
CHAPTER 1

# Racialization in the Nordic Countries: An Introduction

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The authors of this book address the issues of racism and related phenomena in the Nordic countries and invest a comprehensive effort to dig deep into the cumulated academic experiences and the analytic approaches in order to come to grips with the discrimination, racialization, color racism,[1] Islamophobia, anti-racism, and inclusion and exclusion of especially so-called non-Western minorities in the Nordic countries. In a heavily mediatized society, they seek, in particular, to single out critical media events that are representative for how processes of racialization take place in an environment dominated by commercial interests, anti-migrant and anti-Muslim narratives and sentiments, and a surprising lack of research-based knowledge of racism and racialization. Or, these events are sought out to show "turns", "transformations", and furthering of inequalities along

[1] I use this term as a shorthand for the dominance of racism against people of color in research and everyday conversations, acknowledging that there are other broad categories and forms of racism, and that "race" and "color" legally are not identical.

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racial lines through strong emotional and affective engagements in debates. Most generally, the volume asks to what extent racism in the Nordic countries has been overcome long ago, or are we witnessing new kinds and more subtle forms of racialized practices?

## Nordic Racialization

Researchers in the Nordic countries agree that the discrimination of visibly different minorities has become subtler in the last 20 years, which continues to have serious consequences for many of these minorities as well as contributing to a more and more polarized society. In the Danish context, white Danes make approximately double the income of non-white Danes. Their employment rates are significantly lower, while many decide to stay outside the job market in low-income, private-sector jobs, with incomes far below the minimum wage. Non-Danish immigrants and Danes with ethnic minority backgrounds from other countries are poorly represented in higher institutions of learning as well as in leading positions. In addition, they are unequally divided in residential areas. The list goes on to account for representatives in school boards, residential bodies, and ownership of residential units. While there are certainly exceptions, the averaging gives a murky image of the situation; for people of color and of East European origin in Denmark, there is a patterned attempt both privately and officially to explain away any issue of discrimination. This is most notably in response to reports and research on mediated events, everyday conversations, and in in-depth interviews as well as a habitual whiteness that systematically denies minorities' experiences of discrimination.

Issues of racism have attracted researchers from anthropology, media studies, gender studies, and sociology, to examine critical media events that interrupt people's routine and monopolize the media platform (Hebb & Couldry, 2013). Sometimes these events are pseudo-events, sometimes they occur outside the media, but most often they become news as journalistic social constructions following the genre, jargon, and epistemology of news journalism. These particular events convey racializing points and embody unsaid forms of racialization. They are practices of communication often with hidden and subtle practices of racism and racialization built in—and increase—polarization of society and, as the term "critical" suggests, threaten to cause serious harm to people implicated in the event. Media players, whether authors, commentators, or sources, use ideas of "cultural incompatibility", unwanted presence, fixed identities, racial-cultural logic

of belonging, anti-intellectualism, anti-feminism, and intense adverse criticism. These ideas again rest comfortably on morality as the basis for understanding "difference" in the 2000s, which creates an environment where violence, confrontation, austerity measures, and "zero-tolerance" are the chosen forms of expression as the possibility of dialogue has been surpassed. The dominance of moralism and news media's reliance on stories about conflict, drama, violence, and moral panic bring out tensions between legal frameworks, research-based findings, and moral arguments and common sense, populist reasoning that calls for changes in legal conventions and more direct forms of democracy sometimes also referred to as mob rule or street democracy.

The authors of this book are researchers concerned with what is happening in the Nordic countries. Most of them have finalized their dissertations on racism, racialization, and anti-racism within the last decade. Most of them are engaged in large research projects directly relevant to the book's topic. They are writing contributions to this book from within their own research expertise, half also with experiences as racialized minorities. None of the authors entertain fantasies about a shared Nordic cultural and political community but are well versed in intra- and inter-Nordic similarities and differences. Authors have sought to avoid the traps of methodological nationalism, which would risk reducing different case studies to expressions of historical-cultural differences or policy differences between the countries. The truth is that variations and diversity do not follow frozen national borders but are often regional as well as showing tremendous mutual borrowing and political distancing from events debated in other Nordic countries. This is, of course, not the same thing as saying that histories and country differences are not a factor to account for, but it is saying we should be careful not to reduce findings to be the outcome of national differences. There is a clear need of studies that goes beyond an Anglo-Saxon tradition, and beyond Eurocentrism (I will come back to further ahead), and in that regard chapters contribute to developing analyses of racism that is grounded in the Nordic countries with studies and theorizing that take place in these countries.

Much of the contemporary interests in racialization come via dialogue with a broad version of critical race theory, post-colonial and de-coloniality studies, general interest in colonial histories, and, perhaps more importantly, as academic responses to issues and phenomenon that go on in society. Some of these researchers derive their interest and anti-racism efforts from their own recurrent experiences of denial and sharing vicariously the

experiences of others. Regardless if they experience discrimination themselves or from others, the fact is that minorities' experiences of racial discrimination increased drastically back in the 1990s, not least among Somalis in Denmark (Møller & Togeby, 1999).

Authors use a variety of means and methods to analyze the media events. Since all of the contributors have done substantial primary research in this area or are currently engaged in larger projects, they do not fall back on a single, mechanically executed method but invest more creatively and broadly in the analyses. They use ethnographic methods, discourse analysis of political discourse, and different forms of media analysis.

While authors of this book depart from grounded studies, whether face-to-face interactions, including in-depth interviewing, sustained social interaction, shorter interviews with authors of texts, commentators, or text analysis, they recognize how the media shapes racialized thinking; promotes moral panic, moral outrage; and spurs action and policies. They equally share the insight, a classic in traditional ethnographic interviews, that analytical terms should not be forced upon interviewees risking contamination of the material (Carsten, 1995).

Two decades ago Nordic researchers documented that since indigenous citizens had little social interaction in their everyday lives with people of immigrant background, but still held strong stereotypes and distorted views of refugees and migrants, they relied almost exclusively on the news and popular media for their knowledge and attitudes (Gaasholt & Togeby, 1995; Hervik, 1999a). Today, there is an "inescapable presence of media as a contemporary cultural force engaged with the mediation of hegemonic forms and resistance to them; the growth and transnational circulation of public culture; the creation of national and activists social imaginaries, ..." (Ginsburg, 2005, pp. 21–22). This volume is informed by the premise that most of what people generally know today about other migrants and refugees derive from this presence of social media, traditional news media, and popular media. First, the media amplifies racialization and extends it in space and time. Second, the media frames and re-frames racialization and thereby becomes a performative agent of racialization. Third, the media co-constructs racialization due to the inseparable institutions of media and politics (Hjarvard, Mortensen, & Eskjær, 2014) most clearly seen in political spin communication. This book therefore focuses primarily on the media and media analysis. We refer to other works for analyzing comparative intra-Nordic complexities of policy making that may work to reflect as

well as amplify racialization in the Nordic countries (see, for instance, Brochmann & Hagelund, 2012; Hansen & Wæver, 2002).

All authors are fully aware that using terms such as racism carries the risk of enhancing or transforming forms of asymmetric relations phenomena that were not of racist content to begin with. Authors ask how news coverage and public media debates serve to promote the politics of fear, securitization of minorities, racialization of minorities, and the threat of incompatible difference. Moreover, authors set out to analyze the reactions to the content and circulation of anti-racist claims.

The authors also insist on the importance of larger forces in the structural conditions and circumstances within the grounded studies. The studies are contemporary media debates and authors seek answers within the "horizon of history" (Gadamer, 2003), yet they recognize how racial issues appear from the level where the brown child tells her mother, "I don't want to be brown anymore", to mega-narratives of clashes of civilizations. Authors know and agree that the micro-level analysis must be seen as integral to larger processes of change. They all do include the broader scope, albeit to varying degrees.

## Global Populism and Inequality

From the contemporary perspective on racial and national inequality, I would argue, however simplistically it may be, that there are at least five central integral forces that come out of the engine room to create and recreate this nexus of racialized inferiorization. The *first* force comes from experiences of existing inequality and the endeavor to overcome it or efforts of increasing it. This comprises everything from original dispossession of land and labor (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013; Harvey, 2003) to constructions of the precariat (Standing, 2014). Often overlooked by scholars, and certainly not a welcome fact in political circles, is that, at a deeper level, migration is predominantly caused by inequality, or the experience of inequality, in any of its many forms and with strong, often desperate, investment into overcoming it (Glick-Schiller, 2014). A *second* force can be approached as "white" privilege, where entitlement racism ("white is right") is one articulation of it; even if the white privilege dominates, there are other ones, hence the inverted commas. One of the most difficult issues with the term white is that it is often taken for its "face value" as actual skin color, while racism researchers insist it is a social construction or a metaphor for a privilege that comes with people who are

predominantly white (see Meer, this volume). Yet, the terms brown and black are also racial categories and not "natural" categories. To illustrate, we could ask, if Italian explorer Christopher Columbus was white or brown? Did the perception of his "whiteness" or "brownness" change over time? And are Italians and Spanish people are predominantly white or brown today? Where? The implication of each answer explodes from 1492 (I shall return to that further ahead). The literature on racism is dominated with color racism, which leads to an almost exclusive focus on "white" privilege and, not yet, on other racialized privileging with "white" being one particular, and perhaps, generic expression of racial privilege. A *third* force lies within nationalism and the enforcement of the nation-state, and everything that comes with it. Nationalism is one "context" that gives racism meaning (Lentin, 2008) and is often regarded as an ultimate political weapon of recruitment onto which people are expected to be willing to forsake their families and die for the nation's protection whether within the borders or in faraway places. Nationalism comes with the imagination of homogeneity and therefore with a strong motivational force to decide who does not belong and should not have the same equal footing as the original indigenous population. The *fourth* central force that contributes to racialized inferiorization could have any number of headings, but the ideas of accumulation of capital, excessive capital, creed for wealth, the claims of rights coming with capital, as well as neo-liberalism's ideas and practices of free markets. In short, neo-liberalism and the idea of the unrestricted free market and belief that social problems will find "natural" solutions. A *fifth* force is the dynamics of identity formation and identity politics in the modern world. Who are you? And who are you not? Masterfully expressed in Dr. Kritzinger's story to General Heydrich in the documentary Conspiracy on the Wannsee Conference. The story went that a man failed to cry when his beloved mother died, whereas he cried inconsolably when his much-hated father died. The point is that identity formation had as its object the hatred of his father. When the object of hatred was gone, there was nothing left to give him an identity. This point echoes Carl Schmitt's idea that you don't know who you are until you know whom you hate; and it is reinvented by Samuel Huntington in the Clash of Civilization ideology but without mentioning Schmitt (Hervik, 2011).

All these "forces" are closely related and have long histories. Some would object that colonialism, legacies of imperialism and colonialism, and racism should be included as separate forces producing racialized inferiorization. And rightly so. However, regardless of how strong and

important identifying legacies of colonialism and imperialism are, such identification in my view fails to analyze the efforts to uphold privilege and inequality beyond establishing (rightly so) that they are more generic than the overt expressions of colonialism. However, as in classic theories of power parlance, there must also be a theory that explains the production and reproduction of these legacies, since the legacies, like origins of word meanings, do not explain continuity by themselves. As for racism, researchers have again and again argued against single-axis explanations and pointed to how racism is integrated into other structures and forces, and that seeing racism as part of constructing incompatible difference, inequality, inferiorities and superiorities, nationalism, and more is important, which does not, in any way, undermine the importance of racism. Racism is simply a much more complicated and complex phenomenon that should not be reduced to one specific historic version or a single, isolable dimension. The recent turn to intersectionality is a reflection of this acknowledgment of racism's complex interrelationship with other forms of subordination.

The World Trade terror attack in 1993 did not provoke a war on terror that obviously did not happen until 2001. When the attack took place in 2001, deadly terror attacks had already taken place at embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and more, but with a new president, the "War on Terror" was adopted as a strategy. Denmark and Norway joined allied forces in 2003 and sent soldiers off to Iraq, and later Afghanistan. But the production of inequality, coloniality, nationalism, an enemy image of Islam, did not start with the attacks on 9/11, 2001. Those attacks were both a symptom, a separate contributor, and a pre-text for inferiorizing other "civilizations" or "culture" as seen in Samuel Huntington (1993, 1996) and Bernard Lewis' works (1990).

"The War on Terror" and new regimes of securitization and monitoring brought out a language of "radicalization", "Islamist terrorism", "foreign fighters", and so on. These discourses and practices of racialization, racialized integration, are issues that have brought Muslims to the forefront of negative public attention in the Euro-American world with one effect being that racialization is now directed at entire communities of people associated with Muslims, Islam, or "Muslim culture" that as "a whole way of life" becomes explanations for peoples' belief and social actions (Hervik, 2015; Kundnani, 2015). Thus, when politicians ask Muslims to apologize for certain terrorist attacks to members of the nation-states in which they reside, the premise is that there must be a hidden solidarity between the killers and presumed Muslims (Roy in Guenif-Souilamas et al., 2015).

Islamophobia is precisely the political claim that it is "Something particular about Muslims/or Arabs that makes them capable of carrying out such acts (9/11)" (Lentin, 2008, p. xv), which only makes sense if Muslims are regarded as a "race".

Until 2001, processes of racialization were present in the Nordic countries, but only Swedish scholars would use the term "racism" more consistently to capture what was going on (Keskinen & Andreassen, 2017). Anders and Berit Wigerfelt's study of everyday racism in Klippan, southern Sweden, used "racism" and connected it to the presence of radical right-wing groups (2001, 2014). In other Nordic countries, race and racism are still tabooed words, or dare one say, they are not used due to political correctness, particularly when talking about anti-Muslim or anti-Islamic racial slurs.

## *The Nordic Scene*

"The Nordic" welfare states and the Lutheran-Evangelical historical tradition and other shared features are pillars in a larger dialogue about "the Nordic", which is generally associated with positive identity (Hastrup, 1992). One of these associations is that "the Nordic" is a unit of cooperation and initiatives based on ideas of similarity and tradition, which according to Lene Hansen functions as an intermediate level between the national and the European. This association has come under serious challenge from a neo-nationalist upsurge in the post-1989 era (Hansen, 2002).

The traditional Nordic emphasis on social egalitarianism, as eloquently described and analyzed by Marianne Gullestad as "equality as sameness" and expressed in the Swedish metaphor for the local community and nation called "the folk home" or "the people's home" (*folkhemmet*) (Gullestad, 2006), has come under pressure in the racialized and culturalized reactions in the last decades due to refugees fleeing from war, atrocities, and increased focus on the extreme poverty around the world. Thus, in the last 20 years, the Nordic countries have become more intolerant toward newcomers and ethnic minorities, but with enduring claims of post-racial, color-blind ideology that somehow transcend the history of colonialism, eugenics, and xenophobic expressions that see reactions to people outside their "natural" settings as a "natural" if not instinctive response.

Nordic societies are committed through the human rights declaration to combat racial discrimination, such as Islamophobia. Yet, recent violent events in Paris and Copenhagen have contributed to new political efforts

to avoid radicalization of ethnic minority youth through an intensification of anti-radicalization programs without also dealing with Islamophobia and related forms of racial discrimination (Hervik, 2017). Such an effort is both a response and a reproduction of the morality-based, increasing racialization of these and other groups that places them in vulnerable positions and as targets of recruitment. It is these ongoing processes and dynamics with which this volume is concerned.

After the mega events around 1989, European attention centered on the Balkan war in the first half of the 1990s. The Nordic countries received their share of refugees. Most of the refugees were Muslims, but at the time, however, negative sentiments and racializing remarks were not articulated as anti-Muslim racism, just like racism more generally was not used as a common articulation of negative, inferiorizing relations between the national "we" and the foreign newcomers. There was talk about perceived and actual hierarchies of refugees and migrants, but they were debated in terms of multiculturalism and "cultural differences" and not talked about in terms of "race", "racialization", or "anti-racism" (Hjarnø, 1995; Schierup, 1993).

For its part, Denmark became "white" in the late 1990s as media and voters shifted to parties advocating anti-immigrant policies, which made Danes more aware of their "whiteness" and acted upon it through their voting. By then, the dominant negative focus was on Somali refugees, who were not (yet) regarded as a problem for being Muslims, but their "incompatible" racialized and cultural difference were again and again singled out by politicians in the news media as a particular Somali problem (Fadel, Hervik, & Vestergaard, 1999). In this process, Somalis were considered so different that it was assumed they could never be integrated, which reminded Danes about the incompleteness of their white nation with these bodies in the midst. In this way, the Somalis and the Danes were racialized as part of the same categorization and reasoning.

What is true for the Nordic region is that the last 25 years have brought a very high number of heated debates about engagement in wars in the Balkans, Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and more and the arrival of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers as well as the role of ethnic minority groups already in Nordic countries. A total of around 17,000 Bosnian war refugees came to Denmark, where the strategy became to avoid any concentrations of asylum seekers in one place. To reach this objective, refugees were distributed widely across the landscape and thereby attempting to minimize their influence on Danish culture. (For documentation of the early debates on the Bosnian refugees in the Nordic countries, see the

three books from the comprehensive Scandinavian project Ålund, 1998; Berg, 1998; Schwartz, 1998.) This three-country project did not include conceptualization of refugee experiences of exclusion using terms like racialization or racialized integration or studies that used research-based insights to understanding the meeting of refugees of war with the Scandinavian policies or news media.

By the mid-1990s, the first explicit heated media debate about the controversial word "Negro" happened to take place in the midst of national debates on what to do about the country's Bosnian refugees (see Vertelytė and Hervik, this volume). The Danish debate about the term "Neger" (Negro) started a discussion, but it never came close in intensity as the debate did in Norway in 2002/2003—a debate that showed how the preoccupation with skin color and the rights of racializers to name it. By the early 2000s, the public sphere in Denmark was no longer a space for dialogue for an area for serious battling and confrontation following a core value of neo-conservatism (Hervik, 2008, 2011) and motivated by the discomfort of "whitened" population in the presence of more than a tiny number of immigrants. The debate and the emergence of strong ideas of cultural incompatibility began to fuel other early academic treatments of racism in Denmark (Hervik, 2002; Rasmussen, 2004; Røgilds, 2002; Wren, 2001). But when an exhibition in connection to the Danish slave trade was discussed critically, the racism terminology and post-colonialism had not entered into the analysis of these themes (see Olwig, 2003). By 2015, racism and racialization were still talked about as rotten eggs, but as Kjetil Rødje and Tess Skadegård Thorsen show, regardless of the meanings of racial signifiers and anti-anti-racism, racism has entered the public debates. This even if incongruence rules the so-called debate (this volume).

The rise of right-wing and radical right-wing parties in Europe started in smaller affluent European countries, and the Nordic ones were no exception (Gingrich, 2006). When four prominent members of the Progressive Party in Denmark broke out in 1995 to form the Danish People's Party, a new path opened up for the unfolding of neo-nationalism and populism (Hervik, 2011). Other parties joined them in a policy that eventually turned Denmark into a country with one of the most restrictive integration policies in Europe. The success for the Sweden Democrats to enter the parliament in Stockholm (Riksdagen) was with 5.7% of the votes and later peaking in the polls with 19% support (Statistics Sweden, 2016). Entering the parliament, other parties agreed not to cooperate with them at both the municipal and the national level (Lööw, 2009) in a series of

initiatives to isolate the party. In Norway, the populist Progress Party was for the first time accepted into government as a partner of the Conservatives in 2013, with partial support from the center-right parties. The party received 16.3% of the votes in this election, while the opinion pool had them at one point above 30% of voters' support. In Finland, the rise of the populist anti-migrant and Eurosceptic environment coincided with the success of the Finns Party (*Perussuomalaiset*), established in 1995. The party has increased its popularity in each parliamentary election, gaining a major victory in 2011 by receiving 19.0% of the vote.

In the new Danish government of November 2001, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen based his minority government on the votes of the Danish People's Party. Most significantly, he launched a fierce populist right platform directed at the "elite", the opposition, refugees, migrants, unemployed, welfare recipients, and Danes with migrant background, not least Muslims. Restrictive after restrictive measures targetting "non-Westerners" were passed by the parliament, in what is most correctly described as based on neo-nationalism and neo-racism combined with folkish criticism of the elite. From the start, Rasmussen launched the strategy of a "Cultural War of Values" based on ideals of American neo-conservative values and similar to the cultural war discourse subscribed to by Ronald Reagan (Hervik, 2014). The strategy was copied by the largest newspaper in 2004 and soon ended in the infamous Danish Muhammad cartoon affair. *Jyllands-Posten*'s leadership used their entitlement ideas to back up the initiative to ridicule, mock, and insult Muslims in Denmark, through the newspaper's very own drawing contest, where cartoonists were asked to draw the prophet Muhammad as they saw him resulting in a major media event.

The Danish Muhammad cartoon reverberated into all the Nordic countries and brought controversies with it. The Norwegian *Magazinet* publication of the cartoons on January 10, 2006, provoked foreign anger against Norway (see Stokke, this volume). In Sweden, artist Lars Vilk's roundabout dog provocations, depicting the Prophet Muhammad's face on the body of a dog, were particularly rousing. In 2007, local newspaper, Nerikes Allehanda in Örebro decided to publish one of Vilk's drawings together with the praising of freedom of speech, which sparked new controversy in Sweden and against Sweden (see Ezz El Din, this volume).

Six years later, on July 22, 2011, Norway witnessed a major terrorist attack by the radicalized, right-winger, Anders Breivik, who had been a member of the Progressive Party and whose ideas and ethos were shared by many right-wingers in the other Nordic countries, except of course for

the violence (Boisen & Hervik, 2013; Eide, Kjølstad, & Naper, 2013). Supposedly, Breivik's urge to cultivate the deadly project that included the killings of young left-wingers began eight to nine years earlier (Bangstad, 2014), which is precisely during Norway's major and furious media debate about racial epithets. The "*Neger* debate" is well-researched by Marianne Gullestad (2006), who acknowledged her own optimism and perhaps naivety upon entering the debate "to assume that issues of race thinking, ethnicity and nationality could be discussed rationally at the present conjuncture" (2006, p. 11). She wrote this in 2005 while communicating the reactions to her first book in Norwegian (Gullestad, 2002) and explained how she "was met with firm and articulate resistance" (Gullestad, 2006, p. 11).

A flip side of the new anti-elite, anti-Muslim, anti-left-wing, and anti-feminist populism is anti-intellectualism. Premier Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's war of values strategy fiercely attacked intellectuals and the elite, in a classic the-elite-has-betrayed-you strategy, which follows an already noted decline of scholarly authority as perceptively captured by Marianne Gullestad (2006). This anti-intellectualism has continued and entered the academia itself as Lene Myong and Tobias Danbolt's analysis shows (this volume), where the public circulation of research-based knowledge of racism and racialization is undermined rather than read and understood. This criticism follows more broadly a tendency of the times to express ourselves publicly in whichever way one feels like (Essed, 2013). In Norway, the populist right has been attacking the "political correctness" of the cultural and intellectual elite for several decades, gradually pushing the boundaries of what is acceptable to say publicly about minorities. Gender populism in Finland holds a strong element of anti-intellectualism, which is part of a broader anti-elite argumentation. In her study, Tuija Saresma found that gender populists subscribe to the assumption that there are irreducible differences between women and men, femininity and masculinity. Any attempt by elites, or other, to even out "natural" differences must be fought back at any cost (Saresma, 2018).

### *Scholarly Responses*

The field of ethnicity and race research has been, and to a large extent still is, bifurcated with a clear division between a sociological focus on race and racism and an anthropological emphasis on cultural difference (Alexander, 2004). With a few exceptions, European anthropologists have not been at

the forefront of theoretical developments on racism in Europe, particularly regarding theories interpreting "culture" as "a new concept of race" and leaving issues of rapidly growing culturally based and value-based inclusion and exclusion to be taken up by other disciplines such as cultural studies, sociology, and the interdisciplinary "IMER" studies (International Migration and Ethnic Relations) (Balibar, 1991; Barker, 1981; Goldberg, 2006; Gullestad, 2006; Hervik, 2004; Stolcke, 1995).

The emergence of neo-racism as a concept and category first took place in Denmark within the anthropological team research project, "Structuring Diversity"[2] (Hervik, 1999b; Jørgensen & Søderhamn, 1999), and followed soon by geographer, Karen Wren (2001) (see also Rasmussen, 2004), who argued that cultural racism was damaging because of its subtle and almost invisible character and the relative sexual equality "allows the demonization of other 'backward' cultures in their midst which are perceived to oppress their women" (2001, pp. 146–147). The team project was carried out when tabloid *Ekstra Bladet* launched an unprecedented three-month, anti-foreigner campaign and the Danish People's Party was established. As such, the conceptualization of neo-racism with neo-nationalism came out of the analysis of these events more so than through the emerging literature. One of the first sessions on contemporary racism in the meetings of the European Association of Social Anthropologists occurred in 2002, leading to a special issue of the Nordic journal *Ethnos* edited by Marianne Gullestad and myself (see Hervik, 2004). Later, this collaborative effort leads to a presidential session of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in 2005 called "Initiating Trans-Atlantic Dialogues on Race and Cultures", where American experts were commenting on European, mostly Nordic, presentations. There were other more individualized attempts earlier to introduce neo-racism or related concepts into anthropology, such as Stolcke (1995), although she maintained that "cultural fundamentalism" was the proper category to use rather than neo-racism.

Outside of anthropology and sociology, Lene Myong and Rikke Andreassen stand out with pioneering work on racism and racialization in Denmark. Myong's contribution came through a comprehensive and much acclaimed thesis that built empirically on in-depth, qualitative

[2] As part of that project, I taught a course on racism to anthropology students at the University of Copenhagen in 1996, and by arbitrary circumstances, I also taught the first course on racism at the anthropology institute at the University of Oslo in 1999.

interviews with Korean adoptees in their late 20s and early 30s who had been transnationally and transracially adopted into white Danish families (Myong, 2009). Today, a group of transnational adoptees contributes to critical anti-racist activism. Rikke Andreassen's thesis is a substantial study of the Danish media coverage between 1971 and 2004 of visible minorities focusing on the closely related themes of nationality, gender sexuality, and race (2005). While the thesis laid out the groundwork for a Danish language book on the media coverage, it was Andreassen's study with Anne Folke Henningsen of human exhibitions in Tivoli and the Zoological Garden around 1900 that hit an Achilles heel of Danish self-understanding (Andreassen & Henningsen, 2011). The effort of Myong and Andreassen has contributed significantly in making scholarship on race-related issues known in Danish academia. Recently, more and more seminars and conferences are organized around racialization, and networks are created at some universities to facilitate talk about "race" and experiences of racism (see, for instance, Andreassen & Vitus, 2015).

Besides the research in Swedish racism by historian Anders Wigerfelt and ethnologist Berit Wigerfelt (Wigerfelt & Wigerfelt, 2001), and anthropologist Karin Norman's work on cultural racism and xeno-hostility (2004), racism studies in Sweden have been dominated by researchers outside of anthropology and sociology with their foci on post-colonialism, critical race theory, feminist theory, and more (Hübinette, 2013; Keskinen & Andreassen, 2017; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2017).

In Norway, anthropologist Marianne Gullestad was for many years the key voice of anthropology of racism, which included both studies in Norway and the colonial legacies of Norwegian missioners' photographic documentation in Cameroon (Gullestad, 2007). Much later, Sindre Bangstad's work on Islamophobia, and not least the eminent treatment of the Breivik case, brought him international acclaim (Bangstad, 2014).

One of Finland's key figures in racism and racialization research is Suvi Keskinen, who works within a post-colonial feminist perspective and critical studies on racialization and whiteness in the Nordic context. Her key contributions revolve around the different ways national identity relates to the welfare state in economic (and cultural) chauvinism that reveals a fortification against migrants and certain foreign influences. Her work also contributes significantly to the dismantling of the basics of power relations between the state and migrants, men and women, and between generations. *Complying with Colonialism* is a book that signals a paradox in the Nordic region (Keskinen, Tuori, Irni, & Mulinari, 2009). On the one hand, four

of the Nordic countries, defined here as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland, tend to represent their historic positions as outside of the colonial project, nurturing a self-image as both humane and equal in gender terms. On the other hand, the Nordic people have tended to identify themselves with former colonial European regimes' idea of "the other", with its division between "the civilised" and "savages" (ibid.).

Departing from own experiences and vicarious experience of discrimination and relating these to social science approaches to dominant processes in society, a new generation of Nordic scholars with immigrant histories may signal that the academic research knowledge and methods of color racism can be adapted and developed to Islamophobia.

When working with the review of relevant Nordic studies of racism, racialization, and racism, the disciplinary and interdisciplinary backgrounds do play a role; even though I do not want to exaggerate them, they reveal some important differences. While anthropologists have traditionally produced analysis on the basis of sustained social interaction with those whom they study (in faraway places under difficult circumstances), tended to side with the minorities and the muted. In Denmark, Lene Myong was one of the first to document that Korean adoptees that lived racializing discrimination were silenced and rejected both in their white families and in society. She comes from a gender studies and critical adoption studies background using in-depth interviewing and thick description for her fine-grained analysis. European anthropologists have been reluctant to work on racism, while their American counterparts have been far more engaged, for instance, resulting in the highly praised, nationally traveling exhibition project "RACE—Are We So Different?" created by the AAA (Goodman, Moses, & Jones, 2012). In the USA, racism studies are divided in various disciplines but they are more firmly established, whereas Nordic research is more oriented toward post-colonialism and with less public resonance.

### *Nordic Exceptionalism, Ethno-Centrism, and Coloniality*

Historically, the "Nordic Race" has again and again been constructed at the top of the evolutionary hierarchy, first as a "race" and later through "culture", "welfare state", "equality", "gender equality", "tolerance", "generosity", and "happiness". The American Immigration Act of 1924, for example, includes a statement: "Our own data from the army tests indicate clearly the intellectual superiority of the Nordic race group" (Brigham 1923 cit. in Goodman et al., 2012, p. 34).

A large set of qualitative interviews in the late 1990s showed that Danes tended to see themselves as the best examples for human kind for its informality (Fadel, 1999), non-conformity, anti-fanaticism, and good sense of humor (Hervik, 1999a, 2002). According to Sayaka Osanami Törngren (this volume; see also Heinö, 2009), Swedes see themselves as democratic, liberal, equal, and tolerant individuals, while Anders Hellström and Tom Nilsson (2010) found that the Swedish Democrats subscribed to an image of themselves and the Swedish nation as "the good ones". Likewise, Norwegian self-understanding is that of people being neutral, good-intentioned, and "close-to-nature" to such an extent that the derogatory term "Negro", for instance, transforms into a neutral word, once it reaches the Norwegian border (Gullestad, 2006). Finland may be described as the ambiguous exception, even racialized exception. On the one hand, part of the Nordic community, but on the other, historically represented by the Swedes as belonging to a lower race (Rastas, 2012, p. 90). Finns have traditionally supported gender equality as central for national identity and self-understanding; many consider Finland (along with Iceland) as a model example of equality. However, the rise of the populist climate has also generated "masculinist" claims, according to which gender equality "has gone too far" (Saresma, 2012, p. 14). An emphasis on traditionalist and conservative values has caused a clash with the general liberalization of society: gender-neutral marriage and the right of homosexuals to adoption have recently roused heated debates between conservatives and liberals (Lähdesmäki & Saresma, 2014).

The Nordic countries seem to share a racial exceptionalism that tacitly denies colonialist engagement and "supported a narrative in which racism 'proper' is understood as something that primarily 'exists "far away", "in the past", or "on the extreme right wing", in a Nordic context'" (Danbolt, 2017, p. 108). While the positive self-image with the "region's unprecedented understanding of equality, tolerance and solidarity" (ibid.) serves as a strong branding device, the same brand is under attack and being replaced with a nationalist protection device serving to signal to potential refugees and migrants they should stay away from Denmark and also making life difficult for those already in the country.

The war of values strategy and entitlement racism got Denmark into serious trouble in its own country and around the world. The Muhammad Cartoon affair became a major media event whose coverage has revealed an incongruence between how people abroad see Denmark and Danish self-understanding. Nowhere else, for instance, is the cartoon affair to

refer conventionally as the "Muhammad-crisis", and nowhere is the prime minister's spin version of the affair adopted by the Danes, but rejected in other countries (Hervik, 2008).

Writing within a Nordic setting but drawing analytical categories and historical comparisons beyond Europe, in the Nordic literature on racialization, whiteness, anti-racism, and post-colonialism, there is still both an ethno-centrist and a euro-centrist bias; little attention is being paid to racism toward aboriginal people, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and other forms of racist subordination. Moreover, there is also a striking absence of voices of non-Western people.

Robert Miles (1989) credits Frantz Fanon for having pioneered the work on "racialization of thought", which took place when colonialism erased differences among and within Africans and blacks in place of racial categories such as "Negro". The answers to race and racism, Fanon argues, are to be found in European models of thought, not in the assumed affinity between national cultures of the colonized but on the similar claims of colonialized nations (Murji & Solomos, 2005, p. 7). That belief started earlier than the Middle Passage, and it also exploded from within civilization during Nazism which holds a central racist force that cannot simply be reduced to colonialism.

By asking what people object to when people object to racism, Barnor Hesse reminds us that reducing racism to a linear story that starts with the theological reflections, kidnapping, torturing, and enslaving of black Africans from various different language groups and clans is insufficient to explain the dynamics of racism historically speaking. He therefore suggests we look closer at racism's alterities just like we have looked at nationalism's others (Hervik, 2011; Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012). Hesse does not deny, minimize, or reject the significance and horror of this part of history, but he argues that reducing racism to "Western Colonialism and White Supremacy" fails to acknowledge and integrate the dynamics of Nazism and the Holocaust. Where racism originates in Western colonialism of non-Western peoples, there is also a racism articulated very strongly in objection to Nazism and its extremist nationalism. The "first" racism comes from an articulation of the relationship between the "West" and the ("non-West") colonized people, and the "second" racism is a product of Western civilization and modernity. As Hannah Arendt reminds us, Jews objected to being stigmatized as racial-colonial subjects and insisted that "European Jews were undeniable white" (Arendt cit in Hesse, 2014).

Today, racialization studies of "European models of thought" have moved away from being synonymous with racism and the idea of a single monolithic racism (Goldberg, 1990), and the approach to different forms of discrimination studied as "distinct silos" (Meer, 2012, p. 2), or single-axis explanations that only focus on race but leaves aside the intersections of race with gender or class (Crenshaw, 1991).

For Miles, for instance, in a European context, ideologies of racism and nationalism are relational and the ideas of "race" and "nation" (the outcomes of racial discrimination and "nationalism") are categories of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion (1993, p. 55), while neo-nationalism itself builds on anti-migration and the idea of new foreign cultures threatening the coherence and cohesion of domestic cultural values.

Moreover, as Nasar Meer has noted, the academic literature on race, racism, and racialization lacks discussions of Islamophobia (cf. with the idea of "distinct silos") even though this has been changing within the last five years (see Bangstad, 2014; Hervik, 2015; Gardell, 2010 for Nordic exceptions).

A third example of Hesse's point is Robert E. Park's study of African-American migration to Chicago. The colonial conquest was not included, and with that the "enduring forms of white domination on which it was conceptually sustained" (Hesse, 2014). In fact, the study reproduced the idea that race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named" (ibid.). In this case, the racializing reactions concerned 10% of the African-American population in the South, who migrated toward a better more just and equal life (Anderson, 2016).

According to Nelson Maldonado-Torres the concept of "coloniality of being" was born in the early 1990s in conversations among Latin American scholars about the implications of the coloniality of power in different areas of society (2007, p. 242). These interlocutors found themselves breathing coloniality all the time, whether in authority, sexuality, knowledge, and the economy, as well as in the general understanding of being as well. Modern forms of exploitation and domination, and coloniality of knowledge and of being, had a primary reference through lived experience of coloniality of power (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). One should remember that coloniality studies grew out of activities connected to the marking of 1992 as being 500 years since Columbus "discovered" the new world. Indigenous associations and activists across the Americas met for the first time on a grand scale to share experiences and coordinate

activities, which again attracted the attention of scholars (Urban & Sherzer, 1991; Warren & Jackson, 2002).

Where "Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation which makes such nation an empire", then coloniality "refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration" (2007, p. 242). In other words, coloniality is different from colonialism. It occurs in the absence of colonial administration (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and it has a longer history.

De-coloniality scholars have re-defined racism to avoid the reductionism of existing definitions (single-axis): "Racism is a global hierarchy of human superiority and inferiority, politically, culturally and economically produced and reproduced for centuries" (Grosfoguel, Oso, & Christou, 2014, p. 3). They adopt Fanon's distinction between zones-of-being, as subjects on the superior side, and zones-of-non-being for those who live on the inferior side, where racialization occurs through the marking of bodies by colour, ethnicity, language, culture and/or religion (ibid., pp. 3–4). This division into zone-of-being and non-being is that of being considered "subhuman or non-human; that is, their humanity is questioned and, as such, negated" (Fanon in Grosfoguel et al., 2014, p. 3).

With this division, Grosfoguel and collaborators open up for various forms of racism, not only color racism but also Islamophobia, racism against aboriginal populations, and so on, although from a view of indigenous people of the Americas, there is little attention. With this opening, Grosfoguel goes on to argue that Islamophobia is an original racism that became particularly public in 1478 with the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition, when Spain began cleansing southern Spain from Muslims and Jews. After 700 years of presence, they were asked to convert to Catholicism or leave, based on the Western pre-nation idea of one culture, one religion, one language, and one territory, which can also be seen as a project of cultural homogeneity. Once this project was completed, Columbus would be allowed to set sails and cross the Ocean to India. In this endeavor, Christian/Catholic religion and culture was seen as superior to Islam and Judaism, yet recognizing these religions as within civilization.

At the risk of simplifying complex research, Grosfoguel explains that through an analysis of Colombus' diary when he reached the "new" land, the beings he encountered were not like the Muslims or Jews. Columbus

wrote that these beings did not have souls and religion, and therefore they were not human beings. He did not concern himself with his own, white or brown, skin color or that of the people of the Antilles. Only years later in 1537, following long debates, did the Pope decide that "Amerindians" were humans (Grosfoguel, 2008; Maldonado-Torres, 2014). What this means is that racism as an idea and practice, with an ideology of superiority/inferiority along the lines of human vs. non-human, was present before the Middle Passage and had Catholic theology as a key rationalization.

The historical moment, or point zero of Eurocentrism, defined as the conflation of the historically specific European and the universal, can be found in Rene Descartes' philosophy, for instance.

Grosfoguel argues that Descartes:

> ...replaces God, as the foundation of knowledge in the theo-politics of knowledge of the European Middle Ages, with (Western) man as the foundation of knowledge in European Modern times. All the attributes of God are now extrapolated to (western) man. Universal truth beyond time and space, privilege access to the laws of the Universe, and the capacity to produce scientific knowledge and theory is now placed in the mind of western man...It is this "God-eye view" that always hides its local and particular perspective under an abstract universalism. (2008, p. 4)

The de-coloniality project is to identify and dismantle this "Capitalist/Patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric Modern/Colonial world-system" (ibid., p. 5). "European patriarchy and European notions of sexuality, epistemology and spirituality were exported to the rest of the world through colonial expansion as the hegemonic criteria to racialize, classify and pathologize the rest of the world's population in a hierarchy of superior and inferior races" (ibid., p. 7). These notions were naturalized in conflation of universal validity of Christianity and the universal validity of historical emergence of nationalism. This complex coloniality system is also present in post-colonialism to which Grosfoguel and Maldonado-Torres subscribe themselves. Post-colonialists must deconstruct their own Eurocentrism and, in addition, listen more carefully to the native voices wherever they go and at the level of everyday experiences of superiorizing and inferiorizing, which of course challenges the researcher to deconstruct his or her relations with people in the field. For a recent example of how de-colonization can be carried out in the academia and its efforts of participatory research, see Parker, Holland, Dennison, Smith, and Jackson

(2017). A modest start could be identifying the language spoken and written by these people and to what extent the researchers are familiar with this language. This de-colonilization struggles are of course not new to those who grew up in anthropology confronting the colonial encounter like no other discipline in the late 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s (see, for instance, Asad, 1973; Weiner, 1992; Wolf, 1982 and many others) and for a decade leaving it in a disciplinary identity crisis.

With coloniality scholars opening up for various forms of racism occurring at different historical conjunctures, we must ask the question in a Nordic context about what is the racism in "anti-racism" and "color-blind racism". Barnor Hesse has been particularly clear on this when he makes the opening statement: "Racism is more objected to than understood in sociology. When it is only as a result of the objection to it that racism becomes an object of analysis, then it is not racism itself that is being observed, but rather the objection which comes to stand in its place" (Hesse, 2014, p. 141). Anti-racists, he goes on to say, are more occupied in Black Sociology with "imaginaries of racism, rather than exposing racism" (ibid., p. 142). Hesse's lead may be helpful for looking at how racism, anti-racism, and racialization are approached and opposed in the Nordic societies.

## Positions of Engagement

The engagements in racism and racialization seem to fall into four interrelated positions in the Nordic countries, where two appear as popular social movements and two categories are more institutionally anchored. *First*, the legal framework of the law, often lying with the Ombudsman or with the Human Rights Institution, as well as some NGOs that prioritize the law as the point of departure. The legal framework is the least studied in this book. *Second*, we see anti-racism as a cluster, where members "object" to what they regard as racism, often revolving around a group or collective of people who experience being propelled into certain categories, or perhaps trash bins, full of prejudice and stigmatization. Or, people who act to enhance the interest of racialized or otherwise stigmatized individuals or groups. This includes the efforts of middle-class women in Finland, who are not unlike those white women Ruth Frankenberg wrote famously about (Frankenberg, 1994) as well as attempts to use anti-racism in discourses about national and racial exceptionalism (see Haavisto, this volume). For the Norwegian scene, Stokke discusses the anti-racism of

Muslim feminist groups (this volume). And 2000 km north of Oslo, local Norwegians turn to basic humanitarianism in their activism for a more equalitarian less humiliating treatment of asylum seekers in vulnerable situations (Boe and Horsti, this volume). In Denmark, anti-racism is currently most visible as a new social movement of anti-racists who seek "safe spaces" in closed social media groups and coordinate a series of activist initiatives that include targeting commentators and racial signifiers in the Danish public (Keskinen & Andreassen, 2017). With the Sweden Democrats' successful entrance into the Parliament (Riksdagen), Sweden has seen a drastic embracement of anti-racism, even if this may appear more an issue of branding than a direct countering of racial discrimination (Hübinette & Lundström, 2011). Also included—and well represented in this volume—is the emergence of new initiatives to combat racism, often phrased as post-colonial, structural discrimination, or color racism. The (in)efficiency of anti-racist initiatives is captured by Miri Song. Song has noted that in Britain the dominant understanding is still that a white person or institution is the perpetrator of racism with the implicit assumption that "almost any form of racial statement, made by anyone (of any hue), as automatically, and indiscriminately, 'racist'" (Song, 2014, p. 109). *Third*, color-blind racism to use the term suggested by Sayaka Osanami Törngren, in this volume (with a bow to Eduardo Bonilla-Silva). This approach is that of the hegemonic majority that dominates debates in the Nordic countries. While adhering to color blindness and the idea that racism only exists in "faraway places" and "in the past" fails to address the transparency of whiteness and its raciality (Nielsen, this volume), people within this group instead resort to an anti-anti-racism in order to elevate their interests, which then makes it difficult to talk about racism at all, since racism triggers "wrongful accusations". *Fourth*, the study of racism that is the research-based approach to racism, where racism is the point of departure, less so, than the mere objection to racism. When using much research on racism in the North American context, racism seems to be a master narrative, whereas racism in the Nordic context seems more to revolve around nationalism of the nation-state and the welfare state.

The most salient feature of anti-racism and color blindness is the focus on identity formation and identity politics based on a morally and emotionally driven force against inequalities rather than a legal one. While the rhetoric of 20 years ago (Hervik, 1999a, 2002) in media coverage and everyday conversations reveals similar attitudes and perceptions, the Nordic countries in the last years are characterized by a moralization. With

longterm exposure to moralization and moralizing, affect builds up, not least as moral outrage. Then anxieties follows to the point, where arguments and listening are abandoned. At this point, "rage" in Carol Anderson's sense takes over, and arguments are reduced to positions and visual appearance. Anderson captures this well through the concept of the "white rage", which lingers behind the easy triggering of confrontational racist language and violent action:

> The trigger for white rage, inevitably, is black advancement. It is not the mere presence of black people that is the problem; rather, it is blackness with ambition, with drive, with purpose, with aspirations, and with demands for full and equal citizenship. It is blackness that refuses to accept subjugation, to give up. A formidable array of policy assaults and legal contortions has consistently punished black resilience, black resolve. (Anderson, 2016, pp. 3–4)

The identity politics of anti-racism is crucial for the claims of social justice, overcoming various forms of inequalities, and strives for recognition. However, identity politics is organized to advance the interests around who you (and your group) perceive yourself to be and are perceived by others and less about attempt to remove the political impact on identity, as, for example, the civil rights movement did in the USA. As Halleh Ghorashi points out, identity politics risk enhancing the divisiveness as it feeds stronger emotion and fear of what others do, whether domestic adversaries or incoming people. Apart from the work for social justice, she asked the difficult question as to what degree anti-racism in its current form is the most effective way forward in dismantling racism, "Race" as a social category may itself become a rallying point for creating community among the anti-racist rights movements. Anti-racism does not so much handle heterogeneity and needs to address issues of power (Ghorashi, 2017). Perhaps, racism may be fought more efficiently by taking a step back in order to look at the structures and coloniality complexes that produces racializing policies, media coverage, draconian security measures, as well as turning local policing into income-generating nightmares as in the case of Ferguson (United States Ministry of Justice, 2015).

Anti-racism and color-blind racism hold antagonistic relations to each other as they struggle for space on the news agenda and social media. Anti-racists generally turn to strategic racialization, whiteness, brownness, and emotional appeals of testimonies, while color-blind racism, in my view, works through either "race" or "nation" or both as master narratives

evoking ultimate emotions, incompatible values, and non-negotiable entitlement. People in the color-blind racist group target Muslims, non-Westerners, and also the anti-racists and thereby become anti-anti-racist. On its side, anti-racists are at risk of taking their effort to the point of becoming anti-white.

Students of racism include activist approaches; it is difficult to imagine scholarly experts on racism not also being public intellectuals and community or organizational activists. Researchers will seek to analyze and dismantle the logics and mechanisms of racialization and racism. In this way, they take part in the anti-racism scheme. Similarly, anti-racist activists may also tap into the research-based approaches, if only sporadically, in order to provide documentation and a foundation upon which to forward their agenda of creating a more just society. Some scholars of the color-blind group do seek to influence the public agenda, but they are not racism scholars (see Danbolt & Myong, this volume; Gullestad, 2006), whereas racism scholars seldom join the color-blind racism groups. The legal and the scholarly based groups, ideally, seek a more universal perspective to racism, although human rights as a normative system is often associated more with the Western world than not.

Scholars of racism can be further roughly divided into clusters according to whether they, as Barnor Hesse suggests, continue to influence the legacies of colonialism in the contemporary world, radical nationalism, Nazism, anti-Black racism, anti-Semitism, and racism against aboriginal groups to mention some of the more salient racisms with distinct alterities.

## Overview of Parts and Chapters

The chapters are roughly divided into three parts plus a concluding chapter on "Whiteness and Racialization". Part I is on debates on racism and racialization, Part II on denials of these, and Part III on examining anti-racism more closely as research object.

On July 17, 2017, Danish television, TV 2, brought together in the studio three (white) "experts" that were to comment on the week's top stories as defined by the host. One of the themes discussed was a radio show for the younger generations of listeners. Listeners were asked to bring what they considered jokes that went beyond the limits of the acceptable, regardless if racial, sexual, religious, or other nature. One Danish anti-racist activist with a Ugandan background, Mary Namagambe, objected strongly to the program, and eventually the director of the program terminated the

program. Now, speaking from another studio, Namagambe explained her experience, moral outrage, and criticism.

One of the experts in the studio is specialist in American politics and parliamentary candidate for the liberal party, Venstre, Mads Fuglede. Fuglede disagreed with Namagambe without acknowledging her experience. He went on by stating that "to be a racist is to believe there is a difference in different skin colour that shows different intelligence, and those rights that goes along with these differences, and I don't think that you necessarily believe in that because you tell bad jokes" (TV 2 News, 2017). In response to Namagambe feeling offended by the program, Fuglede answered, "I hope that we all feel that sometime". He then turned the experience of being offended by the vulgar jokes around and into a wish of using offendedness as the basis for a demand to stop the program, "to do this form of opinion censorship and judging taste, where you decide what you can say and what you cannot within the limits of freedom of speech" (ibid.).

This little glimpse of a recent media coverage may serve to illustrate how racism and racialization are debated in Denmark and the Nordic countries more generally:

1. The white expert in the studio rejected Mary's experience of being racially offended.
2. None of the experts in the studio were experts on racism, but spoke from a gut-level sense of what racism is. The statement of racism provided by one of the guests refers to a belief that was rejected by social science decades ago.
3. Despite being an expert on American issues, Fuglede showed little sense about non-white views and experience of racism.
4. The angle chosen to approach the theme is recurrent in most news media coverage: When is something racism and when is it not? May I say a given word or not (see also Ventilate and Hervik, this volume). This leads easily to a boxing match type of exchange and is a lost opportunity for a much needed, informed dialogue.
5. The white majority position includes articulating itself as a victim of attempts to limit its freedom of speech.
6. There is general agreement among US racism scholars and anti-racist activists that the "white supremacist" position has for more than 100 years in the USA included claims that it was offended, which in various ways was used to legitimize racialized treatment of blacks.

Throughout the Nordic countries, it is common to find that the white, hegemonic majority denying minority experiences of racial or other discrimination. Denials are present in public service as well as commercial television, when racialized experiences are presented in the studio, and/or with scholarly based research results with elaborate definitions and well inscribed into the research history, and opposed them to non-professional, politicians, who by definition speak from a normative position and spinning himself in the most favorable light. The result is disregard and ignorance of experiences and research, reduced to gut-level reactions of what people think about or like about them. While social scientists have to document as part of their work, the politicians are normative, often media-trained and in command of populist language. In whose interest then is the journalist and news agency working?

In Chap. 2, Myong and Danbolt analyze the news coverage of non-racist experts' denial and explaining away of racism in Denmark as it is analyzed by Danish researchers. The authors reveal the hegemonic conditions that shape the circulation of research-based knowledge of racism in Denmark and argue through the dismantling of the debate for a break with the historic and color-blind racism among the network of authors, journalists, and editors-in-chief in the news media coverage. Tuija Saresma analyzes the Kempele rape case in Finland in Chap. 3, which is an exemplary case to illustrate the mechanisms of racialization that is inseparable from gendering, sexism, misogynism, and much more. Like in the coverage of 22/7 in Oslo (Breivik's terrorist massacre), the lack of early information about the suspects of rapist automatically provided a schema-driven suspicion directed at two younger asylum seekers. With effects but no causes, prevailing hegemonic racialized views appear. The two boys were falsely accused. They were not present at the scene of the crime. Saresma analyzes the event and discusses the media rhetoric of rape as performative that brought all asylum seekers under suspicion. This rhetoric of rape and accusations of rape is particularly difficult to counter and nuance, due to its winning communication ability, you cannot meaningfully argue against rape cases. Therefore, the gendered rape speech and reasoning can be used as posing and enhance a threat to white women in particular while also offering protection from non-white potential rapists. In Chap. 4, Asta Smedegaard Nielsen identifies a similar racialization pattern in the public media as a performer of racialization in Danish journalism. She analyzes the Copenhagen mass shooting in 2015, where the threat of terror dominates the angle of coverage without providing alternative forms of particularly

heinous crimes. The hegemonization of the event is dominated by a habitual whiteness which works to keep its privileged white position, through the logic of defending themselves against those threats inscribed on the bodies of "the other" and therefore leading to the new restrictive measures. In her study of how two British media (BBC and *The Guardian*) and two American media (CNN and *New York Times*) cover a local Swedish newspaper's publication of a controversial Muhammad cartoon caricature, Mahitab Ezz El Din further documents strong dichotomizations that help us to understand the logic of having two different standards for representing the same event. In Chap. 5, she identifies this dichotomy as a form of Orientalism and as such it is a binary division that is an ongoing identity narrative that builds on ideas of incompatibilities which are at odds with the experiences on the ground.

Closely related to debates about racialization, we find denials of racism and denials of experiences of racism and racialization (Part II), which is widespread in the Nordic world whether overtly as in the TV 2 incident above or hidden in habitual whiteness as argued by Nielsen. In Chap. 6, Sayaka Osanami Törngren focuses on attitudes toward mixed relationships. Her analysis brings out a conventional discourse celebrating free unrestricted choice of partners, yet reasoning about how actual mixed relations bring issues out that shows grave concerns about upholding Swedish gender equality norms. This reasoning, she finds, is based on a color-blind racism, where those who do not comply with the Swedish sacred values of especially gender equality are to be sanctioned. In Chap. 7, Mantė Vertelytė and Peter Hervik take issue with the moralizing of racial epithets in Danish media through an analysis of the unfolding debate on the use of the term *Neger*. The term is responded to through the use of the "N-word". The analysis of the arguments shows an incongruence between the different sides of the debate, which reveals a general lack of knowledge of racism's history and celebration of Danish racial exceptionalism that denies and trivializes racialization in Denmark. In Chap. 8, Carolina Sanchez Boe and Karina Horsti find that anti-racist and humanitarian initiatives are not solely found in urban centers in Europe but also in the most northern region of Europe. They tell the story of local Norwegian responses and circumstances of responses in relation to the "biking" Syrian and other asylum seekers from Russia via Norway-Russia border some 2000 km north of Oslo. Through the analysis, authors document that moral senses of right and wrong may challenge the legal framework and administrative routine practices in a way that better highlights

human rights and fights inequalities in a process where they themselves are embedded through their precarious positions at the margins of Europe.

In the third part, four authors examine in three chapters cases of anti-racist initiatives while examining also the concept of anti-racism itself. Christian Stokke asks in Chap. 9 the question whether anti-racist efforts and policies have made a difference. By studying the media coverage and exchanges around the Norwegian cartoon affair in early 2006 and the hijab debates, Stokke first documents discourses in "Immigrant as a problem" and the "anti-Muslim" and then moves on to the core of his study, namely, the Muslim feminists and their anti-racist efforts to counter what goes on in the debates. The outcome of these efforts is found, he argues, in how the social democratic government has accommodated minority perspectives into multicultural education, potentially opening for a broader anti-racism education. In Chap. 10, Camilla Haavisto looks at anti-racism through four mediated events in Helsinki and Malmö. Haavisto finds "listening" and the proficiency in conveying experiences of racism and thereby the potential for genuine dialogue to be crucial for the anti-racism activism. This is where transformative power comes in and leads her to distinguish "critical events" from others. In Chap. 11, Kjetil Rødje and Tess Sophie Skadegård Thorsen analyze the racialized and racializing debate around a large Danish amusement parks' use of racial signifiers for some of its rides. The analysis reveals a by now recurrent pattern in such events that a majority subscribes, intentionally or habitually, to an entitled position that allows it to ignore and explain away critique of the park as well as arguments that claim experiences of racial offendedness. The lack of congruency in the debate implies that the event never becomes a "critical event", but remains yet another missed opportunity to seriously discuss the difficult issues of racism and national white self-understandings. One important absence in studies of Nordic racialization has been to understand how ideas of "Whiteness", which takes racialization as its starting point, relates to "Neo-Nationalism", which includes racialization but also draws on the generative power of defending the "nation". In Chap. 12, Nasar Meer offers a much welcome treatment of these relations from a broader analytical perspective. In this effort, he discusses the racialization of Muslim and the role of Islamophobia.

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