

Feeding the Beast

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Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and Denmark

- work in progress -

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The news media takes on tremendous importance as the source of knowledge and insight about the immigrants, refugees and descendants.¹ The news media provides a site of public controversy where the cultural foundation of any society is disputed and renegotiated. This debate ultimately resolves into questions of what “we” are in relation to what “we” are depicted not to be.

In this article, we will focus on the media coverage of the debate leading up to two separate European Parliamentary elections. We wish to scrutinize a development over time, and also compare the coverage in two neighboring countries, Sweden and Denmark. With this comparison, we aim to provide a comprehensive perspective to the coverage with a special emphasis on how political parties have been reacting to the Radical Right Parties (RRPs), the Danish People’s Party (DF) and the Sweden Democrats (SD), who have been in the forefront of formulating and enacting a clear anti-immigrant message.

We assume that the media’s framing process will reveal certain views and attitudes that affect the popular opinion and the voters support for the RRP parties. Even more so, if feelings of insecurity and xenophobic attitudes are communicated, more widely, by the mainstream parties (including the mainstream press) as something salient and actual this predispose people to vote for the RRP (Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007: 42; see also Gorodzeisky and Semyonov 2009); a process that has been coined as a mainstreaming of the radical right (Berg and Hervik 2007).

We argue that the successful evocation of nativist political rhetoric provides more support for the RRP, which will make other parties compete for these votes as well. Feeding the beast (what Togeby saw as “the inner swine” 1995) nourishes nativist appeals as well as reactions to these appeals. An alternative hypothesis suggests that the public opinion in Sweden is contained by responsible elites, i.e. building up pressure waiting to explode.² We will instead suggest that the debate climate in Denmark contributes to the support for the RRP parties, while not being the constitutive reason for their success.

¹ We are grateful for all valuable feedback from Anna Bendz on this draft. Thomas Hervik did the extensive coding of the Danish news material and we are very grateful for his work.

² It is clear that the SD capitalizes on that image and tends to e.g. idealize the debate climate in Denmark.

Native born Natives in the Welfare State

Following Mudde (2007: 19) “nativism ... holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of a group (“the nation”) and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state”. It holds that the nation-state needs to be protected and reserved to members of the national group with the specific aim of consolidating political and cultural homogeneity. Nativist political rhetoric separates between the native and the nonnative, by means of demarcating the native culture, including the native people, the native ideas and values, from what is depicted as alien.³ The rationale behind the nativist message is to propagate that the nation (a distinct territory) belongs to the natives (a distinct “people”) foremost; hence, Sweden belongs to the Swedes and Denmark belongs to the Danes.⁴ In this sense, nativist political rhetoric is inclusive as it aims to consolidate greater social cohesion. However, it is also highly exclusive as it differentiates between the natives and “the others”. In this regard, the nativist rhetoric of belonging cannot be separated from a language of fears equally spread in the news reporting.

Sweden and Denmark are typically defined as strong universal welfare states with long-lasting Social Democratic efforts to control the state to create a good life for the citizens and protect their lives.⁵ There are however important differences. During the last third of the nineteenth century, Danish nation-building efforts spread from the elite to the peasants, workers, and smallholders, but kept a tension between the Grundtvig’s conceptualization of the Danish nation like the Herdian kultur-nation with “the People” at the center represented naturally by the peasants. Later, the Social Democrats saw the workers as being “the People”, since they provided the material foundation of the

³ Mudde’s definition of “nativism” captures the notion of “native-ness,” although it takes for granted that “natives” are clearly identified and does not sufficiently address the categorization of “newcomers” or simply “non-natives.” The non-native needs to be further differentiated, because some non-natives may be more contested than others (Hervik 2010).

⁴ In comparison to nationalism and its many usages, the term ‘nativism’ is more specific and excludes for instance elitist nationalisms and liberal non-xenophobic nationalisms. Emphasizing the use of nativist political language in the public debate, we acknowledge the nationalism of our common sense; hence, the banal reproduction of the markers of certainty that help bring the natives together (see further Billig 1995; Hellström et al. 2010; Jenkins 2006).

⁵ The SD combines classic Neo-Right rhetoric with a strong defense of the Social Democratic welfare model, which distinguishes it from other more neo-liberal oriented neo-right parties such as the Progress Party in Norway. According to Magnus Marsdal (2007), though, the extraordinary success of the Norwegian Progress Party in the 2005 general elections (approximately 23 percent) can be explicitly linked to the inability of the Norwegian Social Democratic Party to attract ordinary workers.

country. Until the 1920 the Danish state was smaller than the Danish nation, but with the referendum in 1920 southern Jutland was voted back to Denmark enabling a closely knit fit between the state and the nation. In Lene Hansen's words (2002: 50):

the result was a peculiar combination of the French and German conceptualization of state and nation: the state and nation are so tightly knit together that it seems impossible to think of the nation without the state – as in the French conceptualisation – and the nation is at the same time defined according to descent – as in the German model.

Unlike in Sweden, the Danish popular movement of peasants and workers created a separate public sphere and a civic society independent of the state, which stemmed from the nation's failure to establish norms for all citizens. In Sweden the Social Democrats pursued nation-building through a modernist utopian ideal by uniting the popular movements with the state (Trägårdh 2002; Berman 2006). The Social Democratic party developed in the early 20s century from a particular movement for the working class to become a state governing party for all the Swedish people, famously epitomized in the annexation of the people's home metaphor in the auspices of the Social Democratic Party chaired by Per-Albin Hansson who was Prime Minister in Sweden from 1932 to his death in 1946 (Dahlstedt 2009; Andersson 2009; Lindeborg 2000; Lagergren 1999). Åsa Lindeborg shows in her dissertation how the Social Democratic party gradually conquered the public view of national history. According to the party historiography, the modern Sweden's success tale came about in 1932 when the (S) embarked with the project of transforming the "poverty Sweden into the Swedish people's home", as it was phrased in a national school book from the 1950s (Berg 1957). In much national history narration, the history of the Social Democratic Party was also the history of the post war experience in Sweden.

However it has become increasingly difficult for the Social Democratic parties to maintain the close relation between the people and the elite as a catalyst for progressive politics. This is due to the durable governmental position, but it is also due to the changing character of the political competition. The difference between the blocs diminishes, or at least alters its meanings. Peter Mair (2002: 85) points out that the political identities of the mainstream parties are increasingly blurred. This invites new political actors to occupy an underdog position in relation to the established elites (Mouffe 2005; Kitschelt 2002).

In this context, Denmark fits a general trend in many European societies that immigration-skeptic and even immigration hostile parties thrive. This tendency is obvious in the 2009 European elections, including countries such as Hungary, Austria, United Kingdom and Finland to mention but a few examples. Whereas Denmark, to a significant degree, conforms to a broad support of nativist arguments and nativist policies, Sweden does not to the same degree. *The aim of this article is to consider the public debate to explore this difference.*

Framing the Beast

Cas Mudde (2008) identifies a paradigmatic shift in the study of populist parties. The argument is basically that most research on RRP-parties has hitherto been devoted to attempts to explain why certain voters tend to be attracted to parties like SD (see further Widfeldt 2000; Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup 2007; Rydgren 2007; Hellström et al. 2010). These explanations range from extremism (the view that these parties are antithetical to the core values of liberal democracy) and modernism (that RRP only finds fertile ground during periods of crisis). According to Mudde these explanations do not stand up to closer empirical scrutiny, since potential voter support for RRP is much larger than is generally accounted for. He encourages a closer examination of the supply side, i.e. the struggle over the issue of salience and positions in mainstream politics. The paradigmatic shift, he concludes, signifies a shift from normal pathology to pathological normalcy – an awareness that RRP does not represent an anomaly in Western societies but is rather a radicalization of mainstream politics. We here pursue with a closer examination of the supply-side of politics; hence, how and if the immigration is raised in the political competition of votes. We assume that the framing of issues will reveal certain views and attitudes that affect the popular opinion and the voters support for the RRP parties. We thus consider how the RRP parties in Sweden and in Denmark are framed in the national news reporting. According to Robert Entman (1993: 52):

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described

In this regard the framing of issues has an impact on the receiving audience and thus affects popular opinion (see also Zaller 2006). Even if the journalists comply with the rules for objectivity, a journalistic text yet assesses a particular media event by means of selection and thus presents certain aspects as more salient than others. Whereas all major newspapers in Sweden seem to share a mutual agreement not to take side with the SD, the situation in Denmark is more complex and some newspapers, e.g. *Jyllands-Posten* and *Ekstra Bladet*, occasionally applaud the DF initiatives. In addition, the DF is by now an established political actor in Denmark whereas the SD continues to teeter on the edge of the acceptable. We therefore assume that the tone – the language used to describe and discuss the SD – differs from the Danish case. Editorial writers, various experts and political representatives tend to exercise control of the public opinion in editorials, chronicles and debating articles; i.e. to determine the major manifestations of the public opinion and the popular will (Entman 1993: 57). These texts may also pass on moral judgments and make causal explanations to the issue at stake. The DF has hitherto been more successful than the SD to pursue with their nativist politics. There is reason therefore to suggest that the interplay between the framing of issues and the public opinion differs between Sweden and Denmark. In this article, we thus hypothesize that (1) the tone used towards the DF in Denmark differs significantly from how the Swedish newspapers talk about the SD and (2) that the Danish Newspapers frame the DF views differently compared to the SD in the Swedish news reporting; hence, the framing of the Beast differs.

The empirical context is centered on the elections to the European Parliament (EP) in 2004 and 2009 respectively. The body material consists of 573 articles in ten Danish and Swedish newspapers. The EP's relative power has expanded with every treaty revision from 1979, even though the voting figures have declined. Only 43.3 per cent of the EU citizens actually decided to vote for candidates to the EP in 2009. Nevertheless, the elections open up a space for new political contesters to gain political influence. The voters are more apt to reconsider established voting preferences and parties who otherwise take little interest in European affairs may find it worthwhile utilizing this platform to accentuate their political agendas.

The analysis is divided in two sections. First, we proceed with a quantitative reading of the material to discern differences in the tone used to describe the SD in Sweden and the DF in Denmark respectively. Second, we highlight recurrent themes in the media material to determine the role played by the RRP parties in the public debate. We begin with a short summary of the RRP-parties in the EP elections followed by some introductory notes on the RRP parties in Denmark and in Sweden.

The Radical Right Populists in the EU

The EP elections have been referred to as a second-order election that benefits smaller or more radical parties. Some voters utilise their votes to protest against the sitting government, and thus prefer an anti-establishment party. The political parties sharing a nativist political agenda have had little effect on the politics at an European level, though, according to Minkenberg & Perrineau (2007: 51): “this political family is limited to the role of a spoiler, without ever achieving the ability to represent a veritable alternative for the people of Europe”. Attempts by e.g. Jean-Marie Le Pen to consolidate a nationalist international have hitherto been a failure much due to personal conflicts and incommensurable nationalist agendas (ibid; Declair 1999; Schori Liang 2007). There is simply no common European political agenda to agree upon; of what an ideal Europe should look like (Mudde 2007).

Most RRP parties conceive of the current EU as something bad as they share a euro-skeptic agenda although it is rare that they refute the project all together (euro-reject parties).⁶ Cas Mudde (2007: 169) argues that: “... the general idea of a more or less open internal market protected from extra-European competition seems widely shared”. Nonetheless, both the Front National (the 1984 elections) and the Vlaams Bloc in Belgium (the 1994 elections) had their first electoral breakthroughs in the EP, and soon after they also crossed the threshold to the national parliament. According to Gingrich (2006: 31-32) Western Europe’s far-right parliamentary parties share three basic orientations. First, these parties tend to be critical of deeper EU integration, which would imply the transformation of more power to the supra national

⁶ Originally that was not the case, for instance the Front National propagated for a common European defense policy at a supra-national level.

institutions of the EU. Second, these parties capitalize on skepticism of the widening of the EU integration (i.e. further EU enlargements) as this would imply low income and a cheap labour market. Third, there is among these parties a hard-line orientation against illegal immigrants inside and non-European immigrants from the outside. They aim to protect the national-state from multi-cultural elements to instead celebrate cultural purity. This view holds that differences between cultures are impermeable and incommensurable. This does not necessarily imply that some cultures are considered superior to others but they insist that the natives share precedence to their native culture.⁷

RRPs in Scandinavia

In the early 1970s, both Norway and Denmark experienced how RRP parties gained seats in the national parliaments while the Social Democratic parties lost electoral ground. Less than two years after its establishment, the Danish People's Party (DF), who had taken up the same name as the radical right wing, nationalist and anti-Semitic party of 1941-1943, won a stunning 7.4% or 13 seats in the Parliament in its first national election in 1998. However, in the period 1998 – 2001 they were not admitted any influence and often shrugged at in the Parliament, since they were not considered *stuerene* not least according to the infamous statement by Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. This changed quite drastically at the wake of the new Millennium, though. In 2001 a story about young Danish Muslims with Pakistani background hit the news and grew big. The Muslims were represented as consubstantiated with the Taliban, supporters of the death penalty, and fundamentalists and even though the press council found faulty journalistic research along the way, few had any wish to falsify the story. Since the Danish general elections of 2001, the DF has supported the current Right-Wing coalition government with 12-14 percent of the electorate behind them. Two months later the parliament election gave the right wing party, the liberals (Venstre) a huge victory, and they went on to join forces with the conservatives and the DF as their demanding supporter. At this time it is estimated that most Danes, and most of the political establishment shared the view on immigrants, refugees and descendants that necessitated a very restrictive policy.

⁷ This view has been given many different labels in the academic literature; ethno-pluralism (Rydgren 2007), cultural fundamentalism (Stolcke 1995); new right (Declair 1999), neo-racism (Hervik 2010); cultural racism (van Nieuwerk 2004); racism without races (Balibar 1991) to mention some of these.

In Sweden the situation is different. Here the mainstream parties have traditionally avoided conflicts on these issues. According to Johansson (2008), the mainstream parties in Sweden tend to mobilize voters around an image of Sweden as morally superior, particularly through an emphasis on state policies on immigration. In this regard the SD challenges the consensual elites' position. After the 2006 elections, however, this mutual agreement began to loosen up (see e.g. Jonsson in *Dagens Nyheter* 1 August 2006, debate article).

To understand this difference, it is also important to recognize how the Danish Social Democrats since the early 1990s (and before them the Progressive Party) have adopted DF politics and views in the hope of being able to stop workers-turned-middle-class votes from leaving the party. But it is the government party *Venstre* and the Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who initiated the *war of values* strategy.

It is actually my opinion that setting the agenda in the debate of values changes society much more than those changes of the law. When I speak broadly about culture: It is the outcome of the culture war that decides Denmark's future (*Weekendavisen* 17 January 2003).

Within this strategy the government coalition and the DF criticize the opposition for being liberal, long-haired, halal hippies, relativists, multiculturalists and so on for allowing too many of the wrong immigrants into the country. The strategy was accompanied by a cultural canon project, launched by the Conservatives, officially in order to strengthen the Danish cultural heritage. In the Swedish political debate the mainstream parties are careful not to be affiliated with the SD and their position in the domestic political field is weak as the mainstream parties unanimously decide not to cooperate with them. In the rhetorical struggle for electoral support the SD is the card you least want in your hand (see further Hellström & Nilsson 2010). In this sense, the mainstream parties frame the SD as the beast in contemporary Swedish politics; an enemy that we may pass moral judgments on and mutually detest.

To sum up, both the SD and the DF mobilize voters around a core nativist message: Sweden belongs to the Swedes foremost and Denmark to the Danes respectively; multi-culturalism endangers social cohesion; the religion of Islam is incompatible with the natives' values and traditions; and they both claim to be friends of the people, in the sense that they stand up for the prudent native worker against the elites.

They accuse the Social Democratic parties for not defending the national values against (too much) foreign, especially non-western, influences.

Journalistic Tone and Degree of Difference

The analysis covers the news reporting during two periods, 2004 (040413-041013) and 2009 (090407-091007). Table 1 shows that very few articles deals with the SD in 2004, however rather evenly spread between the newspapers. Almost half of the articles in Sweden and more than 60 percent in Denmark are news articles and the remaining material is divided in chronicles, op. eds and editorials. In 2004 the SD was yet a marginal phenomenon in Swedish politics; however after their relative success in the general elections 2006 the news coverage expanded rapidly and has continued to do so (see appendix 1). In Denmark, the DF was already an established actor in 2004 and it is therefore no such discrepancy between 2004 and 2009.

Table 1. Sources of Data, Swedish newspapers

	News article/News item	Chronicle	Editorial	Op.eds	Total	2004	2009
Expressen	25	29	16	6	68	11	57
Dagens Nyheter	38	39	17	8	76	7	69
Svenska Dagbladet	26	17	3	2	43	3	40
Aftonbladet	22	1	0	6	44	6	38
Göteborgsposten	32	1	6	6	62	7	55
Total	143	87	42	28	293	34	259

Table 2. Sources of Data, Danish newspapers

	News article/News item	Chronicle	Editorial	Op.eds	Total	2004	2009
Jyllands-Posten	68	29	0	0	97	65	32
Politiken	46	39	3	2	90	43	47
Berlingske Tidende	43	17	3	0	63	30	33
Ekstra Bladet	12	1	1	1	15	6	9
B.T	15	1	6	0	22	17	5
Total	184	87	13	3	293	161	126

Background

In the 2004 elections the Social Democrats was in the government position in Sweden. The campaign was rather centered on domestic concerns and in the elections the Swedes tended to vote along yes/no parameters that had impeded the discussion on European politics in Sweden since the referenda on membership back in 1994. In a Eurobarometer survey from 2004 (Eurobarometer 62) some 48 per cent of the Swedes considered the EU membership to be a “good thing”, compared to the European average (56 per cent). The support for membership was much stronger than before, though in the EP elections only 37, 9 per cent of the Swedes went to the polls, which was below the average in the member states. In the elections, many of the mainstream parties also lost considerable electoral support, whereas the new EU-skeptic party Junilistan gained more than 14 per cent of the votes. However, the SD did not gain more than approximately one per cent.

The 2009 elections was quite a contrast to the previous elections. The EU-skeptic or EU-rejectionist parties lost electoral ground and instead a new party, the Pirate Party, managed to gain two seats in the EP, emphasizing questions of integrity and internet independency. According to a Eurobarometer survey from 2009 (Eurobarometer 71) “Sweden’s enthusiasm is close to the European average” and only two out of ten Swedes see the EU as a “bad thing”. The SD nearly tripled their votes from the previous elections in 2004 and is now also constantly exposed by the news media agenda which – all things considered - may generate more voting support (see further appendix 1).⁸

In Denmark the 2004 elections the two major parties, the Social Democrats (five seats) and the mainstream right party Venstre (three seats) gained together more than 50 percent of the total votes. The DF marginally raised their share from 5, 5 to 6, 8 per cent. 47, 9 per cent of the Danes went to vote in the EP elections. A Eurobarometer survey (62) from 2004 reveals that the Danes are more skeptical of the constitutional treaty

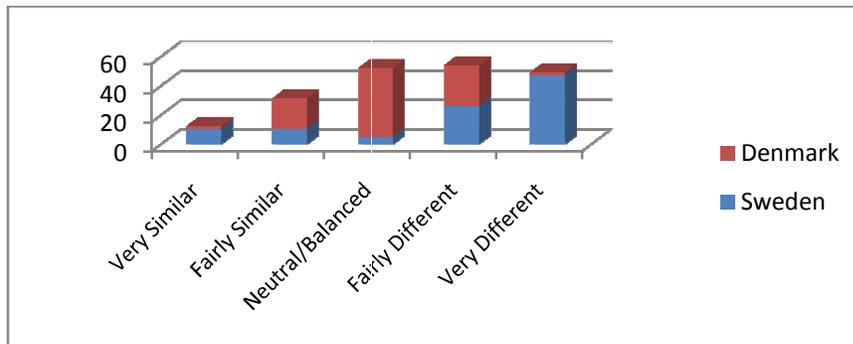
⁸ Apart from their explicit anti-immigration agenda, the SD is also arguing that Sweden should leave the EU (Sverigedemokraterna 2009): ”Vi sverigedemokrater anser att Sverige är värt att bevara som en självständig, levande och aktiv nationalstat /.../ Utvecklingen inom EU mot en europeisk superstat, nya regionindelningar och maktförskjutningar från de nationella parlamenten till EU-systemet riskerar att på sikt upplösa den svenska nationen.” In a wider European outlook, the combination of being against membership in the EU together with resistance towards extra-European immigration seemed to be a winning concept. Not in Sweden. With the exception of the SD, the parties who actively pursued that Sweden should leave the union (the Left party) or was heavily EU-skeptical (Junilistan) suffered from heavy losses. Instead both the Green party (who only recently had chosen to become pro-EU or at least not Euro-rejectionist) and the liberal People’s Party were the big winners among the mainstream parties.

compared to the EU average, but are on the other hand more than before pro Danish membership in the EU. This polarization is reflected in the results that also gave Folkæbevægelsen mot EU and Junibevægelsen one seat each in the EP, representing EU-skeptic, or EU-rejectionist votes. In the 2009 elections in Denmark almost 60 percent of the voters showed up at the polls, which makes it the third highest voting figure in the EU. Compared to the EU average, the Danes also proved to be more satisfied with the EU and they also appreciate their country's membership of the EU (Eurobarometer 72). The turnout shows, though, a significant decline for both the Social Democrats (dropped from 32, 6 to 21, 6 percent) whereas the leading government party Venstre remained at approximately 20 percent. Together with the Socialist People's Party who doubled their votes from the previous elections, the DF was the great winner of these elections with more than 15 percent of the voters behind them⁹.

Journalistic Tone

Is it the case that the DF and the SD are presented as very different to the mainstream parties or does the national media coverage instead portray these parties as fairly, or even very similar to the mainstream parties? Table 3 shows that almost half of the articles in Sweden frame the SD as very different to the mainstream parties and almost three quarter of the articles (73.7 per cent) frame the SD as either fairly or very different from the other parties. In Denmark only 2 per cent of the articles frame the DF as very different (28 per cent as fairly different) compared to the mainstream parties.

Table 3. Degree of Difference in Sweden (N=19) and in Denmark (N=100), 2004.



⁹ The election result was not least the result of profile hardliner DF candidate Morten Messerschmidt who received 284.500 votes or almost 11.7 per cent of those who voted at the elections.

Table 4. Degree of Difference in Sweden (N=121) and in Denmark (N=40), 2009.

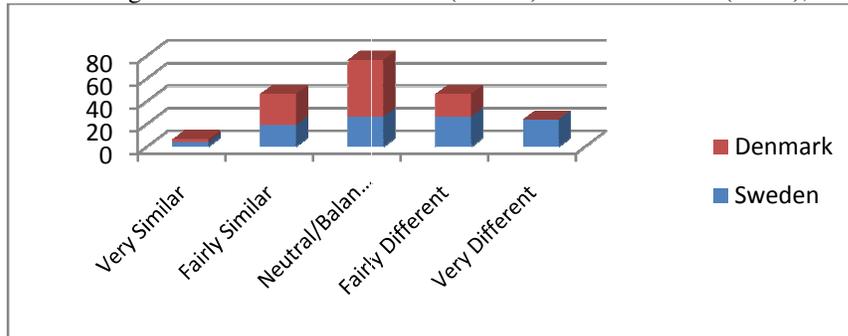


Table 4 shows that in 2009 half of the articles in Denmark frame the DF as neither different nor similar in relation to the mainstream parties. It is actually more common in the national media coverage to frame the DF as fairly- or very similar (30 per cent) than to frame them as fairly- or very different (20 per cent). This is no big difference compared to 2004 (when the figures were approximately reverse). In the Swedish case, the difference between 2004 and 2009 is quite significant. Whereas approximately half of the articles frame the SD as fairly- or very different from the mainstream parties, almost one quarter (23,1 per cent) of the articles frame the party as fairly- or very similar in relation to the mainstream parties.

In table 5 and 6 we test the journalistic tone used to describe the DF and the SD respectively. In 2004, more than 3 out of 4 articles use a fairly- or, more common, very negative tone towards the SD in the Swedish newspapers. Even in the genre of ordinary news articles, the journalists tend to apply labels such as “xenophobic” and/or “Extreme Right” to define the SD. In the Danish case, approximately 6 out of 10 articles are using a balanced/neutral tone to define and discuss the DF, whereas approximately 2 out of 10 are using a fairly- or very positive tone.

Table 5. Journalistic Tone in Sweden (N=28) and in Denmark (N=111), 2004.

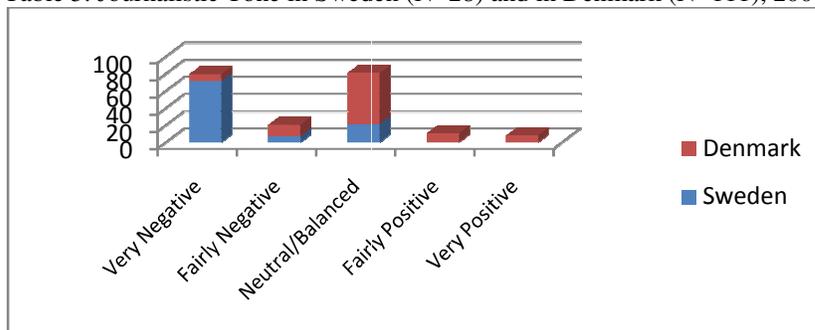
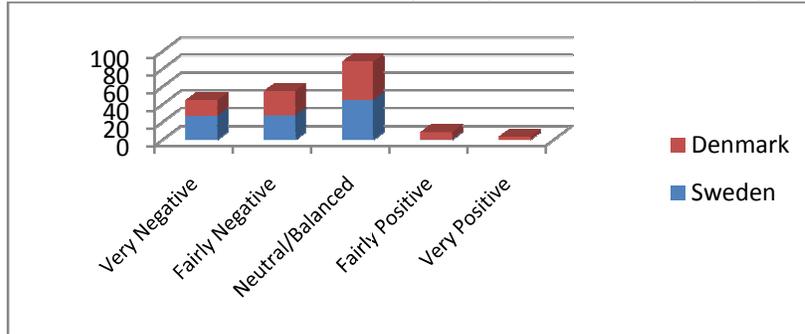


Table 6. Journalistic Tone in Sweden (N=192) and in Denmark (N=62), 2009.



In 2009 it is obvious that the journalistic tone towards the SD in Sweden has changed to become more balanced/neutral compared to 2004. In 2004 more than 7 out of 10 articles used a very negative tone towards the SD; in 2009 less than 2 out of 10 articles did. Yet there are hardly no articles (less than 1 per cent) that use a positive tone towards the SD - which is probably due to that very few SD supporters are given the opportunity to present their arguments unanswered – and more than half of the articles use a fairly- or very negative tone towards the SD. Given the more established position of the DF in the Danish political debate, it is perhaps less surprising that the Danish news material features more “positive” articles. In 2009 however there are less articles using a fairly- or very positive tone towards the party (1 out of 10) compared to 2004. It is also interesting to note that more articles are using a fairly- or very negative tone towards the DF (approximately 45 per cent) compared to 2004. Certainly the DF makes a prominent voice in the Danish debate, however controversial and often criticized. In Sweden, all newspapers (including the tabloids) are taking a firm stance against the SD. In Denmark, the media landscape is much more divided, not to say polarized. Table 7 and table 8 display the tone towards the SD and the DF used by the different newspapers.

Table 7. Newspaper and Journalistic Tone, Swedish Newspapers, 2004 and 2009.

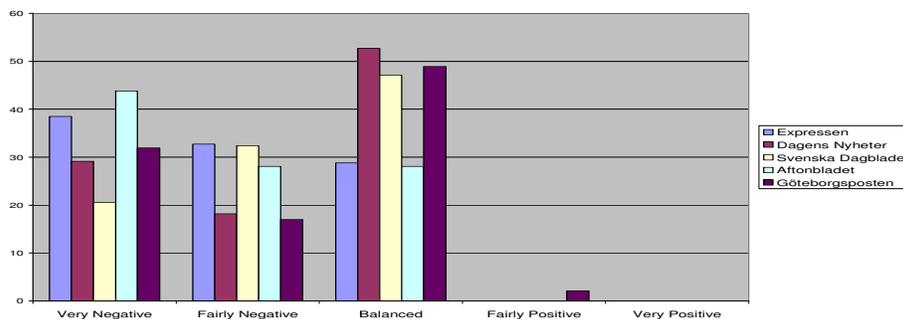
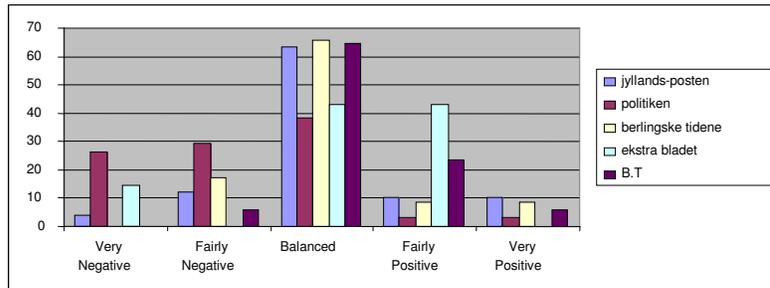


Table 8 Newspaper and Journalistic Tone, Danish Newspapers, 2004 and 2009.



These figures (table 7 and 8) show that in Sweden the tabloids, predominantly *Aftonbladet*, tend to be more negative towards the SD compared to the morning papers. A news article in *Aftonbladet* (26 May, 2009) is illustrative: 'Mardrömmen kan bli verklighet. Sverigedemokraterna ser ut att få en vågmästarroll efter nästa års val'. Also in "neutral" genres, SD is frequently described as an alarming threat, or at least portrayed in a negative way. We could also add that more than 3 out of 4 editorials use a very- or fairly negative tone towards the SD whereas approximately 6 out of 10 news articles use a balanced tone. In the Danish case, the media landscape is more fragmented. *Politiken* adopts a rather negative tone towards the DF (more than half of the articles are either fairly- or very negative), whereas *jyllands-posten* tend to be more positive than negative. *Berlingske Tidene* and *B.T* are somewhere in between whereas *Ekstra bladet* are more similar to *jyllands-posten* in this regard. More than 7 put of 10 news articles use a balanced tone towards the DF whereas the editorials and the chronicles, perhaps less surprisingly, utilize a wider spectrum of negative and positive remarks on the DF. In comparison with the Swedish case, only 4 out of 10 editorials use a very- or fairly negative tone towards the DF.

It is reason to assume that articles adopting a very negative tone towards the SD/the DF try to distance themselves and the mainstream parties from the RRP parties - to nurture the distinction between the good and the bad guys. We therefore test the relation between the degree of difference and journalistic tone. Is it the case that those using a very negative tone towards the SD and DF also consider the parties to be quite distinct from the mainstream parties?

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Table 9. Degree of difference and journalistic tone, number of articles (percent) in Sweden, 2004 and 2009.

Journalistic Tone/Degree of Difference	Very Similar/Fairly Similar	Neutral/Balanced	Very different/Fairly Different	Total
Very Negative/Fairly Negative	18 (62,1)	13 (44, 8)	55 (83,3)	86
Balanced/Neutral	11 (37,9)	16 (55,2)	11 (16, 7)	38
Total	29 (100)	29 (100)	66 (100)	124

Table 10. Degree of difference and journalistic tone, number of articles (percent) in Denmark, 2004 and 2009.

Journalistic Tone/Degree of Difference	Very Similar/Fairly Similar	Neutral/Balanced	Very Different/Fairly Different	Total
Very Negative/Fairly Negative	14 (46,7)	10 (15,6)	8 (17,8)	32
Balanced/Neutral	16 (53,3)	48 (75)	17 (37,8)	81
Fairly Positive/Very Positive	0 (0)	6 (9,4)	20 (44,4)	26
Total	30 (100)	64 (100)	45 (100)	129

The results indicate that articles framing the SD as different also to a great extent (83, 3 per cent) use a fairly negative/very negative tone towards the SD. But we also note that articles framing the SD as similar to the other parties to some extent also frame the SD in more negative than positive wording (62, 1 per cent). In the first case, the SD is on an aggregated level framed more or less as an anomaly or a threat that risk to destabilize mainstream politics. The problem is spelled the SD and what the party is said to represent. The remedy to this challenge is that the mainstream parties should do everything in its power to debar the party from formal influence. In the second case, the SD is on an aggregated level framed as a symptom of a much wider problem; i.e., the mainstream parties copy SD politics and views. The problem is rather the growing acceptance of nativist politics than the party in its own right. An editorial in *Expressen* (8 May, 2009) by Ann-Charlotte Martéus is illustrative of the first position, though she is also concerned about the compromising forces in the mainstream parties:

Sverigedemokraterna drivs av två krafter: främlingshat och makthunger. Ingenting annat. Resten är tomhet, kamouflerad med sentimental nationalromantik. Det går inte att kompromissa med den häxbrygden. Det går inte och man får inte. Det enda anständiga är att vara en motkraft

Yet other voices tend to stress similarities between the SD and the mainstream parties, such as Isodel Hadley-Kamptz who (*Expressen* 13 June 2009, chronicle) argues that: "De etablerade partierna delar ju i grunden SD-idén att Sverige var bättre förr, vilket

handikappar dem i alla diskussioner”. Similarly, the scholar Carl-Johan Gardell (*Svenska Dagbladet* 14 September 2009) claim:

Efter en svacka under 90-talet, då folkhemmet förknippades med maktberusade sociala ingenjörer som ville lägga livet tillrätta för medborgarna, tycks den klassiska svenska modellen numera ha antagit formen av ett hotat paradiset som samtliga politiska partier vill slå vakt om och rädda för framtiden

In the Danish news reporting, those articles that frame the DF as different only to a low degree employ a negative tone towards the party (17, 8 per cent). Conversely, 46,7 per cent of the articles that posit the DF as similar employ a negative tone towards the party and among those that posit the DF as different, 44,4 per cent of the articles use a fairly- or very positive tone towards the party. The results show that articles framing the DF as similar to the established parties also tend to use a negative tone towards the DF. We can understand this in the light of the DF's role as government supportive party, which implies that negative criticism of the DF sometimes also is an explicit criticism of the governmental politics:

Nej, vi er mange, der ikke på nogen som helst måde kan identificere os med den uhyrlige parodi på en nation, som DF og regeringen har gjort Danmark til. Der findes en kæmpe gruppe danskere, som føler en stor frustration over at være statsborgere i et land, der har gjort en uværdig behandling af udlændinge til sit kendetegn (*Information*, 7 September 2008).

Articles that frame the DF as fairly or very different, contrary to what we expected, tend to instead use a positive tone towards the DF. This result indicates that the DF, despite its strong position in domestic politics, is presented as a radical and yet invigorating political alternative in Denmark. No doubt, the DF feeds on that image. In a response to an appeal to participate in the celebration of Ramadan at Christiansborg¹⁰, the party makes a clear statement (*JP*, 15 September 2009)

... all members of the Parliament have received a written invitation, but none from the DF has accepted it. And that is no coincidence, explains the party's spokesperson on social affairs, Marin Henriksen. He says: 'It is absolutely crazy, and one should ask oneself, whether this is not an expression of misperceived integration, when you use the facilities of Christiansborg to mark a Muslim religious celebration

Dominant Frames

So far we have verified the proposition that the Swedish newspapers use a more negative tone towards the SD in Sweden compared to the Danish media's framing of the DF. We

¹⁰ Christiansborg is a castle in Copenhagen that also hosts the Danish parliament among other important political institutions.

also notice a difference in time in the sense that the Swedish newspapers tend to apply a more balanced/neutral tone when they define and discuss the SD in 2009 compared to 2004. However, we are yet to explore the dominant meanings in the communicative texts. We will do so by identifying different frames of interpretation in the newspapers. We do not by any means suggest that the frames are absolutes. They co-exist and are unfolded or compressed to different degrees, often in the very same statement. Nevertheless, the separation of frames helps us to produce a better sense of which frames are in play, which ones that are weak and strong.

This second section is divided in three parts. The first part concerns different frames answering the question: what is *the nature of the beast*? Is it the case that the SD/the DF is defined as an anomaly in contemporary Swedish Politics/Danish Politics or is it the case that these RRP parties are defined and recognized as regular/normal/normalized political adversaries? Who is, really, the beast that triggers mutual dislike and moral judgments among the mainstream actors?

The second part concerns different frames answering the question: *how to kill the beast*? If recognized as a problem, what is then the cure/solution to the RRP parties' progress in Sweden and Denmark? In this regard, the mainstream political actors use different strategies to either ban or copying the RRP policies. And much debate is about the limits of the freedom speech axiom. The third part concerns different frames answering the question: *why is the beast so attractive*? This section involves frames that define and discuss what constitutes a fertile soil for the further progression (and possible decline) of the RRP parties in Sweden and Denmark.

The nature of the Beast: Sweden.

In 2004 the public debate in Sweden demonstrated unanimous framing of the SD as the unwelcomed Beast, since then the debate climate has changed. One strong frame that persists in the media coverage is that the SD represents a *devil in disguise*. Underneath the polished facade they are still the same xenophobic movement; according to an editorial in *Expressen* (8 April 2009): "För visst rycker det fortfarande lite i den sverigedemokratiska högerarmen, även om den numera är inpackad i en Dressmankavaj i stället för en armbindel". In this frame, the SD ambition to moderate their image is

discredited. A second equally strong frame suggests, though, that the SD ideological message is embedded in a deep rooted nationalist tradition of protecting the People's Home against nonnative elements; hence, a party that attracts discontent Social Democrats that are concerned about the deterioration of the Welfare State. They feed on a perception that "we" (as in "we", the native Swedes) were better off before. Some commentators, such as Dilsa Demirback-Stern in *Expressen* (7 August 2008, cultural chronicle) even suggests that: "Om det inte vore för invandrarfientligheten skulle deras partiprogram kunna vara vilket illa hopkommet idékollage i folkhemsanda som helst, avsett att illustrera välfärdsstatens förträfflighet." In this frame, the SD are *radical (some would say extreme) nationalists*.

A third frame, finally, to define the nature of the SD locates the party closer to the bourgeoisie camp. In a debate article (*Dagens Nyheter* 2009-09-17), the Party President of the Christian Democrats (KD), Göran Hägglund, fabricates the populist divide between the people and the elite, thereby suggesting that he represents the reality people who are constantly being sidestepped by a new radical elite that refuse to accommodate the views and interests of the 'ordinary men'. This article with its explicit populist appeal provoked several critical comments, an editorial in *Expressen* (18 September 2009) says:

Vakna, Göran, du sitter i regeringen! Du kan inte ge dig på "eliten" ur ett underifrånperspektiv. Du är socialminister, grabben. Du skriver propositioner som blir lagar som bestämmer vad "vanligt folk" ska göra. Du är en del av eliten, Göran Hägglund. Och du är uppenbarligen villig att spela på vilka vulgärpopulistiska strängar som helst för att behålla din makt.

In another editorial in *Expressen* (8 July 2009) it is suggested that Hägglund's populist rhetoric about the need to confront real problems instead of discussing gender issues, queer theories or deconstructing societal norms and beliefs is very similar to the SD. The SD radicalizes populist demands of social cohesion articulated also by the mainstream parties; hence, this frame suggests that the SD are *radical populists*, though not extremists. To sum up, the SD is defined as the beast in Swedish politics. However, some commentators warn that this Beast is about to transform into a Trojan Horse in Swedish politics, just like the DF in Denmark:

De stora danska partierna sa länge att de vägrade samarbeta med Dansk Folkeparti. Precis som alla svenska riksdagspartier säger nu ... Först tog den danska högern, och så småningom även vänstern, efter den främlingsfientliga retoriken. [...] Det dröjde inte många år. Nu är de flesta partier hårda kritiker av invandringen (*Aftonbladet* 31 August 2009).

The nature of the Beast: Denmark

In Denmark, the nature of the Beast is ambivalent. One frame in the Danish news reporting suggests that the DF, rather than a Beast, is a *political agonist*. Voters attracted to the DF may be former voters for other parties and now these parties seek to lure voters back into the fold through political appeals. Some members of the Conservative party unite in an informal network to distance their party from the DF. Peter Norsk, member of the party board, maintains that: "vi ikke længere skal konkurrere med Dansk Folkeparti om at rakke mest ned på muslimer" (REF).

Rhetoric that begins with a direct criticism of DF often ends up sharing views and policies, though. One example is the New Alliance, who broke out of the Social Liberals (*Det Radikale Venstre*) with an enough-is-enough agenda (nok-er-nok) referring to the lack of direct criticism and resistance of the Danish People's Party's anti-immigrant rhetoric. The party was established 7 May 2007 attracted an overwhelming 25 % in the polls suggesting an emerging right wing dissatisfaction with the Danish People's Party. Due to lack of policy and some scandals the party gained only a few seats and soon disappeared. Its leader – who originally claimed – that the party was established as a guarantee of a resistance to the DF joined the Conservatives within two years. In his first proposal as the party's new spokesperson on integration was that Burkas should be forbidden in the public (including sidewalks and private domains) (REFS) showed that his policy was not unlike that of the Danish People's Party.

While all Danish parties worship/subscribe to the values of social cohesion and relative intra-cultural solidarity (hence, homogeneity), the DF goes further. The following quote illustrate how far the party is willing to let the state intervene in the everyday life of citizens with social evaluations of right, wrong and natural and the production of fear.¹¹

Dansk Folkeparti kræver, at daginstitutionerne igen begynder at servere leverpostej, frikadeller og medisterpølse for børnene. Mikkel Dencker, der både er medlem af Folketinget og byrådsmedlem i Hvidovre Kommune, har tidligere foreslået en minimumskvote på mindst 20 procent svinekød på al den mad, der serveres i landets daginstitutioner."Helt at fjerne svinekød er et direkte knæfald for en anden kultur, nemlig den muslimske, siger han til Børn & Unge. (*Avisen*, 12 January 2010).

Mainstream actors produce counter frames that constructs the DF through its extreme nature, thus a second frame suggests that the DF are *Extreme Nationalists*. The former

¹¹ This reference to the everyday food consumption clearly relates to Billig's idea (1995) that the reproduction of nationalism takes on a banal, but not necessarily a benign form.

party leader of the Social Democratic Party, Mogens Lykketoft's op-ed piece is illustrative (*Information* 19 February 2009):

Forpligtelsen til at forsikre de kloge 'nok-er-nok'-vælgere om, at de trygt kan stemme på os. Vi vil hverken i det store eller det små trækkes rundt ved næsen af Dansk Folkeparti og alle de fordomme og aggressioner, de slæber med sig. Vi vil sætte os i spidsen for en regering, der arbejder effektivt for respektfuld integration af nye danskere. Vi vil være garantien for, at Pia Kjærsgaard bliver ladt tilbage alene og sur i udkanten af dansk politik - og med kun meget sjældne invitationer til at komme i tv. Vi vil sørge for, at I bliver fri for at se så meget til Søren Espersen, Martin Henriksen, Peter Skaarup og Thulesen Dahl. Vi vil meget aktivt arbejde for at få skubbet Langballe og Krarup ud af debatten i midten af dansk politik - og tilbage i det ekstremistiske hjørne, hvor de altid rettelig har hørt til.

A third frame, *the beast is Islam* is arguably the most dominant frame in Denmark, though. Even though the leader of DF talks about immigrants, she most often use it interchangeable with Muslim. In somewhat milder version, though, we recognize that also the mainstream actors adopt a similar negative tone towards Islam, which tends to be repeatedly used synonymously with Fundamentalism. The Minister for Culture Brian Mikkelsen, representing the Conservative People's Party, has for instance again and again linked the cultural canons to the cultural war debate on values referred to above. In his speech at the annual meeting in September 2005, he argued that both projects serve in the shared fight against Muslims fundamentalists. In fact: "contemporary Muslim culture is evolving in Denmark with Middle Age norms and anti-democratic ways of thinking. This is "the new front of the culture war" (Mikkelsen in Larsen & Seidenfaden 2006:18).

The nature of the beast in Denmark makes up two weak frames and a strong one. DF is not identified as radically different in Denmark as it is in Sweden. It is spoken of as a political opponent and party of extremist views, particularly its *menneskesyn*. The beast is not the party, but Islam. Of course there are those in Sweden that articulate a similar message, but these are – in general - articulated from a marginal position; such as the SD representatives themselves. Conversely, in Denmark also actors talking from a legitimate and a more privileged position communicate a similar message. Lene Espersen (*Ekstrabladet* 16 August, 2009) is the deputy Prime Minister from the Conservative Party and is now also Foreign Minister.

Den muslimske trussel mod vores samfund overgår klimatprobleme /.../ Hvis du går rundt og tror, at den største trussel mot din existens er miljøet, der truer med at oversvømme dit liv de kommende årtier, kan du godt tro om igen. Den største trussel mod Danmark og de danske værdier er muslimsk.

In this frame, the beast is the incompatible muslims, and more broadly non-western migrants. They are to be controlled; their number limited and the number of new migrants coming in should be carefully monitored. The beast is “the others”, those who are also the object of restrictive policies.

How to kill the Beast: Sweden.

The SD is widely recognized as a problem in the public debate in Sweden. Political groups of various kinds mobilize their efforts to obstruct the SD from gaining seats in the national parliament. In 2004 this was not much of an issue as they were not yet recognized a potent threat. However in 2009, it could be argued that the question of how to confront the SD became a political issue in its own right. There are those who champion freedom of speech to engage in *open dialogue* with the party whereas e.g. Lena Andersson, instead suggest in a column (*Dagens Nyheter* 17 September 2009, editorial pages) that: “Att ta av det berömda locket och låta hatet koka över leder bara till mer förakt och förråelse, visar det danska exemplet. Verklighet skapas av ord...”. In a survey to the Swedish members of the national parliament (MEP), only three percent preferred to meet the SD with *silence* whereas a majority of 59 percent wanted instead to engage in open debates with the SD (*Göteborgs-Posten* 17 August 2009). Evidently, there are two distinct frames on how to kill the beast; with *silence* or with *open dialogue*. However, the SD Press secretary Jens Leandersson (*Göteborgs-Posten* 17 August 2009, news article), gives his view on what the open dialogue approach has implied in practice: ”Det är som att alla pratar om jultomten men ingen egentligen har sett honom. Partierna säger att man vill ta debatten för att det är svaret man förväntas ge men sedan händer ingenting”.

Another frame on how to kill the beast is the *strategy of taming*. If the mainstream parties also recognize the “problems” with integration and immigration, discontent voters may yet again consider the mainstream party to be an alternative in the forthcoming elections. The conservative party, Moderaterna, let a special committee lay out the contours for a new immigration policy. In their report, the committee chose to ”se sanningen i vitögat” and they recommend a “nykter syn på den mångkulturella verkligheten”. Before, the integration politics has shifted from ”en närmast assimilerande politik till ett missriktat omhändertagande” (De nya moderaterna 2009: 6; see further

Hellström 2010). This frame suggests that "we" (as in "we" the mainstream actors") must seriously consider the "real" problems with the reverse side of integration, otherwise voters may turn to the SD. If the Beast cannot easily be demolished, when this frame suggests instead transforming the Beast into a pet. In Denmark, the strategy of taming has been used for quite some time.

How to kill the Beast: Denmark.

Voters from the Social Democratic Party, the Socialistic People's Party and the Red-Green Alliance lost a substantial number of voters to the Danish People's Party in the 1998 and 2001 parliamentary elections. These parties in particular have ever since tried to recapture the voters. There is general agreement that if the parties use words such as nationalism and racism, criticism easily backfires and more voters risk joining the DF, since they fear a new tolerance of non-Western migrants. If the beast then is seen as being Islam and Islamism the way to combat them, this frame suggests, is through restrictive policy and zero-tolerance practice.

It is not only the government parties that support the DF banning on the Muslims. Also the Social Democrats support new legislation on e.g. against wearing of Burka in public places:

Vi kan ikke forbyde, hvad folk render rundt i derhjemme. Der kan man være nøgen eller gå i burka. Men Socialdemokratiet er med på et forbud, der gælder, så snart man bevæger sig ud af gadedøren, siger politisk ordfører Henrik Sass-Larsen (*Ekstra Bladet* 17 August 2009).

For its part the DF is supporting the government because they will carry out the restrictive politics:

Hvis ikke regeringen garanterer en stram udlændingepolitik, så truer DF med at afbryde det tætte samarbejde med regeringen. Den stramme udlændingepolitik er for os årsagen til, at vi støtter Anders Fogh Rasmussens regering. Der er ikke principielt andre årsager til det, siger DF's udenrigsordfører, Søren Espersen, til Ritzau (*Danish Radio* 22 July 2008)

The most dominant frame on how to deal with the "first beast", DF, is through *verbal resistance*, and to deal with the "second beast", here Islam and non-Western migrants, is to suggest and support similar restrictive migration policies. In the fear of losing votes, few dare to question these policies. It also seems to be a consensual agreement on the need to support and sustain national values, the national cultural canon, and citizenship testing and so on.

Why the Beast is so attractive: Sweden and Denmark.

The bestiality of the Beast is attractive in a political landscape where the differences between right and left seem to vaporize (see also Mouffe 2005). To depict something (or someone) a Beast is a means to augment moral values in the field of politics. The Beast is attractive in the eyes of the political antagonists because it represents the moral evil that “we” (as in “we, members of the mainstream parties) condemn.¹² Following Richard Kearney (2002: 121): ‘What monsters reveal (*monstrare*) to us is nothing less than our craving to put a face on phobia’. The obvious side-effect is that the underdog, interpreted as a Beast, can use the same moral arguments to blame the elite for not listening to the views and the needs of the domestic citizens that they are appointed to represent. The RRP parties thus aspire to be the only political movement that challenges the consensual views of the political establishment, which they consider to be not only politically naïve, but also morally wrong since they distance themselves from the people on the ground (See further Hellström 2005). In this frame the attraction of the Beast lies in the incapacity of existing liberal democratic regimes to deal with politically incorrect views. This is the *taboo frame*, which is equally strong in Sweden and in Denmark. Nathan Schachar writes in a chronicle (*Dagens Nyheter* 25 September 2009):

Det farligaste är inte misslyckanden och svårigheter i samband med invandringen, utan känslan av att politikerna över huvudet på väljarna avfört ämnet från dagordningen och tabubelagt det. I Österrike, vars invandrare är mindre marginaliserade än i Sverige, är det detta mer än några verkliga katastrofer, som banat väg för FPÖ.

We have learned from the cartoon conflict about the sacred nature of freedom of speech using among journalists and politicians, but we also learned that freedom of speech was a lever for anti-Islamic policy and practice far from the founding fathers original vision of using freedom of speech to protect vulnerable minorities against the power-holders such as the state and the press (Hervik 2010; Bjerre 2009). Today this use of the notion of free speech goes hand in hand with the construct of a political correct taboo according to which the “truth” is being hidden from the Danish politicians. Appeals during the

¹² Considering the public debate around *Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ) and its late leader Jörg Haider in Austria after that the party took seat in the national parliament in February 2000, Slavoj Žižek (2000) said that finally the mainstream parties in Europe, and in particular in Austria, had found someone (Haider) to mutually hate.

Muhammad cartoon conflicts to social responsibility and a more lenient treatment of Muslim and other migrants are being met with accusations about covering up the true nature and danger of Muslim presence in the country.

In a recent course for Scandinavian journalists this conflict appeared as one between Danish and Swedish news journalists. While the Danish journalists wanted to indiscriminately extremists statement to celebrate freedom of speech, the Swedish counterparts insisted on their rights and professional duty to reject anti-democratic rhetoric for the sake of preserving democracy and carrying out freedom of speech with a social responsibility.

The Taboo frame is adjacent to another common frame in the public date. This frame suggests that the SD gains electoral ground because the electorate is *afraid* and *unsecure* about what is going on around them. The journalist Lars Åberg writes in a debating article (*Göteborgs-Posten* 23 August 2009):

Ur viljan att hjälpa och stötta utan att stöta sig med någon har det uppstått en politiserad och moraliserande osäkerhetskultur, som lett till att man utbildar offentliganställda i antidiskriminering och suckar över Sverigedemokraterna i stället för att tackla de förhållanden som är deras jordmån.

In this frame, the SD progress in Sweden is understandable due to the current upheavals in the suburbs, which is directly or indirectly connected to the “new multi-cultural” Sweden that some native born Swedes are said to be afraid of. The message is, then, that these issues need to be recognized as “real” problems. Our quantitative measurements indicate that to a great extent people are framed as either fairly or very insecure/afraid (93.5 percent in Sweden and in Denmark 95.1 percent).

A final, less strong, frame concerns the idea that the Beast does not only feed on people’s fears, but also on a growing feeling of *resentment and indifference*. In this case, however, many commentators blame the mainstream parties for nourishing these feelings. And our quantitative measurement does not give unanimous support for the claim that the people are perceives as indifferent to politics¹³ it is instead the lack of political visions to spur the people’s imaginations that is considered the main problem, Niklas Ekdal says (*Dagens Nyheter* 13 September 2009, chronicle):

¹³ Less than fifty percent of the articles alluded to the view that the people are very or fairly indifferent to politics in Sweden and in Denmark three quarter of the article depicted the Danes as either fairly-, or very interested in politics.

Feeding the Beast: Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and Denmark.

Sverigedemokraternas framgångar är ett tecken på att vi har gett upp, att ingen egentligen förväntar sig att det ska bli bättre, utan att allting nu är ett nollsummespel om en krympande välfärdskaka där det ena gänget gökungar står mot det andra

Furthermore, the rise of the Beast is not considered a problem associated with growing feelings of xenophobia among the Swedish electorate, recent polls actually indicate that Swedes are more pro immigration today compared to before the general elections in 2006 when the SD became an issue of public controversy (See further Demker 2009). Our quantitative analysis verifies this proposition.¹⁴ In other words, the attraction of the Beast cannot be explained by reference to anti-immigration attitudes among the population. However, the framing of the public opinion as unsecure and afraid prevail. In the news reporting this perception is also framed as a determinant factor for the progress of the DF and the SD. This is nothing new and certainly not a unique feature in Scandinavian politics. In the process of consolidating common asylum and immigration policies liable to all of the EU members states, developed in The Tampere Milestones 1999-2004; The Hague Programme 2004-2009 and now also the Stockholm Programme 2009-, the European Union Commission sets the agenda for combining “the European ideals of solidarity and hospitality” with enhanced efforts to combat e.g. illegal immigration; hence, the dual strategy of boosting belong and securitize migration (see further Hellström 2008). Romano Prodi, who was then President of the Commission, epitomizes this in a speech in Milan on 15 January 2002: “Recently the issue of security has been increasingly linked to immigration. I am not convinced that the two should be linked, but it would be dangerous to ignore people’s real fears”. The thrust of the speech is that the EU ought to tighten up its control on people, since “people’s real fears” need to be accommodated. However, this statement inevitably also risks fuelling perceptions that it is the immigrants who are the problem (Hellström 2008: 40).

In 2009 Anders Fogh Rasmussen stepped down as Prime Minister in Denmark leaving the position to the unproven Lars Løkke Rasmussen. The Socialist People’s Party had successfully carried out ever more restrictive measures against migrants and migration policy, which had given them a huge boost at the polls. With this boost and the weaker new prime minister, the opposition Social Democrats and Socialist People’s Party

¹⁴ The results from the Swedish and the Danish case both indicate that people are neither particularly pro immigration nor anti-immigration, based on the news reporting.

began to sense that they could possibly be forming the next government together. That is what makes the beast, here Islam, attractive. This development goes hand in hand with the politics of fear, which began in the late 90's and gained more intensity following 9/11. Although the fear has become more and more real, it is important to stress, as Hervik has shown elsewhere (1999, 2010) that fear and insecurity is the long-term result of the contentious effort of political and media entrepreneurs. Today, there is a widespread *popular anti-Islamic sentiment towards Islamic culture in Denmark*, which is the dominant frame revealing the attractiveness of this beast.

Final Reflections

In this article we have shown how the journalistic tone in the Danish newspapers towards the DF in Denmark differs from journalistic tone in the Swedish newspapers towards the SD. The DF might be a foe in Danish politics, but the SD is still the Beast in Swedish politics. The dominant frames in the Swedish newspapers indicate that we (as in “we, the good guys” need to do everything to fight back the Beast from entering the Parliament. Conversely, the mainstream parties in Denmark, from both right and left, continue to pet the DF, though invoking verbal resistance to the DF as *extreme nationalists*. The Beast that summons the morally “good ones” in Danish politics is more and more projected into the Islam community in Denmark which put to risk social cohesion in this context. Mainstream actors in both Sweden and in Denmark tend to justify the use of nativist rhetoric to avoid losing votes to the RRP parties and an increased support for nativist policies in general. However our study suggests instead that the further acceptance of nativist rhetoric feeds the Beast and helps it to grow stronger.

The Beast thus represents some archaic force that challenges the stability of representative politics that for some voters is too technocratic, and perhaps also too dull. According to Chantal Mouffe, the RRP parties – as representing this archaic force – is the only movement challenging the status quo (Mouffe 2005: chapter 4). Some five years after that Mouffe let publish her book *On the Political* the Extreme Right Parties are no longer referred to as Extreme, but *radical populists*. And we have also seen how RRP parties in e.g. Denmark occupy an established, yet controversial position in domestic politics. And the language of fears, commonly invoked in the DF rhetoric is by now

common goods in the news reporting repertoire. One explanation why this development has gone further in Denmark is that also *legitimate actors* in the public debate have taken up the language of the DF. This is not the case in Sweden, at least not up to the same extent.

The nature of the Beast has shifted, from the evil extremist on the right side of the political spectrum to an emphasis on social cohesion, cultural congruence and a pre-occupation with how people migrating from Non-Western countries may jeopardize community stability. If this perception gains further ground also in Sweden, the SD may cease being the Beast after the national elections in 2010. The Beast, understood as the internalized threat that put to risk societal cohesion and thereby also foster in-group solidarity has two different faces in Denmark and in Sweden. In Denmark, non-western migrants are framed as some kind of existential threat that endangers the survival of the national community (see further Huysmans 2001), which enables the “good guys” to mobilize against the morally evil. Of course this also happens in Sweden; however the SD yet represents the innate threat that endangers the endemic perception of Sweden as tolerant, non-xenophobic political community. One could also say that we are confronted with a dual-faced Beast that feeds on perceptions of the people as ultimately afraid of what is not recognized as native goods.

Feeding the Beast: Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and Denmark.

Appendix 1. Media coverage of Sverigedemokraterna (SD) in Mediearkivet (2010) from 1997 to 2009. The Social Democrats (S) and the Christian Democrats (KD) are included for the sake of comparability.

