



Danish Review

Issue 3

Summer 2014

The Moral of the Little Mermaid

Navigating the Abstract

Equally Equal in Denmark and in Sweden

Dare you to be Danish?

Reviews of Contemporary Danish Books

Danish Review

The Team

This magazine was created at UCL (University College London), by Senior Teaching Fellow Jesper Hansen, together with PhD student Tom Høctor. Tom's dedication and hard work cannot be commended enough and it has been a pleasure to work with him again this year.

This year's issue is a collaboration between staff and students at UCL, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Washington and the University of Mons. I want to thank everybody for their contributions and support.



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Danish Review

Editorial

Welcome to Danish Review 2014, whose focus is once again different from previous years'. This year focuses on gender, equality, politics – and modern Danish art.

Two articles were originally written in Danish, and these have been translated into English by Tom Høctor. Both versions are included in the magazine side by side, and I hope you will enjoy the result.

This year's magazine is particularly dear to me as it achieves one of the goals I set three years ago: it is a collaboration between international universities that offer Danish. It has been challenging to work with staff and students from different academic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but the process has been mostly smooth and rewarding. I hope that my colleagues feel the same, but in particular I hope that the students who have contributed articles are happy about the way the magazine has turned out and feel that it has been worth their hard work. I want to extend another thank you to everybody who has contributed to the magazine.

And with that I wish you all a splendid summer.

I hope you enjoy the magazine,

Jesper Hansen
13 July 2014

Danish Review aims to:

Act as a point of reference for students of Danish around the world;

Form early career networks connecting students of Danish and people working with Danish around the world;

Provide a platform for people with interests in areas of Danish culture to contribute and share their knowledge.



Cover design: Elettra Carbone
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Photographer: Richard Dennis

If you have any comments, feedback or ideas, please send it to us at the following email address:
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The Moral of the Little Mermaid

The Little Mermaid is one of Disney's biggest successes. But how does it compare to Hans Christian Andersen's original story and its view of children? [Rebecca Eskildsen](#) analyses both versions and discusses their different ideas of childhood.

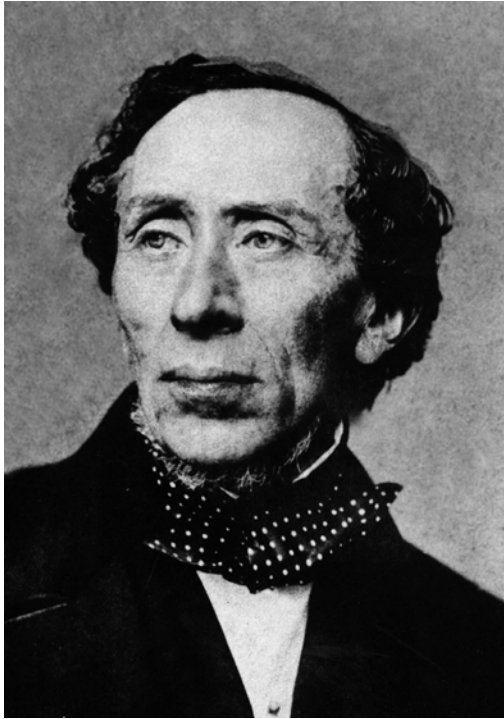
The way we understand children is fluid, changing over time according to each new didactic belief. I argue that children's stories show the values of their era in relation to what a child is believed to enjoy and understand. Through examination of the moral teachings and differing endings in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale 'Den Lille Havfrue' (1837) and the Disney animated movie 'The Little Mermaid' (1989), I will explore what these two versions tell us about how their creators viewed children in their respective time periods.

The Lover and the Saint

Fairy tales generally convey a moral and these versions of the same story are no exception, though their morals are considerably different. The main moral of Andersen's story is that one should continually strive for transcendence of one's baser form to achieve a higher spiritual existence. The mermaid's end-goal is to gain her immortal soul, initially through marriage to a human, but failing that,

she instead earns her immortal soul by performing 300 years of good deeds as an air spirit, or 'Daughter of the Air', as she becomes after sacrificing herself for the prince. Although the theme of spiritual transcendence is the core of Andersen's tale, Disney completely wrote the theme out of its film. Without the spiritual plotline, Andersen's original story becomes nothing more than the tragedy of unrequited love. To make up for the failings created by this gaping hole in the plot, Disney turned the film into the story of a successful romance, in which the prince and mermaid overcome external adversity to be together. In a phrase, Disney's moral is that good will triumph over evil and true love conquers all.

Andersen's mermaid's ambition to transcend her original state to gain an immortal soul at any cost resembles saints 'who were martyred for their faith' in the Catholic Church (Mortensen 451). The mermaid loved the prince, but the marriage she envisioned was also a means to an end: marrying him would give her the immortal soul that



Hans Christian Andersen

prince must die before the sun rises after he has married another princess. She chose to die rather than spend her entire 300 mermaid years pining away in the guilt of murdering her loved one. Furthermore, the 'good deeds' Mortensen mentioned are part of her character as well, but arguably not in connection to the prince. Rather she performs good deeds as an air spirit, also in an attempt to earn an immortal soul. She consistently strives for transcendence, an admirable spiritual quality in Andersen's time. That goal of transcendence and her altruistic behavior come together to portray the mermaid as a saint.

A general 'good versus evil' theme is more prominent in Disney's film than any specific saintly behavior. As previously mentioned, Disney entirely ignores Andersen's mermaid's goal of transcendence. Ariel is merely fascinated by the human world in a grass-is-always-greener way. Yet Niels and Faith Ingwersen point out that Disney remains 'truer to the folktale struggle between good and evil than Andersen's tale' (Ingwersen 415). As this movie was aimed at a child audience, this black and white take on good and evil in the world suggests that Disney did not expect its child viewers to understand any gray areas in the morality of the film. Andersen's

Disney turned the film into the story of a successful romance, in which the prince and mermaid overcome external adversity to be together.

she desperately craved. She is no longer willing to live the 300 years allotted to mermaids, only to disappear into oblivion when she dies. This desire for an immortal soul places her among the ranks of saints who found God and wanted to live purely enough to gain entrance to Heaven when they died. Despite her quest for an immortal soul, her love for the prince is indisputable, though whether she loves him as a person or an idea is left unclear. Mortensen writes, 'From the perspective of the divine, love amounts to both self-sacrifice and good deeds' (451). The mermaid's most important goal was to gain an immortal soul, and she saw love – which Mortensen defines as coming from self-sacrifice and the performance of good deeds – as a means to that end. Although the prince could not love the mermaid in return, she loved him so completely that she sacrificed her own life for him – as her sisters tell her, either she or the

sea witch took away the mermaid's tongue and voice, but she was merely performing a service for which the voice was the payment she requested; she wasn't an evil character. Disney's Ursula, however, had an agenda: she

wanted to rule the ocean in place of Ariel's father King Triton. She is therefore viewed as the evil usurper.

Additionally, a sub-theme of true love permeates the film as part of the good that must conquer the evil. Just as Ursula is indisputably evil, Prince Eric is portrayed in every possible good light: He saves his crew and his dog from their sinking ship, he takes Ariel in when she appears at his castle, and he never truly loved anyone but Ariel. The love ideology combines with the 'good conquers evil' ideology in the film: The evil Ursula becomes the other princess, invalidating any feelings Eric might have for any woman other than Ariel because his love for 'Vanessa' (Ursula in disguise, using Ariel's voice) is not real; he has been bewitched. In reference to Disney's film, the Ingwersens write, 'The public seems to prefer lovers to saints' (415). Disney appears to have recognized that an austere and idealistic saint-like character would be difficult for the late-twentieth century audience to identify with, which is why it avoided portraying Ariel in that light. Instead, it opted for a romantic plot in which the heroic lovers must come together to defeat the evil, false love, and then they may live happily ever after in the end.

The End

Disney's rendition drastically rewrites the ending of Andersen's fairy tale, and this new ending sparked endless criticism. Most criticism is aimed at Disney for disregarding the importance of Andersen's ending, but other critics feel that Disney's end is more suitable for children. The two endings have drastically different effects. Andersen asks for suspension of disbelief in the tale in order to persuade child readers to take away a greater understanding of empathy. In contrast, Disney's movie shows a more straightforward

happy ending that nevertheless has the potential to inspire children to work toward their dreams.

Andersen's mermaid sacrifices herself to save her prince, but is then given a second chance for her altruism when she is transformed into an air spirit who will spend 300 years performing good deeds, earning an immortal soul at the end of that time as her reward. Beyond her transformation, Andersen's ending makes the story an 'interactive fairytale' (Mortensen 444): The final paragraph of the fairytale enlists the help of child readers in shortening the years the mermaid/air spirit must wait before finally earning her immortal soul. Readers are told that every well-behaved child will take a year off her wait time, whereas every tear the spirits cry because of bad behavior will add a year to her sentence. Some pedagogical tactics have inspired good behavior in children by teaching them the 'fear of God', but such a method forces good behavior only out of fear of punishment. Andersen's fairytale, however, focuses on teaching children to look beyond themselves. Mortensen writes, 'Presumptuous children are not corporally punished by a distant,



Walt Disney. Photographer: Alan Fischer



The Little Mermaid statue in Copenhagen. Photographer: RClfans

severe father (deity), but learn instead to feel sorrow and shame as well as a sense of responsibility for ensuring that innocent representatives of goodness are not punished' (444). By interacting with the children, the fairy tale teaches them empathy, so they understand the consequences of their actions. Rather than behaving well in order to selfishly avoid punishment, they learn to behave well to minimize any negative impact on others.

Disney gave its viewers a happy ending in which Ariel became permanently human and married her prince, after they had defeated the evil Ursula. The film's end continues the theme that true love can conquer anything, including bringing together members of different species in marriage. Disney's goal appears to have been to leave viewers with a pleasant, hopeful feeling. There is no attempt to engage the child viewer to teach any virtues; Disney simply provided children with an optimistic outlook on life and on one's ability to achieve one's dreams. While this ending is viewed by many critics as more shallow than Andersen's version, it certainly has its own merits as well. Ariel reclaims her voice during

the struggle to defeat Ursula, which Laura Sells reads as a positive feminist image, because it 'reimagin[es] women as speaking subjects' (Sells 177) instead of leaving her voiceless, only to have the men speak for her under the assumption that they know her mind. Sells also points out that Ariel does not feel pain with every step and her feet do not bleed when she dances; since her voice is removed magically instead of having her tongue cut out, this is not a permanent loss. 'The Disney version thus becomes a bourgeois feminist success story in which access [to the male/human world] is achieved with minimal cost' (Sells 181). In this context, Disney may have omitted Andersen's interactive pedagogy, but perhaps children – girls especially – are more in need of Ariel as a role model. She finds her voice and manages to achieve her dream of becoming human. However, from a feminist standpoint, it is concerning that her success ultimately rested in the hands of her father, who granted her his blessing in the end and was the one to transform her permanently into human form so she could marry Prince Eric. Viewers then watch her move physically out of her father's sphere of influence in the

water, directly into Eric's waiting arms and his probable legal control on land. So Disney at least pushes the feminist envelope a bit, although it still ends with showing viewers a simple happily ever after ending.

Conclusion

The two versions fundamentally differ at their cores: Andersen focused on the saintly mermaid's quest for an immortal soul, whereas Disney concentrated its narrative on the fight between good and evil. The movie portrayed Ariel as a relatable teenager, struggling to find her place in a black-and-white world. Since Andersen places the most weight on the narrative of transcendence, it seems that he wanted to convey to children the importance of spirituality, and that he believed they were capable of grasping the spiritual concepts presented in his story. Disney, however, did not expect children to understand any moral ambiguity or at least did not feel they were prepared to delve into moral complexities. These world views are further obvious in the two endings. With his interactive ending, Andersen demonstrates both that he values social consciousness and that he believes children have the capacity to learn this consciousness at a young age. While Disney makes a slight detour into a feminist narrative by minimizing the violence done to the mermaid, it ultimately presents a strict good versus evil dichotomy in which the good characters win through the power of true love. Children are not left to wonder whether Ariel made the right choices, and they are not asked to help her achieve her desire. Based on these differences, Andersen clearly held the intellect of young children in a higher esteem than Disney did, and he expected more growth in consciousness from them after the story was finished. Disney, in contrast, aimed to protect children from ugliness in the world and prove to them that there is always hope.

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Navigating the Abstract

Visitors to art museums in Copenhagen often feel daunted by their wealth of abstract art. Assuring you there is no need to fear, [Anne Katrine Harris](#) welcomes you into the wonderful world of abstraction.

Each day, hundreds of excited visitors flock to Copenhagen's art museums, eager to be tested by the royal portraits of Thomas Kluge, or maybe the witty sculptures of Elmgreen and Dragset, but instead find themselves standing in front of wall-sized, jumbled-looking, post-modernist paintings, scratching their heads in absolute confusion. They remain there a few moments, wondering how long they must stand to convince the people around them that they have sufficiently appreciated it. I count myself among them, for before I studied 20th century art history, I remember wandering glassy-eyed through the Danish National Gallery, thinking more of which cakes were offered at the cafeteria than of what these muddled paintings meant. Little did I know that



most Danish abstract painters never intended their works to be cryptic or overly-intellectual. Instead, their artwork, reflecting Denmark's socialist tendencies, is meant to be accessible to everyone, regardless of background. Once I realized this, I felt encouraged to re-trace my steps, taking another look at works I once only gazed at in bewilderment. Take Carl-Henning Pedersen, for instance, one of the most beloved Danish artists of the 20th and

Carl-Henning Pedersen, *Smilende menneske og rødt skib* (Smiling Person and Red Ship), 1950. Oil on canvas, 162 x 206 cm. Photo by Carl-Henning Pedersen & Else Alfelts Museum.

Carl-Henning Pedersen, *Slutspil 2 (Endgame 2)*, 1996. Oil on canvas, 206 x 290 cm. Photo by Carl-Henning Pedersen & Else Alfelts Museum.



21st centuries. You can easily see his works in person in Denmark, either concentrated in his museum in Herning or scattered about the country. As for myself, after delightedly hearing about a centennial exhibition dedicated to him at Arken Museum of Modern Art, I adventurously and somewhat foolishly decided to bike the twenty kilometers there from Copenhagen central – in the middle of winter, no less! But of course, it was well worth it, for his collection encompassed nearly half the museum, spanning over seventy years.

Born in 1913 to a poor family in Copenhagen, and later living through the Nazi occupation of Denmark, Pedersen would have been upset by art that could only be understood by snobby 'intellectuals'. As a socialist, he wanted his art to be experienced by everyone, irrespective of race, class, age, gender, or education. Pedersen, like one of my other favorite artists, Wassily Kandinsky, sought to find a universal language everyone could

relate to, settling for simple subjects such as birds, horses, boats, houses, stars, and suns. Thus, his worlds often appear dream-like, populated by weird creatures in even weirder places. They tap into the spontaneous universe of dreams and happiness which exists in everyone, yet is often neglected in the humdrum struggles of daily life.

When I first saw Pedersen's gigantic paintings in the flesh at Arken, such as 'Endgame 2' or 'Smiling Person and Red Ship', I found it impossible not to gape open-mouthed in admiration of his fantastic colors – swirling, thick, hurricane-like masses of blues, golds, and oranges. For Pedersen, these colors are a way to express the nuances and the beauty of life and of the human imagination. On a plaque nearby, he says simply that '[he] was painting one day when [he] discovered the joy of putting one color next to another color. Since that day [he has] been busy trying to find the secret of color'. This mystery of color perplexed and

delighted him for the rest of his near seventy year career. As he grew older, he often alluded to children's crayon drawings and other primitive artwork, desiring their wealth and spontaneity of color, as children are never hindered by preconceptions of what colors complement each other. I think he might actually have been flattered if someone told him he painted like a kid!

While Carl-Henning Pedersen floats around in the fantastical world of human imagination, most other Danish abstract painters are much more grounded, or structured, in their paintings by comparison. The first example that comes to my mind is Per Kirkeby, arguably the best known abstractionist working in Copenhagen today. A few of his early paintings are just around the corner in Copenhagen's Danish National Gallery, but many of his most impressive works are in the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk. Though it's quite possible to just bike to Louisiana along the lovely northern coastline, I chose instead to take a bus loaded with elderly tourists, which was, in hindsight, slightly less scenic. The



Per Kirkeby, *Viel Später (Much Later)*, 1992. Oil on canvas, 300x479.5 cm. Photo by Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.

museum, it turned out, is actually a beautiful garden paradise overlooking the ocean – and just so happened to have canonical masterpieces scattered about.

Fantastic Danish artists abound in Louisiana, but Kirkeby by far most appealed to me. His paintings are abstract in a different way; they are not loose or spontaneous, like Pedersen's, but structured and intentional. He demands a core, or inner structure, from all his paintings. I wonder if perhaps this in part arises from his background as a scientist with a masters in geology. When I looked into his background, I found that he went on many expeditions to Greenland, Central Asia, Iceland, Central America, and the Mediterranean. He would analyze nature, looking particularly at the formations that occur naturally within geological formations. These would serve as the basis for his wall-sized abstractions, in which a viewer can barely make out a cave here, or a tree there.

Standing before a Kirkeby painting

Per Kirkeby, *Weltuntergang (End of the World)*, 2001-2002. Oil on canvas, 300 x 500.5 x 3.5 cm. Photo by Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.



I saw clearly that his process was different from Pedersen's, or most other abstractionists for that matter. While Pedersen paints a whole piece as quickly and directly as possible, Kirkeby tends to layer his paints, taking usually around a year to complete a given painting. He builds up the layers of paint in his paintings just like soil is deposited and compressed into strata in the ground. In other words, for Kirkeby, the process of art is similar to the process of sedimentation. His work reminds me of sudden, natural catastrophes, like landslides and earthquakes, as well as deep-time, gradual compressions that take place over thousands of years. This implied destruction and decay was crucial for me in understanding his worldview. 'The role of art', he says in an interview with *The Boston Globe*, 'is to accept that things break down. That is the only way to get something new to emerge'.

Jens Birkemose, *litografi (1660)*. Photo by Galleri Heede & Moestrup, København og Skørping.

The layering technique Per Kirkeby uses in his paintings is actually quite common for today's abstractionists. It was popularized by Willem de Kooning and the New York school of Abstract



Expressionism during the 1950's, eventually making its way over to Denmark. Another Danish artist working today who, like Kirkeby, has also adopted de Kooning's technique of layering brushstrokes is Jens Birkemose.

Though not as well known as Kirkeby, Birkemose has paintings tucked away

in many cozy, smaller galleries in Copenhagen, as well as the enormous Danish National Gallery. I happily spotted a few of his in the latter, while roaming about quite lost. They practically shone out like stoplights in their vibrancy, grabbing my attention from afar. At a glance, it was clear that his compositions are much less subtle and structured than Kirkeby's. Instead, like Jackson Pollock, he attacks the canvas with vibrant color – making this attack, this movement, the subject of his paintings.

Standing there and observing his mad, scrubbing-like brushstrokes for myself, I remember wondering: what on earth was he thinking as he painted this? According to the artist in an interview with *Politiken*, more often



Jens Birkemose, *Englen (The Angel), serigraf*.
Photo by Galleri Heede & Moestrup, København og Skørping.

than not, Birkemose listens to music (in particular, Schoenberg) and records his reactions to songs while he paints. In fact, he possesses a deep love of music, even attending a music conservatoire for piano before he became interested in art. He does not differentiate between the rhythm of the music and the rhythm of the brushstroke. Both are explorations into his consciousness; a type of psychoanalysis, if you will.

If I were to guess Birkemose's personality from his abstract paintings, as he intended his audience to do, I doubt he would have the same light-hearted whimsy of Pedersen or the analytic nature of Kirkeby. His body of work as a whole is a conglomeration of color, erotic photo-collages, love poems from old exes, mythical creatures, fantasies of his, and memories. He pours both his love and

his hate, his humor and his cynicism, into each canvas. I get the sense that he uses his art like a therapist, or like a drug. Regardless of the product or outcome, it is the process of painting itself that seems to excite and soothe him, allowing him to channel his thoughts and feelings into something concrete.

Birkemose, in trying to express himself through painting, is just like both Pedersen and Kirkeby in that all three want a real connection to their viewers. They are not trying to alienate poor museum-goers, but to reach out to them. I completely overlooked this intention until a few years ago – up until that point I saw contemporary abstract art as a meaningless, impenetrable fog that I dragged myself through for the sake of being cultured. Denmark, more than some cultures, has

a long history of appreciation for this type of abstract art. Danes erect entire museums to each acclaimed artist the country produces, such as the Asger Jorn museum in Silkeborg or the Carl Henning Pedersen museum in Herning. To me, it comes as no surprise that such a strong social democracy would love and financially support abstract art, since it can be accessible to almost anyone. The paintings rely on color and stroke to communicate instead of esoteric, encyclopedic motifs known only to art historians.

If living in Copenhagen, it would be such a tragedy not to take advantage of this generosity towards the arts. I recommend visiting the Danish National Gallery, Arken, Louisiana, the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, and Charlottenborg – most are either free or at minimal cost to students. Copenhagen is a hot spot for contemporary artists right now, churning out some of the most controversial and innovative art in any European city, so any artistic adventure you dare to take would be well worth it.

Upon closer inspection, I've found abstract art to be always purposeful, though in widely different ways for each individual artist. Whether it's Pedersen painting the joyous capacity of the imagination, Kirkeby abstracting the natural decay of the earth, or Birkemose recording his own thought processes, I now appreciate abstract painting as more than a hodgepodge of colorful brushstrokes on a canvas.

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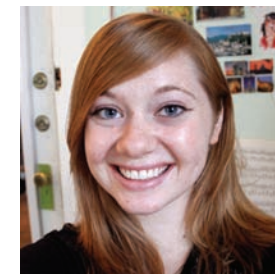
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Lige lige i Danmark og i Sverige

Uden for skandinavien ses Danmark, Sverige og Norge ofte som en enhed, men når man ser på de enkelte lande, er der store forskelle. [Elise Monseur](#) ser på de forskellige tilgange til ligestilling i Danmark og i Sverige.

Kan man sige, at ligestilling er en realitet i de nordiske lande? Visse mennesker vil sige ja uden tøven. Andre vil kategorisk fremføre, at man er langt fra målet: Kvinder tjener stadig mindre end mænd for samme arbejde, få kvinder har topstillinger, og når de får disse stillinger, taler man om det i pressen, som om det var et ekstraordinært fænomen - kønsstereotyper er vedholdende! Imidlertid er der mange, som har de skandinaviske lande som forbillede i forhold til ligestilling. Og ja, set fra Belgien synes situationen hos vores nordlige naboer nærmest ideel, men kigger man lidt nærmere, opdager man, at der faktisk er store forskelle landene imellem, fx mellem Danmark og Sverige.

Danmark og Sverige har i virkeligheden meget forskellige opfattelser af ligestilling. Selvom der har været meget aktive feministiske bevægelser i begge lande, er resultaterne efter mere end 40 års kamp for ligestilling særdeles forskellige. Hvor man i Sverige går ind for, hvad man kunne betegne

som ubetinget lighed, er den danske kontekst langt mindre yderligtgående. Man kunne måske karakterisere svenskernes version af feminismen som 'statsfeminisme', hvor Danmark kan betragtes som et land, hvor feminismen i høj grad er forblevet en slags 'basisgruppefeminisme'.

Den danske antropolog Dennis Nørmark er stærkt kritisk over for den svenske udmøntning af ligestilling. Han mener, at feminismen i Sverige har ført til, at mænd bliver undertrykt af kvinder. Ifølge ham er mænd og kvinder forskellige af natur. De har forskellige måder at være på og at vurdere, hvad der er vigtigt her i livet. Han tilføjer, at mænd er konkurrencedygtige, rationelle, logiske og fokuserer på dominans og magt, mens kvinder lægger stor vægt på følelser. Han mener i øvrigt, at det dybest set er uinteressant, om disse forskelle skyldes biologi eller kultur. Han påpeger, at det vigtige er, at disse forskelle bliver værdsat og får lov at eksistere. Mænd og kvinder er forskellige, og disse forskelle skal dyrkes!

Equally Equal in Denmark and in Sweden

Outside Scandinavia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway are often seen as one entity, but when looking at the individual countries, there are big differences. [Elise Monseur](#) looks at the different approaches to equality in Denmark and in Sweden.

Is equality a reality in the Nordic countries? Some people would answer yes without hesitation. Others would categorically state that this goal is a long way away: women still earn less than men for the same work; few women have senior positions, and, when they do reach these positions, it is discussed in the media as though it were an extraordinary phenomenon - gender stereotypes persevere! There are, however, many who hold up the Nordic countries as a model of equality. And yes, seen from elsewhere, the position of our northern neighbours seems almost perfect, but on closer inspection, it is clear that there are actually big differences between the Nordic countries, for example between Denmark and Sweden.

In reality, Denmark and Sweden have very different interpretations of what constitutes equality. Even though both countries have had very active feminist movements, after more than forty years of struggle for equality the results are very different. While Sweden supports what could be described as

unconditional equality, the climate in Denmark is far less radical. The Swedish version of feminism could be characterised as 'state-feminism', whereas in Denmark feminism has primarily remained a grassroots movement.¹

The Danish anthropologist Dennis Nørmark is a harsh critic of the Swedish model of equality. He believes that feminism in Sweden has led to the oppression of men by women. According to him, men and women are intrinsically different. They have different ways of behaving and evaluating what is important in life. He adds that men are competitive, rational, logical and focused on dominance and power, whereas women place great emphasis on emotions. He believes that it is fundamentally unimportant whether these differences are biological or cultural. He points out that what matters is that these

¹ The Danish term 'Basisgruppe' refers to an anti-authoritarian and egalitarian form of grassroots political and/or social organisation in small groups.

Dennis Normarks opfattelse af ligestilling står i diametral modsætning til, hvad der sker på den anden side af Øresund, hvor man for enhver pris søger at fjerne forskelle mellem kønnene. Anette Borchorst, som er professor i statskundskab ved Aalborg Universitet, hvor hun har forsket i ligestilling i Skandinavien, forklarer, at de fundamentale forskelle mellem Danmark og Sverige skyldes arven fra de feministiske bevægelser i 70'erne, da det hele startede. Ifølge professor Borchorst havde de danske og svenske feminister forskellige måder at definere ligestilling på og forskellige opfattelser af, hvordan de skulle opnå deres mål. Det er baggrunden for, at politikerne i Sverige er langt mere proaktive end deres danske kolleger.

Årsagen skal først og fremmest findes i den kendsgerning, at Danmarks og Sveriges geopolitiske kontekst ikke ligner hinanden. I og med Danmark ikke som Sverige havde adgang til egne energikilder, var Danmark langt mere udsat, da oliekrisen brød ud i 1973. I kølvandet på oliekrisen fulgte en økonomisk krise, der fik arbejdsløsheden til at stige og forbruget, væksten og produktionsniveauet inden for alle industrisektorer til at falde i hele Europa. Danmark blev dog langt hårdere ramt end Sverige, der bedre kunne modstå krisen.

Anette Borchorst påpeger, at der i krisetider er en tendens til, at der opstår en opposition til regeringen og den herskende klasse, og at det derfor ikke er overraskende, at danske feminister definerede deres projekt som i opposition til magthaverne. Anette Borchorst forklarer, at rødstrømpebevægelsens identitet i Danmark var forankret i et modsætningsforhold til myndighederne og magtinstanser. Konkret betød det, at de feministiske bevægelser i Danmark, på trods af at de skabte livlig debat i medierne, blev organiseret uden for Folketinget

gennem lokale organisationer og sammenkomster af kvinder i små grupper, de såkaldte basisgrupper. Rødstrømpebevægelsen holdt sig væk fra de politiske partier. Omvendt tog de politiske partier i Sverige de feministiske krav og programmer til sig, og partiernes dagsordener begyndte at ligne rødstrømpebevægelsens. Hvor de danske feminister kæmpede mod dem, der var ved magten, overtog det institutionelle Sverige feministernes budskaber og mål.

Det er netop de danske feministers forholdsvis perifere rolle, der kommer til at betyde, at det ikke lykkes dem at slå igennem politisk på længere sigt. De får masser af opmærksomhed i medierne i en årrække, men uden at det rigtigt får politiske konsekvenser. Anette Borchorst forklarer, at 'da rødstrømpebevægelsen og den politiske aktivisme mere generelt

differences are valued and allowed to exist. Men and women are different and these differences should be nurtured.

Dennis Nørmark's view of equality runs counter to what is happening on the other side of the Øresund² where they are seeking to eliminate social differences between the genders at any cost. Anette Borchorst, professor of political science at Aalborg University, where she has researched equality in Scandinavia, explains that the fundamental differences between Denmark and Sweden are a legacy of the feminist movements of the 1970s. According to Professor Borchorst, Danish and Swedish feminists defined equality in different ways and had different ideas about how that goal should be reached. Swedish politicians are much more proactive than their Danish colleagues.

First and foremost, this is because the Danish and Swedish geopolitical contexts are rather dissimilar. Given that Denmark, unlike Sweden, did not have access to domestic energy sources, it was much more exposed when the OPEC oil crisis struck in 1973. In the wake of the oil crisis, an economic crisis led to increased unemployment and a decline in consumption, growth and production levels in all industries across the whole of Europe. Denmark was much harder hit than Sweden, which was able to better withstand the crisis.

Anette Borchorst points out that in times of crisis there is a tendency for opposition to the government and the ruling class to emerge, and it is therefore not surprising that Danish feminists defined their project in opposition to those in power. Borchorst explains that in Denmark the Red Stocking Movement was deeply

rooted in hostility to the authorities and existing power relations. In practice, this meant that the feminist movements in Denmark, despite creating lively debate in the media, were organised outside the Folketing (the Danish Parliament) through local organisations and gatherings of small groups of women, the so-called 'basisgrupper'. The Red Stocking Movement kept their distance from the political parties. Conversely, in Sweden, the political parties embraced the feminists' demands and manifestos, and the parties' began to resemble those of the Red Stocking Movement. Whereas the Danish feminists were fighting against those in power, in Sweden the institutions took over the ideas and goals of the feminists.

It is exactly the relatively peripheral role of Danish feminists, which is the cause of their failure to succeed

Statistikker

Beskæftigelsesgrad (kvinder, 2013):

Danmark: 72,4 %

Sverige: 77,2 %

Belgien: 62.1 %

Storbritannien: 69.4 %¹

Andel af befolkningen mellem 30 og 40 år (2013) med en videregående uddannelse på mindst 4 år:

K: kvinder

M: mænd

Danmark: 51,8 % (K) og 35,2 % (M)

Sverige: 55,2 % (K) og 41,8 % (M)

Belgien: 48,3 % (K) og 36,2 % (M)

Storbritannien: 50,5 % (K) og 44,6 % (M)²

¹ <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tsdec420&language=fr>

² <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tsdsc480&language=fr>

Statistics

Employment rate (women, 2013):

Denmark: 72.4%

Sweden: 77.2%

Belgium: 62.1%

UK: 69.4%¹

Share of the population between the ages of 30 and 40 (2013) with at least 4 years of further education:

W: women

M: men

Denmark: 51.8% (W); 35.2% (M)

Sweden: 55.2% (W); 41.8% (M)

Belgium: 48.3% (W); 36.2% (M)

UK: 50.5% (W); 44.6% (M)²

¹ <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tsdec420&language=fr>

² <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tsdsc480&language=fr>

Barselsorlov

I Sverige har moderen og faderen ret til 16 måneders betalt barselsorlov tilsammen. Faderen og moderen har hver 2 måneders øremærket barsel. De resterende 12 måneder kan deles frit. Omkring 25 % af barsel tages af de svenske mænd.

I Danmark har forældre ret til 12 måneders barselsorlov, men faderen har ingen øremærket barselsorlov. I Danmark tager fædrene godt 7 % af den samlede barsel.

begyndte at klinge af i slutningen af 1980'erne og begyndelsen af 1990'erne, var der ikke så mange danske kræfter, der stillede kritiske spørgsmål til ligestillingen – i modsætning til Sverige, hvor feminismen levede videre i partierne'.

Drude Dahlerup, professor og kønsforsker ved Stockholm Universitet, siger, at det fra begyndelsen af 1990'erne er andre emner, der har mediernes opmærksomhed, som for eksempel tiltrædelsen til Maastricht-traktaten.

Hun giver udtryk for, at det var de danske feministers anarkistiske karakter, der stod i vejen for, at deres idéer kunne bryde igennem på den politiske arena. Til gengæld giver den danske feminisme oprindelse i græsrods miljøet bevægelsen en mere radikal og mindre topstyret karakter.

I Sverige var feministiske spørgsmål relevante emner for Riksdagen og de politiske partier, og netop fordi ligestilling tages dybt alvorligt politisk, er det et enormt chok, da det efter et valg i 1991 bliver klart, at andelen af kvinder i Riksdagen er faldet betydeligt. Det bliver et vendepunkt. Der bliver

straks iværksat en undersøgelse, der skal kortlægge magtmønstre mellem kønnene, og resultatet er nedslående: De traditionelle kønsroller har stadig en stærk forankring i det svenske samfund, både i familierne, i skolerne og på arbejdsmarkedet. Der er politisk konsensus omkring en opfattelse af, at det er absolut nødvendigt, at det bliver lavet om. Det er fra dette tidspunkt, at den svenske politik på ligestillingsområdet begynder at adskille sig fra den danske tilgang til ligestillingsspørgsmål. Drude Dahlerup forklarer, at 'de fleste svenske partier begyndte nu at kalde sig for feminister og talte om et kønsmagtssystem: En systematisk kvindeundertrykkelse, som må ændres af staten – eksempelvis ved at straffe mænd, der køber sig til sex hos prostituerede'. I Sverige, hvor man længe har været vant til en kvindepolitisk diskurs, begynder man nu at sætte handling bag ordene. Svenskerne går handlekraftigt og

En systematisk kvindeundertrykkelse, som må ændres af staten – eksempelvis ved at straffe mænd, der køber sig til sex hos prostituerede.

beslutsomt i gang med at lovgive på området.

I Danmark er holdningen en anden. Politikerne står ikke klar med banebrydende lovgivningsforslag, men søger i stedet at påvirke borgernes, især mændenes, holdninger og adfærd. I Sverige kriminaliserer man de prostitueredes kunder; det er simpelthen ulovligt at tilfredsstille sine seksuelle behov ved at betale for det. I Danmark nøjes man med bevidsthedshøjnende kampagner, der skal få eventuelle kunder til at droppe idéen om at købe tjenester af de prostituerede. De danske feminister

Parental Leave

In Sweden, mothers and fathers have a right to sixteen months of paid parental leave between them. Two months of leave each are earmarked for the father and mother. The remaining twelve months can be shared at the discretion of the parents. Men account for approximately 25% of parental leave in Sweden.

In Denmark, parents have the right to 12 months of parental leave, but fathers have no dedicated leave. In Denmark, fathers account for approximately 7% of parental leave.

politically in the long term. They received a great deal of media attention for many years, but without any real political consequences. Anette Borchorst explains that 'when the Red Stocking Movement³ and political activism more generally abated in the 1980s and early 1990s, few critical questions regarding equality were asked in Denmark – in contrast to Sweden where feminism lived on in the political parties'.

Drude Dahlerup, professor and gender researcher at Stockholm University, says that from the early '90s, other topics grabbed the media's attention, such as Danish accession to the Maastricht Treaty. She suggests that it was the anarchistic character of the Danish feminists that stood in the way of their ideas making their way into the political arena. On the other hand, the origin of Danish feminism as a grassroots movement gives it a more radical and less top-down character.

³ Inspired by the New York Redstockings, a part of the Women's Liberation Movement, in the USA.

A systematic oppression of women, which had to be changed by the state – for example by punishing men who pay for sex with prostitutes.

In Sweden, feminist issues were relevant topics for the Riksdag (The Swedish Parliament) and the political parties, and, because equality is taken so seriously in politics, it came as a huge shock when it emerged after the 1991 election that the proportion of women in the Riksdag had fallen considerably. It was a watershed. An investigation was carried out, charged with mapping patterns of power between the sexes, and the result was discouraging: traditional gender roles were still deeply rooted in Swedish society: in family life, at school and in the labour market. As a result, there is now political consensus that this must be changed. It is from this period onwards that Swedish policy on gender equality began to diverge from the Danish approach to gender issues. Drude Dahlerup explains that, 'around this time, most Swedish political parties began to consider themselves feminist and talk about a

system of gender power: a systematic oppression of women, which had to be changed by the state – for example by punishing men who pay for sex with prostitutes'. In Sweden, where female political discourse has long been the norm, words are now being backed up with action. Swedes are energetic and resolute about legislating in this area.

In Denmark there is a different attitude. Politicians do not table radical legislation, but instead seek to influence the citizenry, particularly the attitudes and behaviours of men. In Sweden, legislators criminalised paying for sex; it is illegal to satisfy your sexual

argumentation og værdisæt er ikke trængt ind i politikernes rækker. Ligestilling og respekt for kvinder er generelt ikke noget som danske politikere mener, at man kan lovgive sig til.

Disse forskellige reaktionsmønstre er imidlertid også kulturelt betingede, påpeger Rikke Andreassen, der er forsker i krydsfeltet mellem kommunikation og køn ved Roskilde Universitet. I Danmark er det latterligt at være politisk korrekt, hvor det i Sverige er en dyd. Danskerne er mere anarkistiske og antiautoritære end sine svenske naboer og bryder sig absolut ikke om noget, der minder om gruppepres eller formynderiskhed. I Danmark er der en mere liberal indstilling i forhold til, hvor meget staten skal blande sig. Derfor bryder man sig ikke om kvoter, forbud og tvungen ligestilling.

Ikke alle er begejstrede for den svenske tilgang, men opfatter den som en konformeringsproces, hvor der ikke mere er plads til forskelle og særegenheder. Man ser da også, at en del svenske tøjforretninger har valgt ikke mere at skelne mellem drenge- og pigeafdelinger, og at legetøjsforretninger søger at undgå reklame, der kan blive beskyldt for at være sexistisk. Det mest prægnante eksempel på denne udvisken af kønsforskelle er det nye pronomen 'hen', der er kønsneutralt. Det er meningen, at neologismen skal erstatte 'han' og 'hun'. Mange svenske står bag denne nyskabelse, men ifølge Elise Claeson, der er skribent og klummeskriver ved Svenska Dagbladet samt ligestillingseksper, risikerer denne midt-i-mellem-identitet at forstyrre børns personlighedsudvikling. Børn er jo i fuld gang med at opdage og undersøge deres kroppe, som netop er forskellige. Er det ønskeligt, at denne forskel ikke kan italesættes?

Danmark og Sverige har grebet kvindesagsspørgsmål forskelligt an, og det er der både økonomiske og kulturelle årsager til. Her i det sydlige Belgien ville man nok få adskillige morgenkryddere meget galt i halsen, hvis belgiske politikere pludselig ville kaste sig over kønsrollefeltet med svenskernes resolute proaktivitet. I mellemtiden kan man konstatere, at kønsrollemønstre både i Belgien og i Danmark jo rent faktisk ændrer sig over tid, men at det tager sin tid, for de traditionelle kønsroller sidder dybt i vores kulturelle dna.

Kilder:

<http://jyllands-posten.dk/indland/ECE5578722/hvorfor-er-svenskerne-sa-feministiske/>

<http://videnskab.dk/sporg-videnskaben/hvorfor-er-svenskere-sa-feministiske>

http://www.olofpetersson.se/_arkiv/dokument/svmukap11.htm

<http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/kulturdebatt/vi-tolererar-inte-dansk-sexism/>

Elise Monseur læser oversættelse fra engelsk og de skandinaviske sprog til fransk på kandidatuddannelsen ved Université de Mons i Belgien. Hun har været i praktik på Den Belgiske Ambassade i København.



desires with a prostitute. In Denmark, action was limited to campaigns to raise awareness designed to encourage prospective customers to cease buying sex from prostitutes. The arguments and values of Danish feminists have not penetrated the ranks of politicians. Equality and respect for women are generally not things which Danish politicians believe can be legislated for.

These different patterns of reactions in Denmark and Sweden are also culturally conditioned, Rikke Andreassen, a researcher in the intersection between communications and gender at Roskilde University, points out. In Denmark, political correctness is considered ridiculous whereas in Sweden it is considered a virtue. Danes are more anarchistic and anti-authoritarian than their Swedish neighbours and have absolutely no interest in things which are reminiscent of peer pressure or paternalism. There is a more liberal attitude towards the extent to which the state should intervene in people's lives in Denmark. As a result, Danes do not like quotas, bans or forced equality. Not everybody is enthusiastic about the Swedish approach. Some see it as a process to create conformity, where there is no longer space for difference. For example, many Swedish clothing stores have chosen not to distinguish between boys' and girls' departments and toy companies attempt to avoid advertising that could be considered sexist. The clearest example of this blurring of gender differences is the new gender-neutral pronoun 'hen'. The intention is that this neologism will replace 'han' (he) and 'hun' (she). Many Swedes support this innovation, but according to Elise Claeson, an author and columnist at Svenska Dagbladet and expert on equality, 'these in-between identities' risk disrupting children's personal development. Children are in the process of discovering and exploring their bodies, which are different from each other. Is

a situation in which these differences cannot be articulated really desirable?

Denmark and Sweden have engaged with gender issues differently, and there are both economic and cultural reasons for this. Outside the Nordic countries, people would probably choke on their morning pastries if politicians suddenly plunged into the gender role debate with resolute Swedish proactivity. In the meantime it can be stated that gender role patterns, both in Belgium and in Denmark, change over time, but that the process takes time as traditional gender roles are deeply embedded in our cultural DNA.

Translated by Tom Høctor

Tom Høctor is a PhD researcher in the Department of Scandinavian Studies. He is particularly interested in the Nordic Model, Danish politics and critical theory.



Tør du være dansk?

Ole Hyltoft har været en fremtrædende figur i den danske værdidebat gennem en lang årrække. I 2009 meldte han sig ind i Dansk Folkeparti. I denne artikel analyserer [Aurèlie Cornet](#) hans bog *Tør du være dansk?* fra samme år.

Tør du være dansk? Det er det spørgsmål, Ole Hyltoft stiller i sin tredje bog efter bøgerne *Tør du være fri?* og *Tør du være med?*. De diskuterer alle tre problemstillinger, der har med tendenser i det danske samfund at gøre.

Ved første øjekast kunne man tro, at denne bog handler om, hvad det er, der gør en dansker dansk. Om dansk identitet. Det er også, hvad den smukke forside med idyllisk natur, runesten og røde hjerter leder tankerne henimod. Men så snart man åbner bogen, forstår man, at Ole Hyltoft snarere har skrevet en nationalpopulistisk pamflet.

Hvem er Ole Hyltoft egentlig? Han er født i 1935 og læste senere dansk og engelsk på universitetet. I offentligheden har han siden halvfjerdsene været kendt som en flittig kronik- og essayskribent, men han har også været politisk aktiv som socialdemokrat. I næsten et halvt århundrede var han medlem af Socialdemokratiet, men i 2009 meldte han sig ind i Dansk Folkeparti. Det var

samme år som han skrev bogen *Tør du være dansk?*. Det er naturligvis ikke et tilfælde, for de holdninger, der kommer til udtryk i bogen, passer i det store hele til den politisk-ideologiske linje, som udstikkes af lederne i



Dare you to be Danish?

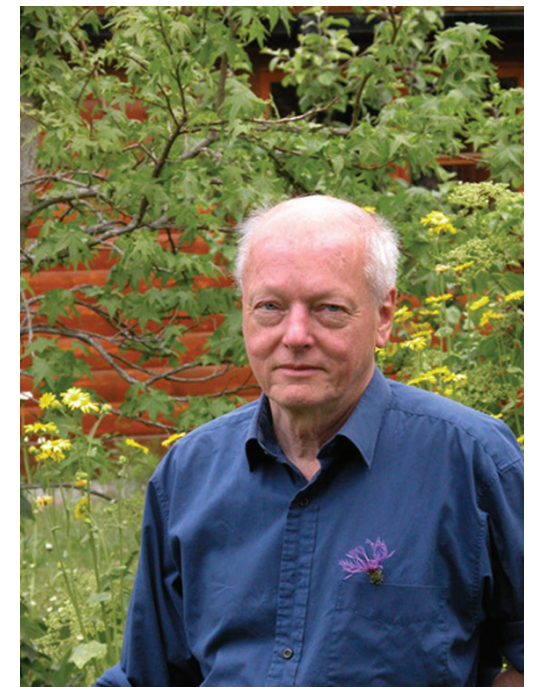
Ole Hyltoft has been a prominent figure in the debate about Danish identity and values for many years now. In 2009 he joined the Danish People's Party. In this article [Aurèlie Cornet](#) analyses his book, *Do you Dare to Be Danish?*, of the same year.

Do you dare to be Danish? That is the question Ole Hyltoft asks in his third book, a follow-up to *Do you dare to be free?* and *Do you dare to participate?*. All three discuss issues and trends in Danish society.

you dare to be Danish? Of course, that is no coincidence, as the views which are set out in the book adhere, for the most part, to the political-ideological line marked out by the leaders of DF. The book's forty-nine short chapters

At first glance you might think that this book is about what makes a Dane Danish: Danish identity. That is also hinted at by the charming cover with idyllic nature, runestones and red hearts. But as soon as you open the book, it becomes clear that Ole Hyltoft has instead written a right-wing populist manifesto.

So, who is Ole Hyltoft? He was born in 1935 and later studied Danish and English at university. Since the 1970s, he has been publicly known as a sharp feature writer and essayist and he was also politically active within the Social Democrats. He was a member of the Social Democrats for almost half a century until in 2009 he joined the Danish People's Party (DF). That was the same year he wrote the book *Do*



© Ole Hyltoft

Dansk Folkeparti. Bogens 49 små kapitler handler bl.a. om folkelighed, globalisering, religion og indvandring – typiske nationalpopulistiske temaer, som også er kernen i Dansk Folkepartis raison d'être.

Hvis man kigger på onlineordbogen 'Den Danske Ordbog', er definitionen på nationalisme følgende: 'stærk eller overdreven nationalfølelse, ofte forbundet med en nedvurdering eller diskrimination af andre nationer eller med et ønske om politisk selvstændighed'. Populisme defineres som 'en bestræbelse på at vinde den brede befolknings gunst ved at forenkle fremstillingen af vanskeligt forståelige (samfunds)forhold og ved at forholde sig kritisk til samfundets etablerede autoriteter'. Nationalpopulisme kan defineres som værende en blanding af disse to politisk-ideologiske retninger, og Ole Hyltofts bog indskrives sig i en sådan diskurs.

Nationalpopulister har typisk en drøm om en guldalder – en længsel efter svundne tider, hvor alt var bedre. Denne nostalgi kendetegner også Ole Hyltoft, der går så langt som til at indskrive sorgen over tabene af Skåne, Sønderjylland og Norges selvstændighed som en art nedarvet træk i den danske nationalkarakter. Han beskriver, at denne del af den danske historie 'lå os i blodet'. Hertil kommer, at hans nationalkonservatisme i andre sammenhænge får ham til at forfægte, at der burde skulle være en folkeafstemning om Skåne for at afgøre, om ikke denne svenske landsdel kunne vende 'hjem' til Danmark. Det gør han fx i en video, hvor bogen præsenteres (cirka 9.25: <http://vimeo.com/44378642>).

Ole Hyltofts nationalisme kommer

dog først og fremmest til udtryk som animositet mod globaliseringen. Hans hovedpointe er, at globaliseringen truer nationalstaten. I to kapitler gør han rede for, hvor skadelig globaliseringen er for det danske samfund. Han

Hyltoft understreger bl.a. globaliseringens iboende imperialisme, når han argumenterer, at globaliseringen 'vil erobre hele verden, ligesom nazismen, kommunismen, og islamismen'.

understreger bl.a. globaliseringens iboende imperialisme, når han argumenterer, at globaliseringen 'vil erobre hele verden, ligesom nazismen, kommunismen, og islamismen'.

Hyltoft anvender i øvrigt mange steder i bogen ordet 'islamisme', der henviser til politisk islam. Islamisme betegner således den holdning, at statens opbygning og institutioner bør være i overensstemmelse med islamiske forskrifter, dvs. shariaen, hvilket ikke er særlig forenelig med individuelle rettigheder og fx ligestilling. I og med Ole Hyltoft anvender begreberne islam og islamisme i flæng, kommer han til at implicere, at alle muslimer på en eller anden måde har et politisk projekt, hvis værdigrundlag er fundamentalt anderledes end danskernes. Han giver også udtryk for at islamisme truer den danske ytringsfrihed og ser Muhammed-krisen i 2005 som et bevis herfor.

Indvandring er naturligvis bogens hovedtema. Det er nationalpopulisternes hjertesag, og Hyltoft gør hyppigt brug af generaliseringer og medlevende beskrivelser, der kan siges at have som mål at stigmatisere og dæmonisere indvandrere med muslimsk baggrund, fx når han skriver: 'I flere muslimske lande i Afrika udsættes piger for om-

deal with, among other things, Danish values, globalisation, religion and immigration – typical right-wing populist themes, which are also at the heart of DF's raison d'être.

Upon consulting the online dictionary *Den Danske Ordbog*, the definition of nationalism is given as follows: 'strong or excessive national-feeling, often associated with a disparagement or discrimination against other nations or with a desire for political independence'.

Populism is defined as 'an endeavour to win the favour of the population by simplifying the presentation of complex (social) conditions and by adopting a critical attitude to society's established authorities'. Right-wing populism can be defined as being a mixture of these two politico-ideological movements and Ole Hyltoft's pamphlet enters into a similar discourse.

Right-wing populists are typically nostalgic for a golden age – a longing for a lost time when everything was better. Ole Hyltoft is also characterised by this nostalgia. He goes as far as to ascribe the grief over the losses of Scania (Skåne), Southern Jutland (Sønderjylland) and Norwegian independence to a kind of hereditary trait in the Danish national character. He describes how this aspect of Danish history was 'in our blood'. Additionally, his nationalism leads him to assert that there ought to be a referendum in Scania to decide whether this Swedish province should come 'home' to Denmark, which he argues, for instance, in a video from an event promoting the book (from about 9.25: <http://vimeo.com/44378642>).

However, Ole Hyltoft's nationalism is expressed, first and foremost, as an animosity towards globalisation. His

principal argument in this regard is that globalisation threatens the nation-state. In two chapters, he explains how harmful globalisation is for Danish society. He underlines, among other things, the imperialism inherent in

Hyltoft underlines, among other things, the imperialism inherent in globalisation which he argues 'wants to conquer the whole world, just like Nazism, Communism and Islamism'.

globalisation which he argues 'wants to conquer the whole world, just like Nazism, Communism and Islamism'.

Moreover, Hyltoft makes frequent use of the term Islamism in his book, referring to a political strain of Islam. Islamism thus denotes the position that the state's structures and institutions ought to be consistent with Islamic strictures (i.e. Sharia law), which is not particularly compatible with, say, individual rights and equality. By using the concepts Islam and Islamism interchangeably, Ole Hyltoft implies that all Muslims somehow have a political agenda, the moral basis of which is fundamentally different from Danish values. He also argues that Islamism threatens Danish freedom of speech and sees the Muhammad cartoon crisis of 2005 as proof of this.

Immigration is, of course, the primary theme of the book. It is the right-wing populists' pet peeve, and Hyltoft makes frequent use of generalisations and vivid descriptions which can be said to have the goal of stigmatising and demonising immigrants with a Muslim background. He writes, for example: 'in many Muslim countries in Africa, girls are prepared for circumcision, that is to say mutilation of their genitals. Millions of young

skæring, det vil sige lemlæstelse af deres kønsdele. Millioner af små piger udsættes for denne meningsløse tortur, der gør deres seksualliv pinefuldt og glædesløst. Muslimske piger, der ikke adlyder familiens faderlige overhoved, risikerer at blive myrdet af deres far eller bror'. Hyltofts interesse for ligestilling og kvinders rettigheder indskrives sig i en argumentation, hvor muslimsk kultur beskrives som en 'beduinerkultur fra 600-tallet', der har 'barbariske leveregler'. Hertil kommer, at det er en præmis i hans argumentation, at indvandrere med muslimsk baggrund per se er troende muslimer, og at alle troende muslimer er islamister.

Ole Hyltoft opbygger et fjendebillede, hvor 'den islamiske indvandring' er en byrde og en trussel for det danske samfund, og muslimers livsstil anses for uforenelig med dansk kultur. De politiske ledere kritiseres for ikke at have begrænset indvandringen og ikke have sørget for, at indvandrere tilpasser sig og bliver integreret.

Kritikken af de politiske ledere knytter an til et andet typisk nationalpopulistisk træk, nemlig kritikken af eliten. Det er en del af den populistiske selvopfattelse at positionere sig i modsætning til eliten, uanset om det er den intellektuelle og politiske elite eller medieeliten, der er tale om. Hyltoft kritiserer den politiske elite for at have ansvaret for 'masseindvandringen' og for at lukke øjnene for de 'rigtige problemer som kommer fra immigrationen'. Han giver udtryk for, at manglende politisk mod og angst for repressalier er en del af årsagen. I øvrigt kritiseres regeringspartierne ikke kun for den politisk betingede indvandring, men for en lang række forhold. Politikerne i regeringspartierne beskrives som inkompetente forrædere, der ikke handler i folkets interesse.

Hyltoft savner tidligere tiders socialdemokrati. Han giver udtryk

'Medieoverklassen'

Hyltoft kritiserer den såkaldte 'medieoverklasse':

'Selv om medieoverklassen har meget konjunkturbestemte synspunkter, er der dog også enkelte, de indtil videre har stået fast på. Højest blandt dem rangerer troen på multikulturen. At hvert land bør bestå af mange varierende kulturer og religioner. Det giver jo et broget og underholdende skue, der svarer til at medieoverklassen lever af at underholde. Som følge heraf har medieoverklassen tilskyndet den islamiske indvandring i Europa så længe denne har været i gang. Man har agiteret for, at indvandringen var en kulturberigelse og bagatelliseret dens sorte sider'.

for 'at socialdemokratiets rygrad smuldrer'. Denne proces begyndte, fra det øjeblik partiet besluttede at forsvare multikulturalismen. Ifølge Hyltoft forsvarer Socialdemokraterne ikke længere de oprindelige socialdemokratiske idealer, hvilket er grunden til, at han har forladt Socialdemokraterne til fordel for Dansk Folkeparti.

Det er som sagt ikke kun politikerne, der bliver kritiseret. Også den såkaldte 'medieoverklasse' har ifølge Hyltoft et ansvar for 'masseindvandringen'. Journalister og medier er ansvarlige for at have skabt et alt for positivt og virkelighedsfjernt billede af det multikulturelle samfund. Man har valgt fortrinsvist at betragte indvandring som et kulturberigende fænomen og har lukket øjnene for de negative konsekvenser. Hyltoft anfører, at hovedårsagen til mediernes positive indstilling til indvandring er dens fotogene og underholdende

girls are exposed to this meaningless torture, which makes their sexual lives painful and joyless. Muslim girls who disobey the patriarchal head of the family risk being murdered by their father or brother'. Hyltoft's interest in equality and women's rights is part of an argumentation where Muslim culture is described as a 'Bedouin culture from the 600s' with 'barbaric laws'. Additionally, a premise of his argument is that immigrants with Muslim backgrounds are necessarily practising Muslims and that all practising Muslims are Islamists.

Ole Hyltoft creates a hostile image where 'Islamic immigration' is a burden and threat to Danish society and an Islamic lifestyle is considered incompatible with Danish culture. Political leaders are criticised for not having limited migration or ensuring that immigrants adapt and integrate.

The criticism of the political leadership links up with another typical right-wing populist trait, namely criticism of the elite. It is part of populism's self-identification to position itself in opposition to the elite, regardless of whether it is the intellectual, political or media elite. Hyltoft holds the political elite responsible for 'mass migration' and for closing its eyes to the 'real problems which come with immigration'. He contends that a lack of political courage and fear of reprisals are part of the reason for this. Moreover, governing parties are criticised not only for allowing immigration, but also for a wide range of other issues. The politicians of the governing parties are described as incompetent traitors not governing in the people's best interests.

Hyltoft misses the Social Democracy of a bygone era. He says that 'Social Democracy's spine is crumbling'. This process began from the moment the party began standing up for

'The Media Elite'

Hyltoft criticises the so-called 'media elite':

'Even if the media elite has very market-oriented views, there are however a few which they have stood firm on. Highest among these ranks the belief in multiculturalism. That every country ought to consist of a variety of cultures and religions. That gives a colourful and entertaining spectacle, which goes to show that the media elite lives by entertaining. As a result of this, the media elite has promoted Islamic immigration in Europe for as long as it has been going on. They have agitated for immigration as a form of cultural enrichment and trivialised its dark sides.'

multiculturalism. According to Hyltoft, the Social Democrats no longer defend the original ideals of social democracy, the reason why he left the Social Democrats in favour of DF.

As stated above, politicians are not the only ones who are subjected to criticism. According to Hyltoft, the so-called 'media elite' also have to take responsibility for the 'mass-immigration'. Journalists and the media are responsible for having created a far too positive and unrealistic image of multicultural society. The media has primarily chosen to look at immigration as a culturally enriching phenomenon and have closed their eyes to the negative consequences. Hyltoft states that the primary reason for the media's positive attitude towards immigration entertainment value and photogenic nature. In other words, Hyltoft blames the media for being superficial and naïve.

dimensioner. Hyltoft beskylder med andre ord mediefolket for at være overfladiske og naive.

De kritikpunkter, som Hyltoft tager op i sin bog, har han til fælles med nationalpopulistiske fortalere i hele Europa. Fx afviser *Front National* i Frankrig, *Vlaams Belang* i Flandern i Belgien og den hollandske politiker Wilders' *Vrijheidspartij* alle idéen om et multikulturelt samfund. Disse partier er også stærkt kritiske over for indvandring, ikke mindst fra muslimske lande, og gør hyppigt brug af fjendebilleder og dæmonisering i deres retorik. Det, som adskiller Hyltoft fra sine europæiske meningsfæller, er hans forholdsvist subtile forestilling om en svunden guldalder. Hans argumentation har derfor indimellem et dannet, nationalromantisk og nostalgisk skær.

Måske var denne kombination af et stærkt stereotypet billede af indvandrere og en folkelig dannethed en tilgang, der skulle gøre den danske nationalpopulistiske strømning, der politisk inkarneres af Dansk Folkeparti, 'stueren', et udtryk som tidligere statsminister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen i sin tid anvendte i en ofte citeret kommentar, hvor han tilkendegav, at han aldrig ville samarbejde med Dansk Folkeparti. Det var i 90'erne, men meget har ændret sig siden. Nyrup Rasmussens udtalelse er fra 1999, og

Ole Hyltofts bog er skrevet 10 år senere. I mellemtiden har Dansk Folkeparti fået en ny formand, der ifølge politiske analytikere ser ud til at tiltrække mange nye stemmer, fordi han, i modsætning til den tidligere formand, virker på mange danskere som en flink og omgængelig mand. Der ser således ud til at være en sandsynlighed for, at Dansk Folkeparti efter næste folketingsvalg for første gang vil kunne være en del af en regeringskoalition. Måske skal Ole Hyltoft også have en del af æren for at have givet stærkt stereotype synspunkter en forsonende indpakning?

Aurélie Cornet studerer oversættelse fra engelsk og skandinaviske sprog til fransk på Mons Universitet i Belgien. Hun interesserer sig meget for de nordiske lande og har boet i Helsingfors, Stockholm og Uppsala. I år har hun været i praktik på den belgiske ambassade i Stockholm.



The criticisms Hyltoft discusses in his book are common to right-wing populist leaders throughout Europe. For example, the *Front National* in France, *Vlaams Belang* in Flanders, Belgium and the Dutch politician Geert Wilders' *Vrijheidspartij*, all dismiss the idea of a multicultural society. These parties are also strongly critical of immigration, not least from Muslim countries, and frequently make use of stigmatisation and demonisation in their rhetoric. What separates Hyltoft from his European counterparts is his relatively subtle conception of a lost golden age. His argumentation therefore has a cultured, national romantic and nostalgic tone.

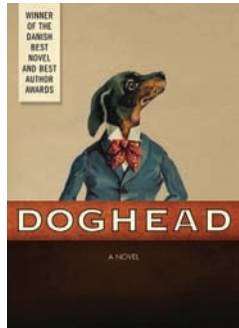
Perhaps this combination of a heavily stereotyped image of immigrants and a folksy demeanour was an approach which allowed the Danish national populist wave, which is politically incarnated in DF, to become 'fit for the drawing room', an expression which former Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen used in an often cited comment declaring he would never work with DF. That was in the '90s, but much has changed since then. In the meantime, DF has selected a new leader, who, according to political analysts, looks to attract many new voters. This is due to him appearing to many Danes as a decent and affable person, in contrast to their former leader. Thus, for the first

time, DF looks likely to form part of the governing coalition after the next election. Perhaps Ole Hyltoft deserves some of the credit for having provided such strongly stereotypical viewpoints with acceptable packaging?

Translated by Tom Høctor

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Doghead (Hundehoved) Morten Ramsland

Translated into English by Tiina Nunnally
Publisher: St. Martin's Press
Published in the US in 2009
(Published in Denmark in 2005)

384 pages
ISBN: 9780312376543

Reviewed by **Myhrra Duarte**

The Story behind the Nightmares, the Paintings and the Monsters...

Jug Ears is a small boy who escapes from his father's World War II nightmare driven drunkenness and mother's addiction to the past by drawing monsters underneath the kitchen sink. In his 2005 novel, *Doghead*, Morten Ramsland builds his own collection of monsters underneath the kitchen sink. Ramsland's ability to reconstruct and merge the aftermath of world war two from a Danish perspective with local folklore fascinated critics and book lovers alike. Not only did he win Denmark's most prestigious literary prize, the Golden Laurel, but in the blink of an eye he became a best seller across Continental Europe.

In an unflinching manner Ramsland weaves together the stories of three Eriksson generations. Employing a tone that mixes the playful bitterness of Bierce with Garcia Márquez's magic realism, *Doghead* unfolds for us the secret identity of grandfather Askild, also known as the carpenter. Before the war, Askild was a nobody, after it he was a hero. However, unknown to the family, while grandfather was trapped in the concentration camp he was forced to violently betray a friend. An action that will haunt him and his descendants forever. Without once stopping to ask himself if it is proper or not he spills out stories of little brothers who record the noises from their older sister's room and of boys who listen to voices that promise them that amid their poverty 'riches will flow, coins will rain down and gold will find its way into your hands'.

Sin and redemption clash in *Doghead* to create a cubist painting. Amidst tales of random acts of violence, alcoholism and sexuality, the author's passion for art emerges. Grandfather Askild's personality is explained as a parallel to the cubist movement seen in the works of Picasso, Braque and Cezanne in the late forties. While other members of the family find his work disgusting, horrible or cheap, the narrator sympathizes with it. 'Grandpa discovered that he had a cubist soul inside him'. And with these words Ramsland introduces to us the possibility that despite the darkness and cynicism that emanates from his characters' lives, they are multidimensional. They too aspire and carry hope within them. This is further emphasized with the recurring metaphor of the forest, of which one has to be cautious so the tree spirits don't pass through you, for 'to let the tree spirits go through you meant surrendering to the dark, hidden side of your nature'.



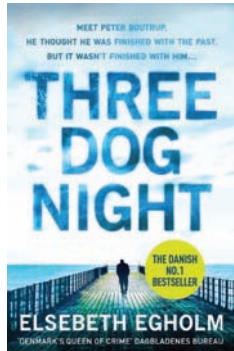
©Martin Dam Kristensen/Rosinante

In front of our very own eyes ghosts, shady entrepreneurs, artists, grandmothers addicted to romance novels, mentally handicapped women, men with an addiction to tattoos and the sea, teenage girls with a taste for boys and drugs are all determined to erase their past, but the bloodhounds won't let them. Employing nicknames such as little bitch, jug ears, the fang, doghead, the bathplug, applehead Ramsland brings to life his own monsters.

Doghead is a novel that dwells in the space that resides between reality and fantasy. Ramsland's pen is a true delight because he manages to transmit hope amidst a collection of dark narratives.

Myhrra Duarte, Mexican and in love with creative storytelling, has a special interest in Scandinavian voices. She has recently finished her undergraduate degree in Communication from IE University in Spain. She can be contacted via twitter at @suicidebycinema or by e-mail myhrra.duarte@gmail.com





Three Dog Night (Tre hundes nat)

Elsebeth Egholm

Translated into English by
Charlotte Barslund and Don Bartlett
Publisher: Headline Publishing Group
Published in the UK in 2013
(Published in Denmark in 2011)

400 pages
ISBN: 9780755397815

Reviewed by **Meagan Date**

It's easy to see why Elsebeth Egholm has been hailed by Dagbladenes Bureau as the new Danish 'queen of crime'. With ten novels and a television series under her belt, she has become a celebrated and renowned name in her native country. *Three Dog Night* is one of the latest entries into the world of Scandinavian crime fiction, a genre which has been steadily growing in popularity around the world. Originally published in Danish in 2011, Elsebeth Egholm's thrilling and fast paced novel now reaches an even wider audience with its recent translation into English. With the follow up *Dead Souls* due for release later this year in November, it is clear that Egholm has carved out a space for herself as one of the best and most exciting authors in the genre, and is set to continue growing in popularity around the world.

The novel opens with the central character, Peter Boutrup, an ex-convict who is trying to forget his tumultuous past by settling in the quiet rural Danish town of Grenå. On New Year's Eve the uneasy peace he's found for himself turns out to be short-lived when he finds the body of Ramses, an acquaintance from his past criminal life. At the same time, another gruesome discovery is made in the town's harbor: a young girl, with half her face torn off, anchored to the bottom of the harbor basin. As the investigation unfolds it quickly becomes apparent that Peter won't get his wish to move on from his past.

Peter is surrounded by a cast of damaged, but diverse and strangely likeable characters from the outskirts of Danish society. The female characters in particular are both compelling and refreshing, a testament to Egholm's skill as a writer. Felix, Peter's neighbor, is an ill woman with a tragic backstory, but with a wry stubbornness that intrigues both Peter and the reader. The lead investigator, Anna, is young, smart, and driven. Finally Kir, whose job it is to scour the cold and unforgiving harbor floor for dead bodies, battles the conflict between her own desires and the expectations of a father who doesn't feel as though her job should be performed by a woman. Each compliments the other in such a way that fleshes out the story and makes it a truly unique tale.

The action unfolds at a brutal pace, with Egholm using short, sharp chapters to drive the plot forward. She performs a masterful balancing act with the story,

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establishing a layered narrative which has multiple characters and plot points running at the same time, but which never feels overly complicated or confusing. The beautiful, but harsh and dangerous Danish landscape acts as a supporting character that serves to enhance the bleak and ominous atmosphere. Egholm smartly weaves a thrilling and mysterious tale which defies reader expectations up until the final page.

Meagan Date is currently completing an MA in Creative Writing at the University of Technology, Sydney Australia. She recently spent a semester abroad at the University of Texas at Austin.



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