NATIONAL IDENTITY AND IMMIGRATION
in Denmark and the United States

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National Identitet og Indvandring – I Danmark og USA

Indvandring og integration er to af de mest aktuelle emner i den vestlige verden, og der er en udbredt frygt for at en stadig indvandring vil true nationernes stabilitet og sammenhængskraft, medmindre der gøres en større indsats for at integrere indvandrerne som velfungerende borgere der kan bidrage til nationens vækst.

Denne opgave er baseret på en opfattelse af, at det overordnede success-kriterie for integration er, at så mange mennesker som muligt føler sig som fuldt ud ligeværdige samfundsborgere og medlemmer af nationen, og at samfundet kun opfatter mennesker som udlændinge hvis disse selv opfatter sig som udlændinge. Hypotesen er at national identitet er afgørende for om dette kan lykkes, og opgavens hovedformål er derfor at undersøge hvilken rolle national identitet spiller i forhold til integrationen af udlændinge. Sammenligningen mellem netop Danmark og USA er interessant, fordi det er to vestlige lande der har meget til fælles, men som er meget forskellige med hensyn til indvandringshistorie og national identitet.

Til at begynde med defineres og diskuteres begreberne 'indentitet', 'integration' og 'national identitet'. Desuden defineres 'inkluderende' elementer i den nationale identitet som elementer alle kan blive en del af, og som derfor er inkluderende i forhold til udlændinges optagelse som medlemmer af nationen. 'Ekskluderende' elementer defineres som elementer det kan være meget svært, eller umuligt, for udlændinge at blive en del af. Baseret på tre anerkendte integrationsteorier fremsat af sociologen Milton Gordon, defineres tre forskellige tilgange til integration: 'konformitet', 'smeltedigel' og 'multikulturalisme'.[1]

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[1] Milton M. Gordon. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964), 107-108.

Hovedvægten i opgaven ligger på en gennemgang af henholdsvis Danmarks og USA's historie, for at belyse hvordan vigtige historiske begivenheder har bidraget til dannelsen af national identitet, og hvordan den nationale identitet har påvirket indvandring og integration. Forskellene mellem Danmark og USA diskuteres, med særligt henblik på hvad Danmark kan lære af USA's lange historie som indvandrernation og de forskelle der er mellem de to landes nationale identiteter.

Gennem en case om amerikanere af indisk afstaming, diskuteres begrebet 'mønsterminoritet' ('model minority'), som dækker over minoritetsgrupper der ses som et forbillede for andre, fordi de udmærker sig økonomisk, uddannelsesmæssigt og socialt. Denne case fungerer også som en anledning til at undersøge stereotyper omkring indvandrere, og den sammenhæng der er mellem disse stereotyper og stereotyper i den nationale identitet. Gennem hele casen drages sammenligninger mellem USA og Danmark.

I løbet af opgaven gives der eksempler på hvordan en opdeling af samfundet i forskellige grupper kan føre til en splittelse af nationen som kan have særdeles alvorlige konsekvenser. Der fokuseres i denne sammenhæng særligt på opdelingen mellem 'os' – den hjemmehørende befolkning[2] – og 'dem' – udlændingene.

Konklusionen er, at en inklusiv national identitet er nødvendig for at udlændinge kan blive integreret som fuldgyldige medlemmer af nationen. I USA er kernen i den nationale identitet klart defineret gennem en Amerikansk forfatning der er inkluderende i forhold til alle mennesker. Kernen i Danmarks nationale identitet er aldrig blevet klar defineret, og det er derfor op til alle danskere at bidrage til at definere en national identitet som kan inkludere alle, uanset etnicitet, hudfarve, religion og kulturel baggrund.

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[2] I denne opgave defineres 'hjemmehørende befolkning' som de mennesker der af sig selv og resten af samfundet opfattes som fuldgyldige medlemmer af nationen – uanset om de er indvandrere, eller indfødte der kan spore deres rødder i nationen mange generationer tilbage.

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1 Introduction

Immigration is one of the most prominent issues in the public debate of the Western world. There is a widespread fear in Western nations that a continuing influx of immigrants will threaten the internal stability and cohesion of the nation state, unless a special effort is made to ensure that they become fully functioning citizens, who will contribute to the overall well-being and progress of the nation. Successful integration is key, but what it means and how it is achieved is a topic of heated debate.

This paper is based on the belief that the overall goal of successful integration is that as many people as possible are considered part of the native population[3], rather than foreigners, and that only those people who consider themselves as foreigners should be considered foreigners by the rest of society. Regardless of the nature and attitudes of immigrants, this requires a native population that is willing to allow foreigners to become part of the nation as equal citizens and fellow countrymen and women. A hypothesis of this paper is that the national identity is a deciding factor in this process.

Denmark and the United States are both Western nations that have a lot in common, but they are very different both in terms of national identity and immigration history. The United States has a very long history of immigration, which is central to the national identity, whereas Denmark has a very short history of immigration. Therefore it is natural, as a Dane, to look towards the US in order to see if there are any lessons to be learned.

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the role of national identity in the integration of foreigners in Denmark and the United States.

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[3] In this paper, the 'native population' is defined as consisting of all people who are considered full members of the nation, by themselves and the rest of society – regardless of whether they are immigrants, or native-born citizens who can trace their origins in the nation many generations back.

2 Method

The starting point of the paper will be a discussion of the concepts and integration theories that will be used throughout the paper. The main part of the paper will consist of a chapter on the United States followed by a chapter on Denmark. The final part of the paper will be a case study on Indian-Americans as a model minority.

The chapter on the United States will contain a discussion of some of the main characteristics of US national identity and how they came to be – based on a history of the United States with a strong focus on immigration. The thoroughness and detail with which the US immigration history will be covered serves a dual purpose – since the immigration history is not only relevant in regard to current immigration issues but also central to the national identity.

The chapter on Denmark will contain a discussion of some of the main characteristics of Danish national identity and their historical origins – based primarily on important events in Danish history from the War of 1864 and onwards. Throughout the chapter on Denmark, the chapter on the United States will be used as the basis for a comparative discussion of the differences in history and national identity and the effect these differences have in regard to integration. The chapter will be finished off with a closer look at current Danish immigration politics.

In order to examine more concretely how national identity affects integration, I have chosen to include a case study on Indian-Americans. Indian-Americans are often described as being a 'model minority', and the concept of the model minority is particularly relevant in the context of this paper – in the sense that it raises questions about the goals of integration and highlights the importance of stereotypes. The correlation between ethnic stereotypes and national identity stereotypes is a very important factor in regard to integration. Throughout the case study, comparisons will be made between the United States and Denmark.

3 Theory and Concepts

Under the heading of '**Integration**', I will start off with a theoretical look at the process of integrating a foreigner into an established society. What does this integration process entail, and more specifically: what are the potential problems involved, and how is integration affected by stereotypes and group mentality.

Under the heading of '**Identity**', I will take a closer look at the concept of identity – particularly the identity of individuals and groups, interactions between groups, and the effects of these interactions on both the individual and group levels. The focus will be on interactions between the majority group and the foreigner group.

Under the heading of '**National Identity'**, I will define what national identity means, and how it will be used in this paper. Central to this are the concepts of **exclusive** versus **inclusive** national identity traits.

As the final part of the theoretical basis for this paper, I will define three different theories of integration: **conformity**, **melting pot**, and **multiculturalism**.

3.1 Concepts

3.1.1 Integration

The introduction of a foreigner into an established society is bound to cause some disruption, but the degree of disruption will obviously vary greatly, depending on both the nature of the foreigner and of the society into which the foreigner is introduced. If the foreigner is very similar to the native population, the disruption will be much less dramatic than if the foreigner is very different in terms of appearance, language, culture, religion, etc. A foreigner who is basically identical to the native population will in most cases be allowed to blend in seamlessly, and cause minimal disruption.

In regard to the individual immigrant, society will obviously be much more likely to benefit from a highly educated immigrant, than from an immigrant with little or no education, or an immigrant who is otherwise a potential burden on society. However, the level of disruption caused by an individual immigrant goes far beyond the nature and actions of that particular immigrant. Take the example of an immigrant who commits a crime. The level of disruption caused by this crime will vary greatly, depending on whether the criminal is identified as a native or as belonging to a minority group – specifically in this case: a foreigner group. If the criminal is identified as a native, the disruption will be limited to the crime itself, whereas a crime committed by someone who is labeled as belonging to a foreigner group will often cause additional disruption that goes far beyond the impact of the crime itself. In that case, the crime leads to tension between the native population and those who are seen as being members of the particular foreigner group – a development which tends to have a very negative spiraling effect. Tension and mistrust between the foreigner group and the native population will cause these two groups to move further apart from one another, posing a great risk to the cohesion and stability of the nation. Outright discrimination and a general lack of interaction will make it more and more difficult for the members of this group to contribute to society in a positive manner by excluding them from jobs and social activities. The long term effect is a downward spiral in which worsening social conditions for the foreigner group will become an increasing burden on society – contributing to a steadily increasing level of animosity between the native population and the foreigner group, and thus further prejudice against not only this group of foreigners, but all foreigners perceived as belonging to this group or as being similar in nature.

In the beginning, a certain group might only exist in the perception of the rest of society – in the sense that the actual group members do not feel that they belong together with the other members society has assigned to this group. Once a group is firmly established in the perception of society, it will gradually evolve, from being little more than a perceived group, into being a real group in the minds of the supposed group members as well. If the rest of society perceives you as belonging to a certain group, you immediately have something very important in common with your fellow

group members – to whom you might not previously have felt any connection. As time goes by, the perception of a group will likely grow stronger, and the group identity along with it – and the people who were initially assigned to this group will increasingly identify themselves as group members.

In a historically homogenous and monocultural society – like Denmark – the likelihood that a foreigner will blend seamlessly into the existing society is less than in a heterogeneous and multicultural society like the United States. It appears that in the US people are significantly less likely to be labeled as foreigners than in Denmark, and this perceived difference makes a comparison particularly relevant. It is a hypothesis of this paper that the above difference is more than just a perception, and that it to some extent stems from differences in national identity.

3.1.2 Identity

Identity can be defined as an individual's or group's sense of self. Political scientist Samuel P. Huntington elaborates on this by stating that: "[identity] is a product of self-consciousness, that I or we possess distinct qualities as an entity that differentiates me from you and us from them". Later he goes on to say that "so long as people interact with others, they have no choice but to define themselves in relation to those others and identify their similarities with and differences from those others." This is of course central to the issue of integration and foreigners versus natives, as discussed in the previous chapter. In order to gain entrance into the native group, the foreigner needs to not only define him/herself as a native, but needs the native group to accept him/her as a native as well. If the native group continues to perceive this person as a foreigner it is highly unlikely that he/she will be able to maintain his/her self-perception as a native. The end result might be that the foreigner will want to distance him/herself from this native group that refuses to include him/her.

Both the native group and the foreigner groups will to some extent define themselves by what they are not, and the group members will look for negative traits in the other groups in order to elevate their own self esteem. In an academic context,

this way of defining oneself by denigrating others is often referred to as "Othering". Thus, the native group might ascribe to a particular foreigner group negative traits such as being prone to criminal behavior, being uncivilized or less intelligent. The foreigner group might ascribe to the native group negative traits such as being racist, elitist or xenophobic. A long term consequence for the foreigner group can be that the members actually begin to believe that the group is less civilized or intelligent – causing members of the group to try to distance themselves from their own group, and leaving them stranded in a no-man's land between the foreigner group and a native group that they also do not want to be part of, or which refuses to accept them. Often this will be a conflict between first generation immigrants and their children – a family conflict that can have a negative impact on society as a whole. One possible outcome is an increase in juvenile delinquency, which is one of the most severe consequences of failed integration. In the words of American sociologist Milton M. Gordon: "sometimes the immigrant's offspring rejected the restrictions of their parental culture only to fail to take on the social restraints of the broader society"[4].

The foreigner groups and native group would of course not be the only sources of identity for the individual members of these groups, and it is unlikely that it would be the primary one in most cases. Other parts of the individual's identity could be derived from their family, their religion, gender, ethnicity, language, political standpoint, the sports club they support, or a number of other affiliations or characteristics that an individual might define him/herself by. In different situations, different sources of identity will be more or less important, and they will gain or lose significance depending on various other factors. If society constantly treats you as a foreigner, the membership of the foreigner group will grow in importance – and the more it grows, the more difficult it will be for you to ever see yourself as a native.

3.1.3 National Identity

For most people, national identity will be a very important source of personal identity. Most people identify themselves as members of a nation, and if you ask

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[4] Milton M. Gordon. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964), 107-108.

someone to say something about themselves, "I am Danish" or "I am American" would likely be one of the first things they would say. When you state that you are Danish – or whatever nationality you may be – you are not simply saying where you are from geographically, because geography is just one aspect of being of a certain nationality. Being Danish carries a variety of different meanings and implications depending on who you ask – and what it means to be of a certain nationality is the essence of the term 'national identity'.

The identity of a nation is not absolute and is always evolving, and therefore it can be very difficult to pinpoint. However, for the purpose of this paper, **national identity is defined as the collection of those identity traits that by the native population are predominantly considered essential to being a member of a particular nation**.

Like the identity of an individual person, the national identity of a certain nation might encompass any number of identity traits relating to religion, geographical location, cultural traditions, eating habits, political standpoint, ethnicity, etc. For most purposes in this paper, it will be necessary to single out a particular trait for closer examination, rather than examining the national identity as a whole. An important aspect of this examination will be the significance of 'exclusive' national identity traits versus 'inclusive' national identity traits.

A purely theoretical example of an extremely inclusive national identity could be one that was based purely on a single geographic trait entailing that anyone who lived within the borders of the particular country would share in its national identity. However, such a national identity would be all-encompassing to the point of being virtually meaningless. It is reasonable to assume that the cohesion of such a nation would be very weak.

On the other end of the scale, a not so far-fetched example of an extremely exclusive national identity could be one that had race as an all-important trait. This national identity could include a lot of people, but it would be extremely exclusive in the sense that someone of a different race would never be able to share in the national identity – and thus never truly be accepted as a native of the particular

nation. In spite of being of the accepted race, a large number of people would likely want to disassociate themselves from the national identity, and in a sense seek to exclude themselves by choice. This national identity would be a source of strong emotions that in the long run would be more likely to tear the nation apart than bind it strongly together.

There is no simple explanation as to how the identity of a particular nation is formed, but there are usually events in a nation's history that stand out as defining moments – just as there are in the lives of people. Some of these defining moments will be discussed in the two main chapters on the United States and Denmark respectively.

3.2 Integration Theory

In *Assimilation in American Life*, Milton M. Gordon puts forth three theories of assimilation: 'Anglo-conformity', 'the melting pot', and 'cultural pluralism'. According to Gordon, these terms refer to: "theoretical models which either would formulate the preferred goals of adjustment to which the influx of diverse peoples might be expected to look for guidance, or would describe the processes of adjustment as they have empirically taken place."[5]

With only slight modifications I have adopted the above theories under the terms '**conformity**', '**melting pot**', and '**multiculturalism**'. I will explain later in this chapter, why I have chosen to slightly alter two of the terms used by Gordon. The theories will be referred to as 'theories of integration', rather than 'theories of assimilation' – since 'assimilation' often refers more specifically to something akin to what Milton terms Anglo-conformity

3.2.1 Conformity

Gordon uses the term 'Anglo-conformity' in the specific context of the United States, but at one point in his discussion of Anglo-conformity he gives a more general

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[5] Gordon. *Assimilation in American Life*, 84.

description of what conformity entails.[6] Based on Gordon's definition of 'Anglo-conformity' and his more general description, I have chosen the term 'conformity' to refer to: a theoretical model which entails complete assimilation of immigrants, with a bias towards immigrants from Northern and Western Europe, and a desire to maintain the language, culture and institutions of the majority population. This is applicable both to the United States, Denmark and many other countries.

3.2.2 Melting Pot

The 'melting pot' theory is defined and exemplified by Gordon using the imaginary nation "Sylvania" which experiences an influx of immigrants from the likewise imaginary nation of "Mundovia":

> "the Sylvanians accept many new behavior patterns and values from the Mundovians, just as the Mundovians change many of their ways in conformance with Sylvanian customs, this interchange taking place with appropriate modifications and compromises, and in this process a new cultural system evolves which is neither exclusively Sylvanian nor Mundovian but a mixture of both. This is a cultural blend, the result of the "melting pot," which has melted down the cultures of the two groups in the same societal container, as it were, and formed a new cultural product with standard consistency."[7]

3.2.3 Multiculturalism

The final theory of assimilation presented by Gordon is 'cultural pluralism'. 'cultural pluralism' is often used interchangeably with 'multiculturalism', and I have opted for the latter, since I find it to be more relatable and explanatory in nature. 'multiculturalism' is defined as:

> "a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional culture or special interest within the confines of a common civilization"[8]

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[6] Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 69.
[7] Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 74.
[8] Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary. "pluralism". http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pluralism (accessed July 29, 2010).

4 The United States

4.1 The Settling and Founding of the US (1606-1783)

The first Europeans settled in North America in 1606, when the colony of Jamestown was established by the Virginia Company of London, by permission of King James I of England. In the time between 1606 and 1773, thirteen British colonies were founded. These colonies have come to be known as the original thirteen colonies, since they were the ones that would later declare independence from Great Britain.[9]

The core values that would come to define the US national identity were visible even at the time of the first settlements. The Plymouth Colony, for example, was comprised primarily of Puritans – a protestant group that believed in what it saw as a more pure and strict version of Christianity than that which the Church of England represented. As a demonstration that God would reward hard work and purity of faith, the Puritans wished to create a successful, civilized society in the wilderness – "a city upon a hill", as it was expressed by the colony's leader John Winthrop.[10] The Plymouth colony would come to represent both a religious aspect of the national identity, entailing that the United States is somehow ordained by God to have a special place in history, and an entrepreneurial aspect – the willingness to take chances, and the notion that through hard work and dedication anyone can be successful.

The desire to gain independence from Britain and the way in which independence was achieved were crucial factors in the shaping of the national identity. In 1764 – under the cry of "No taxation without representation!" – the colonists took a stand against taxes being imposed by the British Parliament, in which no representatives of the American colonies were seated.[11] The Stamp Act and Quartering Acts of 1765, which imposed more taxes and forced the colonists to give

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[9] Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy, *The American Pageant* (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991), 15.
[10] Niels Bjerre-Poulsen, *USA – historie og identitet* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Gads Forlag, 2000), 9.
[11] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 107-108.

British soldiers food and board, aroused further anger among the colonists, who felt they were being deprived of their basic liberties.[12]

By early 1776, when the American colonists were still hoping for reconciliation with Britain, a pamphlet entitled "Common Sense" was published by Thomas Paine. Paine called for unity and forgiveness among Americans, human rights, and not least for republicanism and American independence. With his writings, Thomas Paine helped to define the national identity of the United States that was soon to come. He wrote:

[…] instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissension. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the RIGHTS of MANKIND, and of the FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.[13]

On July 4th 1776, independence was declared.

The Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson, contained the justification for independence – but more importantly, it defined what it meant to be American. There is one sentence that more than any other represents the very core of the national identity:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.[14]

In standing up to the British, the American colonies demonstrated some of the traits that today are inherent in the national identity. First and foremost the belief that freedom is all-important and worth dying for.

The attitude towards British rule also shows a general animosity toward centralized authority which is still part of the national identity today. It is a trait that is likely to have been present from the very beginning in the immigrants that settled in the United States – as they themselves were often escaping persecution by religious

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[12] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 108-109.
[13] The Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia: ushistory.org."Common Sense by Thomas Paine." http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/singlehtml.htm
[14] The Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia: ushistory.org."The Declaration of Independence." http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm

and political authorities. The geographical distances between the colonies, lack of interaction, and necessary self reliance of the individual colonies were other factors in the animosity towards centralized authority, and they also represent another national identity trait: a great sense of self reliance – a belief in yourself and your ability to be the master of your own destiny, independent of outside help.

Another characteristic of US national identity that was on display during the American Revolution, is the belief that anything is possible if you put your mind to it and are willing to work hard and make the necessary sacrifices. The safe and predictable path to take for the colonies, would have been to obey the commands of Britain and remain a part of the British Empire, and thus under the protection of the greatest military power in the world. However, this would have meant compromising on freedom – a sacrifice the colonies were not willing to make.

A long and bloody war followed the Declaration of Independence, not only between British and American rebel forces, but also among rebels and Americans loyal to Britain. The odds were stacked against the American rebels, who were vastly outnumbered and lacked the organization, military training, and strict discipline of the British forces – but in spite of this, the American rebels won the war.

Stories of "underdogs" who succeed against seemingly impossible odds are popular around the world, but nowhere more so than in the United States. The celebration of the underdog, is something that is deeply ingrained in the national identity. The nation itself was very much an underdog in the war against Britain, but in a sense it is also a nation shaped by underdogs, in the form of the immigrants who started out with little or nothing and overcame great obstacles to build a new life for themselves. That is the American Dream – the idea that anyone can be successful through hard work and determination, regardless of the cards they were dealt.

In relation to national identity and the War of Independence, there is another aspect worth mentioning. One of many reasons for the British defeat was the fact that many of the British officers were unskilled – appointed based on their social status and connections, rather than their leadership abilities. The Americans, on the other hand, were free to choose the officers they found to be most qualified. This defeat of

the British aristocracy at the hands of the American meritocracy highlights an important aspect of US national identity: The idea that people should be judged based on their own personal achievements and hard work, rather than based on their ancestry. Of course this is not to say that ancestry is irrelevant in the US, but the celebration of meritocracy and the self-made man is a key element of the national identity.

The history of the founding points to a United States whose national identity is based on a shared system of values and beliefs, often referred to as the American creed. Being an American is more than anything else about accepting Thomas Jefferson's statement about equality, freedom, and rights of the individual. It is about being independent, hard-working, resilient, and striving to be the very best. However, in spite of the seemingly all inclusive nature of the American creed, the promises of the Declaration of Independence could not be realized by just anyone – at least not to begin with, and arguably not ever fully for some groups. There is a deep-seated hypocrisy which goes back at least as far as the words "all men are created equal". In spite of these bold words from the Declaration of Independence, the fact of the matter was that freedom and civil rights only fully applied to white men – less so to women, and least of all to African Americans and Native Americans.

From the very beginning, race was an aspect of the US national identity – and so it remains today.

4.2 Racial Relations in Early History

From the time of the first settlement, the tone was set for racial conflicts that were to haunt America for centuries to come, as both Africans and Native Americans became the unwilling participants in the white man's history.

As early as 1619, the first Africans were brought to Jamestown as slaves, marking the beginning of the North American slave trade – one of the ugliest chapters in American history.[15] These involuntary immigrants and their descendants, over the

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[15] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 47.

years, came to constitute the largest ethnic minority, with no rights and no say in the shaping of the places they ended up in.

There was a brief period of cooperation and peace between Native Americans and the first settlers, but with the settlers' continuing demand for more land, and their lack of respect for the indigenous population, a conflict was inevitable. In 1675, tensions culminated in the war with the Native American chieftain King Philip, during which the Native Americans attacked fifty-two of the ninety settler towns and drove the settlers back to the coast. In the end, the Native American tribes were defeated, their leaders killed, and many men, women, and children were shipped to the West Indies as slaves.[16] The war resulted in even sharper boundaries being drawn between settlers and Native Americans, and the path was firmly set towards dealing with the Native Americans by way of expulsion or termination.[17]

The settlers were all white Europeans, and even though their attitudes towards people of other races differed little from the attitudes of other Europeans at the time, racial discrimination was very much on display in North America from the time of the initial settlers and throughout the following centuries. The African slaves were seen as subhuman – more akin to animals than people – and they were treated accordingly. The Native Americans were seen as uncivilized savages who in the eyes of God had no rightful claim to the land – and they were pushed out or killed to make room for the expanding white civilization.

The words of the 1775 Declaration of Independence changed nothing for the slaves from Africa or the Native Americans, and neither did the Naturalization Act of 1790, which stated that only "free white persons" could become US citizens – thus leaving out both the Native Americans, to whom the land originally belonged, and the African slaves and their descendants.[18] This was not changed until 1868, with the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which stated that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction

[16] Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We*? (London, England: Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, 2004), 53.

[17] Huntington, *Who Are We*?, 53.

[18] The Library of Congress: www.loc.gov."A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774 – 1875. Statutes at Large, 1st Congress, 2nd Session" http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=226

thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside".[19] Even after 1868, naturalization for immigrants was only an option for "free white persons".

Slavery was not completely abolished until the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 – and even after that, sharecropping[20] and Jim Crow laws[21] maintained the oppression of African Americans. The Native Americans were continuously pushed further and further away – such as when President Andrew Jackson forced around 100,000 Native Americans to relocate to Oklahoma on the so-called "Trail of Tears".[22] Wars between Americans and Native Americans continued up until the end of the nineteenth century – ending with the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890[23]. At this point, most of the remaining Native American tribes had been placed in government controlled reservations. In the reservations, some efforts were made to convert native Americans to Christianity and make them "more civilized" in preparation for possible future citizenship, but mostly they were neglected by the US Government and left to fend for themselves on these random plots of land to which they had been assigned.

The treatment of black slaves and Native Americans is a part of US history that stands out because it is so much at odds with the very core of US national identity with its calls for "liberty and justice for all" and the proclamation that "all men are created equal". It is both fascinating and deeply disturbing that a country could celebrate – or even worship – such high ideals of freedom and equality for all, while simultaneously stripping people of their freedoms and treating large groups of the population as if they were not remotely equal to the rest of the population.

The above examples represent an almost unbelievable hypocrisy that has marred the US since the Declaration of Independence, and they add to the national identity more than a twinge of guilt. To many outsiders it seems presumptuous beyond belief that the US could think that it has anything to teach the world about

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[19] The Library of Congress: www.loc.gov."A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774 – 1875. Statutes at Large, 39th Congress, 1st Session". http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=014/llsl014.db&recNum=389

[20] A system in which a landowner provides a share of farm land in exchange for a share of the crops (See Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 485)

[21] State and local laws mandating racial segregation in public facilities (See Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 898)

[22] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 269.

[23] Sometimes referred to as "the Battle of Wounded Knee". A tragic episode in which an attempt to disarm a group of Native Americans turned into a massacre during which the US army killed around two hundred men, women and children (See Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 594)

democracy and freedom with a history such as that. However, as you delve deeper, you find that these ugly chapters of US history – however disturbing – do not negate the many great achievements. In fact, it is perhaps due to the long history of discrimination and injustice that the country in some ways has come further in terms of civil rights and racial relations than most other countries of the world.

For some white people in early US history it might have been a moral necessity – or simply convenient – to dehumanize Native Americans and African Americans for the sake of continued expansion and creation of wealth. To others, perhaps the subjugation of Africans and Native Americans was merely seen as a demonstration of the superiority of "the white race", and a natural consequence of evolution. Undoubtedly, many who bought into the idea that it was God's will that America be settled and become civilized, thought it inevitable that the other "inferior" races be swept aside, not to be included as citizens of the "city on a hill."

This is a kind of Social Darwinism that resembles the survival-of-the-fittest mentality which appears to be widespread in the US even today – although it often comes in the guise of "survival of the hardest-working". It is a common belief that people who are not successful most likely do not deserve to be successful, and that they are probably in the position they are in because they did not work hard enough to achieve the American Dream. This seems to be used as an excuse to allow and ignore poverty, and in modern day US it is often applied to African Americans, with a total disregard of their troubled history and often dismal social conditions.

In relation to immigration, one would imagine that the treatment of Native Americans and African slaves in early US history influenced how non-white immigrants were received later.

4.3 The Ethnic Makeup of the Thirteen Colonies (1775)

By 1775, the population of the thirteen colonies was made up of about 66.3% English and Welsh, 5.6% Scottish and 1.6% Irish, 4.5% German, 2% Dutch, 0.4%

French, 0.3% other whites and 19.3% African slaves.[24] The white ethnic population was overwhelmingly Northern and Western European. Excluding slaves and Native Americans, it was a very homogeneous group.

4.4 The Irish and German wave (1830-1860)

The period between 1830 and 1860 saw a wave of Irish and German immigrants. Irish peasants were fleeing plummeting wheat prices, pressure from landlords, and finally the potato famine of 1848. The German immigrants were generally better off than their Irish counterparts – farmers escaping crop failures and other hardships, and a significant number of liberal political refugees escaping the autocracy of Germany after the failed March Revolution of 1948. Among the German immigrants were also Jews, Pietists – a Lutheran movement – and Anabaptist groups such as the Amish and the Mennonites.[25]

Most immigration at the time was taking place due to push factors as those mentioned above – factors causing people to leave their homeland because they were left with little or no choice. The reason why so many immigrants went to the United States were the well known pull factors of religious and political freedom, huge areas of unused land, and generally many opportunities for a new and better life for those willing to work hard.

The German and particularly the Irish immigrants were not always well received, and as their numbers grew, so did the fears among native-born Americans that the immigrants posed a threat to their way of life. To the Protestant majority, the Catholic faith of most of the immigrants was a source of great concern – both as a religious threat, but also as a political threat, in the sense that Catholics were seen as being accustomed to an anti-democratic hierarchy of obedience with the Pope as their ultimate leader.[26] In some cases, the anti-Catholic sentiments resulted in violent attacks on Catholic churches and schools.[27]

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[24] As quoted in Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 64.
[25] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 291-293.
[26] Huntington, *Who Are We?*, 94.
[27] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 294-295.

The resistance towards Catholics also resulted in the semi-secret group called the "Know-Nothings" which started out in 1849 as "the Order of the Star Spangled Banner". The members were called "know-nothings" because they were supposed to claim to know nothing of the movement, which existed to spread anti-immigrant propaganda and pushed for very strict immigration and naturalization laws. During the 1850's, the Know-Nothings gained significant political influence – until slavery, rather than immigration, came to dominate the political debate.[28]

Religion and politics were not the only sources of resentment towards Irish and German immigrants. The Irish immigrants, who were usually the young sons of poor Irish peasants, were ill-prepared for life in the big cities, where they usually ended up. They had a reputation for being troublemakers and drunks, which, combined with their Catholic faith, earned them the distrust of the native-born Protestant majority.

The German immigrants inspired resentment to a much lesser extent than their Irish counterparts, probably due to the fact that they were generally successful and self-sufficient and tended to stay to themselves far away from the cities.[29] The Germans, however, had the disadvantage of not being native English speakers, and they were sometimes criticized for their efforts to hold on to their own language, rather than focusing on learning English. In spite of the disadvantage of not being native English speakers, the Germans fared better and were more easily accepted than the Irish. This was mainly due to economic factors. As mentioned above, the German immigrants were out in the country, where they remained self-sufficient, while the Irish were mostly in the cities, where there was greater competition for jobs. In the cities, the Irish immigrants were accused of taking jobs from "real Americans" – a theme that was to be repeated with other immigrant groups throughout US history. The German immigrants were much closer to what some today might call "model immigrants" – immigrants who work hard, are successful, and who keep to themselves.

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[28] Huntington, *Who Are We?*, 94.
[29] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 288-289.

From a modern Danish standpoint, it is interesting to note that immigrants from such non-threatening places as Germany and Ireland, in the US were met with much the same kind of prejudice that in today's Denmark is directed towards Muslim immigrants with religious, cultural and social backgrounds that differ greatly from those of the majority population. It is hard to imagine that the German and Irish immigrants were really all that different from the majority population, but the fact is that they were perceived as being different, and that certain traits were attributed to each group and exaggerated by those who resented their presence in the US. One lesson to be learned from this could be that the perceived differences between certain immigrant groups and the majority population are often much greater than the real differences, and that the highlighting and exaggeration of differences are often driven by other motives that in the end have very little to do with the actual differences. Prominent among these motives are economic security and jobs. In times of prosperity, immigrants are much more likely to be well received, but in times of hardship, immigrants will often be blamed for stealing jobs and economic resources.

Immigration forces a nation to question its national identity, and the Irish and German Catholics prompted a question of whether you could be a true American if you had a different religion than the Protestant majority.

4.5 Manifest Destiny

In 1845, an American journalist by the name of John L. O'Sullivan wrote an article in which he proclaimed that the United States had a divine destiny "to be the great nation of futurity" and an example for all others.[30] O'Sullivan's words were very much an extension of the idea of "a city upon a hill", expressed first by the leader of the Plymouth colony, John Winthrop, and now being applied by O'Sullivan to the entire existing United States:

> The far-reaching, the boundless future will be the era of American greatness. In its magnificent domain of space and time, the nation of many nations is destined to manifest to mankind the excellence of divine principles; to establish on earth the noblest temple ever dedicated to the worship of the Most High -- the Sacred and the True. Its floor shall be a hemisphere – its roof the firmament of the star-

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[30] He had not yet coined the term "Manifest Destiny" which he used for the first time in an article in 1845.

studded heavens, and its congregation an Union of many Republics, comprising hundreds of happy millions, calling, owning no man master, but governed by God's natural and moral law of equality, the law of brotherhood -- of "peace and good will amongst men.". . .[31]

The concept of "Manifest Destiny" was used then to justify the continued US expansion throughout North America, most significantly to justify war with Mexico and the annexation of Texas. Manifest Destiny represents a self righteousness, conviction of purpose, and sense of entitlement that has been a reoccurring theme in American foreign policy and very much a part of the national identity.

4.6 Internal Migration and Westward Expansion (1840-1861)

From 1840 to 1861, thousands of pioneers journeyed westward in pursuit of the American Dream – often starting with nothing and building a new life through hard work. This internal migration in the US – most notably the great move westward – was no less important than the external immigration in shaping the US national identity. In the words of the iconic American historian Frederick Jackson Turner:

[…] the most important effect of the frontier has been in the promotion of democracy here and in Europe. As has been indicated, the frontier is productive of individualism. Complex society is precipitated by the wilderness into a kind of primitive organization based on the family. The tendency is antisocial. It produces antipathy to control, and particularity to any direct control.[32]

Turner believed that too much attention was given to the European influence on the United States and emphasized the influence the frontier had had in the shaping of the national identity – or "national character" as he termed it. In relation to both immigration and internal migration there is a particular quote from Turner that stands out:

In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics. [33]

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[31] O'Sullivan, John L. *"The Great Nation of Futurity"* The United States Democratic Review Volume 6 Issue 23 (Nov 1839), 427. http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=usde;cc=;view=toc;subview=short;idno=usde0006-4
[32] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1921) 30.
[33] Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, 23.

In other words, Americans do not belong to any pre-existing race or nationality – rather they are an amalgam of different peoples that has resulted in a new people with its own unique characteristics – an idea completely in line with the Melting Pot theory. The shared experience of "conquering the frontier" has undoubtedly been a great factor not only in uniting people of different ethnicities and religions, but also in forming a particular American national identity.

Obviously, the westward expansion differed from more traditional internal migration, in that it was taking place in territories which had not yet been settled, but even after the frontier reached the Pacific, Americans continued to be on the move. Today, the United States has a very high degree of internal mobility, which is likely to stem both from the continuing influx of immigrants, and from the fact that the settling of the United States was a continuous process of immigration and westward migration.

The high degree of internal mobility is presumably part of the reason why immigrants seem to be more easily integrated in the US than in many other countries. The historian John Higham talks about how mobility as a feature of US society makes the arrival of immigrants less unsettling, since most of the older more settled population is also accustomed to relocations – and thereby living among strangers.[34] Also, one would imagine that the combination of a high degree of mobility and a relatively short history means that Americans feel less threatened by immigrants – since there is not the same attachment to land that you see in older, less mobile nations with a stronger sense of national borders. In those older nations, people might feel that the immigrants are encroaching on land where they and their fellow countrymen have lived for many generations. On the topic of attachment to land, Huntington writes:

> Americans have [not] to the same extent as other peoples identified themselves with the overall territory they inhabit. They have, to be sure, celebrated the scope and beauty of their land, but it has normally been land in the abstract. Americans may sing "Oh beautiful for spacious skies," "the land we belong to is grand," or "This land was made for you and me," but what they celebrate is an abstraction, not a particularity […] [35]

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[34] Higham, John. *Hanging Together. Unity and Diversity in American Culture*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001) 108.
[35] Huntington, *Who Are We?*, 51.

Land has always been plentiful in the US, and any sense of entitlement seems to be of a more abstract and inclusive nature. It is more like a "divine right" to the land – dating all the way back to John Winthrop's "city on a hill" and reinforced in the concept of Manifest Destiny. It is inclusive in the sense that it seems to invite people from around the world to share in the divine right of the United States.

4.7 The Civil War (1861-1865)

Economic conflicts between the northern and southern part of the country – combined with the rise of the abolitionist movement – tore the nation apart, and there was a genuine fear that the tear could become permanent. The war, and the decades leading up to it, showed both a national identity that was not strong enough to keep the country together when it came under serious pressure from internal conflict, but it also showed a national identity that was strong enough to be worth fighting and dying for. Furthermore, the time after the war showed a nation that had an amazing ability to heal itself after the most terrible wounds a nation can suffer – the wounds received from fellow countrymen maiming, raping and killing one another. Without a strong underlying national identity this would have been near impossible, and would certainly have taken much, much longer.

The abolition of slavery, that followed with the end of the war, marked a turning point in regard to racial relations, and it was one of the first great steps in confronting the hypocrisy of severe racial discrimination in a country celebrating the equality of all people. However, even after the Thirteenth Amendment in 1868 allowed them to become American citizens by law, African Americans were still a very long way from fair treatment and equal rights.

4.8 The New Immigrants (1880-1920)

Any kind of outside pressure, be it from immigration or otherwise, prompts the people of a nation to huddle together – and often differences between the people of the nation will be pushed to the background, or even forgotten, when faced with

an immigrant "Other"[36]. This also seemed to be the case for the Irish and the Germans, as their inclusion into the nation was sped up by a new wave of immigrants. One "Other" was replaced by another.

Up until the 1880s, most immigrants had come from the British Isles, Germany, Scandinavia and other areas of Western Europe, but from 1880 to 1920 there was a dramatic shift in immigration, with a great influx of Italians, Croats, Slovaks, Greeks, and other immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.

There were significant differences between the old immigrants and the new. The old immigrants were typically fair skinned, primarily Protestant, with the Irish and some German Catholics as the exception. Most of them were literate and from countries with some kind of representative government. The new immigrants had darker skin, many were Orthodox or Jewish, to a great extent illiterate and impoverished, and they came from countries unfamiliar with representative government. While many of the earlier immigrants had moved on to establish themselves further west, the vast majority of the new immigrants crowded together in the big cities with their fellow countrymen in neighborhoods that often came to be named after the nationalities they housed, such as "little Italy", "little Poland", etc.. [37]

With the new wave of immigration, the anti-foreigner sentiments flared up again. Religion was still a strong factor, but race was becoming increasingly important now that the US was faced with immigrants of darker shade.

One response to the new wave of immigrants was the creation of anti-foreign organizations which had a lot in common with the "know-nothings" of the past. Among the most influential was the American Protective Association (APA) founded in 1887. APA was an organization that quickly gained popularity urging people to vote against Catholic political candidates and spreading anti-catholic propaganda. Also the labor unions fought against the new immigrants, who were willing to work for extremely low wages and who were difficult to organize because they did not speak English. From 1875 to 1882, Congress passed several laws restricting access to the United States – which included the barring of entrance for criminals, prostitutes and

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[36] See discussion of "Othering" in the 'Identity' chapter.
[37] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 558-559.

people who were unlikely to be able to support themselves.[38] By far the most noticeable and controversial of the new laws was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which completely barred entrance for Chinese immigrants. Although they had never constituted a large immigrant group compared to the waves of immigrants from Europe, the Chinese were the first ethnic group to be blatantly singled out in official US Government policy.

The Chinese had started arriving by the thousands in 1840 – most of them with a dream of returning home with their pockets full of dollars. In 1870, there were 63,000 Chinese in the US, and out of these 70% were living in California. At first, the Chinese were welcomed and appreciated for their hard work in railroad construction, mining, farming and other physical jobs, but white laborers soon began to feel threatened by the willingness of the Chinese to work for exceedingly low wages.[39] Another aspect of controversy regarding Chinese immigrants was the way in which they came to the United States. Some people began to express concern that the transport and contracting of Chinese laborers was similar to the slave trade, and that many of the laborers were in fact more like slaves than contract workers. However, the American historian Ronald Takaki points out that there was never any proof that Chinese immigrants were anything but free men and women who either paid their own way or borrowed the money for the passage.[40] The arguments of Chinese immigrants working under slave-like conditions were rarely expressed out of concern for the Chinese themselves, but rather out of concern for the white workers who could not compete with the low wages of the Chinese.[41]

Low wages was not the only source of resentment towards Chinese immigrants, who were also singled out because of their obvious differences in language, culture and physical appearance. Also, the fact that the vast majority of Chinese immigrants were men gave the unfair impression that the Chinese did not

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[38] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. "Legislation from 1790-1900."
http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201790%20-%201900.pdf
[39] Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans (New York, NY: Back Bay Books, 1998), 80-81.
[40] Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 36.
[41] Andrew Gyory, Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 38.

care about family values, and it did not help in this regard that many of the few female Chinese immigrants ended up as prostitutes.[42]

The Chinese were perceived as being so racially and culturally different from "real" Americans that by 1882 the US government banned them entirely from entering the country. At this point in US history, becoming an American was not an option for Asians. They were simply too different.

The new immigrants who arrived in the US in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were radically different in terms of culture, race, appearance, language, and religion than the immigrants the US had seen before. This had a dramatic effect on how they were received, and the degree to which they were perceived as American. The Chinese, being the most "foreign", were given the hardest time, but Eastern Europeans, Catholics, and Jews struggled too. Technically, Croats and Jews were white, but they were generally still a bit darker, and had darker hair and eyes than the immigrants who had come before them. Considering that citizenship until 1868 was only granted to "free white persons" it is perhaps not so strange if people who were "less white" were considered less American.

Of course, it was not racism alone that made it difficult for the new immigrants. Again economic factors played into determining who were allowed to consider themselves American. The new immigrants offered cheap, unorganized labor – and workers and trade unions were understandably threatened by this. Many Americans feared that their entire way of life was threatened by the new immigration, and there was a general feeling that something had to be done.

4.9 Isolationism and Xenophobia (1914-1950)

In the early Twentieth Century, the United States was beginning to isolate itself, and the communist fears that had been growing since the Russian revolution in 1917 resulted in a crusade against left-wingers and labor union activists, who were seen as being un-American and in league with Russian communists.[43]

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[42] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 515.
[43] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 734-735.

In the 1920s, ultraconservative views were gaining strength across the United States, and the Ku Klux Klan, which had been founded in 1866, had a renaissance during which it reached about 5 million members. As the most extreme representative of ultraconservative views, the Klan was pro-Anglo Saxon and pro-Protestant, and against foreigners, Catholics, Blacks, Jews, pacifists and Communists[44] The Klan virtually collapsed in the late 1920s – ruined by scandals and an increased opposition to the violent methods of the organization – but the fear of foreigners continued to rise.[45]

In an environment of fear, isolationism, and anti-foreignism, the US Congress in 1921 passed the Emergency Quota Act which set a yearly quota on immigrants of a certain nationality at 3% of the total number of people of that particular nationality living in the country in 1910.[46] In 1924 this was lowered to 2% and was now based on the total number of people of that particular nationality living in the country in 1890, when less Southern and Eastern Europeans were part of the population. The Immigration Act of 1924 also completely banned all immigrants ineligible for citizenship – a measure which was primarily aimed at Japanese immigrants. This was in spite of the fact that the quota system itself would only have allowed 100 Japanese immigrants per year based on the minimum-allowance from each country.[47] An earlier immigration act – the Immigration Act of 1917 – had already set up the so-called "Asiatic Barred Zone" which banned entrance to immigrants whose ancestry could be traced back to the Asian continent or Pacific Islands.[48]

4.10 American Prosperity and the Cold War (1950 ->)

The end of the Second World War brought in an era of American prosperity and influence on the international stage. Post-WWII America was an America that had come so far from being an isolationist nation that it was now leading the reconstruction efforts in Europe. And even though the Civil Rights Movement would

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[44] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 736.

[45] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 736.

[46] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 737.

[47] Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 209.

[48] Robert G. Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999, 108.

not begin for several years, some moves were made to extend rights to minorities in the US, such as when President Truman desegregated the army in 1948.[49]

In this more open atmosphere, the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 was passed. Up until then, citizenship had only been granted to immigrants who fell under the category "free white persons", but under the Act of 1952 race was no longer a factor in obtaining US citizenship. The quota system was changed so that it was now based on the number of people of a certain nationality living in the country in 1920 – rather than 1890 – which allowed for greater ethnic diversity among the immigrants. It also became easier for both relatives of US citizens and relatives of aliens to obtain residency, as well as for skilled immigrants whose services were urgently needed. The act expanded the list of reasons for deportation and exclusion of unwanted aliens, but at the same time added more safeguards to avoid wrongful deportation.[50]

During the Cold War, the United States became increasingly concerned about its ability to compete with the Soviet Union in arms and space technologies, and therefore there was a strong desire to attract more skilled immigrants.[51] There were also fears that the origin-based quota system might be perceived as racist, and that this could lead to increased animosity towards the US and more support for the Communist USSR.[52] Those were some of the main reasons for the passing of the Immigration Act of 1965, which abolished the quota system and made it much easier for immigrants to obtain visas if they had skills that were needed in the US. The nation-based quota system was replaced by a numerical system allowing for 170.000 yearly immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere and 120.000 from the Western Hemisphere. Children, spouses and parents of US citizens were not subject to the numerical restrictions.[53]

The new legislation had a dramatic effect on the composition of immigrants entering the United States, and consequently on the ethnic makeup of the US

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[49] Bailey and Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, 900.
[50] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. "Legislation from 1941-1960."
http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201941-1960.pdf, 5.
[51] As quoted in Vijay Prashad, The Karma of Brown Folk (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 75.
[52] Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 418.
[53] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. "Legislation from 1961-1980."
http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201961-1980.pdf, 2.

population as a whole. As an example, the Asian American population went up from one million in 1965 to five million in 1985. Many of the skilled workers – such as scientists, engineers, and doctors – were of Asian origin.

During the Civil Rights Era, when African Americans were fighting for basic liberties, Asian Americans were developing a reputation as the quiet, problem-free minority. A slew of articles came out praising Asians Americans for being the hard-working minority that never asked for handouts. This will be discussed further in the case study on Indian-Americans as a model minority.

The Cold War strengthened the national identity, as it pitted the US against an outside threat of a magnitude it had never seen before – a terrifying Communist "Other" which could hardly have been more at odds with US ideology and national identity.

4.11 Immigration from Latin America (1970->)

In recent decades there has been a dramatic, ever-growing influx of Spanish speaking immigrants from Latin America – commonly referred to as Hispanics. Since 1970 and 2000, the number of Hispanics in the United States has grown by 300%, and in 2000 they numbered 30 million.[54] As of July, 2006 that number had increased to 44.3 million, making Hispanics the largest ethnic minority in the US, and making the US the country with the second largest Hispanic population in the world, only surpassed by Mexico.[55] More than one of every two people added to the US population between 2000 and 2006 were Hispanic.[56]

The massive Hispanic immigration differs from previous waves of immigrants not only in scale, but also in the nature of these immigrants. It is in many ways a very homogenous group in that they all speak the same language – Spanish; they almost all have the same religion – Catholicism; and the large majority is from one country – Mexico. They mainly settle in areas that already have a high concentration of

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[54] Chafe, The Unfinished Journey, 516.
[55] U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "Hispanic Population of the United States".
http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic_pop_presentation.html (accessed August 9, 2010)
[56] U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "Hispanic Population of the United States".
http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic_pop_presentation.html (accessed August 9, 2010)

Hispanics – particularly in the states close to the border with Mexico – and they tend to retain very strong ties to the countries they came from.

Throughout US history it has been a necessity for immigrants to learn English in order to be part of society, but due high concentrations of Hispanics there are now areas in which you do not need to know English to be a fully functioning member of the local community – and in many of these areas it would difficult to get by without being able to speak at least some Spanish. This has raised concerns among many Americans that English will eventually lose its place as the one language of the United States – with Spanish becoming an equal language that will also have to be used in official documents, on street signs, in schools and elsewhere.

It is only natural that Spanish becomes more and more prolific as the Spanish speaking segment of the population grows and businesses have economic incentives to use Spanish in their marketing and by providing products and services targeted specifically towards Hispanics. Politicians have an obvious interest in catering to the Hispanic segment of the population, which is already very significant and growing at a fast pace. This includes listening to demands for more bilingual education in schools, more public information being provided both in Spanish and English, and other demands that directly or indirectly promote the Spanish language.

Not all people are concerned about the increasing proliferation of Spanish, and many will argue that it is a always positive that more information is provided in other languages in order to ensure that no one feels left out and that everyone receives the same information. This could seem like an enticing argument without any serious negative side effects, other than the obvious hassle of having to provide the same information in two different languages – but other possible consequences should of course be considered. One natural concern is that the proliferation of Spanish could lead to a more segregated society – with a divide between those who only speak Spanish and those who only speak English. It is obvious that there would be less of an incentive for Hispanics to learn English if Spanish was always provided as an alternative, and it is reasonable to believe that some first generation immigrants would focus less on learning English if they could get by with the language they

already know. However, the children of these immigrants would still have to learn English in school and would continue to be exposed to English through the media and popular culture. If English was a dying language the consequences could be dramatic, but English is not a dying language – on the contrary it is a language that is thriving and continuously growing in influence all over the world.

The United States does not have an official language, but English is the de facto official language, and many states have also declared English the official language of their particular states. Along with the growing influence of Spanish there has also been a growing demand from many Americans that English should be declared the official language of the United States. Opponents of such a step believe that it would only lead to the further alienation of Spanish speaking Americans and consider it unnecessary because of the dominant position of English.

English is a major part of the US national identity, and nationwide languages in other countries it plays an important role in binding people together. There is a fear that without one shared language the country will slowly become divided – with some parts being Spanish-speaking and some parts English-speaking. If that was to happen, it would be left to other aspects of the national identity to ensure the cohesion of the nation.

The language debate is part of a greater debate about the extent to which immigrants should change their ways in order to fit into their new country, and how much that country needs to change in order to fit the immigrants. It is a clash between multiculturalism and conformity. Should immigrants assimilate into the existing society and take on the culture, language and way of life of the existing population – or should society allow for many different groups, each with their own cultures, languages and ways of life?

Since the sixties, multiculturalism in the United States has been promoted by left wing progressives. The most visible and controversial result of this has been affirmative action which started out in 1961 with an executive order by President John F. Kennedy requiring government contractors to hire and treat employees "without

regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin".[57] Since then affirmative action has shifted towards the idea of taking past and present discrimination into consideration and attempting to "even the playing field" by giving preferential treatment to groups that have been – or still are – suffering from discrimination, or who society would otherwise put at a disadvantage due to their race, gender, social status or certain other factors outside the control of the individual. The opponents of Affirmative Action will argue that this kind of preferential treatment is unfair, and that equality under the law is one of the founding principles of the United States and central to the national identity.

Most people – including those in favor of Affirmative Action – would agree that preferential treatment would be wrong in an ideal world without racism, gender discrimination, social inequality or any of the other factors Affirmative Action attempts to counter. However, the world is far from ideal, and it is an indisputable fact that people are not given the same opportunities in life, and that certain groups have suffered from extreme discrimination throughout US history – most prominently African Americans and Native Americans.

The idea of Affirmative Action is undoubtedly a noble one, but whether it fulfils its intended purpose is a much more controversial matter. It is certainly peculiar that the United States has fostered Affirmative Action given a national identity that worships the idea that we are all masters of our own destiny and that we can achieve anything through hard work and determination – the essence of the American Dream and central to the national identity.

While some might consider Affirmative Action discriminatory against the white majority, there are also laws that discriminate against other groups in society. On April 23rd, the Governor of Arizona signed the highly controversial SB-1070 bill into law. The law now requires that police officers check the immigration status of anyone with whom "lawful contact is made" if there is "reasonable suspicion" that they are illegal aliens.[58] The law is controversial because it encourages racial profiling targeted at individuals who look like they might be Mexican Both of the concepts 'lawful

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[57] As quoted in Huntington, Who Are We?, 148.
[58] Arizona State Legislature. "Senate Bill 1070" www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/bills/sb1070s.pdf (accessed August 11, 2010).

contact' and 'reasonable suspicion' are vague, and essentially leave it to the individual police officer to decide who should be questioned.

The American public would never accept a law that would allow police officers to approach random individuals on the street in order to investigate if they are legal residents of the country. That situation would be something you would be more likely to see in a police state, rather than in a United States based on freedom, equality and individual rights – and in which the government has always been regarded with some suspicion. Thus, the passing of SB-1070 arguably represents a much greater threat to the national identity and cohesion of the United States, than the illegal immigration which it was designed to prevent.

The US national identity is constantly evolving, with aspects of the identity gaining or losing significance. Ethnicity as part of the national identity started losing significance with the Irish and German wave of immigrants, and was still further eroded by the wave of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. No longer could an American be said to be an Anglo-Saxon Protestant descending from the British Isles. Race, however, remained an important part of the national identity and you still had to be white to be American. This began to change after the Civil War – and with the civil rights movement in the 50's and 60's the racial aspect of the national identity started losing its significance at a dramatic pace.[59]

In regard to national identity and cohesion, the United States has the advantage of being founded on a set of principles that are inclusive of all people, but history shows that there is often a great distance between this set of principles and the reality of life. Slavery and abuse of Native Americans continued long after the founding; racism has continued to plague the United States all throughout its history; and immigrants have been met with prejudice and distrust. Almost all nationalities and ethnicities have at some point been considered less American than others, and SB-1017 would seem to indicate that this is still the case.

Human experience and prejudice supersedes the best of written down principles – even those that are universally agreed upon. However, in spite of the fact

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[59] Huntington, Who Are We?, 17.

that the Constitution has often been interpreted in ways that seem to go beyond its intentions, the most important aspects are conclusive and undeniable. Thus it is an invaluable document to point to whenever there are questions of discrimination, or claims that some ethnicities or religions are more American than others. It is a litmus test that everything else should have to pass

Time will tell whether the American ideals – which are central to a primarily inclusive national identity – will be able to survive in a globalized world of widespread poverty, international terrorism and illegal immigration.

5 Denmark

5.1 A Long History (12.000 B.C->)

Upon opening the first page of a textbook on the history of Denmark, it is immediately clear that the history of the United States and the history of Denmark are widely different. The standard US history book is likely to start in Europe around the end of the 15th century, just before the first Europeans set sail for "the New World" – perhaps with a brief precursor about the indigenous people and/or previous European ventures of discovery. A Danish history book, on the other hand, is likely to start around 12.000 B.C. with the hunters and gatherers that are believed to have lived in the geographical area now known as Denmark. Slowly the Danish history book will work its way through the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age and so forth.

It is clear that the long Danish history has greatly affected the shaping of the national identity. There is a sense of an almost mythical bond between all Danes that has been created over thousands of years – a sense that somehow all Danes carry with them an undefinable primordial heritage. The existence and creation of Denmark as a nation is not something that is questioned in the national identity – Denmark "just is". Land has been gained and lost, but the core has remained an unquestionable natural fact. Or so it would seem to most modern day Danes.

5.2 Attachment to Land

One way in which the long Danish history asserts itself in the national identity, is in an attachment to land that is very different from what you see in the United States. The ancestors of the Danish majority population have inhabited the same geographical area for thousands of years. The ancestors of the American settlers have inhabited the land slightly more than 500 years, and are a much smaller part of the population due to the influx of immigrants throughout history. That is of course with the exception of Native Americans whose ancestors make up only a fraction of the current US population, and who have not played a major role in defining the United

States as a nation. The land was more or less stolen from the indigenous population, and grew through a long period of exploration and conquest.

With the strong Danish attachment to land comes an exclusive sense of entitlement, which undoubtedly plays a role in how immigrants are received – a sense that "this is the land of the Danes – this is *our* land". As discussed earlier in this paper, the sense of entitlement to land you see in the United States is of a more abstract and inclusive nature.

5.3 Grundloven – the Danish Constitution (1849->)

Unlike Americans, Danes were not forced to define themselves and their nation early on. Where Denmark – at least in the national identity – appears to have been created "brick by brick" over thousands of years with no consciously predetermined plan, the creation of the United States was a result of conscious decisions and the setting up of a framework through the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution

When comparing the significance of the US Constitution and the Danish constitution (Grundloven) in the national identities, Grundloven falls far short. To most Danes Grundloven is an old document that carries little or no significance, whereas the US Constitution to this day arouses strong emotions. Grundloven very rarely gets more than a brief mention in the Danish political debate, whereas the US Constitution appears to be as relevant as ever in American politics.

5.4 The War of 1864

Like the US Constitution, the War of Independence does not have a Danish equivalent, but there is a war – and particularly one battle – that stands out as a defining moment in the Danish national identity: The Battle of Dybbøl, in the War of 1864[60]. The War of 1864 was fought between Denmark and Germany over a greatly

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[60] Also known as the Second Schleswig War

disputed area of southern Jutland and northern Germany and ended in utter defeat for Denmark.

As is often the case in history, the way in which the Battle of Dybbøl has asserted itself in the national identity is not necessarily justified by the actual historical events. Historian David Gress argues that the land lost did not really belong to Denmark, and he attributes the Danish defeat to poor planning on behalf of the Danish government, which he accuses of being highly nationalistic and for pursuing an aggressive foreign policy that was not followed up by the necessary investments in the Danish army and navy.[61]

Danes celebrate a war which was lost. In the national identity, Denmark proudly defended itself against an overwhelming force, and the Danish soldiers fought bravely in spite of the inevitable defeat. This idyllicized view of the war seems to have ingrained itself in the national identity as a belief that Danes are a proud and brave people, but that there is only but so much a small country like Denmark can do. The War of 1864 was the last in a row of lost wars, and undoubtedly contributed to a feeling among Danes that they would be better off by themselves in order to avoid tempting fate and inviting in trouble from the outside world.

The contrast to the US War of Independence is clear to see, and it represents a significant difference in the national identities of the two countries. Americans celebrate a war that against all odds ended in victory – injecting the national identity with a great sense of confidence and pride, and reinforcing the beliefs that the US has God on its side and that anything is possible if you are willing to work hard and fight for it. The declaration of independence itself was a willful act representing a take-charge attitude and willingness to face a challenge head-on. With the war against Great Britain, the United States proved that no threat from the outside world was a match for the will of this new nation of immigrants.

5.5 Folk High Schools and the Co-operative Movement (1864->)

[61] Elbjørn, Kasper and Gress, David. *20 Begivenheder der Skabte Danmark.* Copenhagen, Denmark: Gyldendal, 2006.

After the War of 1864, Denmark was more or less forced to give up the use of military force as a political tool. Even more significantly, the country was in shock after having been reduced to one of the smallest nations in Europe, and there was a widespread and reasonable fear that Denmark could cease to exist as a nation – perhaps being divided up between Germany and Sweden.[62]

When the initial shock had subsided, the focus was turned inward and people bonded together for the betterment of the nation under the motto "what is outwardly lost is inwardly won".[63] This popular movement was led by the Danish Folk High Schools, which offered post-school education in practical farming, history and literature, and which – perhaps most importantly – instilled in people a great sense of duty towards the nation. This sense of duty brings to mind the sense of duty which in the US was expressed by John F. Kennedy in his 1961 inaugural address, when he uttered the now famous words: "ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."[64] Almost all young people in the rural districts of Denmark enrolled in in the Folk High School, which helped to greatly increase the education level, spread democratic ideals and philosophical thinking, and also to establish the principle that education was of the utmost importance and should be available to everyone.[65] Although Folk High Schools are not as prevalent today, they are still an important part of the Danish national identity.

It was the priest, author and politician, N.F.S. Grundtvig who introduced the idea of a school for the people in his work "School for Life", and he is still considered the ideological father of the Danish Folk High School. Grundtvig is likely to be the most prominent character in the national identity, and his free-spirited and open-minded attitude towards life and education lives on. In regard to religion, he represents an approach that is philosophical, personal and free, rather than dogmatic, institutional and rigid. Despite of what the existence of the Danish State Church (Folkekirken) might suggest – this is very much in tune with the general Danish attitude.

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[62] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 231.
[63] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 232.
[64] Bartleby.com. "John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address, Friday, January 20, 1961" http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres56.html (accessed July 21, 2010).
[65] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 233.

The following period saw enormous improvements and modernization within Danish agriculture as well as in most other areas of the economy. Up until this point, Danish farms had mostly produced cattle and corn, but when the market was flooded by cheap corn from the US and other countries, Denmark quickly shifted its focus toward quality rather than quantity.[66] Particularly Danish butter and bacon gained a reputation for exceptional quality – a reputation that is still intact today. This shift in agricultural production is likely to have contributed greatly to the concept of 'Danish quality', which most Danes today see as the highest recommendation for any product, but which also carries great value around the world. Today, by Nørreport Station in central Copenhagen, a pizza place advertises "American pizza – Danish quality", and in Nørrebro a Muslim Halal butcher shop advertises "Halal meat – Danish quality" – clearly realizing that 'Danish quality' is the best possible selling point in Denmark.

The great improvements within agriculture were driven not only by the Folk High Schools, but even more so by the co-operative movement, which in many ways brought old farming traditions into the modern age of industrialization. The principle of the co-operative movement was that a group of dairy farmers would build a dairy in which they would all hold a share, and in this dairy they could then have their milk processed in a much more efficient and uniform way than had previously been the case. The co-operatives also came to include other areas of farming and even co-operative stores in which the farm products could be sold. Regardless of the size of a particular farm, all farmers had only one vote at the general meetings – making the co-operative movement a shining example of Democracy at work.[67]

The egalitarian attitude seen here in the co-operative movement is very much a part of the Danish national identity which rests on a firm belief that no one is better or more deserving than anyone else. In this regard, the Danish national identity differs from the US national identity, which allows – and even encourages – people to strive to be better than other people. In Denmark you are encouraged to be the best you can be, but do not ever dare to think that you are better than anyone else, even if you have worked hard to achieve success. This sentiment is expressed in a popular phrase

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[66] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 233.
[67] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 233-34.

that can be directly translated as "don't you come here and think you are somebody"[68]. Even though it is not necessarily directed at outsiders, it is clear to see that it is very much applicable to any foreigner who would dare to draw attention to him/herself.

With the Folk High School and co-operative farming, the seeds were sown – both literally and figuratively – for the kind of nation that Denmark was to become: an incredibly homogenous society with a national cohesion that was strong and on the rise. Through a collective effort, Denmark was transformed into a modern agricultural society, combining the best from the past with the best industrialization had to offer.

One image that was to become further ingrained in the Danish national identity in the years to come was that of Denmark as a farming nation with a landscape covered in fields, small farms and grazing animals. This image was picked up by the famous Danish writer Morten Korch who – in the period from 1900 to 1952 – wrote an astounding number of novels which took place in this exact setting. Just about every novel was based on the same plot: good hard-working people stand to lose their family farm because of the actions of some unscrupulous, dishonest character who represents an outside threat to the harmony that would otherwise exist. Often the good characters are the victims of fraud and devilish plots, but decency always wins out in the end, and the idyllic peace is restored to the charming rural setting.

5.6 Two World Wars (1914-1945)

The above image of Denmark survived two world wars. The First World War left Denmark more or less unharmed except for some damage done to the Danish shipping fleet by German submarines. The economic damages were more than made up for by the earnings made from dealing with the belligerent nations. However, the First World War was a stark reminder that Denmark was still a part of the world, after having enjoyed a period of peace and growing prosperity since the War of 1864.[69]

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[68] In Danish: "Du skal ikke kommer her og tro du er noget"
[69] Lauring, *A History of Denmark*, 236-38.

The Second World War saw Germany overrun a Denmark that was ill-prepared for war – and which, at the prospect of great destruction and loss of life, was unwilling to put up a fight. However, Denmark managed to save and even strengthen its reputation due to the successful, popular effort to save the Danish Jews, and due to the actions of the Danish resistance movement in the later part of the war. Fairly or not, the imprint the Second World War left on the Danish national identity was primarily one of a nation that had been unjustly overtaken by an outside aggressor of such magnitude that a war would have been futile and irresponsible, but which had showed its strength when its people came together to help save the Jews and resist the occupation. The truth of the war effort would probably have left Denmark in a somewhat less flattering light – but until recent years, when new facts have resurfaced and people have been allowed to question the rosy image, the prevailing story has been the one described above – of a small nation that did more than anyone could have expected. From the perspective of a Morten Korch novel, Denmark represented the good character which was threatened with almost certain ruin by a dishonest and aggressive Germany, but which bonded together to help shed the yoke of the oppressor and restore peace and tranquility.

5.7 The Welfare State

It seems that a line can be drawn from the Danish welfare state of today – or at least the ideals it was founded on – all the way back to the co-operative movement and the Folk High Schools: It is all about harnessing the power of community. In many ways the welfare state can be likened to a village. Everyone looks out for one another, and if someone comes upon hard times the village steps up and helps through a collective effort. However, the village is skeptical of outsiders, and when outsiders settle in the village they will not easily become part of the 'we', but will instead remain a suspicious 'Other'.

5.8 Immigration (1960->)

The Danish immigration history is short, and as such, immigration has not nearly had the same impact on Danish national identity as it has had on that of the United States. However, since the sudden increase in immigration in the late 60s, immigration has proved a challenge to the national identity that Denmark has still not managed to come to grips with. Until the 1960s, immigrants to Denmark had come mainly from Scandinavia, other European countries and North America, and this type of immigration had been unproblematic, and had mainly gone unnoticed – probably because most of the immigrants were very similar to the general population, both in regard to skin color, culture and socio-economic background.[70]

During the economic boom of the 60s, Denmark had a shortage of unskilled workers for the manufacturing industries, and employers started looking outside of Denmark to fill the need. From 1967 to 1970, around 18,000 foreign workers came to Denmark, primarily from Turkey, but also from Yugoslavia and Pakistan. At first it was mainly the workers unions who were concerned, since they feared a lowering of wage levels – but there was also a rising negative attitude among the general public. Compared to Danish workers, the foreign workers generally had to work harder, for lower pay – and more often than not they lived under conditions that no Danish workers would have been willing to put up with.[71]

Around 22,000 foreign workers and relatives were living in Denmark when the 1973 Oil Crisis prompted the Parliament to put a halt to any further immigration of foreign workers. This meant that residence and work permits were only granted to the spouses and children of foreign workers already living in Denmark. In 1981, around 30,000 foreign workers and relatives were living in Denmark – making up about 0,7 of the population.[72]

Between 1956 and 1984, Denmark had only received around 12,500 refugees, but suddenly there was a sharp increase, and from 1984 to 1997 more than 73,000

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[70] Poul Villaume. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 15*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal and Politikens Forlag, 2005, 220.

[71] Villaume. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 15*, 220-223.

[72] Søren Hein Rasmussen. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 16*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal and Politikens Forlag, 2004, 14, 48.

people were granted refugee status and asylum. Wars in the Middle East resulted in a great number of refugees from Iran and Iraq, but also many from Lebanon, out of which the majority were Palestinians. In 1986, Denmark took in almost 3,000 Tamils from the civil war in Sri Lanka – followed in 1993 by refugees from the civil war in Yugoslavia and later in the 1990s by refugees from the civil war in Somalia. Added to this were other refugees from various conflicts around the world.[73] The total number of foreign citizens went up from 2% of the population in 1985 to around 5% in 2000 – roughly a quarter of a million people.[74]

Within three decades, Denmark went from being an almost entirely homogenous nation of native born Danes, to a nation with a significant number of foreign born citizens from a great variety of often very different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Denmark was no longer an entirely "white country", as various shades of brown had been thrown into the mix.

From a country in which only a tiny fraction of the population belonged to a religion other than Christianity, Denmark is now home to around 200,000 Muslims, or 3,8% of the population. Although there is a significant number of immigrants and descendants belonging to other religions, the word 'Muslim' has become almost synonymous with the word 'immigrant' in the public debate. In the light of this, it is only natural that religion has become an important aspect of an immigration debate in which Denmark is often referred to as a "culturally Christian" nation.

It is a very common belief that Danish values and way of thinking are unique and that a Christian foundation is central to this – something which is often emphasized in the debate. Thus, religion has become a highly exclusive aspect of the national identity – in spite of the fact that religion is not an important part of everyday life for most Danes. The result of all this is an unnecessary alienation of people of other religions, who would be justified in thinking that they as non-Christian can never be truly Danish. If indeed exists a serious problem of young Muslims being recruited by fundamentalists, as many people seem to believe – then promoting Christianity as an essential part of being Danish would be to play directly into their

[73] Rasmussen. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 16*, 50.
[74] Rasmussen. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 16*, 48.

hands. People have a strong desire to belong to a group – and if one group rejects them, they will look somewhere else.

Among the general population there has been a growing dissatisfaction with increased immigration, which dates at least as far back as the late 70's, when a survey showed that a majority of Danes were against the intake of foreigners from non-Western countries.[75] From early on it seemed that Denmark had been split in two – with those in favor of immigration on one side, and those against immigration on the other side. To begin with, there was only black and white, and little room for the gray in between. In the public debate, people who were critical of the influx of immigrants were often labeled as racists, and their opinions were considered unsavory, even though they were shared by a growing segment of the population.

It seemed that many of the more moderate voices kept silent due to fears of being labeled racist – and as a consequence, the critical voices came to be represented by more extreme voices to the right of the political spectrum. One of the most extreme voices was that of Mogens Glistrup, the founder of the Progress Party (Fremskridtspartiet), who at one point in his career stated that "Of course I am a racist – all good Danes are".[76] The Progress Party was founded in 1972 and stormed into parliament just a year later, when they won 28 seats out of 179 and were exceeded only by the Social Democrats (Socialdemokratiet).[77] At that time, it was abolition of the income tax that was the key issue, but over the years, the opposition towards immigration became more and more dominant.

In 1987, the Danish Society (Den Danske Forening) was founded with the peculiarly phrased purpose of "counteracting the alienation of Denmark". It quickly became a countrywide organization with 40 local branches, and began publishing the magazine "the Dane" (Danskeren), which was dedicated to providing information about the negative consequences of immigration. Among the members were all the most prominent opponents to immigration – including Mogens Glistrup, and Søren Krarup, a long time defender of Danish national feeling and patriotism. Søren Krarup

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[75] Rasmussen. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 16*, 50.
[76] Humanisme.dk. "Indvandrerfjendtlig polemik og propaganda – Mogens Glistrup". http://www.humanisme.dk/hate-speech/mogens_glistrup.php (accessed July 29, 2010).
[77] Fremskridtspartiet.dk. "Historie 1973-97: Jordskredsvalget". http://www.fremskridtspartiet.dk/ (accessed July 29, 2010).

had become instantly famous around the country when he in 1986 spoke out against a nation-wide fund raising campaign for the Danish Refugee Council (Dansk Flygtningehjælp) – an aid organization dedicated to helping refugees around the world. To bring home his point, he started an "anti-campaign" against taking in refugees, which brought in half a million DKK.[78] The Danish Society still exists, and on its website you can read these declared goals:

"- to safeguard Danish culture, language and traditional lifestyle in a world increasingly threatened by   chaos, overpopulation, violence and fanaticism.
        - to warn against the dissolution of our cultural identity which is now under threat of being swamped by an   enormous influx of immigrants from countries plagued by overpopulation.
        - to prevent the disintegration of Denmark as the homeland of the Danish people."[79]

5.9 Current Immigration Politics

In today's Danish politics, some of the opinions and policies that were considered unsavory or even racist in the past are now mainstream, and the government alliance of the Liberal[80] Party of Denmark (Venstre) and the Conservative Peoples Party (Det Konservative Folkeparti) depends on the Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti / DF) for parliamentary majority. DF – a spin-off of the Progress Party – has been very successful in its continual push for tougher immigration laws – placing Denmark securely in the vanguard of a Europe growing increasingly fearful of immigration.

Whether one is in favor of the tightened immigration laws, or not, it seems that they have had a calming effect on the majority population. However, DF is ceaseless in its attempt to ensure that as few non-Western immigrants as possible are able to enter the country – even if it means infringing on what is considered basic human rights. One example of this is the 24-year rule which states that a foreigner can only obtain a residency permit based on marriage if this person and his or her spouse are at least 24 years old. Several other rules apply, including a somewhat subjective

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[78] Rasmussen. *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie: Bind 16*, 55.
[79] Den Danske Forening. "Den Danske Forening: who are we?" http://www.dendanskeforening.dk/index.asp?id=27 (accessed July 29, 2010).
[80] In Denmark, the word 'liberal' carries a different meaning than it does in the US. In part, this difference can be explained by the fact that, overall, Danish political parties are further to the left than the US political parties. Thus, in US politics, 'liberal' is associated with being at the left side on the political spectrum, whereas in Danish politics, liberals are at the center-right.

evaluation of whether the couple lives up to the requirement that their "combined attachment to Denmark must be greater than [their] combined attachment to any other country".[81] The 24-year rule is supported not only by DF and the Liberal-Conservative government, but also by most other parties in parliament – including the Social Democrats. Recently DF has been attempting to turn the 24-year rule into a 28-year rule, but has yet to gain support from other parties.

The claim by those in favor of the 24-year rule has always been that it is simply designed to prevent forced marriages, where young girls, against their own will, are forced to marry someone of their parents choosing. However, 'forced marriage' and 'arranged marriage' are often used interchangeably in the public debate – exposing that the true purpose of the rule is not only to prevent 'forced marriage', which any reasonable person would be opposed to, but also to prevent 'arranged marriage', which is something entirely different. An 'arranged marriage' is a marriage arranged by the parents, but it does not mean that is something entered into involuntarily. However, it is still something that many people would consider "un-Danish", but if it is agreed that everyone has the right to choose their partner in marriage, it seems that everyone should also have the right to have someone else be involved in the process – if they so desire. Under the cover of human rights and freedom of choice, this is essentially a case of some immigrants being targeted by the government for being "un-Danish", and an example of how the government is constantly looking for creative ways to limit immigration from non-Western countries.

Becoming a naturalized Danish citizen does not necessarily mean that you are considered truly Danish, but most people would consider it a minimum requirement. This has always been a long and often difficult process, but recent policy initiatives have made it even harder. Listed here are some of the official requirements:

> "[you must:]
> agree to renounce your present nationality.
> […]
> have lived in Denmark for a continuous period of at least 9 years.
> […]
> have been self-supporting for four years and six months of the last five years. […] if you receive

[81] newtodenmark.dk – the official portal for foreigners and integration. "Family reunifications> Spouses"
http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us/coming_to_dk/familyreunification/spouses/spouses.htm (accessed August 11, 2010).

rehabilitation benefits, you will not be eligible for Danish nationality.

[…]

prove your Danish skills by presenting a particular examination certificate.

[…]

prove your knowledge of the Danish society and of Danish culture and history by presenting a certificate of a special citizenship test."[82]

Those who succeed in becoming naturalized citizens will simply be notified by mail. The lack of a citizenship ceremony, combined with the arduous process of becoming a citizen, could give one the impression that citizenship is granted reluctantly not just because it is of great value, but also because it is not something that Danes really wish to share with anyone else.

In the United States, the citizenship ceremony is considered an event of great significance, and you usually see tears being shed as the new citizens swear allegiance to the United States. For most of these foreigners, there is great pride in becoming citizens, and you sense from the ceremony that these individuals are from now on truly American. It is a moment that is cherished by all Americans – old and new alike.

The Netherlands now has a ceremony modeled after the United States – having realized that not only is this something that the new citizens deserve for their dedication and effort to become part of the nation, but that it is also something that benefits the nation itself. If you feel that you are truly part of the nation, you will also feel more of an obligation and desire to work for the betterment of the nation, rather than working against it. This is expressed in a clear and simple manner by the political scientist Aristide R. Zolberg: "immigrants who feel welcome rarely set out to destroy their new home".[83]

After becoming naturalized citizens, many former immigrants will be disappointed to discover that there is still a long way to go in order to be considered truly Danish, and that it in fact might never happen for them personally. This fact is expressed very clearly by Bashy Quarishy, an author and political activist of Pakistani

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[82] newtodenmark.dk – the official portal for foreigners and integration. "Danish Nationality > Conditions to be satisfied" http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us/citizenship/danish_nationality/conditions_to_be_satisfied.htm (accessed August 10, 2010).
[83] Zolberg, Aristide R. *A Nation By Design: immigration policy in the fashioning of America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, 459.

descent, when he describes what happened when he proudly showed his new Danish passport to his Danish friends:

> "they laughed and said: 'Bashy, you are only Danish on paper. This piece of paper does not change the fact that you do not look like a Dane, you are not Christian, you speak with an accent, and your habits are not like ours'".[84]

Naturalized US citizens can point to the Constitution as proof that they too have a right to be accepted as Americans. Denmark does not have a clearly defined set of principles that the national identity is centered around, and that means that it is up to all Danes to help define what it means to be Danish. In regard to immigration, the United States is roughly two hundred years ahead of Denmark, and from the very beginning, the founding fathers were able to define America in a way that has stood the test of time. The United States would undoubtedly have been very different today if the founding fathers, instead of defining it the way they did, had defined the United States as an exclusively Christian nation for people of Western European descent.

In a way, Denmark is at a similar juncture right now, but so many factors are different that a true comparison is impossible. The Danish national identity cannot be said to be any better or worse than that of the United States, but the lack of a defining set of principles means that it is easier for various individuals and groups to claim that their definition of Danish national identity is the true one. One example of this is the way that DF has been trying to define Denmark as a monoethnic, culturally Christian nation. Since there is no clear definition of the national identity, it is also unclear what the national symbols stand for, and DF and their supporters have taken the Danish flag for their own – holding it up as a symbol of what *they* stand for. Instead of being a inclusive and unifying symbol, the flag has suddenly become exclusive and divisive.

In spite of not being being based on a clearly defined set of principles, Denmark as a nation has a very solid foundation that has been constructed over hundreds, or even thousands of years. There is reason for cautious optimism, and considering the short immigration history, at the end of a very long history as a

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[84] Trolle, Annette Lerche et. al. '… *herfra min verden går – Dansk identitet i fortid, nutid og fremtid'*. Vejle, Denmark: Sammenslutningen af Lokalarkiver, 2002. [Translated from Danish]

monoethnic nation, it does seem that Denmark has come a long way already in terms of integration. It is not strange that the nation was taken aback by the sudden increase in immigration, and it is understandable that there has been – and still is – a lot confusion as to in what direction Denmark should be going. Still, it is an undeniable fact that Denmark is no longer a strictly monoethnic nation, and that it will become even more multiethnic in the future. This change will happen naturally over time, but exactly how much time, and what the costs and benefits will be, are factors that can be influenced by active involvement. Hopefully the result will be a national identity that is inclusive of all Danes – old and new alike.

6 Case Study: Indian-Americans - a Model Minority?

The concept of a "model minority" is believed to have originated in a New York Times article from 1966 entitled "Success Story, Japanese-American Style" by sociologist William Petersen.[85] As the title suggests, the model minority label was first attached to Japanese Americans, but since then it has been attached to other Asian minority groups as well. Petersen wrote: "By any criterion of good citizenship that we choose, the Japanese Americans are better than any other group in our society, including native-born whites."[86] The latest members of the model minority "club" are Indian-Americans.

Indians were late arrivals to the US, and only a few thousand had arrived when the Immigration Act of 1917 completely banned entrance for anyone whose ancestry could be traced back to the Asian continent.[87] Thus, the first major influx of Indians took place in 1960s after the the passing of the Immigration Act of 1965 which made it much easier for non-Europeans to enter the country – particularly if they had skills that were needed in the US.[88] Since then, Indians have come to be widely recognized as hard working, highly educated, unlikely to cause problems, and held up as an example not only to other minority groups but to the white majority as well.

A 2009 article from Forbes.com entitled "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority" is just one out of a slew of articles pointing out the model minority status of Indian-Americans. The article's author, Jason Richwine from the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, points to data showing that, in 2007, the median Indian-American household income was approximately $83,000, compared with $61,000 for East Asians and $55,000 for whites.[89] Today, around 69% of Indian-Americans age 25 and over have four-year college degrees, compared with 51% for East Asians and 30% for whites – and Indian-Americans are less likely to be poor or in prison.[90] Constituting

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[85] William Petersen, "Success Story, Japanese-American Style", *New York Times Magazine*, 9 January, 1966, 20-43.

[86] William Petersen, "Success Story, Japanese-American Style", 20-43.

[87] Robert G. Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, 142.

[88] Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, 142.

[89] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"

[90] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"

less than 1% of the population, Indian-Americans constitute 3% of its engineers, 7% of IT workers and 8% of the physicians and surgeons.[91]

Richwine proceeds to examine why Indian-Americans are seemingly doing so much better than everyone else. He begins with the theory that it is usually the most ambitious and hardworking people who decide to move to another country, but he sees the all-important factor as being US immigration policy which will grant residency to immigrants with professional skills that are needed. In the case of Indian-Americans the result is that "it is mainly India's educated elite and their families who come to the U.S".[92] The cream of the crop of a huge country such as India would naturally be more significant than that of a smaller country, but Richwine also points to a culture which, as he puts it "places strong – some would even say obsessive – emphasis on academic achievement"[93].

The final and most controversial reason Richwine gives for Indian-American success is that they, according to some IQ tests, have a higher intelligence than other ethnic groups. Richwine does mention that the results of these IQ tests should be taken cautiously but goes on to compare the IQ scores of Indian-Americans with those of white Americans and Ashkenazi Jews - "a famously intelligent ethnic group".[94] In his appeal for an immigration policy that "prioritizes skills over family reunification", Richwine points out that "most U.S. immigrants, especially Mexican, are much less wealthy and educated than U.S. natives, even after many years in the country."[95]

To Jason Richwine, being a model minority is almost exclusively about money making potential. Immigration is not considered from the point of the immigrant, but rather from the point of the society wishing to benefit from immigration. Thus, Richwine states that "immigrants need not be unskilled, nor must their economic integration take generations to achieve".[96] It appears that economic integration is the only type of integration that Richwine finds desirable, and he seems to take joy in the

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[91] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[92] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[93] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[94] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[95] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[96] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"

fact that Indian-American Governor Bobby Jindal is nothing but an exception to the rule that Indian-Americans are not usually interested in politics.[97]

Some might argue that the attitude of Richwine fits well with a capitalist United States, valuing financial success above all else. However, the greatest admiration is reserved for those who start out with nothing and achieve success through hard work and determination – that is the American Dream. The American Dream is not about favoring the privileged – and neither is immigration if you go by the oft quoted inscription on the base of the Statute of Liberty:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"[98]

It seems both unwise and morally dubious to base immigration policy exclusively on attracting those immigrants who would contribute most to the financial growth of the country, but Richwine is right in stating that: "There is nothing inevitable about immigration. Who immigrates each year is a policy decision".[99] Immigration policy is indeed something that deserves great attention, and among Western nations there is hardly a political issue that is more debated.

All Western nations are looking for ways to attract immigrants who would be able to contribute to their financial growth, but it is not without danger if it becomes the only goal of immigration policy. Denmark is among the countries that have recently shifted the focus of immigration policy towards attracting more skilled immigrants, and among the new initiatives is a Green Card program inspired by the United States. Interestingly, the official English title is "the Greencard scheme" which – however unintentional it may be – hints at something morally questionable.[100]

As mentioned in the chapter on Danish immigration , it is not the first time that Denmark has actively sought to attract foreign labor. At that time the focus was

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[97] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[98] Liberty State Park. "Statue of Liberty Monument". http://www.libertystatepark.com/emma.htm (accessed August 3, 2010).
[99] Richwine, "Indian-Americans: The New Model Minority"
[100] newtodenmark.dk – the official portal for foreigners and integration. "The Greencard scheme" http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us/coming_to_dk/work/greencard-scheme/greencard-scheme.htm

on attracting unskilled labor to work in factories, and not a lot of consideration was given to the future consequences. Today there are many regrets associated with these immigration policies from the past, and it is clear to everyone that it was naive to look at these immigrants simply as laborers who existed only in the factories in which they worked. No consideration was given to the fact that the immigrants would naturally become part of society, and no policies were put in place to ensure that they could be successfully integrated. They were simply expected to leave when they were no longer needed.

In many ways, history seems to be repeating itself, as Indians who were brought to the US during the IT-boom in many cases are no longer needed because the IT jobs are being outsourced to other countries – most notably, and most ironically, India. Thus, although it would appear to be less problematic to have a large influx of skilled labor than a large influx of unskilled labor, it is not something that should be pursued blindly. The future consequences – positive and negative – should be considered carefully.

When Denmark began to see a dramatic decline in manufacturing jobs, it quickly became obvious that it had been short-sighted to import great numbers of unskilled laborers. As competition for unskilled work grew, so did the animosity towards immigrants who were seen as stealing jobs from Danish workers. In today's post-industrial Western world, countries are doing everything they can to attract skilled labor, but unfortunately it seems that the lessons of history have been forgotten.

Denmark, as of yet, does not have a model minority – and if there is a minority group that might fit the criteria, it is not something that is part of the public debate. In this regard, Denmark might have a chance to learn something from the United States, before it too falls for the temptation to point to a model minority as a role model for other minority groups. It is clearly necessary to look for examples of successful integration, but the danger lies in making an example of one particular group, rather than focusing on individual successes. Regardless of which theory of

integration you favor, the goal would never be a society of separate groups ranked differently according to certain stereotypes.

Labeling a particular group as a model minority deepens the divides that already exists between different minority groups, and between minority groups and the majority population. Members of the model minority group will perhaps gain some confidence in their possibilities to be successful, but the model minority stereotype will do little to encourage members of other minorities. The fact that an Indian-American can be successful in the United States does not mean that the same possibilities exist for a Mexican-American.

The model minority stereotype always carries with it negative implications about other minority groups, and in that way it is more likely to be discouraging, rather than encouraging, to other groups. Explicitly comparing the successes of a particular model minority with the failures of another group further enhances the negative consequences. When, as in the Richwine article, Indian-Americans are pitted directly against Mexican-Americans, a natural consequence would be that Mexican-Americans come to resent Indian-Americans for providing an excuse to criticize Mexican-Americans.

The model minority stereotype might very well provide some opportunities for Indian-Americans, but as it opens some doors, it closes others. When it comes to affirmative action, someone belonging to a model minority is unlikely to be favored, regardless of whether this individual fits the stereotype. These ill-favored individuals not only have to deal with the disappointment of not having lived up to their model minority status, but they are also unlikely to receive the assistance that sometimes befalls minority groups that are considered less fortunate.

On the surface, the idea of a model minority sounds positive, but it fails to take into account the great differences between various minority groups in terms of the obstacles they face, and it also fails to consider the great differences between the individuals that are artificially grouped together. It is even worse when the example of a model minority focuses on factors that are out of the control of the individual – such as high IQ or other inherited traits.

A Newsweek article entitled "American Masala"[101] looks beyond what Indian-Americans might be able to contribute financially, and examines what else Indian-Americans have to offer and how they feel that they are being treated by the rest of society. The authors mention prominent Indian-Americans and their achievements as painters, writers, actors, journalists, film makers, pianists and more. The fields in which Indian-Americans are often found, such as technology, engineering and medicine are also mentioned, but the focus of this article is on those Indian-Americans that have broken free from those stereotypes.

It seems clear that the authors value multiculturalism and do not wish for Indians to lose their "exotic culture" by melting into the rest of society. Thus, the Indian influence is not perceived as a threat, and the chai (Indian tea) at Starbucks and kurta pajama tops (traditional Indian clothing) are seen as nothing but positive. One could argue that even though the article highlights Indian-Americans who have broken free from the professional stereotypes of Indian doctors, engineers, etc., it plays very much on these and other stereotypes in its portrayal of Indian-Americans as an exotic, foreign element. The lead of the article reads: "They've changed the way we eat, dress, work and play. South Asians come here from many places, and they succeed in blending East and West." This is problematic in two ways. First of all there is the immediate separation of "them" and "us", and attached to that is a stereotype encompassing all South Asians: that "they succeed in blending East and West".

In a Time article from July 2010 entitled "My Own Private India", author Joel Stein takes a very different approach to Indian-Americans, and even though the article – on the surface – is a lighthearted humor piece, real fears of growing Indian-American influence clearly shine through. The article uses irony and sarcasm, and the tone is set right from the beginning, when Stein writes: "I am very much in favor of immigration everywhere in the U.S. except Edison, N.J. The mostly white suburban town I left when I graduated from high school in 1989".

Joel Stein has clearly chosen humor as a supposedly safe way to express his own concerns about immigration, and he gives no special consideration to the fact that he is dealing with an ethnic minority that has been subjected to discrimination

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[101] Julie Scelfo and Barbara Kantrowitz, "American Masala," Newsweek.com, March 22, 2004.

and racism. In fact he makes light of this when he writes, "I question just how good our schools were if 'dot heads' was the best racist insult we could come up with for a group of people whose gods have multiple arms and an elephant nose." However, there are many examples that seem to cross the line of the acceptable – such as when he questions the model minority stereotype:

"For a while, we assumed all Indians were geniuses. Then, in the 1980s, the doctors and engineers brought over their merchant cousins, and we were no longer so sure about the genius thing. In the 1990s, the not-as-brilliant merchants brought their even-less-bright cousins, and we started to understand why India is so damn poor."[102]

… and when he introduces another stereotype:

"a lot of them look like the Italian Guidos I grew up with in the 1980s: gold chains, gelled hair, unbuttoned shirts. In fact, they are called Guindians. Their assimilation is so wonderfully American that if the Statue of Liberty could shed a tear, she would. Because of the amount of cologne they wear."[103]

These statements would not be as interesting as they are, if it was not for the fact that they are from the moderately liberal Time Magazine and written by someone who is a declared liberal in favor of immigration. For this reason, the article serves as a great example of how immigration and ethnic minorities can raise fears even among liberals – that it is not just about being for or against immigration, but that it is a complicated issue that requires everyone's attention.

It is clearly easier not to face the issue of immigration when it is something abstract and far away, and most people will at least be able to relate to Stein's sadness at seeing how his hometown has changed so dramatically that he can hardly recognize it. One of the problems with his article is that he feeds into the 'us' and 'them' mentality. The Indian-Americans become 'the Other' that is trying to take what once belonged to the "real Americans".

Stein give an impression of Indian-Americans deliberately trying to colonize his old town, rather than just wishing to be near other people who are more like themselves and where they can feel safe. This natural desire to be part of a community is expressed in very simple terms in a quote from an International Herald

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[102] Stein, "My Own Private India," July 5, 2010.
[103] Stein, "My Own Private India," July 5, 2010.

Tribune article, in which an Indian-American woman explains that she felt very lonely when she arrived from India 40 years ago, but now feels entirely comfortable in Fairfax County, Virginia, which has a large Indian-American Community: "'Do I need a temple?' Varna asked. 'It's here. Do I need a family? It's here. Do I need a business? I have it."[104] What Indian-Americans seek, is clearly not specific to being an Indian-American, but is just human nature. The desire to be with others like you is nowhere more obvious than in "Danish colonies" in southern Europe where Danish pensioners settle in large groups together with other Danes. In Stein's small home town, Edison, N.J., the change is felt more dramatically than elsewhere because it is a small geographic area in which Indian-Americans constitute a substantial segment of the population, as opposed to New York city, which is the scene of the Newsweek article.

There is nothing new about immigrants settling together with fellow countrymen. It has been a pattern throughout US history. When the Germans and the Irish started arriving in the 1830s they behaved the same way. The Germans settled together in rural communities in which they cultivated not only the land but also the German language and culture. The Irish settled together in the cities where they helped each other to cope with life in the US.[105]

As mentioned previously in this paper[106], 'attachment to land' is not generally considered a very important part of the national Identity – but suddenly attachment to land comes to play a great role as immigrants are seen as taking over a whole town and thus encroaching on land that used to belong to the original, "true Americans". Stein starts the article off by pointing out that the town used to be called Menlo Park, but was renamed in honor of Thomas Alva Edison – the famous inventor and scientist popularly known as the inventor of the light bulb.

It is as if Stein is not only saying that the Indians are taking over his town, but that they are encroaching on sacred grounds that are essential to US history and thereby threatening the very foundation of the United States. This impression is – perhaps unintentionally – emphasized by two links that have been added to the text.

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[104] Brian Knowlton, "Immigrants from India thriving in U.S.; New wave of well-educated young professionals blends right in," International Herald Tribune, October 30, 2006, 1.
[105] See earlier chapter: 'The Irish and German wave (1830-1860)'.
[106] See earlier chapter: 'Internal Migration and Westward Expansion (1840-1861)'

One link is appended to the paragraph Stein begins with "My town is totally unfamiliar to me" and has the caption "See pictures of Thomas Edison's Menlo Park". Another link is appended to the paragraph Stein begins with "Eventually, there were enough Indians in Edison to change the culture" and points to a Time's special report on "the Making of America: Thomas Edison".

Part of modern US history is an idolization of the suburbs of the 50s, which are seen as quintessentially American and are an important part of the national identity. This is also true for the small towns that are now much less common than in the past – the kind of town with a diner, a gas station, a school, a grocery store, and a friendly atmosphere with people greeting each other on the street. Joel Stein invokes both the image of the 50s suburbs and small town America when he writes:

> My town is totally unfamiliar to me. The Pizza Hut where my busboy friends stole pies for our drunken parties is now an Indian sweets shop with a completely inappropriate roof. The A&P I shoplifted from is now an Indian grocery. The multiplex where we snuck into R-rated movies now shows only Bollywood films and serves samosas. The Italian restaurant that my friends stole cash from as waiters is now Moghul, one of the most famous Indian restaurants in the country.

Joel Stein's sadness resembles a kind of sentimental reminiscing about ones childhood and days gone by that most people can relate to. For most people, childhood and adolescence are associated with a more "worry-free" existence, and the negative memories often give way to the good ones. In other words, Stein's sadness – whether he realizes it or not – appears to have more to do with memories of the past rather than the situation of the present. It is likely that someone growing up in Edison now, in 10-20 years will find that it is equally different from how it was when they grew up, and perhaps they will share the feelings of Joel Stein. Some aspects are probably better, some are probably worse, but more than anything people are scared of change. What is most troubling about Stein's approach, is that he exclusively targets one particular ethnic group as the reason for the supposed decline of his town. He does on one occasion point to another reason for the negative changes, but it does not seem to have any influence on his own attitude in the rest of the article. He writes:

> I talked to a friend of mine from high school, Jun Choi, who just finished a term as mayor of Edison. Choi said that part of what I don't like about the new Edison is the reduction of wealth, which

probably would have been worse without the arrival of so many Indians, many of whom, fittingly for a town called Edison, are inventors and engineers. And no place is immune to change.

When an ethnic group is concentrated in a specific area where they become the majority, it is often referred to as "ghettoisation", and it is automatically seen as a problem by most people. It brings to mind poor African American ghettos with high crime rates, isolated from the rest of society. Historically, white Americans as a whole have been substantially richer and better educated than the non-white population, which has meant that areas with a majority of non-whites have naturally had more social problems than areas with a white majority. Now, with some ethnic groups surpassing whites in terms of education and income – Indian-Americans chief among them – it will be interesting to see if high concentrations of non-whites will continue to be seen as something necessarily problematic.

Edison , N.J. – as an example – in 1999 had a population that was almost 60% white compared to 75% of the entire population, and a median household income of $70,000 compared to the national median household income of $42,000.[107] In the period 2006-2008 Edison had an estimated white population of slightly under 50%, compared to the entire population which consisted of roughly 74% whites; yet, the median household income of Edison was around $83,000 compared with a national median household income of $52,000.[108] It is of course impossible to say anything definite based on these statistics, but it does not appear that the decline in the percentage of white people has had any dramatic effect on the income levels in Edison.

Reading Joel Stein's article about Edison, it is easy to get the impression that the town has been entirely taken over by Indians, when in fact Indian-Americans only made up 17.5% of the population in 2000.[109] That was the highest percentage of any municipality in the United States at the time, and still the Indian-Americans were a minority compared with the roughly 60% white population (1999 numbers).[110] In some

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[107]U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "American Factfinder" http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFFacts?
_event=&geo_id=06000US3402320230&_geoContext=&_street=&_county=edison&_cityTown=edison&_state=04000US34&_zip=
&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=060&_submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=ACS_2008_3YR_SAFF
&_ci_nbr=null&qr_name=null®%3Dnull:null:null®=null®%3Dnull:null:null&_keyword=&_industry= (accessed July 14, 2010)
[108] U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "American Factfinder" (accessed July 14, 2010)
[109] Epodunk. "Asian Indian Communities". http://www.epodunk.com/ancestry/Asian-Indian.html (accessed July 14, 2010)
[110] U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "American Factfinder" (accessed July 14, 2010)

statistics, Asian Indians do not appear as a separate group but as part of all Asians. However the total number of Asians in Edison went up from 29.3% in 2000 to an estimated 36.2% in the 2006-2008 period.[111] Assuming that mainly Indians were responsible for this increase in the Asian population, it still does not fit the impression Joel Stein gives of a town being completely taken over by Indians.

It appears that what Stein resents most about Indian-Americans is that they are very different from the people he grew up with, which could lead one to suspect that race is also a factor, and that Stein might be among those who are fearful of a future in which white people will no longer the majority. Even in a land of mixed races and ethnicity, white people in many ways still represent the true American. The first settlers, the founding fathers, the cowboys, and of course the majority of the population throughout history.

Stein's article shows that even as a model minority you are not free from being seen as an 'Other' and a threat to the existing society. The size of a minority certainly seems to be a major factor, and when any particular minority group grows "too large" in any given area, it is likely to be the target of increasing prejudice. Too large, in this case, is less than one fourth of the population of Edison.

The Indian-American minority is not only the most successful minority group according to all the essential criteria in a capitalist society, but they are also seemingly the least threatening minority group. Like other Asians they are not seen as being physically threatening, as opposed to Blacks who are often regarded as physically superior to other races, due primarily to their prowess in sports, but also due to the stereotype that they have a larger penis size. It is at least the popular belief that in both physical strength and penis size, Blacks are ranked highest, followed by whites and then Asians. Indian stereotypes are even less physically threatening than those of other Asian groups that are often associated with various forms of martial arts. In terms of stereotypes related to crime, Indians appear much less threatening than for example Blacks and Hispanics, who are associated with gangs, and East Asians who are associated with "mafia style" organized crime.

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[111]U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.org. "American Factfinder" (accessed July 14, 2010)

There are no exact statistics on the religious affiliation of particular Asian-American groups, but everything indicates that the majority of Indian-Americans are Hindus, and those who are not are often automatically assumed to be by the rest of society. In the Western world, Hinduism is seen as a non-threatening religion which does not actively seek to convert others – as opposed to Islam which is often associated with stereotypes of terrorism, oppression of women and of wanting to turn the whole world Muslim and impose religious Sharia laws.

Indian food is mentioned several times in the article, and it is unlikely to be a coincidence that food is prominent among the issues that trouble Stein. Food is a very important part of ones personal identity, and very much a part of the national identity as well. There are a lot of stories attached to food. What we ate growing up; who we ate it with; and what choices we have made concerning what we eat. The author Jonathan Safran Foer devotes a whole chapter to "Storytelling" in his book *Eating Animals*[112], a thought provoking book centered around the ethical and social aspects of eating meat.

When someone chooses to become vegetarian – or even vegan – it is likely to be a central part of their lives that they are very much aware of and are always ready to defend and argue for when questioned by others. People who eat like the majority will often take food for granted and might not be aware of how important food is to them until they are faced with someone who chooses to eat differently. Naturally, this will affect many immigrants who come from different food cultures and who might even have religious beliefs that dictate what they can and cannot eat. Hindus do not eat cows and are often vegetarians, and this adds to the foreignness of all Indians and adds distance between Indians and the majority population. The issue of food culture becomes dramatically more important when the food choices of immigrants begin to affect the choices of other groups. Stein hints at this when he mentions that his old movie theater now serves samosas, but he neglects to say if this has pushed out other kinds of food that he was used to.

In Hindus and Jews, their eating habits are often seen as a curiosity and might be the source of jokes and even ridicule – but when it comes to Muslims, the issue of

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[112] Jonathan Safran Foer. *Eating Animals*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2009.

food choices suddenly takes on a more threatening tone. As it did in Denmark when some kindergartens decided to stop serving pork because it was just easier to leave it out altogether, rather than having to make separate meals for the significant number of Muslim children and others who do not eat pork. This resulted in a public outcry and a heated political debate in which Pia Kjærsgaard, the party leader of DF, said that: "it is completely unacceptable that Danish children, who are after all still the majority, are not able to get pork".[113] One city council member went as far as saying: "Let me provide a public service message: This country is Denmark. A culturally Christian country with a long tradition for eating pigs".[114] This particular quote is an interesting example of how national identity traits are interconnected. To this council member, Christianity and eating pork seemingly go hand in hand as an essential part of being Danish. Also the more moderate Venstre joined in and called it a discriminatory action against some of the children who were "deprived of the option to have normal Danish food".[115] The idea that there is such a thing as "normal Danish food", carries the message that there is also such a thing as un-Danish food which apparently is ranked lower and should not be given the same consideration.

From a common sense perspective it might make perfect sense to leave out pork when it would be both easier and cheaper and have no negative effect on the quality and nutritional value of the food being served. Added to this would be the positive unifying effect that is to be had from all children sharing the same meal. However, food is not just a common sense issue, and, regardless of how peculiar it might sound, pork is an important part of Danish national identity.

Denmark has a long history of pig farming and is currently one of the world's largest exporters of pork.[116] Needless to say, the pork industry is important to Denmark's economy, but it is also an important part of Denmark's history as a farming nation. This is a very exclusive element of the national identity, since "the eating of pork" is not something that immigrants can reasonably be expected to adopt, and

[113] Mads Schmidt Hansen, "Daginstitutioner fjerner svinekød fra menuen," TV2oj.dk – TV2 Østjylland, January 12, 2010 http://www.tv2oj.dk/vis_nyhed.asp?AjrDcmntId=27912 (accessed July 19, 2010)
[114] Sune Borkfelt, "Behøver vi kød I daginstitutionerne?," Vegetaren, Summer 2010.
[115] Lise Brix, "V: Diskrimination ikke at servere svinekød," JP.dk – Jyllandsposten, January 14, 2010 http://jp.dk/indland/aar/article1946480.ece (accessed July 19, 2010)
[116] Landbrug og Fødevarer. "Den danske svinekødssektor". http://www.lf.dk/Tal_og_Analyser/Fakta_om_landbrugsfoedevareprod/Den_danske_svinesektor.aspx (accessed July 19, 2010)

even more so because it is not even an option for some religious groups. No group is more affected by this aspect of the national identity than Muslims – the group that a majority of Danes consider the most problematic.

The United States has the hamburger, but unlike pork in Denmark, the burger in the United States is not an exclusive aspect of the national identity. The hamburger represents a fast food culture that has a long history of integrating various cuisines from all over the world. It is a culture in which Italian, Mexican and Chinese food now seem almost as American as the burger. Traditional ethnic cuisines have in most cases been "Americanized", so that they – usually in their American-style fast food versions – are quite different from what is found in the countries they came from.

The American food culture is a great representation of America as an immigrant nation, in the sense that it has integrated cuisines from all over the world and added to them an American touch. When it comes to the integration of cuisines, the United States seems to most closely resemble the salad bowl of multiculturalism rather than the melting pot, since the various cuisines remain distinct but are also heavily influenced by the general US food culture which they are all a part of.

It is interesting that Joel Stein reminisces about the Italian restaurant of his adolescence that has been replaced by an Indian restaurant. Although he mentions that this Indian restaurant is one of the most famous in the country, he still does not seem happy about the change. Surely, Italian food was once considered foreign like the Italians who brought it to the US in the 1880s, but now it is not something anyone would consider un-American. Indian food has a more recent history in the United States, but there is not reason to think that Indian food would not follow the same pattern of integration. However, even with an inclusive food culture, different eating habits among ethnic groups is something that can add to their foreignness and thus create more distance between the ethnic group and the majority population.

This case study of Indian-Americans shows that not even an inclusive national identity based on principles of equality and individual rights is a guarantee against discrimination and prejudice. Human nature and experience trumps even the most clearly defined principles, and there are many other national and personal identity

traits at play. Sometimes, seemingly irrelevant parts of the national identity – such as eating pork – become important in the immigration debate, where they are linked to bigger issues of culture and religion.

It is clear that fear and mistrust of immigrants has a lot to do with a fear of change, and it is human nature to be on guard when changes are happening. The "model minority" represents something that is different from the majority population, and like all immigrants and ethnic groups, the model minority is a mirror in which the majority native-born population can see a reflection of themselves. Sometimes they will not like what they see, and they might look for flaws in these 'Others' in order to justify themselves. Thus, immigrant stereotypes not only highlight who we are, and what we would like to be, but are used as examples to other groups of what they are not.

7 Conclusion

The United States has a proud history of integrating immigrants of all different nationalities, cultures, religions, races and ethnicities. As this paper points out, there have been some very serious problems along the way, and at different times, different groups of immigrants have not been well received, and there has been – and still is – racism, religious prejudice and general xenophobia. However, in the end, it seems that the US has always managed to absorb all these different immigrant groups and make them Americans.

From a Danish perspective there is a lot to learn from the immigration history of the United States. First of all, Danes should be able to take comfort in the fact that the US, throughout its history, has been able to integrate a vast number of immigrants, while still maintaining a strong national identity and cohesion. Often these immigrants have come in waves rather than in a steady flow, and at times there have been fears that these large groups of immigrants of a particular ethnicity, culture or religion, could not be successfully integrated – that they were simply too different. Again and again those fears have been put to rest, and most everyone has eventually been accepted as American by the native population. When someone describes themselves as Irish-American or Italian-American, it is not an indication that they consider themselves less American – on the contrary, they are so confident of their status as Americans that they can take pride in their ethnic heritage without any fear that people would question their loyalty. In Denmark it is a different situation, and whereas an American of Turkish descent would be referred to as Turkish-American, a Dane of Turkish descent would in Denmark be referred to as a Danish Turk (Dansk-Tyrker) – with the emphasis being on the Turkish part of their identity.

Today the United States faces perhaps the greatest challenge in its long immigration history: the dramatic and continuous influx of Hispanic immigrants, and a Hispanic population that is growing at an incredible rate. Not only is this group vast in numbers, but it is concentrated in certain geographic areas close to its main country of origin, to which it maintains very strong ties. Those factors by themselves would

prove a great challenge to any nation, but this wave of immigration also challenges one of the most important aspects of national identity, and probably *the* most important aspect of national cohesion – language.

Looking at the challenges facing the US, the challenges facing Denmark seem to pale in comparison. There is no threat to the Danish language. There is no single ethnic group that is growing at a rate that in any way resembles that of Hispanics in the US. There is no nearby developing nation to be an inexhaustible source of immigrants wanting nothing more than to cross the border. Still, the issues of immigration and integration are very important and pressing issues, and by examining different situations in different countries it is possible to clarify where the most significant challenges lie and find inspiration for solutions.

As a capitalist democracy, the US sometimes seems blinded by the earning potential of immigrants – both when it comes to highly educated immigrants, but also – and perhaps more dangerously – when it comes to unskilled guest workers. Many US companies are highly dependent on unskilled workers to fill the lowest paying jobs, and short term needs are prioritized higher than potential future problems.

Denmark experienced some of the possible consequences of importing labor, when unskilled guest workers were imported to fulfill economic needs, but some of the lessons seem to have been quickly forgotten. The import of skilled labor may help to solve some economic problems now and in the immediate future, but in the end it could easily end up causing more problems than it solves. Even high-skilled jobs are now moving to other countries – in much the same way as the unskilled jobs of the past. It seems that Denmark could easily be facing a situation in which high-skilled immigrants end up competing with high-skilled native Danes for an ever-decreasing number of jobs.

It is problematic that the Danish government is now working hard to attract skilled immigrants, while the immigrants that are already in Denmark are treated as a problem – and it fits poorly with humanistic Danish ideals that privileged immigrants are favored over those less privileged in terms of skills and education. Perhaps Denmark will end up with a model minority – or simply a "higher class" of immigrants

– which could be used to point out the flaws of other immigrant groups, as seen in the US.

History has shown that immigrants cannot simply be considered a source of labor you can import or export according to your current needs. The true measure of a nation, in this regard, lies not in who it is able to attract, but in its ability to provide the best conditions and opportunities for its citizens – old and new alike.

In the effort to protect the nation, both Denmark and the United States are endangering some of the most important aspects of their national identities. In the United States, the civil rights and democratic ideals, which are supposed to be held up high as examples to the world, are being compromised in the attempt to counter illegal immigration – as seen recently with the passing of Arizona SB-1070. Denmark, as a social democracy, is struggling to tackle the challenges of immigration and integration while maintaining a humanistic and tolerant society. Basic civil rights are being compromised in an attempt to limit immigration from non-Western nations, and core identity traits of compassion, tolerance and community are threatened when those who claim to love Denmark the most cling to exclusive identity traits that have little actual value. As when pork – of all things – is raised up as an important part of being Danish – showing a great intolerance towards certain ethnic groups, and weakening the cohesion of the country by contributing to the divide between these groups and native Danes.

There is good reason to be fearful of the future challenges facing Denmark. Cracks are beginning to show in the welfare state, and historically Denmark is in uncharted waters. Increasingly, people are asking what their country can do for them, rather than asking what they can do for their country. The sense of community is weakened as the demands of individuals push aside the needs of society as a whole. When there is no longer a 'we' but only an 'I', the welfare state will have failed.

The right wing of Danish politics still clings to the unrealistic and outdated "Morten Korch"-image of a rural, homogenous, and peaceful Denmark, free of all the problems that supposedly arrived together with globalization and – most significantly – increased immigration. This is an exclusive image of Denmark that immigrants and

their descendants can never be a part of, and there seems to be no understanding that there is a threat to the Danish welfare state that is just as great as the threat of 'we' becoming 'I' – the threat of the nation being split into 'us' and 'them'. Thus, in their frantic struggle to defend the Denmark they love, DF, and those of a similar disposition, are in fact contributing greatly to its demise. In the process, they have taken hostage the most important symbol of national identity – the Danish flag. Ironically, the flag that should be a unifying symbol is now being used to divide the nation.

Immigrants and their descendants are here to stay. Contrary to what some people seem to think, Denmark cannot be "liberated" from immigrants. Immigrants cannot be shaken off the way that Denmark – mostly thanks to other nations – shook off the German occupation in the Second World War. In fact, what helped the Danish reputation and ensured a respectable outcome of the war, was the way Danes came together and helped an ethnic group threatened by persecution.

It is often claimed that Denmark is a tolerant nation, but being tolerant of others is very different than being willing to include them as your own. In fact, when you tolerate someone, you point out that they are different, and that there is something wrong with them. To be able to survive in the turmoil of globalization, it is more important than ever that the Danish population is one – that everyone is part of the community. Therefore, Danes have to look beyond those national identity traits that are exclusive of others – religion, ethnicity, skin color and whatever else they may be – and cultivate those national identity traits that are inclusive of all people – democracy, compassion, egalitarianism, freedom, and most important of all: a strong sense of community.

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