

## 5 The politics of paradox

### Kierkegaardian theology and national conservatism in Denmark

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In the autumn of 2010, an article with the headline ‘DF [*Dansk Folkeparti*, Danish Peoples’ Party]: The Concept of *Menneskesyn* [theory of humanity] Does Not Exist’ was printed in the Danish centre-left newspaper *Politiken*. The piece begins with the journalist describing how one councillor for the Criminal Justice Department, a Louise Aagard Larsen, had visited a prison. Here, an inmate had asked her to explain the Danish Peoples’ Party’s *menneskesyn* (lit. ‘vision of humanity’, meaning general theory of humanity, including notions of whether humans are good or bad, and how they should treat each other). Realizing that she did not know how to answer, Ms Larsen sent an email to the press office of the Peoples’ Party. ‘The reply surprised her’, explains the journalist, and then cites the email that Ms Larsen received from Kenneth Kristensen Berth, who presented himself as ‘an MA in sociology and history’, and as someone speaking on behalf of the press office of the Peoples’ Party (Berth later ran for parliament and is now a Danish MP for the Peoples’ Party):

The concept *menneskesyn* has been invented for the occasion to criticise the Peoples’ Party for our position regarding foreigners and immigrants. The concept has been launched by the left and it is totally devoid of meaning, so one cannot answer your question.

After having noted Ms Larsen’s reaction (‘It is a totally inept reply. He should know better with an education like that, and he ought to know that I know better.’), in what remains of the article the journalist reports back from an interview that she must have carried out with Mr Berth following his email exchange with Ms Larsen. ‘I do not have any *menneskesyn*. I don’t know what it means. I never understood that concept and I do not think that it exists as a concept’, the journalist cites Mr Berth as telling her, before giving back the word to him for a departing comment:

I replied to the question as a professional working for the Danish Peoples’ Party’s press office, and not a person who has studied sociology at the University of Copenhagen, for I could easily begin outlining all sorts of philosophical and history of ideas considerations.

What are we, as anthropologists, to do with potential ethnographic data such as the above? It seems evident to me that we need to treat them with the same strategic curiosity and the same heuristic respect that anthropologists try to accord to all other objects of investigation. In short, we need to take seriously the notion that there is no such thing as a concept of humanity (*menneskesyn*) ethnographically. This is precisely what I shall attempt to do in this chapter. Rather than simply trying to situate Mr Berth (who was elected to parliament in the June 2015 election) and other politicians from the Danish Peoples' Party (henceforth DF) in Europe's wider national-conservative political landscape (although this would be a worthwhile project too), I wish to unearth a 'deeper' historical genealogy (in the Foucaultian sense) of some of Dansk Folkeparti's most basic but tacit values. I shall do this by tracing certain 'theo-logics' (to coin a term) deployed by DF politicians like Mr Berth back to *Tidehverv*: a Danish Lutheran theological movement, which, although it has never had more than a few hundred members and no organization beyond a journal and an annual meeting, has had an extraordinary impact on not just Danish theology but also politics over the last century.

In the proposal for the research project from which this chapter (and the present book as a whole) is one among several outputs, my own sub-project was entitled 'Faith as Self-distortion: Concepts of Personhood and Agency in a Danish Protestant Movement'. Accordingly, as also outlined in the original proposal, the objective of my subproject was to 'explore the distortion between persons' intentions and actions in the Kierkegaard-inspired theological discourse of the Danish Protestant movement *Tidehverv*, with a view to contextualizing this theological movement and its ideas in the anthropology of Christianity'. In many ways, this captures what I ended up doing once my investigations took off. Certainly, that was how I described my project to my *Tidehverv* interlocutors when they, bewildered, amused and sometimes anxious about the presence of an anthropologist at their midst, asked me about my motivations for being there; namely, to conduct an ethnographic study of what it concretely means to be living Kierkegaard's theology in practice.<sup>1</sup>

And indeed, as I wish to demonstrate in this chapter, *Tidehverv* in many ways turned out to be an apposite ethnographic arena for an anthropological study of 'distortion', as this phenomenon and concept is explored in some of its varieties in the different contributions to the present book. As we shall see, if 'optimal distortion' in anthropological terms can be defined as a situation or a context in which certain kinds of 'actions turn out to be successful *because* their consequences are decoupled from what motivated them in particular ways and degrees' (Nielsen and Pedersen 2012, and Chapter 9 this volume), then this almost sounds like a blueprint for the complex and rather peculiar nature of Christian faith and subjectivity from a *Tidehverv* perspective, especially certain ethical-cum-political contradictions and paradoxes arising from subscribing to this explicitly Kierkegaardian form of Lutheran Protestantism. More precisely, if 'optimal distortion' can be described in

theoretical terms as ‘that which happens when a gap between the cause of an action and its effects is stretched out to such an extent and in such a way that, retrospectively, this disfiguration of agency emerges as not just a good, but also as a necessary thing’ (Nielsen and Pedersen 2012, and Chapter 9 this volume), this rather neatly seems to convey the extremely severe *limitations* yet at the same time also extremely strict *obligations* imposed on human volition according to the fundamentalist existentialist theo-logic.

Nevertheless, the fact is that the concept of ‘distortion’ also imposes certain constraints on my analysis of the ethnographic case of Tidehverv and therefore can only take an anthropological understanding of their theological-cum-political ideas and practices some of the way. For one thing, it is unlikely that my interlocutors, along with people associated with and sympathetic to Tidehverv, would be sympathetic towards any attempt to theorize their ideas and practices as modes of ‘distortion’ (let alone ‘optimal distortion’). On the contrary, given how serious they consider the Tidehverv agenda to be and how much energy they invest in it, they most likely would resist such a description vehemently and quite possibly take offence from it. Just as importantly, when commencing my project it quickly became clear to me that another concept – one that shares a number of semantic overlaps with ‘distortion’ but also differs from it in important ways – offered a better candidate for capturing the central Tidehverv matter of concern (*anliggende*) that was of particular interest to me. As an added and not insignificant benefit in light of my earlier described ambition to take the Tidehverv movement and its adherents seriously, this is a concept that is not just used on a regular basis by Tidehverv protagonists in both speech and writing, but one that also figures prominently in Kierkegaard’s theological and philosophical project, namely paradox.

Paradox, it is widely agreed among Kierkegaard scholars (Evans 1989; Melbjerg 1990; Rapport 2002), lies at the heart of his theological and philosophical project. Without paradox by an always-suffering subject, there would be no faith, for being Christian requires ‘acceptance of the “absolute paradox” of God becoming incarnate as a man. Achieving such faith requires a terrifying inward struggle’ (Evans 1989: 348). In that sense, the relationship between God and his subjects can indeed be described ‘as a peculiar connectedness, which is not causal in any linear or direct way’ (Nielsen and Pedersen, Chapter 9 this volume). And as such, optimal distortion – or better, in keeping with Kierkegaard and his Tidehverv admirers, *optimal paradox* – lies at the heart of Christian faith. Without the continual experience of paradox, and the doubt, fear and uncertainty that come with it, it would be *too easy* to be faithful, as if being a Christian were something you could just decide to be at your own will, and not something that can only *happen to you*, especially during those moments when you (and others) are least expecting you to be a subject of, and to, God. Nowhere was this clash between what, seen from the Tidehverv perspective,

might seem and what actually is Christian faith and ethics played out more vividly than in a recent controversy between two Danish public figures, who deem themselves a progressive and a national-conservative, respectively.

### ‘The Syrian refugee is not my neighbour’

In October 2015, at the height of the so-called European refugee crisis, a heated discussion took place in a live studio on Danish national TV between two well-known public figures: Lisbeth Zornig Andersen (an award-winning social worker who has devoted her life to helping people from social backgrounds as marginalized as her own), and Marie Krarup (MP for DF, Tidehverv member, and daughter of Søren Krarup, former pastor and MP, and widely recognized as the leader of the national conservative right). At issue was the fact that Zornig Andersen, along with other Danes (ranging from left-wing activists, to urban youth from immigrant backgrounds, to actors and intellectuals), had assisted foreigners crossing the border to Sweden, the preferred destination for many refugees/migrants at the time. In keeping with DF’s stance towards what they refer to as ‘the mass migration’ (*folkevandringen*), Krarup criticized Zornig Andersen on two counts. Not only were she and other ‘people smugglers’ breaking the law by engaging in ‘trafficking’ (indeed, Zornig Andersen was later charged and convicted with ‘people smuggling’, which in turn sparked off a crowd-funding initiative to pay her fine), she was also, fumed Krarup, putting the security of the Danish nation and its people at risk by ‘helping what could be future terrorists’ to enter the country.

Still, neither of these two aspects of Zornig Andersen’s intervention was the object of the most passionate scorn from Krarup. Instead, what really infuriated her and other right-wing Christian commentators in arms was the fact that Zornig Andersen and some other ‘people smugglers’ were justifying their actions on Christian grounds. Thus, the most heated (and for present purposes revealing) point in the debate between the two women happened when Zornig Andersen tried to rebuff Krarup’s critique by posing a counter-question that went, essentially, as follows: How can someone like you, coming from a Christian background, not understand and appreciate my actions? After all, is that not what Christian love (*næstekærlighed*; lit. ‘neighbourly love’) is all about? [Interestingly, there appears to be no standard English translation of *næstekærlighed*, which has been variously – but never really satisfactory – translated as ‘charity’, ‘solidarity’ and ‘grace’]. And was that not what people were doing by going to the German border? They were not just exercising a democratic right as citizens of a progressive state but performing a *moral duty* as faithful Christians.

The intensity of Krarup’s response was almost visceral. One could literally see her face redden as she turned towards her adversary to make clear in no uncertain terms, and with a voice shivering from ill-disguised affect,

how totally and utterly wrong Zornig Andersen was about Christianity in general and about so-called Christian ethics in particular. After all, as Marie Krarup further elaborated the following days (with explicit reference to some of her father's many books), the whole point of *næstekærlighed* is that it cannot be reduced to a 'principle' or 'rule'. For the love that a Christian exercises towards his neighbour (*næsten*) is always concrete in the form of a specific encounter between two individuals. Accordingly, Christian ethics can only take the form of existential decisions, and never that of moral rules. Or, as Krarup went on to explain in a newspaper op-ed in the Christian daily *Kristeligt Dagblad*, in turn widely circulated across the Danish blogosphere, and which bore the headline 'The Syrian Refugee is not My Neighbour':

Syrian refugees and children in Africa are not my *næste*. It would be mad to demand that I must love them, for I don't know them ... People nowadays know little about Christianity. They think it is *næstekærligt* to vote for socialist parties which want to remove all borders and help the poor at the expense of the rich. I find this to be rubbish.

(*Kristeligt Dagblad* 2015; author's translation)

Later in the op-ed, Krarup explains what neighbourly love is, if none of the above. She stresses that while the injunction 'to love your neighbour is the essence of Christianity', which means that it is 'an ethical obligation for everyone to exercise care toward the human who faces you', it also the fact that this injunction 'was never aimed collectively at a group or a society'. Rather, as she puts it, '*næsten* is the person who is near to me. It is a person whom I can see and touch' (*Kristeligt Dagblad* 2015; author's translation).

Still, even this objection – that Zornig Andersen's notion of *næstekærlighed* was theologically inaccurate and politically irresponsible – does not explain the intensity of wrath evinced by Krarup on live TV (even the host, Martin Krasnik, who as we shall see later, had done his share of tough interviewing in his career, was rattled). More than anything else, it was the fact that Zornig Andersen *went public*, announcing on Facebook that she had 'helped a family of Syrian refugees with small children in need' that set her opponent's temper on fire. For in addition to all the other problems with her activism, it was this 'narcissistic tendency to flag her goodness to the world' that made Zornig Andersen's actions positively ungodly – thus Krarup argued with reference to one of her father's books (1987). Zornig Andersen was not just un-Christian but anti-Christian. Far from accepting that, like everyone else, she was a mere human (*kun et menneske*) whose predicament was to live an earthly life in 'sin and death' (*synd og død*), Zornig Andersen was guilty of the self-love that arose from elevating oneself to a moral high ground, which only God was able to occupy. In deeming her own and other 'humanists' intentions and actions 'good', Zornig Andersen disobeyed God, in Krarup's eyes; for only He knew what it meant 'to be

good' and, indeed, to be human in the first place. Which takes us back to the earlier newspaper story about Mr Berth and his problem with, if not downright contempt for, the concept of *menneskesyn*, and all that it stood for. In both cases, we are faced with the notion that any attempt to assume God's transcendental vantage point – by, say, assuming it to be possible for humans to occupy a position from which humanity could be seen as a whole (namely, *menneskesyn*) – was not just immoral but a sacrilege.

Clearly, both Krarup's unapologetically right-wing stance and the alarmist language she used to argue and defend it call to mind other conservative religious and/or political movements in Europe as well as the US. In a recent study of conservative Christians in Britain, for example, Méadhbh McIvor describes their 'worry that the human rights project elevates the fallen morality of created men and women over the limitless wisdom of their Creator God' (2016: 153) and their struggle to 'establish conservative Christians as the members of a self-identified "counterpublic", highlighting their subordinate status and "[marking themselves off]" from an allegedly dominant political elite' (2016: 154, citing Warner 2002: 19). Also, based on fieldwork among less vocally Christian and mostly working-class UKIP supporters in northern England, Cathrine Thorleifsson suggests that this party has 'captured a segment of the population's fears and insecurities about the impact of global and European integration on national identity, welfare and security – even civilization as a whole' (2016: 5). However, rather than seeking to further contextualize and interpret Marie Krarup's ideas against this resent surge of ethno-nationalism and right-wing populism across Europe (although this surely would be a worthwhile anthropological project, too), I wish here to trace certain theological and ethical logics deployed by her and other leading Danish national conservatives, including influential members of the Danish Peoples' Party, to Tidehverv – the said Danish theological grouping which, although numbering only a few hundred and with no organization beyond a journal and an annual meeting, has had such extraordinary impact on not just Danish theology but society, culture and, especially over recent decades, politics. In making this exploration, my aim is to lay the ground for what might in the future turn into a bigger comparative project on vernacular political-theology in Denmark and elsewhere in Europe.

### **Existentialist fundamentalism**

So, how does one deal ethnographically with heated political and cultural controversies such as the above, and what might they tell us about Tidehverv's theological project and its more or less tacit role in the national-conservative surge in Danish political life? Specifically, what might imbrications between theological and political matters of concern of the sort played out above tell us about the role of paradox in the Tidehverv context and beyond? To address these questions, it is useful to begin by summarizing the core

tenets of what I have elsewhere (Pedersen, forthcoming) called Tidehverv's 'existentialist fundamentalist' project.

Established in 1926 in response to an age that its four founders lamented as 'too modern to respect the elementarily human' (Bramming 1993), Tidehverv for the first few decades fought its intellectual battles mostly with other branches of the Danish church, including its original arch-enemy, the pietistic *Inner Mission*; but later also increasingly against the 'sloppy humanism' they associated with mid-20th century celebrations of the famous 19th century poet-priest, N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783–1872). However, following the Second World War and the Nazi occupation from 1939 to 1945 (during which several prominent Tidehverv members broke with their past pacifism to join the Resistance) and to an even higher degree after 2001, when its two most prominent recent leaders, Søren Krarup and his cousin, the late Jesper Langballe, were elected to parliament for the Dansk Folkeparti, Tidehverv became more explicitly and vocally political; a recognized driving force in the recent rise of national-conservative Danish intellectuals, in what they describe as the struggle (*kamp*) against atheist-socialist-humanists (*kulturradikale*), and, more recently, Islam. And so it happened that two Tidehverv priests became members of parliament and leading ideological figures for DF. This party was in many ways a de facto coalition partner in the centre-right government that ruled Denmark from 2001 to 2011, and it is currently Denmark's second biggest party after having secured 21 per cent of the vote in the 2015 parliamentary elections. Indeed, the year 2001 is widely recognized to mark a rupture (or could one say, a 'sea-change') in modern Danish political history and cultural politics more generally, demarcating what Søren Krarup likes to describe as the 'system change' (*systemsiftet*) from '150 years of humanist hegemony' to a 'natural national-conservative' Danish nation, society and culture.

Over the years a number of attempts have been made by journalists, commentators and scholars to explain how Dansk Folkeparti's core political values reference Tidehverv's theological values, or vice versa (e.g. Bramming 1993; Grosbøll 2007; Hervik 2011). Yet, as many Tidehverv adherents also find it important to emphasize, there have never been any formal links between Tidehverv and any political party (indeed, priests who have partaken in or flirted with Tidehverv have been associated with social democratic and in one case even radical leftish attitudes and positions; see Pedersen forthcoming). Still, as a middle-aged pastor tersely observed during a Tidehverv gathering, 'it is unlikely that you will find anyone here who voted for the left side in the recent election!' Indeed, as Søren Krarup and other Tidehverv figures (including his daughters Agnete Raahauge and Marie Krarup) like to stress, Tidehverv and DF's values are 'genuinely' (*ægte*) conservative as opposed to the 'so-called Conservative Party'. In the words of Raahauge, who recently took over the role as editor-in-chief of Tidehverv's journal from her father:

From its inception, the objective of Tidehverv (...) has been to speak against any Christian as well humanist celebration and belief in human progress: that humans through Christian influence, humanist education, and psychological-scientific treatment can be elevated to a point above sinfulness and concrete reality.

(2013)

Leaving aside various internal divisions (Bramming 1993; Pedersen, forthcoming), Tidehverv has always promulgated an explicitly Kierkegaardian form of Protestantism, positioned at right angles to what in many other countries would be considered to the two defining poles of conservative and liberal Christianity (see e.g. Harding 2011). As dogged and ‘hard-core’ Lutherans whose founders were inspired by the influential early 20th century dialectical or ‘neo-orthodox’ German theologians Karl Barth and Martin Bultman, the Tidehverv pastors preach to their parishioners and amongst themselves that the genuine Christian believer (*den sande Kristne troende*) must always strive to be a ‘full human being’ (*et helt menneske*). In explicit contrast to various pietistic forms of Protestantism that gained much traction in Denmark and elsewhere in Northern Europe before the First World War (and which over recent decades has become so popular in the US and elsewhere), this entails accepting, if not rejoicing in, the fact that all human beings are inherently weak and faulty individuals whose tragic predicament – yet at the same time only hope of redemption – it is to live an earthly life in perfect accordance with the post-paradisiac condition of ‘sin and death’ (*synd og død*).

It is here that Tidehverv’s self-acclaimed ‘reactionary’ and ‘conservative’ stance resides: since human existence (including the obligation, or could we say the right, to sin) is given as a gift by God, it is futile to imagine (let alone to try) making a better world inhabited by tolerant and enlightened beings imbued with universal rights. In fact, any belief in or action towards individual – or worse still, societal – betterment or improvement, be it mental or bodily, amounts to a sacrilege. For in doing so the moralists (*moralisterne*) allow themselves the unwarranted freedom to assume an elevated vantage point above their peers, and with that a superior capacity for passing judgements on their thoughts and deeds – that can and should only be entertained by God. This is why Tidehverv adherents, often to the surprise of their critics, systematically classify and criticize ‘utopian socialists’ and ‘radical Islamists’ to be one of a kind. For the Krarup family and their peers, both humanism and Islam represent sinful projects in which man disobeys God by infringing on His territory, by either (in the humanist and modernist Enlightenment project) announcing His death and replacing Him with human rights, or by formulating and implementing unchanging laws for how to please Allah and thus assuming to know His will. Or in Bramming’s words:

Sin is equivalent to self-inflation, because what I/we/the party wish to accomplish for the whole world is fundamentally equal to moral striving (...) Sin is not ignorance of, but disobedience and spite towards God. The evil is disobedience too even though in our eyes it manifests as something good.

(1999: 51)

Such, I suggest, was the theological logic (or ‘theo-logic’) that allowed Marie Krarup, with reference to her father (and, more generally Tidehverv, at whose annual meetings she is a regular attendant), to claim that ‘the Syrian refugee was not her neighbour’. For in making this statement Krarup was only being faithful, or at least doing her best to remain faithful, to the abiding ethical principle that may provocatively, but in my view nevertheless accurately, be summed up as ‘the injunction never to be pious’; at least as long as being ‘pious’ (*from*) means the reduction of the singular decisions (*afgørelser*) of human existence to moral rules and religious laws. Indeed, this is Tidehverv’s most abiding theological-cum-political concern: they are preaching, and practising, an ethics of anti-piety, which is all about being good at being a human, as opposed to being a good human (to paraphrase Herzfeld 1985). So goes the central theological tenet of what I like to call ‘existentialist fundamentalism’ (Pedersen, forthcoming) and which commentators of Tidehverv’s dialectical theology have variously referred to as ‘Lutheran Fundamentalism’, ‘neo-orthodox Protestantism’ or ‘theology of crisis’ (Taubes 1954). Here is the quintessentially Kierkegaardian (and thus anti-Hegelian) notion that being a faithful Christian is not a function of the degree to which one says or thinks (let alone feels) that one ‘believes in’ (*tror på*) God, or how much one imposes and adheres to laws for how to serve him. On the contrary, in order to be a proper ‘knight of faith’, to use Kierkegaard’s expression, one must constantly confront and tarry with the existential paradoxes arising from living the life of a full human being (*et helt menneske*) by submitting oneself to what one *is*, as opposed to what others – be they social workers or Salafist imams – dictate that one *should* be. Or, as Kaj Munk, a famous Danish priest and author who was assassinated by the Gestapo in 1944, once characterized the Tidehverv attitude to human life: ‘God is all; I know nothing; and you are an idiot!’

But what are the concrete implications, including the concrete political ramifications, of this existentialist fundamentalism? It is one thing to brand oneself as someone who is against ‘human rights’ and other purported ‘humanist abstractions’ as a matter of theological faith, but quite another actually to practise Kierkegaard’s and Tidehverv’s founding fathers’ ideas and injunctions in, say, the national parliament. To explore this question, I shall now turn to another ongoing political controversy revolving around key figures from Tidehverv and the Danish Peoples’ Party, namely the question of the naturalization of foreign nationals.

**[Rules of] Law**

In December 2014, just before the closing of the Danish *Folketing* for Christmas, the seventeen members of the Committee for Naturalization (*Indfødsretsudvalget*) met to discuss and vote on the naturalization of foreign nationals, based on legislation that twice every year is put forward to this parliamentary committee after having been processed by the Ministry of Justice (that autumn, the list of pre-approved aliens numbered 1109 grown-ups and approximately 481 children). In keeping with what had almost become an annual tradition, Dansk Folkeparti, whose members of *Indfødsretsudvalget* at this point were Marie Krarup and Christian Langballe (the son of the late Jesper Langballe, who alongside his cousin Søren Krarup was a DF MP from 2011 to 2012) voted against the proposed legislation. They did so on the grounds that, as stated in the official statement (*betænkning*) issued by the Committee for Naturalization on December 5:

The members of the committee from Dansk Folkeparti consider it highly problematic that by far the majority of the people granted citizenship from this legislation originate from non-Western, Muslim countries. The same goes for the massive immigration from the same countries which has already taken place over the years. This entails significant demographic displacements to the effect that the Danish population is being replaced, and it is worrisome that parallel communities [*parallel-samfund*] in which fundamentalist Islam and sharia dominate the agenda have appeared in Denmark. DF feels that the immigration from non-Western, Muslim countries must be reduced, just as the granting of new citizenships must be reduced. For instance, DF finds it appalling that 177 Afghans and 245 Iraqis are granted citizenship. They ought to be sent home to help rebuild their respective countries. On these grounds, DF votes against the legislation.<sup>2</sup>

To an even higher degree than usual, Dansk Folkeparti's no-vote (or more precisely its *rationale* for doing so – after all, the radical left-wing party Enhedslisten also voted against this specific legislation (albeit for very different and in their own terms more progressive reasons) – caused a significant stir in the media and blogosphere, spanning from denunciations in all major newspaper editorials to more or less enthusiastic support from various conservative bloggers. One critique was made by Jacob Mchangama, high-profile legal director of CEPOS, a libertarian think-tank. In a posting on his blog *Retsstaten* ('Rule of Law') in *Berlingske* (a centre-right newspaper), Mchangama rhetorically asked 'Should citizenship depend on religious affiliation?' Acknowledging that receiving Danish citizenship is indeed not a human right, Mchangama criticized the Peoples' Party for proposing to make access to citizenship dependent on religious or cultural background. After all, as the legal director went on to observe:

[Such as policy is] clearly incompatible with the rules of law [*lighed for loven*], which is a core principle in a liberal democracy [*en liberal retsstat*] ... The proposed principle is in practice the same as saying that one cannot be Danish and Muslim at the same time ... [T]his principle would be at odds with several conventions of human rights ... [What is more,] also the Danish constitution does not allow for citizens' status to depend on religion or ethnic origin.

For the same reason, Mchangama concluded his *Berlingske* blog post by saying he would like to believe that:

we are never going to find ourselves in a situation where the High Court of Justice must decide on whether we in Denmark will allow for a version of religious apartheid of the same sort that opponents of Islamic fundamentalism justifiably criticize Islamists and many Muslim countries for.

(*Berlingske* 21 December 2013; author's translation)

A little over a week later, Søren Krarup, himself a former member of the Committee for Naturalization, published a thinly disguised rebuttal of Mchangama in *Berlingske*. Beginning by noting how pleased he was that his former peers in parliament had decided to vote against the new legislation, Krarup then went on to defend the charge of discrimination that had been hurled at the Peoples' Party from Mchangama and other commentators. Yes, Krarup happily admitted,

[to] distinguish [*sondre*] between Western and non-Western immigration ... is one's job as a politician working on naturalization. To discriminate means to *sondre*, and it is the job of the Danish government and parliament to distinguish between those who are Danish – that is, who are naturalized Danes – and those, who are not.

And indeed, Krarup then also acknowledged, that

when one becomes a Danish citizen, the law applies equally to one as it does with others [*er man lige for loven*]. But not before (...). If one is not a naturalized Dane, one does thus not have equal legal status with others, for it is only Danish law that makes citizens equal. There is and should be a difference between Western and non-Western, and Danish and non-Danish, status.

Accordingly, as Krarup goes on to conclude, it may well be that from the perspective of 'abstract and otherworldly human rights', someone like Mchangama 'will claim that one cannot treat Muslims and non-Muslims

differently'. But, Krarup then concludes, the fact is that this is just what 'one can, because human rights are religion, not law; abstraction, not Danish law'. In other words:

If a Muslim has become a Danish citizen, he has equal legal status with all other Danish citizens. But this equality is conditional upon naturalization and therefore upon the Danish law, which is all. Everything else is an abstraction and a dissolution of Danish rule of law – indeed, of Denmark.

(*Berlingske* 1 January 2014; author's translation)

We see here another example of how, due I would argue largely to the influential role played by Tidehverv adherents in the Danish Peoples' Party over recent decades, a distinctly Kierkegaardian flavour can be detected within certain quarters of contemporary Danish political discourse. For is that not what Søren Krarup and (more indirectly) his nephew Christian Langballe did above: take Tidehverv's existentialist fundamentalism to its political-theological conclusion? Arguably, the reason why both Christian Langballe and Søren Krarup were able to insist that the rule of law only applies to a certain class of people, namely (native or naturalized) citizens, was that, for them and their peers, the very notion that there is a 'rule of law' and an objective legal-cum-moral order/system more generally is the product of a unwarranted leap in abstraction typical for the self-inflated and ungodly mind-sets of socialist/Islamist ideologists. Within the realm of human beings, there can be no such thing as human rights or rules of law, for only God resides over, and has capacity to know, what the true Law is and thus to pass fair judgement in accordance with this transcendental vantage point. Or as Søren Krarup himself puts it in an essay on Kierkegaard in the book *Conservative Essays* (1987):

[I]t is the predicament of the politician to always be called upon as God's servant [*altid under fordring ved at være kaldet som Guds tjener*], so all human beings are equal when it comes to decisive matters [*det afgørende*]; which is why no human can elevate himself above his peers and make himself to their ultimate and just judge [*bøddel*]. Since there is a God, there is sin, and because God is the fundamental condition [*grundbestemmelse*], each and every human being, the king included, is a weak and fragile being; which is why the king's power endows him with responsibility and not deified status, in the same way as the basis of politics is comprised of fallible and frail humanity, where everything takes the form of natural and historical order, and where absolute leaps and holy revolutions are another word for self-deification and demonism.

(Krarup 1987: 18–19; author's translation)

No one who exists can be objective, for only God is objective:

‘There is no such a thing as a system of human existence’, Kierkegaard writes. ‘Does that imply that there is no such thing [as a system]? Far from it (...). Human existence is a system – for God; but it cannot be so for an existing soul [*eksisterende ånd*] (...). System and existence cannot be thought about together in abstract terms, because systematic thinking, in order to think about existence must think of it as elevated, that is as non-existing [*ikke værende*]’.

(Krarup 1987: 21–22; author’s translation)

This does not mean that this immanent and concrete realm of mankind necessarily takes the form of a Hobbesian chaos where everyone is left to their own devices and to fight for themselves, pitted against all others in a state of nature. Quite the contrary. As whole human beings (*hele mennesker*), who are only completed by virtue of their dual submission to God and nation, each and every citizen has an obligation to live his or her life in accordance with the conventions of the particular fellowship of neighbours to which they along with their forebears have ‘naturally’ (i.e. incrementally and historically as opposed to suddenly and discontinuously) grown into belonging; as long, that is to say, as it is remembered that this concrete ‘natural law’ has nothing to do with abstract laws of the sort espoused by human rights lawyers and other ‘EU and UN types’, and for the same reason cannot be reduced to (be reified into) rules. Indeed, it is the very concept of rules (along with its twin concept of rights) that is the problem; as opposed to a means by which all the ills, sufferings and contradictions of human existence can be overcome – as humanists, Muslims and other ‘law-religion’ worshippers think:

In the world of faith and the gospel, leaping has to be done! But in the world of earthly reality that is politics, for instance, leaping is an impossibility, since a natural development does not happen in jumps. So when political system-creators or ideological politicians nevertheless seek to leap via revolutions, then they destroy the natural development and effectively molest and tyrannize humans. In this sense Kierkegaard is politically conservative (...). But this conservative rejection of leaping within a temporal development is a consequence of the necessity of leaping in the religious or eternal world, where God cannot be known but only be an object of faith, and where no human has direct or natural access to the divine and truth. Since you must have faith in God you should not make politics into a matter of faith – that is the point.

(Krarup 1987: 12–14; author’s translation)

What Krarup tell us here, with explicit reference to Kierkegaard’s (1992) notion of the leap of faith, is that from a Christian vantage point there can be one and only one leap in the totality of all human existence, namely the

existential leap required to re-enter the kingdom of God from which Man was originally inseparable but was then evicted and excluded from. Any other attempt to multiply and therefore also relativize and render more immanent this primordial fall by way of leaps into different revolutionary ruptures or progressive reforms, with associated universal rights and general rules, are not just utopian and thus destined to go wrong, but, due to the demonic violence exercised through such abstractions, downright totalitarian:

Søren Kierkegaard is pre-eminently anti-totalitarian since his life from its beginning to its end revolved around maintaining the totality of God's reign and possibility, where Man is as a sinner facing God but a single individual defined by his vocation and background [*hin enkelte i kald og stand*] (...), whose existence is given by earth and temporality, and who is thus incapable of creating a totalitarian paradise in which perfection, truth and classless human happiness shall rule inhibited and eternally.

(Krarup 1987: 27; author's translation)

We can now recognize the distinctly secular (in Talal Asad's terms, 1993) rationale behind Marie Krarup's dismissal of Zornig-Andersen's critique of her lacking *næstekærlighed* and, by implication, Christian faith. For it should now be clear that from the neo-orthodox Lutheran or existentialist fundamentalist perspective, the daily struggle of the truly faithful to obey God boils down to the moral injunction to 'sin boldly (*synd[e] tappert*) – as the telling title of another of Søren Krarup's books puts it (1990). For the same reason, what to Zornig Andersen and other left-leaning/liberal Danes look like heartless egoism and intolerant nativism fundamentally at odds with the Christian message of neighbourly love, in Tidehverv's own terms is in fact a mark of genuine Christendom and a recognition of the imperfection, ignorance and uncertainty that follow from the predicament of being human, all too human. According to Søren Krarup and his Tidehverv peers (including, as we have seen, his MP daughter Marie Krarup and his MP nephew Christian Langballe), to refuse to accept the dominant humanistic conventions of Danish and European public discourse is precisely an indication of *superior* faith and thus also of personal integrity. After all, only the genuine 'knight of faith' has the ability (*evnen*), the guts (*modet*) and the character (*karakteren*) required relentlessly to pursue the challenging (since deeply unpopular) task of *never being pious*.

But this still leaves us with what to me and several Danish intellectuals and commentators appears to be a core contradiction that goes right to the heart of current (but not necessarily past) Tidehverv's theological-cum-political project. I am referring to the problem of 'The Danish people' (*det danske folk*). For surely, as I keep on asking my Tidehverv interlocutors during interviews and other conversations with them, it does not seem to make

much sense to speak of ‘The Danish people’ or indeed other non-concrete generalizations – such as, for instance, ‘Muslims’ or for that matter ‘socialists’ – from the doggedly anti-Hegelian and intrinsically Kierkegaardian perspective entertained by the four Tidehverv founders and many of their contemporary peers? After all, as I then sometimes go on to ask, didn’t Kierkegaard himself stress ‘Every effort that tends toward the establishment of a Christian State, a Christian people, is *eo ipso* un-Christian, anti-Christian’ (cited in Backhouse 2011: i)?<sup>3</sup> Surely, one cannot help wondering, to speak of ‘The Danish people’ (or any other social, cultural or religious entity or grouping which transcends the purportedly concrete realm inhabited by individuals, family and ‘neighbours’) would seem to be committing ‘a violence of abstraction’ (paraphrase Comaroff and Comaroff 1999) from a Kierkegaardian vantage point, which is not just wrong, but, *eo ipso*, an act of disobedience towards God? If ‘human rights’ and ‘the rule of law’ from a Tidehverv perspective are breaches of the arrangement established between God and man after the Fall, why are national conservative notions like ‘The Danish people’ or ‘The tradition’ not guilty of the same charge – why is the notion of ‘Denmark’ itself not the product of a heathen and totalitarian abstraction that has been violently imposed on a concrete and Christian reality comprised by the multifarious imponderabilia and innumerable contractions of an human existence that is all too human? As I am going to show in the next section, this is where the question of paradox takes centre stage in the present analysis.

### Paradox as an endpoint

For Kierkegaard, it is only through awareness, celebration and cultivation of paradox that one is fully constituted as a human subject. Accordingly, as Rapport points out, for Kierkegaard paradox is ‘part-and-parcel of the human condition, something like a guarantee or proof that the assurances gained by way of faith could not be reached by human reason or other capacity alone’ (2002: 181). Here, paradox ceases to be an epistemological problem which one should always seek to reduce to a minimum. Instead, it becomes an ethical-cum-theological imperative: to experience paradox is a Christian obligation, a prerequisite for being a true believer. The genuine ‘knight of faith’ (to rehearse another of Kierkegaard’s terms) does not just passively accept paradox as an intrinsic feature of human earthly life. No: he pursues it as an end in itself, as if he were trying to pick a fight with existence by making ‘claims, which might be read as paradoxical [but serve to] create a Christianity in which pain and pleasure are not opposites’ (Tomlinson 2014: 172). Or on Kierkegaard’s florid expression: ‘paradox is the source of the thinker’s passion, and the thinker without a paradox is like a lover without feeling: a paltry mediocrity’ (1985: 46).

This is also where another key concept of Kierkegaard’s, ‘the leap (of faith)’ takes centre stage: for, repeated momentary ‘leaps’ into the future through

inherently risky existential decisions is precisely how the Christian ‘knight of faith’ is able to perform the seemingly impossible act of ‘recollecting forward’ through ‘repetition’ (Melberg 1990; Grøn 1993/94). Or as Kristoffer Olesen-Larsen, one of the four founding fathers of Tidehverv and a respected Kierkegaard authority also within the wider Danish theological establishment, once put it:

During decisive moments of life, even the greatest human is empty-handed facing God, who requires us to decide [*stiller os i afgørelsen*]. This is a decision that is made by the single individual [*den enkelte*] (...). It is to think in contradictions [*at tænke i modsætninger*], but this thinking in contradictions does not merely have a rhetorical purpose; on the contrary it is a reflection of the ambivalence of existence [*livets tvetydighed*]. Indeed, one might say that this [*thinking in contradictions*] is the essential condition of the existing human who lives on a daily basis (...). The moment that one overlooks [the] conditions pertaining to the paradox of human existence, then one obviously reaches the conclusion that ‘God is all; I am nothing; and you are an idiot!’ – being the common objection against dialectical theology. Here, eternity encompasses temporality [*evigheden opsluger timeligheden*], so to speak. Yet the intention is precisely to retain the contradictions in order for them to be a genuine reflection of the basic ambivalence of existence. The problem of existence is thus not cancelled by virtue of ‘God is all; I am nothing; and you are an idiot!’; [rather], by retaining the contradictions, *den enkelte’s* existence is precisely emphasized.

(Olesen-Larsen 1999: 88–90)

From this perspective, the aforementioned hard-nosed anti-pietistic and doggedly anti-Enlightenment attitude espoused and indeed celebrated by Tidehverv adherents emerges as a mean rather than an end in its own right: far from offering a blueprint for how to be a genuine ‘knight of faith’, the ‘God is all; I am nothing; and you are an idiot!’ emerges as an apt (but still fundamentally inadequate) depiction of what living a life faithful to the ethics of anti-piety looks like *from the outside*. Thus understood, the unusually direct, harsh, if not rude straight-talking (*ligefremme tale*) for which the Krarup clan and their peers (to their delight!) have become so (in)famous in Danish theological circles and public life more generally, are not to be understood as theological, ethical and political endpoints within the fundamentalist existentialist cosmos. Rather, for the genuine ‘knight of faith’, this *frimodighed* (‘free daring’) represents a necessary launch pad for a radical leaping into the doubts of Christian faith – and associated paradoxes of human freedom, including doubt about who God is and how to reach Him. Basically, one recognizes here the contours of a radically doubting (for only thereby radically submitting to God’s will) fundamentalist existentialist subject, who is imbued with no moral or theological (let alone epistemological or political) certainty other

than the reality of doubt itself. As was Kierkegaard, this subject can never be certain (that would be a sacrilege), but must bravely (or *frimodigt*) face the paradoxes of being forever suspended between time and eternity, between the concrete immanence of mankind and the abstract transcendence of God. We are here reminded of what Karl Barth, father of dialectical theology and one of the early Tidehverv heroes, called the ‘aristocracy of the spirit’. From this perspective, which in many ways captures the legacy of Olesen-Larsen in Tidehverv, ‘only the masses need “piety”, “religion” and “churches”. The “free spirits” have left behind all realms of “religion, church, Judaism, Christianity, morals and all idealisms” (...) in a kind of superior patience’ (Taubes 1954: 236). According to this deeply Kierkegaardian notion, it is only via existentially authentic acts of repeated leaping across paradox that the ‘knight of faith’ becomes able to momentarily straddle (but never, of course, fully overcome) the absolute ontological divide between God and man, transcendence and immanence, Law and laws.

So, indeed, paradox goes to the heart of Tidehverv’s overarching fundamentalist existentialist theological project in the form of the deeply Kierkegaardian injunction that *to fully believe in God one also has to fully doubt*; and, following from this, that to be good one also has, equally paradoxically, to strive never to experience (or pronounce, perhaps even to oneself, certainly with too much conviction!) oneself as pious. And indeed, one might say that, without the continual pursuit of paradox in all walks of life, be they religious, ethical or whatever, one would be on the verge of committing a sacrilege. For this would mean that one had assumed, or imagined to have assumed, God’s divine vantage point: a vantage point which, due to its transcendental, absolute and eternal nature, is the only one comprising no paradoxes or contradictions of any kind (apart, that is, from the paradoxical fact that God’s point of vantage is, precisely, not a vantage point in a common perspectival and human sense).

In sum, for both Kierkegaard himself and his contemporary Tidehverv peers, paradox becomes an endpoint – a *logical and indeed necessary theological and ethical endpoint* – for the true ‘knight of faith’. Only by cultivating a ‘superior patience’ towards everything that (with a nod to Nietzsche) is ‘all too human’ – everything, that is, which is immanent, sinful, contradictory, amoral and concrete – the latent potential within every human soul to become an ‘aristocrat of spirit’ may be released. This is what *frimodighed* means: to act, in defiance of social convention and good taste, in accordance with the magnified responsibility (the expanded freedom arising from the realization that all abstractions are illusions and the extended obligation to God and one’s neighbour following from this fact) bestowed on one, as a gift from God.

### The politics of paradox

We can now return to the, for me, seemingly contradictory nature of statements about ‘The Danish people’, and other ethnic, cultural or religious

categories of the sort that are so frequently invoked by leading Tidehverv protagonists and other national-conservative voices on Denmark's current theological and political scene; including the widespread claim that Islam 'has an essence' (*har en kerne*), which is fundamentally at odds with the 'core of Christianity'. For could this be the reason why members of Tidehverv, including some of my interlocutors, come across as so strangely unconcerned about questions on these matters, to the point where objections of the sort mentioned above are laughed off or ignored and dismissed with knowing and sometimes rather patronizing smiles? Namely, that *such contradictions (or in stronger terms, paradoxes) are inevitable – and not just that, but necessary! – effects of being human in Christian way?* Perhaps, the implicit logic goes (though I should stress that no one from Tidehverv has expressed it to me in just these terms), all human lines of reasoning (and lifeways more generally) are *supposed* to end up in paradox; otherwise the authors of these acts would not be fully human but instead incomplete half-gods?

Consider a TV interview with Søren Krarup, which went viral after it had been aired on Danish DR 2 in October 2014. In that interview the host, Martin Krasnik (a well-known journalist who was recently made editor of the high-brow, right-leading magazine *Weekendavisen*, and who is famous and feared for his controversially aggressive interview technique<sup>4</sup>), confronted Krarup with the apparent self-contradictions already discussed in this chapter; contradictions that, from a liberal/republican or left-wing perspective, seriously serve to undermine the basis of both Krarup's and the Danish Peoples' Party political position with respect to the question of who qualifies or, in their parlance, 'deserves' and 'earned the right' to be classified and nationalized as 'Danish'. This is not the place to offer an actual transcription and translation of the interview in question. Suffice to note that Krarup did not seem overly shaken let alone embarrassed by what many people (including myself) experienced as a rather successful attempt to poke a hole in the firmaments of his national-conservatism.<sup>5</sup>

Consider, for example, Krarup response when Krasnik held up a photograph of Özlem Cekic, a well-known politician and former MP for the Socialist Party, and asked (I am paraphrasing): 'so, here is a Özlem Cekic. She came to Denmark when she was ten after having grown up in a Muslim-majority country, Turkey, and she is a practicing Muslim. She is unlikely ever to become a Christian. So is she completely Danish?' To which Krarup responded: 'Yes, I believe she is. As I know her, she is a person who respects the culture that has been formed by Christianity.' But Krasnik pressed on, asking Krarup how this squared with the statement that he once made that 'it takes Danish parents in order to be Danish – that to be Danish is an inherited reality (*arvet virkelighed*)'; a formulation that Krarup disputed, explaining that one does not need to have Danish parents to be Danish, but that to be Danish is to be part of that people (folk) who have grown up in Denmark and who have had Danish parents. The interview culminated shortly after when Krasnik (who is Jewish) held up a photo of himself and

asked (I am paraphrasing again): ‘Okay, but what about this guy? Is he Danish – and if so, how Danish is he? 90 per cent? 50 per cent?’ In both these instances, Krarup’s response, and the expression on his face and the posture of his body more generally, was uncharacteristically subdued and almost meek (my interlocutors are not going to like that characterization!); an attitude which (at least to dedicated *Deadline* viewers like myself) seemed to differ markedly from the air of assertiveness, authority and conviction of his many other appearances on this and other Danish TV programmes over the last decades. Having said that, Krarup did not seem particularly taken aback by the direction that the interview was taking. To the contrary, he seemed perfectly calm and resigned and almost unnervingly unalarmed by the fact that the logic behind his entire concept of Danishness seemed to unravel as it was pushed to its limits on live TV by a critical journalist. In fact, a viewer might be tempted to think that Krarup had been waiting for such paradox to reveal itself one day.

It is important to emphasize that, even if the above interpretation holds true (and I stress again that this is *my* rendering of the role of paradox in Tidehverv, not theirs), one should always strive to avoid becoming confronted with contradictions in one’s thinking of the sort that happened to Krarup in the above interview, according to some commentators. Indeed, judging from my participation in several of Tidehverv meetings and interviews with several priests, people subscribing to this theological project, including public figures like Søren Krarup and his daughter, should do everything they can to be as logical, concise and learned in their reasoning as possible, no matter whether the context is politics, theology or any other which they deem worthy of constituting a real matter of concern (*anliggende*). This should come as no surprise, since Tidehverv has always seen itself – and has been seen by others – as a highly intellectual endeavour; a sort of hard-core Lutheran brains-trust that has acted as a necessary refuge for some of the brightest, most hardworking but also politically or otherwise marginalized theology students from across Danish universities and the Church. In fact, as I discuss elsewhere (Pedersen, forthcoming), there are several similarities between the Tidehverv summer meeting and gatherings among, say, anthropologists. What is more, these similarities may be detected not just at the level of the shared form (the long presentations followed by extensive questioning and discussion; the endless gossip over coffees and dinner; the heavy, almost desperate drinking deep into the night by (especially male) attendees), but also in terms of the similar content (the effort and pride speakers put into making coherent arguments and new insights; the emphasis on, and the respect allotted to, scholarship and learning more generally; the excitement, if not the sheer pleasure, generated from learning something new, or, better still, asking a penetrating, perhaps even a game-changing question, etc.).

In short, my interlocutors (or at least many of them,) seem to be just as interested in being precise, knowledgeable and convincing as other

intellectuals, whether inside the academy or not. For the same reason, to simply say that ‘paradox is an endpoint’ in the present context would be an over-simplification, at least if one takes this to be a licence to be deliberately sloppy in one’s thinking. Rather, I suggest, what is at issue is a more intricate, peculiar and very Kierkegaardian attitude towards paradox. What makes this attitude towards the problem of paradox different from other such attitudes, including for instance the solutions propagated by some analytical philosophers or for that matter by high-modernist theories such as dialectical materialism, is the inherently conservative (in both the philosophical and the political sense of the word) scepticism towards the ability of human beings to overcome this problem. Whereas paradox is treated as something that ideally should not exist and can be gradually diminished and perhaps even ‘in the long run’ fully overcome by post-Kantian philosophers such as Hegel and post-Enlightenment theorists such as Marx, then for arch-conservative existentialists such as my Tidehverv interlocutors, as for Kierkegaard himself, paradox is, as we saw, what being human is all about; which is just another way of saying that paradox is, strictly speaking, not a problem per se, at least not one that it is within the remit of mere humans to do away with. Yet, crucially, one should still do everything one can to engage, head-on, with paradox rather than trying to hide from it or run away with it; for the point is to neither avoid nor overcome it, but to tarry with and be moved by it. Only by remaining faithful to reason up until its very limit can one launch ‘a leap of faith ... into what is offensive to reason, into the seemingly absurd’ (Rapport 2002: 181). So, far from providing an excuse for sloppy thinking and unconvincing reasoning, this predicament of paradox in all ways of life imposes an obligation to always do the best that one can, inside the bounds of the human, to avoid it, all the way up to the point where one is confronted with one’s innumerable limits. And it is this point, really, that the road taken by the Enlightenment humanists (whether socialist, liberal or whatever) fundamentally departs from the one travelled by the proudly reactionary Christian ‘knight of faith’. For whereas the former, according to the more or less tacit Kierkegaardian logic that I am trying to lay bare here, are claustrophobically imprisoned within the house of language and culture imparted to them by Kant and his German heirs, the latter are provided with a divine route out of this earthly prison via a God-given capacity not merely to accept paradox but to pass through it.

This, then, may help account for Søren Krarup’s uncharacteristically plegmatic response to Martin Krasnik’s challenge – and, more generally, the almost bored breeziness (or could we say ‘superior patience’) with which some Tidehverv adherents dismiss criticism (my own included) of their peculiar Kierkegaardian branch of Christian national-conservatism. After all, if paradox is a logical and necessary endpoint to all human thinking, its logic of irreducible contradiction must extend into the realm of politics too. In fact, it might even be argued from a Tidehverv/Olesen-Larsen perspective,

that the domain of the political is supremely contradictory and thus subject to paradox in all its many guises precisely because it is so far removed from the concerns (and the authority) of Christian theology and God. Perhaps one could refer to this as the ‘politics of paradox’. In coining this term, I do not so much wish to capture the general and rather well-known sense in which the realization of political ideals into concrete political practice tends to result in various contradictory outcomes (think, for example, of the extensive sociological literature on ‘unintended consequences’ in policy and technocratic contexts). I am more interested in its specific and much less common meaning of certain kind of political logic – and indeed theo-logic – which considers itself to be *inherently paradoxical* and thus does not necessarily try to hide this fact (in the way that other perspectives of what constitutes an ideal political practice would) and perhaps even takes a certain pride in it. Certainly, I have argued, this captures what happens when Tidehverv’s fundamentalist–existentialist theological project is translated into political reasoning and practice in Denmark’s public sphere and national parliament.

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### Notes

- 1 This chapter does not draw in any direct way on conversations with Tidehverv people, but is instead an attempt to provide an anthropological analysis of this movement based more or less exclusively on written sources as well as media appearances by key Tidehverv protagonists. For a more ‘traditional’ ethnographic account of Tidehverv, based on data obtained from participant-observation and interviews, see Pedersen forthcoming.
- 2 [www.ft.dk/samling/20131/lovforslag/153/betaenkning.htm](http://www.ft.dk/samling/20131/lovforslag/153/betaenkning.htm); author’s translation.
- 3 As Backhouse also notes, ‘As an individual, by Kierkegaard’s definition, the neighbour’s reality includes the fact that one’s personhood cannot be defined primarily by one’s membership of a certain cultural group ... His attack on Christendom, and his championing of the self and the neighbour as individuals who find their identity primarily in relation to the God-man means that his theological project is by extension also a political project, applicable as it is to any Christian culture which is tempted to confuse its Christianity with its nationality’ (2011: xiv–xv).

- 4 While Krasnik is widely considered one of the sharpest journalists of his generation, his interview technique has been met with criticism across the political spectrum. For example, Katrine Winkel Holm, theologian and leader of the Society for Free Speech (and Søren Krarup's daughter) was one among several hard-right critics to accuse Krasnik of being biased and politicizing following another controversial interview of his with the former leader of the Society for Free Speech, Lars Hedegaard ([www.180grader.dk/Politik/martin-krasnik-saetter-effekt-overfakta](http://www.180grader.dk/Politik/martin-krasnik-saetter-effekt-overfakta); see also <http://www.uriasposten.net/archives/46227>).
- 5 As Svend Andersen, a theologian and philosophy professor at Aarhus University, gleefully expressed it in a commentary in the centre-left newspaper *Politiken* a few days after the interview: '[A]mong conservative intellectuals, there seems to be agreement that Krarup is their greatest thinker. For those who still retain a measure of judgement, a much-called-for correction of this image took place when Martin Krasnik interviewed Krarup on *Deadline* on October 10. Simply by citing a number of Krarup's statements and drawing attention to their consequences, Krasnik succeeded in revealing Krarup for what he is: an ideological propagandist (*Politiken* 2014; author's translation).

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