Working towards diversity with a postmigrant perspective: how to examine representation of ethnic minorities in cultural institutions

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ABSTRACT

This article presents ways for researchers and cultural workers to find and examine versions of representation in cultural institutions through a postmigrant perspective. The starting point is Denmark—a European nation state with, like many others, a diverse composition of citizens. This diversity is, however, poorly represented in Danish cultural institutions and the problem is difficult for many cultural workers to discuss due to the hesitation large segments of the Danish population feel about using terms associated with race and religion. Since much of the research regarding representation is strictly critical in its approach, it is also challenging to find the proper tools and language to discuss and correct the current skewed situation. This article is intended to provide balance in representation, first by presenting a model of four levels for potential positioning of diverse representation in cultural institutions and, secondly, by addressing the problems of access and depiction in regards to representation.

Introduction

Representation of diversity is not yet the norm in Danish cultural institutions. Reports from the Danish Ministry of Culture in recent years describe the cultural landscape of Denmark as being filled with white, male bodies and voices, but also note an interest in changing the current dominant perspectives. Responses by the cultural institutions to the actual challenges of representation have been primarily to create seminars focusing on the subject of skewed representation, to issue charters that state their support for diversity, and/or to arrange for workshops for the under-represented. Up to now, the institutions have been focusing on diversity through talks and projects rather than through sustainable structural changes within the institutions.

One possible explanation for this is that Denmark has only started to address the subject of diverse representation in the arts in the past decade or so. The current initiatives could be considered the first steps in a long process of redressing the imbalance. In order to further the development of balanced representation, cultural studies researchers Anne Ring Petersen and Moritz Schramm conclude that it is essential to create "a language that does not stigmatise certain groups and individuals, and to increase our understanding of the cultural practices that can promote vulnerable groups’ social, cultural, political and economic participation in society". The aim of this article is to reveal the complexity and importance of the problem of skewed representation, and to create models that can help cultural institutions determine which steps towards achieving diversity should be taken next.

This paper will first outline the current state of Danish cultural policy and provide an example of the current discrepancies regarding diversity in Danish public discourse. Next, the postmigrant perspective is presented as a productive way of working towards diverse representation. Finally, two sets of distinctions are introduced, which allow cultural workers and researchers to be more focused and precise when working towards diverse representation.

A history of unity?

Ever since Denmark lost Slesvig, Holstein and Lauenborgin to Germany in the war of 1864, one of the goals of Danish cultural policy has been to unite the nation state through a coherent national identity, but this goal has not only been a focus in Denmark. In the book Imaged Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, political scientist Benedict Anderson describes it as thus: “the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship”. Cultural sociologist Peter Duelund writes that, in Denmark, this “comradeship” was bound together by the concept of unity of “one nation, one people, one language”. Historians still debate whether this unity has ever truly existed, but the focus on unity and “sameness”
in Danish cultural policy is well documented; policies instituted by the Danish Ministry of Culture from 1970 to 2010 have been described as being “assimilationist” by cultural policy researchers Dorte Skot-Hansen and Mahama Tawat. Duelund also states that the Danish government has actively been using “assimilationist” concepts of unity in its policies “as a safeguard against the European integration process, migration and the multicultural challenge” at least since the 1990s.

Although immigrants and guest workers have been coming to Denmark for more than a century, they were not widely considered to be and discussed as integral members of Danish society until the 1960s and 1970s. It was during that period of time that the idea of “Danish unity” was challenged by the growing percentage of the population that had visibly non-European backgrounds. The notion of a multicultural Denmark was challenged from the start by Danish political parties whose aim was to regain the former unity of Denmark, and which were some of the first strong anti-immigration right-wing parties in Europe to receive seats in government. Anthropologist and professor in migration studies, Peter Hervik, has recently published studies of racism and xenophobia in Denmark, and common conceptions among his interviewees are that it is “natural to live among one’s own”, and that xenophobia is a “natural reaction” to migration. However, migration researcher Nils Holtug claims that the general population of Denmark is not particularly xenophobic: “The Danish population is rather exceptionally polarised with many people who are very positive towards immigrants, and many who are very negative.”

An example of how this polarisation becomes tangible is found in the public debate surrounding a campaign created by the Danish political party Dansk Folkeparti (“The Danish People’s Party”), which was distributed in early 2016 (Figure 1). The campaign posters featured a group of white people of several generations gathered in close physical unity. The text next to the image states: “Our Denmark—there is so much we should protect”. Although representatives of the party denied that the poster was encouraging people to remove the thread of immigration, the dominant assumption in the press was that the campaign was promoting the party’s well-known anti-immigration stance. The public responded immediately with alternatives that were distributed over social media; two of the most shared images are presented in Figures 2 and 3.

In the images used, in what could be described as “the anti-campaigns”, people of all colours were grouped in close physical proximity. In Figure 2 the text is exactly the same as the original poster, and a dog is even photoshopped into the image in order to replicate and ridicule the original. In Figure 3 Danish flags are added to the background and the text has been changed to state: “there is so much we are already protecting”.

Such initiatives demonstrate that segments of the Danish population would like more visibility for non-white Danes; however, othering-processes do still occur. One example is when the common question of heritage is directed to non-white and visibly Muslim members of the population. While Danish media might use hyphen-identities and terms such as “New Danes” (“nydanskere”) to describe individuals with easily recognisable immigration backgrounds, it is not uncommon for individuals to call themselves “Turkish” or “Iranian” despite having only spent holidays and family visits in the countries they claim to be their own. When asked why they choose this self-identification, the response is that it is the answer people are expecting to receive in response to the recurrent question: “Where are you from?” This practice of asking and answering is documented in biographical texts, in research performed by Danish political scientists and anthropologists, and is widely portrayed in Danish culture, including Danish cinema. One example is found in the movie Fighter, whose young protagonist, Aicha, has parents who emigrated from Turkey:

![Figure 1](image1.png)
Aicha is visiting white friends from her secondary school when the mother of one asks: “Where are you from?” Aicha is quick to raise a sceptical eyebrow and answers “Nørrebro”, which is a multicultural district in Copenhagen. The mother looks a bit puzzled but senses that she made a social faux pas and answers: “Okay”.

In another scene in the film, the protagonist’s love interest is introduced and he asks where she is from, whether she is a “Muslim–Muslim” (meaning one who practices her religion instead of the common Danish agnostic practice of Christianity), etc. Aicha angrily stops him. He seems baffled and she tries to explain: “I’m just tired of being asked the same questions”.

The trigger for such questions about origin and religion is not the observation of cultural differences, although that is what several interview subjects claim in anthropological research. The problem, as cultural studies researcher Stuart Hall has pointed to in other studies, is that we talk about culture as the problem, but use appearance as evidence. While cultural differences might be the real point of irritation or interest, it is not the behaviour of ethnic minorities that trigger the questions; it is their visible difference.

In the late 1990s, Danish anthropologist Ulla Fadel reached the same conclusion. She carried out multiple interviews with what she calls “majority Danes” in order to understand their categorisation of immigrants. It turned out immigrants were considered to be problematic by most of her interviewees, and that the greatest irritant was not the difference in their lifestyle: “What seems to be most important is that ‘the strangers’ come to look like the [white majority] Danes”.

Figure 2. Jacob Crawfurd, shared by Alex Ferlini.

Figure 3. Jens Peter Engedal based on an idea by Birgit Bjerre.
According to Fadel’s interviewees, when immigrants talked with an accent, dressed differently, performed different gender roles and religions than the persons interviewed, their “strange” appearance made it impossible to treat “the strangers” as equals. One could claim that the comradeship of Danish unity was broken due to visible heterogeneity.

What leads people to ask questions of heritage and religion for Aicha in Fighter, as well as actual children of migrants in Danish society, has very little to do with displayed cultural differences. The mother in the first scene has not been in the room long enough to observe Aicha before asking where she comes from, and Aisha has done little that could be categorised as “Muslim” before her love-interest questions her about her religious practice. It is not the way she acts, but her “visible strangeness” that sets off the interrogation.

In contemporary Danish society, Aicha is labelled a “visible stranger,” and people identified as such are often referred to in the public discourse as “immigrants”, “ethnic minorities”, “second-generation immigrants” or “people with another ethnic background than Danish,” as media researcher Rikke Andreassen has shown in her work. Being labelled a visible stranger has nothing and everything to do with an individual’s appearance. The label is only applied to individuals with certain noticeable characteristics such as non-white skin, speaking with an accent or wearing specific types of clothing like a headscarf. At the same time, it is possible to speak with an Arabic accent and wear a headscarf without ever being perceived as a visible stranger. It all depends on how surrounding society positions the individual, meaning “visible stranger” is not something a person is, but rather something a person is perceived as.

While carrying out fieldwork at various Danish cultural institutions, I have observed a high interest in working with the people marked as visible strangers in “outreach” or “inclusive” projects. One example involved a visit to the Storm P. Museum in the capital of Denmark in the spring of 2016 to learn more about an outreach project created in collaboration between the Storm P. Museum and The Royal Danish Library. The main goal was to gather a group of immigrants and let them curate an exhibition about humour and satirical drawings. The white Danish project leaders were women and had managed to gather participants from Iceland, Rumania, India, Argentina and Lithuania—all of whom were women. When the project leaders were asked about the lack of male participants, the response was that they had really wanted a “Muslim Arabic” man to participate in the project, but that none had volunteered despite their active efforts to recruit someone who fitted that category.

The statement suggests that the team had a specific interest in people labelled “Muslim Arabic”, and their focus on this specific category of immigrant can potentially be ascribed to the hypervisibility this stereotype receives from the Danish press. But if the team were interested in individuals with such heritage, why not make it a focus point for the project from the very start?

Anthropologist Peter Hervik believes that much of the Danish population is afraid of being labelled racist when discussing topics like race and religion. Such categories are closely connected to the common usage of the terms among the German national socialist movement, which, Hervik explains, most of Denmark’s current population wishes to distance themselves from. This could mean that while the cultural workers in the case described above would like to include the easily recognisable and somewhat stigmatised individuals labelled visible strangers, they limit themselves by not even naming the specific characteristics of the people whose voices they would like to hear. The question is, which perspectives can cultural institutions and cultural researchers adopt in order to move towards a more diverse representation from such a difficult starting point?

The productive postmigrant perspective

By using a postmigrant perspective in the practice of cultural analysis, it is possible to begin a productive, future-oriented line of work instead of a merely retrospective critical approach. As Ring Petersen and Schramm write in their article “Postmigration—Mod et nyt kritisk perspektiv på migration og kultur” (“Postmigration—Towards a new critical perspective on migration and culture”):

The potential for cultural analysis as seen through the idea of a postmigrant society consists of enabling a conceptual, social science framework for investigative cultural criticism paired with the ambition to dissolve the dichotomy between majority and minorities. It [a postmigrant perspective] also opens up the idea of viewing interrelations in society as a complex web of similarities and differences, contradictions and connections.

The postmigrant perspective encourages researchers to look forward instead of only criticising what has happened in the past or is happening around them. The acknowledgement of the complexity of the individual is both productive and closer to reality than working with categories of people that easily become stereotypes. This “complex web of similarities and differences” is often forgotten when scholars, artists and activists advocate for more or better representation of homogenised groups, such as black bodies, cisgendered women, and non-heterosexuals. These “groups” are presented as underprivileged
comparing to the young, white, able-bodied, heterosexual man—what Judith Butler has named "the unmarked body". 

This majority–minority dichotomy is, however, a construct that simplifies something as complex and ever-changing as the identity of individuals.

Stating that any member of the white majority in the Danish population is more privileged than any individual recognised as a visible stranger is neglecting important factors such as gender (man, woman, non-binary, cisgendered, trans . . .), sexuality (heterosexual, homosexual, monogamous, polyamorous, asexual . . .), social class (level of education, wealth, language skills . . .), traumas (abused, molested, exiled . . .), body capability (struck by physical or mental illness, born without four functional limbs, born with a syndrome), etc. And this complexity of the individual becomes even more complex when categories are positioned in relation to another.

When categorising one person as more privileged than another, you need knowledge about the individuals in the comparison (more privileged than whom specifically?) and the context (more privileged in which way? in which situations?). This means that statements such as "all brown people are less privileged than all white people" might be true statistically, but such statistics cannot be transferred to an individual level. Questions such as "Is a Danish, wealthy, middle-class, female Dane?" have many possible answers. If the two people needed to secure a new place to live, the wealthy man would be in a more privileged position to choose a home to his liking, while a Danish woman would have the same education and work experience, the white woman would be more privileged according to recent studies performed by The Danish Institute for Human Rights.

To put it another way, when applying a postmigrant perspective to working with structural racism one might be working towards achieving representation that is less skewed racially; but when working with an individual it is important to remember the many other aspects of the person’s identity and life experience. This is necessary because the influence of multiple oppressions might be overlooked in an individual with more than one “mark” on her body, as Kimberly Crenshaw concluded in her intersectional research from 1989.

The goal for equal representation in the postmigration condition is not simply to give the people labelled as visible strangers more attention. The goal is to make “the mark of the visible stranger” into one feature among many. Using the example of Aicha from Fighters, the aim from a postmigrant perspective is not to eliminate all questions directed towards her heritage and lifestyle. It would be to let her define her own person through open questions such as: “Who are you?” and “How is it to be you?”.

The focus on moving forward does not eliminate the necessity of critique. As Ring Petersen and Schramm explain, critique is a vital starting point of our analysis, but: “In contrast to a purely negative, problem-oriented critique, a representational criticism with a postmigrant agenda also points to the good examples and best practices in cultural institutions […]”.

This shift of focus from retrospective critique to future-oriented analysis does not mean that all struggles are over—quite the contrary. As social researcher Naïka Foroutan, who works with postmigration in a German context, has pointed out, debates and discussions, conflicts and negotiations are all important parts of a postmigrant society. Negotiations are essential if the privileged majority are not to “give” diverse representation to the minoritised as some sort of gift. If equality is given as a gift, then the giver has the power to define what is given, whereas a negotiation has the potential to take the needs of both sides into consideration.

Some losses are a given in these negotiations. The recognition of the fact that we are all different takes away the sense of security that the idea of homogeneity seems to offer—although sociologists Karen N. Breidahl, Niels Holtug and Kristian Kongshøj argue that a sameness-based national identity does not necessarily create trust and social cohesion.

Everything becomes more complex when everyone is recognised as an individual with different needs. For example, if you are hosting a dinner party and wish to take the dietary preferences of every individual guest into consideration, it becomes more challenging to create a menu that suits the various individual needs, rather than simply assuming that everyone shares your own preferences and needs. Nevertheless, such considerations do not hinder you from hosting a dinner party. The real challenge is rather that the guest list might need to be changed now that so many are able to participate. If equal representation becomes reality then new methods of selection are needed, and will require that some representations from the current positions of privilege will be reduced and instead awarded to those who are presently underprivileged.

Power struggles are just as essential to the postmigrant society as negotiations for recognition are, as Foroutan also highlights, and creating the language needed to start the discussions necessary to work towards diverse representation is an important beginning. An essential part of this language is concerned with establishing more precise terminology that makes it possible to point out where representation is skewed, and in what way, and to determine how best practice examples are put together. In other
words, specific terms will make it easier to determine where it is most relevant to start the postmigrant diversity work.

**Four levels of representation**

As Ring Petersen and Schramm also write, it is in the postmigrant condition important “to increase our understanding of the cultural practices that can promote vulnerable groups’ social, cultural, political and economic participation in society”. In order to acquire this understanding, more specific analyses of the current inclusive initiatives already taking place are needed, and new language and definitions are what will make it possible to conclude these analyses in a more precise manner.

Working on improving representation in cultural institutions must be done at multiple levels, and while it is also relevant to focus on the composition of audience members, this article starts by giving the model and distinctions required to examine the people working for and in cultural institutions. Presented here are four levels of representation to work with and focus on in regards to analysing and/or implementing diversity in cultural institutions. To demonstrate these levels, the concept of a stage is used as a metaphor, explaining how representation can be implemented onstage, backstage, offstage and through patrons of the stage. These four levels are distinguished by how much the audience sees, who has the most influence, and who controls the distribution of resources (Figure 4).

**Onstage** is the part of a stage visible to the audience, where the characters of a play act their roles. In the context of this paper, onstage representation also refers to any character recognisably human that is a part of an artwork. In works that consist of written words or audio presentations, the narrator, the characters described and the voices speaking would also fall under the category of onstage representations, although the body and thus most of the visible traits of an individual are hidden from the view of the audience. The representation is then achieved through descriptions, names, accents, etc. This means that representation of individuals identifiable as visible strangers on the onstage level does not per definition necessarily involve an individual with the features and/or life experiences of a visible stranger. Still, it is important to consider whether not including those represented could result in stereotypical or otherwise problematic representations.

**Backstage** representation involves directors, producers, artists, writers, and all other people who initiate and produce cultural products. They are seldom seen by the audience (although in cases such as that of the performance artist, the same body will be performing representation both onstage and backstage), but they have a higher degree of influence on the final cultural product than the individuals placed onstage traditionally have. The backstage level of representation is therefore to be considered more empowering as it has the potential to influence narrative and artistic expression. It is, however, also important to question whether the “burden of representation” put on those recognised as visible strangers are limiting these individuals to only work with depictions of their own potential visible strangeness.

Film scholar Hamid Nacify writes in his book *An Accented Cinema* that an audience tend to expect certain portrayals from directors with “hyphen-identities”, as Nacify has named the group. To that extent, accented cinema theory is an extension of the authorship theory, and it runs counter to much of the postmodern theory that attempts to either deny authorship altogether or multiply the authoring parentage to the point of “de-originating the utterance”.

Danish film scholar Heidi Philipsen agrees that it has been virtually impossible for directors with “hyphen-identities” to create films without being assumed to be presenting themes regarding their

Figure 4. Different levels of representation, what the audience sees, and from where the resources flow in what amounts.
visible strangeness. As soon as the audience sees the name(s) of the person(s) backstage “racial and cultural discrepancies and dilemmas are expected to be a part of the film”.

When working with representation, researchers are likely, or as Nacify suggests, encouraged, to look for signs of representation and might therefore neglect to see what story or expression the person backstage may be actually trying to communicate to the audience. Out of eagerness to examine and develop diverse representation, scholars and critics might be blinded by their own expectations regarding any performer marked as a visible stranger. However, as Ring Petersen has described in earlier works, it is an oversimplification to confine the work done by people viewed as visible strangers to be only the work of visible strangers and nothing else. This is due in part to the viewer labelling the directors or actors as visible strangers, and not necessarily the directors or actors identifying themselves as such, and due in part to the two sides of representation—best understood through the distinction between depiction and access (see Table 1).

Table 1. Overview of the applications of the terms “access” and “depiction” on the four levels of institutional representation presented in this paper.

| Access | Depiction |
|--------|-----------|
| Onstage | X         | X         |
| Backstage | X       | X         |
| Offstage | X        |           |
| Patrons of the stage | X | |

Representation as access has to do with eliminating any structural discrimination that keeps certain individuals out of cultural institutions. Depiction, on the other hand, involves the potential to create or break down stereotypes through cultural representations. These two are not inseparably linked, although they often occur together.

Access is crucial to all levels of representation, while one could argue that depiction is most relevant to the elements an audience sees, meaning the first two:

When working with diverse representation in a postmigrant perspective it is important to make the distinction between access and depiction in order to free individuals recognised as visible strangers to work any way they want, using whatever expressions and storylines they prefer, and also in order to acknowledge that all individuals must share the burden of representation. One example is that a Danish woman who can hardly be considered a visible stranger was the director of Fighter. Likewise, individuals regarded as visible strangers produce narratives and art that represent the lives of others, like the brown Danish writer Hassan Preisler does in his books and plays; for example, Brun Mands Byrde and Hellig Krig (Brown Man’s Burden and Holy War). Access is an equally important aspect of representation. If talented individuals are kept from creating cultural products solely because of their physical features, society is potentially excluding cultural products that are interesting in their own right as well as the portrayal of diverse narratives and expressions. By structurally excluding representation of specific individuals, audiences are kept from learning about and adapting to the diverse ways of life one finds in a postmigrant society, and it makes it impossible for parts of the audience to find characters and stories in which to mirror themselves and their own life experiences.

Previous studies of diverse representation in the arts, such as the studies performed by Hall and Nacify, focus mainly on the two first levels of representation—onstage and backstage. The two final levels—offstage and patrons of the stage—are, however, where the strongest gatekeepers are positioned. People in these positions decide who has access to working onstage and backstage, which is why an analysis of these levels are just as, if not even more crucial to Ring Petersen and Schramm’s postmigrant goal of increasing our understanding of the cultural practices that promote vulnerable groups’ participation in society.

People situated offstage work for the cultural institutions and other venues that constitute the framework for cultural products. These frameworks can be art museums, literature festivals, film institutes, theatres, etc. People who work for these cultural institutions are in charge of creating exhibitions, programmes and schedules. They decide, at least to some degree, who or what can be put in the frame that is their responsibility, meaning that offstage representatives select which depictions get institutional recognition and are made available to a wider audience.

Diversity at this level is rarely discussed. In Denmark, cultural institutions repeatedly create “outreach projects” that have a limited duration and a restricted scope, often inviting groups, which have not sought out the institution on their own initiative, to contribute to the institution. Such projects can involve inviting children to participate in the creation of new exhibitions, or the targeted involvement of minoritised individuals of society in creating and/or curating exhibitions. The latter was the case with the national open-air museum of urban history, Den Gamle By (The Old Town) and the construction of “A Somali home in Denmark” for a contemporary historical exhibition. A group of women who had emigrated from Somalia to Denmark helped decorate a home so that it looked like their own homes in Denmark. According to the project leaders, the intention of the project was to let the people they referred
to as “Danes” visit what they referred to as “Somali homes” so the “Danes” could see the similarities and differences between “Somali” versus “Danish” homes for themselves. What is special about this project is that the “Somali women” had sought out the museum on their own initiative through another participatory project, proving that diversity projects can create gateways that promote inclusivity and give greater access to individuals that have not previously been included.

The “Somali women” were invited into the cultural institution to contribute to this specific exhibition, but all of them did the work on a volunteer basis and none of them were hired beyond the duration of the exhibition that they had helped create and present. It should be noted that the museum did provide the participating women with hygiene courses in order for the women to be able to cook food and serve it to the museum’s guests at the opening of the exhibition, and having completed these courses helped lead to employment elsewhere for some of the women after the exhibition.

One problem with such inclusive initiatives is that the focus is on projects and talks of limited duration, rather than continuous diversity work with the aim of creating long-lasting structural changes. This is not just the case with individuals marked as visible strangers, but also with other structurally excluded groups, which becomes apparent when looking into the debates and actions connected to The Danish Film Institute’s (DFI) report about equality between male and female directors published in 2016.59

The DFI report reveals that less than 20% of public funding awarded to Danish fiction films went to female directors.60 The results were widely discussed, but gatekeepers and representatives agreed that too few women had the necessary skills to be given additional funding,61 although 29% of the people studying feature filmmaking and 63% of the people studying directing documentaries at the National Film School of Denmark in the years 2002–2015 were women.

DFI invited representatives of the film industry to discuss what to do next. At this diversity talk, film critic Nanna Frank Rasmussen asked whether more discussions were necessary, implying that it might be time for action. The suggestion was quickly shot down by the CEO of DFI, and the strategy to keep having workshops and discussions about the matter got accepted by the present majority according to DFI’s website.62

When asked at another event why the skewed distribution of funds was not detected before, the head of funding at DFI explained that, because the institution had been “so focused on including ethnic minorities”,63 the institute might have forgotten the women. “You cannot do everything at once” he stated.64 He may have a point; but shouldn’t the goal be on offering everyone equal representation?

To return to the allegory of a dinner party, the approach taken by DFI is to make sure there are enough acceptable dishes for one set of preferences at a time—but is the goal to make everybody equal but separate? The hosts of the dinner party could invite representatives from a diverse group of guests to help create a versatile menu that can be offered to all kinds of guests, acknowledging that the diverse guests know more about their own preferences than do the homogenous group of hosts. Then the dinner party could become more inclusive (and the hosts would be granted opportunities to sample new dishes and learn new recipes). In other words, diverse representation offstage might be what boosts representation onstage and backstage, since having diverse offstage staff can potentially help create the sustainable structural changes necessary for diversity work to become the norm.

People who work offstage are restricted by the funding received from the final and most powerful level of representation—the patrons of the stage. In a Danish context, this level consists mostly of the politicians who decide the amount of funding to be given to the arts, the government officials who work at the Danish Ministry of Culture, and the representatives of the Danish Art Foundation. In Denmark, the arm’s length principle is considered a crucial part of cultural policy,65 which is why it is not the members of government who are supposed to decide which specific individuals are awarded funding (although exceptions have occurred). That is the job of the representatives at the Danish Art Foundation and, although “quality” is stressed as the first priority in all cases,66 they are currently working with a list of considerations, such as gender and regional affiliations, that they must take into account before deciding who is to receive funding. Whether this practice is a productive tool when striving for diversity, or simply a way of supporting group identities, as migration researcher Mark Terkessidi fears such initiatives do,68 can only be validated when observational research of the work done by these committees is carried out. Such considerations do, however, indicate that a desire for diversity is present, but fears associated with discussing race and religion in Danish public discourse, as documented by migrations professor Peter Hervik,69 may make it difficult to expand the Art Foundation’s current considerations to also include discussions about the representation of people labelled as visible strangers.
Final remarks

The current situation in the Danish cultural landscape, in which cultural institutions try to create alternatives to the idea of a naturalised, homogeneous representation of what is "Danish", despite assimilationist cultural policies, does not offer many examples of ongoing diversity work. Decades of cultural policy focused on unity and exclusionary methods of structural discrimination do not change overnight, but perhaps the current diversity talks and projects are signs of change—or at least a desire for change. If that is the case, cultural studies researchers with a post-migrant focus can provide cultural institutions with the language and models necessary to continue working towards achieving diverse representation at all levels, so that eventually the mark of the visible stranger seems less significant, and the complex individual becomes the centre of interest.

Notes

1. E.g. “Musikhandlingsplan 2012–2015”, The Danish Ministry of Culture, http://kum.dk/uploads/tex temper.plavolja/KUM-Musikhandlingsplan_WEB-02.pdf; “Undersøgelse af etnisk mangfoldighed i dansk film 2015”, The Danish Film Institute, http://www.dfi.dk/branchego_stoette__;/media/DB9A2BC049C14E08B27D8E0ECD463968.ashx; “Sænkunstdialog—Visionspapir for udviklingen af scenenkunsten i Danmark 2015”, The Danish Ministry of Culture, http://kum.dk/uploads/tex_tem plavolja/Scenenkunstplanification.pdf; “Museet: Borgere og bæredygtige løsninger 2015”, Agency for Culture and Palaces, http://slks.dk/fileadmin/FTPfiles/Museer.%20Borgere%20og%20bæredygtige%20l%C3%B8sninger.pdf.

2. Such as the Danish Film Institute’s “Charter for Ethnic Diversity” in Danish film (http://www.dfi.dk/branchego_stoette__MangfoldighedEtnisk-mangfoldighed.aspx), The Danish Arts Foundation’s charter “Fold out the Music” for diversity in Danish music (http://www.kunst.dk/kunstomraader/musik/nyheder/2017/12397/) or the talks arranged by The Danish National School of Performing Arts about diversity in the performing arts in 2017 (https://ddsks.dk/da/1-scenenkunstens-aarsmoede-mangfoldighed-og-scenenkunst).

3. The discussion about diversity has, however, been a focus in private organisations since the late 1990s—early 2000s according to Jacobs, Lützen and Plum, Mangfoldighed Som Virksomhedsstrategi—På Vej Mod den inkluderende Organisation.

4. Ring Petersen and Schramm, “Postmigration—Mod et nyt kritisk perspektiv på migration og kultur”, 194; own translation.

5. Duelund, The Nordic Cultural Model, 534.

6. Anderson, Imagined Community—Reflections.

7. Duelund, The Nordic Cultural Model, 534; own translation.

8. An example is found in the following: Østergaard, Indvandrerne i Danmarks historie.

9. Skot-Hansen, “Danish cultural policy—from Monoculture towards”; Duelund, The Nordic Cultural Model; Støvring, “The cultural prerequisites of social cohesion”; Tawat, “Danish and Swedish immigrants”.

10. Skot-Hansen, “Danish cultural policy—from Monoculture towards”, 209.

11. Tawat, “Danish and Swedish immigrants’ cultural policies between 1960 and 2006”, 205.

12. Duelund, The Nordic Cultural Model, 543; own translation.

13. An example is the Polish people who would help Danish farmers during the harvest from the 1890’s and forward, described in: Boye Holt & Bejder, Fra Huguenotter Til Afghanere—Indvandringens Historie i Danmark.

14. According to Danish Statistics’ website, 8.5% of Denmark’s population is registered as ‘non-western immigrants and descendants’, https://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/emner/indvandrende-og-efterkommere/indvandrende-og-efterkommere.

15. Melzer and Serafi ed. Right-Wing in Europe Extremism.

16. Hervik, “Race, ‘race’, racialisation, racisme og nyracisme”.

17. Nils Holtug, “Hvorfor bliver vi så vrede?” Information, https://www.information.dk/motiv/2016/04/hvorfor-saa-vrede; own translation.

18. “DF Kampagne”, from The Danish People’s Party’ official website, http://www.danskfolkeparti.dk/DF_Kampagne.

19. Ritzau Bureau, “Søren Espersen om modtræk til DF-plakat: Noget forfærdeligt pjet”, MetroXpress, http://www.mz.dk/nyheder/danmark/story/15683237.

20. E.g. Lasse Koldkjær Kristoffersen, “Modstand mod DF-kampagne tager fart: Sådan ser vores Danmark ud”, TV2, http://nyheder.tv2.dk/samfund/2015/06/16-modstand-mod-df-kampagne-tager-fart-saadans-vores-danmark-ud.

21. Alex Ferlini, “Der er så meget, vi skal passe på”, Facebook update posted 05/16/2016, https://www.facebook.com/photophp?fbid=10156826690435123&set=a.1015069560800123.676072.891870122&type=3.

22. Both images shared by the Danish media, e.g.: Kristoffersen, “Modstand mod DF-kampagne tager fart.

23. Kfoed Simonsen, “Den fremmede”, byen og nationen—om livet som etnisk minoritet.

24. E.g. Azis Mahmoud, Hvor taler du flot dansk?; Sabitha Sofia Söderholm, “Som lille tegnede jeg på min krop med den farve, I kalder hudfarvet”, Information, https://www.information.dk/debat/2017/01/lille-tegnede-paa-krop-farve-kald-hudfarvet.

25. E.g. Kfoed and Simonsen, “Den fremmede”.

26. E.g. Hervik ed. Den genererende forskellighed—danske svar på den stigende multikulturalsisme.

27. Own translation from Fighter, Natasha Arthy (Denmark 2007).

28. Egaa Jørgensenand Søderhamn Bülows, “Ali og de fyrettryve k(r)oner”, 84.

29. Hall, Representation.

30. Fadel, “Skik følge eller land fly”, 219; own translation.

31. Inspired by Andreasen, Der Er et Yndigt Land.

32. Ibid.
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