

Commemorating the Terror Attack at Drottninggatan

Commemorative Atmosphere, National Identity and Everyday
Space

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Abstract

In this thesis, I examine the case study of the annual memorial of the terror attack at Drottninggatan (a central street in Stockholm) in 2017. To understand the memorial at Sergels Torg, a central square in Stockholm, Sweden, I use the theory of commemorative atmosphere, national identity and everyday space. Through a fieldwork study, while attending the annual memorial day on April 7 2023, I gathered data through an observation study and vox pop interviews to understand Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan as commemorative spaces. In addition, I use discourse analysis to analyse a video published by Stockholms Stad (Stockholm City) to understand the narratives surrounding the future planned monument honouring the victims of the terror attack. The study result showed a lack of organisation from the city surrounding the annual memorial day. Because of a lack of foreknowledge, there was next to no interest in commemoration on-site by the public. The primary reflections were; first, the commemorative atmosphere enabled further understanding of the memorial as missing in anticipation and the symbolic built environment where the space of the square was seen as layered and altered through the everyday space. Second, Swedish national identity was understood as modest in a commemorative sense. Finally, the everyday space is seen as changing because of the planned monument, which will change the space, making this year the last without a monument.

Keywords

Affect, Atmosphere, Commemoration, Everyday Space, National Identity, Memorial, Terrorism.

Contents

- List of Figures 1**
- 1. Introduction..... 2**
 - Background: 3
 - Research Rationale: 9
 - Research Structure: 9
- 2. Literature Review 10**
 - Memory, Commemoration and Rituals10
 - Affect and Atmosphere:15
 - Swedish National Identity:21
- 3. Methodology 29**
 - Auto-Ethnography:29
 - Methods:32
 - Analysing Data:35
 - Ethical Considerations:36
- 4. Results and Discussion 37**
 - Commemorative Atmosphere:37
 - National Identity:48
 - Everyday Space:55
- 5. Conclusion 60**
- References 63**

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1. Visionimage, art for memory space, Sergels torg (Stockholms stad, 2022a). | 3 |
| Figure 2. Memorial for the victims during the terror attack at Drottninggatan 2017, Sergels Torg on 7 April, 2022. (Source: Author)..... | 6 |
| Figure 3. Stone lions with wreaths at the Memorial Day, Drottninggata on April 7 2022. (Source: Author)..... | 7 |
| Figure 4. Stone lions by the store Åhléns where the terrorist crashed, Drottninggatan on April 7 2022. (Source: Author)..... | 8 |
| Figure 5. Post-It wall at the crash site by Åhléns, Drottninggatan on April 29, 2017 (Swi-hymn, 2019). | 13 |
| Figure 6. <i>Traces of spontaneous commemoration by Olof Palmes memorial plaque, Stockholm on March 2, 2023 (Source: Danielle Drozdowski, Owners private collection.)</i> | 27 |
| Figure 7. <i>Sergels Torg early in the morning, April 7, 2023. (Source: Author)</i> | 39 |
| Figure 8. Post-it wall by Åhléns, Drottninggatan on April 22 2017 (AleWi, 2017b). | 43 |
| Figure 9. <i>Åhléns commercial in the window the terrorist crashed the truck in 2017, Drottninggatan on April 7 2023. (Source: Author)</i> | 44 |
| Figure 10. Stone lions during the aftermath of the terror attack 2017, Drottninggatan on April 8 2017 (AleWi, 2017a)..... | 45 |
| Figure 11. <i>Flower wreath and placed flowers next to it, Sergels Torg on April 7, 2023. (Source: Author)</i> | 48 |
| Figure 12. <i>Showing an individual sitting next to the wreath, Sergels Torg on April 7, 2023. (Source: Author)</i> | 57 |
| Figure 13. Visionimage, art for memory space, Sergels torg. Version 2 (Stockholms stad, 2022b). | 59 |

1. Introduction

For this thesis, the original point of interest was commemoration through monuments in Sweden. Based on seminar discussions throughout the master programme, both with teachers and students, questions regarding what memorials and monuments exist in Sweden caused further questions of who these monuments were and what Swedes commemorate in public space. Compared to other European countries, the lack of a normative practice of commemoration and annual ritual memorials revealed a disjuncture in the Swedish context. For academic relevance, in the literature, authors argued that there had been a drastic increase of monuments established in Europe since 9/11, using the term 'monument mania' (Milošević, 2017). Several scholarly articles state that we live in a time of rising nationalism (Antonsich, 2020; Closs Stephens, 2016), pointing to the increasing number of populist leaders, politics and global events that have increased the feeling of them and us, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. However, scholars who study memorials and commemoration have pointed out that the focus on security and identity has gotten more attention, neglecting other possible understandings of memory and commemoration (Milošević, 2017).

In Europe, terrorism monuments have been created in many cities. Such monuments include the 11-M Memorial in Madrid or the memorial 'Lysningen' at Utøya, Norway (Tanović, 2019). However, based on my own experience and identifying myself as a Swede (rather than factual sources), the claims of increasing monuments or attention to them can not be said to be the same as in other parts of Europe. Thus, when the announcement of a new monument situated at Sergels Torg (Sergels Square) in Stockholm by Stockholm Stad (Stockholm City) for the victims of the terror attack at Drottninggatan (Queen Street) in 2017, which they did around last year's annual day of commemoration (Fares, 2022b), it became a suitable case study for this thesis. That monument or art piece is called 'Sanctuary' or 'Fredad Plats' and depicts a blanket of gold-coloured bronze designed by the artist Ann-Sofi Sidén and the architect Mats Fahlander. The creators state that the decision to shape the monument into a blanket is because a blanket is a fundamental and central object in every person's life, from the cradle to the grave (Stockholms stad, 2022c). The plan, therefore, was to attend the

annual commemoration day to observe the unveiling of the monument and the processes around it by considering the monument as a case study.



Figure 1. Visionimage, art for memory space, Sergels torg (Stockholms stad, 2022a).

Monuments and art pieces, like the one planned on Sergels Torg, are not based on events that occurred in the distant past but are living memories for people who experienced them on different levels (Edkins, 2003). Thus, terrorism memorials are essential to understand the aftermath of such events in everyday city places. Because of the trauma, grief and suffering terrorist attacks produce, terrorism memorials get extensive coverage in both traditional and social media and become a target of antagonising criticism even before it is built (Tanović, 2019). However, in the preparation phase of the master thesis, Stockholm Stad announced that the monument would be delayed (Steiner, 2023). Hence alterations were made to the reserve plan, namely a shift to the memorial service.

Thus, this thesis will analyse how the annual memorial day of the terror attack at Drottninggatan in 2017 help shape the memorial landscape in Sweden.

Background:

The case of the terrorist attack at Drottninggatan occurred on 7 April 2017. There is a lack of academic literature covering this case; thus, the sources used to understand what

transpired are mostly limited to secondary sources. It began when the police started to receive alarms at 14.53 as a hijacked lorry belonging to the company Spendrups was driven at high speed into the crowd along Drottninggatan, the central pedestrian street of Stockholm, before crashing into the corner of an Åhléns department store (Eriksson, 2018; Pettersson, 2022; Tikka, 2019). The terrorist drove the truck through Drottninggatan for approximately 500 meters, taking around 40 seconds. After the crash, the culprit set a homemade explosive in the truck. It did not detonate as he had wished but still caused a violent fire (Pettersson, 2022). As the perpetrator fled on foot, he left behind an array of dead and injured victims and shocked eyewitnesses. Five people were killed in the attack, and 15 were injured; 9 had severe injuries (Eriksson, 2018; Tikka, 2019). The terrorist was, at the time, 39-year-old Rakhmat Akilov from Uzbekistan, who was detained in Märsta, north of Stockholm, a couple of hours after the attack (Pettersson, 2022). News coverage in mainstream media covered every development with live broadcasts, commentators and CCTV footage of the lorry driving through Drottninggatan. Social media was also active at this time, with the event going viral (Eriksson, 2018).

Information and images of the attack immediately started to spread on social media and were shared and commented on by authorities, journalists and citizens (Tikka, 2019). As police and medical staff tried to gain control of the situation, treating the injured and organising security operations, rumours of other shootings started to circulate in media as well, both traditional and social media. The suggested chaos throughout the city caused growing concern and insecurity among the people, and an hour after the assault, authorities put the city centre on lockdown by stopping public transportation for trains, metro and busses, evacuating the Stockholm central station, several shopping locations and closing the Swedish parliament (Tikka, 2019). This meant that many people who did not live in the city and lacked any means to leave the city had to walk home (Tikka, 2019).

In the aftermath, on Sunday, April 9, two days after the terror attack, tens of thousands gathered to honour the victims and manifest love at Sergels Torg. Artists performed, and speeches were given. One minute of silence was held at 14.53 when the police got

the first alarm of the attack (P4 Stockholm, 2017). Some landmarks and memorials got more attention than others as part of the spontaneous commemoration during the aftermath. Three of the more profound landmarks were the stairs at Sergels Torg (see Figure 1), the windows by the store Åhléns where the truck crashed (see Figure 3), and finally, the concrete stone lions that are placed along Drottninggatan (see Figure 2 and 3). These lions also had a role in stopping the terrorist when driving down Drottninggatan.

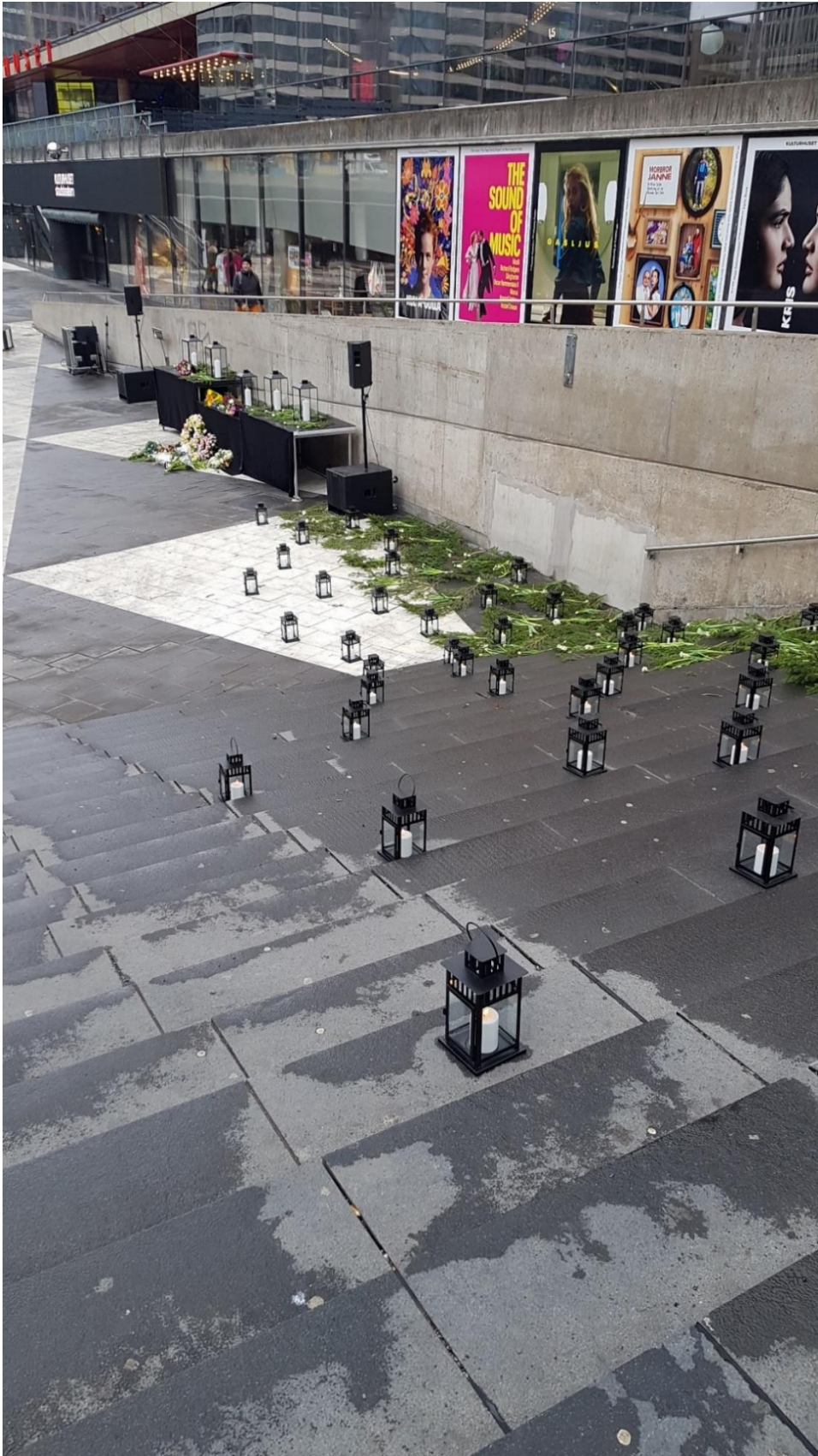


Figure 2. Memorial for the victims during the terror attack at Drottninggatan 2017, Sergels Torg on 7 April, 2022. (Source: Author)



Figure 3. Stone lions with wreaths at the Memorial Day, Drottninggata on April 7 2022.
(Source: Author)



Figure 4. Stone lions by the store Åhléns where the terrorist crashed, Drottninggatan on April 7 2022. (Source: Author)

Research Rationale:

Based on this brief introduction and background, this thesis will use autoethnographic to understand better the case of the terror attack, thereafter known as ‘the attack’, at Drottninggatan 2017. ‘The attack’ represents an entry point into the paucity of literature and method. Understanding how commemoration and memorials are expressed in a Swedish context, little information exists on different kinds of memorials in Sweden, how they are understood in people's everyday life, and how they connect to national identity. Thus, this thesis aims to analyse how the annual memorial day of the terror attack at Drottninggatan helps shape the commemorative landscape in Sweden.

To answer the research aim, a focus on Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan as sites of commemoration were chosen. To make sense of the topic, the affective, commemorative, emotional and sensory aspects of commemoration and the cultural through memories and national narratives form data points for this thesis. Hence, the concept of atmosphere is suitable to explore and contribute to answering the aim of this thesis. Based on this deduction, the thesis answers the following research questions:

- How does the conceptualisation of atmosphere enable us to analyse the terror attack memorial at Sergels Torg?
- How can we better understand Swedish national identity through the memorial and planned monument at Sergels Torg?
- How does the everyday landscape provide a public space for the memorial of the terror attack at Drottninggatan?

Research Structure:

To provide a thorough record of the attack, the text is structured in the following way:

In Chapter 2, Literature Review and Theoretical Background, I outline the framework and assumptions based on earlier research, which this thesis builds upon. This chapter covers the concept of affect and atmosphere, which helps us understand how non-representative, subjective and material aspects coincide and affect each other through different commemorative processes. Second, I discuss scholarship on memory, commemoration and rituals related to memorials and settings of remembrance, covering

important work on the memory of trauma such as terrorist attacks. Finally, I outline definitions of national identity and nationalism. In this section, I discuss nations and include conceptualisations on ethnonationalism, which are covered widely in the literature. Then, I put this into a Swedish context to show how different narratives try to define what it means to be a Swede.

In Chapter 3, Methodology and Methods, I outline my research design and how I position myself for this thesis. I begin the chapter by presenting autoethnography as a method, focusing on the changing role of the researcher and how it is not possible to be unbiased when doing fieldwork. The chapter continues to cover the case study and introduce the methods of observations, vox pop interviews and discourse analysis, which will be used for this thesis. The chapter then continues with a description of the coding and data analysis and finally covers ethical considerations relevant to the work of this thesis.

In Chapter 4, Results and Discussion, I present the results for the different methods relevant to the research aim and questions. Simultaneously, I build on the results with my reflections, combining them with theoretical understandings from Chapter 2 to make connections and arguments relevant to the thesis.

Lastly, in Chapter 5, I conclude the thesis, summarise the thesis and confirm if the research aim and question have been answered. Additionally, I propose future academic studies based on the result of this thesis.

2. Literature Review

Memory, Commemoration and Rituals

This section will cover scholarship on memory in combination with commemoration and rituals. Before going into the literature review, I argue that it is necessary to present the concept of representation and non-representation as these two terms define part of the structure of the literature review. De Nardi and Drozdowski (2018, pp. 430–432)

present the representation of memory as understanding memory as embodied by things, places and tangible entities that we can see, touch, hear and experience. Memory representation in the landscape is layered and changes based on social and political aspects. It can be symbolised as sacred landscapes of remembrance in the national psyche, but at the same time, be seen through everyday landscapes where commemorative practices share the space with the mundane of the everyday. Thus, it is important to explore the memory of representation further. Non-representational or more-than-representational is instead focused on sensory, affective and atmospheric elements and attempts to look past text and the visual, which representation focuses on (Sumartojo, 2021; Waterton, 2018). For this thesis, it is important to consider both representational and non-representational understandings of memory and commemoration to answer the aim and research questions. Therefore, the literature review will begin with memory, commemoration and rituals to cover some of the representational aspects of commemoration, and after that, in the next part, explore non-representational elements through affect and atmosphere.

Memory:

Memory entails a process of 'remembering'. Memory is not something stored and brought out when it is needed. Instead, it is a process in the present where we, based on our social context and positioning, interpret, negotiate and accommodate aspects and understandings of memories to suit our current selves (Edkins, 2003). Scholars recognise that in Western countries, the representation of memory normatively follows a linear timeline. Time appears as a succession of 'nows', a sequence of presents, and the existence of something is confirmed by its continuing presence through a series of such moments. As such, we think in the past tense when we think about memories. We see it as a camcorder, giving an accurate picture of events that have transpired, yet we 'playback' from our positions in the present what we alter and re-interpret our understanding of the past (Edkins, 2003, p. 36). For example, childhood memories can be seen as nostalgic, depending on your upbringing, and memories such as warm summers with ice cream by the beach make it seem that everything during this time was idyllic and utopian. However, there were not only good things; it was only a snapshot of how it was growing up. It is, therefore, crucial to consider what we remember through, have seen, and what we thought happened since that event. Given

that we have lived through times of increased terrorism, it is also relevant to present the connection between memory and terrorism as trauma.

Terrorism brings much attention because of the human action to cause terror and trauma in victims and targeted groups. Here trauma stands out because it is impossible to locate meaning within it. Trauma as memory is unique because it is the memory of events or human actions for which no interpretation has yet been formed. They are events that resist meaning (Edkins, 2003, p. 37). As Shields (2012, pp. 15–16) argues, the disappearance that traumatic events produce makes our minds reel, and the body must navigate around a space of absence that is both material and abstract representation. Thus, memory is neither an abstract representation, a concrete thing or a probability. It is shaped through a process of both the material and the abstract, making it essential to keep both aspects in mind throughout the thesis.

Commemoration:

Commemoration is a central aspect of understanding memorial landscapes. Commemoration tends to be divided into two versions, spontaneous and organised. Organised commemoration focuses on the macro of commemoration, influenced by the state's politics, national narrative and identity of the community organised from the top down (Stephens et al., 2021). In contrast, spontaneous commemoration is expressed in moments of mourning and grief right after a traumatic event. Spontaneous commemoration is connected to the emotional and affective responses when individuals come together and go with the motion (Stephens et al., 2021, pp. 23, 26). Such examples of spontaneous mourning may be the laying of flowers after a tragic event or the post-it wall seen in the aftermath of the Stockholm terror attack (see Figure 5). In the late example, bystanders put up messages of love or condolence as a spontaneous action rather than passing the site. (Nordin, 2017).



Figure 5. Post-It wall at the crash site by Åhléns, Drottninggatan on April 29, 2017 (Swi-hymn, 2019).

Commemoration can be interpreted through major and minor gestures of remembrance. Compared to major acts of remembrance associated with national narratives and influences by the state, minor gestures are smaller gestures that open up potential landscape variations regarding rituals, performances and commemoration (Closs Stephens et al., 2017, p. 45). Minor gestures are a relevant concept for this thesis because of their potential to reorient understandings of commemoration. The minor reveals the ebbs and flows of emotion, spikes of intensity, and the lulls of boredom or ambivalence as they pulse, flow and pour through us in our everyday life. Thus, minor gestures make how people think and feel in the moment important consideration for understanding the meanings and possibilities of commemoration (Sumartojo, 2021, p. 538). Closs Stephens et al. (2017) found, while studying small-scale ceremonies for victims during the London terror attack organised by the London Assembly, that memorials designed for family members and friends rather than the public or media

were often innovative and fragile but inherently affirmative and composed of different ways of living. An example of minor gestures during the ceremonies where the police officers silently nod to people attending the ceremonies, creating a soft kind of governance. It was unclear what was being suggested, observed, allowed or not allowed, but what was being invoked was the presence of the state (Closs Stephens et al., 2017, p. 49). Moving on to the next part, it can be said that repeated minor gestures can become symbols and, in turn, rituals.

Rituals:

Through ritualised gestures, people articulate feelings, such as love or compassion, and rehearsing ritualised events creates solidarity and a sense of social togetherness. Rituals also allow people to create a physical memory in each other by acting together, being close to others, and showing vulnerability. However, rituals do not create change; instead, rituals let people become a part of something larger than themselves. It does not achieve change, but the context of coming together to make desired to change possible (Salomonsen, 2021, p. 78).

Ritual is a term for repetitive events and is relevant when looking at events such as holidays or memorials that have become more than a one-time event. For example, a manifestation, demonstration or memorial service that occurs once only turns into a ritual once repeated over several years with the same elements or format for every occasion. In this sense, rituals are a part of tradition. Rituals reaffirm communal bonds, concern normative dimensions of society, and employ narratives, displays or some kind of performance (Etzioni, 2004, p. 7).

Etzioni (2004, p. 7) use the work of Durkheim to present three points important for understanding rituals. First, rituals allow communities to ‘re-create’ themselves to strengthen shared beliefs, social bonds and values when weakened by routine and daily life, enhancing individualism. Second, rituals help create emotional bonds between community members by ‘re-creating’ a society where members share experiences and worship the same objects. Finally, objects celebrated or worshipped as part of the ritual have no intrinsic value or meaning. Society imbues the objects with meaning and thus becomes cornerstones to the rituals built around them.

Affect and Atmosphere:

This section aims to present literature regarding affect and atmosphere. I argue that affect and atmosphere offers an understanding of memory and emotional spaces through bodies in motion, flows and sensed experiences. It becomes a valuable concept as this thesis aims to understand and observe the sensed commemorative atmosphere of Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan, where the annual memorial for the terror attack at Drottninggatan mainly occurs. By the end of this section, I will have defined affect and atmosphere, presented how researchers can understand atmosphere differently in practice, and presented the strengths of looking through the lens of affect and atmosphere, and the cons together with what cannot be answered through this lens.

The section will be structured as follows: First, I define affect. Affect as a concept is not always easy to grasp because it lacks a universal definition, creating much debate within the academic community. Therefore, this thesis will use the most common definition of affect as it is necessary to understand the next topic, atmosphere. Second, the text will present atmosphere, generally defining it further to explain it through affective and commemorative atmospheres to argue for its relevance. Finally, the section will conclude by presenting the strengths of using the concepts of affect and atmosphere for the topic of this thesis but also argue for what is possible to discern based on these concepts and what is not possible.

Affect:

To understand the atmosphere and the emotional processes during the memorial event at Sergels Torg, it is necessary first to understand affect. The nature of affect is tricky to discern, and the inconsistencies and gaps in the literature fuel debates on its functions, applications, relation to emotions and potential risks (Bazinet & Van Vliet, 2019; Closs Stephens et al., 2017). Affect as a conceptual theory emerged in the 1990s and has been associated with exploring emotions within fields of social sciences, such as human geography, which can briefly be defined as a body's capacity to affect and be affected (Bazinet & van Vliet, 2019). Alternatively, it can be understood as 'flows' between bodies; in this case, it is not through the everyday concept of bodies where the body's boundaries are understood as beginning and ending at the skin. Instead, the body in affect theory is considered porous yet not permeable to its environment (Bazinet & Van

Vliet, 2019). Sumartojo (2021, p. 534) point out that collective feelings made through impressions by others draw us into a collective and allow 'feelings-in-common' to emerge. For example, events that allow this can be music festivals or funeral services where other's impressions and emotions draw you in.

To further complicate the definition of affect, it is possible to look at affect as the flow of emotion passing between human and nonhuman bodies, such as public space, monuments, or nature, where affect is an impression of the contact between the world and the body (Stephens et al., 2021). Finally, affect can be understood through flows and sensory relations between bodies; here, affect becomes something automatic, nonconscious, or pre-personal, as affect represents how the body registers its sensory connection to the world. As such, affect is understood as something that precedes emotions and is contrasted with personal, conscious, emotional experiences often identified as feelings (Stephens et al., 2021).

While there is much work based on affect to understand topics such as commemoration, remembrance, and national identity, one of the more prominent critiques of over-relying on affect as a concept or taking it at face value is that affective bodies are not excluded from classification (Bazinet & Van Vliet, 2019). As affective studies have had the post-humanist tendency to bypass modern categorisations, there have also been critical interventions in affect theory that allows the onlooker to look beyond the accepted social construction of the self, the body and the social, even if it does not escape them. The critique of categorisation shows that even if affect is not usually understood as material and thus not representable in content, it does not stand apart from it. Instead, it is involved with materiality and the process of materialisation. Bodies are not neutral entities free of meaning; they become knowable through gendered, sexualised, ableist, objectified, animist, and racialised categorisations and entanglements (Bazinet & Van Vliet, 2019).

Affect is thus an essential concept when the researcher wants to understand memory and commemoration through more-than-representational understandings and becomes an important element when understanding the concept of atmosphere.

Atmosphere:

The concept of atmosphere is closely related to affect and is often described together in academic literature. Like affect, atmosphere is often identified through its subjective properties. In everyday speech, Fregonese and Laketa (2022) describe it as moods, auras, ambiences or senses of place. It has been compared through the immersion of the environment combined with sensing bodies, while at the same time being diffuse in the air or ethereal, gesturing the complexity of defining the concept. Accordingly, one might assume that atmosphere is an extension of affect. However, such assumptions limit our understanding of atmosphere. Affect, while important within studies regarding sensed experiences and emotions, is only one part of atmosphere among many others, such as materialities, emotions, and meanings in historical and cultural contexts (Edensor & Sumartojo, 2015). The concept of atmosphere has evolved in human geography and social sciences to encompass more than just quantifiable calculations or a sense of place. It goes beyond representation and includes emotions and experiences, such as those felt at the memorial of Sergels Torg. Atmosphere is shaped by material and symbolic representations, memories, expectations, and personal experiences. It is a constantly evolving condition that transcends the physical environments in which people find themselves (Edensor & Sumartojo, 2015). In sum, atmospheres rely heavily on the interjection between subjectivity and materiality. The subjective parts can not exist without the physical aspects that generate a context for subjectivity. The argument becomes important for the result and discussion section as I use commemorative atmosphere and in the next topic of affective atmospheres.

Affective atmospheres prove a useful tool to comprehend and use emotional power to comprehend formations of, for example, national identity or commemorative events. However, the term is not immune to critique, and if used, some arguments should be considered. Edensor and Sumartojo (2015) point out that atmosphere is not solely based on affect. The idea of affective atmospheres diminishes the idea of atmosphere as extensive and based on multiple characteristics. Reducing it to its affective qualities suggests that an atmosphere pre-exists in the presence of those suddenly subsumed within its affective field (Edensor & Sumartojo, 2015). Therefore, they argue that focusing only on the atmosphere's affective aspect makes it possible to miss affective formations'

social and cultural contexts. It would neglect how affective experiences are cumulative and, therefore, a historical interaction process between human beings and place. However, in the literature, alternative uses of affective atmosphere and its different strengths.

Fregonese and Laketa (2022) use affective atmosphere to define atmosphere as a relation, created and recreated across different spaces, politics and materialities and always 'ongoingly and in emergence'. Here they argue that existing accounts of atmosphere have not sufficiently accounted for its emergence in actual configurations of people's ongoing worlds and that atmospheres cannot be divorced from the specific feelings that are part of them. They look past the notions of affective atmospheres as only emotive charges in the air that spatially are poured out. Instead, affective atmospheres are seen as situated and politically charged nature of atmospheric attuning and transitions. Together with affect, atmosphere helps understanding debates surrounding national and urban groups brought into presence through terrorist events. Another example is Closs Stephens (2016), who brings up the relevance of affective atmospheres through studies on nationality. Addressing so-called 'moody force fields' in the making and shaping of collective publics, Closs Stephens argues that nationality is often experienced as a feeling. For example, during sporting events with crowding, singing and matching uniforms. It presents a provocation for cultural and political geographies and the study of nationalism as it brings together arguments in cultural geographies about the emotional power of national identity with insights from political geographies about the importance of developing a more relational understanding of national territories that is attentive to the associations between people and things.

To conclude this section, using the concept of atmosphere for this thesis allows me, as the researcher, to understand further how the sensed feelings and experiences for me and others are shaped when interacting with memorials connected to terrorism. Its complex dynamics allow for further insight as individual subjectivities such as memory and sensory perception influence how an atmosphere is shaped, sustained, and disappears. Personal interpretation of spatial events and practices also influences how meaning is formed; sensory experiences are crucial in this process (Sumartojo, 2016).

At the same time, atmosphere is not wholly subjective or objective. It reveals specific relational configurations between the subject, their memories and experiences, and the representational and non-representational elements that make up their spatial environment. Different feelings, such as pride, humility, grief, sadness, boredom, or uneasiness, can be associated with collective memorial events. Particular aesthetic and representational settings shape these atmospheres, but these components do not solely determine them. They are 'affective qualities that exceed the ensembles from which they emanate' (Sumartojo, 2016). Thus, it is a valuable theory and tool for understanding terrorism and commemoration not only through security, trauma or identity but rather by combining and looking at the ever-changing processes in the landscape.

Commemorative Atmosphere:

By using the several theoretical concepts so far, we can make use of Sumartojo's (2016) definition of commemorative atmospheres and start pairing the concept of commemoration seen as practices and narratives that draw together national identity, collective and individual memory, grief and mourning, regular ritual and material, aesthetic representations of war and death with atmosphere, and its dynamic combination of space, sensory experience, affect, individual memory and experience and the material environment (Sumartojo, 2016, p. 541). By thinking about the geographies of commemoration, it is possible to link the individual to the nation and show the relevance of repetitive rituals to make connections to how commemoration 'sticks'. However, the idea that commemoration 'sticks' can be expanded to suggest that commemoration can be understood as staged, enacted and experienced through atmosphere. (Drozdowski et al., 2016, pp. 1–2) say that memory has a 'sticky' resonance, drawing in broader contexts and places, including nations and places with them. Memory's adhesive quality attends to our capacity to remember the trauma. Meaning encounters with violence, whether direct or indirect, affect place and space in meaningful ways. It explains the potency of commemorative events that exceed the ritual reinforcement of identity narratives to bring out atmospheres that mix narrative, sensory and affective elements into powerful combinations with political implications (Sumartojo, 2016, p. 544).

Sumartojo (2016) claims there are three factors when discussing commemorative atmospheres, foreknowledge and anticipation, symbolic built environments and sensory experience. The first aspect of the commemorative atmosphere is foreknowledge and anticipation. Before any commemoration event begins, a feeling of public significance is built through the efforts of the state and media. Therefore, in the case of any planned ceremony, people who attend will most likely possess foreknowledge that prepares them for emotional rituals and any preparations needed in advance to attend appropriately (Sumartojo, 2016). In the case of the ceremony at Sergels Torg, such preparation can occur on the website of Stockholm Stad through information days beforehand or media making general notices or debate articles surrounding, for example, the security issues surrounding more giant stone lions to block any future attempts of similar attacks (Nordström, 2020), or terror funds (TV4, 2022).

The second aspect of the commemorative atmosphere is the symbolic built environment. It is centred around the symbolic staged materialities of the commemoration site. It suggests a spatial aspect where the landscape has sensory influence through elements such as lights, running water or sounds. It highlights the architectural symbolism and design and uses the landscape contexts of the site to contribute to the felt atmosphere that participants together constitute and experience during the ceremony (Sumartojo, 2016). For example, in the case of the monument "Sanctuary" or "Fredad Plats", the planned monument at Sergels Torg, which depicts a blanket of gold-coloured bronze, is argued because of its design to allow every people to relate and interpret the monument with symbolism that can be applied to qualities a blanket would have such as protection, heat and comfort (Fares, 2022b). The mention of an electrically heated monument where visitors can physically touch it to heat themselves during the cold part of the year (Steiner, 2023) suggests staged materialities in the landscape.

The third and final aspect of the commemorative atmosphere is the sensory experience. Attending a symbolically charged ceremony or a memorial site when filled with anticipation creates a range of sensory attunements that shape the atmosphere and the experience of those present. Based on the memorial design of the second aspect of the symbolic built environment, which attempts to change the attitudes of memorial sites, it also shapes perceptions and actions of visitors to enhance their engagement with the

commemoration site. Revealing the close links among memory, affect and place. Here the affective atmospheres return to 'thicken' the sense of the memorial space as diverse affects are generated (Sumartojo, 2016).

Sumartojo's (2016) study of the commemorative event of Anzac Day in Australia shows how it is possible in this thesis to demonstrate how atmosphere emerges from combinations of history, memory, place, built environment, landscape, object, texts, people and anticipation. Hence, commemorative atmospheres allow memorials to be understood as stages, with affective bodies shaping and creating meaning in repeating and ritualised performances to create discursive meaning and allow the nation to remember. They also have the capacity to both be sites of grieving or reconciliation, which is a central theme for events revolving around terrorism which is related to memories of trauma. The argument for commemorative atmospheres also strengthens the idea that we need to consider affective, sensed and emotional aspects when studying memorials and monuments rather than just one based on history and security to understand how national identity in the next part is shaped and expressed.

Swedish National Identity:

In this part of the literature review, national identity and its relation to memory will be discussed. While memory is often associated with intimate, personal and emotional experiences, memory with a connection to more significant tragic events, such as terrorist attacks, tends to be interpreted on a national scale as a threat or even an attack against the state rather than individuals (Mitchell, 2003; Pace & Bohland, 2020). In Western nations, terrorist attacks have created, in the aftermath, commemorative responses aimed to support victims and gather people through a sense of national identity and social togetherness. Such commemorative responses are, for example, often portrayed by politicians and government officials in speeches and media by encouraging unity, freedom, and democracy (Stephens et al., 2021). Thus, since different nations have different constructions of national identity, it is necessary to map and gain an understanding of Swedish national identity.

Furthermore, based on the research questions, it is relevant to understand what earlier research has said about Swedish national identity to understand further the preconceived notion that there is a lesser ritual commemoration and established monuments in

Sweden than in other Western nations. Therefore, in this part of the literature review, the text will first explain what national identity is and how different authors have documented it in the context of commemoration. Second, the text will discuss its connection to affect, atmosphere, memory, rituals, and commemoration. Finally, building on the research questions, the text will differ from a previous understanding of Swedish national identity, its development, and its connection today to alt-right movements.

Definition of National Identity:

To attempt a definition of Swedish national identity, it is first necessary to define what nationalism and national identity mean for this thesis. Nationalism is ‘the political belief that a nation has a right to self-determination, governance, and independent territory’ (Pace & Bohland, 2020, p. 373). Further, defining nationalism, a critical understanding of nationalism is produced by modernity, which means that the idea and sense of nationalism are not far back in humanity's history but have been created in modern times through our development. In this perspective, nationalism emerged historically due to modern processes, such as capitalism, industrialisation, urbanisation, secularism and the emergence of the bureaucratic state (Antonsich, 2020, p. 1231). Additionally, one of the critical motivations supporting this modernist theory is the change of values where a homogenous national culture becomes prioritised over place-specific and local elements to form mutually exchangeable and reducible individuals needed to create industrialised economies (Antonsich, 2020). Therefore, nationalism as an understanding of social organisation applies to modern industrialisation. Contrary to ideas of nationalism as primordial or ethno-symbolic, the modern state gives birth to the nation, not vice versa (Antonsich, 2020, pp. 1231–1232).

Broadly there are two understandings of national identity and the construction of a nation in the related scholarship. The first is based on a long history with a homogenous ethnic identity; the second is of nations as socially constructed and recent in their creation (Kaplan, 2020). However, the common trend for the two versions is that national identity is attached to cultural identity and a relation to a community, meaning that national identity can be defined as a 'sense of belonging to a particular nation, considered a unified political and cultural entity' (Kaplan, 2020, p. 239).

Creating a nation's sense of belonging and a unified political and cultural entity is multifaceted and based on the politics of memory and identity (Drozdewski & Matusz, 2021, p. 2). The process of creating such belonging to the nation includes the making and sharing of collective memories through common identities and backstories, constructing common enemies and perceived threats, reinforcing robust social structures, identifying important spaces of collective meaning and developing practices and rituals to create a sense of social order (Kaplan, 2020). Thus, belonging becomes a discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resists socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion.

Furthermore, strategies to maintain a strong sense of belonging among citizens and a collective idea of the nation become crucial for the continued support of a unified nation (Drozdewski & Matusz, 2021, p. 2). A sense of belonging to the nation, then, functions as a foothold of stability where trust is placed, most commonly in those who share one's cultural memory defined as social rules and values as well as a memory of a commonly inhabited and similarly experienced past' (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 18).

The creation of social order through national identity is used for political purposes as claims and expressions of power and territory, which are crucial for developing nationalism. Furthermore, the concept of territory is evident when narratives of nationalists are portrayed (Pace & Bohland, 2020). Terms such as homeland, territory, motherland and other geographically based words facilitate this. For example, the territory can be seen in Swedish national identity through the Swedish concepts of 'folk', 'folklighet' and 'folkhem' (Trägårdh, 2002). The phrases are tied to a post-war modernity project and are often associated with the Social Democratic party of Sweden and the welfare state, propagating a national narrative of freedom, equality and democracy, and in a sense, a modern moral superpower (Johansson, 2001; Trägårdh, 2002).

Additionally, when considering the geographic scale and national identity, it is important to remember that national identities are often nested, meaning that a smaller identity may be part of a larger one, which may be a part of an even broader identity (Kaplan, 2020). Thus, the definition of nationalism and national identity in this part will be important to remember as I will continue the chapter by defining the concept of Swedish national identity.

For this thesis, it is necessary to not only understand nationalism and national identity through a macro perspective of nations as expressions of power via homogenous and

top-down enforcement with only one definition of national identity. Instead, to gain a further understanding of how people interact with ideas of nations through memory and affective registers, it is vital to consider the everyday space (Antonsich, 2020; Closs Stephens, 2016). The everyday space connects with memory and national identity because it makes the minor gestures of commemorative geography (as described earlier) visible and makes the felt sayable (Drozdewski et al., 2021, p. 44). Furthermore, as Drozdewski et al. (2021, pp. 71–72) argue.

‘Attending to the everyday and ordinary manifestations of collective national memory allows us to move beyond accounts that rely on representation alone and instead take in experiential and individual understandings. Moreover, thinking-with these objects, sensory experiences, settings, and rituals opens a route to seeing how they connect across national and individual scales to constitute a rich and complex experience of commemoration.’

The everyday maps the tensions and contradictions of nationalist rhetoric. It allows for observing everyday instances to uncover how people make the nation present to themselves and others and for what purpose (Antonsich, 2020, pp. 1233–1234). Thus, whether commemorative spaces such as Sergel Torg is defined as everyday space, people will still encounter the memorial and planned monument through their everyday movements and routines (Drozdewski et al., 2021).

Swedish National Identity:

In this part, where Swedish national identity based on earlier literature will be presented, it is necessary to understand national identity's relation to culture. Literature on national identity draws on two kinds of relations, national identity as related to cultural identity or national identity as related to spatial experiences. The relationship between cultural identity and national identity determines how in different ways, nationalism is expressed both through discursive practices and materially (Kaplan, 2020, p. 240). In the case of national identity in Sweden, cultural identity connected to ethnonationalism has been covered widely as alt-right movements have gained traction in Sweden and the rest of Europe (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2017; Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019).

The standard definition of ethno-nationalist movements contributes one specific ethnic or racial group to the nation. The boundaries of the national community are seen as restricted, excluding immigrants and people who have lived in the country for a long time but do not fit the specific group. This view has long existed, and some countries are more influenced by ethnonationalism than others; movements such as the National Front in France articulate a French identity that is anti-immigrant, antimuslim and often antisemitic. Hungary and Poland are also two examples of countries in Europe that have seen an increasing influence of right-populist parties with strong anti-immigrant platforms. (Kaplan, 2020, p. 240). The rhetoric of ethno-nationalist movements becomes more convincing as individuals and communities seek respite from the perceived chaos of a globalising, postcolonial world; many do so by looking to the past, imagining a simpler time of secure and homogeneous national identities (Pace & Bohland, 2020, p. 373). The modern identity, associated with an increasingly globalised society understood as multifaceted and hybridised, challenges a classical notion of a heritage rooted in a singular national identity and people. However, during the last several years, ethno-nationalist sympathy has emerged in several countries, challenging the modern identity (Pace & Bohland, 2020, p. 374). Sweden is no exception.

In Sweden, Elgenius and Rydgren (2017) argue that the right-wing party, the Sweden Democrats, presents anti-immigrant sentiment and portrays immigration as a threat to the ethnonational identity of the majority. The perceived threat to the national identity is expressed through feelings of nostalgia, 'the loss of times bygone - of 'not feeling at home anymore' - and is translated into ethnic and national terms' (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2017, p. 354). Right-wing parties in Sweden offer a rebranded version of the 'People's Home' (Folkhemmet). In this Swedish so-called golden age, there was a cohesive society with a homogenous population and traditional values, dating to the 1950s, compared to the current decline of the past 50 years. The decline is argued to be because of internationalisation made by the Liberals and Social Democrats, even though the Social Democrats are praised for the creation of the welfare state and People's home (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2017, p. 354; Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019, p. 592). 'The Peoples Home' is a poetic term for the Swedish welfare state or when the Social Democrats governed Sweden between 1932-1976. In many ways, it is a nationalistic project acting on a

discourse of 'us', social solidarity and Swedish democracy. It is a suitable past, where Sweden is the cradle of modern democracy (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2017, p. 355).

Figures such as the former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme (1969-1976; 1982-1986), who was assassinated in 1986, are identified as the main culprits for the deterioration of the Swedish state (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019). His death shocked Swedish society since peace and solidarity were the major remembered themes in his political career. However, he was a controversial political figure because of his strong views on political matters, such as American involvement in Vietnam and apartheid in South Africa. He was a symbol of 'Folkhemmet', making his murder interpreted as an attack on the welfare system established by social democracy, but at the same time, he was also a hate figure for the right wing (Pantti, 2005, p. 363). The harsher critique could be expressed as:

'there has never been an individual who has had such a detrimental on this country. His senseless migration policies eroded the Swedish nation state and the glue that kept it all together' (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019, p. 592).

Olof Palme, I argue, as a major symbol for the nation of Sweden, thus shows the different narratives competing for the memory of his importance and, in turn, trying to shape the national identity of Sweden. As Figure (6) below shows, while there is ethno-nationalistic rhetoric to vilify his role, at the same time, people still commemorate him as an important figure in Swedish history as people still put down flowers by his memorial plaque in 2023, showing the complexity of identifying Swedish national identity.



Figure 6. *Traces of spontaneous commemoration by Olof Palmes memorial plaque, Stockholm on March 2, 2023 (Source: Danielle Drozdowski, Owners private collection.)*

To understand Swedish nationalism and national identity in a more critical sense than one based on alternative right nationalism based on ethnic and cultural values, it is necessary to look at other values that define national identity. Sweden, in comparison to, for example, the United States or Great Britain, is a Western nation with a different historical consciousness, especially in post second world war Sweden, according to Trägårdh (2002). Trägårdh (2002) argues that it is possible to see the difference of consciousness through the lack of monuments and memorials for citizens to organise a collective and national memory. However, while Sweden lacks such monuments compared to the rest of the continent, there still are monuments and icons, just not the kind celebrating leaders or war memorials familiar in the rest of Europe. Trägårdh (2002) recalls another author's view from growing up in Sweden:

"The historian Kjell Jonsson once told a story from his youth in Sundsvall, a port in Northern Sweden, that is instructive in this regard. Sitting by the dock, he would watch the ships being loaded, setting off for foreign lands

with the products of great Swedish export firms like Volvo and SKF. Then, he remembered, he felt proud to be Swedish' (Frykman, 1991, p.169 through Trägårdh, 2002, p.150).

Here Trägårdh (2002) describes the different articulations of monuments of modern Sweden, arguing for the vision of modernity rather than a distant past. This perspective of Swedish identity opens up discussions based on other values apart from ethno-nationalist ones.

Johansson (2001) argues that the second world war (WWII) played a central role in shaping the collective memory of their national identity in the US and other European nations. After WWII, it was hard for Swedes to relate and know how to position themselves to the war and atrocities since they decided to stay out of the war and emphasise neutrality politics. This politics of neutrality would continue to shape Swedish identity and influence it. Johansson (2001) describes this neutrality policy as a turn away from history and focus on the not-so-clear vision of modernity with the aim of becoming the most modern nation in the world by stepping toward society and identity based on modernity instead of traditions and culture. Turning away from the rest of Europe that was seen as historical, traditional and reactionary and towards 'third-world countries' who did not judge Sweden for its role in the war, thinking of themselves as a moral superpower. With modernity as a symbol of national identity, historic identities faded into the background. Sweden's identity was tied to the present and the future and to neutrality as a vision for a tradition of peace (Johansson, 2001, pp. 228–232).

In conclusion, while it is relevant to comprehend narratives of the nation based on historical, ethnic and territorial understandings, the study of Swedish national identity needs to look not only at the ideas of creating a state but also at the redevelopment of the state. As such, how the population understands and interacts with the state is constructed. The example of Sweden, as shown in this section, is a state with the homogenous national narrative of a modern state, distancing itself from historic and ethnonationalism since the second world war (Johansson, 2001). This assumption should, however, be scrutinised and analysed to a greater extent since identity is always in the process of becoming. Also, the landscape of heritage and identity is becoming

more complex in the 21st century as communities no longer need to connect only in physical forms but may meet and find solidarity in virtual spaces. Beginning in the 20th century, since the introduction of the Internet in people's daily life, traditional and social forms of media are of massive importance in understanding the construction and growth of postmodern heritage identities and practices that, in turn, construct ideas of national identity (Pace & Bohland, 2020, p. 378).

3. Methodology

Based on the background and the theoretical framework I have presented so far in this thesis, here I will go through the methodology and research design of this thesis. This section's focus will first be establishing the framework for how I define and use autoethnography. Second, the three methods for the thesis will be presented. The three methods are an observation study, vox pop interviews and discourse analysis. Third, I will present how data analysis was made, involving field notes, transcriptions and different kinds of media. Finally, this section will cover positionality and ethical considerations for this text.

Auto-Ethnography:

For this thesis, a central part of the methodology was autoethnography. Ethnography can be described as related to participant observation (although the latter term has been used less since the 1970s) (Bryman, 2016, p. 423). Ethnography involves an extended involvement over time to observe behaviour, listen in on others' conversations and engage with the community themselves (Bryman, 2016). According to Ellis et al. (2011), autoethnography challenges ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially just and socially conscious act. By using parts of both autobiography and ethnography, autoethnography becomes a method that is both a process and a product. The reason for choosing an autoethnographic framework is to look past impersonal reflections and not be a distant onlooker. Though some researchers still assume that research can be neutral and objective, such assumptions are questioned in today's academic fields (Ellis et al., 2011).

Autoethnography is an approach that allows the researcher to acknowledge subjectivity, emotions, and the researcher's influence on their research rather than trying to hide them in their text or assuming that they do not exist (Ellis et al., 2011). Furthermore, it is also recognised that different people have different assumptions about the world. Within the academic fields, it becomes a matter of research being narrow and limiting in how to do research, as speech, writing, values and beliefs are expressed in various ways and therefore are silenced or limited by conventional means of doing research, meaning the traditional conventions of doing research implies that other ways of knowing are unnecessary, unsatisfactory and invalid. Such different assumptions can be grounded by several reasons, such as gender, race, sexuality, age, ability, class, education or religion (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 275). Thus, methods such as autoethnography expand on the world and allow researchers to question what constitutes meaningful and valuable research. This approach helps to understand how our claims of understanding the world, and our understanding influence what we study, how we study it, and what we say about the topic.

Since autoethnography is mainly written through the observer's insights, the reflexive practices differ for researchers who use this method. The personal epiphanies the researcher perceives or gains throughout a study are valuable; it still needs to take into consideration compared to the epiphanies of others. Therefore, the researcher who aims to use autoethnography in their work needs to consider how much emphasis their work is placed on the study of others, between the self and the interaction with others, traditional analysis, interview context and the power relations (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 276).

This thesis will thus be an autoethnographic study based on this thesis theory and the memorial service at Sergels Torg for the terror attack on Drottninggatan (7th April). As the researcher, I will immerse myself in recording sensory experiences I perceive during this time. Pink (2015) discuss how sensoriality experience contributes to the methodological toolkit. The subjective, embodied, contingent and intimate writing of autoethnography allows us to use our experiences to produce academic knowledge. Closs Stephens et al. (2017, p. 46) explain that the reason for using participatory observation or autoethnography is not to make claims about how others might have experienced these events, which in this case, would have involved trespassing on very

personal moments. Instead, it is to record my affective performances of the experience as a way of 'feeling our way' into the politics of this commemorative event.

The matter of reliability refers to the narrator's credibility; could the narrator have had the experience defined? Does the narrator believe that this is what happened to them? Could the text be considered fiction rather than an accurate and truthful account of what happened? In the case of validity, researchers doing work through autoethnography seek truthful accounts to reach good validity. When the writer writes 'stories' based on their own 'truths', it becomes necessary to reflect on how helpful the story is and to what use the story might be used. Lastly, generalisability in autoethnography moves from respondents to readers and is tested by readers to determine if they can relate to the written text or the lives of others they know (Ellis et al., 2011, pp. 282–283).

Building on the autoethnographic part of the study, it is vital to understand how we communicate and express ourselves in a more digital world. Most of our everyday experiences are either highly mediated or digitalised, causing us to be surrounded by media. Autoethnography, in this case, is a method to write about the self and our digitalised and fragmented identities within a cyber and convergence culture. It concerns the self in cyberspace and the digital ecology and how new media technologies simultaneously disembody and reembody our experiences (Atay, 2020). In this context, it is crucial not to discern people as digital or not digital, but rather as digital tools which change how we interact with space, but it does not erase our physical selves.

When Merrill et al. (2020a) present how the public sphere has been reconceptualised because of the internet and social media, they argue for the relevance of a 'more-or-less digital' space. The 'more-or-less digital' is relevant here because it allows the researcher to acknowledge how public atmospheres and its constituent elements are always a changing mix of the digital and the non-digital (Merrill et al., 2020a, p. 550). I argue that for my studies, the non-digital aspects of commemorative and everyday space are important, and the influence of the digital is an important aspect in people's daily lives. Therefore, the digital factor is important when doing my methods.

Methods:

Observation:

The primary method for this thesis is an observational study. Observation studies (often referred to as participant observations) are a method to turn witnessed actions and experiences into qualitative data. It is a method where the researchers are the instrument processing and recording observations directly as data, with the researchers participating in daily life while observing (and writing down) those practices.

Researchers watch social and environmental phenomena, take notes, record their own experiences, and, to varying degrees, participate in the minutia of daily life (Hay & Cope, 2021). Because of the nature of the theoretical background for this thesis and ontological assumptions, grounded in the understanding that affective and sensed experiences are essential to understand memories of trauma, commemoration and how it is tied to national identity, I argue an observation study is suitable for answering the research aim of this thesis.

Before beginning the fieldwork, practical preparations of tools, area of study, and the matter of study needed to be prepared or decided on before the day of the study. The first topic of preparation of tools was how to gather the data. The fieldwork focused on recording visual and auditive data, where and how to take notes, and how to gather and store this data. I decided to mainly use a smartphone to capture visual data through photographs and sonic data through recordings and video recordings. Smartphones are convenient tools that can record different media, are easy to utilise because of their everyday usage, and do not add additional costs such as buying or renting a GoPro camera or other recording tools. Another reason to use a smartphone is the possibility of using apps during fieldwork. In preparation for this study, I used QualNotes, an app aiming to gather data for qualitative studies through digital mapping, recording and note-taking. The reason was its practical usage, mapping my route while doing the fieldwork, looking through the lens of digital geographies and gathering data in one place to make coding in the next stage easier.

The second matter of preparation was the decision on the area of study. The observation study took place at Drottningatan and Sergels Torg, where I walked through the space to initially observe the memorial and service at Sergels Torg, a square connected to

Drottninggatan a couple of meters away from where the terror attack occurred. I argue that several landmarks in this space are important to the event and those who remember the attack. Two of the most important places during the aftermath were the exterior of Åhléns, where the truck used by the terrorist crashed and where the post-it memorial wall appeared, and the stone lions that helped stop the truck and became spots for spontaneous commemoration. At Sergels Torg, there is also the landmark of the stairs where the sea of flowers appeared the days after the attack and where the planned monument will stand. Thus, in my preparations, I concluded that these landmarks should be observed in the study.

Finally, as part of the preparations, I needed to take a stance on addressing or engaging with what to observe when on site. While the researchers doing the fieldwork should be reflexive and unbiased without preference, going into the study to take in new experiences one has not thought of, there will still be some level of expectations. In this case, I had expectations or assumptions of where flowers would be put down, the relevance of landmarks associated with the terror attack, and where might be a good route to walk. Therefore, it was essential to acknowledge this as it would influence what I saw that others might miss.

I began my fieldwork observation at 9.24 in the morning, which lasted seven hours, at the City Subway station exit. I continued to lap around Serges Torg, up to Drottninggatan, and towards Åhléns, where the terror attack happened. The route was repeated during the fieldwork in different patterns, as well as standing on spots with good sight over the street or square to take notes, count actions or interactions, and observe social patterns. The fieldwork alternated with the vox pop interview throughout the day depending on the flow of people past the memorial and at what time of the day it was to observe different flows of every day as the people changed throughout the day, from morning time when the stores had not opened, to the lunch rush, and the afternoon flows.

Vox Pop Interviews:

The second method for data gathering is through vox pop interviews, 'vox pop' meaning 'voice of the people'. Vox pop interviews are shorter interviews performed in everyday settings by talking with people on the street to gather qualitative data. While this may

have a similar purpose or be interchangeable with questionnaire methods, the purpose of asking interview questions is to allow the respondent to show the minor commemorations and other possible insights that major narratives of national identity will not capture or miss (Drozdewski & Matusz, 2021, p. 4). Additionally, the everyday component of the research is vital for this study. Asking people in everyday settings, in this case, Sergels Torg, on their way to work, meeting up acquaintances or going shopping, added to how the nation and a sense of identity exist in the mundane. The spontaneous element of the interviews, where the interviewee was not withheld for long and had no time for preparation, was also essential to capture affective and intuitive responses while looking at and contemplating the memorial (Drozdewski & Matusz, 2021). In the study, 22 vox pop interviews were done. Following good ethical practice, participants consented verbally to being interviewed and could withdraw from the study whenever they wanted. They could also decide if they could be recorded using a digital voice recorder and, in that case, have their responses written instead. All responses were anonymous.

The vox pop guide consisted of four questions aimed at understanding the interviewee's experience and feelings surrounding the annual memorial, the importance of the event, if the planned monument on Sergels Torg is relevant for national identity, and if they even knew it was the annual Memorial Day. Therefore, the following questions were asked during the vox pop interviews:

- Do you know what this memorial is for?
- Were you in the city the day it happened or the days after? If yes, what were the feelings then?
- Do you think the placement makes it important?
- Would a monument be important to remember the day?

Coding was done by summarising the notes right after, reading the transcripts, and identifying recurring themes.

Discourse analysis:

The final method I will use for this thesis is a limited discourse analysis. The method of discourse analysis relies on Foucault's concept of discourse, which examines the

cultural production and circulation of knowledge, allowing us to analyse what and how we know about the world. It entails how 'particular knowledge systems convince people about what exists in the world and shape what they say, do, experience and become' (Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 334). By analysing media connected to the event through discourse analysis, I aim to discern narratives surrounding the terror attack at Drottninggatan that are conceived as 'established truths'. The aim fits with the method as discourse analysis investigates why some narratives or arguments become taken for granted as truths while dismissing others (Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 334). The source material for the data gathering will be the video Stockholm Stad published on its website on April 5, two days before the memorial day (Stockholms stad, 2023). The reason for analysing this source is because of its relevance in signifying the narratives made by Stockholm Stad and the rhetoric they use, which has an impact on the design and instalment of the planned monument, which much of the memorial landscape surrounding the terror attack at Drottninggatan is affected. The analysis will therefore contribute to and triangulate the study with my observations, respondents' opinions and the narratives of the city. During the coding phase, themes surrounding emotions, commemoration and national narratives were especially considered.

Analysing Data:

After the field study had been completed 7th of April, the annual Memorial Day, I collected different kinds of data due to the different methods. The data gathered were from the observation study, which consisted of my own memos or field notes, photos, sound, and video recordings. From the vox pop interviews, there were transcripts. From there, the gathered data were categorised into categories of relevance for the research questions and then coded to sift through the vast amount of data to lessen the data and highlight aspects of greater importance. The categories were initially in broader strokes divided based on the theoretical themes of the literature review of the thesis, including aspects of the atmosphere, memory and national identity. Then the coding went deeper into categories such as 'history or imagined', 'togetherness', 'community' and so on, where some codes were more valuable than others. The coding based on the field memos and transcriptions was done right after they were performed to be as fresh as possible in my mind, granting a clearer perspective of the notes. In addition, the digital media procured during the data gathering was also coded similarly. In this case, the

media were saved from the devices to a cloud for safekeeping and further categorised and coded with the same or similar key terms and themes.

Ethical Considerations:

In the preparation phase, it became clear that the cause of studying the terror attack at Drottninggatan would instil different feelings and emotional responses in people observed as part of the observation study and those approached as part of the vox pop interviews. Therefore, several ethical considerations were to be made throughout the field study and interviews. Questions of who, for example, to approach for the study became focused on which to approach based on their interaction with the memorial. On the one hand, I did not want to approach passersby with no inclination or interest in the memorial. I wanted them to be at least curious about it, taking photos or walking up to it, placing flowers or such, showing any signs of engagement with the memorial.

Because on the one hand, I did not want to intrude on vulnerable moments for individuals who were there when it happened, knew someone who became a victim or overall attended the memorial to have a private moment commemorating. Therefore, when selecting participants for the vox pop, I needed to be sensitive and respectful not to intrude if people approached with flowers, showed intent and visited with purpose rather than curiosity.

As part of the vox pop interviews, verbal consent was deemed appropriate from an ethical point of view. In addition to verbal consent, cards with details of the study and contact information were handed out to participants. The cards briefly described the purpose of the interviews, the respondent's right to opt out of the study whenever and contact details if there were any further questions.

Positionality:

When performing research through ethnographic studies, positionality is essential to understand how pre-conceived notions and established knowledge and experiences as the researcher. Positionality refers to a researcher's social, locational and ideological placement relative to their research project or participants. It is the idea that a researcher can, for example, be influenced by biographical characteristics, such as class, race, and gender, but also formative experiences. Therefore, the researcher's identity becomes a question of power relations (Hay & Cope, 2021). Understanding the research progress

through a critical perspective means that a researcher's identity matters when gathering data and interpreting it, suggesting knowledge is based on perspectives, also called situated knowledge. Situated knowledge characterises the research philosophy of social construction, where human identities and cultures are produced through socially agreed-upon meanings and are highly changeable rather than fixed and objective. All people have life experiences that will alter our experiences and make us exercise power differently. However, since our identities are not always clear, we experience a range of social advantages and disadvantages, and power dynamics are not always explicit (Hay & Cope, 2021). Therefore, the researcher's positionality provides insight into and affects the data gathered and the interpretive framework of the experience.

My positionality was important because I did not aim to present how others experience this event in the moment. The reason is that this would trespass on the respondent's personal moments. Therefore, I argue that instead, I pay attention to my impressions and record affective aspects to feel my way into the politics of the event. The observation further studies my responses and how feelings pass through bodies and ripple out through a crowd, which is essential since politicised anniversary events create expectations to feel something.

4. Results and Discussion

Commemorative Atmosphere:

In this part of the chapter, I will present a chronological account based on my own observations during the annual memorial day at Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan. I first use this part of the chapter to give the reader insight into how it performed the fieldwork throughout the day. Second, I introduce the atmosphere section and the affective and sensory aspects I experienced on the annual memorial day.

One of the initial reflections made before and under the observation study was when the study began and concluded. Thus, to perceive and consider mobility and flow as deterrents to understanding spaces as fixed and static, the trip into the city was observed as part of the study. The travel into Stockholm City and Sergels Torg was difficult. All

trains north of the city were down for the whole of Easter because of infrastructure work for the commuter trains, resulting in anyone visiting the train stations or using the travel app being greeted by messages saying, 'All trains cancelled'. Similarly, the red subway line was also closed, creating even more of the feeling of a lucky few who had to navigate the city to get to Stockholm City. Once I successfully travelled by car from Kungsängen north of Stockholm to the blue subway line at Sundbyberg, I was met by an almost empty carriage. The initial thought was that it had to be because it is Easter and people have the day off or open shop late. However, these were only initial assumptions; I could only claim that the empty carriage and the eerie quiet underground station created a sense of going somewhere where few others were going.

When I arrived at Segels Torg, the square was close to empty, apart from some passersby. Similarly to what I deduced on the train carriage over, since it was early, any signs of it being Easter and therefore a holiday were not evident at this point as it is important to keep in mind that this was not a normal weekday, but a holiday, altering the everyday landscape. I had come by 9.22 and was there before most shops opened by 10 o'clock. All the stores I passed were closed, and there was a sense of calm before people gathered in the city. Drottninggatan stood empty except for the few individuals who marched with determination, headphones on and looking straight ahead or down at a smartphone screen, determined to reach their destination. Other people on site were the streetcleaners riding along the square, the early bird tourist groups meeting for their guided tours, and finally, people without housing who strolled around the streets and square. It was cold in the square at this time. There was a sense of having the square all for yourself when standing there, counting the few people passing by. I was also met with an unexpected surprise when arriving in the area. Initially, it was unclear how the memorial site would look except for its general placement compared to earlier years. However, when I came up from the subway, there was no orchestrated place for the memorial; instead, on the other side of the square, on a lone circular wooden bench, was a flower wreath. At the sight of this wreath, there were two initial thoughts; first, someone would have had to arrive early to put this down, and second, the disappointment when I saw the small wreath on the ample space of the square, making it seem insignificant.



Figure 7. *Sergels Torg early in the morning, April 7, 2023. (Source: Author)*

There was a stark contrast to the landscape as the stores and the shoppers started to roll into the area. From lunch and throughout the afternoon, the flow of people, where they were walking and what materialities they interacted with changed. The shift from the morning geography to the more bustling and 'alive' space of the inner city created another sense of the city, changing the social interactions I perceived while observing. The main social differences that changed during the afternoon were the less perceived movement of people heading from one point to another. Once the stores had opened, there was a more inquisitive interaction with stores and physical properties in the landscape, such as the stone lions, but most interactions with the wreath were during this time of the day. However, it was not just a matter of how or how many people walked past. The area's atmosphere would change nature once the city became more 'alive'. Music from speakers, street vendors selling books, street artists, the scent from the hot dog stands, activists shouting slogans, and Christian gatherings for Easter all affected the atmosphere throughout the day. It would become more profound the later it was. Similarly to the accounts of Doughty and Lagerqvist (2016), who studied South American pan flute musicians performing at Segels Torg, sound and other sensory aspects can soothe, animate and soften urban spaces. The changed landscape also

changed the demography and group constellations walking past. While in the morning, people had been on their way somewhere, at Sergels Torg, closer to noon, it became a place for people to wait for and meet up with others. Since the memorial was close to 'Kulturhuset', which hosts Stockholm City Theatre and City Arts Centre, many people gathered there. However, because of Easter, it was closed. The occasional gathering of people outside Kulturhuset close to the memorial allowed me to, on several occasions, see individuals or groups of people wait for acquaintances or family members. It showed, together with observations in the rest of the area, how family groups, friends meeting up for lunch or fika or doing other planned activities become more common compared to the lonely bypassers later in the day.

Foreknowledge and Anticipation:

To understand the commemorative atmosphere of the memorial, I first go through the concept of foreknowledge and anticipation, as described by Sumartojo (2016). The lack of attention to the memorial on the annual day left much to be desired. Nevertheless, here I argue how the lack of attention in relation to earlier years is a result in itself. The most significant difference between the coding of my observations and the vox pop interviews is the perceived attention to what day it was. Since I have done significant preparations and reading on the topic, as well as a good knowledge of the city and what happened in 2017, I accumulated foreknowledge on the topic that would make it impossible not to have any preconceived notions or hunch of what to expect. However, going through the vox pop notes, there were several cases of not knowing what the memorial wreath was for. When respondents knew about the memorial, they did not know it was on this date, guessing it was sometime later in April. Some more telling examples were the news reporter and the second respondent, who returned after the interview to put flowers on the wreath.

During my observation study, a reporter from Swedish Radio P4 approached me regarding the annual memorial day for the attack. Since I was standing alone by the wreath, they assumed I was there for the commemoration and asked for an interview. However, once they learned that I did my thesis on the memorial, we instead talked about the lack of attention to the memorial this year. Once we finished talking, the reporter went trying to gather more interviews. Observing the reporter trying to interact

with passersby at the square allowed me to consider the similarities between when they tried to get someone on tape and me trying to get interviewees for the study. From another angle, it showed the surprise of no one being there, the small wreath being the only indication of any memorial, the attempt to approach people without much luck, to finally, accepting the lack of attention the annual Memorial Day had reserved. The other example of the second respondent putting down flowers by the wreath shows the will to act and commemorate when the foreknowledge is established and the shift in the process of remembering that occurred. I interviewed the third respondent (Interviewee 3, April 7 2023) sometime earlier, and when I was in the middle of another interview close to the wreath, they came back with white tulips. The interaction was quick as I tried to keep the other interview going, but they came back and put silently down the flowers as we made eye contact, we made a subtle nod to each other with a smile, and then they continued on their way. It was a minor gesture that made me feel, even if it was for only a moment, a connection with the respondent, creating a sense of togetherness in its unique setting and showing the importance of affective atmospheres in such moments (Sumartojo, 2021). In other words, foreknowledge has been pointed out to be important in creating commemorative atmospheres, not only through intellectual means but also through the capacity of bodies to influence each other. The social cues, knowing what the other knows, create a sense of belonging that can be created through small gestures (Stephens et al., 2021; Sumartojo, 2016).

Based on the discussion on foreknowledge and anticipation, the discourse analysis based on the video published by Stockholm Stad brings insight into what part of the terror attack back in 2017 people should remember (Stockholms stad, 2023). By discerning between the traumatic event, the gathering the days after, and the feeling of togetherness, the video focused on the days after the terror attack rather than the attack itself. The attack was limited in its coverage in the video. Stockholm Stad described the tone set as hopeful or positive rather than negative, forceful or antagonistic, not about the struggle but rather the love that existed in the spontaneous commemoration in the days after the attack. The focus on love and togetherness without pointing out villains or 'others' is not uncommon. Memories of trauma are not always sought or wanted to remember, but rather to move on from the traumatic events of terror attacks (Heath-

Kelly, 2021). Nevertheless, it shows the narrative of what we should not forget that was important that day.

The discourse analysis also begets the question of how people are supposed to commemorate. In the video, they highlight the unique collective togetherness and the notable emotional responses at the time. However, how they suggest the memorial will move people is not through communal togetherness but through individual reflection. By using rhetoric such as 'each and everyone needs to evaluate what this means for them' (Stockholms stad, 2023), Stockholm Stad portrays a memorial space not through organised rituals to create change (Etzioni, 2004; Salomonsen, 2021) but instead where you engage based on your terms, based on how much you want to interact and remember. It contrasts with other narratives and 'taken for granted' understandings of memorials and monuments that focus on communal feelings by making the suffering of the individuals accessible to the larger population (Heath-Kelly, 2021; Wagoner & de Luna, 2021). It suggests that the existence of the monument is motivated by 'historically' remembering the event as something in the past and by limiting the taken-for-granted way to understand commemoration to the individual and not focusing on the ritualistic aspect, the aim seems to be to move on and forget the trauma.

The Symbolic Built Environment:

The staged materialities of a symbolic built landscape described by Sumartojo (2016) proved challenging to perceive during the field study. All the landmarks mentioned in this thesis lacked any semblance of commemoration. The stairs where hundreds of people put down flowers in the aftermath stood empty. The wall by Åhléns, where the truck crashed during the terror attack, powerfully symbolised the spontaneous commemoration the days after. The Post-it wall by Åhléns has broad recognition (see Figures 5 and 8), and as one interviewed during the vox pop interviews said, they were surprised that there is no semblance of commemoration there (Interviewee 9, April 7 2023). In the window where the terror attack happened, the commercial said, 'Meet spring in full bloom. Spring news has blossomed. Welcome in!' (see Figure 9) and were decorated with pink and green colours and warmly decorated with outside furniture for the patio at home. There was no sense of commemoration around the window, organised or spontaneous, while I was there during the day. One of the respondents

(Interviewee 9, April 7, 2023) would especially critique the lack of commemorative gestures by the Åhléns window. They reminisced about how they had been there the days after the terror attack and could vividly describe the Post-It wall and how it was to stand there. The respondent offered to show photos from when they were there and showed an intense and fond remembering of the space. When probed further regarding the lack of commemorative efforts and attention, they shifted to a sad expression. According to them, it is very frustrating that there is no monument or even a plaque at Drottninggatan by Åhléns. The reason why the commemoration of earlier years and the wreath this year are placed at Sergels Torg is motivated by Stockholm Stad because this is where the spontaneous commemorations took place in the aftermath (Stockholms stad, 2023). However, the fact that there is nothing placed where the truck crashed and where the terror attack occurred is motivated by the respondent to 'probably be because of commercial reasons' (Interviewee 9, April 7, 2023), hinting at Åhléns and Drottninggatan as a shopping area.



Figure 8. Post-it wall by Åhléns, Drottninggatan on April 22 2017 (AleWi, 2017b).



Figure 9. Åhléns commercial in the window the terrorist crashed the truck in 2017, Drottninggatan on April 7 2023. (Source: Author)

During the observation study, the stone lions along the street of Drottninggatan were not as prevalent as it has been compared to earlier years. The lions, who have had a dual purpose and symbolism since 2017 when the attack happened, have other years been decorated with flowers in recognition of their role in stopping the truck driving into the crowd (see Figures 3, 4 and 10). However, what I encountered differed drastically compared to earlier years. There were no flowers or wreaths as it has been at other times, which gave an appearance of any other day, giving a sense of an everyday landscape where there are no symbols of commemoration to shift the gaze of passersby. When observing people interacting with the lions, I noted how many interacted with them on every occasion. The result was always someone leaning, sitting on, or children playing on them. However, this interaction shows how the meanings inscribed in physical material can shift depending on the social context (De Nardi & Drozdowski, 2018). Without the foreknowledge of what annual day it was, most people interacting with the lions seemed to acknowledge their functions of safety and functional element in the landscape rather than one of symbolism. In sum, the lack of commemoration

suggests everyday usage where the social context of an annual commemoration is missing.



Figure 10. *Stone lions during the aftermath of the terror attack 2017, Drottninggatan on April 8 2017 (AleWi, 2017a).*

The delayed monument can be argued as a contributing reason why there was a cold interest in the event this year. Since the only article covering the event this year was about the delay of the monument (Steiner, 2023), it stands to argue that the material property of the planned monument has considerable importance for the continuation of any ceremonial event every year. By constructing a monument, its material properties make the memory permanent in the landscape and become political statements and stagings of post-terrorist memory through both materialities and affective performances (De Nardi & Drozdowski, 2018; Heath-Kelly, 2021). It becomes clear from the discourse analysis of the video by Stockholm Stad that there is a reliance on the monument for continued narratives as a focal point for gathering any commemoration (Stockholms stad, 2023). However, compared to other kinds of national commemorations in other countries, such as Anzac Day in Australia or World War 2 related memorial days in

Western nations (Mitchell, 2003; Sumartojo, 2020), the terrorist attack at Drottninggatan is portrayed in the video of the discourse analysis as something that should be commemorated alone. It begets the question if it is favourable to commemorate an annual day for terrorist attacks as a community. Because trauma is experienced personally, once people who believe themselves to be indirectly connected to the event through proximity or national identity have moved on, the people who have lost loved ones or were there still reeling from what happened are left behind (Edkins, 2003). At the same time, monuments tend not to be for the victims but for the nation's population. Who the monument is for can be observed based on the results of whom the vox pop respondents thought the monument was for, where the majority claimed the monument was for everyone not to forget. Thus, it suggests a complex process of remembering what people want to commemorate because of the event's special nature in a Swedish context, while at the same time, a reluctance from the state's national narrative to create a sense of communal presence with an active organisation of remembrance.

Sensory experience:

Building on the third aspect of the commemorative atmosphere described by Sumartojo (2016), the symbolic and sensed experience, it was hard to discern symbols in the landscape during the observation study because of the lack of any memorial worth mentioning. However, it allows us to invert the question if there are symbols of relevance regarding the atmosphere, instead asking what symbols in the landscape are sought to reach the desired atmosphere. Here, the discourse analysis and the vox pop interviews have valuable insight to further the argument. The discourse analysis showed how Stockholm Stad's video argued for an everyday space in which the monument would exist; the suggested layering of the monument existing 'in' the everyday rather than standing apart from it (Stockholms stad, 2023), I argue values the monument as a modest instalment in the public space. Many monuments are small in scale and do not draw attention to themselves, such as the plaque for Olof Palme (see Figure 6). However, this case contrasts the vox pop interviews, where respondents asked for a monument standing out in the landscape and on symbols. Respondents felt that other landmarks connected to the terror attack at Drottninggatan, such as the stone lions and the post-it wall by the store Åhléns, lacked the due attention that they deserve since both

the memorial wreath placed this year and where the planned monument would be is not where the attack occurred but rather where the spontaneous gatherings happened the days after. Thus, if this depends on the nationalist populism among the respondents against earlier Swedish narratives of modernity (Trägårdh, 2002) needs to be discussed further; however, there are different ideas of what symbols should exist in the landscape which would alter the symbolically charged atmosphere of Sergels Torg.

The primary purpose of the memorial is to foster commemoration and remember the event that day. As such, it was essential to observe how individuals commemorated when there was no gathering and expectations through social gatherings or text to encourage particular behaviour on how to commemorate. The number of people attending the memorial compared to earlier years, where at least a gathering in the hundreds attended (Fares, 2022a), was limited, mainly passersby who did not know what the wreath was for. Four persons throughout the observation study attended the memorial to put down flowers. Throughout the study, two persons put down flowers early, before noon, and the other two put down flowers together in the afternoon. The two, before noon, put down multi-coloured and white tulips and white roses in the afternoon. For all occurrences of someone putting down flowers by the wreath, I was standing on Sergels Torg, attempting to collect data by gathering respondents for the vox pop interviews. The process was very similar for all occurrences. In all cases, the individuals approached the wreath coming from the subway. No other people were around, and they would quietly put their flowers next to the wreath, standing there for a couple of minutes in silence and then heading back down to the subway or on their way through Drottninggatan. While only four persons put down flowers within approximately seven hours could be interpreted as irrelevant, in this case, the change of atmosphere stood out observing these four persons. Standing close to the wreath, when flower bringers walked up to the wreath, the feelings changed the setting to make me feel the seriousness of the situation, the importance of social conduct regarding the visitor's feelings and overall, one's expectations shifted. Describing what I felt standing there and watching the people put down flowers, Sumartojo (2016) use the fitting concept of 'thicken' to understand the sense of memorial space. The link between memory, affect and place became apparent through an affective atmosphere as the

engagement with the place and wreath altered the commemorative space and allowed me to feel and engage with the memorial in a different sense.



Figure 11. Flower wreath and placed flowers next to it, Sergels Torg on April 7, 2023. (Source: Author)

National Identity:

In this section, I present several observations and reflections based on the results connected to national identity. One crucial part of discussing the results of this thesis is what happens to an annual commemorative event when neglected. In no way has the yearly rituals surrounding the event lacked any attention with news coverage, social media, debate articles and the attendance of influential people, such as prime ministers and the crown princess (Fares, 2022a; Tikka, 2019; TV4, 2022). This year, however, since the organised event is not there, it allows for analysing the landscape when this central element is missing. As such, the main focus of this section will cover what is left to perceive when the large-scale organisation of an annual event, in a Swedish context, is missing, allowing us to comprehend the process of remembering national identity in an everyday setting.

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Several observations made confirmed the theory of previous literature on national identity used in this thesis. The first point of interest was during the vox pop interviews when the interviewees learned what the wreath was for. Among the interviewees, only one person knew what the day was for, and when asked as a part of the interview, no one else stated that they knew. One interviewee who worked at Stockholm City stated they did not know but exclaimed once I told them, 'Oh! I work at Stockholm Stad, I should know this!' (Interviewee 5, April 7 2023). Moreover, after being asked, they made an effort to walk closer to the wreath to study it further, flipping the ribbon to read what the text on the ribbon said. There were also guesses connected to current political events, mainly gang shootings, as motivated by the size of the memorial (but missing the candles). Furthermore, coding the data revealed two common responses among the Swedes interviewed, either shame or embarrassment for not knowing or associating it by remembering what happened based on their own experience on the day of the terror attack and the days after. This observation from the vox pop interviews fits the description of earlier research of a sensed experience of national identity and social togetherness. Based on the concept of national identity, the commemorative responses aim to support victims and gather people in the aftermath of terrorism (Stephens et al., 2021). In this case, I argue that the lack of foreknowledge previously mentioned creates a situation where the commemorative response is neglected. At the same time, the embarrassment or shame observed shows how there is a believed expectation of how one should collectively perform, which can be traced to the idea of developing practices and rituals to create a sense of social order for maintaining a nation's sense of belonging (Kaplan, 2020).

Another respondent who had lived in Sweden for a long time but originally came from Iran pointed out through their inflexion during the interview their response to police forces during the day of the terror attack. While it was a brief comment, they described how they had been at Drottninggatan on the day of the terror attack and recalled the police forces running through the streets in the inner city, armed with heavy weapons, making it clear that something was going on. In their comment, they expressed their comment so that, at first instance, they were in the initial response scared of the police. However, they claimed they were not afraid, 'I was a bit curious what is happening, I

went around, like the police with the heavy weapons and at the same time, I was not afraid. I thought it was an attack, so I guess the police had to prepare for the worst' (Interviewee 10, April 7 2023). Other respondents within the study would, if they talked about the police, describe them in a favourable light where they were professional and heroic in their response. The different response to police shows one of the potential silences of this study. With many of the respondents being ethnic Swedes, alternative affective impressions of the terror attack based on racialised and alternative experiences have gone unquestioned. However, I argue that since affect can not bypass categorisations and are not neutral and free of meaning but rather knowable through, for example, racialised categorisation (Bazinet & Van Vliet, 2019), it becomes important to understand initial responses to events such as the attack to understand how there can be smaller identities within larger ones such as a Swedish identity (Kaplan, 2020).

Swedish National Identity:

So far, I have covered elements of national identity that are not necessarily unique to a Swedish context but found in different commemorative spaces. In this part, I present other observations I found that relate to Swedish national identity. Among the respondents during the vox pop interviews, some people did not identify as Swedes but of other nationalities who lived in Sweden and Stockholm during the attacks. One respondent who identified themselves as French sympathised with Swedes and those who were there when it happened. They claimed they had no emotional connection to the event but understood that Swedes do. After all, they said, as a French person, they have had their fair share of terrorist attacks, such as the November 2015 terror attack, that they emotionally relate to. Another respondent who identified themselves as Polish showed much interest in the wreath and was the only one among the vox pop interviewees who knew what day it was. They were the same person who pointed out their disappointment in the lack of commemoration by the Åhléns windows, but they also commented on Swede's way of remembering and commemoration. Their take on Swedish commemoration was that 'Swedes want to look forward and keep a low profile in their commemoration. It can be something inherent in the society, but like with the missing plaque up on the street (Drottninggatan), there is no kind of place for community' (Interviewee 9, April 7 2023). They also claimed that 'Swedes do not seem

to know how to commemorate. They are not used to it, unlike Poles who have plenty of experience with commemoration and monuments everywhere' (Interviewee 9, April 7 2023). The idea or narrative of Swedes as not good at commemorating is similar to the observations of Trägårdh (2002) and Johansson (2001), where Swedishness is a modernity project with reservations about thinking about the past.

A common occurrence was the process of remembering through the interview. Because the majority of the interviewees did not know about the wreath or what day it was, there was a process where they went from puzzlement to realisation. The realisation led to disappointment or outcry because of the lack of attention the annual commemoration for the victims gained, and finally going over to more and more realise how big the event was and the effect it had for the individuals, the community, and Sweden. The clearest example of remembering was the accounts of trying to get home after the attack. One of the interviewees recollected how they had been at Klara Church (or The Church of Saint Clare), close to where the terror attack happened, just a few hundred meters away. They recollected the panic and the people running away from Drottninggatan. Not knowing what might have happened, 'It could have been one of those snipers shooting, maybe war, I thought' (Interviewee 22, 7 April 2022), they took no chances and started to try getting home. The problem, however, was that no trains or other forms of public transport were moving because of all the 'false alarms' throughout the city. The interviewee, in this case, had to resort to trying to hitchhike with complete strangers back home to Danderyd northeast of Stockholm but had to jump off at St. Eriksplan to then give up on catching a ride all the way and decided to walk from there. Another interviewee recalled how they had to hitchhike home to Skanstull because of the stop of public transport and the impossibility of finding an available taxi. The story of how it was difficult and, in some cases, almost impossible to travel out of central Stockholm during the day of the terror attack has been mentioned in earlier literature. However, it also shows the discursive practices at play and demonstrates a collective memory, leading to a common identity and backstory (Kaplan, 2020). The collective memory and story of the countless people living in Stockholm who had to struggle to leave the city become crucial for understanding it as strengthening the identity of being from

Stockholm and a Swede. Thus, it is an important memory of a commonly inhabited and similar experienced past (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 18).

Additionally, the coding showed how the respondents frequently used collective terms such as us, we, all of us and together to answer why the monument is important. Cap (2018) uses the terms 'us' and 'them' to demonstrate how in order to create social togetherness among people on the 'inside', in this case, the nation of Sweden, shun or position themselves to have different values than those on the 'outside' or the 'others'. It can, for example, be as Swedes, Europeans or Westerners. However, even if the respondents focus mostly on discussing the values of 'we' and 'us', it does not mean there are 'others'. Thus, even if the respondents initially could not place the flower, by the end of the interview, they had no problem recalling what happened and the importance of coming together, showing how commemorative space could be perceived through language. This shows that even if there was no encouragement from the state or media, through the memory of indirect contact, there is still a process of remembering what happened.

The final question I asked all interviewees in the vox pop study was, 'Do you think a monument is important for commemorating the terror attack on Drottninggatan?'. Coding the interviews and based on my notetaking, of all 22 interviews, everyone except one argued that it was important to build a monument. However, different answers emerged on the monument's purpose and intended audience when further probing why it is important. The most apparent difference among the respondents was who the monument was for. Some interviewees argued that the monument is for the relatives affected by the attack; others argued that the monument has a historical relevance, one of education and reminding people what happened at Drottninggatan. Finally, some argued that the monument is for Swedes to come together as a community, reminding us of our values of freedom, democracy and peace. Currently, Sergels Torg lacks a monument and therefore becomes a space of absence lacking the material representation that the respondents wished for (Shields, 2012). What is interesting about this result, I argue, is how memorials and monuments are usually understood as political statements that underline, reformulate, and rearticulate conceptions of nationalism, sacrifice, and identity for the citizenry; it is a way for states

to reassert claims through commemorative space (Heath-Kelly, 2021, p. 279). However, in this case study, it was rather the people who were upset about the missing monument and the absence of a noteworthy memorial. The people, rather than the state, push for a collective identity and make it available and represented in the landscape for future generations of Swedes.

The memorial brought discussions with the vox pop respondents based on historical and ethno-nationalist perspectives and arguments. The discussions with a semblance of historical rhetoric were with respondents of older demography (60+). For example, two respondents argued for the lack of commemoration and the monument of a failing community in modern times. They had been at a Christian gathering close by, celebrating easter, and they argued that the absence of Christian values as a way to gather friends and family is a strong reason why Swedes lack any sense of togetherness. In contrast, another pair of older people drew similarities between the days after the terror attack to the days after the assassination of prime minister Olof Palme in 1986. The amount of love, togetherness and coming together was something real. However, they explain that no other commemoration in modern times has come that close as the aftermath of the terror attack on Drottninggatan 2017. The two discussions with the respondents demonstrate the complexity of Swedish national identity. On the one hand, the two respondents who had been at a Christian gathering and advocated old values as a way to increase commemorative togetherness is an example of the rhetoric of simpler times and looking to the past, having similarities of ethno-nationalist rhetoric and cultural identity (Pace & Bohland, 2020, p. 373). The lack of commemoration was seen as connected to modernity and a threat to Swedish national identity (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2017, p. 354). On the other hand, the other two respondents argued that the commemoration during the aftermath of the attack in 2017 could only be compared to the aftermath of the assassination of Olof Palme in 1986, connecting commemorative practices to Palme as a significant symbol (Pantti, 2005, p. 363). Thus, Swedish national identity will be understood differently depending on the understanding of past events and how we draw meaning in the present.

During the coding of the video published by Stockholm Stad (2023), another point of interest was the view of national narratives and national identity. In the video, Stockholm Stad frequently, as was made clear from the coding, used the identity of 'Stockholmare' (Stockholmers) instead of Swedes as the identity to describe who this monument is for. The reason for choosing Stockholmers instead of Swedes could be because Stockholm Stad mainly represents the city and does not speak for the entire nation. However, it becomes relevant since they are in charge of the monuments in the city and therefore shape how people interact with memorials and monuments and how they believe they should commemorate them. Here we can see another example of how smaller identities can exist in larger ones (Kaplan, 2020). However, the observation of 'Stockholmare' opens up a discussion of geographic scale and urban landscapes. Because it is the city of Stockholm rather than the state responsible for the commemorative space, it opens up the discussion of whether every Swede feels the same based on memory. During the interviews, many of the respondents from other cities, such as Gothenburg or Malmö, who did not live in Stockholm at the time of the attack felt that they could not relate to what happened the same way people who lived in Stockholm did. Indeed, with this in mind, it becomes an important topic of discussion of the national identity of a nation that seems modest in its presentation in commemorative space, questioning the term 'memorial mania' that entails memorials as overly staged performances (Heath-Kelly, 2021) and if this description fits in the Swedish case.

To conclude this section, literature used for this thesis give a similar account of Swedish national identity as the results I have gathered for this thesis suggest. The vox pop respondents and discourse analysis both suggest Swedish commemoration to be modest in people's performance where there is a hesitation to make major gestures. The understanding of Swedes as modest in their commemoration does create discussions on to what degree it is possible to apply major gestures and national narratives in the case of Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan as it does not fit the literature where there is a top-down national narrative (Heath-Kelly, 2021). However, even if the commemoration was seen as modest, there were still many examples of 'common stories' regarding the attack that illustrate togetherness and a shared experience. For example, the vox pop respondents who described their journey home the day of the attack, but also stories such as one respondent who were following the story on TV, where it was covered non-

stop, 'When it happened, everything stopped. You sat in front of the TV completely shocked and listened when they kept saying the same thing over and over' (Interviewee 12, April 7 2023). Thus, how the monument will be used by the state in a top-down fashion, together with how people will remember these common stories, can change the commemorative space and thus become a part of Swedish national identity.

Everyday Space:

Sergels Torg is an interesting space because it is a focal point for many people and provides many functions as part of the everyday landscape, such as a meeting point, a space for entertainment, culture and manifestation (Doughty & Lagerqvist, 2016). It is a space with many meanings for different people, and thus, it is an interesting reflection of how and to what degree it can be seen as commemorative in an everyday space. In this part, I will present results and reflections on everyday space.

Based on the discourse analysis, the usage of everyday concepts in the video from Stockholm Stad facilitates how people will interact with and interpret the monument in their daily life. In the video, several expressions and lines described Sergels Torg as an everyday space or constructed rather than a memorial landscape, which in nationalist fashion is held sacred and fixed in time. The expression of relevance was, for example, Sergels Torg described as Stockholms 'living room', signalling how it is a place in the city where people meet and manifest, as it always has been. It becomes an important statement because, based on the analysis, Sergels Torg is a space with many layers where the memorial is not believed to be sacred since the bustling city will always be there. The monument is for the passersby to stop and reflect on their way somewhere. As the initial observation of this section, it sets the stage for how we can understand Sergels Torg and Drottninggatan as everyday spaces. As Drozdowski et al. (2021) point out, memory is based on individual experiences, which fits with the idea of the monument where the individual reflects based on their own experience. However, what stands out is how the commemorative space is not seen through collective identities and representation in major gestures (Closs Stephens et al., 2017) but instead as an everyday space first and a commemorative space second, where the planned monument only will take up a small amount of space. Thus, it becomes an interesting aspect to look at further as Sergels Torg is a layered landscape in a central everyday space of Stockholm.

Another interesting observation was regarding proximity and expected interaction between the wreath and passersby. As the area became more crowded throughout the day, I could see a pattern of people interacting with the bench the wreath was placed on but not the wreath itself. At around noon, people who were at Sergels Torg had changed their movement pattern from just walking past, but instead sticking around for what seemed like different reasons. The people interacting with the bench would do what often can be observed in people sitting on a bench, such as eating their lunch, having a smoke, waiting for other people, or just taking a rest, all right next to the wreath without paying any mind to it, on one occasion even plucking petals from the wreath. This observation regarding people's understanding of the wreath gives a fascinating insight into how a lack of preparation for an annual event can create a different perception of commemoration, even if the event gained considerable attention in earlier years. Sergels Torg is seen as an active everyday space rather than a passive one where people use the space in the everyday as usual without reflecting on the commemorative aspect of the wreath. It is similar to studies on the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin (MMJE), where architecture form and surface have encouraged visitors to use its maze-like form to use it in recreational purposes, such as jumping on top of the blocks or eating and playing between the blocks. Thus, visitors experienced other sensory experiences than the trauma of the event, making the MMJE memorial unable to fulfil the designer's message about the commemoration of the Holocaust and the murdered victims (Attwa et al., 2022, p. 8; De Nardi & Drozdowski, 2018). On a smaller scale, the wreath at Sergels Torg fails to attract a sensed experience of commemoration in the everyday space. It leaves bypassers ambivalent or not understanding how to interact with it.



Figure 12. *Showing an individual sitting next to the wreath, Sergels Torg on April 7, 2023.*
(Source: Author)

It was difficult to find symbols or indicators of annual commemoration because of its lack of attention. However, there was no lack of a political landscape, only regarding the memorial. It shows how a landscape of politics and cultural values of the nation exists and is practised in different ways depending on what time of the year it is. For example, because the annual memorial coincided with easter, there were gatherings of Christian groups on and near the square throughout the day. In the morning and closer to noon, there was a small gathering of anti-abortion protesters, using Jesus and Easter as slogans and confronting people on the street walking past, reminding them about the morality of Christian values.

Another example of political symbols was the street artists outside of Åhléns. Outside the store Åhléns, close to the windows where the truck crashed during the attack and, in the aftermath, became a space for commemoration through a plywood wall with post-its, there were street artists who, during mainly the afternoon, worked with chalk crayons to draw on the streetscape. The drawing attracted much attention from bypassers who stopped, took a photo, gave some coins, and continued walking. The drawing was of several national flags with different amounts of coins on different flags,

all within a circle and letters around it, proposing world peace. However, this observation cannot discern the drawer's intent to make a political statement or gain money. What could be observed was the response of bypassers. In sum, this shows that while the memorial was missing, it does not mean that politics is missing from the landscape altogether. Both examples demonstrate the sensed experience and affective registers that go into the everyday space that the wreath shares with other symbols in the landscape. Passerbys experience the examples of the protesters and the street artists differently based on memory and their individual understandings (Drozdowski et al., 2021). Thus, showing the tensions and contradictions of political narratives, the nation and commemoration in an everyday setting for people in their everyday movements.

So far in the discussion, I have covered much of the memorial's physical properties, being in place and how people acknowledge and interact with the memorial and commemorate the annual day. However, the discussion has not covered the public sphere online and through social media platforms. During one of the vox pop interviews, I interviewed two social workers patrolling Sergels Torg (Interviewees 18 and 19, April 7 2023). None of them knew what the wreath was for or that it was the annual memorial day. However, around halfway through the interview, one of the respondents picked up their phone because of a message notification and exclaimed that one of their common friend had put up a commemorative image on Instagram showing flowers and an image text with the message never to forget. The online commemoration suggests that while the physical commemoration did not happen to the greater extent that would be expected, people still commemorated through social media, reaching a wider audience. It proves that what happened is not forgotten but changing in its way of commemoration from a traditional sense. It also shows the space as a 'more-or-less digital' space (Merrill et al., 2020b). The way the respondents used smartphones to access social media and gain knowledge of the commemoration shows how people in their everyday lives are both digital and non-digital, and how we perceive commemoration should be understood by how we interact with digital devices in everyday space.

I have discussed the study's results regarding everyday space in this section. I argue that one of the most important reflections regarding everyday space is how this year will be the last time there will not be a monument at Sergels Torg. The monument has been

described in media as having sensory functions allowing people to interact with it in an affective manner compared to traditional monuments. For example, the electrically heated monument encourages touch, as shown in Figure 13 below, where the design shows how people can interact with the monument. The example of sensory touch in the context of the everyday space demonstrates how the design creates a link in space, where minor gestures are possible through interactions with the physical monument and opening up new potential variations in the landscape of rituals, performances and commemoration (Closs Stephens et al., 2017). Additionally, the ‘stickiness’ of memory highlights how adding the monument brings a new way to remember the event. It bridges the representational and the non-representational as the monument creates new possibilities of rituals, identity narratives and atmospheres, mixing narratives with affective and sensory aspects (Drozdowski et al., 2016). Thus, with the monument installed at Sergels Torg, the gap will be filled and change the everyday landscape of the square. Since the interaction with the monument is described by the city as an individual experience, the alternative minor gestures offer new avenues of commemoration and, with the sticky nature of memory, will create a new way of understanding the everyday landscape over time which is not possible to perceive at this time.



Figure 13. Visionimage, art for memory space, Sergels torg. Version 2 (Stockholms stad, 2022b).

5. Conclusion

The research aim for this thesis was to analyse how the annual memorial day of the terror attack at Drottninggatan helps shape the commemorative landscape in Sweden. To be able to answer the research aim, I also formulated three research questions. The three research questions were:

- How does the conceptualisation of atmosphere enable us to analyse the terror attack memorial at Sergels Torg?
- How can we better understand Swedish national identity through the memorial and planned monument at Sergels Torg?
- How does the everyday landscape provide a public space for the memorial of the terror attack at Drottninggatan?

I used the thesis's literature review to present three research areas related to the aim and research questions. The first section of the literature review was named 'Memory, Commemoration and Rituals'. The section used theoretical understandings of memory and remembrance to explain trauma-related memories and build on how we can understand commemorative space, commemoration as spontaneous and the role of minor gestures, and finally, rituals as repeated gestures to understand memorial events. The second part of the literature review was named 'Affect and Atmosphere'. It covered the concept of affect, defined as flows between bodies and atmosphere which first is described as affective atmosphere and then commemorative atmosphere building on the three elements of foreknowledge and anticipation, the symbolic built environment and sensory experience. The third section of the literature review was named 'National Identity' and covered concepts of national identity and nationalism and how they are connected to commemoration and everyday space, but also went into the literature on ethnonationalism and how it can be perceived in a Swedish context by demonstrating narratives of Swedish national identity.

In the chapter 'Methodology', I present the concept of autoethnography, the methods used, the coding and analysis, and ethics and positionality related to this thesis. Autoethnography allows the researcher to look past objective understandings of doing

research and instead understand themselves to be a part of the space they aim to study. The methods described and used for the thesis were an observations study of the annual memorial day, vox pop interviews, where I interviewed 22 people at Sergels Torg and a discourse analysis, where I analysed a video published by Stockholm Stad to gain insight into the narratives of the city in the establishment of the planned monument. After that, I presented how I coded and analysed the data, presented ethical considerations, and reflected upon positionality.

To answer the aim and research questions, I structured the results and discussion into the three parts of 'Commemorative Atmosphere', 'National Identity' and 'Everyday Space' to let each section reflect one research question. The first research question, 'How does the conceptualisation of atmosphere enable us to analyse the terror attack memorial at Sergels Torg?', is themed surrounding the first section of the results and discussion, 'Commemorative Atmosphere'. The results enabled an understanding of the memorial as missing in anticipation and the symbolic built environment. Because of the delayed monument, any observations based on the monument being installed were not possible. However, there were interesting reflections to be made. Such as how Stockholm Stad, in their video, portrays a memorial space not through organised rituals to create change but instead where you engage based on your terms, based on how much you want to interact and remember, or how they argued for an everyday space in which the monument would exist and where the suggested layering of the monument exist 'in' the everyday rather than standing apart from it. Such reflections, I argue, help to understand how through anticipation, the built environment and sensory experience, we can analyse the terror attack memorial at Sergels Torg through the lens of atmosphere.

The second research question, 'How can we better understand Swedish national identity through the memorial and planned monument at Sergels Torg?', concerns the second section of the results and discussion, 'National Identity'. One major reflection based on the result was how Swedes commemorate. Vox Pop respondents showed that there is a narrative of Swedes being modest in their commemoration and showing reluctance to show their commemoration. Not necessarily taken as a granted truth, some responses criticised such an understanding of Swedish commemoration. Another interesting reflection on how national identity could be perceived as the common stories told by respondents that demonstrated memories of togetherness. It showed how national

identity could express itself and how we can understand it through the memorial and the planned monument at Sergels Torg.

The third research question, ‘How does the everyday landscape provide a public space for the memorial of the terror attack at Drottninggatan?’ is themed surrounding the third section of the results and discussion, ‘Everyday Space’. Using the lens of everyday space to understand the memorial provided several reflections. The main conclusion made in this thesis was how the planned monument focused on the sensory experience of the individual as they interact with the monument. The example of sensory touch in the context of the everyday space demonstrates how the design creates a link in space, where minor gestures are possible through interactions with the physical monument and opening up new potential variations in the landscape of rituals, performances and commemoration. Since the interaction with the monument is described by the city as an individual experience, the alternative minor gestures offer new avenues of commemoration and, with the sticky nature of memory, will create a new way of understanding the everyday landscape over time which is not possible to perceive at this time. Such reflections help answer how everyday landscape provides a public space for the memorial.

The results of the thesis revealed several points of interest that help further our understanding of the commemorative landscape in Sweden. However, after completing this thesis, there is still room for discussion and aspects I did not cover in this thesis. In this thesis, I used a combination of representational and non-representational understandings of the memorial space to try and bridge observations based on the material, including affective registers and performances. Much of these observations were made through a lens of autoethnography and therefore focused on what could be perceived and sensed while at the memorial, but did not dig deeper into texts such as media discourse analysis or social media analysis which could have been an addition to how to understand the memorial and commemorative space in Sweden. In addition, because I did not get an interview with Stockholm Stad, I failed to gain data or information that might have been crucial for interpreting the city’s role and influence over the memorial and the planned monument. These flaws are important for future studies who wish to study Sweden's commemorative landscape.

Finally, I argue that this thesis has successfully contributed to explaining how the terror attack at Drottninggatan helps shape the commemorative landscape in Sweden and propose future possible academic works based on this thesis. Similar to what was missed in this thesis, digital commemoration is a valuable avenue for future studies. The more-or-less digital space greatly impacts how people sense and perceive the world, and thus how people commemorate through digital means should be further explored in a Swedish context. Another possible avenue for further academic studies is a follow-up based on what this thesis has covered, namely the ‘Sanctuary’ or ‘Fredad Plats’ monument. The original plan for the thesis was to cover the monument itself when it was supposed to be revealed on this year’s memorial day. However, next year’s memorial day will likely present a very different commemorative space and public discussion than this year.

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