



DIALOGUE

NATIONAL MINORITIES

IDENTITY

CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS BLOG

NATIONALITY

ETHNIC MINORITIES

CITIZENSHIP



“The Border Association is much more than the Dybbøl-fundraising and information about something that was. The Border Association is a pioneer when it comes to informing about a living and inspiring border region. We do this with a wide range of activities – our cultural minority magazine “GRÆNSEN” (red. BORDER), exchange-programs, lectures, and especially our Cultural Ambassador corps”

Mette Bock,
Chairman of the Border Association

WHO IS THE BORDER ASSOCIATION?

The Border Association is a national civic education association, which supports the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig (Northern part of Germany) with the slogan “For an open Danishness”.

This means the Border Association acknowledges that globalisation affects everyone – including the Danish minority and other national and ethnic minorities. In the Danish-German border region the citizens have learned to engage in the cultural encounter in a productive fashion. They have gone from an against-each-other mentality to a with-each-other mentality, perhaps even a for-each-other mentality.

Experience from the Danish-German border region can be used as a source of inspiration for lingual and cultural diversity in a world undergoing vast changes.

This is the purpose of the Border Association’s cultural ambassadors: When young men and women from the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig and from the German minority in Denmark tell their own stories, share their experience from a 60 year old peaceful co-existence as a minority in a multicultural environment in the Danish-German border region. These experiences can be used when dealing with the co-existence in other border regions or multicultural nations.

THE BORDER-ASSOCIATION BELIEVES THAT:

- Democracy, freedom of speech and equality is for everyone, also in the case of minorities.
- Anchoring in ones own culture is a prerequisite to understanding other cultures.
- Cultural minorities are an important resource in a democratic society.
- Danish language and culture is strengthened by the encounter with other languages and cultures.

WHO ARE THE BORDER ASSOCIATION’S CULTURAL AMBASSADORS?

The Border Association’s cultural ambassadors are a national corps of debaters, who initiate dialogue about identity, nationality and citizenship. With its basis in knowledge of the history in the border region the cultural ambassadors convey the story of how cultural encounters don’t necessarily need to result in conflict. The cultural encounter can on the contrary provide inspiration for new life-giving communities based on mutual respect.

The cultural ambassadors consist of more than 35 multicultural young men and women, who offer a form of bridging between minorities and majorities. This is done through

dialogue-meetings, happenings, with blog-posts on our cultural encounters blog, and on social media.

Half of the cultural ambassadors are of the wide range of ethnic minority groups present in Denmark, while the other half are of the two national minorities in the border region; the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig (Germany) and the German minority in Southern Jutland (Denmark). In all, 15 cultural backgrounds are represented within the corps. Thusly, the Cultural Ambassador corps is a unified community of diversity!



When is an immigrant part of the society he/she lives in with the same rights as the original population?

WHAT IS THE DANISH MINORITY IN SOUTHERN SCHLESWIG

The Danish minority in Southern Schleswig is a national minority that consists of about 50.000 people. It came into being after the Reunion in 1920, where the Danish-German border was moved. This meant that the Danes suddenly found themselves south of the border and Germans now lived in Denmark. In Denmark after the Reunion, there was a high level of responsiveness when it came to the Danish minority south of the new border. "They shall not be forgotten," said Prime Minister Niels Neergaard at the party at Dybbøl Bank the 11th of July 1920, when Southern Jutland's reunion was celebrated. Politicians still repeat this, however, today a large number of Danes know nothing about the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig.

The Danish minority can either be German nationals or Danish nationals, but they are all citizens in Germany. Furthermore, they have certain minority-rights, which means they can:

- attend Danish schools and high schools, where the classes are in Danish. The teaching methods are Danish, while the overall structure is of Sleschwig-Hoslstein;
- attend Danish churches. It is also possible to be christened, confirmed, married, and buried in Danish;
- take part in extra curricular activities like football, handball, etc. in a club specifically for the Danish minority;
- read a Danish newspaper called Flensburg Newspaper, which covers German as well as Danish news;
- borrow books from a Danish library in Flensburg;
- retire to a Danish retirement home;
- and much more.

**The same opportunities are given to the German national minority in Southern Jutland. The German minority encompasses roughly 15.000 people.*

IMMIGRATION TO DENMARK ● ●

Unlike the national minorities that in principal have never moved, Denmark hosts a range of different groups of people who have immigrated over time for different reasons. Some are immigrants (labour immigrants and united families e.g.), others are refugees (from war, natural disasters or personal persecution e.g.). The Danish kings have since the 1500's welcomed skilled foreigners and religious refugees to the country. Later on, Denmark has sent for foreign labour force from both Poland and Turkey, while refugees from areas of conflict all over the world have arrived by themselves.

A SMALL SELECTION OF IMMIGRATIONS IN DENMARK:

- Approx. 1860 - 1920, Swedes og Roe-Poles (Polish labour immigrants)
- 1956 - approx. 1970, Hungarians (refugees)
 - 1960's - 1970's, Turks and Pakistanis (labour immigrants)
 - 1970's, Chileans (refugees)
 - 1980's - 1990's, Tamils, Palestinians, Iraqis etc. (refugees)
 - 1990's - 2000'erne, Somalis, Afghans etc. (refugees)
 - 2000's - 2010's, Romanians, Poles, Americans etc. (labour immigrants)

**Keep in mind that immigrants have come to Denmark every year and that the list only contains some chosen examples*

THE DANISH-GERMAN BORDER REGION – FOUR CRUCIAL MOMENTS IN HISTORY

FROM CONFLICT



AS A RESULT OF THE DEFEAT in 1864 Denmark lost a third of its population and 40% of its rural area.

Not everyone, who now lived on the other side of the border viewed themselves as Germans. With the loss of Schleswig-Holstein there were almost no more German-speaking Danes. The defeat catalysed a process of moving towards a Danish nationalistic government where Danes equated one nation with one language and one ethnicity.

IN 1919 A REFERENDUM IS HELD in the area. It places the border where it still lies today

THE NEW BORDER RESULTED in a Danish minority south of the border and a German minority in Southern Jutland, north of the border. The overall mood became increasingly tense and the population in the border region was divided: one is either considered Danish or German.

Border Association is established in 1920 in order to support the Danes living in northern Germany.

TO PEACEFUL CO-EXISTANCE



UP TO 1955 the two minorities lived very separate from the majorities and a lot of discrimination was experienced by both minorities.

In 1955 **A RANGE OF MINORITY-RIGHTS WERE INTRODUCED** in the Copenhagen-Bonn Declarations, which were signed by the Danish as well as the West-German government.

THE COPENHAGEN-BONN DECLARATIONS would henceforth ensure that groups of people on both sides of the border would be able to maintain their national and cultural identity without being discriminated against. With the slogan "From an against eachother to a for eachother" people were encouraged towards peaceful coexistence.

SINCE 1955 the either-or mentality towards nationality has slowly been slowly degraded and the relationship between the minorities and the majorities has vastly improved.

TODAY THE MINORITIES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER are acknowledged and respected, they cooperate, and many have a positive mentality towards having a dual nationality and identity in the Danish-German border region.

How can we use the experience from the Danish-German border region today? For instance, when dealing with refugees entering nations or other conflicted border regions around the world?



WHAT IS MEANT WHEN THE BORDER ASSOCIATION'S CULTURAL AMBASSADORS SAY...

IDENTITY

HYPHENATED IDENTITY: In the Cultural Ambassador corps we maintain a positive attitude towards dual national identities, since we believe that you can feel at home at several places at the same time. Thus, hyphenated identity refers to having several identities.

The Border Association's cultural ambassadors focus on national, cultural, ethnic, and religious identity. However, since the different types of identity are interconnected the following graphic presents the theoretical foundation for our work.

NATIONAL, CULTURAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS IDENTITY is a type of collective identity, but it can also be placed in the social identity-category. These identities are what ties us to a certain nation, culture, ethnicity and/or religion. The different identities don't necessarily exclude one another. Therefore, you can be both a Danish national, celebrate Christmas, be a Buddhist, and be of Indian ethnicity – This could make you a Danish-Indian (hyphenated identity).

SOME DEFINITIONS:

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY is the individuals subjective understanding of community (e.g. being Danish or being religious). It is necessary in order to having a place in society and in social circles. Certain norms are associated with collective identity – norms, which one must follow in order to be accepted by the community.

SOCIAL IDENTITY is linked to the roles you fill and the way you want others to see and perceive you as a person. Therefore the social identity can vary depending on, who you are with and, how you want them to see you. The social identity is closely associated with communities (the area in which you live or the music you listen to etc.).

PERSONAL IDENTITY covers the special features, properties and characteristics etc., which others recognise you by.

SELF-IDENTITY is the image you have of yourself and reflects your inner personality. It is the identity, which has most importance for the individual persons psyche and wellbeing.

NATIONALITY

The Border Association works towards an open Danishness with the idea that *"If you feel Danish you are Danish"* as a foundation. This notion stems from the principle of "The peoples' autonomy" which was introduced in the peace treaty (The Versailles Treaty 1919) following World War I and which formed the foundation for the dividing of Schleswig in 1920, where the inhabitants of the border region voted on whether they wished to belong to Denmark or Germany.

Nationality encompasses the overall relationship with a certain nation. In the cultural encounter over the dinner table, in politics, and in the media there is often talk of Danishness.

DANISH – when are you really Danish? On paper, you are Danish when you are a Danish national. Some have the possibility of dual citizenship and therefore two nationalities and passports.

But nationality can also in a sense be passed down through generations, meaning that if your parents are Danish, but you were born and grew up in Ghana, you would probably define yourself as Danish or Danish-Ghanaian. Some will perhaps feel that the connection to Denmark is limited to the extent where they choose to define themselves solely as Ghanaian.



What duties does a new citizen have in your opinion? More or the same commitments as the original population?

CITIZENSHIP

The Border Association's cultural ambassadors are based on the notion that citizenship is fundamentally about all citizens being equal members of society and its community, whether they be of different nationalities, culture, ethnicity or religion. All Danish citizens have the Danish society in common.

This means that:

RIGHTS AND DUTIES: All citizens are subject to the same fundamental rights and duties.

PARTICIPATION: Citizens participate in society in the broad sense.

IDENTITY AND AFFILIATION: Citizens feel like they are a part of the community.

SOME DEFINITIONS: INTEGRATION

Integration encompasses an equality between immigrants and the original population, but not a normalisation. Immigrants have the same amount of actual opportunities when it comes to education, the workforce, friends, and other social privileges as the majority. In other words, the term integration implies that immigrants maintain the connection with their original cultural background and identity while they actively participate in the local societal and cultural life - not on the same conditions but on an equal level with the original population.*

ASSIMILATION

Assimilation is synonymous with a unilateral adjustment process from the immigrant's side, which does not leave room for deviation regarding language, proficiency, values, social life, culture, and religion. Immigrants must "become similar" to original population.*

SEGREGATION

Segregation means separation and is usually associated with a socially based physical separation between different groups of people.*

*Source: Ministry for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration of Denmark

Which pros and cons do you see in integration, assimilation, and segregation?



WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN?

READ

- The Border Association's cultural ambassadors blog about cultural encounters – find us here: ambassador.graenseforeningen.dk/kulturmødeblog

FOLLOW US

- We share our blog posts, events, other articles related to cultural encounters and videos, humorous as well as serious on Facebook. Find us here: facebook.com/dialogmoeder
- On Twitter we tweet about and react to whatever stirs in the realm of identity, nationality, and citizenship: @KMAerne
- On Instagram we show it with images and videos: @kultur.amb.
- If you would like to, share pictures from your dialogue meeting (Instagram) or tweet #HyphenatedIdentity #dialoguemeeting

BECOME A MEMBER – The Border Association, which was founded briefly after the Reunion in 1920, is a civic education-association with approx. 14.000 members in 70 local branches across Denmark. As a member you will among other things receive “GRÆNSEN – magasinet for mindretal, sprog og kultur” (The Border – magazine for minorities, language, and culture), special offers on field trips and events. Read more at www.graenseforeningen.dk

WEBSHOP – here you can buy board games, books, and merchandise among other things. Find us at www.shop.graenseforeningen.dk

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