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En retorisk studie av ett annorlunda parti

av

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Abstract


This thesis originates from an interest in the relationship between rhetoric and democracy and how a society deals with controversial ideas. In Swedish politics, the Sweden Democrats is an exemplification of this. The aim of the dissertation is to, through a rhetorical perspective, illustrate, explain and discuss the perceived complexity of problems related to the Sweden Democrats on the basis of the following three questions: How are the Sweden Democrats viewed in public debate regarding publishing ads from the party? Which ideas are expressed in externally and internally addressed communication from the party? What communicative and argumentative strategies can be found in this communication?

The foundation of the thesis is argumentation theory, epideictic theory, visual rhetoric and humor theory. The overall methodological procedure is hermeneutic, applied through close reading of the material with a holistic approach. This is then applied by using the theoretical perspectives in analysis of debate, argumentation, and visual rhetoric.

The results of the analysis shows that the publishers’ positions regarding ad’s change, but not their view of the party, which is perceived as changed in presentation but not in politics. The analysis of the Sweden Democrats communication does not give a conclusive answer. It shows that they are rather consistent in their topics, but adapt the presentation to the rhetorical situation. Reoccurring strategies are a consistent presentation of the main conflict in society as between Swedes and immigrants, conveying Muslims as a threat, and simple solutions to complex problems.

Finally, this thesis discusses the categorization of the Sweden Democrats as a xenophobic nationalistic party and the potential for ideological criticism with rhetorical terminology and from a perspective inspired by Luthin’s categories of demagoguery.

Keywords: Sweden Democrats, rhetoric, argumentation, visual rhetoric, politics, debate, Toulmin, ideology.

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