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Cultural Aspects of the Current Scandinavian Identity Crisis; The Case of Denmark—Purity Under Attack

Abstract: *In this article I will attempt to show examples of the cultural manifestations of the identity crisis that is currently sweeping over Scandinavia. What is particular about this crisis is that it seems to have struck on most sides of society, while the "Scandinavian model" of the welfare state is slowly crumbling in the wake of the global financial problems. At the center of both this struggle and crisis is the notion of the Homo Scandinavicus; this seems at the same time a threat to existence (by different enemies, depending on one's stand in the struggle) and contested in its very content. In all Scandinavian countries a so-called "cultural battle" has been articulated and used as heavy artillery when articulating characteristics of either side. It is this battle I will highlight and demonstrate through examples how the "general public" has been taken hostage on this identity battle field. Furthermore, I will give examples of alternative strategies (notably found in the art worlds), and why these have also failed to provide actual functioning alternatives to the leading, rivaling, identity strategies. The nature of this crisis and the ways it manifests itself, are by no means strictly restricted to Scandinavia. Therefore, considerations about manifestations and consequences presents some highly relevant and much more general insights.*

Key words: *Homo Scandinavicus, identity crisis, cultural battle, identity strategies.*

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In their excellent analysis *White Melancholia* (Hübinette & Lundström 2011), Swedish researchers Tobias Hübinette and Catrin Lundström formulated the presence of a general mourning in Sweden (and the rest of Scandinavia); this shines through as a longing for either "the old Scandinavia"—as represented by nationalistic and cultural conservative voices—or for "the good Scandinavia", represented by well-meaning cultural progressives. This article led me to investigate the more specific ways this has come to be expressed in Denmark over the last years, and to stretch their notion a bit further by claiming that clear manifestations of a crisis of identity struggle are present, which I will do in the following attempt to demonstrate how it has been gradually unveiled in the context of cultural appearances.

Denmark has in this respect had an interesting development, and has in many ways proven more extreme (at least in its implemented politics), and has thus come to distinguish itself as the more radical country of Scandinavia in terms of both immigration—and cultural politics. Whereas the so-called Danish "caricature crisis" (or, as it is more commonly known in Denmark: "the Muhammad-crisis" [sic]) of 2005, with the problems caused by the printing of those 12 infamous

drawings, turned the crisis into an international matter, I will state that it had in fact been bubbling for at least ten years. And whereas one can state that it is in many ways derived from the rise of cultural conservative movements—which the caricature crisis itself was an example of—it has a lot more to do with what this rise in its manifestations has *revealed* about Scandinavian societies in general, and the "Scandinavian cultural progressive" movements more specifically.

As a starting point in examining the case of Denmark point I will present a statement from the Danish politician and priest Søren Krarup of the rightwing Danish People's Party, who claims that globalization is a "construction of an over-national identity that does not exist" and is opposed to "the real life, which is the same at all times" (Danish Broadcasting Corporation 2011). In many ways, this statement sums up many of the problems of identity that are now being fought over in Scandinavia. What actually lies in a statement like that of Mr. Krarup, is a firm belief that there was a time in which diversity did not exist, or that the idea of a homogeneous society was at one point actually real (Hübinette & Lundström 2011:5).

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This kind of cultural conservatism is more or less "expected" from political entities with an agenda, such as the Danish People's Party, but it could actually almost just as well have been coming from (part of) the left wing; the idea of a homogenous Scandinavian society is by no means only a right wing understanding, and is just as present within the self-understanding of the "cultural progressives". Statements like these expose the hidden racism embedded in the views of "Scandinavia" as a culturally static entity characteristic of culturally conservative/nationalist movements, as well as within the mechanisms of "Scandinavian cultural progressives". The reactions pointed out by Hübinette and Lundström originate from a basic understanding of actually living in this kind of perfectly homogenous society, and as such these views could live side by side, thriving and vibrant.

To understand the mechanisms going on in Scandinavia currently, it is necessary to understand a bit of the background on which the basic identity (national and regional) is based. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, as Scandinavian countries—along with most "modern" countries—started building and constructing a national identity, some special markers for this appeared and were articulated in Scandinavia. In 1864 Denmark lost a major battle to Germany (Preussen) and with it a third of its land. Instead of choosing humbleness and depression, a movement for rebuilding the "spirit" of the Danes was set into motion; referring directly to the military defeat, a saying arose: "Jens (the Danish "arch-soldier") was not afraid, but they were too many"—i.e. the Danish soldiers fought valiantly, but were simply outnumbered by German troops. To put it mildly, this was a modification of the actual events, in which the Danish government and king acted arrogant and foolhardy in a battle that they could not have won.

In reality, Denmark had already suffered a much tougher blow to its physical borders, with the loss of Norway in 1814, a serious financial setback with the end of slavery on the islands of the Danish West Indies in 1848, but for whatever reason the battle of 1864 became much more linked to identity politics (Glenthøj, 2012). The mythology of a nation of brave and strong, but few has lived on, and can still be vividly seen in, for instance, many understandings of the actions of Danes during WW2, where the actual collaboration politics of Denmark is almost always overshadowed by tales of the brave movement of resistance.

The "Scandinavian Model"

The awakening and strengthening of national identities is derived from geopolitical factors such as the small size of the Scandinavian countries; it was relatively easy to set into motion things that should at the same time present and produce markers for national cultural processes, and thus make the idea of a strong affiliation that has been characteristic for Scandinavia.

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At the same time, the Scandinavian countries developed the idea of "brotherhood" between the countries (which is interesting when one considers that the Scandinavian countries actually fought several wars with each other in the last 300 years, and that Norway was in a "forced" union with Sweden until 1905 and celebrate their national day on May 17th, the day this union was dissolved).

In 1962 this "brotherhood" became fully articulated by the signing of the Helsinki treaty. Among other things, the treaty states that the Nordic countries wish to "promote and strengthen the close ties existing between the Nordic peoples in matters of culture, and of legal and social philosophy, and to extend the scale of co-operation between the Nordic countries" (the Helsinki Treaty, 1962).

We are therefore dealing with two simultaneously existing movements: the building of national identity (emphasizing the particularities of the individual nation) and the building of regional identity (emphasizing the similarities between the nations). These of course are not mutually exclusive, but were used to emphasize each other—the particularities and the similarities all got summed up in the idea of the *Homo Scandinavicus*[1]

This concept draws on the idea of Scandinavians being particularly evolved beings, with specific embedded characteristics such as rationality, nobility, knowledge, beauty and tolerance. Historically, Scandinavian scientists have also been frontrunners in developing scientific "proof" of different evolutionary traits within the

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1   The term is amongst others used by Norwegian scholar Nina Witoszek, see for instance: http://morgenbladet.no/boker/2012/utoya_sett_utenfra

Homo sapiens, on such areas as craniometry, physical anthropology, race classifi-cations etc.[2]

All these factors were (of course) bid welcome by the movements for national identities, as it fitted very well with the idea of the small, but strong nations of well-educated, rational, calm and caring citizens. At the same time, this model had room for embracing the "authenticity" of each individual country, but with-out the need to call it such crude names as "nationalism"; Scandinavia became a utopia woken to life, existing outside the realms of the rest of the world, thus pro-tected and with the ability to exist on a higher level than all others.

In that sense, Scandinavia transformed itself into being more than simply neutral welfare-states—it also *evolved* into modern formations of society, that liberated itslef from the weight of traditional nationalistic rhetoric and props; in Scandina-via reason, rationality and the future ruled (Ehn, Frykman & Löfgren, 1993). A so-ciety was created, so wonderful, that you would never want to live anywhere else. It was a model for other (backward) nations—an understanding in which the no-tion of evolution was crucially embedded.

Thus, Scandinavia came to think of itself as being on a higher stand than other countries, both in regards of mentality and—with the welfare state model—fi-nancially. The Scandinavian countries have hitherto managed to maintain an im-age of themselves as ethnically uncomplicated, culturally homogenous, ancient national states (Ehn, Frykman & Löfgren, 1993). A concept that has worked so well, that this—traditionally—has also come to be the way the rest of world per-ceives Scandinavia.

Within this "umbrella"-understanding of Scandinavia, both the left and right wing could thrive. As they basically both spring from the same source—the idea of the *Homo Scandinavicus*—they have for years been untouched by each other's presence. Despite mutual mocking, both views could co-exist, thanks to the basic agreement: Scandinavians are the better people.

The threat(s) to Scandinavian "purity"

What has happened in the last at least ten years is that all these factors have been contested: Where there had previously been a general agreement that these bet-ter beings had a moral responsibility of helping those in need and standing up for

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2   Refer for instance to: Bonde, Niels Christensøn & Bennike, Pia 1990: 'Fysisk Antropologi og human evolution—stadier i den historiske udvikling af studierne i Danmark og det øvrige Skandinavien', *Dansk Geologisk Forenings Årsskrift for 1987-89*, pp. 81-90: Dansk Geologisk Forening and: Duedahl, Poul 2004: 'Skeletter i skabet', *Siden Saxo*, pp. 20-27, no. 4: Statens Arkiver

the weaker in the world, Scandinavians are now actively entering wars, choosing sides and using military violence to make their statements.

As Scandinavia moved into the world in that way, the world also moved into Scandinavia and suddenly became a major threat to the Scandinavian understanding of themselves. Those who were invited to work in these countries from the 1960s and on, suddenly seemed intruders rather than guests, they wanted to stay and even bring their families. The number one marker for Scandinavianism came under attack from within: the whiteness. If we can no longer identify Scandinavians on the whiteness, the whole umbrella-concept of *Homo Scandinavicus* is at risk, as this was implying—as Hübinette and Lundström formulated it: "that third world solidarity and antiracism have gone hand in hand with white superiority and white homogeneity"(Hübinette & Lundström, 2011:5).

As long as Scandinavians could lean on the position in the world as the "do-gooders", they could all the easier embrace those few coming to their safe-havens, and simultaneously state that they were making an honest effort in helping people in their own "true" environment. Now, the Scandinavians themselves are part of the troubles in the world, and more people are seeking the peace of the safe-havens.

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What is at stake is the notion of the Scandinavian *purity*. This concept is once again quite obvious in terms of the traditional cultural conservative movements, in which a "race" can be "infected" by intruders, by violence, blood-mix, cultural interference or all of these. Claims that the "purity" of a nation can be thus threatened are neither new nor surprising.

The cultural progressive movements of Scandinavia however, seems to feel just as threatened by the fear of purity-loss. Since they—within their own understanding—cannot make such claims of direct racial superiority, it seems they have made their own rules of how one is to be Scandinavian correctly. This is not all about color (although this of course also plays its part); it is quite possible to be both brown—with a lot of effort—in a right way, as well as white in a wrong way. Either you know the rules—which, if you are indeed a true Scandinavian, you will know by heart—and play by them, or you will not be counted as a real "Scandinavian", you will be marked "un-Danish"/"un-Swedish" etc.

This strategy can in some ways be compared to putting into effect a game with secret rules, and then judging who manages to work out the rules and who doesn't—that it is somehow possible to spot the purity of the individuals by thus testing them; in a Bourdieuain understanding this would mean that you must master a very particular cultural capital to be counted in.

As a very interesting image of this, I can refer to a current discussion in Denmark about whether people outside of Copenhagen can relate to movies with a cast that

is not entirely white; the "well-meaning progressives" are of course flaming with rage about the obvious racism embedded in the discussion, but are mostly failing to spot their own discrimination towards those outside Copenhagen—they seem to think that only within their own context one is able to see the freedom of diversity. Again the self-image of the better being shines through. Indeed movies, or any other cultural manifestation, portraying diverse ways in which one can be Danish are NOT being made, in Copenhagen or elsewhere. In that sense, the statement of Mr. Krarup makes perfect sense: then globalization *is* opposed to "real life", at least life as it has been acknowledged in Scandinavia...

The threat has seemed so crucial, that in the heat of debate countries have turned the blame for the loss of this natural purity on each other: on the notion of immigrant politics, Danish politicians—nationalists and others—have excused the harsh "tone of debate", by proclaiming that for instance Sweden is far worse off with their misunderstood "politically correct" approach to the debate, and that they have thereby chosen to close their ignorant eyes to the problems. Recently, the leader of the Danish People's Party, Pia Kjærsgaard, in a weekly newsletter entitled "The Swedish Lie" has launched a vigorous attack accusing Sweden of being the "utopia of foreigner politics", where "multiculturalism" is a state-doctrine equivalent to "antifascism" in the former DDR (Website of the Danish People's Party, 2012).

In Norway, the mass murderer/terrorist Anders Behring Breivik has stated that had Norway turned their immigration and cultural politics in the direction of the Danish, he would have reconsidered his actions. The Breivik-case has, at the same time, served to emphasize the brotherhood of the Scandinavian countries, as almost all politicians and media have presented the attack as an attack on "Scandinavia".

The Danish "cultural battle"

In 2001, liberal politician Anders Fogh Rasmussen and his party, Venstre won the Danish election and formed a liberal-conservative government with the Danish People's Party as a necessary support. He hadn't been in office for more than two months, before he—in the yearly televised "speech to the nation"—formulated what would become one of the biggest battles in Danish cultural political history: the showdown of what he called the "arbiters of taste".

From then on came a steady flow of articulating and turning cultural manifestations into political tools. Cultural manifestations have of course always been used politically, and political changes to the cultural landscape had been going on for years, but a brand new way of articulating their political use was set into motion.

An example of this is the place of the aforementioned battleground of 1864, Dybbøl Banke. Located just on the border with Germany, this place has traditionally

held great meaning in the national cultural identity. In 1980s severe changes started being made to the landscape, trees were cut and houses torn down, in order to transform the landscape "back". Except this place from the "past", was more of a mythological one, as the transformation was made to make it fit the image that painters and poets had had of it some 50 years after the actual battle.

This was however never discussed much in public—it wasn't kept secret, but there was no "need" to make statements on the project. With the newer cultural politics, efforts were being made to articulate the extra money donated to the investment in a brand new visitor experience at Dybbøl Banke, complete with dramatic re-enactments of the battle, canon-shootings etc. The importance of this particular historical battleground was thus to be underlined in ways that couldn't be misunderstood.

Another move was the initiating of the so-called *ENB*-objects—objects of Outstanding National Importance, within museum collections. As there of course have always been hierarchies in museum-collections, the articulation and naming of some things as being of outstanding national importance was absolutely unique; Danish cultural-progressives were in outrage: Scandinavians don't do things that way—they are above such nonsense! But of course museum collections in Scandinavia are not "above" hierarchies, but the *articulation* of a national hierarchy once again exposed the pretense embedded in the self-understanding of the Scandinavian model.

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Worth a story of its own is the development of the meanings assigned to the outmost national marker: the Danish flag. In Denmark the flag is used very often— it is the ultimate marker of coherence in the country, and has been promoted so much, that it is the favorite decoration for birthdays and on the Christmas-tree— even the buses are decorated with flags when a member of the royal family has a birthday or there are official visitors in the country. The use of the flag in this "cultural battle" has more than anything exposed the hypocrisy embedded in the idea of the *Homo Scandinavicus*: in this understanding the flag is used by everyone in Denmark, it is beyond political affiliation, beyond class divisions, it brings the nation together—it can put tears in the eyes of even old social democrats to see "the people" salute the queen by waving little flags...

According to the legend, the flag fell from the sky during a battle in 1219 in what is now Tallinn in Estonia—the Danish king was on the brink of losing the battle, when he humbly called upon God for help and God responded by sending him this flag and reassurance that if he fought under that he would prevail—which he did.

In 2010, the Danish People's Party managed to put a grant of € 750.000 in the national budget aimed to preserve and renovate Danish memorials abroad, with the

one located in Estonia as the primary one. This is by itself interesting, since with this the Danish People's Party managed to give national myths the same value as other kinds of cultural heritage. The Danish People's Party has—rather successfully—managed to make the flag "theirs"; they have, so to speak, monopolized the use of the flag, thereby more or less claiming ownership of the most "authentic" part of Danish cultural history.

During the last ten years, debate has been flying back and forth on whether to "take back the flag"—in the sense of clearing it of political meaning. This "taking back" however, is derived precisely from the notion that the "state of natural innocence" (both as an actual place and as a state of mind) actually ever existed. It is a desperate attempt to save a view of oneself as an inhabitant of a wonderful paradise on earth, in which notions of nationalism in any form do not exist, where the national is the natural. In the Danish understanding of self however, such national symbols were considered to be "neutral"—until someone remarked on it and revealed the obvious—that it is of course not possible to hold a national flag as a politically neutral symbol.

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The case of the Danish flag proved more than anything how motionless the left wing has been for a very long time. Because the rise of outspoken nationalistic rhetoric in Denmark has also exposed the embedded racism in Scandinavian "cultural progressives", the left wing seems to be desperately trying to hold on to their title as being the best in the world. As mentioned above, cultural progressives are now targeting those forces *within* Denmark that fail to live up to "the standard" (i.e. unemployed, overweight, smokers, those "cheating the system" etc.) and are, in the mind of the left, part of the problem by corrupting a well-functioning system that only works as long as the Scandinavians are the best, the morally supreme, the most aesthetically desirable etc. etc.

To summarize, there are two movements in Denmark juggling cultural identity markers—the left and the right wing. They both claim the same: that they hold the key to understanding what is originally Danish and what is to be considered "un-Danish". Both sides more or less use the same symbolic and are struggling over the same markers—basically because they are both born out of the same source: the notion that Scandinavians simply are the most evolved—and thereby the better—beings. For those "just living" in Denmark (i.e. the general population), this "cultural battle" has left people with only the choice of being on either of these sides. And due to the inertia of the left wing, the cultural identity in Denmark is now more or less being determined by the right wing.

An example of this is the initiation of the Canon of Culture. This concept was started by then Minister for Culture Brian Mikkelsen of the Conservative Party in 2004 and the creation of the canon had as its primary goal amongst other things

to stimulate personal involvement in Danish culture, to increase self-awareness among Danes of Danish cultural history, to provide "reference points" of "what is special about Danes and Denmark" within the context of globalization and to "strengthen the sense of community" by demonstrating shared cultural heritage. The Canon of Culture was not intended to become part of a set curriculum for schoolchildren, but should rather somehow a part of the daily life of citizens (Falconer, 2010). In 2006 it was published, consisting of a list of 108 works of art that are considered essential for Danish Cultural Heritage.[3]

From the very beginning the project was heavily debated and many were opposed to the idea. Mr. Mikkelsen clearly stated that it was his intention that the Canon should work to strengthen coherence in Danish society, whereas the committees that were to make these decisions on the actual content, argued that the culture that "matters" is that which produces debate etc. But in the end, Mr. Mikkelsen won; even though still displaying their critique, the critical voices did join the committees and did make the selection, thus endorsing his project and strangling their own critique.

Upon learning that his film, "The Idiots" (1998), had been nominated to the canon, Lars von Trier created a video greeting for Mr. Mikkelsen. The film opens with a Danish flag waving in the breeze; in overlaying text, von Trier thanks him for "nationalizing our culture" and sends him a "do-it-yourself guide" for a project he calls "Cultivating the Nation". Accompanied by the militaristic Danish royal anthem *Kong Christian stod ved højen mast*, von Trier carefully cuts the white cross from the Danish flag. The film ends with a shot of the reassembled and now crossless red flag being hoisted up the flagpole to the tune of *The Internationale*. Mr. Mikkelsens response to this was however limited to stating that as an artist in a free country, von Trier can do as he wants. This response was a manifestation of the success of the policy of the government that Mikkelsen was part of: every act of resistance merely becomes a proof of the strength and righteousness of the ruling ideas (Falconer, 2010).

Alternatives

Examples like these, shows how you—within the existing structures—can make a stand in which you position yourself as either for or against the rightwing cultural and identity politics, but to this day no one has managed to formulate any persistent alternatives. A few attempts have however been made, and I will here present a few different examples of alternative identity markers from Denmark:

3 For a full international list of content of the Cultural Canon, refer to: http://kulturkanon. kum.dk/en/

Ungdomshuset (literally "the Youth House") was the popular name of the building formally named Folkets Hus ("House of the People") located in Copenhagen. The house itself held an important role in the history of the Danish labour movement. It opened in 1897, and was the site of many a plan for strikes and demonstrations, it held the 1910 International Women's Conference. International Women's Days was initiated from this house, and figures such as Lenin and Rosa Luxembourg spoke there. It functioned as an underground scene music venue and meeting point for varying autonomous and leftwing groups from 1982 until 2007 when—after a prolonged conflict—it was torn down. This was an explosion within Danish society; it was progressive and liberal Denmark itself that was under attack now, and huge demonstrations and riots broke out.

During these riots seemingly new alliances were made: alongside the black dressed activists you could suddenly spot some of those that has little or no voice in Denmark: the immigrant population (or more precisely, their younger ancestors). The riots went on for so long that one started speculating whether a "true" revolution could be in the making? Was this finally what would ignite the smoldering fire and make subjects of those who were not allowed to speak? What appeared to be an odd, but fresh marriage between those who felt outside society suddenly didn't seem that far away... However—as authorities could see that demonstrations and riots were not going to just go away, they decided to give the activists a new house. And so the short-lived love affair came to an end—the activists, feeling content with their new acquisition, turned their back on further co-operation.

Now neither of them are seen or heard in the public at all.

A quite different example is a work from 2002, by the artistic group Superflex; large orange-colored posters with the text: "Foreigners, please don't leave us alone with the Danes!" were hung in the streets of Copenhagen and Odense[4].

The work attracted a lot of attention, and Superflex actually managed to formulate what many felt at the time: the need to distance oneself from "the Denmark" that was presented, both to the rest of the world, but also internally, to make a statement that one did not feel represented by what was going on. But it was not followed by anything more concrete, and it became a short little statement that never managed to rise above joking-stage, and thus became more of a patting each other's sore back than an actual fire-starter. One could even go as far as to call it an affirmation of the cultural progressive movements of Copenhagen: we know which position is that of the good guys, and we will stay on that side (as long as it doesn't have any consequences for our way of life).

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4   For more on the project refer to: superflex.net/tools/foreigners_please_don-t_leave_us_alone_with_the_danes

Another project that attracted much media-attention was the very radical artistic project by Danish artist Claus Beck-Nielsen/Das Beckwerk/Nielsen. The project was about stretching the idea or concept of identity to its absolute limits, through the artist's ever more increasing deconstruction of his own.

First he attacked the idea of the "natural goodness" of the war for democracy in the Middle East with the project *History of Democracy—A Parallel World History*. The exhibit held from 2003-2008 had seven acts, began with challenging the whole notion of representative democracy in Denmark itself, and ended with large international performances of acts entitled *Democracy—destination Iraq, USA, Mission Iran (Colonizing Iran!)*, and *The Parliament in Afghanistan*. He also appeared as a character named "bin Nielsen", dressed in loose, white clothes giving speeches under the banner *the return of evil as goodness itself*—in a mock terrorist cell similar to that of the "leaders of world-terror".

248 In deliberately distorted language and using images of both "western" and "eastern" ideological leaders, bin Nielsen was attempting to shoot holes in the idea of the embedded goodness of the project of the West bringing democracy to the East. Simultaneously, he was working on his more personal deconstruction of identity-project; in 2001 he started the *Beyond Identity*-project by announcing the death of "Claus Beck-Nielsen", in an attempt to see what possibilities lay in existing without an "official identity". All this culminated in his project *Funus Imaginarium—the Death of Identities and the State Citizen*. For 109 days starting in September 2010 he staged performances in three phases: A seven-day death bed—presenting a 1:1 copy of the dead artist—in the centre of Copenhagen, a grand funeral procession through the centre of Copenhagen to a churchyard where the burial took take place, and 100 days of mourning and reflection.

According to the artist, this project was necessary because: "In the age of globalization and growing migration the concept of identity—personal, national, racial, religious etc.—has proved more and more problematic. And so Das Beckwerk has launched a utopian project to search for a new form of human being beyond identities and the state citizen."[5]

The artist is thus directly connecting the project of identity to the idea and problem of both the nation-state as a general concept, and the modern evolved-democracy-project specifically. This project—of course, one might want to say—would be far too radical to have any real influence on people not already involved in such artistic or intellectual practices; projects like these tend to address primarily, or even exclusively, those who already agree on the issues, thus in a sense claiming superiority to those "failing to get the message".

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5 From: http://www.dasbeckwerk.com/

Artistic projects like Das Beckwerk are simply difficult to approach—it is so intellectualized, even in its obvious corporeal motives—that unless you are studying and following it intensively and for years and years, it becomes almost impossible to grasp. The layers in such projects are too many and the considerations too abstract to give any meaningful alternative positioning even in the context of the very state they are targeting.

Is this specific to Scandinavia? No, of course not—the real discrepancy lies in the hypocrisy of the "Scandinavian Model", which claims to be above these factors, claim to be rid of negative influence such as nationalism and racism as white superiority, and most importantly, claims to be the best possible place on Earth— so good that it can serve as a perfect ready-to-use-model for the rest of the world. This is a view it uses to shed all criticism, claiming to hold the secret to a better life. But this "secret" only functions within a homogenous society, one that has not ever really existed, and that has so patently started falling apart. When von Trier stated that Mr. Mikkelsen by means of cultural arrogance nationalized the culture, he failed to see that "culture" has always—within the Scandinavian Model—been not only arrogant in its approach, but monopolized by the notion of the evolutionary supreme Scandinavian beings.

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So, we end up with a deeply frustrated Scandinavia, with dying welfare states and a right wing granted ability to blame the diffuse group of "foreigners", while the left wing stands around flabbergasted and motionless. The real challenge is to acknowledge the racism within the existing structures, and to allow a truly outspoken critique of embedded mechanisms, in order to attempt to formulate new ways of co-existing.

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Kulturni aspekti skandinavske krize identiteta slučaj Danske – čistota na udaru

Apstrakt

U ovom tekstu pokušavam da pokažem primere ispoljavanja krize identiteta u kulturi, koja se upravo odvija u Skandinaviji. Posebnost ove krize je u tome što je ona pogodila većinu društva u vreme kada se „skandinavski model" države blagostanja polako ruši sa nastankom globalnih finansijskih problema. U centru ove krize je ideja *Homo Scandinavicus*a čije je postojanje istovremeno ugroženo (od strane različitih neprijatelja zavisno od strane koju zauzimaju) i čiji je sadržaj doveden u pitanje. U svim skandinavskim zemljama takozvane „kulturne bitke" bile su korišćene kao „teška artiljerija" pri artikulisanju stavova obe sukobljene strane. Na primerima pokazujem kako je „javnost" postala talac poprišta sukoba identiteta. Takođe ću na primerima alternativnih strategija (otkrivenih u svetu umetnosti) pokazati zašto one nisu uspele da pruže funkcionalne alternative vodećim rivalskim strategijama identiteta. Priroda ove krize i načini njenog ispoljavanja nisu ograničeni na Skandinaviju i zato su razmatranja njenih posledica relevantna i za širi uvid.

Ključne reči *Homo Scandinavicus*, kriza identiteta, kulturne bitke, strategije identiteta.