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Legitimisation and Expressions of Identity and Attitude:
A Discursive Approach

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Abstract

This paper explores the nature of and relationship between 'identities' and 'legitimacy'. First, an analytical distinction is made between expressions of identity and expressions of attitudes about Europe and the European Union. A discussion of 'legitimacy' is provided that proposes the process of 'legitimisation' as the attribution of rights and duties to a given actor, in a specific context. Next, Positioning Theory is proposed as a theoretical and analytical framework for understanding processes of identity construction and legitimisation in discourse. To further illuminate these processes, empirical examples are provided, using the Positioning Triad as a tool to analyse discourse surrounding the Danish Euro referendum. Finally, implications for practice are discussed.

I.   Political Identity and Legitimacy in Europe

Concerns about the legitimacy of the European Union (EU) and the presence or lack of identification of citizens with the EU are being echoed in the media as well as in political and academic circles alike. Questions being raised take, non-exhaustively, the following forms: How are the 'no'-votes in the election on the EU Constitutional Treaty to be interpreted? To what extent and why do citizens and elites feel to be, or

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[1] The opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of UNU.

not to be, a community? How are policies, institutions and events perceived, approved or rejected by citizens and elites? How can European identity be developed in tandem with national identities? How much political identity does the EU need in order to go through a process of legitimisation? How much identity can the EU generate? How can the subtle development of self-identification be detected and gauged?

All of these questions contain certain ontological presumptions. In other words, the nature of the answers is somewhat pre-determined by the questions. Without a clear understanding of the presumptions intrinsic to one's questions, one can easily be lead in search of something that does not exist. To avoid this conundrum, and to address the concerns being raised, it is first necessary to examine in some detail the nature of 'identity' and 'legitimacy', in order to formulate appropriate empirical questions and identify a method to answer them.

A. Identities and Attitudes

Identities

A frequently entertained question in research and policy discussions is, 'Can people have multiple identities?' (See for example Risse, 2004; Carey, 2002; Schild, 2001; Risse et al, 1999.) This query is operationalized, in the Eurobarometer and other questionnaires, with questions such as, 'to what extent (on a scale from 1 – 7) do you feel: A) European, and B) Danish?' (See, for example, Egeberg, 1999). Participants' replies are aggregated and the medians of the responses are presented as evidence that people can identify (to various extents) with both their nation state and with Europe – in other words, that they can have multiple identities. The implicit assumptions embedded in these questions and the method of inquiry is that people 'have' one or more things called 'identities' (which may or may not be compatible, complementary, etc.), and that these can be measured. This sort of approach, also sometimes used by those who refer to themselves as social constructivists, fail to capture what is being accomplished through the construction of the subject of the so-called 'identity' (Zehfuss, 2001). Wittgenstein (1953) also warned against the essentialist error of treating all nouns as signifiers of some 'thing'. In the context of the present discussion, this implies that one cannot 'have' an 'identity' in the same way that one

can have a chair. Unlike 'chair', 'identity' is a concept without a 'signified' counterpart. In contrast, the word 'chair' is a concept (used to convey the notion of a general family of useful objects), but various instances of the concept can be pointed to: 'This is a chair!'

If 'identity' does not refer to any*thing*, then how can one understand what it means? To avoid reification, and to understand the meaning of concepts, such as 'identity', Wittgenstein illustrated the importance of looking at how a concept is being used within a specific context. This context specificity is important, because it alerts one to another potential error: that of assuming that a concept always 'has' the same meaning. Concepts do not 'have' a set meaning; there is no set of necessary and sufficient conditions that could be specified for what counts as an 'identity'. Rather, in examining how 'identity' is used in various contexts, we might discern a pattern of what Wittgenstein calls 'family resemblances'. Like some members of a biological family might have similar noses, others share a similar chin, and others have the same hair texture, so certain uses of a given concept will bear similarities with some other uses, but not with all uses. In summary, to understand what 'identity' means, we need to examine how it is used in specific contexts.

Austin (1961) pointed out that words are discursive tools that are used to accomplish various social tasks. Words, phrases and concepts do not have rigid meanings intrinsic to them, but rather people use them to *do* things. In order to understand what kind of social tasks words are accomplishing, one must understand the specific social context in which they are being employed. The utterance of words, imbued with meaning, Austin refers to as 'speech acts'. For example, when a hostess says, 'Would you please come to the table?' her speech act accomplishes an invitation to sit down. (Note that despite the fact that the utterance takes the form of a question, it is not designed to inquire.) In a similar manner, non-verbal actions imbued with meaning are also a form of discourse and can accomplish social tasks. The same invitation to sit could also be accomplished with the ringing of a bell or a certain wave of the hostess's hands in the direction of the table. These actions, verbal or non-verbal, are attributed a specific meaning – an invitation to sit around the table – in a specific context; this meaning is referred to as the 'social force' of the (speech) act. In a similar way one can ask questions about the 'social force' of the use of the concept,

'identity'. In order to understand what 'identity' means, one must examine the social tasks that the concept is being used to accomplish in a given context.

Attitudes

In order to understand 'EU identity', some scholars have proposed that it is important to consider not only what EU citizens say about their own identity but also what 'outsiders' say about the EU. In traditional psychology literature, such expressions of opinion have been referred to as 'attitudes' and have been analytically distinguished from 'identity'. Accordingly, attitudes have been defined as 'an evaluative disposition toward some object' (Zimbardo and Leippe, 1991:31). However, this literature commits the error of reification in that an attitude is treated as something that people 'have' and that can be tapped into, given the appropriate instruments.

In the presently advocated approach expressions of opinions or 'attitudes' are treated in the same manner as expressions of identity. In order to understand what a person 'means' when (s)he expresses an attitude toward the EU, one must identify what the expression is accomplishing in the given discursive context. This is true whether or not the person expressing the attitude is a citizen of the EU.

Individual - environment interaction

Accomplishing social tasks with words is a skill that people learn from infancy onward. As explained by Vygotsky (1978), this skill is acquired through interactions with others – starting with one's parents. Thus, the child who wants a cookie first learns to point to the cookie (act) to express her request and then learns to say, 'May I please have a cookie?' (speech act) The social force of the act and the speech act is a request. We continue to learn throughout adulthood, and the meaning of each new situation is socially defined through a process of negotiation. Through various acts and speech acts, the participants co-define what the episode at hand is about. However, the possibilities for definition are both enabled through and constrained by the discursive tools upon which one can draw. These discursive tools are part of the culture of any given society and are learned by individuals, as explained above. In certain cultures, to leave no tip at a restaurant will accomplish a clear expression of

disappointment or dismay. Thus, people learn from experience how to accomplish social tasks in a given culture. However, people also contribute to the (re-) construction of a culture, for example by generating discursive tools and interpreting acts in new ways.

The public/private distinction

A distinction is commonly made between what people say and what people 'really think'. Implicit in this distinction is the notion that there is some 'real' opinion or attitude, and that this differs or may differ from what is actually said. Furthermore, various tools are used to attempt to tap into the purported 'real' attitude. Following Vygotsky and Wittgenstein, private discourse (thoughts) and public discourse (talk) are treated on the same theoretical footing. That is, thinking follows the same process as talking. One uses the same discursive tools, and manipulates them in the same ways, privately as one does publicly. In private discourse, these discursive tools are also used to accomplish various tasks. Naturally, people can and do have private discourses that greatly differ from their public discourse(s). In such instances, what they are achieving publicly (e.g. the tasks they accomplish) differs from what they achieve privately. While it is possible to observe what is accomplished socially in public discourse, it is not possible to observe another person's private discourse or what is being accomplished through that discourse.

B. Legitimacy and Legitimisation

Like identity, 'legitimacy' is often treated as some*thing* that people, institutions, organisations or regimes 'have' or do not 'have'. Scholars have even distinguished between different types of 'legitimacy', such as 'input legitimacy', 'output legitimacy' and 'substantial legitimacy. However, like 'identity', 'legitimacy' is also a concept that is used by people to achieve social tasks. In fact, the concept is often used to legitimise or de-legitimise! Processes of legitimisation and de-legitimisation can be seen as being accomplished in two ways. First, legitimisation can occur through the attribution of rights and duties to an actor in a specific context. In contrast, de-legitimisation occurs when no rights or duties are attributed to an actor.

Second, an actor can be legitimised when positioned as having properly fulfilled the duties attributed to it. In the same vein, an actor is de-legitimised when it is positioned as having failed to fulfil it's attributed duties. For example, when a challenger says that the EU is not a legitimate political actor, (s)he is claiming that the EU does not have the right to make policy decisions. Through making this claim, (s)he is also making an accusation, as well as undermining the EU as an actor in the given context. In other words, these are the social forces of the challenger's utterances.

One of the main advantages of adopting the above discursive approach to both 'identity' and 'legitimacy' is that both concepts can be treated within one theoretical framework. The next section will present Positioning Theory as one possible theoretical and analytical framework that can further illuminate the social tasks being accomplished, including legitimising and de-legitimising, when people attribute various identities and attitudes to themselves and others.

II.   Positioning Theory

Positioning Theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999) was developed as a theoretical model for understanding how social acts are accomplished, and how meaning is constructed, discursively. While originally developed to conceptualise how meaning is given to persons (see also, Davies and Harré, 1999), it has also been applied to many other fields such as stereotypes (Van Langenhove and Harré, 1994), inter-group relations (Sui-Lan Tan and F.M. Moghaddam, 1999) as well as to other (constructed) actors, such as states and regions (see Slocum and Van Langenhove, 2004, and Harré and Moghaddam, 2003). Positioning Theory states that people draw upon two contextual factors to interpret the meaning of (speech) acts: the attributed positions of the actor(s) and the storyline at hand. The storyline is the meaning given to a sequence of past and/or projected future events that are conceived as an episode, such as a 'visit by a Head of State' or 'university instruction'. Certain actions and events can be identified as pertaining to, or even essential to, a given episode, while others are deemed irrelevant. For example, ordering and eating food is essential to a 'dining out' episode, but specific conversations that may occur within that episode are not intrinsic to it. Rather, the exchanges in a discussion over dinner

about the European cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed will be conceived as a separate episode; they are not inherent to the 'dining out' script. One's understanding of the relevant episode, or storyline, provides a context that, conversely, can be drawn upon to make sense of various (speech) acts.

Another important contextual factor is the 'position(s)' attributed to the actors(s) engaged in an episode. The concept of a 'position' is similar to that of Goffman's (1968) roles, but positions can be more fleeting in that interlocutors can change positions from one speech act to another. The position is a two-pronged concept that entails: A) the rights and duties and B) the social, psychological and moral characteristics that are attributed to an actor in a given episode. Both positions and storylines are indexed through speech acts, and they simultaneously provide the discursive context within which (speech) acts are interpreted.

Based upon the theoretical foundations of Positioning Theory, the *Positioning Triad* offers an analytical framework for conceptualising how meaning is co-constructed in social episodes (Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999). The Positioning Triad proposes an alternative ontology for the study of meaning-construction. The physical sciences are interested in objects and events as ontological entities, whereby space and time are the systems in which these entities are to be located, and causality is the purported relationship between the entities. In contrast, to study and understanding meaning, we are interested in (speech) acts as ontological entities. It is people who generate speech acts. However, to understand their (speech) acts, we must look not to their physical appearance but to the positions they have taken on or been attributed in a given context. This context is the relationship between the speech acts, which is the storyline. One speech act does not cause another; rather one speech act elicits another in the context of a particular storyline. Thus, if you compliment me, you are likely to elicit an expression of gratitude. The relationship between these speech acts is normative, not one of causation (e.g. cause and effect). A comparison between these two ontologies is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Two Ontologies (Adapted from Harré & Gillett, 1994: 29)

Ontologies	Locative Systems	Entities	Relations
Newtonian	Space and time	Objects and events	Causality
Discursive	Arrays of Positions	(Speech) acts	Storylines

Based upon this discursive ontological foundation, the Positioning Triad emphasizes the three mutually influential components of discourse as the building blocks of meaning: speech acts, positions, and storylines. While presented here as facets of discourse, it should be remembered that these components are subjective and dynamic. There is no 'real' storyline; rather, storylines can be abstracted (given knowledge of a cultural repertoire) and are 'verified' because they help to make sense of sequences of events.

Figure 1: The Positioning Triad: The Building Blocks of Meaning

Positions

Storylines   **Social Forces**
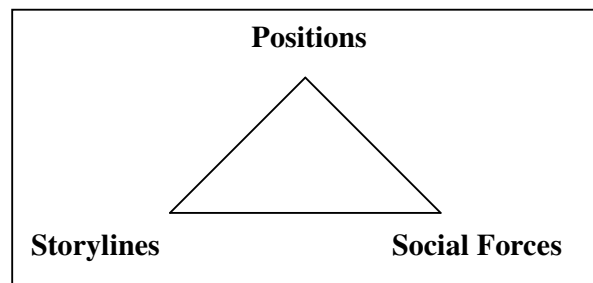
The position concept illuminates the canonical aspect generally implicit in storylines: embedded in storylines is not only the notion of what *is* happening (descriptive) but also what *should* happen (normative). In accordance with the normative aspect of storylines, the actors are attributed with rights and duties (type A positions). Furthermore, Slocum (2001) showed that type B positions are often attributed to actors in accordance to whether or not they are judged (or positioned) as having fulfilled these attributed duties. As explained above, these are two ways in which actors can be legitimised or de-legitimised.

An example of this (often implicit) canonical aspect of storylines can be found in the conflict over the cartoon depictions of the Prophet Mohammed. The printing of the cartoons was interpreted as an offence (social force) within the context of the canon (normative aspect of a storyline) that it is blasphemous to depict the Prophet. Given this, the episode was seen as a discursive war (descriptive aspect of the storyline): the depiction was interpreted as an attack, and it elicited counter-attacks. Thus, the actors took on the positions of attacker and victim, and the war storyline was played out. Given a different canon, that of freedom of speech, the storyline was of an exchange of views. Within this context, the act of publishing the cartoon depictions had a very different social force: by some it was interpreted as jest, by others as provocation – but as fair (albeit not wise or tasteful) provocation, rather than as an insult.

As alluded to in the example above, while actors can position each other, they can also reject or challenge a positioning. In denying that the publishing of a cartoon was an attack, a publisher contests another's positioning of him as an attacker – and concomitantly the positioning of his interlocutor as a victim. Positionings can also be challenged indirectly by suggesting an alternative storyline and positionings, as exemplified above. In this way meanings are co-constructed and social reality is negotiated.

III. An Empirical Study of Identity Construction and Legitimisation: The Danish Euro Referendum

This section presents as a case study the debates over whether or not Denmark should join the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), which took place prior to a referendum on the subject in September of 2000. Many people expressed surprise at the results of Denmark's euro referendum. The Danish people's decision not to join the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) was perhaps most astonishing because their currency, the krone, was already pegged to the euro through the exchange rate mechanism (ERM), which caused the Danish Krone to fluctuate with the euro (within a tight margin). Moreover, by not officially joining the EMU, Denmark remains

without representation in the decision-making process at the European Central Bank (ECB). Countless claims were made that the referendum result had nothing to do with economics but was more a matter of psychology and politics.

Just after Denmark's vote in 2000 against joining the EMU, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, leader of the pro-euro Venstre party, said in an interview with CNN that the main worries of citizens, and hence their reasons for voting against EMU membership, had to do with Danish "national identity" and "sovereignty."[2] Corroborating these statements are the results of a national survey taken after the referendum, according to which 33 percent of 'no' voters said that the reason for their vote was concern for preserving "Danish identity." 23 percent of "no" voters cited a lack of confidence in the European Union, and 37 percent favoured less integration with the rest of Europe.[3] Yet what do people mean by these statements? What do the "EU" and "Danish identity" mean to different people?

In accordance with the discursive approach, the meaning of these discursive expressions is the social tasks they are used to perform in specific contexts. The present study examines how "identity" concepts and other discursive expressions served to promote a 'yes' or a 'no' vote in the context of the Danish euro referendum. In so doing, particular attention will be placed upon how actors (attempt to) legitimise or de-legitimise the EU and other actors. The discourse surrounding Denmark's referendum in 2000 on EMU membership is analysed to abstract the main storylines and positions used in endorsing a "yes" or a "no" vote.

A. Documentary Material

The material collected dated from many months prior to the referendum to several months after it and totalled to several hundred documents, not all of which were actually used, because some were redundant or not directly relevant. The author

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[2]CNNeurope. In-Depth Specials: Denmark Decides. Interviews on video.
http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/
[3]Bering, Henrik. Denmark, the Euro, and Fear of the Foreign. *Policy Review*, Dec. 2000.

had to rely upon translations of documents in Danish. The documentary material included, including printed press, on-line newspapers and news agencies, political websites, and personal interviews. The press material was gathered from Danish news published in English, every English-speaking country in Europe (England, Ireland, Scotland) and even a source in India, in addition to American newspapers. Thus, while a few interviews were conducted with European authorities, this study is primarily an analysis of the "public" discourse. The author also gathered a plethora of information from EU publications, institutions specializing in international affairs, and interviews with various EU experts, in order to augment her understanding of the issues.

B. Analytical Method

The analysis procedure was iterative in nature, using the Positioning Triad as an analytical framework. The documents were eventually analysed for storylines, because the storyline analysis allows one to follow the positioning of the various actors engaged in the debate. The state, Denmark, and the supranational institution, the EU, are seen as pseudo-individuals, having moral and even psychological attributes. In other words, they are attributed 'actorness' and are positioned with rights and duties, and social, psychological and moral attributes. A full account of the analysis can be found in Slocum (2001). The part of the analysis presented here focuses upon two main storylines that can be abstracted from the public discourse around the Danish euro referendum. In these contexts, the analysis will reveal how social forces served to position, and thus legitimise or de-legitimise, various actors. The analysis also illustrates how various positionings are rejected and elicit counter-positionings. One of the storylines presented was evident in the discourse of those endorsing a "no" vote in the referendum, while the other storyline abstracted provided the context for those promoting a "yes" vote. The analysis provided is intended to be illustrative rather than comprehensive.

C. Positioning Analyses

Storyline One: The EU invasion and obliteration of Danish identity

The main storyline evident in expressions by euro-opponents was that the EU was attempting to invade Denmark and obliterate its identity. The "invasion" metaphor positions (type A positioning) Denmark as having a right to sovereignty, and the EU as having the duty to respect that sovereignty. Thus, within the context of this storyline, the EU is de-legitimised as a supra-national actor. Furthermore, the EU is positioned (type B positioning) as an aggressive and predatory "enemy," and Denmark as its passive "victim." The canonical part of this storyline positions (type A) Danish citizens as having the duty to defend their nation against invasion, which is to be accomplished through voting "no" in the referendum. Subsequently, those Danes who promote a "yes" vote, and thereby aid the enemy, are committing "national treachery." This canon poses a new problem: What is the motivation of yes-voters? The solution to this problem is presented in the subsidiary storyline that the EU is the project of elites, who designed it in order to harness even more wealth and power. This attributed motivation is elaborated upon in another subsidiary storyline: namely, that euro advocates are disguising a political project as an economic project. Finally, in the context of this "invasion" storyline, yes-voters reject the positioning of the EU/EMU and its advocates as elite. This storyline and its subsidiaries are elaborated and exemplified below.

In order to highlight the underlying assumptions, the "invasion and identity obliteration" storyline can be presented in three parts. The first part of the storyline says that, in the case of a "yes" vote, the EU would take over Denmark, violating its national sovereignty. The second part is that such a "yes" vote would also result in the obliteration of Denmark's national identity. A third part, in which the EU is associated with cultural/ethnic pluralism, is sometimes added, thus making it also a "cultural/ethnic takeover" storyline. As these three are commonly linked together, they are presented here as facets of the same storyline. However, it is important to note that variations of the storyline do not always entail all of these parts. First, an example of the complex version will be provided, and then an elaboration and further examples will be provided for each of the three parts: (a) "The EU invasion and

usurpation of Danish sovereignty," (b) "The obliteration of Danish national identity" and (c) "The cultural/ethnic takeover."

Pia Kjaersgaard, leader of the Danish People's Party (DPP) illustrated the combination of all three parts into a single complex storyline when she said

> The essential issue is the preservation of our sovereignty. The euro will erode our national authority and identity at a time when Denmark is already becoming more and more multiethnic and globalized.
> Do we want to lose control of our lives with more and more decisions made by the European Central Bank in Frankfurt or in Brussels? Do we want this multiculturalism, this multiethnicity, about which the country was never consulted? I say we don't want either.[4]

Kjaersgaard positions the European Union in direct opposition to Denmark. In her positionings, The EU is portrayed as a conglomerate of menaces, which include the euro, "immigration," "multiethnicity"/ "multiculturalism," and "globalization." Thus, in Ms. Kjaersgaard's positionings, "Denmark" is defined as only the "Old Danes": Danish immigrants and their descendents are excluded. In contrast, "New Danes" are part of the "EU" threat, which is summed up with the terms "multiethnicity" and "multiculturalism," and accompanied with the image of hordes of additional immigrants flooding into the country.

Another part of the threat is what Kjaersgaard refers to with the vague term "globalization." Kjaersgaard links globalization to the euro, along with the "immigration," "multiethnicity" and "multiculturalism" menaces, and she suggests that if Denmark joins the EMU, it would be opening its city gates to the enemy. The EU (and everything with which it is associated in this storyline, particularly the currency) is thus positioned as an enormous aggressive enemy poised to consume its small prey, "Denmark" (read: "Old Danes"). Further examples and elaborations of this broad storyline will now be examined in its three parts.

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[4]The New York Times. 10 September 2000. A Danish Identity Crisis: Are We Europeans? By Roger Cohen.

(a) "The EU invasion and usurpation of Danish sovereignty"

In a symbolic manifestation of the "EU invasion" storyline, the Danish People's Party (DPP) kicked off its anti-EMU campaign on the 60th anniversary of the German invasion of Denmark and accused (illocutionary force) their Prime Minister, Poul Rasmussen, of "national treachery" for his pro-euro stance.[5] Since, according to the "invasion" storyline, one's duty is to vote against the euro in order to protect Denmark, those who promote the euro are positioned as treacherous. Another example is evident in DPP's members' comparison the euro project to Hitler's failed attempt to foist the Reichsmark on Europe. Mogens Camre, one of the party's European MPs, said, "The technique is about combining power. Hitler wanted to combine power in his hands and the European Commission wants to combine power in its hands."[6]

The "invasion" metaphor is elaborated in accusations (illocutionary force) that that position the EU as undemocratic. This is evidenced in the passage above with Kjaersgaard's utterance: 'Do we want this multiculturalism, this multiethnicity, about which the country was never consulted?' in which Kjaersgaard accuses the EU of imposing these menaces (multiculturalism and multiethnicity) upon Denmark. Kjaersgaard interpreted the so-called "sanctions" against Austria, which were implemented by the fourteen other EU members when Austria elected Jörg Haider's Freedom Party (to which the DPP has been likened) to government, as a "coup against democracy." While positioning the EU as militant in this coup metaphor, she also positions it as deceitful, saying that the sanctions are an instance of the EU's "true" undemocratic nature being revealed. Kjaersgaard also condemns (illocutionary force) the EU of playing "Big Brother," thereby positioning it as fascist and oppressive. A Danish newspaper reports:

> Accusing the EU of adopting a big brother role of sovereign state, Kjaersgaard claims that the boycott of Austria has revealed the [European] Union's true colours.
>
> 'And they are not attractive,' said Kjaersgaard.
>
> Writing in weekly newspaper *Sondagsavisen*, Kjaersgaard interpreted the boycott as a clear message from Brussels that current EU leaders are prepared to abandon democracy without hesitation, if such a move promotes their own political ends.

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[5] cphpost.periskop.dk 14 April 2000. Euro fight warms up. By Howard R. Knowles.

[6] http://dawn.com 28 August 2000. Emotion driving 'no' campaign: Denmark's euro vote. By Andrew Osborne. http://www.dawn.com/2000/08/28/int10.htm

> 'Social Democrats still consider it a cardinal sin for anyone else but a Social Democrat to gain power in Europe. The debate we have entertained here in Denmark during the last decade, as to whether or not the EU will eventually usurp member nations' sovereignty, has become null and void. With this Austrian boycott, there is nothing left to argue about.'
>
> Kjaersgaard also pointed out that she herself has often been accused of scare mongering because of her repeated warnings that the European Monetary Union - purportedly an economic union - is in fact a thinly disguised political union. 'Despite endless claims by our Finance Miniser, Marianne Jelved, to the contrary. Of course it is a political union. The facts speak for themselves. The fact that fourteen EU nations see no problem whatsoever in suspending democracy in a European country, just because it doesn't suit them, is both a tragedy and an outrage.'
>
> Kjaersgaard sees the Austrian boycott as an attempted coup against democracy in Europe by the Union's leading Social Democrat heads of state. 'Despite the fact that all recent opinion polls indicate they are becoming a pitiful minority, these Social Democrats still consider it a cardinal sin for anyone else but a Social Democrat to gain power in Europe.'[7]

The positioning of the EU as undemocratic and non-transparent is echoed by Dorte Dinesen, 52, local councillor, who said, 'My concern is that too many decisions in Europe are taken behind closed doors. The bureaucrats aren't properly accountable'.[8]

Ole Andersen, a soldier working for NATO, mentioned the "sanctions" against Austria as evidence of the EU's disproportionate and threatening power. He also condemns (illocutionary force) the EU as the tool of German and French hegemony and warns (illocutionary force) of the obliteration of Denmark in the case of a "yes" vote. He said will be voting "no" because

> He thinks Brussels already has too much power. He sees the euro as the next step towards a United States of Europe dominated by the French and Germans, and for him the European Union's interference in Austria's internal affairs was the final straw.
>
> 'I don't think they can decide everything in Brussels and that's the way we are going now,' he explained. Vote 'yes', he predicts, and in another 30 years Denmark will hardly exist.[9]

Here, the EU is positioned as a power-mongrel intent on usurping Denmark. Using another metaphor for the same storyline, Peter Skaarup, a DPP member of Parliament, said that there exists "the growing anxiety that we won't be masters in our own house

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[7] cphpost.periskop.dk. 11 February 2000. Austrian boycott an outrage, Kjaersgaard says. By Lewis Demat.

[8] CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.

[9] *The Times*. 16 September 2000. To be or not to be against the krone. By Martin Fletcher. http://www.nejtillemu.com/danskdebatt.htm

anymore."[10]

In the context of this three-part storyline, these positionings serve to challenge the legitimacy of, or to de-legitimise, the EU. The EU is positioned as undemocratic and unduly powerful in a culture where democracy and the balance of powers are nonnegotiable norms. Implicitly, the EU is being positioned as NOT having the right to make certain governance decisions for Denmark. Accordingly, Denmark is positioned as having the right to determine its own currency, as well as whether or not it wishes to succumb to a trio of other menaces. Concomitantly, the EU is positioned with the duty to respect and accommodate these wishes. Through accusations that the EU has not fulfilled these attributed duties, because it has attempted to forcefully impose undesired phenomena upon Denmark and thus transgressed its rights, its legitimacy is further eroded. This is accomplished within the broader context of advocacy for a 'no' vote in the referendum, which is a social task that these positionings and storyline achieve.

Rejection of a Positioning

Resisting the positioning of Denmark as the vulnerable victim, within the "EU invasion" storyline, Lars Kjolbye, international secretary of the Danish Conservative Party,

> ...insists Denmark will not be giving up sovereignty. 'Do you think the French and Germans would abolish the franc and mark if they thought they were giving away their sovereignty?' he laughs.[11]

Similarly, Gitte Petersen, 43, nursing home manager told CNN:

> I will vote yes. I like Europe, I feel very positive about it. Why shouldn't we be a big union? I don't think we will lose our sovereignty. We are Danes and we will always be Danes, whatever currency we have. I think if we are going to be part of the EU we need to be a proper part of it. We can't stand out.[12]

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[10]*The New York Times*. 10 September 2000. A Danish Identity Crisis: Are We Europeans? By Roger Cohen.

[11]http://dawn.com 28 August 2000. Emotion driving 'no' campaign: Denmark's euro vote. By Andrew Osborne. http://www.dawn.com/2000/08/28/int10.htm

[12]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop. http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

(b) "The obliteration of Danish national identity"

In examining the "identity obliteration" part of this storyline, it becomes evident how "Denmark" or being "Danish," is being defined in the context of the broader storyline. With campaign slogans such as " Vote Danish - Vote No," "Keep the Krone - Vote Danish,"[13] and "For Krone and Fatherland"[14] the DPP, led by Kjaersgaard, suggests that a particular currency is essential to being Danish. This positions Denmark in opposition to the EMU, since it suggests that in order to be Danish, one must vote against the euro. The implication is that joining the EMU would entail an "erosion" of one's Danish identity, because the krone would be supplanted by the euro. This storyline is echoed at a public hearing held during the run-up to Denmark's euro referendum at Christiansborg Castle, home of the Danish parliament (Folketinget), when (as reported by a news agency),

> A raven-haired lady in a cardigan, more grandmother than grand-inquisitor, seizes the microphone, her voice choked with emotion. 'I would rather give up my soul than give up the krone,' she insists. A sea of gray and blond heads nod in agreement.[15]

Here the speaker suggests that the consequences of giving up the krone would be worse than those of giving up one's soul. Thus, it has the social force of a warning not to vote to join the EMU.

This "identity obliteration" part of the storyline is evident in expressions from Danes interviewed by CNN. For example, when asked how he would vote in the referendum, Lykke Joergensen, 20, said

> I am probably going to vote no. To be honest I haven't followed the arguments that closely -- it is more of a gut reaction. *I am just afraid that if we join a single currency, we will lose our sense of identity.* It is going to be very close, but I suspect that the yes vote will win.[16] (Emphasis added.)

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[13]cphpost.periskop.dk 14 April 2000. Euro fight warms up. By Howerd R. Knowles.

[14]*The New York Times*. 10 September 2000. A Danish Identity Crisis: Are We Europeans? By Roger Cohen.

[15]28 August 2000. Emotion driving 'no' campaign: Denmark's euro vote. By Andrew Osborne. http://www.dawn.com/2000/08/28/int10.htm

[16]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop. http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

Niels Kiehn, 62, art teacher, echoes the notion:

> I am definitely voting no. As an old man I am very afraid of the effect joining a single currency will have on my pension. At the moment old people in Denmark get a good pension. If we join the euro, however, everything will be brought down to the lowest common denominator. *I am also afraid of the effect it will have on our culture, that we will lose our identity.* If it is a yes vote I will cry.[17] (Emphasis added.)

In this latter utterance, identity is explicitly linked with "culture," which, to some people, means the culture of "Old Danes". Here it becomes evident that although for some Danes, the krone itself may be essential to their identity, for others it is a symbol of many other values that are considered intrinsic to Danish identity. According to them, giving up the krone would entail giving up these values. This conception is elaborated by DPP board member, Carl Christian Ebbesen, when he outlines his party's case for a 'no' vote:

> We don't look at it as an economic project. *We are fighting to keep the krone and to keep the values of Danish society. By that we mean keeping control of Danish society in Danish hands.* Denmark will have to be like other European countries, and we don't want that. If there is a 'Yes' vote, the politicians will create a federal union, but *we like to be Danes and do it our way.*[18]

The storyline positions the EMU, and "other European countries" as contrary to being Danish and to Danish values. Implicitly, the meaning given to voting 'yes' in the referendum is that it is to relinquish Danish values. Here, Denmark is positioned in opposition to the EU, and this conception of 'Danish identity' serves to encourage a 'no' vote in the referendum. As illustrated below, the concept of 'Danish identity' has also been given a different meaning – one that is compatible with or complementary to 'European identity', and it has also been used to encourage a 'yes' vote in the euro referendum.

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[17]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.
http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/
[18]http://dawn.com 28 August 2000. Emotion driving 'no' campaign: Denmark's euro vote. By Andrew Osborne. http://www.dawn.com/2000/08/28/int10.htm

Rejection of a Positioning

The oppositional positioning of the EMU and Denmark, in the context of this 'Identity Obliteration' part of the storyline, was countered by Denmark's Economics Ministry. The Ministry rushed out a publication demonstrating that a picture of the Danish Queen Margarethe would appear on one side of the coins (all euro notes are the same). According to Economics Minister Marianne Jelved, "The sight of the queen on the coin helps calm fears about loss of identity."[19] Although it rejects the oppositional positioning of Danish and European identities, this discourse actually maintains the conceptions of "Danish identity" apparent in this broad "EU invasion and Danish identity obliteration" storyline. It does not re-define 'Danish', but rather portrays existing images of Denmark as compatible with the EU/EMU. Thus, the meaning of Danish identity offered by the DPP is symbolized with the queen and integrated into the euro currency.

The oppositional positioning of Danish identity and EMU membership is also rejected by Member of Parliament, Karen Johanne Klint, 43, who told CNN:

> I am a yes voter. I can understand why a lot of people are frightened about voting yes, but *we will not lose our identity if we join the single currency*, nor will our services be affected. I believe we will actually be better off in Denmark if we join the euro.[20]
> (Emphasis added)

Similarly, Claus Larsen-Jensen, Social Democratic MP, also claimed that there was no question of loss of national identity saying, "We are still Danes and the Germans are still Germans."[21] Finally, the link between the krone and Danish identity is also challenged by nursing home manager Gitte Petersen, 43, who said:

> I will vote yes. I like Europe, I feel very positive about it. Why shouldn't we be a big union? I don't think we will lose our sovereignty. *We are Danes and we will always be Danes, whatever currency we have.* I think if we are going to be part of the EU we

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[19]*The New York Times*. 10 September 2000. A Danish Identity Crisis: Are We Europeans? By Roger Cohen.

[20]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop. http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

[21]*The Irish Times*. 26 September 2000. Contradictory polls for Danish euro vote. By Deaglán de Bréadún.

need to be a proper part of it. We can't stand out.[22] (Emphasis added)

In these utterances, the euro and EMU membership are no longer positioned in opposition to Danish identity.

(c) "The cultural/ethnic takeover"

As was exemplified above, in this broad storyline, "Danish identity" is tightly associated with an "Old Danish" culture. In this static conception of culture and identity, other cultures and ethnic groups are seen as non-Danish, and their influence on Danish society is seen as an "erosion" of Danish culture and identity (rather than, for instance, as an enrichment to it). While some political leaders distanced the convictions of themselves and their parties from those of the DPP, the quotes of Ms. Kjaersgaard presented above clearly illustrate how people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds are positioned as a threat to Danish identity. Another example of this positioning comes from Social Democratatic Interior Minister Karen Jesperson who, *in the middle of the euro campaign* said, according to a news service, "that she 'did not wish to live in' a multicultural nation 'where the cultures were considered equal.' She suggested isolating refugees with criminal records on a 'deserted island'"[23] While the former utterance expresses that people from other cultures are inferior and undesired in Denmark, the latter utterance blames (illocutionary force) refugees for a bulk of the crime. These kinds of hostile utterances performatively position "Old Danes" not only in opposition to "New (Not) Danes" but also to other people from different cultural backgrounds, particularly refugees. In the context of a euro referendum, these utterances also imply that joining the EMU will result in more immigrants entering Denmark and (hence) increased crime.

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[22]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.
http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/
[23]Townhall.com. 31 January 2001. A warning from Denmark. By Phyllis Schlafly. Copley News Service.

Storyline Two: European integration promotes peace, tolerance, democracy and human rights

In the context of the Danish euro referendum, the storyline that 'European integration promotes peace, tolerance, democracy and human rights' was evident in the discourse of some proponents of a 'yes' vote. It is also apparent in the Treaty on European Union (the Maastricht Treaty), which established the EMU and was formally inaugurated in November 1993. It supports the ideas of Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet, that ever-increasing economic integration is the best approach to political integration (called the functionalist approach).[24] The storyline that provided the meaning for political integration was that only a supranational organization could eliminate the threat of war between European countries and their peoples. Passages from the introduction to the Maastricht Treaty highlight this storyline:

> Recalling the historic importance of the ending of the division of the European continent and the need to create firm bases for the construction of the future Europe,
> Confirming their attachment to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law,
> *Desiring to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions,...*
> Resolved to implement a common foreign and security policy including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence*, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence* in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world,...
> Resolved to continue the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, ...
> [The members] have decided to establish a European Union....
> [Emphasis added]

According to this storyline, European integration promotes an independent European identity that supports liberty, democracy, human rights, peace, security and progress, as well as openness toward and respect between all peoples. In the context of this storyline, advocates of European integration are promoting peace, democracy, and human rights. A common "European identity" is positioned as complementary to other (national) identities, in that all Europeans' histories, cultures and traditions are

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[24]Urwin, D. (2001) "European Union". Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia 2001.

said to be respected. The canonical aspect of this storyline positions (type A) all Europeans as having the duty to promote the EU and its declared values.

This storyline is also symbolized on the Euro currency. The European Central Bank offers the following description of the banknotes:

> On the front of the banknotes, windows and gateways symbolise the European spirit of openness and co-operation. The 12 stars of the European Union represent the dynamism and harmony between European nations. To complement these designs, the reverse of each banknote features a bridge. The bridges symbolise the close co-operation and communication between Europe and the rest of the world.[25]

The euro coins also are imbued with meaning. Every member state was permitted to design one side of the coins that it issued, while the other side of each coin is the same for all countries. The common side is described as follows:

> The 1,2, and 5 cent coins show Europe's place in the world and the 10, 20 and 50 cent coins depict Europe as a group of *individual* nations. A united Europe without frontiers is represented on the EUR 1 and EUR 2 coins.[26] [Emphasis added]

In these descriptions, the EU is positioned as respectful of the individuality of the member states, and thus not in opposition to them. In the context of discussions over whether or not the nation states would disappear in the EU, this positions a 'European identity' as complementary to 'national identities', rather than obliterating them. In addition, the union is positioned as united, dynamic, harmonious, and open to and cooperative with the rest of the world.

Several people interviewed by CNN before the referendum also positioned the EMU/EU as a promoter of peaceful relations and tolerance of people from different cultures. For example, Mohammed Qauoom, 34, taxi driver, said,

> I will vote yes. We are just a small country. We need to be in the euro. We cannot survive outside it on our own. *I fear what will happen if Denmark withdraws into itself. It will not be good for people like me. Many people here do not accept me, even though I have been in Denmark for 26 years. I feel that if we pull away from Europe those sorts of sentiments will become stronger.*[27]

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[25]http://www.euro.ecb.int/en/section/testnotes.html

[26]http://www.euro.ecb.int/en/section/euro/banknote.html

[27]CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.

(Emphasis added)

This man's utterance also positions Denmark and its citizens as intolerant of people from different cultures. He also implies that EMU membership would help counter this tendency, thereby positioning the EU as promoting tolerance. Similarly, Jens Hansen, 73, politician, and Dagomar Hansen, 71, kindergarten teacher, said:

> We will both vote yes. We live on the German border and feel that good relations with our European neighbours are healthy and important. We need to be close to Europe. We cannot go forward on our own. We are too small a country.[28]

These citizens position the EU as promoting "healthy" and "good relations" with European neighbors. They suggest that voting "no" would forge a chasm between Denmark and the rest of Europe. Finally, Dorte Dinesen, 52, local councilor, also positions the EU as promoting tolerance when she says,

> We see a lot of racism and intolerance in Europe, and I think the best way of tackling that is to have greater integration.[29]

Her account also implies that Denmark, if not part of the EMU, will be more vulnerable to racism and intolerance.

The positioning of Danes as intolerant was echoed by some immigrants living in Denmark. While Danish newspapers report on crime and school disruption by "second generation immigrants," politicians politely refer to this group as "New Danes." Some say that those who use the term "New Danes" really mean "not Danes."[30] This meaning is corroborated by Lusin Canacki, an immigrant who has lived in Denmark since she was six, and in promoting a 'yes' vote in the referendum, said she believes that Denmark is divided into "us" and "them." She said,

> We are told to get an education, learn the language, learn Danish habits. But when we do, we are still one of 'them.' People I know come up to me and say, 'It's not people like you, Lusin, that are a problem, it's all the others.' But politicians and newspapers don't say 'Except Lusin.' We're all lumped together.

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http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

[28] CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.
http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

[29] CNN.com In-Depth Specials - Denmark Decides. Vox pop.
http://europe.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/denmark/

[30] The New York Times. 10 September 2000. A Danish Identity Crisis: Are We Europeans? By Roger Cohen.

Canacki herewith expresses discontent (social force) that many Danes have positioned her as a non-Dane, and thus positions Danes (which here excludes herself) as intolerant. The canonical aspect is that people have the duty to be tolerant and accept people with different backgrounds, especially those who adapt to the local (Danish) culture. 'Old Danes' are positioned as having violated this duty, and are thus de-legitimised. In contrast, the EU is positioned as promoting tolerance and thus as fulfilling it's attributed duties. In this manner, the EU is legitimised (social force).

In accordance with the canon of this storyline, those who vote for EMU membership are positioned as "good Europeans," and those who resist integration are positioned as "second rate". An example of this positioning comes from Ralf Pittelkow, former adviser to Rasmussen, who, as reported by the *St. Petersburg Times*, said

> A Danish 'no' would have a short-term impact on the euro, but the broader repercussions would be longer lasting. 'In the longer term, this would be another step in the direction of a two-speed Europe. I think the euro zone will be the power engine in the future and those left outside will be, let's say, second-rate members,' he told Reuters Television.[31]

Here, increased integration in Europe is characterized as "progress," and those who are hesitant are positioned as inhibitors of that progress. Even before the euro referendum had taken place, the author of an *Irish Times* article positioned the Danes as a repeated nuisance to EU project:

> It is referendum time in Denmark and (once again) the Danes have an opportunity to upset the EU apple cart - this time by rejecting the euro. ... In Denmark this is nothing new. Danes have always been among the most ambivalent of Europeans. The country entered the EEC in 1973 with Ireland and Britain but did so only to safeguard its lucrative bacon exports to the UK. ... In 1992 Danish voters rocked the European Union to its core by rejecting the Maastricht Treaty on stronger European integration by a slim margin. This decision threatened the whole future of European co-operation as the treaty was legally inoperative without the Danish government's signature. Denmark's snub to Europe triggered a dramatic sequence of events.[32]

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[31]*The St. Petersburg Times*. The Rest: EU Holds Breath On Denmark Euro Vote. 29 September 2000. By Ian Geoghegan. http://www.sptimes.ru/archive/times/607/rest/r_318.htm
[32]*The Irish Times*. 9 September 2000. Danish euro vote divides families. By Clare McCarthy.

The same storyline and positionings are evident in another *Irish Times* article, in which Danes are again positioned as stubborn inhibitors of "progress":[33]

> Memories have been revived of Denmark's Maastricht referendum in June 1992 when the Danes refused to ratify the treaty laying the foundations of the single currency. The decision brought political progress in the European Union to a standstill for a year, while the Danish government negotiated a special deal, including an opt-out from the euro.[34]

In equating regional integration with 'progress', all actors are positioned with the duty to facilitate regional integration. In this storyline, Denmark is de-legitimised by being positioned as an inhibitor to progress and thus as transgressing its duty to facilitate 'progress'. In contrast, the EU is legitimised in that it epitomises this 'progress' and is implicitly attributed the right and duty to push for further regional integration.

Rejection of a Positioning

In the context of this storyline, Danes are "bad Europeans," who would be even worse if they reject the euro. This positioning was contradicted by some Danes who positioned themselves as "good Europeans" despite their reluctance to join the EMU. Holger Nielsen, the leader of the anti-euro Danish Socialist People's Party, attempted to distance himself and his party from the DPP and rejects the positioning of "no" voters as xenophobic, right-wing, bad Europeans, as reported in the following article:

> 'The euro is not a question of being conservative but of democracy. It's important for us to stress that it's not a right-wing or xenophobic position. It's not fair to say that resistance is built on right-wing values,' he said in an interview with *The Observer*. Denmark could be in the EU and outside the euro, he adds, and still be 'a good European'.[35]

Similarly, Trine Pertou Mach, a board member of the June Movement, opposes joining the EMU. She also works in Brussels as a policy officer and is assigned to the

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[33]The concept of "progress" is inextricably bound with a particular storyline about the connection between the past and present, as well as a projection about what the direction of the future should (normative) be. Thus, a reference to something as "progress" or a prevention thereof necessarily contains, albeit implicitly, not only a storyline but also an *evaluative conclusion.*

[34]*The Irish Times*. 19 August 2000. Danish euro result will affect whole EU. By Quentin Peel.

[35]http://dawn.com 28 August 2000. Emotion driving 'no' campaign: Denmark's euro vote. By Andrew Osborne. http://www.dawn.com/2000/08/28/int10.htm

preparation of a EU Intra-Government Conference on modernizing EU organization to permit enlargement. She said, "We're very European-minded, but people see this vote as an opportunity to say we don't want any more integration. We stop here."[36] Here, the positioning of Danes as having the duty to promote integration by voting 'yes' to join the EMU is rejected, which challenges the canonical storyline that further regional integration is 'progress'. Danes are positioned as being 'good Europeans' while still having the right to vote 'no' in the referendum, which legitimises Denmark as a non-member of the EMU.

IV.   Summary and Implications for Practice

The above analysis of the discourse surrounding the Danish euro referendum in 2000 has illustrated how 'identities' are generated in discourse through acts of positioning, and how these positionings serve to legitimise or de-legitimise various actors. These acts were performed in the course of endorsing a 'yes' or a 'no' vote in Denmark's election on EMU membership. Those endorsing a 'no' vote de-legitimised the EU by positioning it as lacking the right to govern Denmark, or as having violated its duties towards Denmark and the Danish. They legitimised Denmark by positioning it as having the right and duty to stipulate its policies and govern itself without interference from the EU, as well as by positioning it as fulfilling its duties well. Those endorsing a 'yes' vote de-legitimised Denmark by positioning it as not fulfilling its duties (*inter alia* to respect the rights of immigrants). These yes-voters legitimised the EU by positioning it with the right and duty to govern, and as fulfilling these attributed duties. Such positionings were accomplished within the contexts of two different storylines: 'The EU invasion and obliteration of Danish identity' and 'European integration promotes peace, tolerance, democracy and human rights'. The analysis demonstrates how the 'identity' concept was used in various ways, and various actors were positioned and contested positionings, in the context of endorsing a 'yes' or 'no' vote.

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[36]*International Herald Tribune*. 18 September 2000. Denmark's Vote on Euro: Emotions Over Economics. By John Vinocur. http://www.nejtillemu.com/danskdebatt.htm

The analysis presented here also illustrates *how* meaning is constructed and social reality is negotiated in practice. An understanding of this process is essential to becoming a co-artist of social reality, rather then being a victim of it. By being aware of how the ends – the social forces and social realities – are achieved through one's discourse, one can design more purposefully. The ultimate aim of social scientists should be to illuminate this process (and the concomitant consequences). Unfortunately, much of contemporary social science is descriptive of states and, in its un-reflected acceptance of social categories and concepts, it entrenches social realities (Beck, 1998), rather than offering society a mechanism for its own liberation. The present paper has attempted to provide such a mechanism in the form of a conceptual framework for illuminating the processes of social reality construction.

In illuminating the construction process, this work supports the claim expressed in the Human Development Report 2004 that it is a myth to believe that people's ethnic or regional identities compete with their attachment to a state. However, rather than saying that individuals can and do 'have' multiple identities, it could more accurately be said that individuals can draw upon multiple identity concepts and conceive them within a storyline that portrays them as compatible. They can also be conceived and portrayed as incompatible, which accomplishes a different social task. In other words: identity has an element of choice. Regions do not 'produce' identities, but new geo-political constructions can be drawn upon as tools in the creation of new discursive spaces, which people use to position (or attribute identities to) themselves and others. Thus, when people in a given context choose to position themselves as European, they are actually creating 'Europe'. This implies that the legitimacy of Europe also needs to be approached as a social process, whereby the issue is not whether Europe has or lacks 'legitimacy', but rather what social tasks are being accomplished by discourses on European legitimacy and identity.

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