

# Between paternalism and indifference



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The approach of this article may be resumed in a statement: I have learned to be afraid of people who want to be good to other humans, and especially of people who know how other humans get happy.

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Claudia Huld)

Zygmunt Bauman described a paradox: To demand security is always similar to sacrifice freedom. But security without freedom is slavery. This problem offers to philosophers a kind of headache against which we don't have any medicine. The security that is sacrificed in the name of freedom as well as the freedom that is sacrificed for the sake of safety seems to be the safety or freedom of the other. This paradox appears to be the question of necessity and freedom. In other words this is a story of moral. According to the challenge mentioned the thesis of this article is that a historical account of the relationship between Greenland and Denmark will inform us on a history swinging from the outmost paternalism to the extreme indifference. In the following, a historical sketch plus 3 main perspectives are presented to interpret or understand better the relationship between Greenland and Denmark.

## 1. A short sketch of the past

It is a consolidated fact: the Vikings were capable of sailing. This enabled them to leave Norway and conquer Iceland, while some continued to Greenland where they established smaller settlements or villages at the Western coast of that immense island. The mild climate around 1000 years ago made farming possible. The Vikings traded with Norwegian merchants for 300 years, but due to plague in Denmark and Norway those connections stopped, and the villages near the capital of Greenland, Nuuk, became isolated and had to depend on their own production. Combined with minor changes of the climate much of the food production diminished, and the population began to suffer. The last Viking died about the year 1400 in Greenland. The Vikings had had some contacts with Inuit hunters on exchange basis, and there had been some conflicts as well. But they did not disappear as a result of an armed struggle or fight. They died of hunger. For some hundred years they were forgotten, and as merchants, bishops, etc. would like to reorganise the connections, they found that there did not exist any Nordic colony any more. About 1720 Hans Egede started his missionary work, and rather rapid a network of mission and trading stations was established at the Western coast from Disko to Narsaq, places or trade stations called Frederikshåb (The Hope of Frederic), Julianehåb (The Hope of Juliane), etc. Both mission and trade were heavily supported by the Danish Royal Crown, and Greenland became a royal colony governed by a royal Directorate in Copenhagen.

In principle the Danish attitude towards the natives was marked by paternalism – they were ascribed all those characteristics which are usually applied to understand the native population as “happy girls and boys”. They were “primitive”, “nature's sons and daughters”, or even “savages”, living by hunting and fishing, sharing their wives with guests, situated in very small settlements or villages spread from North to South, and from East to West, moving in summer time from their residence by following the animals they sought to catch or kill, visiting friends and familiar relations in other settlements, or directly arranged their summer settlement, etc.. The Danish policy first of all aimed at “saving their souls” and at the same time doing trade on precious fur, fish etc. Since the population was seen as a former step of the development of mankind Inuits or eskimos were protected from foreign influence, except for the Protestant religion and the rituals of the Danish kingdom (flag, a few military outposts, warships now and then visiting the area to secure the King's sovereignty over the millions of acres of ice, Royal administrators, etc.). It may be of interest that Danish authorities did not

force the native population to learn Danish. In stead missionaries and traders tried as eager as possible to speak Eskimo.

Over the years a native upper class was raised by the Royal administration (a few priests, some more teachers and merchants, etc.). Education was either organised as apprenticeship, at the Royal Teachers College (Ilinniartissuaq) in Godthåb (literally the Good Hope), established 1845 and educating local teachers (catechists), or for upcoming priests at the Faculty of Theology in Copenhagen.

One might compare this society with the Sleeping Beauty. Habits, rituals, old costumes, beliefs, and values continued existing alongside the slow and moderate modernization (trade by the Royal Greenlandic Company, teacher education at the Royal Teachers College in Nuuk, Royal hospitals and clinics, and the Lutheran church). The population was counted since 1805. 1805 the number of inhabitants was counted to 6.046 Eskimos and a few Danes.

Hundred years later (or 1901) it was nearly doubled to 11.893, among them 272 Danes. 1945 they nearly doubled again to 21.412 (incl. 473 Danes). The colonies (meaning the cities of the Danish Royal Company) increased, while the settlements decreased. Around 1940 18 colonies were inhabited by more than 200 inhabitants compared to 59 places of 1-50 inhabitants. 1925 it was decided to develop a school comparable to the Danish comprehensive school where children between 7 and 14 were supposed to participate, and where Danish was introduced as language. The majority of the teaching staff was local and taught Inuit or Eskimo, Arithmetic, and Reading.

Still at the middle of the last century the natives seemed satisfied or at least not protesting in any way against the Danish rule, and the paternalist attitude was not changed. 1941 an American base was established in Thule. Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany, and the Danish ambassador in Washington therefore made the agreements with the American government. After the Second World War anti-colonialism haunted the former colonial Empires as a nightmare, and the Danish government based on facts like living standard, illness, access to basic schooling, etc. developed a plan for a big take off, that of Greenland moving from being non-developed to become a modern society within 10-15 years (G50 and G60 – the reports of commissions on Greenland from 1950 and 1960).

This meant huge investments in hospitals to fight tuberculosis, building new schools, modern villages and even cities, opening a market for private trade alongside the Royal Company. The Danish government furthermore wished to find a solution on the colonial question. This plan was supported by some local politicians, and therefore the UN Commission on Colonies decided to accept the government's plan of Greenland as becoming a Danish county. 1953 the former colony did become a county, consisting of 3 districts (North, South, East). At the change of the Danish Constitution two members of Parliament were elected in Greenland. The other side of that coin was that the building program demanded a lot of skilled workforce which was imported from Denmark. In the middle of the 1950'es about 5000 Danish skilled workers were occupied in Greenland, close to 1/5 of the native population. They arrived in a foreign culture, they were young males, and they made women a scarce resource – creating hatred to Danes. The modernization meant that the new schools became more like schools in Denmark, and that the cultural Danification improved.

The general interest in Greenland from side of Danish governments was – of course – not just charity or the unselfish intention of lifting a native people from old ways of living into modern ones. In the 1950'es the famous Niels Bohr suggested to open mines in order to develop a production of uranium – only for peaceful use (nuclear plants). This adventure was brought to a full stop, as the Danish parliament decided not to develop nuclear energy on Danish soil. Although in some sense the adventure never stopped, since drilling operations

went on below ground in Greenland. For the moment being discussions are going on concerning the right to natural resources in Greenland (gold, oil, thorium, etc.).

During the two decades up to 1970 modernization was continued. By that the Inuit population unintended became more aware of what happened in other countries, and a national self consciousness arose. The open signal of rebellion against Danish supremacy showed up at the general election on membership of EU. Whilst Danish voters by about 63% supported the entrance in October 1972, 70% of the voters in Greenland voted against. The “happy boy and girl” showed up to be lesser happy and grateful than expected.

Negotiations had of course been conducted between the Danish government and the local politicians over the past decades, but the intensity strengthened after 1972. A commission on home rule worked since 1975, and 1979 a referendum accepted the legislation by 60% of the voters. Since 1979 Greenland has had a home rule and partly home government (except for foreign policy and resources), and the country shifted name from Greenland to Kalaallit Nunaat (Land of the Humans). Political parties were created as a part of the process of self consciousness; they consist of left wing social democratic Siumut, left socialist or communist Inuit Ataqatigitt (striving for more independence), and a conservative party, Atássut, interested in continuing the existing relations to Denmark.

## **2. How to interpret that history?**

I would like to offer some perspectives which appear appropriate.

It is obvious that the original relationship between South and North of this case is quite opposite to what we usually understand as the conflict between North and South. The South has been ruling since 1721, and adding the Vikings, since the 11th Century.

### *1. First – a cultural perspective*

Peter Berliner – a Danish psychologist – ‘read’ the schools in Greenland based on Habermas’ famous dichotomy between life world and system and showed that the system was literally speaking colonising the life world of the Inuit people (Berliner 1987). The argumentation is that this colonisation had only little in common with traditional colonialism, but was based on the paternalist responsibility that the Danish politicians felt. They were worried about the future of the ‘good’ Inuit people in an evil global world. Berliner discusses in depth different theories on dependence, centre and periphery, hegemony, etc. in order to assess what the import of a Danish school system meant.

### *2. The white man’s burden*

Behind this type of paternalism it is possible to find an understanding reminding us of the well known phrase: “the white man’s burden”. The idea was derived from a rather old assumption, the so called theory of recapitulation as for example presented by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel. This theory was based on some observations done in Africa and else where by explorers, showing that some nations were not developed to the same extent or level as that of the Europeans. Logically they were looked upon as savages, often so called primitive tribes who lived on conditions as supposed around the neolithic agrarian revolution. The idea of recapitulation then consisted in assuming that those savages had stopped their development hundred or even thousands of years ago, and that the ontogenesis of man had to follow those stages – meaning that the savages could be compared to children, etc. Eventually this meant that Danish priests and teachers had the hard task to enlighten a savage people. The point of view is often labelled as an evolutionist perspective on culture – and it is well known to all of you. Politicians all over Europe have compared Muslim culture with the dark Middle Ages and again and again claimed that such culture will never be as valuable or valid as the national one. They usually also warn against a development of parallel societies – one

for the majority which is enlightened and democratic, and one for the minority which is sinister, undemocratic and oppressive to women. In Denmark this is what leading politicians label the new front of the cultural struggle. They seem to have learnt nothing of what their predecessors did 50 years ago in Greenland by continuing that policy on ethnocentrism.

3. *Time*

The theory of recapitulation as a theory-in-use strengthens the difference between 'them' and 'us'. An important dimension has to do with different understandings of time. Our mortality forces us to organize and allocate our energy according to that most scarce resource – time. Social and cultural conventions are providing direction-giving tracks of meaning. We may consider time as divided up in dimensions like humanistic versus fatalistic and continuous versus episodic. Fatalism is known from Weber's analysis of Calvinism, where he points out that life itself was defined as predetermined by God's will; neither our deeds nor our wishes could change the inevitable outcome (Weber 1930). Apart from the belief in fatalism derived from cultural definitions are situations and settings that tend to induce the same subjective sense. The poor Inuit people, the red Indians, the inmates etc., are but some of the most noticeable groups that experience their life situations as fatalistic. As hunters and fishers they had to secure sufficient food for their families and even their villages. To be a lucky hunter meant so to say everything for the small environments. A clever hunter perhaps caught an ice bear, a seal, or a minor whale and then had to provide not only his family, but the entire settlement with nutrition for some months. In brief: such activities are more or less matters of compulsion, are outside the active domination of the social sector (e.g. nature), and are vehicles of conformist expression. This fatalism does not intend to be the one and only way of living as an Inuit. This may as well coincide with humanistic time tracks, meaning that activities are governed by personal decision, showing a sense of mastery or control exhibited through self expression. While Danish teachers or skilled workers would usually believe in humanistic time tracks, Inuit people might be characterized as more fatalistic. This conflict is further carried out by the dichotomy between continuity and episode. The everyday phrases "long term" and "short term" apprehend some elements of this side. For example an occupational career is associated with a long term investment and accumulation of merits and skills, a slow but steady building up of confidence, etc. By contrast episodes are characterized by an intensity of activity, a relaxation of controls and vigilance, and more frenetic behaviour. The distinction is well known to the part of us who have been married for many years and who may now and then wish to have an amorous affair. This is for some only wishful thinking and for me an example, of course. I am not going to undermine the moral in Riga. The German philosopher and sociologist, Simmel, had a very profound understanding of this (Simmel 1959). Adventures are relevant for this analysis because of the unique manner in which they relocate individuals in time and because they provide unusual opportunities for the reduction of alienation.

4. *Knowledge*

Another conflict between local knowledge and universal knowledge was manifested, too. By implementing a Danish school system piloted by a foreign language as norm, a foreign kind of knowledge taught by teachers either not willing or not able to speak the local tongue local knowledge lost its value. Not overnight, but little by little. In some cases children and adolescents were sent to boarding schools not only in Greenland 100's or 1000's of kilometres from home, but even to Denmark for years. The 'spearhead project' – as it was called – intended to develop a modern mentality

among children and adolescents by sending them one at a time to foster care in Danish families for at least one year, then return to boarding schools in Greenland to continue the Danish education, supervised and taught by Danish teachers and pedagogues only. The spearhead could only be realized when the children achieved “higher” values and norms and picked up a language, Danish, which made it possible for them to acquire new knowledge and education. Still we should not forget that the public school system existed to shape behaviour and attitudes, alleviate social problems, and reinforce social structure under stress. In this context, the character of pupils remained of far greater concern than their minds. The school system seems to be a historical answer of a societal crisis due to urbanization, industrialization, and modernization. By this operation the Danish government thought that local knowledge, habits, traditions, rites, etc., were no longer something to be proud of. Inuit children were stripped or culturally deprived, and the only way out was to overtly fraternize with Danish culture and perhaps covertly to practise traditional crafts and beliefs. The Inuit people had former had a factual monopoly of the kinds of knowledge and skills which made it possible to observe and conclude about the weather f. i., know and use the local resources. By sending the intelligent children to Denmark and receive a Danish system at home for the rest a factual monopoly of knowledge was developed out of range of the local population. Former social relations were changed or broken down, social units were disintegrated or changed character, and the social climate underwent heavy changes. Children at home as well as the elite abroad acquired new horizons and new technologies. They learned to read and write Danish and later English, became familiar with geography and a much larger world or with history and a new look at the past and present. The school represented a sort of modern instruments and values, not compatible with the local values. When families and schools are not representing identical values or at least sharing some kind of common set of values, then children are put in a dilemma. Children and their parents over time became that unequal that they became strangers to each other. When children are separated from their parents and their cultural heritage for many hours a day or even years, it seems obvious that their forms of reaction and direction are much more influenced by the persons and institutions which took care of their modern socialization. This seems to lead to surface homogeneity in society as a whole. The influence of Danish schooling was in no way “value neutral” and did never claim to be, since socialization is a process based on values combining new values and attachments with new knowledge and skills. Except for the injustice the Danish system opened a space for a local youth culture, based on larger schools, the system of boarding schools and supplied by wide spreading radio, later television, etc. Therefore the local adult generation could not control the adolescents any more. Local settlements shifted from an offensive position towards socialization, traditional tasks and possibilities into a defensive position. Local hunters and fishermen had had a broad overview and a clear understanding of their own situation, but by the middle of the 1960'es they had at best a fragmented insight and a fragmented interpretation of things which did not seem to look like their life world any more. The settlement had at an earlier stage been a total system of quality in terms of primary relations, interests, and community. Now it developed into a sector society with no common knowledge base or cultural base. Local knowledge and local vocational skills had been the firm basis of economic life as well as in the production of means of greater importance for other; now it became nearly worthless because the former fisher or hunter was considered to be an unskilled worker, e.g. a factor of production with his labour force as the one and only contribution to society. In terms of Marx this is mere alienation. The focal point is that local knowledge as specific knowledge is substituted by formalized knowledge, and exactly that

fundamental change implied deep cultural changes as well. In brief: the instrumental factors of school (formal learning) seemed to undermine the common values. And this in turn makes it plausible to explain why the Inuit society got into hitherto unknown severe troubles (drugs, alcohol, no future, etc.). The importance of schooling for maintenance of the modern or complex society is augmented, while the expansion of schooling isolates more and more humans more and more from society. The cultural colonisation might consequently be named “reciprocal negation” (Høem 1978, Jensen 2006). Of course, remembering this critique we should not get too romantic about the former society, but the new one appeared to be likewise incapable of problem solving. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the economic and technical development in the 1960'es produced processes and outcomes, which made the learning of skills and competencies of paramount importance in Inuit people's lives. It was no longer enough to have the same living and skills that were brought about by the older generation of hunters and fishermen, by the old traditional ways of life or by old style development strategies for that matter. Learning to learn, learning for problem solving, learning towards critical understanding as well as anticipatory learning became prerequisites to face the new challenges. A major immanent problem showed up to be: How to develop a knowledge system which could be a blend of the Inuit people's own indigenous knowledge base and that beyond its realm? The answer would suppose to be a synthesized knowledge which would be translated into practical policy tools and which would undergo continuous evolution locally for its relevance to locals' needs. This would have required another kind of partnership between North and South Denmark, between political leaders and local societies or communities, between urban areas and smaller settlements and places, between technological advances and indigenous culture and people, and – not to forget – between human and natural environments. History seems to evidence that the political, economic, industrial, and social situation in Greenland hindered those interested from realizing such partnership. The same might go for Denmark that had made knowledge state- and nation-centred and tuned up knowledge to something too abstract for the indigenous children and adolescents. The meeting between Danish and Inuit knowledge did not become the success expected. Above the elite was mentioned. But let's also include some of the 'outlaws' – criminals, insane, mentally or physically handicapped people as well as the 'perhaps suitable'. Due to the development many humans lost influence of their life. They were moved from a small settlement of 100-200 inhabitants to a modern block of flats with 400-500 inhabitants and got jobs as unskilled workers in fishing industry or a company with fixed work time schedules and assembly lines. This life had nothing in common with the earlier life as hunters or inshore fishermen. Their families changed character, as the roles of men and women underwent radical shifts. The families were no longer dependent of the common effort or performance with distinct gender roles. Many tragedies struck the upcoming generation characterized by increasing numbers of suicide, offences against persons, violence, homicide or murder, mental illnesses and disorders, developed in a society with a vulnerable identity. In the name of modernization ill, old, and disabled were sent to Denmark. The ideal was to give them similar rights compared to other Danes. In addition the criminals had to become exported as well – a kind of opposite deportation compared to Australia. The Prison Service as well as the legislation did not take modernization into consideration. The explosive development of the old society accelerated serious crimes like killing, rape, and abuse took the authorities by surprise. They then used the opportunity of sending criminals, handicapped, and ill people to Danish institutions – e.g. the State Prison in Herstedvester (close to Copenhagen), the insanity asylum in Vordingborg, and the most dangerous to the Protection Asylum in Nykøbing Sjælland

(Jensen & Knigge 2008). This happened in the 1960's when many families still fought against poverty and necessity. Some families chose to put their children out for adoption. They were sent to residential homes and since sent to adoptive families in Denmark and Greenland, or they were sent into foster care and later adopted. Some never understood why they had been sent away. Many have later been searching for their roots and an understandable explanation of the harsh separation from their family (Bryld 2008). The majority of those sent to Denmark had never ever been outside their home town or village, just a few spoke Danish. Their families had no influence and often knew nothing about what really happened to their children or adolescents. In short: most of the Inuit people were onlookers to the building of their country, and the changes of their life were decided by other persons.

5. *Traditional or modern?*

Positively interpreted we may understand the Danish policy as if it was based upon the idea of the universal man. But we may as well be critical, since universalism à la Danoise did not take the local culture into consideration. The local culture functions due to a logic in its own right. This is a relativist position differing between culture internal and culture external factors. If we simplify the universal position to “external cultural help in order to solve local problems”, then the relativist position may be reduced to “internal cultural help is better in problem solving”. This observation leads to my next step: Danish missionaries and later school masters observed that Inuit families and relationships in far villages might be labelled traditionalist and collectivist. Compared to the 1950 Danish family standard – a little unit of mother, father and two children, the kernel family of Western Europe and North America – they indeed were collectivist, since Danish families seemed to become more individualist. I have compiled this framework in the illustration below (Skytte 2001).

Such models are instructive and somehow explicatory, but one should always bear in mind that a theoretical model is nothing but a model or an abstraction which helps us understand the complexities. Not all Danish families are individualistic ones, and not all Inuit families are collectively oriented. The variety is broad, and the sets of values are not similar from family to family. There has been much academic discussion about and even refutations of this model. But with reservations I hope that it emphasises a distinct difference which makes the cultural change in Greenland more illuminating. The most striking objection to that model is what it misses. Daniel Lerner has shown that “traditionals” – unable to read and write, with no access to mass media and dependent on the local boss (in casu Danish or domestic) – may get excluded from modernization, while “moderns” are capable of the creation of a life of their own (Lerner 1958). In this context “traditionals” are the elder generations, whilst “moderns” are the young people. If Beck's term of risk society is adapted, other explanations may as well be offered. The interesting and intelligent hypothesis of Beck is: Families as mediating vehicles of social and class reproduction have no longer any role in the construction of biographical projects. They are substituted by supporting links like educational institutions, kindergartens, labour market, etc. – all of which are interwoven with political decisions, meaning that social reproduction as well as biographical projects become objects of politics. Exactly this thesis undermines the whole idea of contradictions between traditional families and modern families (Beck 1992). Even if such contradictions exist – and they may, of course – they are not reflecting a modern society shaped by political decisions (social policy becomes social investment in children and families, etc.). The model is static, not dynamic.

Although one might characterize Beck's thesis as exaggeration or even wild overstatement, it points to a general important aspect of societal change which is perceptible in the periphery as well. The hard facts are that the younger generation has to organize life in a multirelational complexity. A complexity of this kind plays an important role of life planning implying that a

number of careers have to fit simultaneously: professional career, family career, financial career, educational career, and career of spare time. This further stresses that the traditional notion of family and job should be replaced by the concept of a portfolio of activities that everyone manages for themselves. At least five categories of work are listed: waged work, remunerated in line with time spent on it; work for oneself, remunerated by the results obtained; domestic work, performed for the upkeep and maintenance of a home; voluntary work, performed for charitable organizations, trade unions, political parties, the community, friends, family, or neighbours; educational work, which makes it possible to learn, to develop skills, to read, and to educate oneself (paraphrased from Aubrey 1994, quoted in Boltanski and Chiapello 2005: 110). The critique is point-blank to replace the dependence on one single category, especially such categories like 'traditional families' or 'waged work', given that over the life span many people have to reconstruct their portfolio completely. And taking the five categories into consideration it seems obvious, that simultaneous development of all the categories is therefore indicated. E.g. self-educational work helps improving the chances of remaining active and voluntary work makes it possible to construct social networks outside home or workplace, to participate actively in progress towards a better society, etc.

But such development of individual and/or collective agency does not become realist, until society is able to support the self-realizing capacities and biographical knowledge of individuals. This implies a rather high developed society as well as a rather high developed individual. The Danish intention of planning for a modern society in Greenland seems to acknowledge at least parts of that complexity. The cultural colonisation top-down was a failure, seen from our contemporary viewpoint. But to the reformers or – stronger even – the transformers of a Danish school system into a foreign culture it seemed to be a great progress accommodating the wishes of local politicians and authorities. The reformers represented a model which had been functioning rather well over more decades in Denmark, and by importing that they strived for a qualitative lift up of the former Royal subjects and their children and youngsters in order to carry them into a modern life style. Some locals supported the efforts of cultural modernization in the late 1950'es and on, but around 1970 the national consciousness made a backlash. Paternalism did not fit into that consciousness. In stead of drawing on Danish pity or compassion the political grass roots began to point out new targets for social cohesion as a part of national resistance. They saw the Danish way of changing their traditions, etc. as the reason why many locals suffered severe deceases, lost identity, became alcoholics, etc. To be precise it is necessary to dwell a little upon the concept. Social cohesion draws upon two sources – connectedness and values. It is closely interrelated with social capital. Social capital is "the aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to ... a group" (Bourdieu 1986: 248). The approach may consist of four 'forms' of social capital: social support, social leverage, informal social control, and neighbourhood organisation participation. These forms are neighbourhood network-based resources identified as important for achieving a variety of outcomes. Social support refers to a form of social capital that residents can draw upon to cope with daily problems. Social leverage is social capital that helps people access information, survive socio-economically, and even potentially advance (e.g. in relation to new jobs). Informal social control concerns the ability of residents to collectively maintain social order and keep the neighbourhood safe from criminal and delinquent activity. Neighbourhood organisation participation refers to formally organized collective activity for addressing neighbourhood issues. Social cohesion thus involves patterns of social interaction and values (e.g. network formation and ties, familiarity, and mutual trust). Thereby, it serves as a foundation from which social capital can be formed (cf. Putnam 1993 and 2000 and his distinction between "bonding social capital" and "bridging social capital"). 'Bonding' refers the internal side, e.g. to close the endogenous community and culture by developing mutual solidarity ('the super glue'), while 'bridging' refers to the external side, e.g. to open for foreign influence, not only Danish, but unknown fellow citizens as well,



which makes the strange or unknown included ('the lubricating oil'). Reflecting upon the years of radical shifts and external pressure it seemed to be a movement hill up, but at the end they succeeded in reinventing their own values and to some extent also their mutual connectedness. Their contribution appears to correspond with one of the famous statements of Marx: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes..." (Marx 1852). This statement makes the present author like to reassure the idea of 'site of memories' ('lieux de mémoire'), which has been developed by Pierre Nora. Why not translate 'sites of memories' into 'sites of humane intelligence'? It is a place where past experiences of human beings may meet present ones and expect various encounters of varying memories of different people. In order to learn from the case presented here we have to develop such sites in public spaces and in human minds. Thereby humans are not simply accepting the conventionally dominant or hegemony knowledge, but rediscovering historical memories, and recovering memories of expanding sympathy with and towards different civilisations and cultures. If we combine the idea of a site of memory with a critical approach, we might find ways to overcome 'ethnocentrism', 'state-centrism', and 'anthropocentrism'.

1. *Second – the economic perspective*

Even more dramatic were the failures in economy. Greenland has been victim of an experiment – transferring the Danish model of welfare directly to a society where the local government had had no chance to put into place the necessary legal and institutional infrastructure based on own experiences. Tönnies would probably have argued that the local community was overwhelmed by the larger society and its values by expressing the social necessity of the societal development implying a 'Paradise lost', the loss of a natural grown community which caused a problem or problematic of modern integration, not as an individual destiny, but on the contrary as a systematic problem (Tönnies 1887). Anyway, villages were depopulated, and bigger towns established – creating a real problem of housing for those moved by force or voluntarily from small settlements to towns. Furthermore the development of modern work places demanded an everyday discipline with which nobody was familiar. The Danish state forced a rapid transformation of the island with disastrous results. The people had been promised that once market forces were unleashed, the economy would boom and welfare become a free goods at the supermarket. The old, inefficient system of strong Royal and later state control and partly state planning – that distorted resource allocation – was swept away and substituted by an open economy. Almighty planners in Copenhagen believed manifestly in the hidden hand of the market forces. But the myth of the free market had already been exposed by Polanyi documenting that there never was a truly, free self-regulating market system. The governments of the industrialized countries had always taken an active role, not only in protecting their national industries, but also in promoting new technologies and establishing an educational system. Capital restrictions were maintained until recently, and government financed research, schooling and services had been supporting the growth, and the ideal of 'homo oeconomicus' appears to be just an ideal, not a reality (Polanyi 1944). This is a central theme: the complex intertwining of politics and economics. It is still important to remember: The market is a part of a broader economy, and the broader economy is a part of a still broader society. Market economy is not an end in itself, but at best a means to more fundamental ends. Extrapolating this insight we

might add that all too often privatization, liberalization and more have been treated as the objectives of reform. The missing link was the number of individuals who were pushed into poverty, or the number of jobs destroyed versus those created, or on the increase of violence, or in the increase in the sense of insecurity and alcoholism or drug abuse as well as the feeling of powerlessness. We therefore have to talk about more basic values.

2. *What happened in the former USSR?*

The disjunction between those more basic values and the ideology of the self-regulated market is as clear today as it was in the 1990's as the Soviet Union was forced to decentralize, privatize, and liberalize the economy. The economy shrank by almost half, and the fraction of those in poverty (on a four-dollar-a-day standard) increased from 2 to close to 50 percent. While privatization led a few oligarchs to become billionaires, the government did not even have the money to pay poor pensioners their due. Capital market liberalization was supposed to signal to the world that this was an attractive place to invest. It showed up to be a one-way door. Capital left in droves. Now, albeit too late, the consequences of those mistaken policies are being realized. Some of you might recall much of the same picture for the Baltic republics, the former GDR, etc. The more basic values are among other things about democracy, and classical freedoms (free speech, free press, freedom of assemblage, freedom of religion) as well as beyond classical freedoms – freedom from fear and from hunger, from insecurity, etc. Of course, regulations may take away someone's freedom, but in doing so they may enhance another's. The freedom to move capital in and out of a country at will is a freedom that some exercise, at enormous cost to others – what economists are calling “large externalities”. The myth of the self-regulating economy – in either the old guise of laissez-faire or the new clothing of Reagan and Thatcher – does not represent a balancing of these freedoms. For many this represents a greater sense of insecurity for the poor. This means that there is less freedom, less freedom from fear and from hunger. I just compared with what happened to a rather strong economic control state in order to draw a parallel to what may become future in Greenland, and which is already problematic to day. Comparing the cultural perspective with the economic one it seems obvious that paternalism in culture plus indifference in economy results in a profound conflict between the local participation sui generis and the global economy of profit.

3. *Third – a social and political perspective*

Greenland is not a rich country, at least not yet. It may become due to new and promising investigations of natural resources (oil, gold, lithium, etc.). For the vast majority of the Inuit people poverty is the most serious challenge. This does not make them helpless, but at least suffering. To overcome poverty is no piece of cake. Much has been done via the subsidies from Denmark. But still prosperity has not arrived. The political means of fighting poverty are dependent on a certain degree of self-reliance by which an Inuit type of “war on poverty” can not only be declared, but also carried through. To get rid of poverty appears to be a revolution. Without overstating the concept we might in our reflections get closer to Hegel's famous teaching on revolution. Its kernel is the character of historical motion, which is at once dialectical and driven by necessity. The dialectical movement and counter-movement is already exemplified in the historical part of my presentation – from Nordic colonisation to some degree of national sovereignty, and from political sovereignty to new forms of economic colonisation and exploitation by big companies. For our purpose Hegel's dialectics of freedom and necessity differs in understanding of the historical motion from Kantian “melancholy haphazardness” and Goethe's sad “mixture of violence

and meaninglessness”. Nevertheless, it seems to be a paradox that freedom is the fruit of necessity.

4. *Revolution = necessity minus freedom?*

I would like to develop this point to some extent by dwelling on and comparing with the French and Russian Revolutions.

Originally, the French Revolution embodied in the Oath of the Third Estate in the Tennis Court in 1789 was driven by claims on freedom. The revolution aimed in its initial phases towards freedom by breaking the neck of the tyranny. But rather early it became obvious that the suffering masses of the people did not fight for freedom, but rather for dress, food, housing, and the reproduction of their species, etc. Especially, the Sans-Culottes were leading massive conquering of the streets of Paris by protests and demonstrations of the masses or multitude. They wanted first of all to skip necessity. Poverty then and now means more than deprivation, it is a state of constant want and acute misery – short: a dehumanizing force. Poverty puts men under the absolute dictate of their bodies, under the absolute dictate of necessity. It was the rule of this necessity that caused the multitude to rush to the assistance of the revolution. Robespierre understood very well the claims of the revolutionary masses and as their spokesman he exclaimed: “La République? La Monarchie? Je ne connais que la question sociale” (quoted from Arendt 1963, 50). He hereby stated that the whole idea of revolution had lesser to do with freedom and more to do with solving the social question. Ever since revolutions have been inspired by the French Revolution in general and its predominance of the social question in particular. Marx in his younger days thought that the reason why the French Revolution had failed to found freedom was that it had failed to solve the social question. He concluded that freedom and poverty were incompatible. And as a consequence he transformed the social question into a political force, which was contained in the term “exploitation”, meaning that poverty is a result of exploitation through a “ruling class” which is in the possession of the means of violence. By this conclusion and his later additions to the new science of economy by making it what it should be: political economy, he pointed at an economy resting on political power and hence possible to overthrow by political organization and political means. What Marx did here, was to try to persuade us that poverty itself is a political, not a natural phenomenon, the result of violence and violation rather than of scarcity. And history obviously supported his observations and conclusions. The Industrial Revolution had liberated the subject class from its masters only to put it under a stronger taskmaster, the daily needs and wants, the force with which necessity drives and compels men and which is more compelling than violence. Eventually based on this insight he was eager to believe in a dialectical process in which freedom would rise directly out of necessity.

5. *Revolution = necessity plus freedom?*

When Marx’s “best pupil”, Lenin, was once asked to state in one sentence the essence and the aims of the October Revolution, he answered to the question in a curious formula: “Electrification plus soviets”. The formula points out the separation of economics and politics, a differentiation between electrification as the solution of the social question and the soviet system as a new political body that had emerged during the revolution outside all parties. The most surprising seemed to be that Lenin thought that neither socialism nor socialization was capable of solving the social question. It could only be solved by technical means. In other words: the liberation from the curse of poverty would be a result of electrification, but the rise of freedom should flourish through a new form of government. We know that Lenin and other leaders of the revolution later changed point of view. The outcome was a government without

division and separation of powers and without control, checks and balances built into its very centre. The final outcome was not only 'la grande terreur', but also corruption and perversion. Although Stalin claimed that the corruption derived from a conspiracy organized by an internal enemy outside as well as inside the ruling class. In a socialist society this means corruption spring from below, not from above. The only, effective remedy against this might have been that every citizen could become an acting member of the government. Revolutions were "the locomotive of all history" according to Marx, especially bound to a new form of government. Why this story on long forgotten persons? Because they point at some interesting points from which we might learn a lesson. The idea that poverty should help men to break the shackles of oppression, because the poor have nothing to lose but their chains, has become familiar through Marx's teachings. The rich in France were corrupt and the poor lived in misery. The question is: is such an understanding covering our experiences? Apparently not!

6. *How to understand poverty?*

Then back to Greenland: The people had risen against oppression, but not against exploitation and poverty, although some (socialist parties and trade unions) might have seen the connections between them. National liberation from Denmark only meant freedom for the few and was hardly felt by the many who remained loaded down by their misery. Once again we meet the Hegelian dilemma of freedom and necessity. The new "ruling class" of Greenland was marked by corruption, while their subjects were suffering from poverty. Of course, one has to differentiate here: some of new leaders had developed the strategy of national liberation and then organized the people in order to complement the national aims. But anyway over the years a part of even the best leaders got corrupt. While poor Inuit men and women were starving or fearing the future, the wealthy and powerful elite abused their position to get better living standards. The new rulers might be moved by that misery of their compatriots; but pity is not enough. Hannah Arendt suggests that pity is a perversion of compassion and nothing but a sentiment, while compassion is a passion and solidarity an alternative and principle for action to overcome poverty. Solidarity, however, has to do with political education and action, an often forgotten fact (Arendt 1963). Further, Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman 2001) carries on the insight of Arendt by questioning the cognitive frame and the value-set in which poverty is discussed. Bauman points at the interesting fact that "the cognitive frame in which the discussion of growing poverty is commonly placed is purely economic (in the dominant sense of 'economy' as primarily the aggregate of money-mediated transactions) – that of the distribution of wealth and income and the access to paid employment. The value-set ... is most often that of pity, compassion and solicitude for the lot of the poor. Occasionally, concern with the safety of social order is also expressed, though – rightly – seldom in full voice, since few sober minds would sense it the plight of the contemporary poor and destitute a tangible threat of rebellion" (Bauman, 2001: 115). Bauman is right about that the cognitive set and the value-set is highly interesting – "in what the gloss over in silence and leave out of sight" (ibid.). What is silenced then? First of all the role of the poor in the reproduction of the global order, reminding us that "the presence of a large army of the poor and the widely publicized egregiousness of their condition are a countervailing factor of great, perhaps crucial, importance to the extant order" (ib., 118). Bauman concludes, that "the political economy of uncertainty is good for business", because it demands flexibility, etc. the challenges of which is met only by a 'new internationalism' (ib., 121). To examine a 'new internationalism' I would like to insert parts of Dewey's theoretical assumptions. Dewey's definition of experience offers a heuristic projection into the complexity of the raised problems. I imagine that

Dewey would postulate such theoretical assumptions, as: Experience = being in a series of situations

*Situation* = person + circumstance

*Circumstance* = selected surroundings from the viewpoints of values

*Value* = meaningful selection (and decision)

*Meaningful* = ‘cognitive acknowledgement’ + ‘volitional decision’

Interest = inter + esse (= in + being)

In brief Dewey suggests us not to apply any established theory or comprehensive statement, but in stead to discover and examine the methods and standpoints. Hereby we may come to real solutions of the problems and of how to invent a ‘new internationalism’. But as internationalism can not be restricted to wishful thinking

I further develop this viewpoint in connection with Polanyi. Land, nature and man: Polanyi underlines another often silenced factor, that of land or nature (p. cit., Cp. 15, p. 187ff.): “Traditionally, land and labour are not separated; labour forms part of life, land remains part of nature, life and nature form an articulate whole. Land is thus tied up with the organizations of kinship, neighbourhood, craft, and creed – with tribe and temple, village, guild, and church. One Big Market, on the other hand, is an arrangement of economic life which includes markets for the factors of production. Since these factors happen to be indistinguishable from the elements of human institutions, man and nature, it can be readily seen that market economy involves a society the institutions of which are subordinated to the requirements of the market mechanism” (op. cit, 187). Polanyi points at three stages which may be applied to my context: The first stage was “the commercialization of the soil”, the second was “the forcing up of the production of food and organic raw material”, and the third was “the extension of such a system of surplus production to overseas and colonial territories. With this last step land and its produce were finally fitted into the scheme of a self-regulating world market” (ib., 188). Self-regulation was impaired by protectionism – “a three-pronged drive. Land, labour, and money, each played their part, but while land and labour were linked to definite even though broad social strata, such as the workers or the peasantry, monetary protectionism was, to a great extent, a national factor, often fusing diverse interests into a collective whole” (op. cit. 213). What Polanyi states here, is that social and national protectionism tended to fuse, and this impaired the market and led to political intervention. ‘New internationalism’ has to deal with the challenges of the three stages above mentioned.

#### 1. *Globalization*

Due to the imperfection of the market political methods were used – to support a system of world division of labour. This may still be worthwhile to maintain when speaking of globalization. Globalization is usually interpreted in four or five dimensions: a cultural (McLaren 2001), a political, a social and an economic (that labour takes a particular social form – the value-form) and technological. The often forgotten or hidden political dimension almost forces me to quote Saint-Just: “Seules les affaires étrangères relevaient de la ‘politique’, tandis que les rapports humains formaient ‘le social’” – only foreign affairs can properly be called “political”, while human relations as such constitute the “social”. But might you not find a political ‘enemy’ inside your own nation? During the French Revolution the committees succeeded in finding internal enemies. And following this question during the October Revolution we all know that they did as well. This means that if human relations are reduced to be social, then you give up the political dimension which Marx for instance stressed in his analysis. Meeting the challenges of globalization includes by necessity a political dimension. 3.6 Politics – participation and/or representation?

The last point of this sketch of reflections will deal with participation versus representation. Armed with the wisdom of hindsight we must wonder why the whole idea of council systems has been dropped. Utopian Socialists tailored ideas of direct

participation and direct handling of public business. The aspiration aimed at getting every citizen into direct participation – now and then called regeneration of democracy or reinventing a ‘homo politicus’. This raises a serious challenge: would such a system function under modern conditions? Councils are placed in textbooks of political science as mere romantic dreams or some sort of fantastic utopia – hopelessly romantic yearnings of people who apparently did not yet know the true facts of life. The so called realists took their own bearing from the party system, assuming as a matter of course that there existed no other alternative for representative government. The intention here is not to provide a new study of the councils versus the parties, but just to raise the question of participation. How does a rather small population as the Inuit one handle their everyday challenges? Certainly not by equating participation and administration, since the qualities of the political man and the qualities of the manager or administrator are not the same. They very seldom are to be found in the same individual. The one is supposed to know how to deal with people in a field of human relations, whose principle is freedom, and the other must know how to manage things and people in a sphere of life whose principle is necessity. Councils in a factory cannot avoid to bring about an element of action into the management of things, and this indeed could not but create some chaos. On the other side the party apparatuses are causing many shortcomings – let’s point at corruption, incompetence, and waste. As mentioned earlier Inuit politicians and their party apparatuses have been attacked for their corruption and incompetence – especially this was claimed on Siumut, but might go for the other parties as well. Those politicians belong to an élite sprung from the people, and the problem of participation does not lie in the factual rise of a new elite. The trouble lies in the lack of public spaces to which the people at large would have entrance and from which an elite could be selected – or perhaps select itself. The trouble is that politics have become a profession and a career, and that the elite therefore is chosen according to standards and criteria which are themselves profoundly nonpolitical. Jefferson, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America, once remarked about ‘small Republics’ “begin them only for a single purpose; they will soon show for what others they are the best instruments” – meaning the best instruments for breaking up the modern mass society by introducing grass roots. Jefferson hereby underlined that “the abstract political system of democracy lacked concrete organs”. Marx did understand the Parisian Commune of 1871 as “the political form of even the smallest village”, that might well be “the political form, at last discovered, which to work out the economic emancipation of labor” (Marx 1871). Marx’ vision pointed perhaps at an idea of seeing freedom and necessity walking hand in hand.

## 2. *Short summary*

To summarize on indifference and paternalism I would like to conclude by three short statements:

1. Indifference in economy as well as culture seems to be the worst case.
2. Indifference in culture and paternalism in economy may be a better alternative.
3. The best case would be the negation something like difference in culture and some paternalism in economy, combined with moral responsibility and a ‘new internationalism’.

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