation on the labour market. These immigrants are described as respectful to the Danish culture, as in the statements above (e.g. Gunnar). The distinction between *the good and the bad* is a common strategy used among right-wing populist supporter (Andrews, 2018; Kuisma, M. 2013). Andrews (2018) argued that this strategy legitimizes the support of anti-immigration policies, because it helps to define a set of criteria to justify, why some people should be excluded and other may receive protection. The tendency of differentiating between good and bad can be found in NB's immigration policy, according to the three unchangeable requests reported on page 16 (Nye Borgerlige, 2018). Claus expresses his support of NB's immigration policy:

> I agree very much with NB's three demands: that they have to support themselves and that criminals must be sent home. Now I am aware of that it is a minority of the many who are here, that is not behaving well. There are many immigrants in Denmark who work and pay taxes and comply with the law and all that. There are just statistically speaking too many who don't comply with the law and it is them, that I think, we should

do something about. (Claus)

The immigration policy by NB can be viewed as a common-sense strategy, used particular among populist right-wing parties (Wodak, 2005). A strategy which also seems to reflect Christine's and Hans' views:

After all, it depends on the individual's situation. It's hard to say. It depends on why they are here and how they are doing in the country; if they support themselves and do not fail by committing in crime and accept the standards and traditions of the country to which they came to - then I don't think they should be thrown out. But I don't really know anyone who would disagree with me. (Christine)

I think it's okay if they need to go home again. Of course, they should. But if they do not have a home and have nothing to go home to - if they want to work, integrate, learn our language and follow our laws, then I do not think it is so wrong to have them here. But if they do not want to work or behave properly - if they rape our girls and kill us - they will have to go out. (Hans)

Those three statements are examples of how participants legitimize their exclusion of immigrants, through the right-wing political parties' common-sense strategies. Most of the participants referred to this method of distinguishing between good and bad immigrants. It can also be viewed as a compensation mechanism to preserve positive self-esteem, since the participants also tried to justify their prejudice, by acknowledging the immigrants' differences. It goes partly against their strategy of generalizing the group and dehumanization the people, by just perceiving them as numbers (Niels), which will be pointed out later in the text.

Furthermore, some participants place EU, *globalization* and non-far right national parties as guilty of the current perceived social problems (e.g. criminality, unemployment and disagreement about traditions) of culture diversity. This is characteristic of contemporary right-wing populism, where parties construct a fear against secondary others, which they perceive as responsible, such as EU and other parties in the government (Wodak, et. al., 2013; Wodak, 2015). Aspects which also characterize DF's and NB's immigration policy, as expressed by Mikkel: "It is about saving the Danish values, when they are about to be given up because of EU." As well as Mikkel, several other participants claimed to feel fear of losing their culture, which for example was seen through their fear of *too much* interference from other countries in

Denmark:

> If it is the desire to maintain a unique Danish community with own values, then we need to say 'no thanks' to a big part of globalization and I certainly believe and I truly believe that, purely structurally. I think that people, who come here as immigrants or as refugees - I think that it is a tendency, which is dangerous simply because of the number. Due to the numbers. (Niels)

One of the participants explained his representation of democracy, and how this related to his negative view of the Danish participation in EU:

> I am critical of EU and I think we should get out. And that is also related to immigration policy - that you cannot go through certain laws because of the European Court of Justice, for example. And generally, with sovereignty and self-determination * I am quite critical about EU. I am. I am much happier with the politics in Denmark. We are closer to the citizens and we have a national community. We do not have much in common with ones from Poland or Spain, as I have with Danes. I also think democracy must be close to the citizen. And of course, with the EU, citizens are moving further away. But I do not agree with the current immigration policy. Not at all. (Claus)

The newest right-wing populist party, NB, expressed that the current politicians, including DF, in Denmark have part of the responsibility. Hereby, the other parties in the parliament represent for the supporters of NB a threat to the Danish culture, as they are blamed to accept culture diversity. Even thought, participants presented themselves as supporter of only one of the two parties (NB or DF), they also claimed to support each other's immigrations policies, arguing that both policies have similar goal. Where else, the supporters from the DF, protected their ingroup in the interviews, as Kenneth drew attention to:

> Thanks to DF. After entering the government in 2001. (…) Because of them we have been able to control the number of refugees and immigrants who are allowed to enter Denmark. (Kenneth)

In summary, the analysis shows that the participants perceive the Muslims as a threat to their identities, due to the perceived culture differences. They tend to see religion as a core of a disproportionate difference and as a threat. According to the majority of participants, religion deprives the Muslim people, in particular the Muslim women, of the possibility to participate and to integrate in the Danish society. Therefore, they consider the democracy, the Danish

culture and the welfare state to be exposed by the group. They compare cultures of immigrants from non-western countries and other European countries to culture of immigrants from the Middle East, to make sense of their beliefs and to distinguish *good* from *bad immigrants*. Their threat by Muslims is not only targeted towards the group itself, but rather towards EU, other Danish parties and against *globalization*. Patterns which seems to be influenced by the right-wing populist parties.

Meaning of threat

The intergroup threat theory argues, that whether or not threat has any basis in reality, the perception of the threat has consequences at both the intraindividual and the intergroup levels (Stephan & Stephan, 2017). The theory can contribute to a further examination of the social representation of Muslims in Denmark and which identity principles are perceived to be under threat. The following section is divided into the two perceived threats: perceived symbolic threat and perceived realistic threat.

Symbolic threat. The analysis of the interviews suggested that sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) is a very important value among the interviewees. As Tine expressed: "I believe in our community. I believe that Denmark is a country worth preserving in one form or another." The participants described their notion of community by sharing their experiences of feeling close and similar with other people with Danish nationality. The majority of the participants proudly described the Danish society including their welfare system and the democratic system, which they believe to be a result of having created a society based on common values. For instance, Kenneth said:

> As we have a great country, we should say it as it is; it is because our people are homogenous. The whole Nordic is a homogenous society. Culturally, we have a homogeneous composition. Therefore, we do not need to spend so much energy, because we have this common understanding of what a society is. Therefore, when you get some culture from the Middle East up here, it is something that can make a constant change over a generation. It goes so fast. The homogeneous society will disappear under those conditions. (Kenneth).

The risk of losing 'the homogeneous society' seems to be perceived as a threat. In particular, participants seemed to fear losing the sense of belonging (Vignoles et al., 2002). Several participants mentioned, that the homogeneous society creates a common identity with shared

and common values. These views were very common among the interviewees, who also shared the belief that a good society, especially Denmark, cannot be culturally diverse. It reflexes the strategy used among right-wing populist parties in the Nordic countries, where a heterogeneous society is presented as a threat (Keskinen et al., 2019). According to Brewer, Hong and Li (2004), the individual's perception of an ideal group is made of homogeneous people, which hereby reduces uncertainty, as individuals tend to feel that an in-group with similar others can control, what the individual alone not is able to. The fear of a multicultural society can hereby be related to the fear of losing perceived control (Fritsche, et al., 2011). The participants claimed to fear losing their culture values, as they perceived that their freedoms are being threatened by Muslims, namely freedom of expression (Lauge, Bjørk & Mikkel), freedom of religion (e.g. Anna, Hanne & Sten) and sexuality (Sten, Niels, Dennis & Jens). Regarding these topics, most participants argued, that Muslims have opposite views on those values, and that is perceived to constitute a threat towards the Danish welfare-state and democracy. The following excepts by Hanne and Sten are representative of these views:

> They come from corrupt society, where the state is just such a kind of a thing. They do not understand, that hardworking people pay half of their money in taxes. They do not understand it, because they come from corrupt systems. (Hanne)

> Since the 1960s we said: "Everyone is equal, and we must open our arms to everyone and everyone who needs help". And we say:" Yes, yes!" but we cannot afford to help all people and it is what it is. (…) People immigrate because of economic reasons and ** I do not think Danish taxpayers have to pay for it. We have an economy that we have put together because we have a strong cultural community and if the cultural community falls apart then (*) Then there is nothing. Then we cannot tolerate the high tax rate anymore. It would destroy our welfare society, for example. (Sten)

Both quotations refer to a perceived realistic threat (Stephan & Stephan, 2017). Indeed, immigrants are considered to be using the resources (e.g. social services, health services etc.) that "only" the Danish people payed for through their taxes. In particular, there is a shared vision of Muslims as unemployed people (by option) taking advantage of the Danish system. Thereby, Muslims are also a perceived symbolic threat in relation to this topic (Stephan & Stephan, 2017). Previous study has shown that around 88% of the Danes are satisfied with the high taxes, but 31% made clear, that they do not want to pay welfare to individuals, not even Danes, who do not contribute to the Danish society (Gallup, 2014). Concurrently, participants

perceive the Muslims as part of the "corrupt society" (Hanne), which is seen as threat to the Danish welfare system, that is considered to be based on mutual trust of similar others (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2012). Paying a high tax is expressed by the participants to be a value that define the Danish "great society" (Kenneth). Immigrants and their resistance to assimilate were perceived to be causes for the decline of such "great society" as explained by Dennis.

> But, what pisses me off most of all is, that we have built up a social community that is about to crumble completely; because, if only those immigrants who came here contributed, got some Danish values, contributed, got a job, provided themselves and paid their taxes and kept the law and let their children become Danes, no matter who they want to marry, then there would be no problem, then we would only become richer. In my world. (Dennis)

A rich country, according to the participants, seem to have more than economic wealth. Besides, economic richness seems to be considered as a result of being part of a community with common values. Most participants see the perceived lack of assimilation among Muslims immigrants as a threat toward the *richness* of their community. The statement above shows, that the shared resources should only be shared among the once who share "some Danish values" (Dennis). The mentioned values can be argued by the participants to be considered instrumentally necessary for the maintaining of the welfare-state, that they desire. Furthermore, several interviewers expressed fear of losing the kind of values and society they feel attracted to. In IPT's term, it seems that supporters of populist right-wing parties fear losing the sense of identity continuity (Breakwell, 1986), as the shared lifestyle among the participants constitutes the society, that they desire. The search of continuity (Breakwell, 1986) also appeared through the participants fear of losing the control over their generations' future, mainly through their need to ensure, that the values they identify themselves with continue through the following generations:

> So, it is not the individual, because they are Muslims, it is not about that. It is about how Denmark will be shaped over the next hundred years. What should we pass on? Should we pass on a middle-eastern-like country to our grandchildren? (Bjørk)

Another participant mentioned to have changed her perspective after becoming a mother. She wishes, that her own values will continue through her children, and she relates this personal desire with the fear, she argues to have for the future of the Danish society:

> When I got my first child, I started to care a little more about the future. How I can

really imagine, that Denmark's future will look like. So, it went from being a here and now focus to also be a concerned about the future in 30, 40 and 70 years. The children will hopefully even have children one day and something like that. So, then I started to pay more attention to the importance of culture on whether it really becomes a nice society, that they will have in the future. Whether it is a society, that I can imagine that my children can live in. And if it still will be a society, where women and men are equal. I am nervous that the cultures that are right now cannot find a common way of living together. (Christine)

Based on the definition on ethnocentrism (Fritsche, et al., 2011), it can be argued, that Christine's attitude may have become more ethnocentric. As her positive attitude toward ingroup to some extend has increased, along with her feeling of needing to defend her ingroup from the others. An attitude which is shared among all the participant in smaller or lesser degree. Sten, for example, expressed:

(…) After all, we are a small tiny country of 5.5 million inhabitants, so we can't * So, how many should be here? It would ruin it all. What defines Denmark is our culture and language area. The mutual trust we have towards each other. (…) The neighbors run within each other's homes, as one desires. And you do that, because we are very similar. I think it's worth keeping. It gives a safe community that I would like to leave to my boys one day. There are a lot of values, that I really appreciate much besides trust and security. Then we have a good history of taking care of each other. Now, we have decided to have a large and strong welfare system and a very high tax, and it is because we want to contribute to each other. And the willingness to cooperate, that we have on a national level - it seems to me worth preserving. (…) It is our duty to create a country with the stability, that I have grown up with and I also want them to grow up with that. You can't just let it failure. But we have been under threat for a long time, since our integration policy isn't matching. (Sten)

Sten argued, that he fears of losing the Danish culture is strongly linked to his own identity. The perceived threat might made him identify himself more strongly with the Danish values (Fritsche et al., 2008). Thus, it seems that his belonging to an ingroup contribute to his self-esteem, and it provides him with sense of belonging and support (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). An example of when interconnected identity motives, belonging and self-esteem, is threatened (Breakwell, 2014). Additionally, his self-esteem seems to be highly connected to his

identification with the Danish culture, which can be argued to be an example of when social and individual self-esteem are interconnected rather than separated (Breakwell, 2014).

Perceived realistic threat. All participants showed dissatisfaction with the fact, that they had to share their resources with immigrants and refugees. Some participants believe, that immigrants or refugees not necessarily could or would contribute with anything in return, which was expressed through comments such as: "Our biggest import [commodity] are social clients from the third world." (Hanne). Hanne, as well as many other participants, considered that the refugees' and immigrants' intentions are exclusively to be provided economically by the Danish state:

> Lauge: I do not think, that the refugees and immigrants who come to Denmark, have the intention to contribute.
>
> Interviewer: So, what do you think their intention is?
>
> Lauge: Well, their intention is just to be provided for.

There was no evidence showing that the participants personally suffered from any financial distress. For example, no participants were without job or complained about their own finances. Besides, as shown in other studies (e.g. Ribberink, Achterberg & Houtman, 2017), participants did not accuse or fear Muslims' people, or other immigrants, to steal their jobs. Instead EU was blamed for the decrease in job opportunities and lose of work conditions (Anna, Hans & Lauge) (a topic which will be returned to in the next theme). Nevertheless, the analysis of the interviews suggested that individuals consider that the Danish state, which somehow represent Denmark, should share the money and the resources differently:

> Foreigners cost a lot in our welfare state. I heard in the radio the other day, that now they will not pay for the whole treatment of people who have bone cancer because it is too expensive. (…) And a mayor in Assens, will only allow cleaning in the elderlies homes every 5. week. But he can spend 34 billion on them. It is not like that in my world. That kind of policy - I think that it's true – it is the older people who have built the country. (Hans)

This statement, from an older man with bon cancer, represent the view (shared by several participants) that money should be spend on *own people*, especially the ones "who built the country" (Sten) and thus the ones who are considered to actually deserve it. Those beliefs

correspond to the characteristics of a right-wing populistic democracy, where race and national identities construct the illusion of the distinctiveness between us and them (Betz, 1994). Beside Hans, three other participants, referred specifically to the around 30 billion Krones, the Finance Ministry (Finansministeriet, 2018) has published that the Danish government spend yearly on non-western, which several media have exploited (e.g. Rapport: ikkevestlige indvandrere, 2018). The participants perceive the immigrants as too expensive for the society, as Niels explained:

> Those we have - we already have 400,000 - we have to say * we have to turn around and say: "No, no more and no more family reunification." We just have to look the other way around and say: "Do you know what, you should not be here - we want to help" ** like, you can get a lot of refugee-help in Syria for 100 Krones." Here in Denmark, if you give a refugee 100 Krones., they can barely buy a Happy Meal. (Niels)

Participants defended their opinions by pointing out, that it is a matter of number. Along with, that the lack of integration is considered by the participants to have economic consequences:

> I see it as a threat, because I can see that the majority of them - if you look at the Gellerup ghetto for example. I have to use the word which covers. So, 80% lives exclusively by money from the state. It was never been the intention, that they should come here, and we should provide them with lifelong all-inclusive. It has never been the intention, and it is failed policy. (Christine)

According to ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2017), a realistic threat is posed by components which cause the ingroup loss of resources, as explained above, or physical harm. In this regard, the perceived physical threat associated with Muslims and Islam represents, according to the participants, a threat to the Danish infrastructure (e.g. public transport), as well as threat to the safety of citizens and national security. A perceived realistic threat which threaten the identity principle of continuity (Breakwell, 1986), which has shown to lead people to defend their cultural beliefs (Arndt, et al.,1997). But also, a threat towards the need of self-efficacy, as it seems to reduce the individual's sense of control over their own safety (Breakwell, 1986).

> I fear the national security, but I also do not think that it is funny that inside the city - all that protection because they are afraid that a terrorist attack may suddenly happen. You can't go freely anymore without thinking: "Can something happen here?" "Is there anyone who left a bomb at Nørreport?" Or a large car that comes and drives over people, like what happened in Berlin before Christmas in 2016. Things happen all of a sudden.

> The shape of the city shows it and things have changed. (Tine)

As mentioned before especially women expressed to feel unsafe in some particular areas in Denmark with a higher population of Muslims. All participants related the high *number* of Muslims in a geographical area with an increase of the risk of crime and higher risk of terror-attack (Bjørk, Tine, Niels, Camilla & Hanne). This also represent the participant representation of Muslims as criminals.

> I can see the enormous consequences it has. About 30 billion Kroner. It is a huge amount for the relatively few who are already here. Also, with regard to crime. For example, in Sweden which has more refugees than we have. Shooters have gone crazy. There aren't really enough police stations. I can fear that it will happen if we allow to many immigrants from the Middle East. (Claus)

> Many of the terrorists who have been in Europe for the last couple of years, are people who grew up in the ghettos. They isolate themselves in many ways from the surrounding society. Because they are cultivating totally different norms and cultures then Europeans, which do not work. They are socially very neglected. I think the parallel societies are ticking bombs, which has exploded a few times in Europe over the last couple of years. (Jens)

Jens expressed his view of a ghetto as being something fundamentally dangerous in Danish society. The participants fear of crime and terror because of *the threat of a parallel societies*, reflects the government's rhetoric, where ghettos have been presented as a treat towards the Danish society, recently in relation to the current Ghetto-plan (Regeringen, 2018).

The two types of perceived threats capture how the participants experience a fear of losing their shared cultural values. A fear, which might lead them to identify themselves more strongly with the national identity (Fritsche et al., 2008). It appeared to create a threat towards their need of belonging, along with the need of identity continuity (Vignoles et al., 2002; Breakwell, 2014). There exists a common belief, that in order to receive any support from the community, the immigrant must assimilate. It is consistent with the definition of community: "*that need will be met through their commitment to be together*" (McMillian & Chavis, 1986, p. 9). It is also consistent with the assimilationist integration policy among right-wing populist parties in Denmark (Hedetoft, 2010), and the implicit assumption in the ideology of populist right-wing

parties, that 'the people' exist in a homogeneous way (Laclau, 2007). Their perceived realistic threats states, that individuals experience, that their physical welfare is threatened on both group and individual level, which seems to pose a challenge toward some of the participants motive of being in in control over once life (Breakwell, 2014). Their dissatisfaction with the distribution of the shared money can be referred to as a threat to the identity motive meaning, which refers to the motive to find purpose and significance in one's life (Vignoles et al., 2002). From the interviews we see, that some participants find meaning and purpose in their support to and cooperation with their ingroup through for example their taxes.

Responses to threat

A core predicter of IPT is, that if the identity is threatened, the individual will try to cope with the threat, by using specific strategies (Breakwell, 1986; Jaspal & Sitaridou, 2013). In the following section, the strategies used by the participants to deal with the perceived threat will be presented, by referring to intrapsychic and intergroup level of strategies. First, it will be presented, how the participants place themselves as a victim, in the perceived threatening situation, in the sub-theme "self and group victimization". In the second sub-theme named "cultural superiority", it will be illustrated, how the participants responded to their perceived threat, by rationalizing their reasoning, through stereotyping the Muslims. A response strategy, which through their attitude of being cultural superior led to prejudice and cultural discrimination. Lastly, it will be demonstrated, how the participants react to threat through their engagement in political parties, in the sub-theme "participation in politics."

Self and group victimization

There was a tendency among the participants to unconsciously perceive themselves as victims, to make sense of their anger and to justify their opinion. It appeared through their feeling of injustices, which was expressed in a various situation during the interviews. For example, five participants explicitly said, that the people considered to be refugees in Denmark are not *"real refugees"*.

> If you go back in time, let's say when the Jews fled in World War II to Denmark, then they did not flee to Northern Russia or to Portugal, then they took the first country they came to - where they were safe. Because then you do not need to escape anymore. If you go through 7-8-9-10 countries, then I mean - then we are beyond the question whether they are escaping – then it is, because they are looking for better living

conditions and you can't judge them - I would have done that too. So, when people say, "Don't you hate them, you don't hate them, you don't hate them" - NO, because I can understand them. If I was in Somalia or Pakistan and my life were in ruins, well then, I would also seek happiness. And in the perfect life or in the perfect world, it would be great - I just don't think, we can afford it. (…) there is no doubt that there are a ton of refugees, who needs to be helped, but I do not think, that an immigrant should be helped financially. It is like their own case to try their luck and if they don't find, then they must try their luck somewhere else. But refugees must, of course, be helped, but it should not be a refugee who like – are well-educated or wealthy enough to pay a journey coming up here from many, many thousand kilometres away. Then I think, guaranteed, there are many miserable people down there who are poor and needs more help. (Lauge)

Lauge views immigration as someone, who moved based on free choice, where else refugees were forced to leave their own country. It seems difficult for him to distinguish between the criteria to be a refugee or an immigrant, what it means to be in danger as well as to define who deserves help. Nevertheless, by believing that the status of refugees and political asylum is often attributed unfairly, participants find arguments to go against the idea that refugees' people are real victims. Instead they perceived perceiving themselves as the victim in their own home country, *because of the others* (Wodak, 2005). A strategy which might help the participants to understand and legitimize their own opinions. Neglecting the refugees' situation can also be an example of how the perceived threat towards the Muslims might lead the participants to become more intolerant towards the group (Burke et al., 2010, Duckitt, et al., 2002).

Half of the participants have experienced discrimination of themselves or someone from their in-group felt discriminated against, due to their opinions about Muslims or participation in right-wing parties. Often, they mentioned it answering the question whether they experienced or perceived any hate-speech in society:

(...) He was a law student, and he was told that if he wanted to be a lawyer, he should not go to the municipal elections in DF 2015, because if you could just google one poster with his face, then he was sure not to be hired. I do not know a single example of when one has not been chosen from at a job interview because of the party. It's just something I hear from our party. (Mikkel)

Another common example was, that the participants moved the sense of injustice, and the sense of being a victim of prejudice and discrimination away from themselves and over to another

outgroup. Many referred to former Muslims, Muslim- women or homosexuals, as being victimized groups in the Danish society by the male and heterosexual Muslims. Three participants also mentioned the Jews in Denmark as a vulnerable minority-group, again because of Muslims. They explained their arguments often after being asked, if they identify any vulnerable minority-groups the Danish society:

> I can identify apostate Muslims, who have fled from Iran. I am Facebook friends with some, and they actually live under name and address protection today. It's a vulnerable group. In addition, then there are the Jews who are hunted wildly - not just in Denmark, but in Europe. The whole anti-Semitism. (…) They are vulnerable. Then there are third groups that I think are extremely vulnerable; there are Muslim women, who are subjects to a religion doctrine which is maintained by their country and men. In Denmark. However, this applies throughout Europe. These are the three groups that I think should be helped in a better way. The Jews get good help also in terms of protection. But when we take the Muslim women, I think it's totally grotesque. (Bjørk)

The above quotes show how participants to some extent unconsciously placed an outgroup as a victim, in the perceived threatening situation, probably in order to gain confident about their opinions and to protect their own self-esteem. The participants seemed very convinced about their ideas, which can illustrate that they have personalized their assumptions. This strategy can be defined as a motive to maintain a positive self-esteem (Breakwell, 1986), as the participants seemed conscious about, that their opinions at large not are accepted by the majority in Denmark.

Finally, some have complained, as explained in the first theme, over the perceived high demands, that Muslims are claimed to have in Denmark (see p. 24, Kasper). This is an example, where most of the participants feel victimized on a group-level. An image that the media and right-wing politicians have presented in Denmark, for example when discussing the ban on burqas (Krarup, 2019) or the Muslims children's eating habits in the kindergarten regarding pork (Børnehaver dropper svinekød, 2013). In these examples, often used by the media to construct fear, Muslims are represented as scapegoats, through tangible examples, that people can identify themselves with (Wodak, 2005; Hervik, 2002). Such exaggeration of cultural differences and defence of traditional values may be leading to the development of prejudice attitude (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995).

Cultural superiority

On also the intrapsychic level, some participants have reacted to the perceived threat by rationalizing their opinions and views on the Muslim community. There was a common tendency among the participants to justify their beliefs regarding Muslims, by pointing out that they are against their culture or religion, and not against the people, as pointed out before.

> I do not see those countries as a threat, I see the radicalized Islam as a threat. It's the one I'm afraid of. That's the one I have a problem with. Islam, where you have to impose other values on people, where women must behave in a certain way and where homosexuals must be killed, and where there must be a difference between how the children are treated – depending on whether they are a boys or girls - and we must pray and we must worship everything, and we must drop our law and everything possible to follow some caliphate from a religious book. (Dennis)

This statement illustrates, how the participant generalizes his perceived experiences and understandings of Muslims, by directing his attitude against *radicalized Islam* as opposite against the group itself. The statement captures the variables which explains Islamophobia, that represents Muslims as 'inherently dangerous and inferior' (Bleich 2006, p. 17). Other participants view the Muslims treatment of women, individuals with other religions, skin colors or sexuality - presented as a remarkable different from own ingroup, as in the following example. Statements which many times were highly discriminating.

> When you come to another country, you cannot keep living as you have done in a place, where the culture is so remarkably different than it is here with us. We have equality between the sexes - we do not look down on anyone because of their sexuality or religion and skin color, as it has nothing to say - at all. (Sten)

Generally, the participants distinguish themselves from the Muslims by describing Denmark as unique (e.g., Niels). A self-positioning, as part of the 'the pure people', while the others are perceived as 'the corrupt elite' (Mudde & Kaltwasser; 2012, p. 8). One participant used cultural and biological differences to justify her position:

> Those who come here from the non-western countries. They have a hard time changing themselves and there are probably some people in this country who think they should. And we find it hard to be with them because of biological and cultural differences. I think it is important that, as far as possible, if it is possible, to stay with the ones, that we biologically have something in common with. It gives otherwise too many frictions.

> That is why, I believe it is best for them to stay in their countries where they are from and then * stop killing each other and everything weird. (Anna)

Anna's argument shows how she understands her own group as biologically superior, which she believes creates the cultural differences. A negative attitude which helps to retain the superior status between the groups in the country. Other common beliefs about Muslims were also illustrated by the way the participant perceived their own work ethic compared to the Muslims (e.g. Hanne, Kenneth & Gunnar). Participants also shared the conviction that they have a higher intelligence in comparison, explicitly explained by Anna too. A discriminatory behaviour, which she is conscious about:

> The discussion has also been at Aarhus University. With Henrik who is an intelligence researcher. Here, there is always a discussion of, who are the wisest people in the world, and there is a tendency that the longer we come towards the equator, the less gifted are the people. So, the normal distribution curve looks different for example in white western Europeans versus Africans. I know it's very dangerous to say, because * it can really be discriminatory. It is a fragile area. But if you test thousands of white western Europeans and thousands of Africans, for example, there will be a very big difference of level. Then there are many, who say that you cannot use that score because they come from another culture, etc. But if you ignore all the research that is done and do not want to know about it - fair enough, but then you have to look clinically. Well, where does the research come from? Does the research come from Africa? Did they develop solutions for anything? After all, they did not - nothing comes from there. It's typically from Europe. It is hard to change their IQ score in general - it is very, very difficult. Because it's something biological. And of course, there exist wise Africans - just not as many - compared to farther north. (Anna)

Other participants expressed frustration of how to handle the perceived problems due to cultural differences: "Arab crime is not transparent to Europeans. Neither the Danish or German court of law takes into account the way they think or act. The way you relate to each other. We are not prepared for Islam in Europe." (Tine). A participant explained his thoughts of how to turn these perceived problems into action, which again can be defined as a cultural discriminatory behavior, due to his role as a politician: "(…) I also think that if second or third generation immigrant commits crime, the whole family must go home as a punishment. The family is the only thing they respect. "(Mikkel).

The statements in this section illustrates, how perceived cultural differences can strengthen prejudice and, in some cases, lead to cultural discrimination. Interviewees' islamophobic attitudes toward other cultures with different values, may stem from a fear of not being able to maintain a different and *unique* identity (Breakwell, 1986).

Participation in politics

Approximate half of the participants were engaged in politics for the first time. Being new-commers in politics is common among right-wing politicians (Van der brug & Fennema, 2007). These participants claimed joining the parties because of the current perceived threatening situation with Muslims in Denmark and because of their dissatisfaction with both EU or/and the current parties. Kenneth expressed that his participation "was necessary" (Kenneth). Sten explained: "I had a feeling, that no matter who we voted for, we just got more of the same thing all the time. (…)". The need of doing politics; to reduce their uncertainty about their future and the future of the ingroup can be interpreted as a social mobilization strategy on an intergroup level (Jaspal & Sitaridou, 2013). Indeed, social movement support has been increasingly recognized among scholars as being connected to right-wing populist parties and part of the alliance (Castelli Gattinara, & Pirro, 2018). Most of the participants engaged in social movement, also seemed to identify themselves with the party: "(…) it fits very well with what <u>we</u> think in the Danish People's Party" (Jens).

Hans explained, how his job as a fisherman lost its independent and confidence because of EU, which made him participate in politics, when he was younger:

> I would say more Denmark and less EU. We need to have a bigger voice. So, we need that - it is for sure. As fishermen we were actually choked by EU rules. We had good fishing and water in the Norwegian area. The Norwegians are not part of EU and therefore we were thrown out of the Norwegian area. (Hans)

The identity motive self-efficacy (Breakwell, 1986) seems to be driving the participant to his hatred against EU and towards his participation in politics. He sees the EU as the reason of his loss of control and confidence in his role as a fisherman. The motive self-efficacy was, in many cases, what seemed to drive the participants to their engagement in politics. The participants assumed, that they can control and change the perceived threatening situation through this strategy:

> This is really also why I became so active. The thing with the Mohammed crisis. Then

> I got activated. It was exactly at that time. In fact, in Denmark we can make fun of everything, I am not religious, but we can make fun of Jesus, we can make fun of the Torah and the Jews and we must be allowed to laugh with Muhammad - it's just a satire. Back then. (…) I think there was something here, where I felt some injustice. (Dennis)

> I lived in the ghetto and I had informed my ex-husband that if this Islamization continues, I would be gone, and he was not enthusiastic about it and then I thought - maybe I might do something before I leave. (Hanne)

Finally, all the participants proposed helping Muslim people in the countries of origin. A mentioned method by DF, as explained on page 16. This strategy seemed to be perceived as an acceptable and practical way of solving or reducing their perceived increasing threat, which in turn also can help to preserve positive self-esteem. The strategy was justified by arguing, that it is the best solution for both the outgroup and the ingroup:

> In fact, I think we should do, what DF has been talking about for many years and make an entire asylum stop. Then we will help them in the surrounding areas instead of giving people asylum. And if we help in the surrounding areas, we can better cooperate with other countries in Europe and create some camps that may help some more people in the surrounding areas compared to the few, who come to Denmark. In these camps, we imagine that we can provide them first and foremost with safety, but also education. Something that can help strengthen them, when their homeland is secured again. I think, that if you had done so with Syria, where they are actually fighting Islamic state now, I think the reconstruction will be much faster if you had pursued that policy. Because Syria was actually a country, that was very prosperous before, but after the battles everything is very destroyed, and a lot of resources are needed. If many of them come to Denmark, where we will spend a lot of money on them, and the idea is that they will stay here, well then there are some people that cannot be used in Syria. (Jens)

The theme reveals, how the participants, on diverse levels, use strategies to reduce their perceived threat. Acting as a victim, and perceiving themselves and their group as injustice, is used to justify their positioning and gain confident about their opinion, as well as to make sense of their own frustration. It can also be argued to be a common strategy adopted by the right-wing populist parties, as these parties tend to blame others for the *people's* problems (Pelinka, 2013: Wodak, 2005). Problems, that seem to be personalized among the participants

(Breakwell, 2014). The sub-theme "cultural superiority" illustrates how the participants generalizes the Muslims on the basic of perceived culture differences, as a strategy to make sense of their perceived threat. Such strategy can strengthen prejudice and, in some cases, lead to cultural discrimination. The threat toward other cultures with different values seems to stem from a threat toward the identity motive distinctiveness (Breakwell, 1986). In turn, participants make sense of the need to change the perceived threatening situation, by engaging in politics. The motive self-efficacy was, what seemed to drive the participant to their engagement (Breakwell, 1986). Conversely, it can be argued that the sense of wanting to control the threatening situation is a central motive of why the individuals support the right- wing populist party's immigration policy.

Changes in self-positioning – accommodation of different perspectives

The challenge in intercultural contacts is the different knowledge system, which creates different ways of making sense of the world (Sammut & Gaskell, 2010). The perspectives of the participants often appeared as common sense for them, which illustrates their systems of beliefs. Other times contradictory ideas appeared through their consideration about the out- group, and ways to solve the perceived problems. It can represent a threat toward the value/affect dimension of identity, which constantly is in revision due to social change (Jaspel & Cinnirella, 2010). This theme will focus on the participants personal experience and the following changes as well as on participants process of adjusting and evaluating different perspectives.

Much research in social psychology has been conducted to understand how contact can improve intergroup relations, based on Alport's (1954) intergroup contact hypothesis. This theory predicts that intergroup contact, under appropriate conditions, can reduce prejudice. Regarding Muslims, it is not clear if contact with Muslims can reduce prejudice, yet there is evidence, that non-Muslims who imagined intergroup contact with Muslims have more positive implicit attitudes towards them (Turner & Crisp, 2010). Nevertheless, intergroup contact under appropriate conditions has been identified to engender processes of social re- presentations (Chryssides et al. 2009), which can lead to positive contact (Sammut & Gaskell, 2010). All the participants in this study were asked, if they did not mention it by themselves, if they were in contact with Muslims or have any Muslim friends (Appendix A, question 8). Among all participants, none of them claimed to have any voluntary contact with their perceived threatening outgroup, as a part of their daily life. Bjørk had Muslim friends on Facebook, while

two participants lived in areas with a higher population of non-westerns and other two participants worked on schools where there are Muslims attending. Additionally, many participants mentioned experiences, they have had in the past, which either had changed their perspective or strengthened their negative views on Muslims people.

Personal experience

All the participants referred at some point in the interviews to past experiences with people, they perceived as Muslims, which they either explicitly or implicitly claimed to have changed their perspectives, and in some cases, influenced their view on Muslims. The following comment is an example:

> There was a situation with cobbles. Somebody saw me in Ikast, kissing another guy and then they took a picture of me and shared it around. There is a tiny ghetto in Ikast, and therefore I could suddenly not walk on the street without (.) none of us could - without being shouted at. (…) cobbles were thrown in through my window on my couch. Luckily, I was in the kitchen, otherwise I would not be here now. It was in my own home. After that, things changed. Before, I was like a little * I was a little more cynical after this for a while. It also had some psychological consequences - some depression and I isolated myself for many years. (Dennis)

Dennis' experience seemed to have changed his behaviour, as well as it led to an evaluation process of his identity as a homosexual (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). In specific, Dennis became more insecure about his own identity, which constituted a treat toward his self-esteem and his need of belonging (Breakwell, 1986). As a coping strategy, he isolated himself. Further, it changed the meaning, he gives to Muslims, as he claimed that he became more "cynical", which could have provoked his support of the anti-immigration policies. Also, Hanne mentioned to have changed her opinion about Muslims, and her believes about the current immigration policy:

> So, I ended up living between two ghettos. It really started out fine. There were some good homes, etc. But then the Second World War started - I was just about to say – there was an ongoing gang conflict. Today I live in Copenhagen. They shot at four o'clock in the afternoon, and my daughter couldn't even ride on her bike. I was just so angry with them. And I would say that this is one of the things about living in a ghetto - or so close to two ghettos - at least, it has not made me feel better about the way we deal with the

immigration. It has contributed - of cause - to what I believe about them. (…) So, believe me, it's not a world I dream of. And then I began to notice it, and then I thought - okay, NB have something, which speaks to me. Both with their EU and immigration policy. So, I signed up to go over to the National Assembly to see which kinds of strange people, who are there. But there were quite ordinary people. (Hanne)

Today Hanne is active in politics, and it seems that her experiences led her trying to change the threatening *world*. It can be argued, that a mixture of different episodes regarding the perceived threat with Muslims in Hannes life has changed her identity. Explaining the beliefs, that she beforehand thought, that the people from right-wing parties were "strange", can illustrate that the hate against Muslims for her has become more acceptable. Currently, she identifies herself more with the *ordinary people from Denmark* fighting against the Muslims.

Another participant expressed his considerations of how he found it challenging to avoid his few experiences to become subject for generalization:

I was teaching for some of the small classes, and here I experienced the fact that when an immigrant boy entered the class - suddenly I used 30-40% of my time to control him, but I also experienced that a female teacher came into my class and said: "Now I can't do it anymore". She had an older class where there were some girls with scarfs (…) they had difficulty seeing the authority of a woman - or at least someone had. Those girls - it was simply so clear, that they despised her. She was such a younger, beautiful Danish woman. And then one of those girls called her a whore. It is always dangerous to pull out some things and say, that it is a picture of everything. But it forms an understanding. Which makes * It's something that I take with me. (Niels)

Niels' experiences seem to have changed his perspective of Muslims, since he expressed that he "*took it with him".* Such situations have challenged the way, he considers his cultural values compared to the others. Other participants made correlations between different experiences, which formed their basis of understanding of Muslims and their perceived problems with the out-group in Denmark, as seen in the following two examples:

I have lived in Greece. I moved home when I was around 25. So, 2-3 years. I became aware of something here. Greece had a dictatorship at that point (…) And then I could see a connection about the same time, when a lot of Turks started to come up here. They also had dictatorship and oppression. (Hanne) Christine explained likewise: (…) I have therefore travelled a lot in Arab countries. There is a huge amount of sexual

harassment of women. And also, something I partly experienced. And therefore, after what happened in Cologne, I thought: "Okay now we simply imported this harassment of women". Now it is largely on European ground and I think this is unacceptable. (Christine)

Both, Christines and Hanne's discourses suggested that their identity change may be a consequence of the evaluation they did of these experiences. A standpoint, which created Christine's present belief about, how all Arabs treat women, which she transfers to the perceived problems in Europe, where Muslim community are presented as constituting a threat towards gender equality. Her process of engender a belief is uniquely positioned in relation to others believes, but her views are co-creator in forming the social representation of the Muslims in Denmark (Moscovici ,1981). Besides Christine, four other participants pointed out, that they were influenced by what they read and saw in media about the episode in Cologne (assault of many women). Gunnar argued, that what he saw in the media about 9/11, changed his perspective of himself, from before perceiving himself as tolerant and fair, to now identifying himself as being judgmental against other people. 9/11 has additionally been identified to have influenced the intergroup relation between Muslims and Danes in Denmark, as well as it has been argued to play a role of the political change (Rytter & Pedersen, 2014). Gunnar's statement refers to the universal process in IPT, where the absorption and adjustment in the identity structure of the new information of 9-11 was followed by an evaluation process, which gave his perception of Muslims a new meaning and value (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014):

So, the big thing for me was 9-11. It was a crucial moment regarding my attitude towards Arab Muslim influence on immigrants in the West. It was the big moment, in which I began to question my attitudes. I was very positive: "Well, we have to give them a chance and everyone must have a chance." That we should not be racists. We can't be - because they are also people. They are right. But what is happening? (Gunnar)

Self-contradictory ideas

As initially stated, Jaspal and Cinnirealla (2010) proposed a psychological coherence principle, which refers to the motivation to establish feelings of compatibility between interconnected identities. Some of the participants seemed to be apprehensive and doubtful about their own opinions as in the following example:

"Even your wife [from England] is an immigrant. So, how can you sit and have such attitudes, when you are married to an immigrant." (…) If I had ever met an amazing

woman or man from Turkey, then it might well be that my vision had been completely different (…) I am often asked about it - what if I fell in love with one from a Muslim country - and I must say that I do not know. (Niels)

Niels, who had negative experience with immigrants as a teacher, is aware of his own attitude toward Muslims. Niels' considerations can be seen as an example of when an individual's psychological coherence principle is uncertain (Jaspal & Cinnirealla, 2010). Explaining this example during the interview, without being asked, he shows difficulties with the adjustment to counterarguments from people who protect the Muslims position in the Danish society. People, who may be in opposition to the right-wing populist party's generalization of the Muslims, and to a greater extent are able to see through the negative discourses of the out-group in society. Those people's different meanings of Muslims did Niels partly seem to be able to identify himself with, which showed through his uncertainty about the answer to the question many ask him.

A majority of the participants had difficulties making sense of their own moral and personal limits, which was found in the many ways they explained how they imagine helping people in danger. Ragnar, who during the interviews pointed out twice, that he supports NB's proposal regarding total asylum-stop, showed other more humane opinions. The following statement shows, how Gunnar negotiates different perspectives, perhaps as an attempt to establish feelings of compatibility between his interconnected identities.

> We need to build a wall and end asylum. We must close the boarders - people have to know, that they cannot just come here.
>
> [Later in the interview]
>
> We should think more about why people immigrate. Someone says it doesn't matter. In some people, there exist a blindness to why people come here, and I think that is it stupid - It is not a Danish way of thinking! It goes against the Danish way of doing things; to be thorough and honest with the problems we are facing. For example, we should ask: What are some of the basic problems they face. How do we find a solution for the problems? This is the real Danish way of doing things. I think we are failing the Danish way of thinking by not thinking about which problems people have. We are a faithful and warm people (Gunnar)

On one hand, Gunnar wants to identify himself as *a faithful and warm* Dane. A person who rationally identifies human needs differently. On the other hand, he is referring to political

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strategies, as asylum-stop to cope with the perceived threat. It can be suggested, that the perceived threatening situation with Muslims in Denmark, slowly has changed his identity, regarding how he experienced himself in relation to other outgroups.

This theme illustrates, how the participants experience with the perceived threatening outgroup has changed the meaning of Muslims in relation to themselves. The process of meaning-making is constant, which therefore constantly re-produce the social re-presentations of Muslims, which shows to have influenced the participants own identification. This theme also illustrates, that the participants have had negative experience with the threatening outgroup, which has contributed to their views of Muslims. A point of view which has been argued by scholars to be common to social actors, as it constructs a social representation, which influence interaction with others (Sammut & Gaskell, 2010; Moscovici, 1981). Therefore, the participants' experiences do not contradict the fear against Muslims as a social construction, but their experiences influence the framework of how, the participants give value and meaning to their experiences and the perceived problems.

Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the identity motives (Breakwell, 1986; Vignoles, 2002; Jaspel & Cinnirella, 2010), that drive individuals in Denmark to support the right-wing populist parties' immigration policy. Various identity motives were found to drive the participants to support the parties' immigration policy, such as belonging, continuity, self-efficacy and distinctiveness. Belonging and self-efficacy were identified as the most salient identity motives. The study has illustrated different explanations to specific elements of the identity threat and goes beyond the intergroup relation between immigrants and the supporters of the parties. The identity motives proposed by IPT, were identified in three main themes emerged from the data: *Perceived threat to identity; Responses to threat;* and *Changes in self-positioning – accommodation of different perspectives.*

Participants' perceptions of threat were partly demonstrated through their need of distinguishing themselves from the others by defending own culture in comparison with the perceived differences of the Muslim culture. The participants' perception of threat constituted a prejudice- and ethnocentric attitude, due to their generalizing beliefs emerged from mainly social representations. These findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating, that people who are under threat tend to increase their in-group identification (Fritsche, Jonas, & Fankhänel, 2008). They tend to defend and support own in-group (Fritsche et al., 2011), and

become more intolerant and prejudiced toward others, whom they perceive to be different (Burke et al., 2010, Duckitt, et al., 2002). The individuals expressed feelings of uncertainty, because of the perceived differences, which constituted a threat towards their need of belonging. It is especially demonstrated by their fear of losing their homogeneous society. A perceived diverse culture in Denmark, seems to constitute a threat towards the subjective perception of control, as the notion of a homogeneous society seems to offer something controllable and predictable for the participants. Furthermore, a homogeneous society seems to symbolize the Danish society. Indeed, it appears to be a strong connecting between the need of belonging and self-efficacy. The need of getting the control back over the perceived threatening situation was one of the main causes leading individuals to support either DF or NB's immigration policy. This was expressed through participations various coping strategies adopted by the participants in order to remove or modify the perceived threat. For example, the participants expressed, that the Muslims need to assimilate to contribute to the Danish society and to ensure, that the perceived homogeneous community can continue. There is no hierarchy in the identity motives as they are interconnected, but some can appear more salient in certain situations (Breakwell, 2014). Yet, it can be stated, that self-efficacy was one of the main motives, that drove the participants to support the populist right-wing parties' immigration policy. The need of self-efficacy showed to be crucial for the participants to maintain and restore a sense of control and confidence. Some participants expressed feeling able to change the perceived threatening situation with Muslims in Denmark, which can mean that the coping strategies are effective (Breakwell, 2014). Perceiving being in control of the perceived threatening situation can likewise cause the other interconnected threaten identity motives, such as belonging, continuity and distinctiveness to loss its power, which can optimize the identity processes to retain a harmonious identity (Breakwell, 1986; Vignoles, 2002; Breakwell, 2014).

It can be argued, that the tendency of perceiving the Muslims as a common enemy in Denmark, constitutes a strategy of controlling the perceived uncertainty in the society (Sullivan, et al., 2010). It can herewith be claimed, that the Muslims symbolize uncertainty to the participants, which the many different superficial representations of Muslims such as criminals or untrustworthy are marked by. In other words, the perceived threat by Muslims in Denmark, does not necessarily have anything to do with Muslim people per se. The Muslims seems in many ways to represent the target, that can make the individual perceive, that they have control over the unpredictable world around. This unpredictable world is presented as a fear to *the people*, by the right-wing populist parties (Wodak, 2005).

The participants' perceptions of the threat by the social representations of the Muslims and

their fear of social change, created throughout recent decades, can be claimed to have changed their identity to some extent. A change which seems to influence, how the individuals attach value and meaning to the perceived problems with Muslims in Denmark. Their process can also illustrate the constant changes in the interpretation of the problem in Danish society. It marks the individuals' content and value dimension in their identity structure. It is demonstrated by their considerations of how to make sense of the perceived problem with Muslims and how to help people in need. Yet, it must be pointed out, that the participants were not asked whether their perception of Muslims had changes, or if specific experiences have influenced their beliefs. Longer in-depth interviews would be required in order to make a full investigation of the changes in the structure of their identities and to identity further changes to their perception of Muslims.

The various studies made with the purpose of understanding the growing success of the right-wing populist parties have been claimed to focus primarily on e.g. the politicians' strategies or on the factors influencing the supporter's political choice (Golder, 2016). One of the contributions to this study is, that the participants' beliefs seems to be influenced and formed by the strategies and discourses by the right-wing populist parties, which reflect the way the participants adopt and interpret the politician's actions and rhetoric about Muslims. The right-wing populist parties are sharing their message through media and in particular social media in order to gain power and freely articulate their ideology (Engesser, Ernst, Esser, & Büchel, 2017; Wodak, 2005). It should therefore also be taken into account how diverse media play a powerful roll on the influence of the participants. The fear of Muslims among the participants seems to create a feeling of victimization. It appears to have similar component as the parties' predicted strategy of instrumentalizing threatening counterparts in society (Wodak, 2005; Pelinka, 2013). The participants have also adopted similar strategies to cope with the perceived threat, by making sense of the need of social change, by mobilizing political parties against the existing parties in the parliament, in order to solve the perceived problem for the *Danish people.* Furthermore, the analysis illustrates how the participants have accepted and internalized a slightly common and accepted way of identifying the perceived threat by Muslims, which again is consistent with the political strategy of constructing a cultural battle against Islam (Pelinka, 2013, Wodak, 2005; Meret & Siim, 2013). The interviews demonstrated, how religion is perceived as a disproportionate difference and threat, which constitutes their understanding of the cultural differences. According to the participants, their religion holds Muslims from participating and being integrated in the society, which constitute a threat towards their

democracy and welfare- system, along with their need of belonging. The practice of the welfare state seems to symbolize a sense of community among the participants. The shared values of trust and shared responsibility in society give some of the participants a sense of meaning in life. It is illustrated by their high identification with the Danish values. It is important to remind in relation to this finding, that the sense of community is a part of the "great Danish society", understood through the shared sense of identity (Østergård, 1992). A factor which can be argued to make it more accessible for right-wing populist parties in Denmark to gain support, as well as to build on and encourage Islamophobic tendencies. Future studies should explore how sense of community of the right-wing populist supporter's influence their political choice and how their sense of community differ from individuals in Denmark, supporting a liberal immigration policy. As well as it could be interesting to further explore, the connection between the right-wing populist parties' strategies and the supporter's interpretations of the politician action, in order to find further explanations of the individuals' political choice. Such studies may help to predict further consequences in society of the growing success of right-wing populist parties.

As demonstrated in this study, the right-wing populist parties argue on the behalf of *the people* and on the behalf of, what they think people mean. Therefore, they implicitly tell, what people should think. A behavior, which per se can be considered undemocratic. The right-wing populist parties present EU and existing non-far-right parties, as not respecting the peoples' will. Yet, the right-wing populist politicians' narrow delimitation or consciousness of who belongs to the Danish society, which the participants seems to have adopted, creates disrespect to the inhabitants in Denmark. Their behavior counteracts their desire of having a democratic society. The right-wing populist preconception of what the people think, plays a role of what people can belief, how the individuals understand and makes sense of the perceived threat. The right-wing populist superior rhetoric against the others, creates a fear of losing the perceived peculiarity of the Danish culture and the cohesion of the Danes. When the right-wing populists' ideas are instrumentalized in the participants in such way, it may lead to identity threat on an individual level. In turn, such perceived threat seems to develop and strengthen the participants awareness of own national identity fostering feelings of identity cultural superiority and leading to social exclusion in society.

It is concurrently problematic that other parties in the parliament slowly have adopted the same strategies (Andersen, 2018), as well it is disturbing, that policies are categorizing immigrants, such as refugees versus economic migrants, non-Muslims and Muslims, male and female immigrant (Hedetoft, 2006). Those pairs of antonyms might reflect missing categories

or languages to consider solutions for the perceived problem of multiculturalism in Denmark. It is perhaps a sign, that the Danish language has not followed Denmark's shift towards being a more multicultural society. Concepts such as parallel communities, Danish values and second-generation-immigrants seem to maintain the existence of excluded and vulnerable minority groups. It can be argued, that the language can be limiting the processes of developing other social representations, thereby legitimizing the exclusion of the others. To a greater extent, politicians should pay attention to their language, and which categories, the words they use symbolize.

A solution to reduce the hatred against Muslim among the right-wing populist parties' supporters may start by making people aware of the parties' strategies, before introducing people to different ways of thinking about the Muslims. Individuals need to become aware of how their way of thinking can create exclusion and discourses. In future studies, it could be interesting to investigate, why some people are more prone to adopt those negative social representations of Muslims, as well as why some individuals are more susceptible to the right-wing populist strategies. Such studies could lead to a further understanding, why some individuals support anti-immigration policies, and why other do not. The diversity of profile of the interviewees (e.g., educational level, occupation) suggested, that right-wing parties in Denmark attract fairly ordinary and often middle-class people, not only the vulnerable and socially marginal as previous studies argued (Blee & Creasap, 2010).

Lastly, the imitations of this study should be mentioned. Only 16 people participated in the study. More participants and longer interviews could may have offered more comprehensive results as well as it could have been interesting to interview the same participants several times over a long period, to be able to follow how changes in the social context further influenced people's identity. Another limitation of this study can be considered to be my Danish upbringing. It can both have influenced the conversation between me and the participants, as well as it can have influenced, how I interpret the participants' statements. On the other hand, it can be argued, that my Danish background gives me some insights of the Danish culture, which of course can be a barrier, as well as strength.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The need of self-efficacy has been identified as constituting the main reason of why the participants in this study support the right-wing populist parties' immigration policies. The study illustrated how the participants have difficulties accepting increased cultural diversity in the society in Denmark. The individuals perceived cultural differences between them and the Muslims, constitute a threat to their need of belonging, which appeared through their fear of losing the perceived homogeneous society. The social representation of the Muslims as being remarkably different from the Danes showed to symbolize uncertainty, which seems to lead the participants to support the anti-immigration policies of the right-wing populist parties in Denmark. Conversely, this study demonstrated that their support provides the participants with a feeling of control, because the Muslims symbolize an inferior group, which the participants feel to be able to control through their political support and actions.

Furthermore, the study identified how the individuals seems to be influenced by the right-wing populist parties' representation of Muslims, as well as the parties' representation of the social change in society. This study demonstrated, that the right-wing populist parties in Denmark have constructed and developed far-right political identities, based on fear of social change, represented by the fear of diversity. The participants identification with the political parties showed to decrease their ability to understand the perceived problems with Muslims in society from a more comprehensive perspective. The right-wing populist parties' rhetoric has to some extent helped to normalize the participants judgmental and generalizing views of Muslims.

From a theoretical perceptive, this study has demonstrated, how the individuals' identities can be influenced by social representations. It contributed to a different approach of the right-wing populist parties' supporter's identity motives. It is recommended to look at the social representation of Muslims as a supplementary actor in the understanding of the intergroup relations. Finally, this study illustrates the importance of bringing the culture aspect into account in order to increase the understanding of the growth of the right-wing populist parties. Indeed, it seems that some aspects of the Danish culture (e.g. cohesion and trust) can help to understand, why people support far-ring political parties.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Interview-guide

1. Introduction of the participant.
    a. What does it mean for you to be X?

2. What is your opinion to this statement: "*The repatriation of immigrants can be the only way to save lives. It will not bring any good, if they come here. The rights of immigrants can never be put before the right of sovereignty of a nation and its own inhabitants.*"
    a. Can you elaborate a bit on your opinion to this statement?

3. How would you identify the immigrants' position in Denmark?
    a. Is there a difference between the immigrants' position?
        i. If yes; why do you think they have different positions in the Danish society?

4. When it comes to immigration policy, or politics in general, which parties do you feel most connected to (or why do you feel the most connected to X?)
    a. Why do you feel identified with that/those groups/parties? (e.g., is about their values, principles, leaders?
    b. Have you participated in activities organized by them? Which activities? What role(s) did you have?
    c. How would you describe the leader(s)? Which characteristics are important to be such a leader?
    d. Are there other parties or groups that you feel identified to?

5. Do you identify vulnerable groups in our society? (e.g., any group with fewer rights than the general population?).
    a. Who are they? And why do you think they are vulnerable?

      b.   How about privilege, do you identify any privileged group in our society? Why these people have such privilege?

      c.   Do you support the idea that all human beings should be equally treated?

6. Do you see manifestations of "hate speech" in Denmark?
      a.   Can you give me some examples?
      b.   What is your opinion about such ideas?
      c.   Which are the causes of hate speech? Why do you think people use it?
      d.   How does hate speech make you feel? How do you react to this type of speech?

7. In your opinion, what are the major problems, we are currently facing? [e.g., Denmark; In Europe; Worldwide?]
      a.   How would you define existing policies regarding such issues?
      b.   Which policy changes do you think would be necessary? And why?

8. Are you frequently in contact with that group? E.g. are there any X in your groups of friends, among your peripheral friends or colleagues?

Appendix B. Codes and descriptions

Codes	Description	Deductive/ inductive
1. Perceived culture threat	Participants expressed, that people from the Middle east or Nord Africa constitutes a threat toward their culture.	Deductive -the theme is inspired by intergroup threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2017).
1.1. Maintain our culture	They claimed directly that they need to maintain their culture.	
1.2. Perceived culture differences	If they perceived, that the reason of their expressed problems with Muslims, is the differences between Danes and Muslims.	
1.3. Our demands on them	Participants mentioned, that they should make greater demands towards Muslim.	
1.4. Injustices	They expressed feelings of injustices because of the perceived threatening out-group	
1.4.1. Discrimination towards in-groups	Participants shared situations, where they or someone from their in-group felt discriminated against, due to their opinions about Muslims or participation in right- wing parties.	
1.4.2. Their demands on us	Participants expressed, that Muslims have high demands in Danish society	
2. Against EU or globalization, or existent Danish parliament/parties	The participants mentioned either to be against EU, *globalization* or existing Danish parties or the hole parliament.	Inductive
2.1. Belonging	When they expressed at threat towards their need of belonging	Deductive – inspired by identity

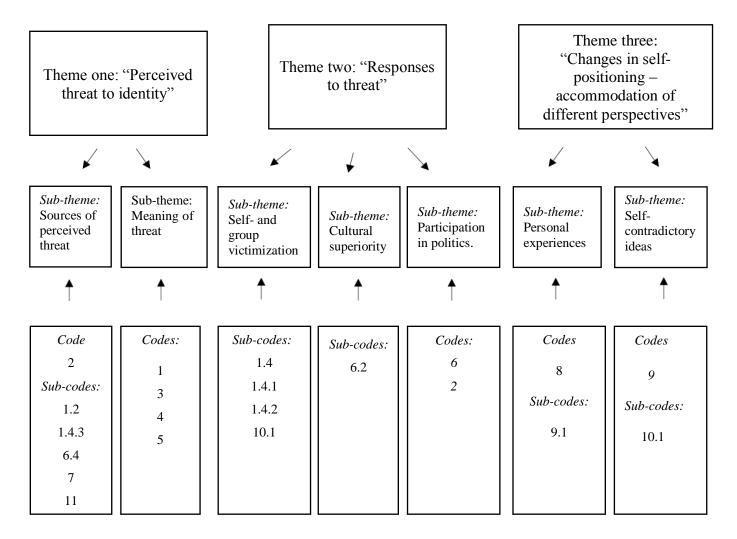|		process theory (Breakwell, 2014)
3. Fear my children's future	Claimed, that they are concerned about the future of their children	Inductive
4. Perceived economic threat	They experienced a threat towards the country's finances because of Muslims.	Deductive – inspired by intergroup threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2017)
4.1. Does the number count?	When they expressed, pointed out or discussed, if *the number* of Muslims/immigrant/refugees has an influence. Or if they pointed out the *amount of money* the state spends on the out-group.	
5. Threat towards security and trust	When they expressed that they feel threatened towards security and trust in Denmark.	Deductive – inspired by ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2017) and IPT (Breakwell, 2014).
5.1. Fear of violence or terror	They express fear of violence or terror on an individual - or group level.	Deductive – inspired by ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2017) and TMT (Greenberg, Solomon & Pyszczynski, 1997)
6. Coping strategies "I do politics to change it."	When they mentioned, that they began their engagement in politics to change the perceived threatening situation.	Deductive – refers to coping strategies; IPT (Breakwell, 2014).
6.1. Coping strategy – Must differentiate	Participants mentioned, that it is necessary to differentiate between immigrants and refugees.	
6.2. (Culturally) Superior	They expressed (cultural) superiority	

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6.3. Help them outside Denmark	Participants explained, that it would be better for *us* and *them* to help outside Denmark instead of inside.	
6.4. We must differentiate	Participants expressed the importance of differentiating between the immigrants	
7. It is not personal	Participants mentioned, that they had nothing against the Muslim people, but instead against their culture, religion, EU or *others,* who could be blamed for the perceived threatening situation.	Inductive
8. Contact	All participants were asked regarding their contact with Muslims to understand, if their experiences were guided exclusively through discourses, or if they have had personal experiences, which had constituted to their believes.	Deductive – inspired by intergroup contact hypotheses (Alport, 1954).
9. Change in perception of Muslims	When they mentioned, directly or indirectly, that they once perceived Muslims differently.	Deductive – inspired by identity process theory (Breakwell, 2014)
9.1. Personal experiences	When they without being asked mentioned personal experience that they, directly or indirectly claimed, had changed their perception of Muslims.	
10. Justifications - Best for both us and them	Justifying, why it could be better for both them and us, if they were not in Denmark.	Inductive

10.1 Immigration or refugees	When they were discussing or pointing out, that the refugees not are *real refugees,* but immigrants.	
11. Either Muslims or Danes	When they mentioned groups or individuals, who were either Danes or Muslims	Inductive

Appendix C. Codes and sub-codes mainly connected to each theme and sub-theme.

Theme one: "Perceived threat to identity"	Theme two: "Responses to threat"	Theme three: "Changes in self-positioning – accommodation of different perspectives"

Sub-theme: Sources of perceived threat	Sub-theme: Meaning of threat	*Sub-theme:* Self- and group victimization	*Sub-theme:* Cultural superiority	*Sub-theme:* Participation in politics.	*Sub-theme:* Personal experiences	*Sub-theme:* Self-contradictory ideas

Code 2 *Sub-codes:* 1.2 1.4.3 6.4 7 11	*Codes:* 1 3 4 5	*Sub-codes:* 1.4 1.4.1 1.4.2 10.1	*Sub-codes:* 6.2	*Codes:* 6 2	*Codes* 8 *Sub-codes:* 9.1	*Codes* 9 *Sub-codes:* 10.1