Feeding the Beast: Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and in Denmark, September version (1.2).

Feeding the Beast

Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and Denmark

- Work in Progress –

(comments are more than welcome, please do not diseminate)

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Feeding the Beast: Nourishing nativist appeals in Sweden and in Denmark, September version (1.2).

The news media takes on tremendous importance as the source of knowledge and insight about the immigrants, refugees and descendants. The media space provides a site of public controversy where the cultural foundation of any society is disputed, renegotiated and celebrated. This continuous debate ultimately resolves into questions of what knit citizens together in a separable community, distinct from the outside.

In this article, we will focus on the media coverage of the public debate leading up to two separate European Parliamentary elections in 2004 and in 2009. We wish to scrutinize a development over time, and also compare the coverage in two neighboring countries, Sweden and Denmark. These two countries, otherwise sharing a similar socio-political structure, display two distinct discourses on immigration. Whereas Denmark, to a significant degree, conforms to a broad support for nativist arguments (Denmark belongs to the Danes foremost) and nativist policies, Sweden does not to the same degree.

The aim of this article is to consider the public debate in the national media to explore this difference.

We assume the media’s framing process reveal views and attitudes that shape popular opinion and voter support for the so called 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 nativist message. 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 RRPs (Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007: 42); a process that has been coined a mainstreaming of the radical right (Berg and Hervik 2007). We argue that the successful use of nativist political rhetoric provides more support for the RRPs, which will make other parties compete for these votes as well. “Feeding the beast” (what the late Political Scientist Lise 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. 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.
From social democracy to nationalist democracy

Following Cas Mudde (2007: 19), nativism holds that the nation-state needs be protected and reserved for the 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. The rationale behind the nativist message is to maintain that the nation (a distinct territory) belongs to the natives (a distinct “people”) foremost. In this sense, nativist political rhetoric is inclusive and aims to attain greater social cohesion. However, it is also highly exclusive as it clearly differentiates between the natives and “the others”.

Nativism constitutes, together with authoritarianism and populism, a key ideological attribute of the RRP party family, following Mudde (2007). However contemporary manifestations of nativism are rooted in a long tradition of safe-guarding the interests of the (native) population. 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. The SD and the DF, in this respect, claim to be the adequate heirs of the Social Democratic heritage of representing the common people against the elite, conversely the Social Democrats of today are accused of having let down the native population (See further Hellström 2010; Bale et al. 2010; cf. Marsdal 2008). 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 country.

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 equal norms for all its citizens. In Sweden the Social Democrats pursued nation-building through a modernist utopian ideal by uniting the
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popular movements with the state (Berman 2006; Trägårdh 2002). 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 (Andersson 2009; Dahlstedt 2009). The historian Åsa Linderborg (2000) shows how the Social Democratic party gradually conquered the public view of national history. 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 also has to with changes in the political completion of the votes. 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 (Kitschelt 2002). In turn, the political opportunity structures (increased convergence between the mainstream parties; focus also on socio-cultural issues; more media attention) are considered favourable for new political actors, such as the immigrant-skeptic, challenging the status quo (See further e.g. Rydgren 2007).

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, though not in Sweden to the same degree.

_Framing the Beast_

We understand the figure of the Beast to be an endemic force that triggers mutual moral disapproval among the established political actors, someone (or something) which “the good democrats” may pass moral judgments upon and unite against. The Beast triggers fear and unanimous resistance. The Beast, as political actor, not only articulates the wrong views, but also represents an “evil” type. Zygmunt Bauman (2007: 65) aptly notes
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that “the evil” and “the fear” are Siamese twins, or two separate names for the same experience. The evil, following Bauman (as the liquid fear), is frightening because it destabilizes the cognitive frames that make the world go around.

The secular evil, Bauman continues is a product of modernity, of totalitarian rationalism covered with reason, enacted by humans – such as the Nazi perpetrator Alfred Eichmann in the post war trials – who said to act out of reason. The face of evil, here inspired by Hannah Arendt, takes on the less monstrous figure of the prudent servant man, only claiming to serve the orders given by the employers.

In popular culture, monsters tend to be both fearsome and evil. How do we, then, make sense of the “monstrous” beast in this text? We suggest that “The Beast” represents less an incarnation of the evil, rather some horrendous presence that deteriorates harmony and established social hierarchies (see further Kearney 2003: 99). In this respect, “the beast” is not an ordinary political opponent, rather a political antagonist that needs to be cast off, similar to the figure of the scapegoat; constructed to save the city/state from sin (See further Culler 1994: 143). The social researcher Slavoj Žižek (2000) wrote an interesting piece on the FPÖ (Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs) and its late party leader, Jörg Haider, arguing that the mainstream parties (finally) – following the success of the FPÖ in the national parliaments elections of 1999 and its entry in the government in 2000 - found someone to hate and debar. In a corporatist political culture where the Social Democratic Party and the leading conservative party (ÖVP) together had governed Austria for several years, FPÖ and Haider played the role of the Beast; someone (or something) that the EU-14 could abandon and distance themselves from, while its presence also injected a sense of dynamic in the political field (See further Hellström 2005). Now the situation is different. The party partly dissolved and Haider died in a car crash. The RRP-parties approached the government position in e.g. Italy and Denmark. Our argument would be that, the Beast has changed faces. It is not limited to the challenge of the RRP-parties, but takes on other appearances as well.

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 these parties (see further

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2 The EU-14 stands for the then member-states, but Austria, of the European Union.
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Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2007; Hellström 2010; Rydgren 2007). 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; the RRP: s do not represent an anomaly in Western societies, rather a radicalization of mainstream politics.

We here pursue with a closer examination of the supply-side of politics. 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.

In this regard the framing of issues has an impact on the receiving audience and thus affects popular opinion, in this process some aspects of a perceived reality are selected and depicted as salient (Entman 1993: 52). Even if the journalists comply with the news genre’s rules of objectivity, a journalistic text yet assesses a particular media event by means of selection and thus presents certain aspects as more salient than others. Our aim is not to illuminate all potential Beasts in the public debate; rather we focus on two potential “Beasts” (the SD and the DF). This certainly limits our horizon, but also allow us to possibly detect other “Beasts” that crystallize in the public debate that concern the SD and the DF, respectively. We will make apparent that Denmark and Sweden display two distinct discourses on immigration. 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 balances on the fringe of the acceptable. We

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3 Frames make sense only against a more comprehensive background of cultural knowledge, organized as figured worlds or cultural models, yet this article does not allow the space for inferring this knowledge.

4 In addition, editorial writers, various experts and political representatives might 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 also tend to pass on moral judgments and make causal explanations to the issue at stake.
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therefore assume that the tone – the language used to describe and discuss the SD – differs from the Danish debate.

We thus hypothesize that (1) the linguistic tone used towards the DF in Denmark differs 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. This article proceeds in two steps. The first part consists of a quantitative overview of the media coverage in 2004 and in 2009 surrounding the elections to the EP in Sweden and in Denmark. Second, we highlight recurrent themes in the media material to determine the role played by the RRP parties in the public debate. We use mixed methodology, both quantitative content analysis and qualitative frame analysis, to come to terms with the issue at stake; the different discourses on immigration in Sweden and in Denmark.

The European Parliament elections

The body material consists of 573 articles in ten Danish and Swedish newspapers. We chose the articles by means of search in the Swedish media database Mediearkivet and its Danish counterpart Infomedia.

The EP’s relative power has expanded with every treaty revision from 1979, though the voting figures have declined. Only 43.3 per cent of the EU citizens 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 might find it worthwhile utilizing this platform to accentuate their political agendas.

Some voters use their votes to protest against the sitting government, and thus prefer an anti-establishment party. 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. Most RRP

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5 The criterion used to select the newspapers is based on the circulation rate. The material includes both dailies and tabloids.
6 We have thus not attempted to cover the whole debate on immigration during this period of time, rather limiting ourselves to the debates on the SD and the DF that concern these issues, including perceptions of the people and popular attitudes.
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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) (Meret 2010; Mudde 2007). We are in this article, however, not primarily interested in the debate on EU-politics. We are mainly concerned with the domestic debate in Sweden and in Denmark.

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 drastically at the wake of the new Millennium. Two months after the 9/11 the parliament election gave the right wing party, the liberals (Venstre) a huge victory. Venstre went on to join forces with the conservatives and the DF as their demanding supporter. Since the elections of 2001, the DF has supported the current Right-Wing coalition government with 12-14 percent of the electorate behind them. 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.

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

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7 Originally that was not the case, for instance the Front National approved of a common European defense policy, 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 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. 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 forthcoming); racism without races (Balibar 1991) to mention but some of these.
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this regard the SD challenges the mainstream parties, both the centre-right and the centre-left (See further Spång 2008).

To understand this difference, it is 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, 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 co-operate 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
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The analysis covers the news reporting in 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>News article/News item</th>
<th>Chronicle</th>
<th>Editorial</th>
<th>Op.eds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressen</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dagens Nyheter</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svenska Dagbladet</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aftonbladet</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Göteborgsposten</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>259</td>
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Table 2. Sources of Data, Danish newspapers

<table>
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<th>Editorial</th>
<th>Op.eds</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Jyllands-Posten</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politiken</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berlingske Tidende</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekstra Bladet</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.T</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background

8 For the Swedish case, we chose the articles included in the sample using the following search criterion: Sverigedemokraterna AND (svenskar OR folk* OR väljare OR muslim* OR invandrar* OR Europaparlament* OR integration). For the Danish case, we used the following search criterion: Dansk folkeparti og integration* OG Indvandre* eller muslim* OG eu eller folk* eller vælger* eller dansker*
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In the 2004 EP elections the Social Democrats were in the government position in Sweden. In the elections, most of the mainstream parties 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. The EU-skeptic or EU-rejectionist parties lost electoral ground and instead a new party, the Pirate Party, gained two seats in the EP, emphasizing questions of integrity and internet independency. The SD nearly tripled their votes from the previous elections in 2004, though, and is by now also constantly exposed by the news media agenda which – all things considered - may generate more voting support.

In the Danish 2004 EP elections the Social Democrats (five seats) and the mainstream right party Venstre (three seats), together, got more than 50 percent of the total votes. The DF marginally raised their share from 5, 5 to 6, 8 per cent. In the 2009 elections in Denmark almost 60 percent of the voters showed up at the polls (over 10 per cent more than in the previous elections), which makes it the third highest voting figure in the EU. 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 them.

Journalistic Tone

“The Beast” is, by definition, someone or something alien to the mainstream parties. Is it, then, 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, per cent.
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Table 4. Degree of Difference in Sweden (N=121) and in Denmark (N=40), 2009, per cent.

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 more common in the national media coverage to frame the DF as fairly- or very similar (30 per cent) than to framing 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 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 2009.

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 article 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” 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.
In 2009 it is obvious that the journalistic tone towards the SD in Sweden has changed to be 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 and more than half of the articles use a fairly- or very negative tone. However the disparity between the journalistic tone in Sweden and in Denmark is not vast in 2009. In Denmark there are less articles using a fairly- or very positive tone towards the party (1 out of 10) in 2009 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. There is reason to suggest that our quantitative measurements alone do not give unanimous support for our hypothesis that the journalistic tone differs significantly, this is definitely true for 2004 but to a much lesser degree in 2009.
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In Sweden, all the newspapers (including the tabloids) are taking a firm stance against the SD, at least in the editorials and on the cultural pages. In Denmark, the media landscape is more divided. 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. Also in “neutral” genres, SD is frequently described as an alarming threat (see e.g. Aftonbladet 26 May 2009, news article), 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.
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*Berlingske Tidene* and *B.T* are somewhere in between whereas *Ekstra bladet* is more similar to *Jyllands-Posten* in this regard. More than 7 out 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 also try to distance themselves and the mainstream parties from the RRP parties - to demarcate the “decent parties” from the “extreme right”. 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?

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journalistic Tone/Degree of Difference</th>
<th>Very Similar/Fairly Similar</th>
<th>Neutral/Balanced</th>
<th>Very Different/Fairly Different</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Negative/Fairly Negative</td>
<td>14 (46,7)</td>
<td>10 (15,6)</td>
<td>8 (17,8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balanced/Neutral</td>
<td>16 (53,3)</td>
<td>48 (75)</td>
<td>17 (37,8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly Positive/Very Positive</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6 (9,4)</td>
<td>20 (44,4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30 (100)</td>
<td>64 (100)</td>
<td>45 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 danger 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
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everything in its power to debar the party from formal influence. In the second case, an alternative frame instead suggests that the problem is that the mainstream parties copy SD politics and views. 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:

The Sweden Democrats is guided by two forces: hatred of foreigners and thirst for power. The rest is emptiness, concealed by sentimental national romanticism. It is not possible to compromise with that potion. You cannot and you may not. The only decent thing to do is to remain a counter force.

Yet other voices tend to stress similarities between the SD and the mainstream parties, such as the journalist Isobel Hadley-Kamptz who (Expressen 13 June 2009, chronicle) argues that: “The established parties conform, in principal, to the SD-idea that Sweden was better off before, something which constrain them in all discussions”.

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:

The main reason for the upbeat coverage and debate in the Danish media is political: The Danish People’s Party has made Islam and Muslims a central theme in the so called war of values, which has unfortunately rubbed off on the other parties with the government in the lead. The theme is therefore itself the foundation of the political power in Denmark. This is a sad and polarizing development of the society, but it is almost impossible for the media to downgrade an area, which has such a high political attention (Birthe Rønn Hornbech, Politiken 9 May 2009, commentary).

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 sometimes given attributes of a radical and invigorating underdog. No doubt, the DF feeds on that image. In a response to an appeal
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to participate in the celebration of Ramadan at Christiansborg, the party makes a clear statement (Jyllands-Posten 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, at least in 2004. We 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 (if there is, or has to be), 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

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12 Christiansborg is a castle in Copenhagen that hosts the Danish parliament, Folketinget, among other political institutions.
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define and discuss what constitutes a fertile soil for the further progression (and possible decline) of the RRP parties in Sweden and in 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. The SD is no longer itself an object of news coverage and indignation. One strong frame that persists in the media coverage is that the SD represents a devil in disguise, though. Underneath the polished facade they are still the same xenophobic movement; according to an editorial in Expressen (8 April 2009): "Surely the Swedish Democratic right arm still gives a twitch, even if it is nowadays tugged in a Dressman-suit instead of in an armlet".

In this frame, the SD ambition to moderate its image is discredited. A second equally strong frame suggests, though, that the SD ideological message is embedded in a deeply 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 the journalist Dilsa Demirback-Stern in Expressen (7 August 2008, cultural chronicle) even suggests that: "If it was not for the xenophobia, their programme could be any badly prepared collage of ideas, in the spirit of the people’s home, intended to illustrate the excellence of the welfare state”. 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, suggesting that he represents “the reality people” who are constantly sidestepped by a the radical elite who refuse to accommodate the views and interests of the ‘ordinary men’. This article with its rather explicit populist appeal provoked several critical comments, an editorial in Expressen (18 September 2009) says:

Wake up, Göran, you are in the government! You cannot attack “the elite” from an underdog perspective. You are the minister for social affairs, lad. You make propositions that become laws that decide what “common people” should do. You are part of the elite, Göran Hägglund. And you are obviously prepared to play on which ever vulgar populist strings to remain in power.
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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 depraving norms 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, in the news reporting on the SD, the party is, sometimes, referred to as the Beast in contemporary 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, the journalist Ronnie Sandahl claims:

The major Danish parties, for a long time, used to say they refused to collaborate with the Danish People’s Party. This is exactly what the Swedish parliamentary parties in Sweden say today … It did not take long. Now most parties are firm critics of the immigration [in Denmark] (Aftonbladet 31 August 2009).

The nature of the Beast: Denmark

In Denmark the DF is an established fact already in the election of 2001 when the party became the supporting cast of the government. Instead of the party being the object of news a substantial number of themes have come up as the outcome of political initiatives. The idea of a ban on Burkas, restrictions on marriage involving near relatives (cousins or parents’ cousins), and parents sending their children to far away countries to be reeducated became dominant media themes, yet they came without any surveys and background analysis. The reeducation stay is a theme that has popped up in the tabloids every June since 1999 but always turns out to lack evidence (see for instance Hervik 2002). The ban on the Burka was proposed by the Conservatives as part of an effort to re-emphasize the party’s active role in the war of cultural values and to compete for the voters. Representing Muslims as a danger creates fear and allows a party to present itself as the hero, who defends democracy through restrictive identity politics against the Muslim presence (Berlingske Tidende 22 August 2009, see also Betz and Meret 2009).

The nature of the Beast is ambivalent. One frame in the Danish news reporting suggests that the DF, rather than a Beast, is a regular political contender. Voters attracted to the DF may earlier have voted for other parties and now these parties seek to lure them back into the fold through political appeals. Some members of the Conservative party
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united in an informal network to distance their party from the DF. Peter Norsk, member of the party’s board, maintains that: “We make up an informal network of people, who believe that we should no longer compete with the Danish People’s party about talking rubbish about Muslims” (Jyllands-Posten 14 February 2010).

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. However 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. Berlingske Tidende (18 September 2009) suggested that his ideas on this and related matters were identical to that of the DF.

The media coverage in both periods reveals a political competition in which similarities between the SD and the mainstream parties are highlighted. DF shares common values with Venstre (Politiken 23 September 2006; Politiken 28 April 2007) and individuals such as Naser Khader (Conservative in 2009, Social Liberal in 2004), Lene Espersen (C), and Karen Espersen (V) being encouraged to join DF on account of their anti-Muslim proposals (Jyllands-Posten 19 August 2009; Ekstra bladet 19 August 2009; Ekstra bladet 17 February 2009, see also Ekstra bladet 3 September 2000). Criticism of DF is often a criticism of the government and even the Social Democrats, since they support many of the proposals on integration (Jyllands-Posten 17 August 2009). A sub-frame comes out in news analysis of the competition revealing that DF owns the immigrant-refugee issue. “The debate is pushed to the edge of what can be implemented. And here DF always wins” (B.T. 19 August 2009), and “A debate about immigrants and refugees always, always! benefits the DF. No one can pass them on the right side.” (Politiken 28 August 2009).

Mainstream actors produce counter frames that constructs the DF through its extreme nature, thus a second less dominating frame suggests that the DF are Extreme Nationalists. When speaking about former “good guys” among the Conservatives and Venstre, Svend Auken (S) writes: “At that time there was no flirting with the DF and the radical rightwing populism” (Jyllands-Posten 10 August 2004), and Mogens Lykketoft
also of the Social Democratic Party declares in the annual meeting: “Some would say we have taken over right wing attitudes towards foreigners and integration. This is totally wrong. We find it despicable when DF and Venstre pursue a politics based on biases and fear” (Jyllands-Posten 10 September 2004).

For those who have experienced a strong anti-semitic tone, which characterized the Nazis, then I can understand, if they see some connection between the way, DF talks about foreigners and immigrants, and the way, how certain groups earlier were targets of derogatory speech (Jyllands-Posten 19 September 2004).

However, these statements are fairly benign compared to DF’s own words and objectives. Pia Kjærsgaard writes: “The solution is that foreigners in large numbers must be sent home and this repatriation will be the DF’s most important political theme for the next years.” (Berlingske Tidende 26 July 2004). In the 2009 sample there are occasionally more crass slogan-like utterances. “Danish People’s Party is the occupational force, we are the resistance movement” (Politiken 23 August 2009). “Danish People’s Party’s anti-Islamic, xenophobic and at times racist politics I will not comment on, because everyone knows their attitudes” (Politiken 9 September 2009).

A third frame, the beast is Islam is arguably the most dominant frame in Denmark. During the debate of the opening of the Danish Parliament in October 2001 Pia Kjærsgaard declared war against Islam. Although she was reprimanded by Party leader, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, (Venstre), they joined a few months later in governmental collaboration based on the same idea but with a slightly less direct tone. Yet Lene Espersen’s declaration that Islam is the greatest threat of all in the world (Politiken 16 August 2009, see also Metro-Express 23 April 2009) kept the image of what the real beast is about alive. Mogens Camre, member of the EP representing the DF, says: “Because of their culture Muslims make up a big problem in Western countries. Few of them wants integration, since they have come with a culture, which they believe must conquer the world” (Berlingske Tidende 1 June 2004). Others simply note: “Today most Muslim immigrants feel unwanted. They experience that the number of people with Islam critical and racist attitudes increase. Many are tired of the comparison between Islam and terrorism” (Politiken 9 May 2009).

Islam as the real Beast also comes out in an omnipresent narrative in the Danish news media sample. An “odd” unwanted immigrant cultural belief or practice is
introduced either in a generalist fashion or through individual cases, then political comments are added usually from a party spokesperson and the DF, and in the end all the political parties agree on some form of political intervention (the Unity-List and the Socialistic People’s party often disagreeing). Immigrants want polygamy; wife beating; stoning of infidels; private Koran-kindergartens and schools; ghettos; gang-rape; old-fashioned view of woman; economic threat; re-education camps, Kamal Qureshi’s ethnic dress when visiting the Danish queen; building of mosques and minarets; the use of Burkas, Niqaps and the headscarf; prayer rooms in the gymnasium; and marriage to near relatives come up with little documentation or perhaps a single instance. Politicians are then asked for solutions, which is symptomatically about enforced learning of Danish culture and history; Danish ways of thinking; forced removal from ghettos and schools with many bilingual students; forced repatriation; withdraw social benefits; social control via teachers; kindergarten staff; making parents responsible; and compulsory courses in marriage law for Muslim Imams. Whatever the specific proposals, the Social Democrats are most often represented as being ready to join the government and the DF in support of the proposal. Some examples are restrictions on part of Muslim preachers (Politiken 20 April 2004); increased social control of Muslim extremism in schools (Politiken 6 May 2004); restrictions on the opening of private Muslim kindergartens (B.T. 13 May 2004); forced resettlement scheme of immigrants in ghettos to other areas (Jyllands-Posten 26 May 2004); social control of immigrant parents, who send their children for re-education in home countries (B.T. 5 September 2004).

Islam is the Beast is not exclusively situated within the borders of Denmark. Foreign policy and development aid is provided in order to prevent refugees from coming to Denmark: “The expert [Minister for Integration, Bertel Haarder] in keeping refugees out of Denmark becomes Minister for solidarity with the world’s poor people, and DANIDA becomes the front office for Bertel Haarder’s forced return policitics” (Ekstra bladet 3 August 2004).

Peter Skaarup sees a clear connection between the efforts of Danish soldiers in the world and the domestic immigrant policy. The background for our effort in Iraq and Afghanistan is also to make it safe to send refugees home. ‘We tie defense-, security-, and immigration-policy together’, he notes (Jyllands-Posten 27 June 2004).
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The nature of the beast in Denmark makes up two weak frames and a strong dominant 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 view of human nature (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.

In this frame, the beast is the Muslims and more broadly non-western migrants whose culture, their values, beliefs, attitudes and identity are incompatible with the distinct Danish culture (Betz and Meret 2009). They are to be controlled (see e.g. Berlingske Tidende 20 April 2004). Their numbers must be 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, also prevalent in the Swedish debate (Hellström 2010).

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. the editorial writer Lena Andersson, suggests instead in a column (Dagens Nyheter 17 September 2009, editorial pages) that: “To remove the famous cover and let the hatred boil over will only lead to more contempt and brutality, the Danish example shows”.

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, news article). 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 (ibid), gives his
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view on what the open dialogue approach has implied in practice: ”It is like everyone is talking about Santa Claus without anyone ever actually seeing him. The parties say to be willing to engage in the debate because that is the answer that one is expected to give, but after that nothing happens”.

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 a valid option in the forthcoming elections. The conservative party, Moderaterna (M), let a special committee lay out the contours for a new immigration policy. In their report, the committee chose to: “face the truth” and they recommend a “balanced view on the multi-cultural reality”. Before integration politics had, according to (M), shifted from almost assimilationist politics to misguided caring” (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.
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, on the other hand, 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: “We cannot ban what people run about with at home. There you can be naked or wear the burka. But the Social Democrats supports a ban, for the moment you
move outside the front door, says political spokesman Henrik Sass-Larsen” (Ekstra bladet 17 August 2009).

As mentioned earlier the Social Democrats changed their opinion when it was found out a ban would be unconstitutional. While Social Democrats rhetorically speak against the Danish People’s Party and the government, in the end they do vote for many of their proposed policies.

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

If the government does not guarantee a restrictive immigrant policy, then DF threatens to stop the close collaboration with the government. The restrictive immigration policy is the reason why we support the government of Anders Fogh Rasmussen. In principle there are no other reasons, says DF foreign policy spokesman, Søren Espersen to Ritzau. (Danish Radio 22 July 2008).

The most dominant frame on how to deal with the “first beast”, DF, is through verbal resistance, whereas the “second beast”, Islam and to some extent non-Western migrants, is to suggest and support similar restrictive migration policies as the government does. In the fear of losing votes, few dare to question these policies. There 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 vaporize, in the public eye (see also Mounfield 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, the members of the mainstream parties) condemn and can mobilize against. 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 “man on the street”. 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
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from the people on the ground. 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. The correspondent Nathan Shachar writes in a chronicle (Dagens Nyheter 25 September 2009):

The most dangerous thing is not failures and difficulties in relation to the immigration, but the feeling that the politicians, over the voters heads, withdrew the issue from the agenda and turned it into taboo. In Austria, where immigrants are less marginalized than in Sweden, this is what – more than any real disasters -- paved the way for the FPÖ.

In Denmark framing Islam as the beast is integrated with the politics of fear that extends, intentionally or not, radical Muslim terrorism to all Muslims. The association of Islam with terrorism was written all over Jyllands-Posten’s cartoon project and cartoonist Kurt Westergaard’s drawings from at least 1997 to the bomb-in-the-turban cartoon of 30 September 2005 and later drawings (Hervik forthcoming). According to a Danish bishop, the perception of Islam in Denmark is almost entirely negative (Berlingske Tidende 19 September 2004).

Not surprisingly more than half of the Danes believe that there is an overwhelming probability that Denmark becomes the object of terrorism. These answers are interpreted by Berlingske Tidende in a heading 'Increasing fear of Muslims and Terror.' In the same newspaper on the same day a text beneath the picture of Pia Kjærsgaard says: 'Islamists threaten our democracy.' (Politiken 25 September 2004.

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 (Bjerre 2009; Hervik forthcoming). 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 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
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Indiscriminately publish extremist statement to celebrate freedom of speech and democracy, the Swedish counterparts insisted on their democratic rights and professional duty to reject anti-democratic radical rhetoric for the sake of preserving democracy and carrying out freedom of speech with a social responsibility. The claim of speaking the truth, calling a spade a spade, is of course a discursive tool used by the person claiming to know the truth, while the opponent is hiding it. The practice of speaking straightforwardly has its price however, as the journalist and author Lena Sundström aptly noted: “Biases are not dissolved by being aired in public […] But I do not believe one becomes happier by articulated one’s biases. Or, that we get rid of biases in this way.” (Politiken 17 August 2009).

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):

Out of the will to help and support, without getting on the wrong side of someone, it has been established a politicized and moralizing culture of insecurity, which has led to that one educate public officials in anti-discrimination and sigh over the Sweden Democrats instead of tackling the circumstances that makes their soil.

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, allegedly, are 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 politics it is instead the lack of political visions to

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10 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.
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spur the people’s imaginations that is considered the main problem, Niklas Ekdal says (Dagens Nyheter 13 September 2009, chronicle):

The progresses of the Sweden Democrats is sign of that we have given up, that no-one expects it to become any better, but everything is now a zero-sum game about a shrinking welfare-cake where the one gang of cuckoo kids stand against the other.\textsuperscript{11}

Furthermore, the rise of the SD 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). 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 persist. 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 unique for Scandinavian politics.\textsuperscript{12}

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 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 that 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

\textsuperscript{11} For the Danes the Muhammad crisis (2005/6) has made Danes tired of debating Muslims: “As many as 61% of the Danes thinks that Islam and Muslims take up too much room in the Danish media” (Politiken 9 May 2009)

\textsuperscript{12} In the process of consolidating common asylum and immigration polices liable to all of the EU members states, 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. This development risks fuelling perceptions that it is the immigrants who are the problem (Hellström 2008: 40).
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sentiment towards Islamic culture in Denmark, which is the dominant frame revealing the attraction 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 – to a large extent - still the Beast in Swedish politics, though much less in 2009 compared to 2004. 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 in Danish politics is more and more projected into the Islam community in Denmark which jeopardizes 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 RRP-parties and helps them to grow stronger.

The Beast represents some archaic force that challenges the stability of representative politics that for some voters is considered too technocratic, and perhaps too dull. According to Chantal Mouffe, the RRP party family – 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. 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 to the same extent. However both the DF and the SD, though heavily criticized, yet tend to set the tone in the debate on immigration and integration, that is communicating a
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message of that the society is extensively polarized and disturbed by social cleavages, e.g. between “the natives” and the rest. The DF and the SD test the limits of the freedom of speech, by means of sometimes vulgar proposals or election films that stigmatizes the Muslim minority population. They do not always succeed and the verbal resistance is often strong, but sometimes the anti-Islamic discourse nevertheless grows as a consequence.

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 preoccupation with how people migrating from Non-Western countries may jeopardize community stability. In the debate on the DF and the SD in the media coverage, the Beast -- understood as the internalized threat that put to risk societal cohesion -- 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 poorly integrated immigrants as morally evil. Of course this also happens in Sweden; however, also the SD represents a threat to the endemic perception of Sweden as tolerant, non-xenophobic political community. The “good democrats” in Sweden thus claim to present a positive self-image of Sweden as perhaps more tolerant, and even cosmopolitan, than other countries as it mirror itself against the SD nationalism as hostile and malignant. 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 native goods.

Epilogue
There is only a bridge separating Denmark from Sweden. However the different discourses on immigration not only manifest itself in the rather modest flow of extra-European migrants from Denmark to Sweden (as a consequence of the more restrictive policies on e.g. marriage possibilities in Denmark), but also in the recent rhetorical struggle of the position of the SD in Swedish politics. During the parliamentary election campaign leading up to the 19 September election to the Swedish Parliament, the Danish Governments parties and the Danish People’s Party tried to influence the Swedish debate and the outcome of the election by suggesting that neutral, foreign election observers
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should oversee the election. The Swedish system was seen as less than democratic since the SD were banned from participating in the final prime time television political debate just prior to the election. Furthermore, the Swedish channel (TV 4) had refused to broadcast the SD election campaign film. However, this action provoked a great deal of interest and several Swedes have already seen the film on Youtube. In addition, the TV4 changed their mind and let a slightly adjusted election film to be sent on national television.

There are at least three important aspects of this intervention. First, journalists in Sweden and Denmark often see their role as guardians of democratic values from two different perspectives. Danes – not least after the Muhammad cartoon conflict – will defend the rights to public anything in the name of democracy and free speech. Critics of Jylland-Posten argued that the newspaper had the right to publish the cartoons, as they have the rights to be stupid as well. Many Swedish journalists on the other hand argue that they defend democracy by gatekeeping non-journalist opinion pieces that are anti-democratic by not allowing them a voice. The event was framed as an issue of taboo versus freedom of speech, only this time – contrasting the cartoon controversy – the champions of free speech infringed on the rights of the independent publisher to decide what to be broadcasted and not.

Second, calls that are critical of Swedish politics in Denmark, and Denmark in Sweden, have always captured the news agenda. The Danish right-wing and radical rightwing captured headlines in Denmark for several days with the opposition only obtaining a secondary role. Third, the Danish political intervention gave the SD a boost in the Swedish public debate. The opinion pools soon revealed that voter support in Sweden was going up as a result.

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Appendix

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.

Media coverage of Dansk Folkeparti in Infomedia from 1997 to 2009. The Social Democrats (Socialdemokratiet 1997-2002; Socialdemokraterne 2003-2009) and the Conservative party are included for the sake of comparability.