Extremist discourse and internationalization

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Abstract
Working within the framework of Social Representation Theory, this contribution focuses on the Facebook activities of a specific extreme right-wing group – the Danish Defence League – in order to examine the impact of international dimensions on its categorizations of self and other. Analyses reveal the importance of strategic intertextual practices in relation to the DDL's replicated discourse from the English Defence League and its use of posts and hyperlinks. Generally, the international is used to enhance the threat of an often generalized Muslim and immigrant other as well as the threat to democracy posed by the establishment. Hence, the need for an active defence is both motivated and emphasized.

1. Introduction

This contribution reports preliminary research on far right extremist discourse and focuses on how the international is exploited by extreme right-wing groups as a resource in identity construction. For present purposes, the extreme right will be understood "to refer to those groups that exhibit in their common ideological cores the characteristics of nationalism, xenophobia (ethno-nationalist xenophobia), antiestablishment critiques and socio-cultural authoritarianism (law and order, family values)" (Caiani & della Porta 2011:181). The importance of spatial perspectives in understanding the dynamics of right-wing extremism, or indeed any form of extremism, has been acknowledged, where differing levels of analysis can reveal the significance of, and interrelationship across, the local, national and transnational (Mammone et al. 2012). In this respect, the role

of technology in creating spaces in which right-wing extremist groups can operate and interact cannot be overlooked. The internet, in particular Web 2.0, has afforded greater opportunities for relationship-building, identity construction, transnational connectedness and information sharing (Ramalingam 2012; Turner-Graham 2013). According to Rogers & Digital Methods Initiative Amsterdam (2013:52), right-wing parties and groups in Denmark are "well-represented in the online space", but their use of social media is generally limited to Facebook. This chapter will take as its focus the Facebook activities of a specific right-wing group, the Danish Defence League (DDL), formed in 2010 as an offshoot of the English Defence League (EDL). Such groups are part of a global counter-Jihad movement, which, Goodwin (2013) argues, has been relatively overlooked in discussions about right-wing extremism. According to Goodwin (2013:3),

> The counter-Jihad scene is comprised of movements that are more confrontational, chaotic and unpredictable than traditional anti-immigrant and ethnic nationalist movements in Western democracies. Within an amorphous network of think-tanks, bloggers and activists, the counter-Jihad scene incorporates the 'defence leagues' in Australia, Denmark, England, Finland, Norway, Poland, Scotland, Serbia and Sweden, groups such as Pro-Cologne and the Citizens' Movement Pax Europa in Germany, Generation Identity in France, the 'Stop the Islamization' networks in Europe and the United States, the American Freedom Defense Initiative and the International Civil Liberties Alliance. Whether formally or informally, such groups often align themselves to an international counter-Jihad network, united by their belief that Islam and Muslims are posing a fundamental threat to the resources, identities and even survival of Western states.

Jackson & Feldman (2011), in a report on the English Defence League, classify it as a new social movement, i.e. united around a cause, with some degree of centralized organizational structure that provides a framework for a network of supporters, but which also depends on other networks of grass-roots activists. Acknowledging the EDL's not unsuccessful tactic of internationalization, the authors doubt that the European defence leagues have been able to adopt the social movement organizational structure of the EDL. Certainly, the DDL has had internal organizational problems from the outset and it is far from certain that a recent change in leadership will

be able to galvanize what is a small organization (SFI 2014). There are no precise numbers of members available; however, media reports suggest that the fatal attacks on a restaurant and synagogue in Copenhagen in February 2015 have provoked increased interest in more extreme movements, such as the DDL.[1] Facebook 'likes' in September 2015 number 7,352, but these do not necessarily reflect membership. My interest in the DDL derives from the fact that it is a product of an internationalization strategy of a larger and more dynamic group. Hence, it is an obvious starting point to study how international dimensions impact on right-wing discourse. Under scrutiny here are the categorization processes used by the DDL to construct the identity of the 'other' and in so doing their own identity as a group. As cyberspace affords various multimodal means of identity-making, two types of behaviour will be considered: the DDL's verbal rhetoric and their use of posts and hyperlinks on their Facebook timeline. Following Beaulieu & Simakova (2006:2), I assume that hyperlinks can be used "to explore the diversity of ways relations between websites (whether they be textual, functional or symbolic) are meaningful". From the perspective of verbal rhetoric, researchers have noted that extreme right-wing discourse is changing. Jamin (2013:49), for example, suggests that there is a trend among extreme-right political parties in Europe to abandon "open racist rhetoric to embrace an ambiguous progressive and secular speech against 'totalitaria' Islam". Wodak (2015) argues that there has been a normalization of xenophobic and racist rhetoric in the political sphere, allowing more peripheral parties to move to the political centre. Jackson & Feldman (2011) refer to the front-stage rhetoric of the EDL, which is more guarded than that of the backstage as revealed in some of its blog sites. It is, thus, to be expected that the DDL shows similar tendencies.

2. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

The framework that I adopt here is that of social representation theory, a social psychological approach which conceptualizes the individual as a social entity in a mutual, interdependent relationship with society (Augoustinos et al. 2014; Moscovici 1984). It deals with the construction of social or common sense knowledge where the primary aim is to "systematize how material that lies in people's taken-for-granted thoughts comes to be there, the specific form it takes, and its consequences for the way they understand their social environment" (Joffe & Staerklé 2007:402). Social

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[1] See for example <*www.euroman.dk/artikler/nyheder/mange-kontakter-os-og-fortaller-at-nu-har-de-faet-nok*>.

representations deal with the content of social thinking and can be defined as "a set of concepts, statements and explanations originating in daily life in the course of inter-individual communications" (Moscovici 1981:181). They are shared by a group and serve as reference points for that group, but are dynamic structures that can be subject to change, challenge and contestation. While shared, social representations have to be triggered by some form of problematization of a phenomenon, as has been the case with issues of health and illness, climate, technology, food, gender, race, ageing etc. Moreover, social representation is not restricted to linguistic communication, but can be constructed through visual means as well as actual behaviours. For example in a study of the social representation of mental illness in a French rural community, Jodelet (1991) found that villagers who housed people suffering from mental illnesses had distinct practices whereby they kept separate dishes for their lodgers and washed their clothes separately as there was a shared social representation of mental illness as contagious.

Social representations involve both product and process: they are "the products of social thinking, structuring beliefs, and knowledge about phenomena considered significant for a given community" and the "processes by which we construct our reality" (Philogène & Deaux 2001: 5). One of these processes is anchoring, which involves classification or categorization as well as naming or labelling, where meaning is derived from existing knowledge, experience and values (Clémence 2001; Deaux & Wiley 2007). Anchoring has been conceptualized in terms of making the unfamiliar familiar, but it can also serve to maintain the unfamiliar or introduce strangeness and create difference (Kalampalikis & Haas 2008). If we take the example of HIV/AIDS in the 1980's, this unknown disease was classified or categorized in familiar terms as a 'plague' that was due to the immoral behaviours of specific others, particularly homosexual men, and indeed was initially named or labelled as the gay plague or gay cancer (Joffe 1995). Through such anchoring, particular outgroups were stigmatized and successfully othered.

Of relevance to this chapter is the relationship between social representations and social identity. The performance of social identity, or identities, necessitates a positioning in relation to the 'other', or more accurately those represented as the 'other', given the relational nature of identity. Howarth (2007:133) argues that social representations and social identity are "two sides of the same coin" since "by positioning ourselves in relation to others – that is, in asserting, performing, or

doing identity – we reveal our perspective on the world and our ways of seeing and constructing the world, or our social representations". So, for example, in her study of racism in a predominantly white English primary school, Howarth (2007) found that the children operated with three main representations of race: race as real (visible characteristics), race as imposed (by teachers, parents, other children) and race as contested (by the children themselves). Within this representational context, the children had to negotiate their own personal and group identities. An important aspect of social identity construction is othering, which serves to differentiate between groups (ingroup vs. outgroup), often through stigmatization (Staerklé 2014). Bauman (2004) views othering as the affirmation of the difference of another or their alterity. He proposes that othering can be understood through a structural model of three 'grammars', i.e. regular, patterned systems: orientalism, following Said's (1978) concept of the oriental 'other'; segmentation, acknowledging that identities are tiered and contextual; and encompassment, allowing for the partial inclusion of some 'others'. I will return to this notion of grammars in the discussion. Similarly, Philogène (2007:33) views alterity as a "systematic and comprehensive crystallization of difference between classes of people" involving generalized categories of otherness. Alterity, she argues, can be interpreted as both unfamiliarity and exclusion, the former sense allowing for a development from the unfamiliar to the familiar, while the latter sense maintains a permanent sense of not belonging.

The data to be considered here come from the DDL's Facebook pages[2] and are of two types. Firstly, there are the texts given under the link 'about us', which follows a standard Facebook template of 'page info', and includes sections on 'short description', 'long description', 'general information' and 'mission'. These texts derive in part from the mission statement to be found on the group's website.[3] Secondly, there are the posts and hyperlinks presented, often with a comment from the DDL, for users to follow, like, share and comment on. Through the lens of social representation theory, I would argue that these posts and hyperlinks can reveal further dimensions of the DDL's categorization processes and identity construction. However, therein lies a challenge as posts and hyperlinks are unstable entities and can simply disappear; consequently, they can be an ephemeral means of identity construction. The textual

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[2] *<https://da-dk.facebook.com/pages/The-Danish-Defence-League/223250204422741>*

[3] *<http://danishdefenceleague.com>*

data will be qualitatively analysed in terms of the interface between the national and the international in the identity construction of the group and the 'other'. Since the DDL exploits the discourse of the EDL, this analysis will involve a comparison of the Danish and English texts, although in this contribution I will not deal with the nuances of translation. What will be addressed is the issue of intertextuality, which involves the processes of entextualization (a stretch of discourse is made into a bounded textual object that affords its removal from its context), decontextualization (the detaching of text from context) and recontextualization (the text is inserted into new contexts) (Bauman & Briggs 1990; Trester 2012). The posts and hyperlinks have been analyzed for a 3-month period (January-March 2015) in terms of what is posted, who or what is being linked to and how these materials relate to the categorizations apparent in the descriptions and mission of the organization itself. These practices, too, evidence intertextuality. The data will be given here as it appears on the Facebook pages, i.e. with typos, omissions etc.

3. Group Presentation

The DDL's Facebook presentation begins with the section 'short description' where the organization, Danish Defence League™, is briefly summarized as a "Netværks-organisation baseret på aktiv forsvar af dansk tradition og sædvane" (Network organization based on the active defence of Danish tradition and customs). The ™ indicates an unregistered trademark and its use, which is not legislated in Denmark, can be viewed as a form of anchoring; this symbol is a labelling which allows the DDL to categorize itself as an acknowledged, legitimate 'organization' and in so doing it is promoting an organizational identity for actual and potential members. This seems to relate to its Facebook page only; the trademark symbol does not appear on its website or logo. The focus of the single sentence of description is on the national, what is being defended, and not on what is being fought; this contrasts to the EDL, which on its Facebook page describes itself as "Leading the Counter-Jihad fight. Peacefully protesting against militant Islam". Yet, the DDL does rely heavily on the discourse of the EDL in the subsequent sections, parts of which are simply lifted from the DDL mission statement, itself a largely equivalent translation of that of the English organization. This replication of the original English text would seem to have been a conscious decision taken by the Danish movement rather than any form of policy on the part of the EDL; while the 'defence league' label or brand does require an adherence to a common

'memorandum of understanding', other defence leagues, for instance the Swedish and Norwegian, have not opted to follow the original English language documents, but have composed their own. The DDL's Facebook presentation exemplifies the intertextual practices that are so prevalent in digital media (Deumert 2014; Leppänen et al. 2013). These can be seen in the 'long description' on its Facebook page, which begins with a paragraph taken from the second aim of the mission statement; this aim is translated from the English as 'Demokrati og Retsstat: Forsvar for demokrati og retsstat via modstand mod Sharia' (Democracy and the Rule of Law: Promoting democracy and the rule of law by opposing Sharia). Hence, this particular piece of text has been recontextualized as a description of the movement, and not its mission. Extract 1 gives the translated Danish text followed by the original EDL text.

Extract 1

Den Europæiske Menneskeretsdomstol har fastslået, at sharia er uforenelig med grundlæggende demokratiske principper. På trods af dette er der stadig mange, der er villige til at tilpasse sig sharias normer, og som tror at sharia kan fungere parallelt med vores egne traditioner og skikke. Realiteten er, at sharia ikke kan være andet end et komplet alternativ til vores nuværende lovmæssige, politiske og sociale systemer. Sharia er en revolution som vores land ikke ønsker og må afvise. Sharia er en klar trussel mod vores demokrati.

The European Court of Human Rights has declared that 'sharia is incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy'. Despite this, there are still those who are more than willing to accommodate sharia norms, and who believe that sharia can operate in partnership with our existing traditions and customs. In reality, sharia cannot operate fully as anything other than a complete alternative to our existing legal, political, and social systems. It is a revolution that this country does not want, and one that it must resist. Sharia is most definitely a threat to our democracy.

Several clear oppositions and categorizations are established in the EDL text and taken over in the Danish: firstly, Sharia is contrasted as mutually exclusive with democracy and national traditions and categorized as a revolution and threat; secondly, followers of Sharia (the 'mange' (many) in the Danish text and 'those' in the English) are contrasted with a notion

of 'us' as expressed through the possessive pronoun 'our'. The pronominal reference is ambiguous (except when used with the noun 'country' in the Danish text) as it could refer to a supranational European 'us' since the section begins with a quotation from the European Court of Human Rights. The threat established, the DDL proceeds to focus on defence and its role as shown in Extract 2. In this original Danish text (the English translation is my own), the DDL associates itself with active protection of peace and freedom, open debate, national history and traditions as well as the Danish constitution and what they term "genuine" democracy.

Extract 2
Danish Defence League™ imødegår denne trusel på flere måder og fra forskellige vinkler. Vi forsøger gennem aktivt forsvar, at sikre fred og friheder i vores lokalområder. Ved synlighed håber vi på, at bidrage konstruktivt til debatten folk imellem samt at påvirke bla. systempressen og politikerne i ønskede retning. En retning funderet i vores fantastiske nations historie og kulturtradition, regeret i overensstemmelse med vores ukrænkelige grundlov og konkretiseret af et oprigtigt demokrati med folkestyre.

Danish Defence League™ is responding to this threat in several ways and from different angles. We seek through active defence to ensure peace and freedoms in our local areas. Through exposure we hope to contribute constructively to the debate among the public and at the same time to influence amongst other things the establishment press and politicians in the desired direction. A direction grounded in our fantastic nation's history and cultural tradition, governed in accordance with our inviolable constitution and concretised by a genuine democracy with rule of the people

The DDL is clearly anchoring itself as a national, democratic movement with concerns for the local and the people. It does so through a focus on Sharia and its many followers, which are 'othered' as an irreconcilable threat. However, there is a hint of a further 'other', namely the establishment press and politicians, who are not working in the "desired" direction, the implication being that an undesired direction is being pursued. This 'othering' is also apparent in the section entitled 'mission', which is lifted from the third aim of their mission statement. The establishment is associated with the interests of policy-makers and not the

public (see Extract 5 below), and the government, in pursuing "destructive" policies, has become the "propaganda arm of the Muslim Brotherhood". This anti-establishment rhetoric is typical of populism and, according to Rydgren (2007:246), is a strategy that "makes it possible for the new radical right-wing parties to present themselves as the real champions of true democracy". In this sense the DDL and EDL share characteristics with the political party segment of the radical and extremist right.

It is first in the section 'general information' that the DDL uses explicit religious group labels and undertakes a categorization of Muslims. Again the text is taken from the DDL's mission statement (from the first aim concerning protection of human rights), and hence is a translation from the English. As can be seen in Extract 3, an opposition is created between 'muslimer'/'danske muslimer' (Muslims/Danish Muslims) and more radical groups, as well as the religion itself, radical Islam. A few points should be noted in relation to the Danish and English versions: the Danish Facebook text has removed the reference to women in burquas, although this remains in the DDL's mission statement; there would seem to be an editing error in the Danish text where the adjective 'britiske' (British) modifies 'moskeer' (mosques), although in the mission statement the expression is 'danske moskeer' (Danish mosques).

Extract 3

Vi mener, at fortalerne for radikal islam har magten over de danske muslimer. De radikale dominerer muslimske organisationer, er nøglepersoner i britiske moskeer, og øger stadig deres indflydelse. Radikal islam holder danske muslimer isoleret i frygt. De radikale elementer misrepræsenterer muslimernes synspunkter, nægter ytringsfriheden og fremmer indoktrinering af egne børn, mens de løbende diskrediterer muslimer, der ønsker fredelig sameksistens med andre danskere.

(From EDL mission statement) We believe that the proponents of radical Islam have a stranglehold on British Muslims. The radicals dominate Muslim organisations, remain key figures in British mosques, and are steadily increasing their influence. Radical Islam keeps British Muslims fearful and isolated, (especially the women that it encases in the Burqa). It misrepresents their views, stifles freedom of expression, and indoctrinates their children, whilst

continually doing a discredit to those who do wish to peacefully co-exist with their fellow Britons.

The explicit category of Muslim is anchored in the national through labelling, be this the use of an explicit adjective of national belonging, Danish Muslims, or an expression of inclusion, i.e. 'sameksistens med andre danskere' ('co-existence with other Danes', what in the original English is expressed through the phrase 'fellow Britons'). Such discursive inclusion is strategic from an ingroup perspective given that right-wing extremist organizations are well-aware of criticisms made against them, as is apparent in the mission statements of the DDL and the EDL (Extract 4):

Extract 4
Dæmonisering af muslimer eller af islamkritikere bidrager ikke konstruktivt til debatten. Vi tror på at en grundig undersøgelse af alle fakta er nødvendig for at samfundet kan styres på en effektiv og human måde. Hvis der findes aspekter i den muslimske tradition der fremmer radikale islamister og kriminelle, er det nødvendigt at imødegå dem uden at skulle frygte beskyldninger om 'racisme', 'xenofobi', eller det vildledende begreb 'Islamofobi'.

Demonisation of Muslims, or of Islam's critics, adds nothing to the debate. We believe that only by looking at all the facts can society be most effectively and humanly governed. If there are aspects of Muslim tradition that encourage the activities of Islamic radicals and criminals then these need to be properly addressed without fear of accusations of racism, xenophobia, or the even the disingenuous term 'Islamophobia'.

A dialogical response which counters the negative categorization of those who criticize Islam is that of constructing and including a category of "acceptable" Muslims, which is opposed to the unacceptable category of fundamentalist Islamic individuals and groups, i.e. Islamists. The contents of both these categories, however, are primarily negative: one is cast in the role of victim, characterized by powerlessness, fear and passivity in the face of the radical other which, in contrast, is influential and dominant, exercising strong agency. In this way, the DDL, following the EDL, can present itself in a more positive, humane light as concerned not only for society in general, but the suppressed national subgroup of

Muslims. Bear in mind that both organizations identify themselves with the protection and promotion of human rights, most particularly those of groups seen as targets of radical Islam, i.e. women, and the LGBT and Jewish communities. Indeed, the EDL has separate divisions for all these groups, although the Jewish group has developed into an independent movement, the Jewish Defence League UK. The DDL does not have the organizational structure or critical mass to imitate the EDL in this regard; the Swedish defence league, however, does have a women's (the so-called Angels) division. This human rights discourse of the defence leagues, then, creates a common enemy, radical Islam, for diverse groups. In this way, the discourse of the defence leagues draws on what Laclau & Mouffe (1985) term the logic of equivalence, which "attempts to create specific forms of unity among different interests by relating them to a common project and by establishing a frontier to define the forces to be opposed, the 'enemy'" (Mouffe 1993:50).

There is, however, some slippage in the categories constructed as revealed in the use of the very term 'Islam'. While modified with the adjective 'radical' when creating an opposition between radicals and Danish Muslims, it is generalized in the context of the DDL's Facebook description of its mission, which promotes the education of the public about "Islam" as seen in Extract 5.

Extract 5

Hvordan man sikrer offentligheden et balanceret billede af islam! Offentlig uddannelse er et centralt punkt i Danish Defence League™'s mission. Den danske politiske og medie etablering har længe arbejdet for at fremvise et fejlagtigt billede af islam som harmløs, hvilket kun er i beslutningstagernes interesse, ikke befolkningens.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: Ensuring That The Public Get A Balanced Picture Of Islam
A central part of the EDL's mission is public education. The British political and media establishment have, for a long time, been presenting a very sanitised and therefore inaccurate view of Islam, shaped by the needs of policy-makers rather than the needs of the public.

It is a generic notion of Islam that is viewed as being misrepresented in the public domain, where the balance needs to be redressed so that ideas of Islam as 'harmløs' ('harmless') can be countered. This usage allows for a generalized categorization of Islam as potentially dangerous, thus contrasting with the more nuanced subcategorizations noted above. Such generalization also occurs with the category of 'Muslim' which is contrasted with that of 'non-Muslim' in DDL's mission statement on their website (following the EDL). It is first claimed that this categorization is that of Sharia law and is to be resisted as a form of "apartheid", a loaded term that simultaneously identifies Sharia as racist and the DDL (and EDL) as non-racist (cf. Jackson & Feldman 2011). Yet the category non-Muslim is subsequently used by the DDL and contrasted to Islam:

> ### Extract 6
> DDL arbejder for at fremme forståelsen af islam og følgerne for ikke-muslimer, der er tvunget til at leve i dets nærhed.
>
> The EDL promotes the understanding of Islam and the implications for non-Muslims forced to live alongside it.

These broad-sweeping, mutually exclusive categories contradict the more inclusive rhetoric witnessed elsewhere in the Facebook and website texts. As observed by Jackson & Feldman (2011:12), EDL discourse "connects inclusivity and exclusion in an almost seamless fashion" and is "continually slipping". The same applies to that of the DDL.

4. Posts and Hyperlinks
In the 3-month period from January to March 2015, there were 89 posts on the DDL's Facebook timeline, most of which contained hyperlinks. The international dimensions of these posts can be seen in terms of the geographical location of the events reported as well as the languages used. Links were given to stories from 12 countries: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, UK, USA, Iraq, Myanmar and Pakistan. Three languages make an appearance: Danish, English and Swedish. In some cases, news stories from foreign language sources have been translated into Danish. For example, one hyperlink to the Danish, alternative online newspaper, *Den Korte Avis*, deals with a story taken from the British tabloid the *Daily Mail* about Oxford University Press forbidding pictures of, and reference to, pigs, sausages etc. in their children's books

so as not to offend Muslims and Jews. Embedded within this Danish text is the link to the *Daily Mail* story (although that link has since gone dead).

The sources for the hyperlinks range across online versions of traditional media, such as tabloid and quality press, and TV channels, as well as online, alternative newspapers, blogs, websites, Facebook groups and YouTube. Most of these sources are national, but some originate from the UK, USA, Sweden and Israel; for instance, an American site, the Council of Conservative American Citizens (http://conservative-headlines.com), is linked to on two occasions (although one of these posts with hyperlink has since disappeared).

The contents of many of the posts and links reflect the categorizations constructed in the verbal rhetoric of the DDL, but greater generalization is apparent. There are news stories of criminality carried out by youths of "middle Eastern" appearance in Denmark, of terrorism (in Paris and Copenhagen) and videos about violent pro-Islam demonstrations in the UK and the continued rise of the Muslim population in the UK. Through such posts and links, a generalized Muslim other is being solidly anchored as threat and danger, not just in Denmark but wider afield. Other links deal with stories of "establishment" subservience to Islam, be this the police in the Netherlands allowing policing of local areas by Muslim groups, Facebook censorship of pictures of the prophet Mohammed, Swedish transport authorities forbidding a number plate containing the numeral 786, which is said to be the numerical equivalent of the opening phrase of the Quran. Such links serve to enhance the general threat to democracy by perceived wrong-headed approaches and, hence, the need for an active democratic movement, such as the DDL.

Some posts and links deal with topics that are not in focus in the DDL's Facebook presentation, particularly immigration and diversity more generally. These reveal the DDL's dis-identification with immigration and diversity through, for instance, stories of ungrateful asylum seekers in Sweden and Denmark and invasion of Europe by immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa. What also is apparent is sympathy for white supremacism.

I will focus on two posts with international dimensions to illustrate the intertextual practices of the DDL and their function in identity construction. The first example links to a story from *Den Korte Avis* about vandalism in Toulouse, France, where a court building was deliberately flooded and graffiti, stating that "the prophet will judge you", was painted on the walls (Figure 1). This event is claimed to have received very little media coverage in France.

The Danish Defence League
17. marts ·

Kaotiske tilstande i Frankrig - Tavse massemedier.

"Ødelæggelserne er så voldsomme, at det i sig selv burde give stor omtale. Dertil kommer at der var malet slagord, der kunne tyde på, at gerningsmændene er islamister.

Alligevel har der stort set ingen omtale været af sagen. Kun nogle få artikler i lokale aviser. Ellers er den blevet mørkelagt af både myndigheder og medier. "

Retsbygningen blev totalt raseret af voldsmænd – på væggene stod skrevet: "Profeten vil dømme...

Retsbygningen blev totalt raseret af voldsmænd – på væggene stod skrevet: "Profeten vil dømme dig" 17. Mar 2015 Karen Jespersen og Ralf Pittelkow...

DENKORTEAVIS.DK

Synes godt om · Kommenter · Del

Figure 1 DDL post on vandalism in France with hyperlink

The DDL introduce the link primarily by quoting from the news article in *Den Korte Avis*, but they give their own 'headline': Kaotiske tilstande i Frankrig – Tavse massemedier (Chaotic conditions in France

– Silent mass media). This highlighting of the lack of media coverage follows the headline of the French online newspaper *Atlantico.fr*, which is one of the sources of the story and which frames it as "L'étrange blackout sur le saccage du…" (The strange blackout of the devastation of the..). I have already noted the DDL's othering of establishment media and public authorities as one-sided and subservient to Islam. This post has similar functions, while simultaneously serving to anchor "islamister" (Islamists) as criminals, albeit quoting the hedged language of *Den Korte Avis*: The nature of the slogans on the walls "could indicate that the attackers were Islamists". It should be noted that none of the French sources from which the story derives explicitly mention Islamic groups.

The second example has also connections to France but relates to race (Figure 2) and displays a white genocide poster comparing photographs of the French national soccer teams in 1960 and 2015. Although no hyperlink is given, this poster is from Europa Rising, which describes itself as a political party on its Facebook page, but seems to be the product of a lone blogger. The poster is one of a series of generic posters where different past and present images are inserted into the same textual format along with the Europa Rising logo (a phoenix). The text includes part of a propaganda tool, known as the 'Mantra', which was written by American white nationalist and former Reagan advisor Bob Whitaker. The Mantra ends with the phrase 'anti-racist is a code word for anti-white'. This slogan has been picked up by supporters of the idea of white genocide and is to be found in varied, worldwide contexts online. Together, the use and textual framing of this poster by the DDL suggests an alignment with white nationalist ideology, which is anti-immigration, anti-multiculturalism and anti-intermarriage. The poster is presented by the DDL with a question: "Why support France in 2015 if you are French, when you can support Nigeria instead". Such a rhetorical question racializes both international soccer and citizenship and conflicts with the DDL's official position of being open, inclusive and non-racist. In contention, of course, is the very notion of racism itself and hence categorizations such as racist vs. non-racist. I will not, however, delve into the complexities of this particular discussion here.

The Danish Defence League
30. marts ·

Hvorfor holde med Frankrig i 2015, hvis man er franskmand, når man kan holde med Nigeria istedet.

FRANCE 1980   FRANCE 2015

MASSIVE NON-WHITE IMMIGRATION + FORCED «DIVERSITY» + 24/7 «ASSIMILATION» APOLOGY (INTERMARIAGE WITH NON-WHITES) IS
WHITE GENOCIDE
«ANTI-RACIST» IS A CODE WORD FOR ANTI-WHITE

Synes godt om · Kommenter · Del

Figure 2 DDL post on white genocide (no hyperlink)

5. Discussion

The aim of this contribution is to consider the impact of the international in the categorization processes of the DDL on their Facebook pages. Examining their group presentation reveals a close adherence to the identity construction strategies of the EDL, but intertextual practices permit a differing emphasis on certain issues, such as the preservation of the national and threats to democracy by the establishment. Choices of posts and hyperlinks are independent of the EDL and both support the othering processes apparent in the official presentation, and widen the field to include the more generalized immigrant and non-white. There is evidence of both meanings of alterity (unfamiliarity and exclusion, cf. Philogène 2007 above): A national anchoring of a subcategory of Muslims as 'Danish Muslims' is a means of making this group more familiar while radical groups are excluded. Yet, there is slippage in these categories and the activities of the DDL on its Facebook timeline would suggest that the sense

of alterity that predominates is that of not belonging, be this in Denmark, Europe or USA. The rhetoric of inclusion, then, is best understood from the perspective of the 'self', i.e. the DDL, who use it to construct an identity that is open and democratic.

Sjørslev (2004) argues that Danish society is particularly liable to exclusion paradoxically because of its emphasis on inclusion. Adopting Baumann's (2004) structural model of alterity (see above), she suggests that a widespread grammar of othering in Denmark is that of encompassment. This grammar is hierarchical and is inclusive of the 'some' who are seen at a general level to be part of the ingroup by that ingroup; in other words the power to include rests with the ingroup itself. However, this "prevalent grammar of encompassment implies that all forms of alterity that cannot be encompassed are regarded as a threat" and, hence, since inclusion is interpreted through the cultural lens of consensus and sameness, diversity by default can be an excluding factor (Sjørslev 2004:90). As a 'defence' organization, the DDL needs to sustain the idea of threat and, in the Danish context, an emphasis on the irreconcilable difference of the (radical) Muslim, or more generalized immigrant, 'other' will serve the purpose of permanent non-encompassment or non-belonging. Through their multimodal discourse, the DDL creates an impermeable barrier between 'us' and 'them', an "antagonistic frontier" in the sense of Laclau & Mouffe (1985) where "signifiers inside the discourse" are established as "equivalent in regard to their common opposition to the common enemy, represented by the excluded chain of signifiers" (Renner & Spencer 2013:480). In other words, DDL construct their identity as democratic, humane, tolerant, civilized etc., signifiers (i.e. words, symbols, images) which are not found in their discourse about especially the Islamic 'other'.

The need for defence is also predicated on an 'othering' of the establishment in terms of its misguided policies and doubtful legitimacy as the voice of the people. As I have already noted, this anti-elitism is characteristic of populism and one of its functions, according to Betz (2005:76), is to "undermine and discredit issues and projects generally identified with the cultural and political establishment, such as immigration, multiculturalism, affirmative action and 'political correctness' in general". The DDL heightens the threat of the Muslim/immigrant 'other' through a focus on the inadequacies of the establishment in this regard, not just in Denmark but elsewhere in Europe. Again the othering is strategic, creating strangeness around the values of the establishment so as to emphasize the need for a defence of the 'real' values of the people.

It is worth considering the relationship of the DDL's categorization processes and anchoring of the 'other' to affective factors. Given the context of threat and defence, a prevalent emotion seems to be fear. Certainly, cultural nativism, which is argued to underlie the stance of many on the extreme right in Europe, deals with the perceived dangers to national and European identity from Islam (Betz 2005; Mudde 2012). The DDL's use of international events likewise plays on fear and insecurity by enhancing the extent of the threat. There are also other emotions in play; for instance, there is a degree of contempt for the 'other' as evidenced by the post dealing with white genocide, and there is also mistrust of the establishment in Denmark and elsewhere. Of course, the DDL does not present itself as fearful or insecure; its social identity is anchored in the familiar notion of an active resistance movement where determination, confidence, pride, courage and aggression are required. The logo of the organization encapsulates these emotions: two soaring birds of prey against the background of the Danish flag and the Latin adage 'si vis pacem para bellum', the motto of a range of military entities, including the British Royal Navy. In a study of extra-parliamentary extreme right-wing groups in Denmark and Sweden (not including the defence leagues), Askanius & Mylonas (2015:67) comment on affective dimensions, observing that such groups have used the political and economic crises in Europe as an "opportunity for preying on sentiments of instability and insecurity in the population" while simultaneously exploiting the idea of crisis as a means of inspiration and hope for their own projects.

A final point to highlight is the role of multilingualism in the DDL's identity construction processes. Receptive skills in English and Swedish are assumed in relation to posts and hyperlinks and someone, from the organization or with sympathies towards it, has translated the original EDL documents to Danish. The availability of automatic translation on Facebook also supports the use of languages other than Danish. Clearly, in Denmark, multilingual skills are an asset if international sources are to be exploited, particularly in relation to hyperlinks. The embedded nature of hyperlinks also allows the interested user to access the original sources, as in the case of the news story from Toulouse. That multilingualism is not a predominant feature of the Facebook timeline of the EDL is of little surprise in the British context.

6. Conclusion

As this is preliminary research, only very limited conclusions can be drawn. The DDL clearly uses social media to advance its cause through strategic anchoring of itself and its primary 'others', partly through a recontextualized translation of the discourse of the EDL and an appeal to the international in its posts and hyperlinks. Transnational space offers opportunities for the DDL to cherry-pick the information to be disseminated on its Facebook timeline and to establish symbolic connections with a range of national and international online media and groups. Not all of these can be classified as extremist and/or right-wing. The DDL happily weaves hyperlinks to the *Washington Post* or the BBC together with links to the Council of Conservative American Citizens or Bare Naked Islam, all for the purposes of propaganda-making. This is not an organization that is unskilled in communication or indeed languages. There is little evidence to suggest that the DDL sees the transnational or the international as an integral element in its own group identity; rather it anchors itself firmly in the national and the nationalist. A European Defence League does exist on Facebook, describing itself as a 'fan page' for all the European defence leagues and a 'news and information hub'.[4] This is administered by the EDL, but is not a transnational organization in structural terms, at least as yet.

Extreme right-wing, non-parliamentary groups are on the rise in Europe and their habitat is primarily cyberspace. While their support base varies and in some cases is quite limited, I would nonetheless agree with Askanius & Mylonas (2015:68) that it "is crucial to uncover and draw attention to what is going on in these obscure corners of the Internet".

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[4]   *<www.facebook.com/EuropeanDefenceLeague>*

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