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Emotions in the Crisis: Mobilising for Refugees in Germany and Sweden

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Introduction

Sweden and Germany have shared a number of similarities during the so-called refugee crisis. Both have been predominantly destination countries for refugees. In European comparison, both have taken in somewhat disproportionate numbers of people per capita during the height of the 'refugee crisis'. In October 2015, Sweden absorbed more refugees than in any previous month; 162,877 asylum claimants entered in that year, more than twice as many as in the previous years (Berger 2016). Germany saw a total of 890,000 for the same year (BMI 2016). Both countries also subscribe in the dominant public discourse to the notion of a 'refugee crisis'. And finally, the civic response to this 'refugee crisis' shares the prevalence of a certain kind of civic organising in support of refugees that emerged during this period—so-called welcome initiatives.

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However, as I will carve out in this chapter, closer analysis reveals some significant differences between the two country cases, too. Both commonalities and differences come into relief if we focus on some patterns of the emotional underpinnings of welcome initiatives and their presence or absence in the field of civic organising for refugees, rather than their formal characteristics. The comparative perspective proves particularly fruitful here. This focus raises the question of contextual conditions accounting for similarities and differences.

The following analysis explores the role of the discursive construct of a 'refugee crisis', the role of different forms of nationalism, and differences in the structure of the civic field and, relatedly, of state-civil society relations. Based on a comparative analysis focusing on the cities of Berlin and Gothenburg (expanded to other cities as well), I will show how a number of discursive contexts have conveyed feeling rules that have shaped some of the emotions that have mobilised civic organisers. What emerges from this comparative analysis are aspects of an emotional politics of the 'refugee crisis' in Sweden and Germany.

German and Swedish Mobilisations

Both countries saw the emergence of a new kind of mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis'—welcome initiatives—which dominated, at least in much of the public perception, the civic response to the 'refugee crisis' but were far from the only civic actors in the field. Welcome initiatives were often entirely new organisations typically mobilised through social media (some only existing as informal online groups). Some also emerged from pre-existing organisations that shifted their focus towards refugees and grew significantly in the process. Many involved individuals had no previous experience with civic action. For Germany, survey research among individual civic actors found that 66 per cent had mobilised for refugees since 2015 and 19 per cent since 2014 (Karakayali and Kleist 2016, p. 19; see also Daphi 2016, p. 35; Sutter 2017, p. 3). Swedish analyses similarly found that many individuals had mobilised for the first time (Weinryb 2016). My own interview data corroborates this.

Welcome initiatives have to a large extent provided stop-gap help to incoming refugees in the context of a state's greater or lesser failure to provide basic and legally stipulated provisions to them. This included handing out food, clothing, basic supplies, accommodation, bureaucratic help, language courses, and so on. Most of the organisations interviewed in this project were rather informal (see also Karakayali and Kleist 2016, p. 22; Weinryb 2016). This seems to be more out of pragmatism than based on normative considerations such as a penchant for grassroots principles. German welcome initiatives, however, more than their Swedish counterparts, have started a process of formalisation and professionalisation. This distinction points at differences in state-civil society relations that I will discuss more in depth at a later point.

Structure of the Field

Welcome initiatives emerged in a field of pro-migrant civic organising that has existed in both countries for decades and comprises a range of other organisations. In Germany, there is a long lineage of civic action both by and for migrants (Oulios 2016; Schröder 2014). Up to the 'refugee crisis', this field had slowly regained some momentum after the severe legal restrictions of the constitutional right to asylum in 1993 and the 'refugee political ice age' that followed (Jakob 2016, p. 106). One notable current in this field is mobilisations since 2012 by migrants themselves, which have involved a number of radical actions (e.g. hunger and thirst strikes, stitching lips shut, occupations of exposed urban spaces), but had already undergone a period of demobilisation when the 'refugee crisis' set in (Mayer 2017).

Another current is radical/autonomous left activism. Two examples are Alarmphone and No Border, which are in fact transnational initiatives, but operating in Germany as well. This current of activism enacts solidarity with refugees as part of a wider struggle against a neoliberal, capitalist order (Kleres forthcoming). My interviews suggest that there is some overlap between radical leftist and migrants' activism, though not free of tensions.

Two other currents remain relatively detached from the former two. One is a range of migration-related interest associations and church-

based initiatives, such as Pro Asyl, Germany's largest pro-immigrant advocacy organisation. Pro Asyl functions as an umbrella organisation for regional refugee councils, church and union initiatives, welfare and human rights organisations, and traditional humanitarian organisations. Many of these are professionalised NGOs.

Finally, churches have formed a pillar of pro-immigrant civic organising in themselves. This often operates on a parish level. A specific form of this is the church asylum, that is, local parishes hosting refugees on their premises in order to protect them against impending deportations. Oulios (2016, p. 326) counted 500 instances of church asylum between 1983 and 2002, helping 5000 individuals. Another example is the Jesuit Refugee Service, providing pastoral care in deportation prisons, offering legal advice and counselling for refugees, and carrying out political lobbying. Our interviews indicate a certain overlap between welcome initiatives and this older, ecclesiastical current.

In Sweden, too, there have been pertinent mobilisations for some decades. Parallels with Germany include the significance of churches. Here as well, parishes have provided direct help for refugees. One example is Svenska Kyrkan Bergsjön, a parish of the Church of Sweden in Gothenburg's Bergsjön neighbourhood. The parish premises have turned into a hub for social and support activities for refugees and migrantic denizens including a cafe, a clothing desk, and other services. This has resulted from the neighbourhood's transformation into a segregated, migrantic one, which predated the 'refugee crisis'. Other parishes in Gothenburg have started supporting refugees only during the 'refugee crisis'.

Political parties—specifically Vänsterpartiet [the Left Party]—played a significant role in the civic response to the 'refugee crisis', as the local chapter in Gothenburg closed down operations in its party headquarters, turning it into an improvised refugee home for several weeks. As one of their representatives put it, Vänsterpartiet and the church provided much of the infrastructure for the civic response to the 'refugee crisis', co-enabling welcome initiatives.

A radical, autonomous Left has been relatively absent in Gothenburg. The most radical left-leaning organisation relevant in this context is Inga Människor Är Illegal [No One Is Illegal]. This has been one of the more

central civic organisations in support of refugees and other immigrants, catering especially to undocumented immigrants. As such, its activities include explicitly political activities such as organising demonstrations. Rosengrenska, another example of a pre-existing organisation, has provided medical care for undocumented immigrants and successfully pushed to have them included in Sweden's regular medical system. A syndicalist group briefly got involved during the height of the refugee crisis.

Another difference from the German case is the lack of any separate, sustained mobilisation by refugees themselves, although individual migrants were involved in any of the above-mentioned forms of mobilisation. The single exception was a 2016 demonstration in Stockholm, with refugees coming from all over Sweden to a central square in the city.

In comparison with Germany, politicisation played a greater and more central role in Sweden. The context for this was at the time still impending (and later implemented) limitations on the legal rights of refugees, for instance, making it more difficult for refugees to even reach Sweden or have their families come after them. A broad range of civic initiatives formed an alliance—the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt [People's Campaign for the Right to Asylum]—to advocate against these legal changes.

Approaching Civic Emotions

Our fieldwork focused on Berlin and Gothenburg for a number of reasons. Both are major cities with a diversity of civic organisations and focal points for refugees' arrivals. The developments in Berlin also took on a particular symbolic character in the German context: the failure of German institutions to take care of incoming refugees was particularly apparent here as the pertinent institution—the Berlin Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs (LaGeSo)—virtually collapsed. This had severe consequences for refugees who were left in large numbers waiting outside for days, unprotected against weather conditions, without food, water, accommodation, medical care, information, and so on. This was a formative context for civic organisers, as I will argue below. Additional interviews were carried out in Leipzig.

Gothenburg is Sweden's second biggest city. While Malmö was the key point of entry—given the city's geographic vicinity to mainland Europe, connected with Copenhagen via the Öresund Bridge—Gothenburg (and Stockholm) was another hub for incoming refugees either as a first destination or as a point of passage en route to other places in Sweden or on to Norway and Finland. To increase the diversity of organisations, additional interviews were carried out in Malmö and Stockholm.

In both countries, interviews focused mainly on welcome initiatives as the new entries into the field and as the organisations that grew to predominance in the civic response to the 'refugee crisis'. A limited number of additional interviews covered other types of organisations (leftist, migrantic, church-affiliated, etc.) and functioned as contrasting cases.

In order to analyse the emotional dimension, I drew on emerging methodologies in social emotion research (Flam and Kleres 2015) and especially for expert/semi-structured interviews (Kleres 2015a). The interview guideline used throughout our project included some direct questions about emotions. However, as many emotional expressions remain implicit in interview texts, I also drew on elements of narrative methodologies for analysing emotions empirically (Kleres 2011). This is also helpful in analysing the emotional configurations of wider political discourses. It draws on the notion of a narrative quality of emotions, which are constituted through the gestalt of actors, events, conditions, thoughts, feelings, and so on. Anger episodes, for instance, involve elements that together form a scene of faulty, unfair behaviour by others (see also Fischer and Jansz 1995, p. 73). Crucially, this perspective blurs the distinction between reason and emotion (Barbalet 1998). Narrative or discourse is thus inextricably emotional and vice versa. In this way, by constituting the world meaningfully, discourse configures how social actors are to feel. That is, they have feeling rules (Hochschild 1979, 1983)[1] inscribed into them.

Given emotions' often covert manifestation, both in interviews and in real life, an interpretive, qualitative methodology is particularly suitable. Qualitative methodologies cannot and do not attempt to propose numerical generalisations. Their potential is in analytical generalisations, identifying empirical patterns (see Kleres and Wettergren 2017, pp. 4–5). The present analysis thus does not aim at generalising statements about

the emotional bases of all welcome initiatives in both countries. Rather, it attempts to identify typical emotional patterns as they emerge from the interview data. The comparative perspective is particularly useful in bringing into relief which emotional patterns were present in the field of civic pro-immigrant organising in one country but less so in the other, which in turn raises questions as to the sources of such patterns and their differences.

This notion tallies well theoretically with a view on civic action whose emotional bases are shaped by feeling rules (Flam 2005; Kleres 2017). Feeling rules are inscribed into discourses, institutions, and organisations. They are social norms that prescribe certain feelings and ways of feeling and expressing them for specific social situations and contexts (Hochschild 1979, 1983). Sets of feeling rules embraced by a social group or institution as pertinent to a social setting constitute emotional regimes (Reddy 2001). This perspective allows us to analyse patterns in the emotional bases of civic action and link them to formative social contexts without reducing the empirical complexity of emotions in social life to single emotions. Rather, it sheds light on how this complexity is governed, but never resolved, through regimes of feeling rules.

Finally, to meet the standards of this volume, excerpts have been carefully edited to enhance their readability. Analytically relevant linguistic features were retained, however.

The Crisis: Mobilising Feelings and Moral Shocks

Compassion

The 'refugee crisis' was keenly mobilising as both a discourse and a material practice. This was because it evoked specific emotions. And as the international comparison will show, these emotions were in fact rather contingent.

For one, the mobilising impact of the 'refugee crisis' as such was particularly evident from the fact that many civic actors had not been mobilised before (see above). The media, too, were crucial in conveying a

sense of crisis. Several interviewees both in Sweden and Germany referred to the image of Alan Kurdi's dead body on the Turkish sea shore as a turning point for them. Others mention the harsh reality of the 'refugee crisis' on the ground as a crucial experience:

[…] that yes there are a few coming now and there is nobody from the government here or the migration service or anything and they are like hungry and thirsty they hardly have any shoes or clothes and they don't know where to go so people you need to come down here and help. (Interview SW7)

[…] already in December 2014 the first gym hall was emergency occupied in [my burrough]. And in our case in fact neighbours showed up and said, that is really horrible that people have to live that way what can we do? Ok then the conditions here came to a head in Berlin, keyword failed state LaGeSo which didn't function, people who simply weren't provided for which led to an enormous will to help and a surge of support. (Interview GE5)

As these excerpts indicate, a keen sense of palpable crisis—mounting unmet needs and shocking living conditions—precipitated civic action, crucially without apprehending much of the context of this plight. This was compounded by a feeling of being overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the plight witnessed on the ground: a mounting list of the needs of incoming refugees; the local witnessing of refugees' plight framed as an 'emergency'; and in both cases an immediate link to helping with only fleeting reference to the state as a mere background condition. At an early stage and for emerging civic actors, the 'crisis' was a humanitarian crisis in the first place. I want to argue that what was mobilised and mobilising here were feelings of compassion.

Leaning on Arendt (2006), compassion can be understood as the emotional apprehension of the suffering of *individual* others as such, rather than of a category of sufferers nor of the contextual causes of this suffering. It is because of this individualising bent that Arendt (2006, pp. 76–77) argues that compassion shuns politics. It decontextualises the plight of others.

The above two excerpts indicate an immediate apprehension of a pressing plight and how this entailed an urge to help. Crucially, both

interviewees made reference to political contexts (such as state neglect) only in passing, as mere background conditions. Equally expressive of compassion is many interviewees' explicit emphasis on fellow humanness as a key driving force for their civic action (on the link of fellow humanness and empathetic feelings, see Schmitt and Clark 2006). This fellow humanness is also expressed by recurring references in the interviews to what civic actors experienced as violations of refugees' human dignity. This care for human dignity is a humanitarian concern, as some research participants explicate:

> […] there really exists a humanitarian consensus; and this humanitarian consensus is on the one hand described in the Geneva convention; and on the other hand in what anyone in the world would agree on, if asked, do you want that someone has his own housing, has his job can earn his money and take responsibility for his own decision and life. No one will then say no, why shouldn't that be possible for refugees. […] That someone gets a residence status and a residence permit is a VERY! different issue that has nothing to do at all with the initial provision and with giving him the chance at all. But I really don't want that anyone who has fled, and also for no German, that he has to live on the street, doesn't know where to buy his bread and with what, and how to provide for his children. I don't want that and no one wants that in our funny little association. (Interview GE9)

Consonant with humanitarianism,[2] the care for human dignity is here constructed as detached from more political issues such as legal status. Another interviewee explicitly refers to dignity as the bottom line of her civic action. This is equally a pre-political, fellow-human stance:

> […] that has a lot to do with dignity, there are homes where refugees aren't even allowed to leave […] there are homes there is a clothing counter, says I just showed you three shirts. If you don't like them, you don't seem to need them. No, that has to do with dignity. […] I decide if I want one of the three or not or if I wash what I have another four times. […] Last week […] it started to rain again. [Another volunteer] ran out and distributed rain capes outside [where refugees were waiting in line in front of a state institution]. The family whom she gave rain capes then said thank you for the rain capes, thank you for the respect. It's not only about protecting

people but also to give the person the feeling you were important to some-
one and he saw that you need this […] the feeling that someone else, I care.
(Interview GE3)

The fact that the image of Alan Kurdi's body had such a mobilising
effect may equally be attributed to the fact that it triggered intense emo-
tions (Procter and Yamada-Rice 2015) and, in particular, compassion: it
is no coincidence that this was the image of a child and that, in fact,
images of children have played an important role in mobilising civic
actors more generally (Karakayali 2016; Sutter 2017). These images oper-
ate on the basis of cultural notions of children as innocent and deserving
of care (Karakayali 2016; Procter and Yamada-Rice 2015). Both inno-
cence and deservingness are key configurators of compassion (Nussbaum,
cited in Höijer 2004, p. 514).

In sum, the discursive-material reality of the 'refugee crisis' exposed
would-be civic actors to the suffering of others, triggering feelings of
compassion and thus the impulse to mobilise their immediate help.
Compassion, however, is not the only emotion to apprehend the plight
of others. Arendt (2006) also singled out solidarity and pity (on their
emotional qualities, see Kleres 2015c, 2017). This contingency of com-
passion raises questions about its social sources: where can we identify
feeling rules (Hochschild 1979, 1983) and other factors that shape civic
actors' compassionate emotional response to the 'refugee crisis'?

Compassion and the Crisis Discourse

One particularly formative discourse, giving shape to feelings of compas-
sion, has been the 'refugee crisis' discourse itself. In both countries, the
'refugee crisis' was the dominant paradigm in public discourse to make
sense of increased numbers of incoming refugees. On closer examination,
however, this is a contingent construct (see also Alcalde 2016): The per
capita numbers of refugee arrivals have been much higher for years in
some southern European locales without much dominant talk of a crisis,
which became the central denominator only when higher numbers of
refugees reached central and northern European countries (Elfwering

2016, p. 42; Pries 2016, p. 28). The refugee crisis discourse is thus predicated on a very specific vantage point.

To no small extent conveyed by the media, the 'refugee crisis' is a metaphor of a suddenly emerging threat including an imagery of migration as a wave, flood, stream, and so on (e.g. Anderson Käppi and Hedman 2016; Elfwering 2016; Herrmann 2016). Like metaphors in general (e.g. Kövecses 2003), it has been keenly evocative of emotions, yet not without ambivalences. It conveyed the image of overburdened societies swept by a large number of incoming refugees. This discourse established, on the one hand, an emotional climate[3] of overwhelmedness and in this way also fear (cf. Herrmann 2016, p. 10).[4]

As it happened, fear would become more dominant especially in 2016, manifesting in both countries, for instance, in increasing right-wing mobilisations and violence, and in political changes that restricted refugees' rights. Fear, however, was not the only element in the emotional climate of the 'refugee crisis' and not the most important aspect with regard to welcome initiative organisers. This can be briefly indicated by German Chancellor Merkel's (in)famous dictum during the height of the 'refugee crisis' in August 2015:

> Germany is a strong country. The way we approach these things must be: we have made it so often—we will make it.[5]

This statement inserted emotional elements of national pride and hope amidst the refugee crisis. Hope, in particular, has a keen potential to outbalance fear and inspire action (Kleres and Wettergren 2017).

Perhaps more importantly, the crisis construct also conveys a feeling rule of compassion. Crisis constructs are tantamount to what has been described as the central trope of the discourse of humanitarianism—emergency (Calhoun 2010; Krause 2014, p. 115). Emotionally, this conveys a keen sense of urgency, amplifying the emotional apprehensions of others' suffering and its action dispositions in terms of direct helping. It also prescribes feelings of compassion by configuring how to relate to others' suffering in specific ways: as Calhoun (2010, pp. 30–31) argues, the emergency construct operates without ascriptions of agency, leading to a focus on suffering per se rather than to an apprehension of its contexts. In

this way, it discursively configures a feeling rule of compassion. By constructing the situation of increased immigration as a crisis, the 'refugee crisis' discourse thus amplifies, or makes particularly palpable, the plight of others. It calls for a kind of help that does not apprehend the political contexts of suffering in favour of immediate and direct help. At the same time, however, the feeling rules of the crisis construct have been fundamentally ambivalent, and we need to look for other factors to understand why this ambivalence was first resolved in favour of compassion.

Moral Shocks

Consonant with the construction of a sudden crisis, the experience of the realities on the ground came to some civic organisers as a moral shock (Jasper 1998). This may also help explain why many without prior experience in civic action mobilised. What was shocking to civic organisers was the extent of human misery witnessed first-hand. Shock was explicitly expressed, for instance, in the following excerpts, or by the iterative, emphatic construction of the situation in Berlin as 'catastrophic':

> […] and then I went there [to LaGeSo] and had a look at the situation and was shocked like all others, too, how badly that was handled there in the summer, that they got [no] water, without any scrutable system of registration being visible there, no information signs, no medical services, no and there were really many [refugees] there at that time. (Interview GE10)

> I went there with my friend to LaGeSo and had a look at the conditions there. Cause until then I personally knew that only from TV. And we realized that is Africa. That is third world. There was no water, no hygiene uh uh facilities etc. etc. So it was really, it was really catastrophic, it was really REALLY! catastrophic. (Interview GE9)

The situation at LaGeSo,[6] the state institution responsible for registering arriving immigrants and, subsequently, for attending to their basic needs, was particularly appalling, as the excerpts describe. Having arrived in a presumably safe place, refugees found themselves in an endangering situation again (Schneider 2015). While LaGeSo rose to particular and

symbolic notoriety, it was representative of what happened in other places in Germany as well (see, e.g. Pelzer 2015). State failure was also a topic in Swedish interviews, albeit to a much more limited extent and with a lesser sense of shock:

> […] there are a few coming now and there is nobody from the government here or the migration service or anything. (Interview SW7)

But the situation in Berlin was arguably a lot worse and longer lasting.

The concept of a moral shock, despite its ad hoc plausibility, says little about the sources of shock and about the shape of actors' response to such shock. The quality of any event as shocking is in fact rather contingent. As we shall see, there were some emotional differences between organisers in Germany and Sweden, and shock seemed to be more predominant in Germany.

What shocked civic organisers in the first place was the utter plight of the refugees as they witnessed it personally on the ground. This had a keenly politicising potential, as this plight was to some extent co-produced by state failure. And yet, none of the welcome initiative organisers engaged with the intricacies of asylum politics beyond the state's failure in attending to the basic needs of refugees. In fact, these organisers—even the Swedish Vänsterpartiet political party—were repeatedly at pains to describe their work as non-political. The depoliticising feeling rule of compassion is one element accounting for this. This was, however, retained and buttressed by another element: the role of nationalism. As we will see in the next two sections, this also accounts for some of the differences between Sweden and Germany.

German Nationalism, Integration, Pity

Pride and Shame

Nationalism has been an important element in the crisis discourse.[7] It also figured in terms of civic action as a formative and mobilising condition, though it did so differently in Germany and Sweden. This can

account for some of the differences between the mobilisations in both countries.

As Arnold and Bischoff have noted for Germany (for Sweden cf. Trägårdh 2016), the political discourse of the 'refugee crisis' 'was an expression of negotiation processes about central motifs, values and the self-image of the immigration society' (2016, p. 28). What was at stake in this discourse was the image of the German nation as humane and, emotionally, compassionate, evoking an image of a set table for all to enjoy:

> […] fantasiz[ing] once more a Germany that is open, liberal and tolerant where migrants are being welcomed. But, as I said, this contradicts the current political climate. From the perspective of the majority of the population migrants are most of all a security risk. (Castro Varela 2015, p. 91, my transl.; cf. also Seng 2016, p. 26)

I have already noted how the 'refugee crisis' discourse has oscillated emotionally between fear of migrants ('security risk') and feelings of compassion and hospitality. Another emotional dimension here is pride in the nation, which is made possible by constructing the nation in superior terms as altruistic and just. Merkel's (in)famous invocation of hope ('We will make it') was significantly coupled with appeals to national pride—a strong country and people that has 'made it' so often before (see above Sect. 'Compassion and the Crisis Discourse'). This element of pride may indeed explain some of the initial enthusiasm when the first trains with large numbers of refugees arrived and masses of locals applauded them at train stations and so on:

> Euphorically, a 'new welcome culture' was celebrated especially in Germany and Austria, which, according to its emphatic proclamation, seemed to symbolize the human face of European civil society. (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 52, my transl.)

Politicians like Chancellor Merkel or Munich's lord mayor publicly stated that they were proud of the many citizens who helped (Popp 2016, pp. 22, 24).

In sum, the nationalist element in the welcome discourse sustained and buttressed feeling rules of compassion and suggested taking pride in a

nation that was constructed as humanitarian and compassionate and thus as morally good. In these ways, the 'welcome' discourse provided a formative context for the emotions of welcome initiative organisers, retaining their feelings of compassion and giving them pride in their work as they essentially enacted the moral nation. It is thus no coincidence that we find references to this kind of nationalism in the interviews.

One interviewee explicitly linked the initial enthusiasm among welcome initiative actors with nationalism, which in his experience had taken on more positive connotations after Germany hosted the soccer world cup in 2006:

> […] there was a turning point in German history, that was the world cup, where suddenly flags appeared and there was again a kind of pride to be German and to be a host. […] And out of that feeling, having been dragged over from the world cup, uhm we are great hosts, in my view this euphoria emerged at the stations, see the pictures in Munich. (Interview GE10)

The flip side of this ascent to pride through welcome initiatives is feelings of shame—pride's dialectic counterpart[8]—about the 'catastrophic' situation of state failure on the ground. One research participant talked about the blatant neglect of one refugee's rather urgent medical needs by public institutions when she said:

> I feel ashamed. I sit here and feel ashamed for this state [I: mhm] to the bone [*in Grund und Boden*]. (Interview GE3)

Both pride—available through enacting the welcoming nation—and shame, motivating actions to rectify the disgraceful situation of falling short of the national welcome ideal, functioned as mobilising emotions here.

Integration and Pity

Nationalist precepts are interlinked with another discourse that took on greater significance as welcome initiatives evolved over time: integration discourse (Seng 2016, p. 24). Integration has been one of the most central

elements of recent migration discourse. It attained renewed emphasis when the initial 'welcome' enthusiasm gave way to a more fearful general climate around the 'refugee crisis', epitomised by the racialising scandalisation of the New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Cologne and other cities in 2015–2016 (Hauer 2016, p. 53; cf. Jungk 2016, p. 99). Indeed, with this new discursive phase, 'fear appears to be the dominant emotion in political discourse about refugees' (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 54, my transl.). This shifting discursive emphasis impacted both the practice and some of the emotional bases of welcome initiatives, subtly altering the regime of feeling rules that governed it.

While many activities of welcome initiatives in the beginning revolved around stop-gap help, such as providing food, housing, clothing, and so on, my interviews indicate a shift as the numbers of incoming refugees declined and as the institutional failure became less acute. In parallel with these changes and the shifting discourse, welcome initiatives began to focus more on integration work, that is, organising leisure activities, German language classes, and so on:

> […] we are now in phase two. We moved from the catastrophe phase [i.e. food, accommodation etc.] […] to phase two, that is integration. […] We take care of supporting people with their masses of applications they need to file, with learning German. And the most important […] we try to give people an understanding of this country. […] It's a bit like teaching children how to walk. You show them something and the rest they need to do themselves. Simply that they understand how does it work here. (Interview GE7)

This excerpt not only describes the shift of practice but equally hints at an emotional shift that I explore in the following. This emotional shift relates to some of the central precepts of integration discourse: intertwined as it is with nationalism, it is inherently an assimilationist discourse (e.g. Geisen 2010; Seng 2016; Terkessidis 2010; Yıldız 2010). It sets a norm to which migrants are to adapt. I argue here that this also alters the regime of feeling rules for civic actors.

The ethnocentrism of integration discourse reflects among some of the welcome initiative actors. Consider, for instance, in the above excerpt the

belittling metaphor of refugees as children who need to be taught to walk. Another interviewee, a more extreme example, complains about what she sees as refugees' more recent tendencies not to integrate, such as when the welcome initiative's efforts to play music were not welcomed by refugees:

> […] uh no we don't want that music. We don't want to listen to that. […] [Interviewer: what kind of music was that?] Well, that was like classic European music. And that they said, no we don't want to listen to that […] it's understandable. Their home country, like, for a moment to delve into their history. But I think our task is to [say], gee folks, you're living here now. If you want a prospect here you have to. Then it is somehow a part of that. You don't have to like it. You don't have to fully buy into it. But it is somehow a part of it, you have to accept that, that's how it is. (Interview GE4)

How can we understand the emotional implications of this ethnocentrism? Through its assimilationist thrust, integration discourse constitutes a matrix of superiority. It sets primacy of the nation as the benchmark for refugees' integration—that is, the standard they need to adapt to. Secondly, by enacting a valued vision of the nation as doing good and as just welcome initiatives ultimately serve the nation. This discursive configuration gives shape to a feeling rule of pity. As we will see, however, this is a feeling rule that welcome initiative organisers have dealt with reflexively to a certain extent.

Pity is a more superficial apprehension of others' suffering (Arendt 2006). This is so because in pity, the hierarchy between those in need and those who can alleviate suffering is reinforced. The reason for this is that the intentional object of pity is not suffering (as with compassion) but, rather, the pitier, that is, a concern with improving social prestige or gaining religious virtue through acts of pity. Pity is about 'announc[ing] one's virtue by registering one's feeling about such suffering' (Spelman 1997, pp. 64–65).

Integration discourse introduces a subtly altered feeling rule into the emotional regime of the 'refugee crisis'. It sets the nation as a supreme standard to which migrants must adapt. Welcome initiative actors sub-

scribing to this discourse convey this to refugees and thus simultaneously enact the vision of a virtuous nation. This changes the apprehension of the plight of refugees into a pity-based stance in which helping functions to establish one's virtuousness. The 'children' metaphor or the paternalising effort at teaching European culture/music to refugees succinctly expresses this. Pity would thus explain why there is at times an element of paternalism in welcome initiatives' support for refugees:

> Helping thus turns into an opportunity to demonstrate the gloriousness of the (national) group of belonging: 'Look, we Germans are good!' (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 60; my transl.)

A corollary of this intertwining of welcome and integration discourse is the production of good and bad migrants—those who assimilate and others seen as unable or unwilling to integrate (Castro Varela 2015, pp. 91–92; Seng 2016). In the above excerpt there was thus a palpable sense of irritation about refugees' reluctance to listen to the offered music. Conversely, it also translates into feeling rules stipulating gratitude from refugees for the help they receive (Bröse and Friedrich 2015). This is also an outcome of social policies that have devolved social provisions for refugees to civil society. As the state has often failed to provide the legal minimum for refugees, leaving it up to civic action to step in, refugees are in effect and practice divested of their legal rights and become recipients of charity (Graf 2016, p. 88)—a rather pity-based form of providing help.

Refugees became dependent on 'a-smile-is-enough' whims which measure themselves against their gratitude and the goodwill of the helpers (Lambert et al. 2015, my transl.)

Welcome initiatives navigate this matrix of self-referential pity and expectations of gratitude. While this is a formative and motivating discursive regime of feeling rules for some organisers, some initiatives deal with it rather reflexively and try to redress its effects:

> Narcissists and frustration is a very big issue, right. So, that doesn't function, that is, if I as a fairly disturbed narcissist try to help a Syrian extended family of eight, and attend to them 24 hours a day, and I see then suddenly

that they are NOT registered right away, that they do not find a job no apartment, that they don't have language classes, and they then even define themselves as individuals who tell me as a helper, but I rather want it this way, and I have to accept that, that gets difficult. (Interview GE9)

Note how in this excerpt an element of self-referentiality (narcissism) combines with an expectation of gratitude—that is, a pity-based approach to helping. While indicating that this is a very big issue, the research participant continued in the interview indicating a critical stance in his organisation towards this kind of attitude. Welcome initiatives may thus show a degree of reflexivity about some of the problematic implications of pity-driven help, informed as it is by emotional regimes. Another research participant, though notably from a relatively left-leaning organisation, for instance, rejects gratitude in her own practice:

I don't want a thank you at all, doesn't interest me at all. If someone says thank you for the trousers then I say thank you that you take those trousers from me. I don't need that at all. Actually I don't want to be here, I don't want to be needed for such things, I find it a catastrophe that we have to be here. (Interview GE3)

Crucially, she contextualises this statement by talking about how help is a means to honour and re-establish others' dignity—an arguably more compassionate rather than pity-based stance.

Sweden: Nationalism, Compassion vs. Solidarity

The Swedish mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis' differed from Germany's in that there was not only a politically limited current of organising but equally a relatively more politicised one, epitomised by the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt. In the following section I will argue that the two currents drew upon different feeling rules, both of which relate to (different) Swedish nationalist traditions.

Consensus: National Solidarity and Compassion

Some civic actors opted for a relatively consensual approach and limited themselves to an at times even explicitly apolitical stance. For instance, the Left Party (Vänsterpartiet) made an effort to keep a low public profile about their considerable effort during the height of the 'refugee crisis', when they closed the operations at their local party headquarters in order to house incoming refugees. They felt that what they were doing was and should be non-political work, and they did not want to make it a political act by communicating their actions to the wider public. Weinryb (2016, my transl.) notes on Swedish welcome initiatives:

> Instead of criticizing and giving proposals for improvements of the authorities' actions people started to organize themselves, both formally and informally, in order to meet refugees' needs.

One welcome initiative in Gothenburg disbanded when they felt that state institutions, after initial negligence, started to step up and take sufficient care of the situation.[9]

In line with this, some civic organisers acquiesced to the legal changes and curtailments of the asylum law (2015–2016, see introductory section above) and the practices of Swedish asylum policies. The following organiser, for instance, combines a degree of political awareness with political acquiescence:

> […] it's not a crisis for Europe. I mean taking care of one million refugees, it's not a big thing for Europe. They are making it a big thing. (inaud.) They are spending more money on stopping them then what it would cost to just, you know, try to create ways to handle it in a more humane way. It's not like we say […] they should let every single refugee stay. But as a refugee you have the right to, you know, come and try that. […] And I can accept that. We can't have everyone that comes because they are only poor. If it's not a political thing or a war or something […] we can tell them no. But we don't have to let them wait in a camp for, like, one year or two years or you know or [where they] kill themselves or let them die from cold just because they are refugees. So yeah I don't like that. (Interview SW7)

On the one hand, she keenly apprehends the refugees' plight, leading her to assume a critical stance towards policies that aim at limiting refugees' access to Sweden. She is equally critical of some of the Swedish practices of receiving refugees, such as housing them in rather isolated camps, far off in the Swedish forests without much connection to the outside world, with negative consequences for refugees' mental health ('kill themselves'). And yet, at the same time, her critical concern is only about some of the practicalities of refugee reception in Sweden. Specifically, she does not question border regimes as such (in contrast to older organisations such as No One Is Illegal). And in fact, she disbanded her organisation when she felt the state had begun to take sufficient care of incoming refugees. Awareness of the implications of the Swedish migration regime did not keep her mobilised.

Consent to these changes may be attributed to the compassionate element and the depoliticising effect of compassion. For instance, Vänsterpartiet's insistence that their actions were and should be non-political implies the assertion of a feeling rule of compassion rather than political solidarity. I have already argued how compassion is informed by the crisis discourse. However, there is an additional element in the production of political acquiescence that has to do with the specifics of Swedish nationalism.

Sweden has a long tradition of moralist nationalism and sometimes even prides itself as being a humanitarian superpower (Anwar 2015). Swedish nationalism involves the dual elements of, first, a moral duty towards fellow citizens through an expansive welfare state based on a conception of Sweden as leading in terms of modernity and wealth and, second, of solidarity with small, peripheral countries in the so-called Third World (Trägårdh 2002; Ruth 1984). Emotionally, Swedish nationalism combines the dual emphasis on national solidarity (welfare state) and international solidarity (internationalism). This provided a basis for both consent to curtailments to the asylum law (Trägårdh 2016) and resistance against it. The duality of national and international solidarity constituted a sense of tragedy during the refugee crisis and lent the legal restrictions a quality of necessity: tragically, as it were, asylum rights had to be curtailed in order to prevent a dreaded system breakdown. Indicatively, the minister in charge was in tears as he presented these legal changes (Trägårdh 2016).

This discursive-emotional regime—the duality of nationalist feeling rules and a sense of unresolvable conflict between the two during the 'refugee crisis'—also affected civic organisers. An activist paraphrases how this was reflected among some civic organisers, who

> […] accepted the mantra or the rhetorics of the government and they were, like, yeah ok, we buy this, it's enough, you know. […] That we need order, we need a structure, we need the migration board, and all the municipalities need to build up better structures so that we can give these people a good welcoming. And as it is now we cannot do that. We cannot offer them what they deserve. And it's not worthy and it's not humane. (Interview SW1)

Thus, a sense of the practical impossibility of living up to a humanitarian standard informed some civic organisers' consent to policies that limited immigration. Interviewees expressed how the fear of a 'system breakdown' became a popular element in public discourse and motivated legal restriction. As this indicates, legal changes were seen as a matter of political reason—ironically, precisely for humanitarian reasons.

Politicisation: Civic Anger and Political Solidarity

A notable feature of the Swedish case is that the compassionate, relatively depoliticised stance did not continue to dominate the field of pro-refugee civic action as it did in Germany. In fact, political plans to curtail the asylum law sparked a wave of politicised mobilisation in opposition. This coalesced in the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt [People's Campaign for the Right to Asylum] presented at the outset of this chapter. A sizable number of organisations and individuals mobilised as part of the People's Campaign—a total of 160 civic organisations managed to collect almost 70,000[10] signatures in support of its petition. A different emotional basis of pro-immigrant civic action emerged here, from a specific, rather non-compassionate emotional trajectory: It drew on different national traditions.

For some organisers, the civic mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis' constituted an emotional climate of hope. This was in itself a mobilising

emotion, given hope's potential to spur civic action (Kleres and Wettergren 2017). This was a hope for different, more refugee-friendly migration policies and formed an important emotional backdrop and point of departure for how these activists apprehended the political shift towards legal restrictions. They developed an emotional stance of political solidarity. One research participant indicates this emotional climate of hope at the beginning of the 'refugee crisis':

> […] in the beginning of this refugee crisis [there] was such a, such a positive, like, hopeful atmosphere. Everyone wanted to [do] something. Everyone wanted to participate. […] Europe is not building borders. Wow. We can fix this. We can help like help solve the situation together. (Interview SW1)

However, as legal changes were impending with a good chance of passing the parliament, as they did in the end, activists instead found that their hopes were frustrated, and they reacted with anger:

> […] and then there's other people that, for the first time maybe, started to learn about how the migration system works and how the regulations work. And they really believed […] that we could help, that we could do more, that it's our duty to help out, you know. And I would say that when the policy from the government changed those people got even more engaged and even more angry and formed for example like Folkkampanj För Asylrätt and other initiatives. (Interview SW1)

What emerged here was the formation of political solidarity with refugees, apprehending both their plight and, antagonistically, the dominant policy's neglect of that plight. Consider, for instance, the following statement by an activist who had joined a spontaneous demonstration after the legal changes passed in parliament:

> We gather in quiet, concern, grief, determination to fight and stillness. And in all this we gave each other hope. We raised our hands and there was nothing else to say than let our palms speak. RIGHT TO ASYLUM. June 21 is a pitch black day in Sweden's history. It is still impossible to understand that this new inhuman asylum law went through. But one day people

must grasp this and the law must be pulled down. (Folkkampanj För Asylrätt n.d., my transl.)

The emotional apprehension of others' plight—not on an individual level but as a category of others together with an antagonistic apprehension of a perceived source of that suffering—constitutes the emotion of political solidarity (Scholz 2010; Kleres 2015c, 2017). The internationalist element in Swedish nationalism conveys this with its feeling rule of solidarity with the global South, understood as marginalised globally. Indicatively, what mobilised some activists was what they saw as a breach with this feeling rule of international political solidarity.

Comparative Conclusion

I have traced here how feeling rules are ultimately grounded in discursive contexts such as the crisis discourse or nationalism. Discursive constructions of issues shape how social actors understand and feel about an issue and thus influence whether and how they might take action on it (Kleres 2017). There are, however, other factors to be considered, especially from a comparative perspective. One has to do with processes of framing and coalition forming. In Sweden, the field of pro-immigrant civic organising included left-leaning, radical organisations such as No One Is Illegal that were politically much less marginalised as far-off radicals than in Germany. In the latter case, many welcome initiative actors expressed an insurmountable cleavage between their own initiatives and those of radical Left activists. In Sweden, by contrast, the radical, autonomous Left has been severely weakened in general, leaving No One Is Illegal as the most radical actor in the field. At the same time, the lack of a political cleavage in the field of pro-immigrant civic action meant that an alliance was easier to form between older, existing organisations—including more leftist ones—and some of the newly emerging initiatives. What came out of this process was a common frame and emotional stance uniting older political activism and the initially more humanitarian civic action of some of the newer organisations, which thus became more politicised over time.

What is more, the co-optation of welcome initiatives seemed less developed in Sweden than in Germany. While there has been a move in Swedish civil society-state relations towards the devolution of public service delivery (see Weinryb 2016), the case of Gothenburg shows that older, more statist or, rather, social-democratic traditions of welfare delivery are still tangible, given that the city administration of Gothenburg—albeit only after some time—took over caring for refugees and did so to the satisfaction of some of the welcome initiatives, some of whom disbanded in response. In this way, civic pro-refugee organisations were less integrated into depoliticising emotional regimes of co-optation that would have fostered their compliance with dominant policies as it did in Germany.

In Germany, the emergence of welcome initiatives and their subscription to the crisis discourse tallied well with an ongoing process of welfare state devolution, including greater reliance on service delivery through civil society actors (van Dyk and Misbach 2016; Graf 2016). As part of this, welcome initiatives have evolved in a climate that values and at time heroises their work, amplifying feelings of pride for welcome initiative organisers. This also manifested in numerous awards granted to some initiatives or individual organisers (Bröse and Friedrich 2015). Furthermore, there are a number of public programmes to foster civic action for refugees, both on a federal and a regional state level (Graf 2016, p. 92). In Berlin, the state even went so far as to require carriers of refugee homes to co-operate with volunteers. This occurred in a context of blatant institutional failure to provide for refugees, for which the state compensates by activating civic organising. Welcome initiatives have dealt with this reflexively. There is a critical discourse among them about how best to walk the tightrope of providing necessary support for refugees while holding the state accountable for providing what is legally required.

In conclusion, a comparative analysis of emotional motives can reveal a number of differences beyond the strong resemblances that civic action took on at face value in both countries during the so-called refugee crisis. These emotional bases emerge from cultural, discursive conditions. However, the differences between these two similar cases also indicate that civic actors draw upon these conditions with degrees of agency in the

way of a toolkit (Swidler 1986). In fact, the compassionate approach to supporting migrants is far from static but can be transformed in the process of civic action. As civic actors, through their organising work, become exposed to migrantic realities and the politics that shape those realities, they may very well assume a more politicised stance and shift the emotional bases of their civic action accordingly. This happened much more in Sweden than in Germany.

Interviews

Germany

GE1: Professional in humanitarian organisation. Lübeck/Skype, 16 June 2016

GE2: Professional in ecclesiastical organisation. Berlin, 17 June 2016

GE3: Professional in welcome initiative. Berlin, 16 June 2016

GE4: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 19 June 2016

GE5: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 20 June 2016

GE6: Civic organiser in leftist organisation. Berlin, 20 June 2016

GE7: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 18 June 2016

GE8: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 23 June 2016

GE9: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 16 June 2016

GE10: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin/Skype, 17 October 2016

GE11: Civic organiser in welcome initiative/leftist organisation. Berlin, 6 October 2016

GE12: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 6 October 2016

GE13: Civic organiser in leftist organisation. Berlin, 7 October 2016

GE14: Civic organiser in refugees' organisation. Potsdam, 7 October 2016

GE15: Civic organiser in legal aid organisation. Leipzig, 4 October 2016

GE16: Two civic organisers in leftist organisation. Leipzig, 4 October 2016

GE17: Two civic organisers in refugees' organisation. Leipzig, 2 October 2016

GE18: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin/Skype, 24 October 2016

GE19: Three professionals in ecclesiastical organisation. Berlin/Skype, 7 October 2016

Sweden

SW1: Civic organiser in welcome initiative/leftist organisation. Malmö/Skype, 28 May 2016

SW2: Civic organiser in medical organisation. Gothenburg, 29 May 2016

SW3: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 30 May 2016

SW4: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 1 June 2016

SW5: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 9 June 2016

SW6: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Gothenburg, 10 June 2016

SW7: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Stockholm, 28 August 2016

SW8: Civic organiser in anti-racist initiative. Gothenburg, 5 September 2016

SW9: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 7 September 2016

SW10: Civic organiser in anti-racist initiative. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016

SW11: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Malmö, 7 September 2016

SW12: Two professionals in ecclesiastical organisation. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016

SW13: Professional in political party. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016

Notes

1. Hochschild (1979, p. 567) argues that framing rules and feeling rules mutually imply each other.
2. The discourse of humanitarianism is explicitly depoliticising and has compassion as one of its key feeling rules (Kleres 2015b).

3. In my use of the term 'emotional climate', I lean on Jack Barbalet (1998) but employ the term in a more discursive way than he does. Emotional climates are thus established by how widely shared discourses produce emotions narratively (cf. Kleres 2011).

4. Fears differed between the two countries, however. In Germany, this was a fear of national coherence under threat by too many racialised others. This is symbolised by the moral panic precipitated by the New Year's Eve sexual assaults in 2015/2016 in Cologne. In Sweden, this was the fear of a system breakdown, that is, the notion that the institutions of the Swedish welfare state—a pillar of Swedish nationalism (Ruth 1984; Trägårdh 2002, 2016)—would quite possibly collapse.

5. Cited and translated from: https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Mitschrift/Pressekonferenzen/2015/08/2015-08-31-pk-merkel.html (accessed 4 September 2017).

6. Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales—Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs.

7. For a scholarly articulation of this nationalism, see, for example, Kronenberg (2016). In line with research on nationalism and emotion, I understand nationalism as being inextricably emotional rather than a mere ideology (e.g. Berezin 2001, 2002; Billig 1995; Ismer et al. 2015; Scheff 1994). This is also based in the argument about blurring the distinction between reason and emotion sketched out in the methods section of this chapter.

8. Shame and pride are the emotional apprehensions of social devaluation vs. valuation (e.g. Simmel 1992; Scheff 1988; Katz 1999).

9. The decision of the government that all refugees need to register in Malmö, the point of entry for many given the city's link with Denmark over the Öresund Bridge, had a demobilising effect, too. Effectively, it meant that many refugees arrived at train stations in other cities.

10. This must be balanced against a total population of less than ten million.

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