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Introduction

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This volume of Academic Quarter addresses how notions like the real and realism are to be understood today.

A number of new terms such as “post-factual”, “fake news” and “post-truth” have been proposed to describe the carelessness with which users of different media deal with matters of fact in our information-saturated society. One recent example is Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway defending the false description of the attendance at Trump’s inauguration, by claiming the falsehood as an “alternative fact”, or Rudy Giuliani flatly stating that “truth isn’t truth”. Combined with the efforts of private companies and pressure

groups to control and manipulate information so it will suit their interests (e.g. Berlusconi, Breitbart news, or 24nyt.dk), a “reality” emerges where truth seems bendable. Lies can be true if you repeat them long enough, and saying “I don’t believe it” has apparently become a fact to question all facts but itself. Why has it come to this?

Actually, this is nothing new. Already in the dialogue *Gorgias*, Plato had Socrates complain about the Sophists teaching about justice while having no real knowledge about justice itself. Asked by Socrates what the benefit of the Sophists’ efforts was, Gorgias replied: “The persuading of others about what is right and wrong”. Thus, Socrates concluded, what the Sophists were interested in were merely the beliefs of right and wrong and not what is right and wrong, hence they failed to distinguish between doxa (mere belief) and episteme (true knowledge). Recently, philosophers Daniel Dennett (2017) and Timothy Williamson (2017) have voiced similar Socratic responses, blaming post-modernist thinkers, like Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard, for indirectly paving the way for fake news, and accusing these thinkers of denying the possibility of distinguishing between true and false beliefs. This, however, seems to be a misunderstanding of at least some of these postmodern thinkers, since the predominant post-modern impetus was primarily a critical impulse directed towards the authority of modernity itself as unjustified (Hoy and McCarthy 1994). Instead the framing of reality through contingency, contiguity and context was described as a condition for our understanding of the surrounding world, and our articulation of this understanding. However, this also seems to be facing an untenable relativism of facts or knowledge, presenting a challenge to the understanding of what makes something more correct than something else, i.e. what makes the real real, and the fake fake. So, what are we to make of belief versus knowledge, facts versus fiction and fake versus real today?

Against this background a number of questions were asked serving as guidelines to be considered within and across different disciplines and research-areas: are we faced with a new realism, or “fake-ism”? Is there a need to discuss realism anew? In what sense is knowledge about something real, and in what sense is knowledge about something false/fake? The essays in this volume address these and/or similar questions.

The first two articles focus on how new media challenge or reinforce what is considered real or fictitious, and asks how this affects the understanding of ourselves, each other and our surroundings.

In "Territorial stigmatization and the negotiation of place" **Jørgen Riber Christensen and Kim Toft Hansen** present an analysis of Danish tv documentaries' creation of mediated representations of real marginalized places, challenging and contesting the inhabitants' representation of the same place in the process. This creates an awareness of the inhabitants of being part of a doubling of place: the documentary's mediated representation of their place, as well as their own situated representation. This awareness, the authors claim, facilitates the possibility of the inhabitant's contestation and negotiation, but of what? The media's depiction or the real place? The authors answer that it is a negotiation of "...their position so that they can contest the mediated stigmatization of their real places."

In his "Memoir as Counter-narrative" **Howard Sklar** takes on Philip Roth's *The Plot against America*. Whereas Roth in other novels uses himself as a character ironically, Sklar claims that in the *Plot* Roth presents an unironical description of his childhood serving as a *real* backdrop for the novel's counter-historical narrative. Hence the counter-historical element in Roth's story lies not in the alternative history it depicts, but what it says of the period in which the supposedly known history took place. Roth thus presents a counter-historical potentiality based on real facts (of Holocaust and American anti-Semitic insecurities experienced in his childhood), and in the process of examining Jewish identity counters, similar to Riber and Toft's notion of contestation, the anti-Semite master-narrative of defining what being a Jew is *and* a stereotypic understanding of "the American Jewish experience". Roth's counter-narrative thereby serves as a reimagining of his actual past by redefining the significance of his identity of being Jewish, but by embracing the ambiguities and complexities involved in this search for identity.

The following two articles question the status and role of the fictitious exemplified by, respectively, fake-news in the public sphere, and conditions making design fictions real.

Anders Horsbøl's contribution "Fake-news conception of the public sphere understood within a deliberative perspective" is based on a discourse-analysis of the use and debate of the notion "fake-news" within Danish newspapers in 2017. The analysis seeks to

bring out the implicit conceptions of the public sphere within this debate, and contrast it with deliberative theories of the public sphere. Horsbøl concludes that the notion of “fake-news” is relevant, as pointing towards the negligence of expert-knowledge and questions of truth in non-elitist areas, but it also fails to cover certain issues highly relevant for a modern democracy and addressed within deliberative theories: a sole focus on truth/fake tends to bypass the inclusion of weaker voices in the public debate, certain systemic relations in political journalism as well as the division of labour among public arenas.

In “Strategic design fiction” **Peter Vistisen and Thessa Jensen** discuss the difference between a pragmatic strategic and a speculative critical design fiction. The authors argue, that pragmatist and strategic notions of design fictions are more complex than utopian and dystopian speculative design fictions. Whereas the latter is only committed to its fictionality and therefore remains solely within the possibility of a ‘what-if’ future, the former carries a potentiality for actually becoming real through corporations with the capacity to implement the design fiction.

Next, two philosophical analyses ask what we are to make of the real, interpreting different notions of facts as well as how we are to understand real fakes.

In “As a matter of fact” **Patrick Kjærdsdam Telleus** presents an interpretation of the notion of fact around three relevant themes: as relation of true and real; fact as carrying a propositional and narrative trait; and fact as being independent and dependent on the knower respectively. The result of the analysis is a view on facts claiming that these can only be understood as appearing under particular circumstances characterized by significant forms of skepticism. The author concludes by claiming that facts are not facts because we hold the knowledge they convey to be true and about reality, but because they are something that we hold on to as being objective and certain when we are confronted with unknowns, with doubts or with absurd opposing views.

In “Goodman and Cavell on Fakes” **Bo Allesøe** presents an analysis of how to understand the notion of a fake artwork, hence also what to make of a real artwork. The point of departure is Nelson Goodman’s understanding of fakes. Goodman’s conception fails to present a viable understanding of how artworks, despite being fa-

kes, still are originals. The reason is located in his lack of considering the notion of aesthetic value of artworks. The author instead turns to Stanley Cavell's understanding of aesthetic judgment as a better frame for understanding real and fake artworks. Where Goodman presents judgmental criteria external to the artistic process, Cavell locates the same as internal to process. What is real is therefore a commitment to established criteria for what art is. This commitment, however, is not to be understood as a reproduction of these criteria, but as a reflection from within this process projecting a new understanding of art as a claim to community, i.e. presenting art as meaningful in our present and coming lives.

The final two articles pick up questions of the status of our knowledge and what the knowledge is about, the first by focusing on the new educational theory of social realism, and the second by providing a more comprehensive perspective involving most of the articles

In "Knowledge, reality and curriculum" **Jørn Bjerre** analyses Michael Young's notion of social realism with a particular emphasis on what constitutes powerful knowledge. The idea is that we must accept that any notion of knowledge is socially constructed, i.e. dependent on contextual factors and potentially just reproducing societal power relations and distinctions, but at the same time also accept that this doesn't necessarily lead to an anti-realist position. What is real is the symbolic and social dimensions of reality being independent of people's interpretation of them. These symbolic and social dimensions do not hinder the experience of reality. Rather, they serve as conditions for experience to be possible in the first place. Hence, knowledge(s) is developed by a process of understanding in what sense the symbolic and social resources opens up access to different kinds of facts about the same reality.

In the last article, **Jørn Bjerre** and **Bo Allesøe** present a brief overview of discussions of realism and related philosophies of science like social constructivism, relativism and the critique of ideology, relating these to the articles in this volume.

As the presentation of the articles above shows, the subject-areas as well as disciplines involved are quite diverse. Despite this, all the articles seem to share a common presupposition in defending some kind of realism: for realism to work a distinction between our

experiences and what these are about, between what we mean and what we encounter, between possible realities and real possibilities, is needed. This seems to be a very plausible way to make sense of (some) reality imposing itself upon us in different ways, as well as allowing the possibility of us actually being in error about something, *for real*.

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Territorial stigmatisation and the negotiation of place

Tainted locations in Danish television documentary

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Abstract

The article addresses the negotiated meaning of notorious places through a consideration of a recent tendency in Danish TV documentaries where marginalized, often peripheral, places are portrayed and debated. Based partly on sociological research about territorial stigmatisation, partly on location studies as a method, the article stresses that inhabitants often contest and contradict the mediated stigmatization of their towns from an ambivalent position. On the one hand, participants in the programs are aware of the stigmatizing gaze of others, but on the other they also express a degree of local pride. The ambivalence of place meaning established through TV representation and the participants' attitude towards their 'real' places reflect a mediated doubling of place, where the inhabitants are in "the event-as-broadcast" and in "the event in-situ" simultaneously. As a result, such 'tainted locations' may be contested directly from within documentary representation.

Keywords: Territorial stigmatisation, TV documentary, tainted locations, contesting representation, negotiation of place

During the past decade, we have seen an increased attention towards ways in which media production may enhance, augment, negotiate and praise real places in a specifically positive sense (Reijnders 2011; Waade 2013). This includes hard effects such as media tourism, attraction of workforce and establishing a local creative industry as well as soft effects such as creating local identity and coherence and representing regional identities in public service broadcasting (PSB) (Christensen and Hansen 2016). Particularly, scholarship on these matters frequently uses fictional film and television as case material. On the other hand, in sociology and ethnography we have, in the same period, seen an intensified attention towards 'notorious places' and 'territorial stigmata' (Kirkness and Tijé-Dra 2017; Wacquant 1996, 2007). Recently, we have documented that the first positive sense of place branding may be employed to avoid negative geographical reputation and debunk myths of problematic peripherality (Hansen and Christensen 2017; Hansen and Christensen 2018). In this sense, a constant negotiation of place and the meaning of place is taking place, and here mediated representations of real places play a decisive role in establishing, negotiating and contesting the 'collective imagery' of ill-reputed local neighbourhoods.

The doubling of place

This article employs a phenomenological approach to focus on the apparent schism between the different perceptions of these 'notorious places' subjected to 'territorial stigmata' through mediatisation. The article addresses questions about the 'reality' of a place when it is experienced by its inhabitants and at the same time mediated. This mediation we limit to TV documentaries, and our cases belong to this genre. Our approach has as its point of departure Scannell's TV phenomenological idea *spanned* spatiality (2014, 63) as it is augmented by Moores' concept of the doubling of place (Moores 2012, 13-16). Moores suggests this as a critique of the theory of placeless culture seen as a consequence of modern media and broadcast (Meyrowitz 1985, 8), and he employs Dayan and Katz's media events (1992) and Scannell's proposition (Scannell 1996, 91) that ra-

dio and television can afford their audiences with a feeling of being at two places simultaneously, their own physical place and the place of the broadcast. Moores has the reservation that “there are significant differences between being physically present at an eventful occasion and ‘being involved’ or ‘caught up’ in an occasion as a television viewer” (15-16), or in Scannell’s words being in “the event in-situ” and “the event-as-broadcast” (79).

The distinction between “the event-in-situ” and “the event-as-broadcast” and the idea of doubling of place are more complex than originally conceived by Scannell and Moores, as “in-situ” designates the local inhabitants’ placed reception of their area as a thematised media location when watching a documentary about it. These two conceptions of a place become negotiable when the inhabitants of a place see themselves and their place as mediated. As a contrast, the national broadcast audience’s conception of the place is solely a televised place or an “event-as-broadcast”. These two distinct modes of reception will reappear later in this article, when the local reception of a TV documentary, which may contain stigmatising material that influence the nation audience, may feed a motivation to contest the stigmatisation. In some cases, this contestation may be mediated, as in for instance as in the case of *Vi elsker Randers* [We love Randers], a TV documentary, which includes and comments on the local inhabitants own mediated conception of themselves and their town, or the local inhabitants may turn to social media, as in the case of contestation of *På røven i Nakskov* [Down and out in Nakskov] with the Facebook group *Lolland-Falster Lovestorm*.

This contestation of marginalized places in TV documentaries suggests that inhabitants do indeed have an ambivalent, sometimes resisting, attitude towards representation, and has its counterpart in results of sociological research. From qualitative interview data, Jensen and Christensen conclude about urban marginality that local residents have “an either positive or ambivalent view of the area and most of them are content to live there” (Jensen and Christensen 2012, 74). Jensen and Christensen address the question of mediated marginalization, and they supplement Wacquant’s Bourdieu-inspired mechanisms of territorial stigmatization (i.e. “the deployment of space as a product and medium of power” (Wacquant 2010, 165), which may have the consequence of an internalization of the

characterization of insignificance) with an “awareness that others see one as being less worth” (77). Such ‘others’ may be national audiences in the reception of the TV documentaries. However, they continue nuancing Wacquant’s conception of stigmatization of places with the argument that this only produces an ambivalence in the residents, as they are well aware of the degrading gaze of others, yet also fully forsaking to internalize this degrading gaze, and the result is ambivalence towards their conception of their neighborhood.

Based on this theoretical position, we suggest that the local inhabitants’ fused position of being in “the event-as-broadcast” as well as in “the event in-situ” facilitates their contestation of stigmatised, mediated place. This is not far from Wacquant’s question whether a sense of stigmatisation is “an artefact of distant observation or [...] a deeply felt reality” (1996, 129). We now address ways in which a range of recent Danish television documentaries displays a complex negotiation of real places and the representation of geographically or cognitively peripheral places. This examination includes observations of the documentaries and of their rhetorical mechanisms, and we aim at illustrating how such complex modes of place representation and their reception work together with ‘contested stigmatisation’. Our main examples are produced by the two broadcasters DR and TV 2. Both have public service obligations, yet there is the difference that TV 2 has had a so-called regional responsibility since the break of public service monopoly in 1988 to cover all regions in Denmark, and it has set up eight regional TV-stations with mostly journalistic ambitions to cover all of Denmark. However, both have obligations to cover the broad perspectives of the nation.

The documentaries

The two documentary series *Drenge fra kanten* [Boys on the edge] (DR3, 2016) and *På røven i Nakskov* (TV 2, 2017) both take place at the southern Danish island Lolland and engage deeply in a discussion of the island’s marginality within the nation. However, in TV documentary this sense of territorial stigmatisation does not only portray territorial stigmata in a geographically peripheral area such as Lolland. The documentary series *Prinsesser fra Blokken* [Princesses from the block] (DR3, 2016) and *Vi elsker...* [We love...] (DR, 2017) likewise display specific senses of locality and cognitive pe-

ripherality, although the series (except two episodes of *Vi elsker...*) take place in and around Copenhagen or in Randers, the sixth largest city in Denmark. The four episodes of *Vi elsker...* take place in four different places in Denmark: the city of Randers (1), the regional area Thy (2), Falster, the neighbouring island of Lolland (3), and Brøndby, part of the so-called Copenhagen Western Area (4), in which the series *Prinsesser fra Blokken* also takes place. In other words, many of the episodes in these television programs encircle the same Danish notorious places and, in this sense, the documentaries become part of the collective imagery and perception of these marginal localities. However, while the programs exhibit what Wacquant (2007) has called 'territorial stigmatisation' or 'problem neighbourhoods', at the same time the stories told establish key counter-narratives and what Jensen and Christensen, in an analysis of another Danish stigmatised territory (Aalborg East), have referred to as "pride and dignity of place" (Jensen and Christensen 2012, 88). To explain the spatial complexities of these documentaries, we distinguish between geographical and cognitive marginality and explain ways in which participants (with)in such TV documentaries may even contest the programs' own discourses of disempowerment and territorial stigmata.

Tainted locations and territorial stigmata

In sociology, urban studies and ethnography, questions of marginality play an important role in uncovering and debating images and reputations of specific peripheral areas (Jensen and Christensen 2012). According to Kearns et al., however, mediated representations of such discussions are "relatively neglected issues of meaning and process" regarding what they term 'notorious places' (2013, 585). Notorious places are locations and areas that are not directly stigmatised, but marked by "negative area reputations", held both by outsiders as an "external image" and often insiders as an "internal image" (ibid, 579). Such places may be suburban areas in larger cities while it is just as often rural, peripheral areas and smaller towns with a range of social issues such as higher crime rates, lower employability rates and health concerns. Negative reputational spirals of place are most often referred to as stigmatised territories, while Kirkness and Tijé-Dra (2017), similar to Kearns et al., moderately refer to such areas as 'tainted spaces'. For Wacquant, stigmati-

sation is part of what he refers to as “advanced marginality”, more precisely “penalized places” or “social purgatories” marked by internal “guilt and shame” and an “acute sense of social indignity”, but according to Wacquant Scandinavian countries are among the societies “that have best resisted the rise of advanced marginality” (Wacquant 2007, 66-68). Nevertheless, Scandinavian societies are affected by similar phenomena, but not to an extent seen elsewhere, and for that reason it would perhaps be more appropriate to consult the areas visited in this articles’ documentary material as notorious places (more specific areas) or tainted spaces (larger living areas or towns). In film studies, specific production sites or shooting sites are normally referred to as ‘locations’, and as a result we reuse these sociological concepts as analytical categories to be used in analyses of film and television. When film and television, both fictitious and documentary material, debate such potentially negative socio-spatial issues, we refer to these places as ‘tainted locations’. What is particularly interesting about ‘tainted spaces’ and ‘tainted locations’ is that the reputation is negotiable, and according to Permentier et al. (2011), loyalty as a “psychological sense of community” may give “voice” to contestation of area-reputation, or even turn a vicious circle into a virtuous one (Kearns et al. 2013, 584). Working with an ill-reputed Danish area, Jensen and Christensen find “little support for a theory of clear-cut internalization of territorial stigma” (Jensen and Christensen 2012, 88). For them as well as Kearns et al., such negotiations of reputation may take place in mediated representations, and this article shows how such contestation also takes place ‘from within’ documentary representations of marginal areas in Denmark.

As indicated above, marginality may be both a geographical and a cognitive image, and often a reputed area or location may be both at the same time. However, territorial stigmatization is referred to as an urban phenomenon, and in fact Wacquant refers to such areas as “urban hellholes” (Wacquant 2007, 67). In a Danish context, the notion of ‘peripheral Denmark’ (Udkantsdanmark) is one of the most pervasive ideas of marginality during the past decade, and peripheral Denmark has since become a normal reference to a place in Denmark that is at once geographically and cognitively marginal (Nielsen and Christensen 2013). As a concept, marginality and peripherality transect into the perception of specific areas or larger

geographical regions as 'provincial', and in general such images and expressions are mostly marked by negative reputation and a downward spiral of place dissolution. However, marginality may also be a merely cognitive category that refers to spatial alienation within a larger urban area, since such cognitive marginality is probably an integral part of most larger urban areas. This means that whole towns close to metropolises (e.g. Randers) and larger city areas in the periphery of metropolises such as Copenhagen (e.g. Brøndby) may also be regarded as marginal in a cognitive rather than geographical sense.

Scholarly work on media representations of notorious places frequently distinguish between attitudes towards the represented area. Kearns et al. distinguish between four categories (positive, mixed, negative and neutral), Christensen and Jensen between three (positive, negative and neutral), while Jensen and Christensen also hold a distinction between three (positive, negative and neutral), but interestingly they subdivide the negative coverage of places into two different representational categories. The one is the 'unambiguously negative stories', very much in line with the above mentioned negative stories, but the other is the 'paradoxical stories' with very much in common with the notion of 'mixed articles'; paradoxical stories "are often positive in their overall approach, but entail an implicit negative description of the area" (Jensen and Christensen 2012, 80), and as noted by Kearns et al., positive stories are difficult to generate "due to press repetition of problems that need tackling" (Kearns et al. 2007, 594). In other words, positive representations of reputed areas also confirm the negative stories, even though they give voice to counter-narratives of place. For Kearns et al., such reputations are hard to turn around and they keep appearing as "real", because they are traceable in popular imagery about the places and in mediated coverage. However, we also need to distinguish between 'voice' (the program participants' internalised self-image) and 'representation' (the editorial level of the programs) in order to see how, for instance, there is a decisive difference between the presented marginality of 'the boys' and the editorial framing of marginality in *Drengene på kanten*. This is specifically the reason why documentaries such as these may give voice to a much more ambivalent sense of place and attachment.

Geographical and cognitive marginality in media

Like similar TV documentaries, such as *Drengene på kanten*, *Vi elsker Falster* [We love Falster] and *Vi elsker Thy* [We love Thy], *På røven i Nakskov* takes place in a geographically marginal place in Denmark. The dramaturgical prelude and presentation phase of the program illustrate how narrative mechanisms of disparaging a locality are intertwined with local contestation so that the story becomes mixed or paradoxical as described above. In the prelude to the program, gloomy underscoring music for a panoramic shot of Nakskov supplements a voice-over: "Welcome to Nakskov and a year with us: the families on the edge of society". During a montage of brief, but crucial episodes from the lives of local people, the voice-over continues: "We are more ill than you, our teeth are poorer, and we are only rarely permanently employed, we live under the threat that our children will be taken from us, and we die far too early." This last statement is anchored by images of a coffin carried out of a church by mourners. These are depressing social statistics turned into a voice-over with direct speech and local identification ("we"), addressing the nationwide audience. This voice-over changes its tone and the montage and underscoring music becomes faster, and the people shown are smiling: "Ordinary families that fall into underclass. We are at the end of our tether, but we are more than that. We fight for our families and dreams. Welcome to what you call periphery, but what we call home."

It is significant in this exposition that its authorial voice speaks on behalf of the local population using the pronoun "we", even though it is obvious from its professional diction and its lack of the local dialect (used consistently in the documentary by the inhabitants) that it is external. Similarly, the juxtaposition of the initial presentation with a stigmatising and miserable picture of Nakskov with the defiant statements about fighting for families and dreams with "pride and dignity of place" is more complex in its perception of the locality, where the local population is ambivalent and poised between cognitive and geographical marginality. This attitude was later repeated in an almost affective form in the Facebook group *Lolland-Falster Lovestorm*.

DR2's documentary *Vi elsker Randers* is situated in a larger urban area, which is presented not as geographically, but rather cognitively marginal: "This program is about Randers. This city has for

decades been known in the media as the city of violence and a place without culture where youngsters only drink Mokai, drive scooters and dress cheaply. Gitte and Søren seek to find the nuances and draw a more real portrait of the place and the people living there." In the initial speak of the program, one of the two investigating reporters states that "perhaps there is more need now than ever to pay tribute to the differences in our country." Yet, early in this program the reporter confronts the mayor with the city's informercial video (Randers Kommune 2016), produced in 2016 to help the city grow after a number of closures of its large businesses. The video has a poetical form with the title *A Hymn to Randers*, and the reporter leans back with a derisive laughter when viewing it with the mayor. This situation is clearly embarrassing for the mayor, but for our purpose it is interesting as it demonstrates how local mediated "pride and dignity of place" is embedded in another media production with a nationwide audience. Yet, despite the stated intention of *Vi elsker Randers*, the actual attitude in the program towards the local population's mediated local pride and place contestation is met with a degree of disrespect. In the next sequence in *Vi elsker Randers*, the other reporter, who is also a well-known master chef, visits a local cafeteria and kitchen whose trademark is traditional food. The master chef is kind, and the local cook answers his questions about more advanced culinary initiatives without being offended by what could be perceived as condescending. Indirectly, the culinary propensities of Randers continue in the following sequence about how difficult it is being young in Randers. First clips from a YouTube rap-video satire of Randers are shown, and then a young student is interviewed about the prejudice. This student is not presented at her studies, but the location chosen is the hot dog stand where she also works. Even in a sequence about prejudices, there seems to be no way to escape them. Similar to the voice-over in the TV documentary about Nakskov, there is a contradiction between content and form, i.e. here between a stated objective of neutralizing prejudices and the choice of location to do so, a location emblematic of low life taste in Randers. A brief quotation from Pachucki (2016): "hot dog consumption (the items less-educated individuals ate more of)" may illustrate this contradiction inherent in a Randers student working in a hot dog stand. As such, here voice is basically very different than the editorial representation of place.

Broadcasting channel and modes of representation

Lastly, it is suggestive of a general documentary tendency if we broaden our focus to include the different documentaries and the broadcasting channels. Even though the interest in notorious places and place negotiation is widespread in TV documentary, and even though Danish PSBs have produced all the above-mentioned examples, there are significant differences depending on the specific broadcasting channel.

Though the editorially selected material in *På røven i Nakskov* may not be representative of Nakskov or the island Lolland, the mode of representation is discreetly ethnographic towards the portrayal of people with various social, economic or psychological complications, intentionally rendered an immanent part of “us”. This continues in the follow-up program *Stadig på røven?* [Still down and out?] produced a year later than the first season. The documentary style, positioned somewhere between Nichols’ observatory and expository modes (Nichols 1991), includes a combination of close vernacular depictions and a slightly distanced voice-over as well as a visual mixture of local decay and panoramic beauty. The intention of these two programs adheres to the public service obligations and regional commitments of TV 2, the broadcaster, with a geographically and demographically broad target audience. The programs are, then, both public enlightenment and candidly entertaining at the same time. These programs stand in the starkest contrast to the series *Vi elsker...* in the way that this program uses both local experts and a highly expository mode of representation, which links the programs to the target audiences of the DR2, the broadcaster. These are highly educated citizens with high cultural capital, and this is also, as touched upon above, both directly and indirectly represented in the series. For instance, three out of four programs in *Vi elsker...* include a linguist, who comments on the local dialect, however, when the program visits Brøndby close to Copenhagen the linguist is *not* included (even though the place is marked by multilingual citizens, which in itself is a noteworthy linguistic phenomenon). This means that the programs actually often end up consenting to the notorious myths rather debunking them, as was the intention.

The two programs *Prinsesser fra blokken* and *Drengene på kanten*, both produced for DR’s youth channel DR3, are very different from

the TV2 and DR2 programs. The ethnographic and specifically gender-oriented fascination of youth cultures in the Copenhagen Western Area (female) and on the island Lolland (male) are, especially in *Drengene på kanten*, heavily stylized (just like the participants themselves) with obvious references to contemporary music video aesthetics and a conspicuous intertextual consciousness among the represented youngsters. In both series, the participants clearly contest the mediated territorial stigmata and shows a distinct pride of place, straightforwardly translated into the styles of the programs representing the media cultures of the target audiences.

Conclusion: contesting media or contesting the real?

This article does not fully service the complexities of the programs, and much more could be said about the different programs mentioned here and others not mentioned. E.g., the humorous stand-up approach to geographical and cognitive marginality in the DR1-series *Gintberg på kanten* [Gintberg on the edge], almost a documentary version of *Seinfeld* in its combination of documentary and stand-up, is also interesting in its unswerving ridicule of local mythology. The TV 2 sportsdoc *På toppen i Nykøbing* [Nykøbing in top form] takes place on Falster, but it rather tells the success story of a local women handball team and, in this way, it may work as the broadcaster's own contestation of stigmata in *På røven i Nakskov* (though it was produced for the commercial channel TV 2 Sport).

This article clearly indicates, however, that mediated geographical and cognitive marginality are manifest in the TV documentaries addressed in this article. So is contestation of stigmatisation and tainting of the towns, areas and especially their inhabitants. In some cases, the contestation is internal in the documentaries and in some external. Though inhabitants have become characters in programs broadcast on national television with a potential productional and distributional stigmatising effect, we have seen a strong counter-tendency to respond to and contradict such stigmata. Yet, we have also seen from sociological studies that inhabitants are poised in an ambivalent position with regard to their attitudes to their neighbourhoods and areas. On the one hand, they are aware of the stigmatizing gaze of others, and on the other they show a degree of local pride. This double awareness corresponds to the question of whether the TV documentaries represent a perceived rather than

experienced reality. Our answer to this question is that it is the ambivalence of the local inhabitants' fused position of being in "the event-as-broadcast" as in "the event in-situ" that makes it possible for them to negotiate their position so that they can contest the mediated stigmatization of their real places.

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“Memoir” as Counter-Narrative

Reimagining the Self in Roth’s *The Plot Against America*

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“To be a Jew is to be set apart from other men, it is also to be set apart from oneself.”

Albert Memmi, *Portrait of a Jew* (1962, 59).

Abstract

Philip Roth’s 2004 novel *The Plot Against America* famously imagines what America might have been like had the aviator Charles Lindbergh, a Nazi sympathizer, won the 1940 election for President of the United States. That alternate history is focalized through the experiences of Roth as a young boy – or those that the author-as-character has conceived within this radically altered world, with the real-world Holocaust as backdrop. By identifying a genuine counter-historical *potentiality* – one that is grounded in actual anti-Semitic insecurities that prevailed at the time, even in the relatively tranquil American context – Roth’s counter-narrative reimagines his actual past by redefining the significance of his identity as a Jew. At the same time, rather than presenting a portrait of “the American Jewish experience” of the period by conceptualizing Jews and Jewish experience monolithically, Roth manages to embrace the complexities and ambiguities of his search for

self-definition, of which his Jewishness remains an enigmatic but essential part.

Keywords Jewish, identity, Roth, Holocaust, counter-narrative

Six months ago, when I wrote the first versions of this article, the "real" Philip Roth, the author, was still alive, and I imagined myself in dialogue – if not with him, exactly, then with the versions of him that populate his fiction and nonfiction. One such fiction, the 2004 novel *The Plot Against America*, famously imagines what America might have been like had the aviator and would-be presidential candidate Charles Lindbergh, a Nazi sympathizer, won the 1940 election for President of the United States. That alternate history is focalized through the experiences of Roth as a young boy – or those that the author-as-character, "Philip," has imagined within this radically altered world. These surface details – often the primary focus of discussions of the novel – sometimes conceal some of the more poignant issues of identity, culture, and authorial voice that form its unspoken ideological core. Roth, of course, is known for creating characters that either playfully and ironically resemble him (the Zuckerman novels, particularly *The Counterlife*) or actually are identified by his own name (*Operation Shylock*). In *The Plot Against America*, though, the ironic distancing that was such a characteristic feature of his earlier work is largely absent. In its place, Roth the author appears to embrace both his identity as a Jew and a version of "Philip Roth" whose past and sensibility seem to largely mirror his own, or what they might have been had circumstances been different. Both of these identifications are precipitated by actual historical stories that are not directly his own, primarily from the Holocaust. One might say, along with Bryan Cheyette (2015, 165-66; 200-201), that Roth "appropriates" these traumatic events for his own purposes in ways that trivialize and domesticate them, and this risk is surely inherent to the project. It is critical, however, to recognize that Roth is not merely imagining an alternate history, or even just creating an opposing or speculative version of himself, but also identifying a genuine counter-historical *potentiality* – one that, as I will show, is grounded in actual anti-Semitic insecurities that prevailed at the time, even in the relatively tranquil American context. At the same time, rather than presenting a portrait of "the

American Jewish experience" of the period by conceptualizing Jews and Jewish experience monolithically (see Biale 1998 and Schreier 2015 for critiques of this tendency), Roth manages to embrace the complexities and ambiguities of his search for self-definition, of which his Jewishness remains an enigmatic but essential part.

1. Roth's imagined "idyllic" childhood

In many of Roth's works, one's Jewishness is shaped by the perception of others, in ways that highlight the "liminal border" (Biale, Galchinsky and Heschel 1998, 8) nature of Jewish-American identity – the sense of being "both inside and outside" (8) the mainstream of American society. In many respects, this dynamic also seems to be at work in *The Plot Against America*. While it is evident that "Roth" as a child (henceforth, "Philip") sees himself as a Jew, this appears to be negatively reinforced by the precarious position that Jews suddenly face shortly after the introductory pages of the novel, when the anti-Semitism of the candidate Lindbergh "assaulted, as nothing ever had before, that huge endowment of personal security that I had taken for granted as an American child of American parents in an American school in an American city in an America at peace with the world" (8). However, as I will show at some length, the conspicuous lack of irony in Roth's narrative, and the very clear identification of the author with the child protagonist version of him that lives through the alternative-historical oppression that Roth imagines, eliminates the sometimes subtle degrees of difference that can be found between the author and his other near-Roth protagonists. Indeed, the "Philip Roth" of *Plot* blurs these distinctions, and forces us, as readers, to reconcile his "experiences" with the *conceivable* treatment of American Jews during the late 1930s – had things gone differently than they actually did.

The difference in this case, I would suggest, is the degree to which Roth appears to *embrace* that identity. The window for readers to perceive this attitude is indeed small, and is quickly subsumed by the events of oppression that ensue shortly after the beginning of the novel. Roth begins with a description of a sort of domestic bliss: "We were a happy family in 1940," he writes. "My parents were outgoing, hospitable people, their friends culled from among my father's associates and from the women who along with my mother had helped to organize the Parent-Teacher

Association at newly built Chancellor Avenue School, where my brother and I were pupils. All were Jews" (2-3). The very mundanity of this description is significant in that it implies a degree of comfort among the members of this New Jersey Jewish community with their Jewishness. Of course, to an important extent, this self-perception is grounded in a degree of assimilation, with the features that define the community seemingly relying more on self-selection than on exclusion. "It was work that identified and distinguished our neighbors for me far more than religion. Nobody in the neighborhood had a beard or dressed in the antiquated Old World style or wore a skullcap either outdoors or in the houses I routinely floated through with my boyhood friends.... [H]ardly anyone in the vicinity spoke with an accent" (4). In this description, before the novel descends into the paroxysm of violence and oppression that occupy the rest of the novel's more than 400 pages, Roth establishes the ground of his identity as a Jew. It is difficult to tease out whether the character-narrator views himself more as a Jew or as an American – or if those two identities are interwoven so as to make them indistinguishable from each other. In any case, Roth-as-character appears to perceive his life at that time as one of comfort and security.

We find a startlingly similar dynamic in Roth's *The Facts: A Novelist's Autobiography* (1988), in which he recounts experiences of childhood tranquility, as well as specific references to the occasional precariousness of Jewish life during the 1930s and 1940s: "At home the biggest threat came from the Americans who opposed or resisted us – or condescended to us or rigorously excluded us – because we were Jews" (*Facts*, 20; see also 24). Yet, Roth's account in that work is made suspect – like so many of his fictions – through an amusing fictional device, in this case beginning the book with a letter to "Dear Zuckerman" and concluding the work with a reply from Zuckerman himself, who admonishes Roth the author (author-as-character?): "I've read the manuscript twice. Here is the candor you ask for: Don't publish – you are far better off writing about me than 'accurately' reporting your own life" (161). By contrast, Roth's 1987 "My Life as a Boy," the title of which echoes his 1974 novel *My Life as a Man*, presents very similar material – the pleasures of his childhood, the hostilities that he and other Jewish children faced from neighborhood bullies – yet without the veneer of irony

that creeps into *The Facts*. One might even call the *Times* piece "unironic," to use Cheyette's somewhat unflattering descriptor for *Plot* (Cheyette, 201). Indeed, as I have suggested, it is this absence of irony – whatever one may feel that this does to the literary quality of the works – that pervades both *The Plot Against America* and "My Life as a Boy," and which lends both a tone of unironic similarity.

Of course, as Timothy Parrish notes about the fictional "Philip Roth" of *Operation Shylock*, one must remember that "the character Philip Roth, though presented as if he were authentically Philip Roth, must also be seen as an impersonation" (Parrish, 5). I would suggest that remembering this distinction is less challenging than Parrish implies, since from the very first sentence of the narrative portion of the novel, the tone fairly drips with irony: "I learned about the other Philip Roth in January 1988, a few days after the New Year, when my cousin Apter telephoned me in New York to say that Israel radio had reported that I was in Jerusalem attending the trial of John Demjanjuk, the man alleged to be Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka" (*Shylock*, 17). Despite following a "Preface" that claims that material for the novel is drawn from the author's personal notebooks (13), the opening uncertainty surely alerts readers to the possible presence of subterfuge. Yet, while both *Shylock* and *Counterlife* effectively "contradict and counterimagine" (Shostak, 4) readers' perceptions of the *real* Roth, to the extent that "the narrative speaks in two voices" (Shostak, 4), there is very little sense that Roth is wrestling with versions of *himself* in *Plot*, as the young "Philip Roth" looks back fondly on the pleasures of childhood.

2. The Anti-Semitic Backdrop

Despite the apparent comfort that attends their assimilation, though, there are hints of underlying anxiety. Implicit in the statement that "Nobody in the neighborhood had a beard or dressed in the antiquated Old World style" and that "[H]ardly anyone in the vicinity spoke with an accent" is the presence, in living memory, of the Jewish immigrant past. That Roth makes this distinction suggests an expectation on the part of readers that such a distinction needs to be made – that his audience will wonder about the type of community that shaped an author who, growing up in 1930s New Jersey, was merely a stone's throw from the large concentration of second-generation American Jews living in New York City.

More significant, perhaps, is the sense that this explanation of his background exudes a somewhat rehearsed quality, as though Roth has honed this definition of his identity over a lifetime of public incomprehension and dissatisfaction with his notion of what it means to be Jew. Indeed, the portrayal of a decidedly assimilated Jewish community is perhaps less innocent of motive than it might seem, for Roth, in setting up a tension between “ordinary Americans” who also happen to be Jewish, on the one hand, and Jews who happen to be American, is preparing us to recognize that, in the eyes of an anti-Semite, this is a distinction without a difference. Roth has examined this tension before in “Eli, the Fanatic,” in which the intolerance of an assimilated Jewish community that seeks to uproot the traditional “greenhorns” (2006, 191) who have moved nearby stems, in part, from their terror in being *re-identified* as Other, out of a genuine sense of insecurity in being associated with them (see Sklar 2013; Aarons 2007). A similar dynamic is seen in *The Plot Against America*, in light of the Lindbergh administration’s policy called “Homestead 42” (243-248), which aims to relocate Jews from metropolitan regions, where they tended to live in larger communities, to distant rural areas where individual families would be essentially isolated from other Jews. While such a relocation scheme lacks the brutal sense of imprisonment and dispossession that accompanied the relocation of Japanese Americans during World War II, the parallels between the sentiments that lay behind that action and Homestead 42 are difficult to avoid.

Within the Jewish community of the novel, support for this program is limited mainly to prominent Jews who are less subject to relocation. These supporters do everything possible to separate themselves from their immigrant past, and to avoid being noticed *as Jews* by the society at large, in the belief that the resistance of Jews to relocation will inflame the prejudices of ordinary Americans (322). Yet, as Sander Gilman points out “even as one distances oneself from this aspect of oneself, there is always the voice of the power group saying, Under the skin you are really like them anyhow” (3). This theme is reiterated frequently in *The Plot Against America*, but never more directly than when Roth’s mother says, “Well, like it or not, Lindbergh is teaching us what it means to be Jews” (*Plot*, 305).

Roth indeed reminds us of the conspicuous presence of those who would “teach us what it means to be Jews” at the time – the

external forces that sought to impose an outsider status, whether or not one considered oneself Other. The most prominent, of course, is the figure of Lindbergh, whose transatlantic flight in 1927 had made him an internationally famous, "charismatic" (Dunn 2013, 46) figure. A decade later, Lindbergh had parlayed his fame into prominence as a political spokesman. Most conspicuously, he was an ardent advocate for isolationism, even in the face of Nazi aggression (47). More egregiously, according to historian Susan Dunn, "he was also reviving the centuries-old anti-Semitic myth of Jews as stateless foreigners, members of an international conspiratorial clique with no roots in the 'soil' and interested only in 'transportable' paper wealth" (2013, 47-48). Thus, while it is of course impossible to estimate the impact that a Lindbergh presidency, had he actually run, might have had on the treatment of American Jews at the time, Roth's speculative extrapolation draws from a well of highly visible sentiment that prevailed at the time. Indeed, the rampant anti-Semitism, unleashed by the popular Lindbergh, makes the events in the novel that mirror those in Europe – the Kristallnacht-like looting (317), the pogrom-like brutality (318, 357-

359), the wild accusations of child blood-letting (376-377) – seem plausible. Roth relies on readers' belief that "it can't happen here" by lulling them into believing that it won't happen there. The discriminatory actions of the government for most of the novel are vile, racist, anti-Semitic, but not on the order of the historical Nazi regime. Yet, towards the end of the novel, Roth shows how tensions and acts of discrimination can escalate. We see this also in perhaps the most openly anti-Semitic group portrayed in the novel, the German-American Bund, whose rally of twenty-two thousand people in Madison Square Garden in New York – described in animated detail in the novel (see, for instance, 209-211) – is based directly on an actual historical event. Gordon F. Sanders conveys the impact that that display of ideological vitriol had at the time: "That rally, the largest such conclave in U.S. history, shocked Americans at the time...This was America. New York City. For Americans wondering whether it could happen here, the Bund rally provided the awful answer" (Sanders 2017). It is inconceivable that an event that was so blatantly anti-Semitic, in such a prominent, nearby New York venue, would have escaped the notice of Roth's actual par-

ents, nor would it have failed to stir their concerns as Jews. Roth's fictional father, in fact, takes his sons to Bund rallies, so that they will be able to recognize the nature of the threat that they face.

For the child narrator, though, this presents a perplexing question: How would they know that I am Jewish? This question is never overtly stated, yet we follow the progress of his gradual realization that the features of his Jewishness that he fondly identifies at the beginning of the novel are supplemented by more revealing physical markers that, as the violence escalates, turn him and his family into targets. Philip remarks, as though observing it for the first time, "It was then that I realized...that my mother looked Jewish. Her hair, her nose, her eyes – my mother looked *unmistakably* Jewish. But then so must I, who so strongly resembled her. I hadn't known" (160). Indeed, this sense of never being able to fully escape one's identity involves the recognition of a two-fold sense of oneself: how I see myself, and how others see me. In *Portrait of a Jew*, the Tunisian postcolonial philosopher Albert Memmi draws this distinction in a way that will be useful to our analyzing further the world in which Roth lived, as well as the one that he has created in order to contest or counter that historical narrative. "That moment always comes," writes Memmi, "when you stop not thinking about it, when you understand what it means, over and above the legal and categorical boundaries, what it implies for the details and the direction of life, and you end by admitting: so then, I am a Jew. I am a Jew to myself, I am a Jew to other men" (Memmi, 26). This epiphany ("that moment always comes"), as Memmi articulates it, presents for the individual the realization of his or her otherness, as defined by others as much as by oneself. Naturally, this realization would have occurred to the historical Roth at some point, yet it would be a mistake to regard that recognition as possessing the same existential force – the same existential *dread* – given the increasingly precarious context in which the fictional "Philip" arrives at his realization. Yet, in light of the considerable stirrings of anti-Semitism that *did* exist in America at the time, it is difficult to conclude, with Cheyette, that Roth's imagined extension of Nazism "appropriates a traumatic history (especially European-Jewish suffering) within the boundaries of the United States" (165-166). I would suggest, rather, that as a Jewish "outsider" within a potentially hostile America, Roth taps into a degree of identification with

the victims of the Holocaust. While one may debate the degree to which this rises to the level of what Christina Fuhr terms “vicarious group trauma” (Fuhr 2016), Roth nevertheless rhetorically projects to audiences his own empathy (Keen 2007, 140) for the experiences of the European Jewish martyrs of his generation – but to what end?

3. Counter-Narration as Self-Definition

In Roth’s immersion in the trauma described above – and, by extension, the experience of the Holocaust – we find two strategies at work that are closely related, but different conceptually and in operation. The first of these seems quite natural to a work of alternative *history*, in that by definition such histories call into question or at least disturb our confidence in the events provided by the histories that have been handed down to us. In this “polemical” sense, Roth’s novel works as a form of *counter-history*, the “aim [of which] is the distortion of the adversary’s self-image, of his identity, through the deconstruction of his memory” (Funkenstein 1993, 36). This “memory” is the “dominant cultural narrative” (Andrews 2004, 1), which, in this case, views the status of American Jews during the 1930s as one of security and acceptance, in stark contrast with the insecurity and rejection of European Jews during the same period. Historian Amos Funkenstein points to the pernicious potential in many counter-histories, the most glaring of which are the continuing attempts to deny the reality of the Holocaust (Funkenstein 1993, 44-48). Such examples, historically indefensible and morally abhorrent, give pause to anyone who, in the present era of “fake news,” values historical accuracy over polemics. Nevertheless, there is a submerged story beneath the “establishment history” (Biale 1982, 7) that Roth attempts to bring to the surface: the *perception* of the actual, lived experience of American Jews at the time. Roth implicitly “contests” (Abbott 2008, 175-192) this view in ways that challenge the certainty of that history, and thereby deconstructs the components of the narratives through which that history, in part, is told. In this way, the counter-historical element in the novel does not reside in the fact that it represents an alternative history, but in what it says about the period in which the supposedly known history took place.

Of course, Roth’s novel is not “history,” counter- or otherwise. To the extent that Roth is contesting anything, therefore, it would be

more appropriate to view this work as a form of counter-*narration*. The aims in this genre are similar to the counter-history, in that it provides an outlet for marginalized peoples to wrest control of the ways their stories are told. As Funkenstein points out, not all history is in narrative form (32), yet narratives – in contrast with artifacts or philosophical argument – are arguably the form in which the significance and meaning of ideas can be communicated most resonantly (see Nussbaum 1990, 3-53). Indeed, although Roth builds his alternative history on a foundation of established and verifiable fact, the novel is first and foremost a fictional narrative, one constructed to communicate the ideas that we have discussed above, particularly the examination of his Jewish identity. If Roth's exploration of his own Jewishness is instructive, it is in his wrestling with the nature of that identity, and in his refusal to allow others to define it – a countering, if you will, of the master narrative (Bamberg 2004, 359-361) that anti-Semites would have the populace at large believe can be pinned to a narrow set of deplorable characteristics. When, during the height of the anti-Jewish violence, "Philip" imagines running away from the community of Jews in New Jersey to an Omaha, Nebraska, nearly devoid of Jews, he sees this as a way of also shedding his Jewishness, of losing the negative features by which Jews were identified. "Not that I'd identify myself as Jewish once I reached Omaha. I'd say – speaking aloud at long last – that I didn't know what I was or who. That I was nothing and nobody – just a boy and nothing more..." (417). This is the closest that Roth comes in *Plot* to imagining an alternative self, a "counterlife," and it is certainly easy to see why the creator of multiple Philip Roths might entertain this possibility: As "Philip" contemplates the possibility of abandoning his identity, the anticipation of relief from having to be Jewish is palpable. Yet, in keeping with what Cheyette considers a repeated theme in Roth's late work, "the replacement of pastoral innocence (in its many forms) by an overwhelming sense of Holocaust-inflected suffering and anguish (201), Philip eventually opts not to flee, and with that decision Roth reminds us that neither he nor anyone else can escape from his or her own identity.

In this regard, the experience of *New York Times* editor Jonathan Weisman is instructive, and may serve as a cautionary contemporary reminder of the reaches of virulent anti-Semitism. In his recent

(2018) book (*(((Semitism)))*) *Being Jewish in America in the Age of Trump*, Weisman describes how, as a secular Jew, he gave little thought to his identity until he was targeted on Twitter by alt-right trolls: "What I didn't know was that I had unwittingly exposed what was known in the alt-right as 'echoes,' those three parentheses that practitioners of online harassment wrapped around Jewish-sounding names on social media" (Weisman 2018, 8). As a result, he was "swarmed" with messages and images, including "the Nazi iconography of the shiftless, hooknosed Jew" (8), "an image of the gates of Auschwitz" (8), "Holocaust denial" (9), and other harrowing forms of abuse. For Weisman, as for "Philip Roth," to recognize oneself as a Jew is at least partly a byproduct of acknowledging how others view him. As dire as that self-recognition may be, within the context of the "Holocaust-inflected" world of *The Plot Against America*, I am reluctant to view the novel as "overwhelmingly" one of "suffering and anguish," as Cheyette suggests. By deciding instead to challenge that master narrative by the simple decision to reexamine his identity, Roth has simultaneously taken on the more daunting task of defining what it means to be a Jew, both then and now. Indeed, the pressure imposed by the Lindbergh regime on the Jews of *The Plot Against America* brings to the surface some of the elements of Otherness, grounded originally in an *immigrant* self-definition, that subtly haunt the more assimilated Jewish population of today. Parrish, in "Roth and Ethnic Identity," articulates this tension perceptively: "[I]f Roth's Jews are 'American' in the way that they conceive the fluidity of their cultural identity, they are also 'American' in their insistence that without a prior ethnic cultural identity with which to invent themselves they would have no identity at all" (Parrish 2007, 3). Thus, even though there are compelling reasons for moving on from a "normative" Jewish (literary) identity grounded in the immigrant roots of the American Jewish population, as Benjamin Schreier contends (2015, 8), it is also impossible to conceptualize the Jewish experience in the United States without also recognizing how the travails of immigration and assimilation, ingrained in the consciousness of Jews, shaped the varieties of Jewish identity in America, despite the distance that they have traveled from those immigrant origins. Moreover, it is this recognition of being but one step removed, as it were, from the precariousness of that prior existence that seems to

constitute the larger ethical urgency of Roth's novel: Rather than a platitude – "for you were strangers in the land of Egypt," as Jews remind themselves at Passover each year – Roth suggests the roots of a more stable form of solidarity with oppressed peoples everywhere than the simple conviction that it is "right." Beyond conventional moral obligation, Roth appeals to a deep-rooted sense in Jews' own experience of being the stranger.

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'Fake news'

Forestillinger om offentlighed i deliberativ belysning

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Abstract

Notions of fake news and post-truth have recently gained attention in public debates in several countries. To a large extent, these notions have been employed to criticize forms of communication and alleged deficits in political debates. The current article examines how the notion of fake news has been articulated in the Danish mass media in a selection of texts from autumn 2017. On the basis of this brief analysis, the article critically discusses the (implicit) understandings of the public sphere and its problems associated with the notion of fake news. To cast a constrastive light on these understandings, deliberative perspectives on a democratic sphere are drawn upon. As a result, the article points to limitations of the notion of fake news when it comes to addressing key challenges of a modern public sphere.

Keywords fake news, offentlighed, deliberativt demokrati, diskursanalyse

Introduktion

Betegnelser som 'fake news' og det 'post-faktuelle samfund' har på kort tid vundet indpas i den offentlige debat i adskillige lande. Oxford Dictionaries kårede i 2016 'post-truth' til årets ord - i øvrigt

i konkurrence med 'hygge' – og noterede en stigning i anvendelsen af ordet på ikke mindre end ca. 2.000 % i sammenligning med 2015 (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016). Tilsvarende kårede australske Macquarie Dictionary (Committee's choice) 'fake news' til årets ord i 2016 med reference til dets udbredelse i den politiske debat (Macquarie Dictionary, 2016). Også i Danmark kan man konstatere en eksplosiv vækst i brugen af disse betegnelser. En søgning på databasen Infomedia viser eksempelvis, at 'fake news' er blevet brugt i 8120 artikler i danske medier i 2017 mod 221 i 2016 og 17 i 2015. Betegnelserne er ikke mindst blevet brugt i forbindelse den britiske afstemning om EU-medlemskab i juni 2016 og Donald Trumps valgkamp op til det amerikanske præsidentvalg i november 2016, men brugen af termene rækker langt ud over disse to kontekster.

Ud over således at være kommet i omløb i offentligheden, er 'fake news' og 'post-faktuel' også begreber, der forholder sig *til* offentlighed. De anvendes til kritisk at vurdere træk ved offentligheden eller ved bestemte aktørers offentlige kommunikation. Den er denne offentlighedsdiagnose og de dermed forbundne *idealforestillinger* om offentlighed, som indeværende artikel vil kaste lys over. Det sker ved at sammenholde 'fake news'-begrebet med veletablerede *deliberative* forestillinger om en velfungerende demokratisk offentlighed. De deliberative forestillinger tjener således til kontrastivt at fremkalde og tydeliggøre, hvordan offentlighed forstås i diskussionen om 'fake news'. Det er artiklens hovedansigt at kaste et kritisk blik på begrænsninger ved 'fake news'-begrebet, når det gælder om at adressere væsentlige udfordringer for en demokratisk offentlighed. Sammenligningen med den deliberative tradition tjener her til at pege på, hvad der offentlighedsteoretisk set falder uden for synsvinklen i 'fake news'-begrebet.

For at etablere et empirisk grundlag for den offentlighedsteoretiske diskussion, præsenterer artiklen en kort empirisk analyse af brugen af 'fake news' i danske medier, baseret på enkle diskurs- og sprogbrugsanalytiske greb. Analysen afgrænser sig til 'fake news', da det synes at være den term, der har vundet størst udbredelse i de danske medier.

Artiklen er opbygget som følger: Først lægges der i den empiriske del ud med en oversigt over, hvilke artikeltyper med tilhørende tematiske funktioner, betegnelsen 'fake news' indgår i. For hver af disse typer identificeres det, hvad der (under)forstås ved 'fake news'.

Dernæst analyseres på tværs af artikeltyper, hvilket betydningsindhold 'fake news' tilskrives i kraft af a) synonymy og modbegreber, b) angivelige konsekvenser af 'fake news' og c) de kontekster eller faktorer, som siges at virke fremmede for 'fake news'. I artiklens anden del identificeres på baggrund af den empiriske analyse nogle centrale forestillinger om offentlighed, som debatten om 'fake news' baserer sig på. Det sker i en sammenlignende diskussion med inddragelse af deliberative idealer om en demokratisk offentlighed (Mansbridge, 1999; Dryzek, 2000; Loftager, 2004 & 2016; Gastil, 2008), ofte med inspiration fra (etaper i) Habermas' offentlighedsteori (Habermas, 1962, 1992 & 1994). De deliberative positioner vil således fungere som en art kontrastvæske, der skal fremkalde træk ved offentlighedsforståelsen i 'fake news'-begrebet. Artiklen konkluderer, at 'fake news' ikke er deliberativt irrelevant, men at en række problemstillinger, som for en deliberativ betragtning er af væsentlig demokratisk betydning, falder uden for synsvinklen i 'fake news'-begrebet.

Det empiriske grundlag for analysen udgøres af ca. 250 artikler fra de danske nyhedsmedier, fordelt på artikler fra henholdsvis september, oktober og november 2017, hvori termen 'fake news' indgår. Dette korpus er tilvejebragt via en søgning på 'fake news' på databasen Infomedia. Cirka en tredjedel af materialet udgøres af artikler fra en uge i begyndelsen af september 2017, cirka en tredjedel af artikler fra en uge i begyndelsen af november 2017, og cirka en tredjedel af tilfældigt valgte artikler fra ultimo oktober til ultimo november 2017. Materialet dækker en bred vifte af danske nyhedsmedier, inklusive webkilder, fagblade og lokale medier, men eksklusive sociale netværkssider. Analysen prætenderer på ingen måde at give et fuldstændigt billede af debatten om 'fake news', men et første indblik i mønstre i brugen af termen, som kan udgøre et ikke-vilkårligt afsæt for artiklens offentlighedsteoretiske diskussion.

Analyse

Analyse I. Typer af artikler og tematiske funktioner

Man kan i det foreliggende materiale identificere mindst seks typer af artikler, som adskiller sig ved at 'fake news' indgår i forskellige tematiske funktioner, heraf fire hvor 'fake news' er tematisk overordnet, og to hvor fake news er tematisk underordnet.

Under de tematisk overordnede findes en række artikler, der beretter udførligt om *specifikke eksempler* på 'fake news'. Det er således det konkrete eksempel, der tematisk er i fokus. Det kan fx være en historie om, at Johanne Schmidt Nielsen fra Enhedslisten har vundet en retssag om tortgodtgørelse mod en person, som på sitet Newsa.dk "delte en falsk nyhed om, at politikeren var blevet fundet død i Århus" (Jyllands-Posten, 27.10.2017). Eller det kan være en historie om en person, der med en falsk profil på sociale medier har udgivet sig for at være medlem af Venstre, og som med "en grov tone forarger [...] andre brugere, der tror, han er politiker" (Jyllands-Posten, 8.11.2017). De konkrete beretninger kan også ledsages af mere generelle overvejelser, i ovenstående tilfælde bekymring for rygtedannelse og konsekvenser for den demokratiske debat. Som eksemplerne illustrerer, er det kendetegnende for disse historier, at 'fake news' står for åbenlyst usandfærdige oplysninger, der er bragt i offentlig cirkulation for at fremme en økonomisk eller politisk interesse.

En anden type artikler tematiserer 'fake news' som et *generelt tema*, dvs. med fokus på karakteristiske træk ved *fænomenet 'fake news'* uafhængigt af dækningen af bestemte begivenheder og sager. Eksempelvis citeres professor Vincent Hendricks for, at begrebet dækker over "'fingerede nyheder, misrepræsentation af motiver og formål, der simulerer journalistik og således sandfærdighed'" (Forskerforum, 5.9.2017). En tilsvarende formulering bringes i et citat fra det britiske forlag Collins, hvor 'fake news' bestemmes som "falske, ofte sensationelle nyheder, forklædt som journalistik" (Jyllands-Posten, 3.11.2017). Materialet indeholder også enkelte eksempler på artikler, som diskuterer forskellige forståelser af 'fake news', eksempelvis skelner Tom Jensen mellem "bevidst desinformation", "fejl" hos medierne og "bias" i mediedækningen (b.dk, 5.11.2017). I denne sammenhæng kan man også se de artikler, hvor der annonceres foredrag på fx det lokale bibliotek om 'fake news'. Også her er det selve fænomenet 'fake news', interessen samler sig om.

For det tredje bruges termen 'fake news' af politiske aktører til at *angribe politiske modstandere*. I den undersøgte periode er der således flere eksempler fra kommunalvalgkampen, hvor politiske kandidater har angrebet andre kandidater for at bruge 'fake news'. Fx angribes en byrådspolitiker i Brønderslev for "radikal populisme og fake news" (Nordjyske Stifttidende Vendsyssel, 3.11.2017), og i Frederikssund kommune diskuteres det om, det "at tale om boliger

på Kalveøen er "Fake News i bedste Trump stil" (Lokalavisen Frederikssund, 20.11.2017). Som i den første kategori er der tale om konkrete eksempler, men til forskel herfra fremføres de af politiske aktører som *beskyldninger* mod andre politiske aktører. Det man beskyldes for, når man beskyldes for 'fake news', synes at være en misvisende eller ligefrem manipulerende sagsfremstilling i sin politiske kommunikation, som dog ikke behøver at være decideret usand.

Endvidere kan man for det fjerde udskille et *metaniveau*, som handler om *debatten om fake news*. Her kan man fx læse at "debatten om falske nyheder er unødigt stor" (Lixen.dk, 6.11.2017) eller at "[f]rygten for, at Facebook og Twitter spreder falske nyheder, ser ud til at være overdreven" (videnskab.dk, 6.9.2017). Som antydet indgår der her ofte kritiske vurderinger af debatten, strækkende sig til opfordringer om at holde op med at bruge begrebet. I flere artikler væves metaniveauet dog sammen med den generelle debat om, hvad 'fake news' er. Samlet set drejer kritikken i dette metaniveau sig enten om, at begrebet er uklart, eller om at det ikke empirisk dækkende.

Til disse fire artikeltyper kan man føje to, hvor fake news spiller en mere underordnet tematisk rolle. Det gælder for det første en type, hvor 'fake news' indgår som *præmis* i artikler med et andet tematisk fokus. Disse artikler handler således om andre emner, som 'fake news' siges at have betydning for. Som eksempel kan nævnes diskussionen om den bebudede lukning af den digitale udgave af Den Store Danske Encyklopædi, hvor Bibliotekarforbundets formand, Tine Jørgensen, citeres for følgende: "I en verden hvor der tales om bobler, postfaktualisme og fake news er det ekstremt bekymrende at skulle stå uden et nationaleksikon" (BF.dk, 1.9.2017). Det formodede eksistens af 'fake news' fungerer her som præmis i et argument for at opretholde nationaleksikonet. På lignende vis indgår eksistensen af 'fake news' som præmis i diskussioner om DR's fremtid (Magisterbladet, 3.11.2017). Den forudsatte forståelse af 'fake news' i disse artikler er ikke helt klar, men synes som minimum at henvise til en samfundsmæssig tilstand, hvor viden og pålidelige informationer er kommet under pres.

Endelig kan man pege på en gruppe af artikler med vidt forskelligt tematisk fokus, hvor 'fake news' optræder *en passant* som en brik i en anden historie. 'Fake news' indgår her ikke som præmis, men

snarere som et tekstligt *krydderi*. Det sker fx når der i en udredning af Islams personalhistorie spørges: "Var det måske Usamu, som skulle have ledet kalifatet efter sin farfar? Ren konspirationsteori? Fake news?" (Weekendavisen, 1.9.2017). Eller når vi i en leder i Motor-Magasinet erfarer, at magasinet under den nye chefredaktør fortsat skal være "mediet, hvor du får klar og reel besked. Ingen fake news her" (Motor-Magasinet, 1.9.2017). Disse eksempler illustrerer godt, hvordan 'fake news' har bredt sig som en term, der ubesværet lader sig anvende i meget forskellige sammenhænge, typisk i betydningen '(bevidst) fejlagtig information'.

Analyse II. Betydningstilskrivning på tværs af artikeltyper og tematiske funktioner

Analysen vender sig nu mod det betydningsindhold, som 'fake news' tilskrives på tværs af artikeltyper. Ser man på de termer, som 'fake news' sidestilles med, fremgår det, at 'fake news' associeres med begreber som "usandheder" (Jyllands-Posten, 8.11.2017; ForskerForum, 5.9.2017), "fejl" (lixen.dk, 6.11.2017) og "forkerte informationer" (Jyllands-Posten, 8.11.2017). Mere rammende er det dog at sige, at 'fake news' især sidestilles med begreber, som udtrykker en *tilsigtet brug af usandheder*. Det viser materialet talrige eksempler på, heriblandt "misinformation" (Viborg.folkeblad.dk, 8.11.2017; Fyens.dk, 3.9.2017), "løgn(e)" (b.dk, 16.11.2017; Dagbladet Roskilde, 17.11.2017; Fyns Amts Avis, 24.11.2017), "falsk(e) nyhed(er)" (Information, 17.11.2017; Journalisten.dk, 8.11.2017; 180grader.dk, 25.10.2017; Sn.dk, 16.11.2017; Ritzau, 6.9.2017), "propaganda" (Politiken, 1.9.2017; Jyllands-Posten, 27.10.2017; Ritzau, 6.9.2017), "fup" (BT, 15.11.2017), "pure opspind" (b.dk., 1.9.2017) og "manipulationer" (ForskerForum, 5.9.2017). Det semantiske indhold i disse betegnelser stemmer ganske godt overens med de eksplicite definitioner på fake news, som allerede er blevet nævnt. Dog anvendes 'fake news' i en bredere betydning end 'fingerede nyheder', da termen også bruges om falske politiske profiler og om udsagn fra politiske aktører. Snarere synes fællesnævneren at være bevidste usandheder. Desuden er det kendetegnende, at usandhederne søges bragt i omløb ud over en enkelt situation eller lokal kontekst. Verbet 'spredte' bruges således ofte i forbindelse med 'fake news'.

Ser man på de *modbegreber*, som 'fake news' bestemmes op imod, drejer det sig om begreber som "sandt"/"sandheder", (Fyns

Amts Avis, 24.11.2017), "ordentlighed" (Stevnsbladet, 15.11.2017), "ægte" (Sciencereport.dk, 19.11.2017), "klar og reel besked" (Motor-Magasinet, 1.9.2017), "respekt for viden" (omnibus.au.dk, 1.9.2017), "fakta" (Nordjyske Stifttidende, 3.9.2017, ForskerForum, 5.9.2017) og "viden" (Jyllands-Posten, 5.11.2017). Betydningsindholdet dækker dels over kendsgerninger og viden om disse, dels over en bestemt (respektfuld) indstilling over for denne viden og formidlingen af den.

Hvad angår de samfundsmæssige konsekvenser af 'fake news', er det karakteristisk for det analyserede materiale, at der tit peges på negative konsekvenser for nyhedsmediernes og for den demokratiske debat. Om nyhedsmediernes siges det fx, at 'fake news' har "bidraget til at underminere samfundets tillid til nyhedsjournalistik" (Jyllands-Posten, 3.11.2017), og at det udgør et "problem for de traditionelle mediers troværdighed" (b.dk, 5.11.2017). I forhold til demokratiet hedder det med en forsigtig formulering, at 'fake news' "forstyrrer den politiske debat" (Jyllands-Posten, 8.11.2017), og i en skarpere variant, at det "er med til at ødelægge den politiske debat" (Information, 11.11.2017) eller ligefrem udgør "et gigantisk problem for vores demokratiske debat" (Jyllands-Posten, 27.10.2017). I et videre perspektiv giver 'fake news' også anledning til bekymring for "sammenhængskraften" i demokratiet eller for, "om vores demokratiske institutioner er mere skrøbelige end vi måske troede" (ForskerForum, 5.9.2017). Det er således tydeligt, at den negative vurdering af 'fake news' ikke begrænser sig til selve forekomsten af usandheder eller det moralsk angribelige i at fremsætte og sprede dem, men også retter sig mod samfundsmæssige implikationer for journalistik, offentlighed og demokrati.

Om de faktorer, der siges at virke fremmende for 'fake news', peges der i adskillige artikler på fremkomsten af sociale medier som et gunstigt miljø for cirkulationen af 'fake news'. Mens intentionen om at udøve propaganda ikke behøver at være ny, som fx det hævdes i en artikel om russisk brug af 'fake news' over det seneste århundrede (b.dk, 16.11.2017), har man nu fået "en ny propagandakanal i sociale medier" (Ritzau, 6.9.2017). Begrundelsen herfor er ofte underforstået, men udfoldes her i et citat af Vincent Hendricks om de sociale medier: "Der er et stort publikum, det er billigt at sprede misinformation, og der er ingen journalistiske dørvogtere, som skal være gatekeepere i sandhedens tjeneste." (ForskerForum, 5.9.2017).

Sammenfattende kan man konkludere, at 'fake news' i det behandlede materiale overvejende forstås som bevidst formidling af usandheder, der søges bragt i omløb i offentligheden med henblik på at fremme en politisk eller økonomisk interesse, og hvis cirkulation og gennemslagskraft begünstiges af de sociale medier. Konsekvenserne heraf beskrives som potentielt alvorlige for tilliden til nyhedsmedierne, den offentlige debat og de demokratiske institutioner.

'Fake news'-forestillinger om offentlighed Offentlighed som deliberativ praksis

På baggrund af den empiriske analyse vil jeg nu identificere og diskutere de normative forestillinger om offentlighed, der gør sig gældende i brugen af 'fake news'. Det vil ske i en sammenligning med offentlighedsforestillinger i den deliberative tradition, som for overskuelighedens skyld er underinddelt i offentlighed som en deliberativ praksis og offentlighed som et deliberativt system.

Centralt i den habermasianske offentlighedsforståelse står idealet om et offentligt ræsonnement, hvor temaer åbnes for offentlig drøftelse, og synspunkter underkastes en argumentativ afprøvning (Habermas, 1962, 1992 & 1994). Som det senere er blevet udfoldet i teorier om et deliberativt demokrati (Dryzek, 2000; Gutmann & Thompson, 2008; Gastil, 2008), ligger der heri en forestilling om, at kernen i demokratiet er samtale og argumentation. Den offentlige debat, som skal lede frem til demokratiske beslutninger på fællesskabets vegne, skal således primært bestå i formulering, udveksling og afvejning af argumenter. Den fordring står selvfølgelig i modsætning til autoritære styreformers, men også til en 'markedsdemokratiske' forståelse, hvor det centrale i demokratiet ses som selve afstemningen og muligheden for at få sine synspunkter repræsenteret gennem denne (Loftager, 2004 & 2016).

Opgaven for den offentlige debat med at lade argumenter udfolde sig og brydes med andre argumenter skærpes i pluralistiske samfund med forskelligartede synspunkter, værdier og interesser. At inkludere forskellige stemmer i den offentlige samtale med henblik på at belyse samfundsmæssige spørgsmål fra forskellige sider og afveje forskellige hensyn, er derfor en væsentlig deliberativ udfordring. Det indebærer ikke nødvendigvis en tro på, at konsensus altid er mulig, men nok en forestilling om, at den enkeltes synspunkter, interesser

og præferencer ikke er fuldstændigt givne, men også kan præges og forandres gennem kommunikation.

Forsøger man at sammenholde denne deliberative offentlighedsforståelse med brugen af 'fake news', kan man for det første sige, at der med 'fake news' påpeges et problem, som også er relevant i en deliberativ sammenhæng. For en deliberativ betragtning er det indlysende, at bevidst spredning af usandheder er problematisk; et offentligt ræsonnement må naturligvis bygge på et faktisk grundlag. Men samtidig er det tydeligt, at offentlighedsdiagnosen i 'fake news'-begrebet sætter andre accenter end den deliberative. For det første fokuseres der med 'fake news' snævert på offentlige ytringers sandhedsværdi, hvor man i en deliberativ sammenhæng ville interessere sig mere for om ytringer er retvisende eller misvisende i forhold til belysningen af en bestemt sag. Det kan således meget vel være at bestemte udsagn er faktisk sande, men ikke desto mindre må anses for at udgøre en utilstrækkelig eller ligefrem misvisende fremstilling af virkeligheden. Som eksempel kan man nævne begrebet 'spin', der for 15-20 år siden blev omgærdet af en nysgerrighed, som kan minde om den, der bliver 'fake news' til del i dag (se i en dansk sammenhæng fx Nielsen, 2004). Spin opererer præcis i dette skel mellem det sande og det retvisende; effektivt spin formår at (for)dreje fremstillingen af en sag i en for afsenderen gunstig retning, vel at mærke uden at man kan beskyldes for at lyve. Vellykket spin kan således være deliberativt problematisk, selv om det ikke er 'fake news'. For det andet rækker det deliberative perspektiv også ud over selve beskrivelsen eller repræsentationen af virkeligheden. Det deliberativt afgørende er argumenter og afvejning mellem argumenter, hvilket ikke lader sig reducere til et spørgsmål om sande eller falske fremstillinger af virkeligheden. Empirisk kan man her henvise til, at en række politiske kontroverser - fra fordelingspolitiske emner som fastlæggelse af skatter og afgifter til værdipolitiske emner som regulering af omskæring af drengebørn - ikke primært drejer sig om, hvad der er sandt og falsk, men snarere om, hvilken vægt og betydning man skal tillægge forskellige sandheder. Sandhed er ikke deliberativt irrelevant, men det afgørende er ofte fortolkningen af og prioriteringen mellem forskellige sandheder. I den forstand er 'fake news'-debatten og det deliberative perspektiv ikke uforenelige, men optaget af vidt forskellige problematikker.

Mere specifikt kan man nævne flere systemiske træk ved offentligheden, som deliberativt set kan stå i vejen for den saglige fremstilling og afvejning af argumenter. For eksempel kan man diskutere om den politiske journalistik i for høj grad har fokus på proces, spil og strategi frem for på politisk indhold og substans og dermed ikke leverer et tilstrækkeligt solidt grundlag for at borgerne kan tage stilling til centrale politiske spørgsmål. Det er et kendt tema i forskningen inden for politisk journalistik, som også har givet anledning til empiriske undersøgelser (se i en dansk sammenhæng fx Elmelund-Præstekær & Svensson, 2013 og Horsbøl, 2013), men det er et emne som begrebet 'fake news' er temmelig uegnet til at adressere, eftersom det næppe er et resultat af individuelle intentioner om at sende usandheder i omløb. I stedet er der brug for forklaringsmodeller, som inddrager systemiske forhold i samspillet mellem politik og medier, herunder professionaliseringen af den politiske kommunikation, konkurrenceforhold på mediemarkedet og udviklinger i efterspørgslen efter og brugen af nyheder hos borgerne.

Ligeledes kan man på en deliberativ baggrund, som det nylig er sket inden for tilløb til såkaldt 'konstruktiv journalistik' (Haagerup, 2017), diskutere om nyhedsdækningen er så præget af kriser, skandaler og katastrofer, at den dels ikke giver et retvisende billede af samfundsmæssige udviklinger, og dels placerer publikum i en apatisk position som tilskuer til verdens snarlige undergang frem for at lægge op til at inddrage borgere i mulige løsninger. Igen er der tale om en systemisk kritik, som forholder sig til grundlæggende træk ved journalistikkens funktionsmåde, der ikke lader sig reducere til intentioner hos journalister, redaktører eller andre om at sende usande oplysninger i omløb. Derfor kommer begrebet 'fake news' også til kort som forståelsesramme, hvis den slags problemer ved en demokratisk offentlighed skal adresseres.

Fra en deliberativ synsvinkel kan man derfor betragte den omfattende brug af termen 'fake news' med nogen tvetydighed. På den ene side kan man hilse det velkomment, at spredning af falske historier adresseres. På den anden siden er der en risiko for, at optagetheden af 'fake news' kommer til at skygge for andre deliberative spørgsmål. Der er i brugen af 'fake news' – i det mindste i det her analyserede materiale – ikke tale om, at spørgsmålet om spredning af falske udsagn eksplicit fremhæves som det vigtigste for en demokratisk offentlighed. Ikke desto mindre kan man fra deliberativt hold godt

overveje, om det store fokus på 'fake news', kan tage noget af den offentlige opmærksomhed fra andre nok så væsentlige deliberative spørgsmål, fx om den saglige relevans af sande informationer, om informationernes argumentative tyngde, om inddragelsen af andre sandheder og perspektiver på sagen osv. Det empiriske grundlag i den foregående analyse er for spinkelt til at konkludere mere præcist om karakteren og omfanget af 'fake news'-debattens skyggevirkning over for andre deliberative spørgsmål. Men ud over at pege på den udbredte bekymring for spredning af usande påstande, viser analysen også, at termen 'fake news' har vundet indpas som præmis i argumenter for samfundsmæssige beslutninger og i arsenalet for angreb på politiske modstandere. Endvidere fremgår det, at det bredere deliberative perspektiv ikke er fremherskende i de artikler i det analyserede materiale, der på et metaniveau diskuterer brugen af betegnelsen 'fake news'. Disse forhold tyder derfor på, at skyggevirningen er værd at tage alvorligt og undersøge nærmere. Det kunne fx være ved at undersøge hvordan emner, som i dag diskuteres ud fra 'fake news'-begrebet, tidligere har været italesat.

Endelig synes 'fake news'-debatten at have meget lidt blik for, hvordan 'sandheden' overhovedet artikuleres, og hvad det sprog, man betjener sig af, betyder for forståelsen af sagen. Man kan godt få indtryk af, at det underforstås, at kendsgerningerne taler for sig selv, og at debatten i sandhedens tjeneste blot skal afspejle disse kendsgerninger. Ud over at dette ikke er nogen holdbar sprogfilosofisk position, er det også deliberativt set problematisk, fordi det hæmmer den meta-deliberation, der som et vigtigt led i den offentlige samtale skal kaste et kritisk blik tilbage på rammerne for denne samtale (Thompson, 2008; Rinke, 2016). En refleksion over det sprog, sandhed artikuleres i, hører således med til meta-deliberationen, der igen er en betingelse for at offentligheden ikke stivner, men kan realisere det, Habermas har kaldt offentlighedens selvtransformerende potentiale (Habermas, 1992).

Offentlighed som deliberativt system

Teorier om offentlighed, herunder om et deliberativt demokrati, har i efterhånden mange år lagt afstand til forestillingen om offentlighed som ét offentligt rum til fordel for en forståelse af offentlighed som et netværk af forskellige deloffentligheder, hvor temaer og tegn kan bevæge sig fra den ene arena til den anden (se fx Haber-

mas, 1990). Da vi i moderne, komplekse samfund ikke alle kan mødes på torvet og drøfte alle væsentlige anliggender, bliver det vigtigt at se på diskursive bevægelser og deliberative arbejdsdelinger mellem forskellige offentlige arenaer. I den forstand forskydes interessen til deliberative *systemer* og *distribution* af deliberation i disse (Thompson, 2008; Mansbridge et al., 2012; Stevenson & Dryzek, 2014; Elstub et al. 2016).

I den sammenhæng har det været et centralt anliggende, at offentlighedens arenaer ikke afkobles fra hinanden, men er porøse og gennemtrængelige for impulser fra andre arenaer. Mere specifikt situerer Habermas (1994) eksempelvis den journalistiske medieoffentlighed mellem det politiske system på den ene side og civilsamfundet på den anden. Det normativt afgørende er her, at medieoffentligheden ikke kun præges af input fra ekspertssystemer og fra politiske partier og ministerier, men er modtagelig over for impulser fra civilsamfundet og kan formidle disse videre til det politiske system. Vigtige erfaringer og problemer fra borgernes hverdagsliv samt impulser fra frivillige sammenslutninger og foreninger skal således kunne kanaliseres frem til den 'store' offentlighed og drøftes i denne. Netop i samfund præget af stærke organiserede interesser og ekspertssystemer er offentlighedens sensibilitet over for svagere organiserede interesser og livsformer en vigtig forudsætning for et dueligt offentligt ræsonnement.

Umiddelbart forekommer disse overvejelser at ligge fjernt fra debatten om 'fake news', da forestillinger om civilsamfund og offentlighedens sensibilitet over for dette ikke synes at spille nogen rolle i debatten. Alligevel kan man godt argumentere for, at ideen om offentligheden som et netværk af arenaer, hvor bevægelserne mellem disse er afgørende for offentlighedens duelighed, også gør sig gældende i 'fake news'-debatten. 'Fake news' forstås jo netop som noget, nogen har bragt i omløb, og som andre har bidraget til at sprede.

Her hører lighederne til gengæld op. Det problem, der adresseres med 'fake news'-begrebet synes nemlig ikke at være, at ekspertssystemerne og det politiske system lukker sig om sig selv, men snarere, at civilsamfundet lukker sig om sig selv. Problemet er ikke, at civilsamfundet mangler stemme i offentligheden, men at civilsamfundets stemmer går i selvsving – typisk på sociale netværkssider - hvor stemmerne bekræfter og bestyrker hinanden. I den forstand er den habermasianske problemstilling blevet vendt på hovedet. Tilsvarende

har kuren mod dårligdommen fået det omvendte fortegn; kuren mod 'fake news' går ikke ud på, at ekspertsystemerne skal gøres mere modtagelige for civilsamfundets impulser, men på at civilsamfundet skal gøres mere modtageligt for ekspertsystemernes impulser.

Parallelt til overvejelserne under diskussionen af offentlighed som en deliberativ praksis kan man her konstatere, at diagnosen i 'fake news'-begrebet påpeger et relevant problem; naturligvis er det uhenigtsmæssigt, hvis store dele af den offentlige debat afkobles fra videnskabelig viden. Dette kan også fungere som et nyttigt korrektiv til en idealiserende forståelse af civilsamfundet som et rum for uspolet magtfri kommunikation. Men samtidig kan man notere sig, at idealet om, at offentligheden skal give rum for, at samfundsmæssige beslutninger informeres af forskellige hverdags erfaringer og vidensformer, synes fraværende i 'fake news'-debatten. Spørgsmålet om, hvordan man i et samfund af med stærkt organiserede interesser kan sørge for, at forskellige former for viden kan brydes på en produktiv og oplysende måde, ligger tilsyneladende uden for synsvinklen.

En anden forskel drejer sig om arbejdsdelingen og distributionen i tid og sted mellem forskellige offentlige arenaer. Her kan det for en systemisk deliberativ betragtning godt give mening, at de enkelte arenaer varetager forskellige opgaver, der ikke hver for sig lever op til alle idealer om et offentligt ræsonnement, men som samlet beriger den offentlige samtale. Fx kan nogle offentlige fora – det være sig på sociale netværkssider, i lokale sammenslutninger eller i kombinationer af begge - primært tjene til, at erfaringer og synspunkter overhovedet artikuleres, udvikles og synliggøres, mens disse synspunkter først i andre fora underkastes en kritisk argumentativ afprøvning, som de naturligvis ikke skal skånes for. Det indebærer endvidere, at udtrykkene i disse fora kan have andre former end de i streng forstand argumentative, fx af mere narrativ eller ekspressiv karakter, men samtidig være deliberativt rationelle. Også dette aspekt ligger imidlertid uden for synsvinklen i 'fake news'-debatten. Som ved diskussionen af offentlighed som deliberativ praksis kan man derfor konkludere, at nok peger 'fake news'-debatten på et deliberativt relevant problem – afkobling af videnskabelig viden fra visse fora i den offentlige debat – men samtidig risikerer det stærke fokus på 'fake news' at skygge for problemstillinger, der for en deliberativ betragtning er nok så væsentlige.

Konklusion

Den offentlighedsteoretiske diskussion har peget på, at 'fake news'-diagnosen ikke er uforenelig med et deliberativt perspektiv på en demokratisk offentlighed, men at der er væsentlige forskelle i optagetheder og bekymringer på offentlighedens vegne. Hvor der i 'fake news'-debatten især ytres bekymring for, at usandheder får lov at cirkulere i offentligheden, er man i et deliberativt perspektiv optaget af muligheden for at fremsætte, udveksle og afveje argumenter, hvilket ikke kan reduceres til et spørgsmål om sandhed. Samtidig egner 'fake news'-begrebets fokus på bevidst spredning af usandheder sig ikke til at adressere væsentlige systemiske forhold ved den politiske journalistik. En vigtig forskel er endvidere, at den deliberative optagethed af inklusion af impulser fra svagere organiserede interesser ikke kan genfindes i 'fake news'-debatten; tværtimod går bekymringerne her på, at ekspertviden negligeres i ikke-elitære arenaer. Den deliberative forestilling om arbejdsdeling mellem offentlige arenaer ligger også uden for synsvinklen i 'fake news'-debatten. Samlet set adresserer termen 'fake-news' på den ene side en relevant deliberativ problemstilling om vidensgrundlaget for den offentlige diskussion. På den anden er der risiko for, at 'fake news'-debattens fokus på (u)sandhed kommer til at skygge for andre vigtige deliberative anliggender og dermed bliver kontraproduktiv for udviklingen af en velfungerende offentlighed.

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Strategic Design Fiction

A Plausible Reality & its Implications

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Abstract

This article aims to discuss the role of the dominant critical tradition of design fiction, as well as defending the merits of a pragmatic and strategic view on design fiction, as potentially real solutions. By adapting one of the most prominently referenced models for speculative design (Auger 2013), and using Ryan's (1980) concepts of factual, non-factual, and fictional statements, we propose a way of clarifying how the 'realness' of a given design fiction places it as a speculative design or an actual pragmatic vision for the future. Our contribution is a differentiation of pragmatic strategic, and speculative critical design fiction, based on their plausibility as well as their realness. This creates a clear agenda for distinguishing between different design research agendas of design fiction, potentially applying it in widely different practices.

Keywords design fiction, critical design, counterfactuals, diegetic prototypes

Introduction

In the recent decade, design fiction has emerged as an intriguing design research approach, using narrative structures exploring possible future scenarios from utopian, dystopian, and realistic points of view. Originally presented by novelist Bruce Sterling in 2005 as the shaping of future technology and technological culture, the term itself first saw deep academic treatment through Bleecker's (2009) thesis on using fictional objects in design as *a creative provocatio*:

“It is a way of probing, sketching and exploring ideas. Through this practice, one bridges imagination and materialization by modeling, crafting things, telling stories through objects, which are now effectively conversation pieces in a very real sense.” (Bleecker 2009:8)

Bleecker argues the link between design and fiction originated as an integration of the paths of *technology, art, and science fiction* in order to find opportunities – for design – “to re-imagine how the world may be in the future” (Bleecker 2009:8). This adds a substantial emphasis on the speculative nature, one that can be argued to be true for all design, which up until the moment of realization or implementation, is essentially all defined as ‘what if’ questions about the future (Kolko 2009). Design fiction takes this speculation to its extreme, by allowing the designer to actively speculate with prototypes that are not real yet, as well as concepts that are never meant to become real. Prompted for a formal definition of this new emerging design field, Sterling (2013) proposed design fiction as “[...]the deliberate use of diegetic prototypes to suspend disbeliefs about change.” Here, Sterling draws on Kirby's (2010) notion of the diegetic prototype, as objects, services and scientific breakthroughs, which are only true in their diegetic ‘told’ narrative form, and not necessarily close to being ‘real’ in the sense of existing outside the narrative scenario. The use of ‘deliberate’ in the quote indicates design fiction is not (just) a story-telling practice; the diegetic prototypes implies instead a changed world, which *might* become real. This underscores the importance of the ‘suspending disbelief’ – the ethical responsibility of design fictions is to propose *change*, but not cheat its audience into seeing the change as having become real already. This is a

delicate balance avoiding concepts too futuristic and perceived as implausible, yet not misleading audiences about the realness of the diegetic prototypes. As Pasman (2016) noted, design fictions ultimately are firmly rooted in familiar or logical relations to the here-and-now reality but add a layer of (near) future thus blurring the boundaries between realism and fiction.

The problem—a critical design bias of design fiction

Sterling's 2013 definition, though stemming from the popular journal 'Wired' has become the most quoted definition on design fiction in the academic design research community—being quoted in all top 30 papers indexed in both Scopus and Google Scholar. In the recent ten years, design fiction has established itself as a recognized field within various research communities (Lindley & Coulton 2015) – especially in design research societies (e.g. Scupelli et al 2016), future studies (e.g. Bell et al 2013), and human-computer interaction (e.g. Blythe 2017). The majority of these perspectives consolidated around a *critical design* tradition, using applied critical theory in design to challenge cultural, social, and political concepts through speculative products with neither a commercial nor a utility aim. This view on design fiction has been featured prominently by e.g. Blythe & Wright (2006), Dunne & Raby (2013), Markussen & Knutz, (2013), Auger (2013), and Lindley & Coulton (2015), and represents the vast majority of academic perspectives on design fiction. Dunne & Raby, who popularized the critical design tradition (e.g. Dunne 1999), has recently even described design fiction as one of the central approaches to conduct speculative inquiries through design.

We argue this created a bias towards considering design fiction primarily as a design research tool for evoking critical discussions about speculative possible futures, and less a pragmatic or strategic approach exploring desirable scenarios aiming at becoming real. The bias, towards critical design, in most of recent design fiction literature is puzzling, since there is no emphasis on such bias in Sterling's original framing, neither in Bleecker's (2009) seminal academic treatment. While promoting speculation and reflections about 'what might be', this was framed as being just as much about finding opportunities, for design, "to re-imagine how the world may be in the future" (Bleecker 2009: 9), as putting our ideological and societal structures under scrutiny.

In this article, the aim is discussing the role of the dominant critical tradition of design fiction, as well as defending the merits of a pragmatic and strategic view on design fiction, as something proposing potentially real solutions. We do this, by adapting one of the most prominently referenced models for speculative design (Auger 2013). Using Ryan's (1980) concepts of factual, non-factual, and fictional statements, we propose a basis for assessing a design fiction's degree of departure from our present, revealing its 'realness'.

Design fiction moving between critical and pragmatic perspectives

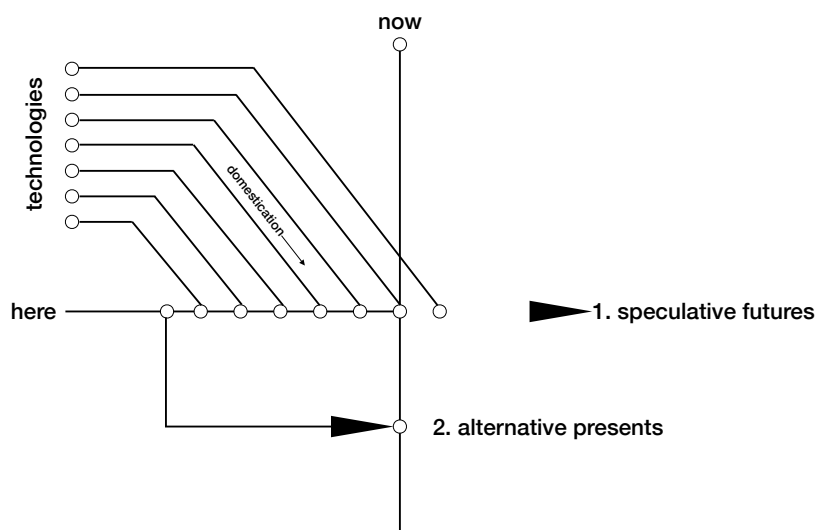
With the critical design tradition's adoption of design fiction, scholars and practitioners re-classified examples of previously known critical designs as examples for diegetic prototypes of design fiction, acting as strong persuasive creators of critical discourses. One example, of the persuasiveness of design fiction used for critical design aims, is Loizeau and Auger's Audio Tooth Implant (Loizeau & Auger, 2002). The original project brief was to "examine the implications of implantable technology for human enhancement purposes through proposing possible applications and access points for technology to enter the body" (Auger, 2013:10). The Audio Tooth Implant was explained as a mobile phone implanted in a tooth. The design fiction was supported by an actual model of a tooth with an embedded computer chip. The main point of the project was to disseminate the idea of such an implant to as many people as possible, hoping to induce a contemplation and discussion of the subject. As the project was picked up by magazines like Wired and news papers like The Sun, Loizeau and Auger showed how design fiction is able to create a discourse among a wide range of participants, but also how the persuasiveness of its suspension of disbelief bordered towards actually cheating the public (Auger, 2013; 11).

As per Sterling's (2013) and Pasman's (2016) notions of design fiction, the approach proposes new realities, which do not diverge too far from the ontology of our here-and-now reality. Loizeau's and Auger's example shows how design fiction through the narrative suspension of disbelief, enables the creation of a critical discursive framing of the discussion of contemporary issues. It supports critical reflection on feasible futures and decisions needed to arrive at or avoid the depicted scenario. This requires a narrative naviga-

tion between both past real world events, the emergence of new technologies, as well as forecasting the potential future issues arising from said technologies. Thus, our past experiences and decisions are either to be taken into critical consideration, or will be replicated without much reflection.

Auger (2013) presents this in his oft-referenced timeline grid for crafting the speculative scenarios of design fiction:

Figure 1: Auger’s model of speculative futures. Redrawn from (Auger, 2013: 3).



Auger’s (2013) model presents a timeline of speculative alternate presents, as well as speculative futures. These categories are all based on the ‘technology emergence’, which indicates the point in time at which a given technology is actually invented or conceived, and gradually reaches different instances of actual implementation (the dots on the horizontal axis). For each past implementation, Auger argues, the technology becomes gradually domesticated—forming conventions, habits, and opinions amongst various audiences. This also includes announced products belonging on the future right side of the model, but where discourse has reached large enough audiences being an active part of the discussion of the specific technology. Finally, outside the domestication accolade in the model, announced or planned instances of technologies, which despite being released are still not part of the general zeitgeist to inform any meaningful discourse of the technology.

While the models axis' of past, present, and future seemingly open up for a narrative scenario building, it is evident from Auger's descriptions, that the speculative nature of speculative alternate presents, as well as speculative and lost futures, is aimed towards primarily provoking a critical stance on our domestication of technology. The emphasis is so to speak put on negatively questioning 'do we really want this reality?' rather than positively exploring questions of 'what might actually work in our reality?'.

Despite its primary use for critical inquiry, Auger's model enables pragmatic and strategic perspectives on design fiction, adhering to the more general outline set by Sterling's original description. These types of design fiction, actually aiming at a possible realization, can be seen as being another pragmatic and strategic, deliberate use of diegetic prototypes to suspend disbelief about change. The intention is to plant the seed for the domestication of the idea of 'what might happen' if the diegetic prototype became real. The role of design fiction here is not to show a final design vision from its most favorable side and potentially hiding the less desirable aspects, like the so-called vaporware (Sterling 2013), but rather to invite future users to reflect upon how the proposed design might affect their contexts. Thus, Zeller (2011) argues that design fiction should not be seen as an approach to actual design making, but rather as an approach to constructive design research.

Lately, we have seen an increase in corporations using design fiction as a way to present their corporate visions of the future, especially regarding consumer technology and policy. Companies as diverse as e.g. Microsoft, Nokia, Land Rover, Fischer-Price, and IKEA have experimented with narrative vision videos utilizing diegetic prototypes, speculating on the companies future product and service concepts.

The common denominator among this growing portfolio is its employment of a speculative scenario containing existing technology, but which has not yet realized its potential on either a consumer or enterprise domain –it is so to speak not yet fully domesticated. They are, in Auger's terms, not real in the present, but are still undergoing an initial domestication through research and development showcases, by contextualizing the diegetic prototypes and technology in speculative use cases. The baseline of technology exists, just not in a realized instantiation. Instead, the speculative sce-

nario is purposefully directed towards an actual realization, rather than a vehicle for creating critical discourse for the sake of discourse.

This moves the role of design fiction from critically questioning what reality should become, to strategically promoting corporate interests. The challenge of this strategic use of design fiction is to help develop and understand the discourse surrounding a diegetic prototype. The different futures are determined by the choices, first by the designer, and subsequently by the user's domestication of a given technology, which can provide early and valuable input from said users without the need to develop costly prototypes or tests as shown by e.g. Vistisen & Jensen (2018), and Wong & Mulligan (2016).

The strategic use of design fiction, in which corporations utilize narrative storytelling with diegetic prototypes of possible future products has seen substantially less research than the critical perspective. One possible explanation might be that the tradition of critical design already existed prior to the emergence of design fiction, and thus could easily migrate into the domain. Another possible explanation might be that pragmatic and strategic uses of design fiction are more complex in how they must relate to reality, since they are not 'just' vehicles for speculation and critical theory discussion, but future scenarios proposed by real corporations, with the capacity to actually implement the scenario. Thus, strategic design fiction need to accept certain obligations, towards e.g. the existing users and customers of the corporation, as well as how potential user and media misinterpretations (as we saw with the Audio Tooth concept) might affect the corporation's image.

This raises the question of whether the suspension of disbelief, and thus the relation to 'reality' is the same in strategic design fiction, as it is in the more critical oriented design fictions? The next section will seek to address the narrative structures of the storytelling about diegetic prototypes in regard to their relation to 'reality'. We argue this is an issue of presenting a world which differs as little as possible from the real world, giving the diegetic prototype a plausible anchor within the real world, enabling a reflective and engaging reception by the audience.

Plausability and Realness of Strategic Design Fiction

This section will introduce Ryan's (1980) concept of minimal departure to address the different notions of plausibility and real-

ness of design fictions—namely instances where the intent is not solely to form critical discourse, but to explore the conditions for actually working towards implementing the diegetic prototype(s) of the narrative.

Ryan's offers the following interpretation of Lewis' analysis of counterfactuals (Lewis, 1973) and possible worlds:

There is a world a where the antecedent holds and the consequent holds.

There is a world b where the antecedent holds, but the consequent does not.

If world a differs less than world b from the real world, the counterfactual is true. If world b differs less, the counterfactual is false.

Ryan (1980: 405)

Lewis' analysis is concerned with the truth value of counterfactuals and subsequently possible worlds. Counterfactual conditions being of the type 'if a has not occurred then neither will b'. Ryan takes the analysis to the realm of narratives and how the reader explores the world created within the narrative. To do so, she distinguishes between factials, non-factials, and fiction (Ryan, 1980:410). For the first two of them to be understandable for a reader the principle of minimal departure has to be applied. The third can deviate from the principle but would consequently need a more thorough explanation of the ontology of the world. Ryan's definition of this principle reads as the following:

"This principle states that whenever we interpret a message concerning an alternative world, we reconstrue this world as being the closest possible to the reality we know." (Ryan, 1980:403)

Together with the plausibility given to a possible world, Ryan now constructs three basic statements about narrative worlds (Ryan, 1980:410-411). First, the factual statement, in which the speaker speaks about the real world from an inside viewpoint (1a in figure

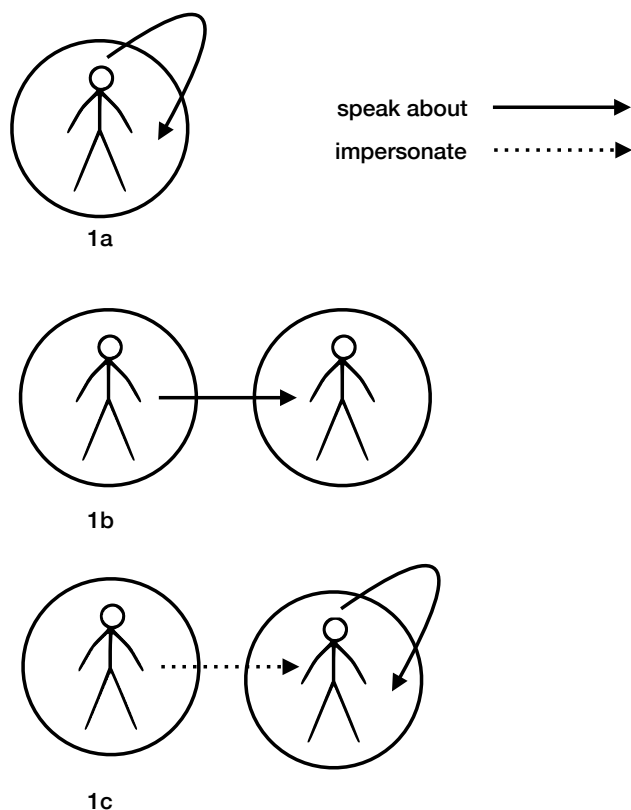


Figure 2: Ryan's model on factual, non-factual, and fictional statements. Redrawn from (Ryan, 1980:411).

2). The speaker speaks about the world as it is presented around him and the audience. Second, the non-factual statement, in which the speaker speaks about an alternate world from an outside point of view (1b in figure 2). Third, in fiction, in which the speaker impersonates a member of an alternate world, which said member speaks about from an inside point of view (1c in figure 2). The three statements can be nested into each other, creating narratives within narratives about possible worlds and alternate endings.

Ryan continues to explain how the audiences' knowledge of the world helps creating an understanding of the possible or alternate worlds as they are described in fictional settings. By the principle of minimal departure, a reader of a story would infer his knowledge, experiences, even ideals into the actual story world. While this minimizes the author's need to explain in detail how e.g. a Unicorn looks like – a horse with a single straight horn in the fore-

head—it gives the reader the possibility to create and unfold the world in his imagination. Depending on the reader's knowledge about horses and horns, he can use his insights to expand the idea of the Unicorn with further details.

Both Ryan and Lewis (1978) search for the truth value of statements and narratives emphasizing the author's responsibilities in telling a story the audience can relate to. The truth value of a given story and its artefacts, its ontology, must be seen as one of the main elements when developing a design fiction. The initial citation shows how the antecedent and consequent of a given counterfactual—that is the diegetic prototype—within two given worlds gives rise to the basic truth value of said counterfactual. This truth value is the foundation for a possible suspension of disbelief by the reader. If the counterfactual ties in with the reader's knowledge of the real world, the reader is able to imagine the diegetic prototype by applying the principle of minimal departure. Strategic design fic-

tion, especially designed corporate fiction, is concerned with creating a possible, believable use case scenario which the audience can transform to their imaginings and needs. This means diegetic prototypes must have a certain plausibility for the audience to engage with them in the ongoing domestication of the concept.

Taking an ethical stance, Booth (1988:134ff) points out, how readers of fictional narratives do have a responsibility to engage with the presented material. The authors should “*give [themselves] generously*” and in response the readers should “enter into serious dialogue with the author about how his or her values join or conflict with [theirs]” (Booth, 1988:135). While Booth is researching fictional texts, the same responsibilities should be applied for the corporation developing the design fiction. Creating a believable and engaging narrative involving the diegetic prototype at its fulcrum is one part of the corporation’s responsibility. The other is to make sure that the audience is able to engage with and transform the material in order to actually both support the domestication of the idea, as well as form the basis of critical reflection upon the proposed diegetic prototype in the design fiction (Vistisen & Jensen, 2017).

A third requirement is the realness, the factuality of the narrative itself. As Ryan points out, a narrative can be a tale about the factual world, a non-factual world, or a wholly fictional world. Strategic design fiction should be a tale about the factual world, relying on Ryan’s principle of minimal departure to give the audience a chance to participate in the design process by commenting on the possible and probable use of a given diegetic prototype.

To extend Sterling’s definition, a design fiction is factual storytelling from an inside view point of the real world. The fiction itself relies heavily on the principle of minimal departure which has to apply on every aspect of the story told. The only counterfactual in this story world would be the diegetic prototype, posing as a materialized ‘what if’ as was shown in the example of the Audio Tooth Implant.

The ontology of the strategic design fiction should be easily accessible for the audience, its starting point being in the *here* and *now* of everyday life. Design fiction should be seen as a constructive and potentially participatory design thinking strategy opposed to the poetic use of critical design (e.g. Dunne & Raby, 2013). The realness of critical design fiction is defined by Ryan’s factual fiction, in

which “the speaker [here, the designer] impersonates a member of a certain [alternate] world who describes this world from an inside point of view.” (Ryan, 1980: 410; figure 2, 1c) As for plausibility, both antecedent and consequent in the critical design fiction must be seen as not holding, rendering it as improbable, while still possible. In Dunne & Raby’s (2013) spectrum, between possible, plausible, probable, and preferable, critical design fiction can thus be seen as belonging primarily to the possible and plausible end of the spectrum, where strategic design fiction needs to address the probable and preferable dimensions too. Especially the aspect of the preferability of the portrayed fiction is important in corporate fictions, in which the ethical responsibility prompts for addressing not just ‘what’ the scenario is, but also ‘why’ it might be preferable.

Returning to Auger’s model on speculative futures, the difference between critical and strategic design fiction can be made explicit by placing Ryan’s narrative statements as shown in figure 5. As can be seen, the strategic design fictions are placed within the reach of domestication, presenting the prototype in a way the audience might experience as a ‘this could be now’. The three markings on the timeline can be described by their probable realness. The first mark in the future, still within domestication, can be seen as an announced product (e.g. a company announcing a new smartphone). The second mark, just outside of domestication, but still within the reach of emerging technology, denotes an announced concept (e.g. a company announces the effort to solve a given design problem, but with nothing specific to launch yet). Finally, the third mark, now outside both emerging technology and domestication, yet still within the reach of existing technology, is a proposed vision (e.g. a company proposing a bold vision for where they see their product evolve towards in the next 10+ years). The first mark can hardly be described as design fiction since the announced product actually does exist outside a diegetic structure. The latter two marks both describe different variants of what we label strategic design fictions—they just differ in probable realness.

Critical design fiction on the other hand is placed in a speculative future and clearly intended to be so. Meaning, the audience is never in doubt that the fiction is told from an impersonation of a person in said future.

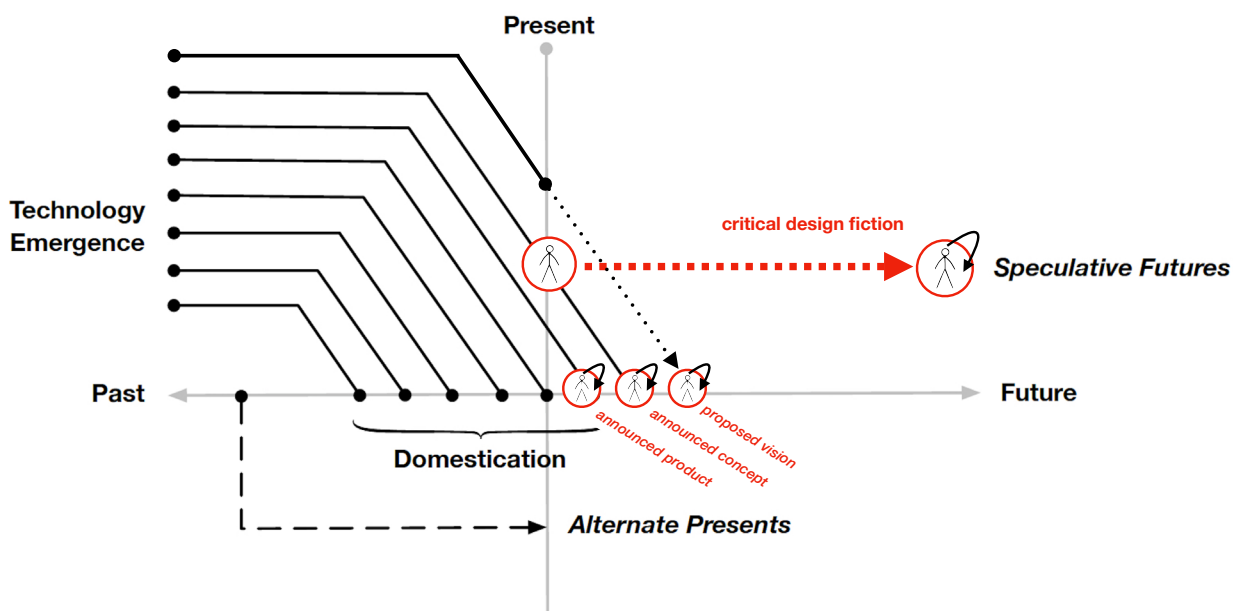


Figure 3: Auger's model on speculative futures revised to include strategic and critical design fictions, distinguished through Ryan's degrees of minimal departure. The dotted red line marks Ryan's impersonator (figure 2, 1c); the black dotted line denotes the emerging technology as a counterfactual

fiction, but which is told from an inside viewpoint of our present here and now (figure 2, 1a). This puts the proposed vision in near proximity to what is already domesticated, and thus balances the strategic design fiction between a factual and non-factual setting.

By placing the strategic design fiction within the realm of domestication, the designer and corporation producing the fiction have the aforementioned ethical obligation toward the audience. Especially, if people start to interact with and participate in an emerging discourse about the diegetic prototype. The strategic design fiction has as such a higher plausibility and gives a sense of reality which the audience might expect as being actually true. This was true for Google, when they in 2012 released a short video narrative depicting the use of the not-yet released 'Google Glass'. A pair of augmented reality glasses, which were able to put a digital overlay on the users peripheral vision, e.g. social media updates, way finding and video recording (Youtube 2012). The video was released six months before any technical prototypes were revealed. Thus, all of the technology elements in the video were purely diegetic, and

not depicting the actual product in use. In fact, the interfaces and interactions with the technology were not representative of how the later prototype actually functioned.

While the Google Glass video is an elaborate narrative, creating suspension of disbelief around a use case of high plausibility, the video also shows the pitfalls of not supporting the viewers return to the actual present. The video made no clear statement of the status of the Google Glass concept as being diegetic, or at least that the technology might be realized in another form than depicted—that it was an announced concept, rather than the specific announced product. As a consequence, the video was interpreted as the exact features and interactions to be released by Google, and soon an opposing discourse of the undesirable outcomes of interacting with people with head-mounted camera glasses began to flourish. Shortly after the release of the video the negative nick name of ‘glass holes’ was coined as a definition of using Google Glasses to engage in inappropriate behavior with people without them knowing (Lawler 2013). Six months later, when Google launched the first developer prototypes to the public, the product was met with huge mistrust, and was in fact banned from several public events. The ‘glass hole’ discourse became the dominating discourse of how actual users of the hardware were perceived.

Google chose a discourse not clearly articulating the state of the emerging technology depicted as what it was—a design fiction of a concept developing, but aiming at a product release within a short time period. Instead of promoting this speculative aspect, inviting the viewers to give feedback and discuss the potentials of the technology, Google showed the diegetic prototype from what can best be described as a marketing-oriented discourse. The video showed a desirable and polished daily use case of the technology, with a high authenticity that not only suspended disbelief, but also kept many users in the speculated narrative, without ever realizing the state of technology in the present. As such, the plausibility of the design fiction became more real than the actual reality. It fostered an undesirable outcome for both the users and for Google, who faced a public backlash, and missed an opportunity to learn from the users about the potential pitfalls of this type of emerging technology.

Conclusion

This article has discussed the issue of realness when using design fiction outside the domain of critical discourse, instead aiming for a strategic use for corporations to explore future concepts through narrative speculation. Strategic design fiction puts the emphasis on the designer's obligation to remind the audience of the diegetic prototype, while both possible and plausible, in fact being non-existent. Design fiction is able to function as a strategic vehicle for exploring near future value propositions, aimed at becoming real. For the critical design fiction, this responsibility is less severe since the very premise of such a fiction is its fictionality and clear 'what if'-ness. Also, the critical design fiction takes its vantage point from a utopian and dystopian point of view, wanting to explore, provoke, and discuss speculative futures with the audience. In conclusion, our adaption of Auger's (2013) model, through Ryan's (1980) narrative theories contributes to making the discourse on design fiction clearer, recognizing the original definition's underlying inclusion of not only critical reflection, but also a strategic component for a corporation's ability to make their speculative and tentative future propositions available for debate and reflection. This broadens the scope of design fiction and frames the issue as one of determining and managing the plausibility of the narrative created around the diegetic prototypes—promoting a scenario of what 'might be' real, but which is not yet part of reality.

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As a matter of fact

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Abstract

In this day and age, facts seem to be equally relevant and irrelevant, depending on your view of the so-called post-factual society. In this article, I look closer at facts by using the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, supplemented by J.L. Austin and others. I analyze facts in terms of a) true and real, b) a propositional trait and a narrative trait, and c) independent and dependent on the knower/teller of facts. The analysis forces facts to be viewed not as definition in themselves but as appearing under particular circumstances. These circumstances are characterized by being induced by a profound form of skepticism and calling for *objective certainty*, a term I borrow from Gunnar Svensson.

Keywords facts, Wittgenstein, objective certainty, hinge propositions, skepticism

A philosophical journey through facts – step one

§1 The world is everything that is the case.

§1.1 The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

§1.11 The world is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts.

§1.12 For the totality of facts determines what is the case, and also all that is not the case.

(Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*)

For anyone interested in facts, reading Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* must surely be a wonderful place to start. Here, facts obviously play a crucial role in the text and find themselves in the midst of Wittgenstein's ideas on logic, pictures and the composition of the world. In short, facts are not things and are not names (or words) but seem to be a form of logical (for lack of a better word) judgment expressed as a comprehensible picture of a particular case or state-of-affairs. The key, as I read it, is that facts make sense of, mostly by denoting, the articulation of a propositional truth (and by that a simultaneous rejection of the possibility of the opposite). Recognizing this unquestionable truth that the proposition articulates, i.e., what makes a fact a fact, is a formal activity and not, as such, an ostensive (empirical) or analytic (reflexive) activity. If the proposition is a fact, it does not need further investigation; it simply shows itself as self-evident; it simply is 'the case'.

Fact as an epistemic version of a comprehended, framed ontological reality but with a slightly different take on fact, we find simplistically expressed in a short remark by Spinoza.

The significance of true and false seemed to have first arisen from narration. That narration was true which was in accord with the facts which it concerned; that was false which was not in accord with the facts of the case.

(Spinoza *Cogitata Metaphysica*: p. 132)

Here, facts are clearly a defining element in the establishment of truthfulness and falsehood and are related to narratives, that is occurrences or events that transpire. From the Latin word *facere*, which means 'to act' or 'to do', grammar gives us the perfectum participium form of the word, i.e., *factum*, which means 'that, which is done'. In Spinoza's version 'that, which is done' is equivalent to 'that, which has occurred', giving fact the structure of a narrative. The narrative then can be either true or false, depending on its rela-

tion to that which really transpired, i.e., the actual event. The true fact is the real fact, so to speak.

The narrative, which (in some way) is assembled by facts, is judged or, better said, called true or false by someone. That is, that which has occurred is known to someone in the sense of someone knowing of it being true, 'in accordance with the facts', or false, 'not in accordance with the facts'. The facts then come to merge the epistemic of knowing with the ontologic of being by basically, in some form, representing that which is known in the form of that which has really taken place, that which is the case. To know therefore becomes to 'identify or inhabit the facts', i.e., to recapture an authentic narrative or, better said, to give a truthful account of a real event.

This step is the first step in our comprehension of facts. Facts represent an epistemically correct account of a transpired reality. However, the propositional character of the single fact, with its stalemate configuration, or picture, in terms of a state of affairs, on the one hand, and the narrative composition of several facts in the character of a temporal (or historical) event, on the other hand, might indicate the need for some further clarification.

A philosophical journey through facts – step two

In "Unfair to facts" (2007/1961), Austin takes these points about facts and narratives one step further in his attempt to illustrate the significance of multiple uses of 'a fact' or 'facts' instead of a limited and inadequate use of fact as simply 'fact-that'. Austin makes the claim that facts have both a narrative structure and a propositional structure. The narrative includes a sequential element (a drive) that shows itself through activities such as effects and affects. While the propositional structure restricts itself to the picture composition, having a logical space but not as such an acting component. Thus, on the one hand, we can understand facts as true or false propositions, but on the other hand, we actively use facts in the creation of propositional narratives that 'color' the facts with intensions, explanations, expectations, etc..

In part, this idea is also present in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, in the sense that facts tells us what is 'possible reality' and what is not. Facts can be read to possess almost a form of transcendental capacity, filtering or qualifying reality as meaningful and accessible. This (transcendental) capacity can be traced in the factual as truth func-

tions (§5), as the totality of elementary propositions (§5.5561), as language (§5.6 + §3.34), as the philosophical I (§5.641), as (Newtonian) mechanics (§6.341 + §6.343), but most of all as logic (§5.557, §5.61, §6.12, §6.124, §5.526, §6.13).

In the *Tractatus*, facts are primarily to be understood as picture-like descriptions that have a truth value carried by logical connectives (or operators), and the realness of the descriptive fact is assured by what the sciences (natural sciences) can investigate and establish. However, I think that there is a good basis for claiming that this rather limited use of facts is more complicated and that Wittgenstein, without making a finalized argument about it, is aware of this. The perspective I called the transcendental capacity of facts, which also has influence on the role and comprehension of facts and descriptive language, is further explored and made more explicitly present in the Wittgenstein notes following the *Tractatus*, as we can see in the following quotations from *Philosophical Remarks*.

33. If I expect to see red, then I prepare myself for red.
I can prepare a box for a piece of wood to fit in, just because the wood, whatever it's like, must have a volume.
If there were no connection between the act of expectation and reality, you could expect a nonsense.

/.../

34. Our expectation anticipates the event. In this sense, it makes a model of the event. But we can only make a model of a fact in the world we live in, i.e. the model must be essentially related to the world we live in and what's more, independently of whether it's true or false.

If I say that the representation must treat of my world, then you cannot say "since otherwise I could not verify it", but "since otherwise it wouldn't even begin to make sense to me".

(Wittgenstein 1964/1975: p. 66-71)

In the same text collection (originally, a text Wittgenstein wrote in 1930 in order for B. Russell and Moore to convince the board at

Cambridge University of the soundness of Wittgenstein's work and whereby renew his research grants.) we find the following:

24. How is a picture meant? The intention never resides in the picture itself, since, no matter how the picture is formed, it can always be meant in different ways. But that doesn't mean that the way the picture is meant only emerges when it elicits a certain reaction, for the intention is already expressed in the way I now compare the picture with reality.

(Wittgenstein 1964/1975: p. 65)

One aspect that we must be open to here is that the role of the knower, i.e. the knower or teller of facts, is worth looking in to. In early comprehensions of facts, the knower is the one giving the account, calling the fact a fact if you will. In Austin's historical perspective, this comprehension is visualized as the knower; the teller of facts literally is someone standing trial. Thus, the trustworthiness of the fact is dependent on or at least related to the teller, the knower of the fact. In the end, the propositional narrative, that which is given as an account, is not simply a question of the facts being the case / being in accordance with what transpired but is simultaneously an expression of someone's comprehension or grasp of what is the case / is in accordance with what transpired. (Austin 2007/1991)

Some thinkers take this relational position in an actor-oriented and constructionist direction, stating the factual as that which is given as a recognizable effect or impact on an individual's or group of individuals' construction of reality. Here, facts appear as an informative part of a constitutive communicated process: "[Facts are] what is, what is said, what has been said, what people wish and what people do. Facts are action." (Henriksen, et.al. 2004: p. 19) In this process, facts do the job of keeping the construction of reality, so to speak, real (or 'not illusionary'). (Ibid: p. 20)

At the same time, facts, due to their propositional nature, also (or as above, simultaneously) find epistemic strength in the account itself. The trustworthiness of the fact is not just a question of its role in the construction or comprehension of the account-giver's reality but is also a feature in the propositional structure itself; it is, so to

speak, something in the factual proposition that determines it as a fact, independently of who claims or states the proposition as a fact. Ayer makes this position quite clear and defines this feature as the possibility for empirical verification.

[A]ll propositions which have factual content are empirical hypotheses; and that the function of empirical hypotheses is to provide a rule for the anticipation of experience. And this means that every empirical hypothesis must be relevant to some actual, or possible, experience, so that a statement which is not relevant to any experience is not an empirical hypothesis, and accordingly has no factual content.

(Ayer 1987/1946: p. 56)

With Ayer's quote in hand, we once again recognize the strong connection between fact and reality. The factual claim, the fact, is dependent on reality in the form of bringing the fact an element of truthfulness. This dependence holds regardless of who makes the claim and what purpose it services. It is a criterion for a fact that its truth value is recognizable through a reliability / consistency with the reality of the case. For Ayer, this criterion is seen in the light of empirical evidence and scientific investigations. However, for a philosopher like Moore, facts and, more precisely, realism in the epistemics of facts can be translated into the reassurance of a truism, particularly a truism of a common sense kind, that is, a statement everyone accepts without supporting statements or a claim that everyone is acquainted with that is stated in plain language, where the denial of the statement leads to a performative inconsistency (although not necessarily a logical one). (Moore 1925)

Both Ayer's and Moore's positions can be viewed in terms of Frege's thoughts on sense and reference. Here, we can understand facts as propositional statements for which we have no reason to doubt or question what the statement denotes or the way the denotation is preformed and comprehended. In short, acknowledging a fact (as a fact) is to meaningfully accept the sense of how that fact simply references the truth. (Frege 1892) Henriksen et al. simply states "Facts are simply facts" (2004: p. 19), and Nørreklit (a Wittgenstein scholar and the architect behind the model in

Henriksen et al.) elaborates in more epistemic detail and stresses the realness of facts:

Facts are therefore just a part of the class of truths. Facts are those truths or circumstances that we have investigated and reached clear and convincing evidence for. Hence a fact is not just circumstances in the world but, at the same time circumstances that we have actual knowledge about. A real factual circumstance is reach e.g. through controlled observation. Hence a fact is circumstances in the world + a social construction based on observations.

(Nørreklit 2012: p. 26)

Returning to the connection between the propositional trait and the narrative character of fact, the epistemic relation to and dependence on reality is equally valuable and necessary. The account of an event, the narrative, needs to adhere to the truth. It must be indisputable, unquestionable or, as previously said, authentic if it should be accepted as a fact, or if not certain, it has to be possible to dispute the account and show it to be unquestionable false (i.e., the negation of the account being a true fact). Austin talks of "a particular truth known by observation or authentic testimony" (2007/1961: p. 164), which again points to the truth value being determined by the realness of the case.

In summary, as we complete step two of our comprehension of facts, there seems to be a consensus for a claim similar to the following: a fact is that which is known about the world. However, we also seem to develop this idea through two different lines of thought, with step one involving the propositional and the narrative. In step two, the two lines of thought are characterized as traits independent of the knower of the fact and traits dependent on the knower of the fact. At the same time, both lines of thought articulate some form of conceptualization of truth and stress the essentiality of some form of relationship between facts and reality. Thus, even if there is no consensus on what precise knowledge constitute facts, how we come to know them and in what way we know that which we know, we are able to add to the definition above that a fact is a) that which we take for certain and b) that which we without question take to be the case.

A philosophical journey through facts – step three

Here, we are not able to say what a fact is in terms of giving a limited definition of its constituents. However, the philosophical journey has thus far given us some criteria for when someone is stating or acknowledging something to be a fact. These criteria are clustered around an ontological element (real) and an epistemic element (true), and they involve a propositional trait, a narrative trait, and characteristics that are independent of the knower/teller and characteristics that are dependent on the knower/teller.

Although we are developing a slightly understanding of facts, what we have so far can hardly qualify as a comprehensive theory or model, but then again, such models or theories are seldom the result of philosophical investigations. What we are obtaining are various criteria that are not exclusively defined but allow us to investigate the circumstances under which these criteria may apply and, perhaps more importantly, understand problematic circumstances in which they do not apply. In order to do that, we embark on our next step in the philosophical journey and try to more coherently conceptualize these circumstances.

As demonstrated, Wittgenstein supersedes the 'pure' descriptive idea of facts, which is represented by the metaphor pictures, to include aspects such as possibilities, anticipation, capabilities and sense-making. Alongside this movement, his philosophical thoughts in general develop from the more 'pure' descriptive or epistemically limited position into the inclusion of the influence and quintessence of becoming aware and confident of rules, learning the game of evidence, navigating in practical settings, decoding other people's states of mind, etc. (Wittgenstein 1953/1992; Wittgenstein 1969/1992; Wittgenstein 1992/2011)

The posthumously constructed collection *On Certainty* (1969/1992) is vital for many readings of Wittgenstein, who seeks a break with the classic 'linguistic turn'- early and late versions. As described in Moyal-Sharrock and Brenner (2007), there is great diversity in interpretations but also a form of consensus on Wittgenstein having a focus on what we might call a subjective philosophy, philosophy of mind, or to some extent even an existential philosophy. However, having said that, I think that it is important not to read a psychology or gnostic ontology into these thoughts and notes of Wittgenstein (something he himself cautions us against)

but to keep in mind that his perspective is continuously epistemic and that it is the rationality (or logic) of man (or mind) that he investigates, fighting skepticism and improper or inadequate metaphysical claims. (Gefwert and Lagerspetz 2009, Svensson 1992)

In philosophy we are always in danger of giving a mythology of symbolism, or of psychology: instead of simply saying what everyone knows and must admit.

(Wittgenstein 1964/1975: s. 63-65)

As Wittgenstein explores the purity and use of propositions in his writings, with logically defined truth and corresponding equivalent to reality, he finds this use to be polluted with perplexities, often normative perplexities, which blur the difference between, e.g., value statements and descriptive statements. These explorations take him and his interpreters in many directions, and one such exploration finds Wittgenstein imagine some *core concepts or primaries*, called hinge propositions, that, on the one hand, a) appear as alternate sides of a coin, being both descriptive and normative at the same time, and, on the other hand, b) (to use a metaphor) grow in you as a form of bone structure, and, although having an empirical genesis, in practice constitute themselves as a priori conditions. (Wittgenstein 1969/1992; Glock 2009; Telléus 2013)

The idea of hinges was primarily introduced by Danielle Moyal-Sharrock at the start of this century, using *On Certainty* and, e.g., §341 (“*That is to say, the questions that we raise and our doubts depend on the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn*”). Moyal-Sharrock is concerned with different forms of hinges, e.g., circumstances of *local hinges*, defined as grammatical (in Wittgenstein’s sense) rules for a community of people at a given time, and *personal hinges*, defined as the logical bedrock of the speaker under normal circumstances. (Moyal-Sharrock, 2001) She makes clear that according to her reading, hinges are not empirical, although they might appear to be (what she calls the *doppelgänger*), and she also stresses the point that they are not judgments (Moyal-Sharrock, 2013).

Moyal-Sharrock’s reading of and ideas on hinges have quickly led to much further debate and interpretation, creating a whole paradigm of ‘hinge epistemology’ (Coliva and Moyal-Sharrock eds.

2016; Adam Carter 2017), with a disharmony between an empirical and a necessary component in the comprehension of hinges (Harré 2015) as one central theme and the role of hinges as principals or foundations (Kusch 2018) or the rationality of treating them as such as another theme (Sosa 2017, Zhang 2018).

Returning to the *core concepts* or *primaries* and not turning to hinges, enables another collection of readings that trace and investigate similar ideas and situations. Here, Stanley Cavell and Cora Diamond are central figures in exploring the triangular relationship between language, human life and reality. (Diamond 1991, Cavell 1979) Both of these thinkers find inspiration in Wittgenstein and address the fragile but vital harmony / disharmony between modes of identification such as thought patterns, habits, generalities, etc. on the one hand and 'reality', the surprising, the unknown, etc. on the other hand. To navigate this harmony / disharmony, we need a *core* or *primary* of some kind that must also be flexible, perhaps even unstable, which turns the comprehension of the core or primary away from something fixed or tangible toward something like "possibilities of thought" (Lawlor 2011: 359). This move also shows the way in which philosophy, or perhaps better said the philosophical attitude (of, e.g., Wittgenstein), is in itself a key to conceptualizing this core or primary.

Recently, a group of Wittgenstein researchers following Diamond and Cavell explored Wittgenstein's use of the concept 'form of life' as a possible core constellation or comprehension. (Sättle, 2016) The readings are rather imaginative, since Wittgenstein's use of the concept is so sparse, but in both *Philosophical Investigations* (§241) and *On Certainty* (§358), there is basis for connecting form of life with something given, something fundamental, something necessary and something enacted.

Thus, what has this third step given us in terms of understanding facts and the circumstances for their presence? I think the point of looking at these readings of Wittgenstein is to better articulate the important element of separating the conditions for facts being knowledge from the conditions for facts being facts. Even though facts appear to us as knowledge (an accurate, truthful recollection or representation of an event), what makes a fact a fact, what makes us acknowledge something as a fact, is not equivalent to what

makes a fact knowledge, what makes us acknowledge something as knowledge.

All the particular things, events, propositions, agreements, etc. that constitute the particular facts appear in epistemic discourses, and these particular facts adhere to epistemically definable criteria. However, amongst these facts, there are irreconcilable differences, and these facts are viewed as knowledge by virtue of irreconcilable realization of the epistemic criteria. However, we still have a concept of facts; there is so to speak a family resemblance. To make this approach work, we need to understand the use of fact and the appearances of facts, not simply as knowledge but under circumstances similar to those addressed by the readings in this third step.

To summarize those circumstances in a way that can cluster the criteria we have articulated concerning facts (reality, truth, propositional, narrative, and independent/ dependent on knower / teller) into a meaningful *core concept*, I borrow a notion from Gunnar Svensson, namely *objective certainty*.

The perception that the one, who fulfills an objective epistemic norm and thereby has authentic knowledge, naturally imagines that only knowledge can remove doubt. However, according to Wittgenstein's investigation, the particular form of doubt, that we have called "skeptical doubt", is not conquered by knowledge but by objective certainty, and objective certainty is not a form of knowledge.

(Svensson 1992: 95)

At the end of the journey

The philosophical journey through facts must end for now with facts being what we know about the world, not simply in terms of acquired and acknowledged knowledge but as something of which we are certain and *objectively so*. Facts are the answer to the deep and profound skepticism (of so-called radical skepticism) that is the cornerstone of many philosophical investigations, notably that of Descartes but, in this paper, obviously that of Wittgenstein. Facts are not facts because we hold the knowledge they convey to be true and to be knowledge of reality but because they are something that

we hold on to when we are confronted with unknowns, with doubts or with absurd opposing views.

Understanding facts in this way allows us both to have a world full of facts and to have one with none. The so called post-factual society, in my view and in this light, can clearly be analyzed as a 'natural' consequence of the nihilism and anti-metaphysics of modernity itself (del Noce 2006). It also points to the close relationship between skepticism and facts and showing us that although facts overcome skepticism, they do this through a process of knowledge, but through philosophy; however, that is another story.

Anyway, all the above could have been said much more simply by recalling a classic way in which we humans use the notion of fact. To resolve a disagreement, ambiguity or confusion, we throw a punch, that is we make an undisputable and undoubtable claim, a truism, an account, a proposition, a possibility that must be acknowledged, by simply saying: *As a matter of fact...*

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Goodman and Cavell on fakes

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Abstract

What is a fake artwork? This is seldom asked in aesthetics even though judging an artwork as excellent or original implicitly posits criteria for fraudulent or dubious artworks as well. This article presents Nelson Goodman's proposal of how we are to understand fakes. It will criticize his predominantly cognitive approach for failure of incorporating a sense of aesthetic value, thereby leaving the possibility of artworks which are fakes but nevertheless originals unexplained. Instead Stanley Cavell's writings on aesthetic judgment are explored establishing a better frame for understanding these artworks.

Keywords fake art, Goodman, Cavell, aesthetic value

Introduction

One theme not especially emphasized in contemporary aesthetics and philosophy of art, is the possible epistemological role of fakes or forgeries for understanding the aesthetic experience. Imagine a unique replica of Mona Lisa replacing the real Mona Lisa without visitors to Louvre knowing about it. Would it matter to their emo-

tional and cognitive experience? Probably not. Would it matter to a skilled connoisseur, an expert in Da Vinci's work? Probably not. What seems to matter is knowledge of whether the artwork is fake or not. Knowing the artwork is a fake somehow diminishes the experience of it. But experts can be wrong also, realizing that what they thought was a real Rembrandt, actually was a forgery. Hence, it is not enough for the artwork to be known to be real, it must somehow *be real* also. This line of thought allows, of course, for a continuous skepticism, but also the hope of what Beardsley (1958) expressed as a realism independent of the experience of it.

But what is it, then, that makes it real? Imagine we discover the Mona Lisa actually was painted by one of Da Vinci's assistants, just as skilled and visionary as the master himself. After the initial shock erupting the art world has faded, would it matter for the mysteriousness and intricacy of the smile then? Again, probably not. Even though we realize it is not a Da Vinci, there is still something real, something genuine about Mona Lisa that *matters* independently of whether Da Vinci or the assistant is the creator. One recalls Eco's subtle thinking on what 'original' can mean (Eco 1992), or Orson Welles pondering, in the movie *F for Fake*, whether a signature truly matters to an art work, as well as quoting Picasso that art is a lie making us see the truth. What a lie is, can, of course, mean any number of things independent of Picasso's original intention or Welles' restatement. In a very obvious almost simplistic sense, if we assume art as representing something, lying implies the artwork simply isn't what it tries to represent – like Magritte's famous pipe expressing a truth about artistic representations as not being copies of the "real world". In yet another sense lying could imply art as characterized by betrayal when we for example realize it is a fake, or perhaps from the artist's point of view when the intention with the artwork is misunderstood, or the artist feels estranged from the result of the creative process. Lastly, lying might point to a question of authenticity, not in the sense of real or forged painting, but as a lack of performance either on the artist's or the judgment-forming audiences' part. All art is pretending to be art, hence potentially a fake, except for art actually *being* real or judged as authentic. In this last sense, perhaps, we might judge Mona Lisa as painted by Da Vinci's assistant as also a real and genuine painting. But again,

how are we to understand this genuineness, what really *matters* in the artwork?

In the following I will address how judging, aesthetically, the difference between fake and authentic art is established using two analytical philosophers. The first, Nelson Goodman, who in his *Languages of Art* was one of the first to discuss the role of fakes in aesthetics, presents us with criteria of what *real* art is. Goodman's suggestion is, however, found wanting due to its lack of incorporating a sense of aesthetic value, and I will turn to another American philosopher, Stanley Cavell, to suggest another and better possibility. The general point of the article is the failure of judging artworks to be fakes by considering objective and factual criteria only, the aesthetic value of an artwork in itself must be considered as well. Within the limits of this article, related questions regarding artist's intention and the broad reception of artworks, will be left out.

Goodman on fakes

Goodman's discussion of fakes is framed around two problems. The first is accounting for the difference between *allographic* and *autographic* art, which, lacking relevance for the concern here, we will not address. The second problem, however, is directly related to our discussion since Goodman questions why any *aesthetic difference* between a deceptive forgery and an original work, between for example a Vermeer and a superior imitation of it would exist (Goodman 1976, 99). Part of the answer, Goodman claims, implies leaving the possibility of establishing any difference by natural scientific means – through x-rays, microscopic examination or chemical analysis – behind. These will provide a difference between the physical condition of the two paintings, but show us nothing about any aesthetic difference in the appearance of the paintings. Instead Goodman propose something like a 'common-sense' departure, that a potential aesthetic difference is established by 'merely looking', i.e. "...looking at the pictures without any use of instruments other than those customarily used in looking at things in general." (op.cit., 101) Furthermore, establishing a difference by merely looking depends not only upon natural visual acuity, but also upon practice and training of the ability to discriminate.

Given these assumptions Goodman presents the problem as follows: "...is there any aesthetic difference between the two pictures

for x at t , where t is a suitable period of time, if x cannot tell them apart by merely looking at them at t ? Or in other words, can anything that x does not discern by merely looking at the pictures at t constitute an aesthetic difference between them for x at t ?" (op.cit., 102) Yes, claims Goodman, the information that the two pictures are different at t , will make a difference for x – even if x is unable to actually *see* the difference between the pictures at t . Recall, that ‘merely looking’ also depends upon practice and training of the discriminatory capacities. Therefore, given the piece of information the relationship between x ’s present and future looking will be affected. The information will inform the character of x ’s present looking and thereby guide what is selected from past experiences of items and aspects to be used in x ’s present looking and onwards (Steele 1977, 255). Hence, from x ’s first-person perspective, even though I cannot tell them apart by looking, the fact that one picture is an original and one is a fake

“...constitutes an aesthetic difference between them for me now because knowledge of this fact (1) stands as evidence that there may be a difference between them that I can learn to perceive, (2) assigns to the present looking a role as training toward such a perceptual discrimination, and (3) makes consequent demands that modify and differentiate my present experience in looking at the two pictures.” (Goodman 1976, 105)

This *cognitive* position, i.e. taking *informative factual* knowledge about the aesthetic object to be an essential component of its identification and appreciation (Parson and Carlson 2008, 35), serves to make a general point about authenticity for Goodman (1976, 109).

How come, asks Goodman, that any knowledgeable layman today can easily tell a Van Meegeren from a Vermeer, when the most venerated experts in the 1930s could not (op.cit, 110)? The answer is, that the experts were fooled because presented with a single unfamiliar picture at the time, they had to decide the likelihood of the picture being a Vermeer. Once the wrong decision was made, it had a self-reinforcing effect. Due to each subsequent fake painting judged to be a real Vermeer, the criteria for what counted as a Vermeer changed in favor of a Van Meegeren. However, by the time

the fraud was exposed, all the Van Meegeren were "...subtracted from the precedent-class for Vermeer, but also a precedent-class for Van Meegeren has been established." (op.cit., 111). Based on this factual knowledge, classificatory criteria for the difference between the paintings were thereby established, hence perceptually telling them apart became more straightforward even for laymen. Thus, judging the authenticity of a painting depends on the sets of examples available and used in the "...exercise, training, and development of our powers of discriminating among works of art..." (op.cit., 111) Or, to put it another way, the authenticity of a picture, includes not only the aesthetic properties found and established by looking at it, but also those properties determining *how* it is to be looked at.

Now, it would be easy to conclude that Goodman is intending to argue that these properties determining how to look at pictures, hence criteria for authenticity, somehow consist of lists of assessments. But he is keen on ensuring that subjective evaluations are not what he is after, "We are not called upon here to make such particular comparative judgments or to formulate canons of aesthetic evaluation" (op.cit., 109) But if that is the matter, then, as Steele puts it "...Why should the difference be called aesthetic?" (1977, 257). As such the criteria established are more related to judgments made by an art historian or archivist, i.e. aiming at establishing objective criteria – the right representation of classification by authorship - for the difference, and relating this to our perceptual discriminating powers and exercises. Goodman fails to provide us with a reasonable account of *why or how* the information or knowledge making a difference is credible and justified in an *aesthetic* sense. Furthermore, as stated in the introduction, experts including art-historians can be wrong and withdraw seemingly objective criteria for discriminating the real from the fake (Duton 1983). This, however, implies considering aesthetic values, *not* as the canons of aesthetic evaluation Goodman denounces in the quote above, but taking seriously how aesthetic judgments since Kant (1790/2000), i.e. judging some piece of artwork as genuine or beautiful, imply a universality which cannot be impersonal. Aesthetic judgment combines some sort of subjective response with an aspiration to universality. In lieu of the lack of absolute certainty for discriminating the real from the fake, of making an objective classification, or es-

establishing canons for how artworks are to be evaluated, the possibility of this other point of departure for establishing aesthetic differences will be our next concern. We will therefore turn to Stanley Cavell whose writings address the possibility of aesthetic judgments in light of an overall skepticism, that the lack of objectivity (as a classificatory rationale), "...of conclusiveness in aesthetic argument, rather than showing up an irrationality, shows the kind of rationality it has, and needs." (Cavell 2002, 86)

Stanley Cavell on aesthetic judgments

It is common to divide Cavell's writings on aesthetics and art into several themes: the first, which will concern us here, focus on aesthetic judgment and modernism; the second addresses the ontology of specific artistic media, and the third contains concrete analyses of literature, opera, film, etc. (Hammer 2002; Mulhall 1994) As our question above revolves around aesthetic judgments, we will focus on some of the early papers in Cavell (2002).

Approaching Cavell's thinking let us start by noting that he conceives answering the question "What is art?" as depending on answering "...why it is we treat certain objects, or how we *can* treat certain objects, in ways normally reserved for treating persons." (Cavell 2002, 189, original italics) Implied here is *not* treating artworks as objects to be classified as done by Goodman, but rather as expressing the kind of genuineness and individuality we normally reserve for people with whom we engage. Our concerns, when engaging these people, are of course subjective. But it is still a responsible subjectivity defending both the correctness of the concern, as well as replacing the concern with disappointment or even sorrow in the face of insincerity or lack of genuineness on the part of these people. Artworks and people, Cavell seems to claim, are to be considered like ends in themselves. Recognizing falseness, insincerity, fraud, etc., depends therefore on the same capacity as recognizing genuineness and sincerity (op.cit., 190). I understand Cavell as claiming that connecting this complex relationship between a responsible subjectivity and the normative universal import of (in) correctness is what aesthetic judgments are about.

Understood this way the aesthetic value lies less in the supposed originality by authorship of the artwork, its classification, than in recognizing its aesthetic value. Thus, it will be possible to recognize

as aesthetically meaningful the examples Grasset (1998, 266) states, namely that Rembrandt signed works done by his pupils, or Poussin painted figures for Gaspard Dughet who then painted the background of some of Poussin's paintings, or painters' inability, eg. Van Dyck, Rodin as well as Bourdelle, to recognize the authenticity of their own work. Hence, the value is expressed through the work as an end in itself, as an autonomous work, recognizable through aesthetic experience. But what does this mean, that a work is autonomous, and how does this relate to the idea of fakes?

For Cavell asking these questions indicates a modern aesthetic attitude: "...the experience of the modern is one which itself raises the question of fraudulence and genuineness..." (2002, 214). Now his point is *not* that questions like these are not addressed in pre-modernity, only they were not *forced* upon people through earlier art because the "...conventions were deep enough to achieve conviction without private backing" (op.cit., 226). In a sense, then, modernity presents a condition in which we are, when it comes to aesthetic judgment, strangers to ourselves and each other. What was fixed previously through tradition and conventions of taste, are in modernity not evident sources of authority. So, what is up for grabs in modernity is the question of why we accept something as a genuine painting, as a piece of art, or not. However, this is not a question of conforming to the conventions (as if they were canonized), but, as the quote alludes to, involves some sense of personal backing, what Cavell in other places terms *voice* (Cavell 1979). It relates to the Kantian idea above, i.e. connecting subjective claims with some sort of universality. But where the universality for Kant seems to amount to no more than a projection of the subjective claim to an intersubjective whole, for Cavell it denotes the possibility of the individual voice to become actually shared, i.e. recognized as achieving a common validity (Laugier 2015, 64). In other words, how the subjective voice involves a claim to community, or in our case, how an artwork can serve as an experiential basis for a new conversation of what art is and can be.

Thus, the condition of modernity implies lacking any "...a priori criteria for defining a painting, what matters is that we realize that the criteria are something we must discover, discover in the continuity of painting itself." (op.cit., 219). Where in ordinary cases we acknowledge something as being correct just *for* me or us, what we

discover through the continuity of painting, is how (if it does) a specific painting speaks for painting as such. Cavell uses painting as an example here, but other artforms are implied here as well. Furthermore, I assume here that aesthetics/the art process for Cavell spans the relation between the artist, the work and an audience, with the possible acknowledgment of a given work as art obtaining within this relation. Hence, it is through painting and looking at a painting, reading and writing a novel, *as such*, that any criteria for something being a work of art is to be discovered. Being art *generally* is not made up of a priori criteria abstracted from or applied to the aesthetic process but is acknowledged as being part of and expressed through the process itself. Furthermore, there is a subtlety in Cavell's use of words in the quote, namely the relation between discovery and continuity. When we speak of discovery emphasis is usually on something new, whereas continuity indicates a continuation of something. This difference noted, how are both, then, related to the discovery, to the aesthetic process?

First of all, Cavell and Goodman both seem to agree on the problematic in a priori presenting a *canon*, a list of criteria for what is an artwork. At least Goodman claims so. For as claimed above, he ends up trading a *canon* in for another kind of abstraction, namely one based on the formal relation between the artist and his work. The real artwork has less to do with the aesthetic value of the work itself, than with establishing the right formal relation between artist and artwork. A relation detected from a place *external* to the artistic process itself. For Cavell, however, the aesthetic value of an artwork involves, as said above, a complex relationship of continuity and discontinuity towards the tradition "...of which it is an inheritor and voice." (op.cit). The non-genuineness and fraudulence quoted above being part of the modern aesthetic attitude, is characterized by the failure of realizing this. This attitude, Cavell claims, is characterized by eluding and failing to assemble any critical powers (op. cit 208), i.e. it fails at being a voice as expressing an individual critical understanding of art aiming at a new shared validity. Both could be exemplified by either an amateur landscape painting, not being a fraud but still not being genuinely a piece of art, i.e. it is a personal expression but without providing a claim to, or being recognized as speaking on behalf of landscape painting as such. Or the van Meegeren discussed above just reproducing the

tradition, pretending to be the work of an original artist, failing to become a voice.

Second, the lack of a priori criteria is not tantamount to no involvement of criteria at all – this is where the relation between discovery and continuity returns. Cavell's understanding of criteria is heavily influenced by his reading of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (see Mulhall (2014) and Affeldt (2014) for an extended discussion of Cavell's reading). By criteria is often meant something like rules for applying a concept (or a rule for applying rules), or for evaluating whether something is more or less correct, beautiful, heavier, tastier etc. than something else (Cavell 1979, 6ff). In this sense criteria function like a measuring rod we can appeal to, when aiming for agreement in judging some piece of work to be genuinely art. Cavell disagrees with this description.

First of all, it makes criteria appear like the *canon* he argued against as shown above. Second, according to Cavell (1979, 13) criteria do not serve as a separate basis or foundation for how we agree in judgment. Rather criteria are already interwoven with cases where we claim to know something is the case. In this sense, criteria express both our agreement, a continuity in the sense of our attunement in describing something, but also the possibility of discovery of a new and different way of understanding and speaking about things. In case of dissonance no independent source of authority, like a canon, exists for us to appeal to in responding to the dissonance. At best criteria can here serve as an impetus for understanding what the dissonance consists in, and how, if possible, one should and could move on from here. Third, criteria therefore point toward the indeterminacy of our aesthetic judgments, they express a possible renewal and advance of understanding (McMahon 2014, 52) but also the possibility of failure. Fourth, as expressions of understanding criteria are claims to community, i.e. "...reminders and vehicles of reorientation – to and on behalf of both others and oneself..." (Eldridge 2003, 6), as well as claims to reason. As Cavell (1979, 20) expresses it, "The wish and search for community are the wish and search for reason". So, the genuineness of an artwork lies both in its reminding us of central traits of the aesthetic practices and thoughts from which it historically sprung (again both from the creation and reception side), and its claim (its voicing) of reorienting these aesthetic practices and thoughts by being the focus of a

new conversation of what art generally is. It is a *reasonable* process, carried out between *you and me* but on *behalf of us*, and without recourse to some external place for acknowledging art.

Take for example, the introduction of the cut-up technique connected both with Dada and Burroughs (Skerl 1986). By now it is a familiar technique, but initially it critically pushed the self-definition of literature asking in what sense it can be, perhaps already is, composed of already made elements. It thereby reminded us, from a particular point of view, of the agreed definitions or criteria for what a text is and how it is handled, and in the process reorients our agreement of these criteria, but again by using the already given medium of a text. Furthermore, its genuineness was expressed through the sincerity of arguing and presenting the conditions of its own making and claiming responsibility for the general idea, making a claim to community, of what is brought forth. For Cavell this would therefore indicate an originality of an artwork and how it is to be judged compared to Goodman's more archival judgmental criteria. Goodman's formal criteria are, in the end, supposed to reach an objective agreement, a conclusion about the proposed fakeness or originality of an artwork established outside the artistic process or tradition itself. For Cavell, the matter is more about expressing one's voice from inside an inherited tradition, than achieving agreement as to the correct formal representation of an artwork. Thus, the artist "...is not to discount his subjectivity, but to include it; not to overcome it in agreement, but to master it in exemplary ways. Then his work outlasts the fashions and arguments of a particular age. That is the beauty of it." (Cavell 2002, 94) But also the potential tragic side of it, for outlasting the fashions of the age is dependent upon the claim to community being addressed, recognized and continued in the ongoing conversation of what art is and can be.

So, for Cavell the dissolution of fakeness is not a question of establishing true authorship or evidential knowledge about the artwork in question. It is a matter of understanding and judging in what sense an artwork questions its own inherited conditions establishing a new genuine exemplar for art.

Conclusion

I have argued here, that criteria for establishing the originality or the fakeness of artworks will need to consider the notion of an aes-

thetic value related to the aesthetic experience besides establishing any genuineness through historical or curatorial evidence. The latter was exemplified by Nelson Goodman who sought criteria for the difference between fakes and non-fakes in objective criteria establishing the authorship of artworks. It was questioned whether these criteria actually establish any *aesthetical* difference. Instead appeal to aesthetic value was made referring to Stanley Cavell's views on aesthetics and modernity. For Cavell a genuine artwork has less to do with authorship, than with questioning and responding to art. This process, then, presents new arguable ways of understanding art, i.e. establishes new criteria by and through which art can become a potential meaningful part of our lives. Unlike a fake, a genuine piece of art presents a claim to community, an exemplary way in which we can learn something new about ourselves and each other, becoming more attuned without being aligned or harmonious in the process.

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Viden, virkelighed og curriculum

Michael Youngs pædagogiske sociologi

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“...enhver konstruktion forudsætter en virkelighed, som den foregår i, og som den identificerer og forsøger at transformere”.

(Lektorskii, 2010, p. 38)

Abstract

Within sociology „Social Realism“ refers to a theoretical position based on the assumption that social reality is non-reducible to the experience of an individual. Within pedagogical sociology, curriculum theory and educational theory have used this theoretical position in their examination of what knowledge is, and why certain forms of knowledge have become, in the Michael Young’s term, powerful knowledge. This article presents Young’s notion of powerful knowledge, critically discussing its implicit assumption about the relation between knowledge and reality.

Keywords Konstruktivisme, realisme, sociologi, viden, magtfuld viden og curriculum.

Det forhold mellem viden og virkelighed, der blandt andet diskuteres i relation til spørgsmålet om falske nyheder og alternative fakta, udgør et centralt problem indenfor forskellige discipliner, der er konstitueret omkring epistemologiske grundforhold. Indenfor den del af sociologien, som arbejder med pædagogik og uddannelse, tages disse forhold blandt andet op i relation til spørgsmålet om, hvad det er for en viden, børn skal tilegne sig i skolen, samt hvordan børn lærer at sondre mellem forskellige typer af viden.

Udgangspunktet for en sociologisk forståelse af viden, er, at viden er et socialt fænomen. Således påstod en af videnssociologiens grundlæggere, Karl Mannheim, at vi aldrig får en passende teori om viden, "så længe vores epistemologi er ude af stand til fra begyndelsen at forstå videns sociale karakter" (Mannheim, [1929] 2015, p. 29).

Diskussionen af, hvad det så betyder, at viden har en social karakter, kom til at stå centralt indenfor den såkaldte "post-modernisme", hvor den ikke blot førte til et opgør med en naiv realisme og essentialisme - forstået som antagelsen om en direkte eller nødvendig relation mellem viden og virkelighed - men til en anti-realisme, og en erkendelsesmæssig subjektivism (Rosenau, 1992).

I modsætning til denne, tog en del sociologer en anden konsekvens af det forhold, at viden er struktureret af sociale forhold og derfor kontekstafhængig. Generelt i sociologien som sådan foregik oprøret med den direkte realisme ved at skyde forståelsen af det reelle i retning af strukturelle eller funktionelle forhold. Denne type forklaringer indbefattes i begrebet *social realism* som på den ene side understreger, at vi har at gøre med sociale konstruktionsprocesser, og som på den anden side fastholder, at dette ikke betyder en nødvendig afsked med realismen. I det følgende vil jeg vise, hvordan denne position tages op indenfor den pædagogiske sociologi.

Viden – som pædagogisk sociologisk fokus

Sociologien har fra sin grundlæggelse været optaget af epistemologi og viden. Således er den centrale diskussion i en af sociologiens grundlæggere, Emile Durkheims hovedværk - *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (1992 [1912]) - af epistemologisk karakter; hvilket allerede undertitlen på introduktionskapitlet vidner om: "Sociologie religieuse et théorie de la connaissance". Det forhold Durkheim ville forstå - via sine studier af religiøs adfærd - var med andre ord

det samme som Kant ville forstå, nemlig erkendelsens processer. Den sociologiske pointe var, at disse processer ikke kan forstås alene ved at betragte den individuelle bevidsthed, eller ved at forskyde problemstillingen ud i antagelsen om en abstrakt transcendent instans (Bjerre, 2016). Forståelsens transcendentale forudsætninger er derimod det sociale livs symbolske former, som viser tilbage til en form for virkelighed, som Durkheim taler om, når han peger på, at man under det symbolske liv kan nå til "la réalité qu'il figure" (Durkheim, 1992 [1912], p. 41) – den virkelighed som symbolet repræsenterer. Det er denne realitet, som begrebet om social virkelighed refererer til.

Parallelt med studiet af erkendelsens processer, udviklede Durkheim også en teori om den rolle viden spiller i sociale sammenhænge, et fokus som siden skærpes ved hjælp af betegnelsen "videnssociologi", som Mannheim, som nævnt, identificerer sig med. Dette fokus får en særlig betydning i den engelske pædagogiske sociologi, hvor der - blandet omkring det professorat i "sociology of education", der blev opkaldt efter Karl Mannheim ved universitet i London – udvikler sig en særlig interesse for forholdet mellem viden, uddannelse og samfund. Den første og mest kendte Karl Mannheim professor, Basil Bernstein, udvikler således en sociologisk forståelse af viden, som en kulturelt overført symbolsk forståelse, som var afgørende for bevarelse af kontrol i samfundet (Bernstein, 2009 [1990]; Bernstein, 2000 [1996]). I højere grad inspireret af Durkheim end Mannheim, beskriver Bernstein sin ambition som det at beskrive den måde viden opstår samfundsmæssigt, rekontekstualiseres igennem uddannelse og virker strukturerende ind på dannelsen af bevidstheden. I den forbindelse henviser hans centrale begreber – fx kontrol, social klasse, kode, regler – til en form for realitet, der er social konstrueret, i den forstand, at den ligger udenfor individet, samtidig med at den udgør en virkelighed, som øver sin indflydelse på den.

Den nye pædagogiske sociologi

I løbet af 1970erne, samler en række forskere sig omkring den skole, der betegnes *New Sociology of Education*, NSE, hvilket jeg oversætter til den nye pædagogiske sociologi.

I det følgende vil jeg kortfattet præsentere, hvordan forholdet mellem viden og virkeligheden tages op i den nye pædagogiske

sociologi, og hvordan NSEs syn på viden ændrer sig fra 1970ernes ideologikritik, over debatten med socialkonstruktivismen, for at ende med den aktuelle position, som netop betegnes "social realism". Fokus for denne præsentation vil særligt være Michael Youngs begreb om magtfuld viden, som udgør et aktuelt videnssociologisk bud på, hvad der skal være målet med undervisningen i skolen.

Betegnelsen *ny pædagogisk sociologi* (NES) henviser til en antologi, udgivet af Michael Young, der bar titlen *Knowledge and Control: New Directions in the Sociology of Education* (Young, 1971). Antologien kom i et årti, hvor den pædagogiske sociologi i England var præget af den såkaldte *politiske aritmetik* (Whitty, 2010, p. 28). I dette perspektiv blev uddannelse blandt andet set som en faktor, der kunne stimulere økonomisk vækst og bidrage til at reagere på markedets forandring (Halsey, Floud, & Anderson, 1961).

Samtidig hermed voksede der i den internationale debat en generel kritik af skolen, som udfoldede sig i forlængelse af en mere generel kapitalismekritik. Ivan Illich udgav bogen *Deschooling Society* (1970), hvori han hævdede, at ikke blot "uddannelse, men den sociale virkelighed i sig selv, er blevet skolificeret" (p. 2). Det store sociale lighedsprojekt, som retfærdiggjorde skolen som fænomen, var fejlet: "i stedet for at give eleverne lige chancer, har skolesystemet monopoliseret chancerne distribution" (p. 12). Sammen med andre, såsom Philip Jackson (Jackson, 1968), var Illich med til at sætte fokus på skolens skjulte lærerplan, dvs. den uudtalte forventning om institutionel tilpasning, som udtrykker skolens faktiske virkelighed, modsat den officielle lærerplans intentioner. Parallelt argumenterede Herbert Gintis og Samuel Bowles for, at det var det kapitalistiske samfunds arbejdsmarked, som udgjorde modellen for skolerne (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

I tråd med dette kritiske fokus, anså NSE viden som en central del af den samfundsmæssige reproduktionsproces, hvorfor sociologien skulle interessere sig for de magtformer, der bestemte, hvad viden er, og hvilken viden, der fik særlig status. NSE trak på Bernsteins analyser af, hvordan arbejderklassens børns sprog og opdragelse kodede deres møde med en skole negativt, idet skolen overvejende belønnede de opdragelses- og sprogkoder, som middel- og overklassens børn var vokset op med.

Parallelt hermed var den nye pædagogiske sociologi inspireret af Pierre Bourdieus tese om, at uddannelse og pædagogik udgjorde

en *symbolsk vold* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977 [1970]). Ifølge Bourdieu tager skolens konstruktion af viden form på baggrund af et system af magtrelationerne [et socialt rum], der definerer status quo som "virkeligheden"; og dermed giver den aktuelle orden status af at være en *naturlig orden*. Pointen bliver således at den dominerende viden er med til at legitimere den dominerende klasses interesser. Derfor bliver kulturel overførelse af viden, normer og kultur til en symbolsk vold, idet den ikke blot udelukker dominerende grupperes repræsentationer af virkeligheden, men også - via det at hypostasere sin egen position som objektiv - skjuler, at denne udelukkelse finder sted.

Den nye dagsorden

Den dagsorden, som den nye pædagogiske sociologi tog op, bestod i undersøgelsen af, hvordan man ved at ændre på undervisningens indhold, kunne bidrage til at fordele chancerne for succes mere retfærdigt. Derfor rettede NSE sit fokus på de såkaldte curriculumspørgsmål.

Udover at forny den pædagogiske sociologi, ville NSE således ved hjælp af det sociologiske perspektiv gøre op med det syn på viden, som dominerede de daværende curriculumstudier. Ifølge sociologerne var der i al for høj grad en tendens til her at se viden som en ting i sig selv, og dermed negligere de sociale rammers betydning. I sin introduktion til *Knowledge and Control* argumenterede Young således for at se på viden som noget, der er konstrueret, som del af en kamp om kontrol, hvor den måde en gruppe konstruerer mening på søges presset ned over andre. Det traditionelle curriculum, som Young formulerer det, tjente de magtfulde, hvorfor formålet med en pædagogisk sociologi var at diskutere curriculum kritisk, afdække forholdet mellem curriculum og social klasse, og på den baggrund introducere alternative repræsentationer af virkeligheden i skolens curriculum.

Logikken var altså, at man ved at ændre det, der talte som viden, kunne ændre på virkeligheden. Siden udgivelsen af *Knowledge and Control*, har Michael Young revideret dette syn på forholdet mellem viden, virkelighed og curriculum ud fra antagelsen om, at det er fejlagtigt alene at søge at reducere viden til et værktøj for positionering og ideologi. Dette sker blandt andet i takt med, at han erkender, at man ikke kommer nogen vegne ved at gøre al pædago-

gik til symbolsk vold. Med henvisning til Bourdieus prægnante udtryk, beskriver Young i det følgende den problematiske konsekvens af dette:

Hvis al kultur er arbitrær og alle former for pædagogik er former for symbolsk vold, og derfor bør være genstand for modstand, så må den logiske konklusion være, at hver generation må opfinde sin egen kultur. (Young, 2008, p. 32)

Denne type argumentation er trukket hårdt op. Man kunne godt forestille sig andre konklusioner, såsom at undervisningen skulle bevidstgøre eleverne om den symbolske volds former. Alligevel tjener den til at forstå, hvordan Young skriver sin sociologiske position ind i en social form for realisme. Når det ikke giver mening, at hver generation skal opfinde sin egen kultur, skyldes det, at kulturen har en logik i sig selv, som man ikke kan ændre på ved at ændre på, hvad der tæller som viden. Forskellige former for viden repræsenterer virkeligheden forskelligt, og har dermed forskellig kvalitet, hvilket man ikke kan ændre på, ved at ændre på curriculum. I stedet bliver det kritiske projekt at identificere magtfuld viden, og søge at gøre den tilgængelige for de dominerede.

Magtfuld viden

Alene på baggrund af Durkheim kan der argumenteres for, at magtfuld viden er en viden, der bringer den lærende dybere ind i den sociale virkelighed. Dette sker såvel forståelsesmæssigt - når individet forstår de processer, denne er en del af - som funktionelt, idet magtfuld viden giver adgang til erhvervelsen af positioner i samfundet. Med afsæt i Durkheim, udvikler Young dette forhold i retning af tesen om magtfuld viden, idet han tilegner sig det syn på viden, som Durkheim præsenterer i forelæsningsrækken om sociologi og pragmatisme (Durkheim, [1955] 1983). Her argumenterer Durkheim for, at viden ikke kan reduceres til at være en del af praksis, men må betragtes som noget i sig selv. Viden, der repræsenterer de fælles forståelser, er forskellig fra viden om teknologiske løsninger, som repræsenterer skik og brug. Når logik eksempelvis tilskrives en særlig magt, er det ikke, fordi den kan bruges til noget bestemt.

Den magt logik besidder refererer til faktorer, som er a priori og eksterne i forhold til specifikt menneskelig aktivitet. Med andre ord, for at gentage en grundlæggende Durkheimsk pointe, logikkens tvingende kraft, og dermed viden, stammer fra samfundet som en realitet *sui generis*. (Young, 2012, p. 11)

Durkheims bidrag består således i at relatere det forhold, at vi er sociale væsner til det forhold, at vi er differentierende og klassificerende væsner (Young & Muller, 2013, p. 230). Vi differentierer således mellem hverdagsbegreber og begreber, der ligger ud over hverdagen, sådan som det sker i såvel religiøs og videnskabelige viden, hvor der skabes modeller af virkeligheden, som har en anden karakter end hverdagens, og som generelt tilskrives en større grad af magt. I takt med udviklingen af samfundet, og den videnskabelige specialisering, kan man tale om, at magtfuld viden ikke blot er "differentieret fra hverdagstænkning", men også er "specialiseret" (p. 246).

Præmissen for alle beslutninger om viden i curriculum bør således være: "(1) at der er "bedre" viden indenfor ethvert felt [specialiseret], og (2) ideen om differentiering – at der findes forskellige typer af viden" (2014, p. 8).

Når det gælder moderne samfund, så er den magtfulde viden typisk indeholdt i specialiserede felter. Eleverne skal derfor tilegne sig en forståelse af, hvad det er for forskellige videnskabelige domæner, at den specialiserede viden findes, såvel som et overblik over relationen mellem disse domæner. Hverdagsviden adskiller sig fra denne specialiserede viden ved typisk at være kontekstafhængig og præget af commonsense. Hverdagsviden – der kan være praktisk i form af knowhow og procedural i relation til, hvordan ting kan gøres – tilegnes typisk igennem socialisering, opvækst og sidemandsoplæring. Skoleviden handler om noget andet. Ligesom Durkheim, peger også Vygotsky på, at skolen skal formidle former for viden, der er mere magtfulde end hverdagsviden, og derigennem forandre børnenes måde at tænke på (Young, 2002).

Problemet med hverdagsviden er, at: "Den behandler enkeltdele, som opstår i hverdagslivet, men ikke giver noget reliabelt grundlag for at bevæge sig ud over enkeltdele" (Young, 2008, p. 14). Det er

netop dette, som kendetegner den anden type af viden, som er målet med skolens undervisning:

Det er den konceptuelle viden, som ikke er bundet til partikulære cases, og som derfor giver et grundlag for at generalisere, og fremkomme med universelle påstande. Modsat kontekst-afhængig viden fremkommer denne form for viden med et reliabelt grundlag for at bevæge sig ud over enkelttilfælde, og dermed ud over ens egne erfaringer. Det refererer til viden som er kodificeret, testet, og elaboreret af fællesskaber af specialister og typisk, men ikke alene, er associeret med videnskab og teknologi. (pp. 14-15)

Blandt andet med udgangspunkt i Vygotsky, er det Youngs hypotese, at fællesskaber udenfor skolen har vanskeligt ved at udvikle denne form for viden, og videregive den til næste generation. På samme måde argumenterede Bernstein for, at det særlige ved den pædagogiske diskurs er, at den opstår, idet viden *rekontekstualiseres*:

Pædagogisk diskurs er konstrueret ved et rekontekstualiseringsprincip, som selektivt tilpasser, relokterer, refokuserer og relaterer andre diskurser til sin egen orden. I denne forstand kan den pædagogiske diskurs aldrig identificeres med nogle af de diskurser som er blevet rekontekstualiserede. (Bernstein, 2000 [1996], p. 47)

I forlængelse af dette princip om rekontekstualisering, argumenterer Young for, at den viden, barnet bør møde i skolen, skal gøre det i stand til at overskride dets egne erfaringers sprog, således at hverdagens kontekstbundne viden – i barnets måde at tænke på - systematisk erstattes af en kontekstafhængig viden, der samtidig med at den rent intellektuelt giver adgang til forskellige domæner, også derigennem giver barnet adgang til de forskellige muligheder, som disse domæner åbner for i samfundet.

Afslutningsvist kan det være nyttigt at pege på en yderligere inspiration i forhold til Youngs tænkning, nemlig Ernst Cassirer. Forståelsen af mennesket som et symbolsk væsen betyder for Cassirer, at selverkendelse ikke alene kan tage form som en proces, hvorved

mennesket introspektivt bliver klogere på sig selv, men er bundet til en proces, hvorved mennesket bliver i stand til at forstå sig selv i relation til den verden af betydning, som det lever i. "Det er vores forhold til verdens symbolske natur, som gør os i stand til at have viden, som vi kan stole på" (Young, 2008, p. 5).

På denne baggrund kan magtfuld viden netop defineres som viden, som gør os i stand til at forstå vores relation til omverden. Dermed kan man netop argumentere for, at Young ser viden som magtfuld for så vidt den bringer individet ind i et mere reelt forhold til sig selv og til verden. Og det er i denne pointe, man kan se, hvad socialrealisme vil sige i en pædagogisk kontekst.

Socialrealismen bygger på antagelsen om, at der parallelt med den fysiske dimension af virkeligheden, findes sociale og symbolske dimensioner af virkeligheden, som ikke er afhængig af individets tolkning – men som individet derimod kan erhverve position gennem tilegnelsen af. Dette adskiller socialrealismen fra forskellige former for socialkonstruktivisme og -konstruktionisme, herunder den position, Young selv besad tidligere i sin karriere.

Social realisme versus socialkonstruktivisme/-konstruktionisme

Går man ud fra en socialkonstruktivistisk eller -konstruktionistisk tilgang til virkeligheden, så er det vores egen perceptions kategorier og strukturer, der skaber de objekter, som vi omgiver os med; derfor er forskning ikke en tilnærmelse til en genstand i virkeligheden, så meget som en konstruktion af "en forskningsgenstand, som ikke eksisterer udenfor denne proces" (Lektorskii, 2010, p. 19).

Ifølge Young er problemet med disse tilgange ikke, at de hævder, at viden er social konstrueret, men at de mangler den rette *sociologiske* forståelse af, hvad det vil sige, at noget er socialt konstrueret. I sociologien betyder det, at noget er socialt konstrueret ikke, at det mangler realitet, men at det har en særlige form for realitet, der udgør et fundament for en ny social interaktion. Præmissen er således, at stort set hele vores viden, og store dele af den symbolske virkelighed, vores viden referer til, er social. Det er for at understrege sin samtidige tilknytning til en grundlæggende realisme og accepten af viden som socialt, at man taler om social realisme. Young kritiserer socialkonstruktivismen for at sidestille det forhold, at viden er socialt konstrueret med antagelsen om, at viden har en flek-

sibel, relativistiske karakter, som kan formes med udgangspunkt i subjektets eget synspunkt. Fejlen ved denne type socialkonstruktivistisk epistemologi er, at den glemmer forskellen mellem den måde, individer tænker om verden, og den måde verden er indrettet på. Socialkonstruktivisten går ikke blot ud fra, at "enhver form for givethed eller fikserethed, om den er politisk, social, institutionel eller kulturel, må udfordres...", men tager som forudsætning, at enhver form for givethed er arbitrær, og dermed "potentiel foranderlig" (Young & Mueller, 2010, p. 178).

At Young og Mueller ikke blot skyder en ren stråmand ned, kan man forvisse sig om ved at læse bogen *Socialkonstruktionsmen og uddannelse* som blandt andre er udgivet af Kenneth Gergen (2017). Heri forklarer Gergen:

Den første store ahaoplevelse for mennesker, som indgår i socialkonstruktivistiske samtaler, opstår nok med erkendelsen af, at alt, hvad vi er blevet fortalt, alle krav på virkelighed og sandhed, al videnskabelig viden og lignende basalt set er noget som kan vælges til og fra; ingen af dem afspejler virkeligheden i sig selv; de konstruerer virkeligheden ud fra et bestemt perspektiv, et synspunkt eller en tradition. Dermed er vi helt frigjort fra alle disse krav. (pp. 35-36)

Det er denne type af relativiserende konsekvens, Young og Muellers argument retter sig imod. Det forhold, at social virkelighed er arbitrær betyder ikke, at den er foranderlig, endsige at individer – ved at ændre den måde, de tænker om verden på - kan ændre verden. Derfor kan individer ikke, som Gergen antyder, frigøre sig ved at vælge mellem perspektiver. Frigørelse kræver derimod en tiltagende forståelse af de mekanismer, den social og symbolske virkelighed fungerer på baggrund af. Som Young og Mueller formulerer det:

Videns sociale karakter er ikke et grundlag for at tvivle på dens sandhed og objektivitet, eller for at reducere curriculum til intet andet end politik med andre midler. Dets sociale karakter er... den eneste grund til at viden kan være sand (og objektiv). (Young & Mueller, 2010, p. 183)

Denne beskrivelse viser, hvordan viden er en social realitet i den forstand, at den er en del af den symbolske verden, mennesker lever i. Det betyder, at tilegnelsen af viden er en central del af det at blive socialiseret ind i virkeligheden på. I den forbindelse er der som nævnt forskel på forskellige typer af viden. Den magtfulde viden er udtryk for en form for viden, hvorigennem individer forstår de sociale ontologiers forudsætninger, og derigennem bliver i stand til at positionere sig indenfor dem. Dermed nærmer den sociale realisme sig en form for begreb om virkeligheden, der minder om det begreb, vi finder i den kritiske realisme. Ligesom kritisk realisme forsvarer social realisme en ontologisk realisme, samtidig med at den rent epistemologisk accepterer, at viden er produceret, og som sådan afspejler de historiske og sociale forhold (Moore, 2013, p. 346).

Kritik af Youngs begreb om magtfuld viden

Youngs arbejde med at gentænke grundlaget for curriculum er blevet kritiseret for at være konservativt. I en vis forstand kan man sige, at denne kritik spejler en kritik af de teoretikere Young trækker på, Durkheim og Bernstein. Durkheim er således blevet beskyldt for at være konservativ (Nisbet, 1952), og da Bernstein bygger videre på Durkheims forståelse af uddannelse som *transmission*, kunne samme indvending rejses mod ham. Det skal blot understreges, at Bernstein ser transmission som et dynamisk samspil snarere end en passiv videregivelse af værdier, normer og viden (Bernstein, 2000 [1996], pp. 16-18).

Det samme gælder Young, hvis begreb om magtfuld viden bygger på samme dynamiske grundopfattelse. Youngs begreb om magtfuld viden adskiller sig således fra en konservativ curriculumopfattelse derved, at viden ikke vælges ud fra dens traditionelle status, og at viden ikke udvælges for at være bevarende. Tværtimod er social realisme orienteret mod vidensoverskridelse, idet dens sigte er normativt bestemt ud fra emancipatoriske værdier. Social realitet skal ikke alene ses som henvisende til den faktiske virkelighed, som den opleves her og nu. Idealer og fordringer om rationalitet og retfærdighed er også en del af den sociale virkelighed. Når magtfuld viden gør kritik mulig, skyldes det netop, at afdekningen af den sociale virkeligheds strukturer gør en immanent kritik mulig, som kan tjene som grundlag for, at den enkelte kan positionere sig forståelsesmæssigt. Denne kritik sigter mod idealer

om sandhed, rimelighed og retfærdighed. Når "powerful knowledge" ikke er det samme som "the knowledge of the powerful", så skyldes det altså, at der er tale om en form for viden, som besidder følgende egenskaber. Den kan:

- bidrage med at udvikle videnstransmissionen i en mere retfærdig retning
- give en bedre forståelse af verden, og menneskets relation til denne
- give elever muligheder for at blive inkluderet i samfundet.

En anden kritik, som kunne rejses i forlængelse af dette svar, er, om ikke social realisme ender med en ny form for *essentialisme*, altså en antagelse om, at der findes nødvendige essentielle egenskaber ved tingene, som den magtfulde viden i sidste ende skal informere om. Snarere end at forsvare den sociale realisme mod denne kritik, vil mit argument her være, at det i højere grad drejer sig om at forstå, hvad der menes med essentialisme. Hvis der dermed menes sociale essenser, altså bestemte elementære former, som reproduceres indenfor social organisation, vil det i og for sig være konsistent med en socialrealistisk ontologi at tale om en form for "essens" (Cruikshank, 2002).

Konklusion

Social realisme er kendetegnet ved at udfordre forståelsen af, hvad virkeligheden er. I en hverdagsbetydning betegner virkeligheden tingene som de toner frem for os i praksis. Det nærværende og de aktuelle problemer er virkelige, mens teorier og begreber er abstraktioner. Ifølge den sociale realisme kan vi ikke sidestille den direkte erfaring med virkeligheden, idet den erkendelse, som erfaringen rummer, er afhængig af, hvilke begreber og kategorier vi har til rådighed. Det virkelige er altså ikke lig med det umiddelbart erfarede, men lig med en måde at repræsentere den umiddelbare erfaring på, når den er i overensstemmelse med strukturen af den kollektive, symbolske verden af betydning, som vi lever i. Kun ved at udvikle vores forståelse i overensstemmelse med denne strukturelle dimension i virkeligheden får vi del af den magtfulde viden. Youngs påstand er således, at det er muligt at sondre kvalitativt mellem forskellige typer af viden afhængig af i hvor stor grad de åbner for

denne dimension. Med henblik på at indkredse de centrale kendetræk ved denne viden, kan man foretage følgende sondringer:

- skole og hverdagsviden;
- specialiseret (domænespecifik) og domæne-uspecifik viden;
- kontekstuafhængig og kontekstafhængig viden.

Det, der, ifølge Young, gør domænespecifik, teoretisk og kontekstuafhængig viden magtfuld, er, at der er tale om en viden, som forandrer elevens forståelse på en sådan måde, at eleven - igennem tilegnelsen af denne viden - hæver sig bevidsthedsmæssigt ud af den direkte erfaring, og den partikulære sammenhæng, som han eller hun befinder sig i. Dermed er der tale om en viden, der giver individet et mere alment grundlag at operere ud fra som subjekt.

Undervisningsprocessen skal derfor begynde med analysen af, hvad der er magtfuld viden, og arbejde med elevernes forståelse, således at de bliver i stand til at gøre denne viden til grundlag for deres forståelse, og derigennem opnå, at eleverne får et nyt grundlag for adfærd.

Afsluttende refleksion

Vender vi afslutningsvist tilbage til den indledende henvisning til falske nyheder og alternative fakta, så er det interessant at sammenligne den udfordring af viden, som disse fænomener udgør med den udfordring, som store dele af det tyvende århundredes sociologi reagerede på, nemlig begrebet falsk bevidsthed, der dækker over det forhold, at en dominerende classes interesser blev fremstillet som objektive, således at en domineret klasse også definerede sig selv ud fra disse – hvilket kommer tæt på fænomenet "ideologi", sådan som Karl Mannheim definerer det. Mannheim taler nemlig om ideologi, når en gruppes eller en epokes totale bevidsthedsstruktur, er kendetegnet ved en systematisk skævhed – som den enten ikke selv er bevidst om, eller har en interesse i at overse (Mannheim, [1929] 2015).

Den ideologikritik, som Mannheim gør sig til talsmand for - hvor ideologi betragtes som en form for videnskabelig patologi – gør sig selv sårbar overfor den kritik af ideologikritikken, som blandt andet er blevet fremført af Slavoj Žižek (Christensen, 2012). Žižeks påstand er, at ideologikritik, ligesom ideologien, må stå på et grundlag, og at selve ideen om at bevæge sig ud over ideologi-

en via et afslørende perspektiv, derfor selv kommer til at udgøre en ideologi (p. 11).

Parallelt med dette kritiske perspektiv kunne man her spørge, hvordan den sociale realisme undgår at falde i en ideologisk grøft, når den mener at kunne tale om en viden, som i højere grad stemmer overens med virkeligheden, end andre? I forlængelse af den sociale realisme selv ville svaret være, at den undgår at blive til ideologi, idet den blotlægger sine egne forudsætninger – og dermed gør det muligt at diskutere de sociale komponenter, som dens påstande bygger på.

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Viden og kampen om det virkelige

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Abstract

In this final article we will reflect on the contributions to this volume, relating these to positions within philosophy of science, realism, constructivism, critical and social realism, and discuss relativism and critique of ideology as well. The article commences by examining a battle of what is to be understood as the real currently underway in politics and everyday life. Subsequently, the article tries to show how a parallel battle takes place in philosophy of science.

Keywords: Kritisk realisme, social realisme, konstruktivisme, ideologikritik, viden

Indledning

I dette nummer har vi mødt forskellige tematiseringer af det virkelige, det falske og det fordrejede. Dermed kan man sige, at vi har bevæget os omkring et spørgsmål, som står centralt i videnskabste-

orien, nemlig spørgsmålet om, hvordan vi kan erkende det virkelige. I den følgende artikel vil vi være mere eksplicite i forhold til, hvordan nogle af de berørte tematikker kan tages op på baggrund af debatter mellem positioner som realisme, konstruktivisme og social og kritisk realisme. Artiklen prætenderer ikke at give en udtømmende beskrivelse af de pågældende videnskabsteoretiske positioner, men snarere at udgøre et afsæt for en videnskabsteoretisk perspektivering af de temaer, der er blevet behandlet i artiklerne.

Veje til det virkelige

Det kan være praktisk nok med en kort opsummerende redegørelse for de grundlæggende forskelle mellem de klassiske videnskabsteoretiske positioner. Det, der kendetegner en *realistisk* position er, at den hævder, at virkeligheden er noget, der er givet uafhængigt af vores erkendelse af den. Hvad der så er implikationerne af dette for, hvordan man erkender virkeligheden, behandles forskelligt af forskellige typer af realister. I dette lys er det derfor vigtigt at adskille det ontologiske spørgsmål om, hvad det virkelige er, fra det epistemologiske spørgsmål om, hvordan vi kan erkende det virkelige. Hvis vi ved *konstruktivisme* forstår det forhold, at vores erkendelse af det virkelige tager form via bevidsthedens konstruktioner, kan man godt være ontologisk realist, og epistemologisk konstruktivist; altså mene at virkeligheden eksisterer uafhængig af vores erkendelse af den, men at vi kun har adgang til den igennem konstruktioner. Den *sociale konstruktivisme* understreger overfor konstruktivismen, at bevidsthedens konstruktioner er socialt skabte, og dermed, at vor viden om verden er formet af den sociale virkelighed, vi befinder os indenfor (Collin 1997). Pointen er således, at det vi ved, ikke alene baserer sig på de erfaringer og de erkendelser vi selv gør, men bygger på en forudsat forståelse af virkeligheden, som vi overtager fra andre, og som vi selv er med til at skabe qua måden, vi opfatter verden på og handler i den. Vi lever med andre ord i sociale ontologier, som vi selv er med til at opretholde. Denne konstatering er grundlaget for den såkaldte videnssociologi (Mannheim [1929] 2015; Berger & Luckmann 2004 [1966]). Indenfor denne tradition omformuleredes det filosofiske spørgsmål om, hvad viden, objektivitet og sandhed er til et spørgsmål om, hvordan en bestemt viden bliver accepteret som værende sand eller gyldig, og en bestemt virkelighed dermed accepteret som den virkelige.

I forlængelse af videnssociologien har andre retninger, som socialkonstruktionismen - som vi vender tilbage til - bevæget sig fra spørgsmålet om, hvordan virkeligheden konstrueres socialt til det mere praktiske anliggende angående, hvordan man kan ændre på virkeligheden. Vil man arbejde analytisk i forlængelse af denne pointe, bliver det centrale spørgsmål angående viden og virkelighed, hvordan nogle bruger viden til at få magt over den måde, virkeligheden konstrueres. Hvordan søger aktører indflydelse på, hvad der tæller som viden? Hvordan påvirkes virkeligheden af den intentionelt konstruerede, dvs. formålsrettede, viden?

Når det gælder forsøget på at bestemme virkeligheden igennem produktionen af viden, synes to modsatrettede tendenser at kendetegne vores informationsmættede samfund. På den ene side udvikles den informationsmæssige infrastruktur i retning af en stadig decentering af vidensproduktionen, på den anden side gøres der stadige forsøg på at centrere magten over, hvad der skal tælle som viden.

Kampen om det virkelige i politik og hverdagsliv

Det mest iøjnefaldende forsøg på en centrering af de legitimerende instanser, der bestemmer, hvad viden er, er de politiske initiativer, der består i at etablere centre, der skal vurdere den producerede viden. Dette sker i form af oprettelsen af såkaldte "clearinghouses", hvis funktion er at sortere viden ud fra bestemte kriterier. I den forbindelse får det videnssyn, som clearinghousesene opererer ud fra en meget magtfuld status, idet de bliver bestemmende for, hvad der får status som viden.

Et aktuelt eksempel på, hvordan denne type initiativer kan støde sammen med det vidensbegreb, der er indenfor et forskningsfelt, fik vi da en rapport om forskning i dagtilbud blev offentliggjort (Clearinghouse 2018). Rapporten, der viser, at dansk forskning indenfor et afgrænset felt resulterer i langt færre forskningspublikationer end svensk og norsk forskning, blev lanceret under den noget brede overskrift "Danmark sakker bagud" (Henriksen 2018).

I et efterfølgende indlæg har en række forskere indenfor området kritiseret rapportens konklusioner, og påpeget, at det har været umuligt at få oplyst nøjagtigt hvilke kriterier, som har været grundlaget for udvælgelsen af studierne, samt mere generelt – som det

fremgår af følgende citat - peget på, at hele rammen omkring, hvad der tæller for god forskning er ideologisk.

Når forskningspublikationerne bliver kritiseret for ikke at gøre tilstrækkelige forsøg på at etablere gentagelighed, reliabilitet, validitet og troværdighed af dataindsamlingsmetoder, er det nemlig ikke en neutral og alment accepteret udlægning af, hvad der karakteriserer god forskning, men snarere et ideologisk og normativt standpunkt. Den anvendte terminologi favoriserer en særlig form for forskning, også selv om Clearinghouses forskningsnotat fra 2012, som ligger til grund for rapporterne, forsøger at signalere ligestilling mellem forskellige forskningsparadigmer. (Ahrenkiel og Andersen m.fl. 2018)

Det syn på viden, som Dansk Clearinghouse har, kritiseres således for at gøre den såkaldte evidensforskning (eg. Bjerre 2018) til enerådende, når det gælder, hvad der kan tælle som forskningsviden, og dermed marginalisere andre former for viden. Dette eksemplificerer, hvordan centralisering af kontrollen med viden kommer til at udgrænse konkurrerende forståelser af forskningsviden.

Også, hvis vi ser på brugen af den dominerende evidensbaserede forskning, kan der peges på problemer. Meningen med denne forskning var, at viden skulle indsamles og kvalitetskontrolleres for derefter at blive gjort tilgængelig, således at magthavere og praktikere kan handle på grundlag af viden. Dette åbner muligheden for, at politikere og embedsmænd søger sikkerhed i forskning for at legitimere deres beslutninger, men det åbner også for muligheden for, at politikere og administratorer kan ønske at påvirke forskningsinstitutioner, der i stigende grad ernærer sig ved myndighedsbetjening (Pedersen & Jessen 2018). I medierne er der således dukket sager op, hvor dialogen mellem ministerier og forskningsinstitutioner er så pågående, at forskningens troværdighed drages i tvivl (se eksempler i Andersen 2017); hvilket rejser en række spørgsmål: Hvad betyder det for forskerens uafhængighed, at konkurrencen om den forskningsbaserede myndighedsbetjening er så hård? Hvad betyder det for forskernes identifikation af problemer, der er værd at arbejde med, at de skal være med i konkurrencen om, hvem, der får midlerne næste gang? Hvad betyder det forske-

rens resultater for tilvejebringelse af viden, at myndighederne kan have interesser i bestemte konklusioner? Er viden noget vi kan stole på? I hvor høj grad kan viden tåle at blive et instrument for magt-havere, der skal begrunde deres politik? (Pedersen et al 2015).

Decentralisering

Samtidig med at der kan være en tilbøjelighed til en centrering af de instanser, der skal legitimere viden, har hele den samlede informationsarkitektur ændret sig i en pluraliserende retning. Internettet, og de dertil knyttede medier, gør i princippet uendelige mange versioner af viden tilgængelige. Dette skaber ikke kun mulighed for at udvikle den offentlige debat og forøge udvekslingen af information, men også mulighed for, at vidensmenigheder får deres egne offentligheder, hvor de hver i sær kan konstruere deres version af virkeligheden, og hvor det bliver muligt helt at undgå almenhedens kvalitetskontrol.

Er man del i en central offentlig debat, så er man tvunget til at tilstræbe en form for korrespondens mellem ens egen konstruktion af virkeligheden, og de i almindelighed accepterede kollektive konstruktioner. På nettets decentrale platform kan grupper, menigheder og lukkede fora derimod gøre et delt trosunivers, som helt strider imod de alment accepterede fakta, til forudsætning for medlemskab. På Facebook eksisterer der således en gruppe, der hedder Flat Earth Society, der har 175.435 medlemmer. Denne gruppe søger ret entydigt ikke at konstruere sit verdensbillede, så det flugter med alment accepterede forestillinger, men derimod at skabe et fællesskab, som holder sammen på baggrund af en partikulær konstruktion af virkeligheden (se også Christensen og Jensen 2018). På denne måde kan man tale om, at teknologien muliggør en infrastruktur, der segmenterer den sociale base for viden (Fuchs 2014; Berry 2014).

Findes der noget der hedder Randers, eller...

Et andet eksempel på, hvordan der kan foregå en kamp om virkeligheden, finder vi i Christensen og Hansens bidrag i dette nummer, som omhandler fordoblingen af et konkret sted, Randers, til også at være en mediefortolket virkelighed. Som Christensen og Hansen viser i deres analyse af en dokumentar om bl.a. Randers, så skabes der to former for repræsentationer. På den ene side er der

dokumentaristernes forestilling om, hvad Randers er, på den anden side er der Randrusianernes forestilling om, hvad Randers er. På den måde kan man sige, at Randers bliver fordoblet for beboerne i mødet med dokumentaristerne. Christensen og Hansen viser, at dokumentaristerne reproducerer de fordomme de forsøger at komme til livs. Og jo mere denne medievirkelighed udbredes des sværere bliver det for Randrusianerne at kæmpe for at kunne repræsentere sig selv på egne betingelser. Eksemplet viser, hvordan der altså kan foregå en kamp mellem medieskabte repræsentationer af virkeligheden og den virkelighed, de er repræsenterer.

Nye former for centralisering

Nettets muligheder for at skabe alternative virkeligheder, har gjort det til et eldorado for radikaliserede meningsdannere og menigheder, hvilket har tvunget tjenester som Facebook til at reagere med tiltag, der går ud på at redigere indhold, der strider mod demokratiske værdier, såsom agitation for nazistiske synspunkter.

Tiltaget er givetvis nødvendigt, problemet er blot, at vi dermed er i en situation, hvor et privat firma aktivt kan sortere i, hvilke informationer, der skal cirkuleres. Det er altså ikke en offentlig myndighed med demokratisk legitimitet, der laver kvasi-love, men en virksomhed, som end ikke har pligt til at fremlægge kriterierne for deres regulering af viden, og til at gøre deres processer gennemsigtige og almene.

Både denne udemokratiske centrering af en censurfunktion og den uredigerede decentralisering af viden, som er vokset frem på nettet, udfordrer den store demokratiske samtale, som betegnes den borgerlige offentlighed. Som Horsbøl hævder i dette nummer, så er den offentlige debat lagt an på at være konsensusføgende. Og dette kan kun ske, hvis argumenter følger basale slutninger, og selve debatten sker i en sanddruelig ånd. Ideelt set udgør den borgerlige offentlighed (Habermas 2009) et sted, hvor forskellige aktører på lige vis bidrager til konstruktionen af, hvad der ideelt set udgør en fælles virkelighedsforståelse.

Sandhed og det postmoderne

På mange måder kan man betragte den beskrevne udvikling som en realisering af det scenarie, som Jean-François Lyotard – i bo-

gen *Viden om det postmoderne samfund* - allerede beskrev i 1979 (Lyotard 1996).

Lyotard talte dengang om, hvordan de store fortællinger havde mistet deres forklaringskraft i det postmoderne samfund, og var blevet erstattet af et netværk bestående af lokale fortællinger. Dette betød, at videnskaben ville komme til at spille en ny rolle. På den ene side ville den blive langt mere central, da viden bliver en stadig mere central faktor i den økonomiske udvikling, på den anden side ville viden ændre status, idet alene viden, som er nyttig ville kunne påberåbe sig legitimitet. Et eksempel på dette er måske Vistisen og Jensen (i dette nummer), der i et opgør med kritisk designfiktion peger på, at det nye nyttige kriterie for design er dens realiserbarhed i praksis. Hvor den kritiske design forbliver på et idealistisk plan af, hvad der kunne ske, så har den mere pragmatiske/strategiske designrationalitet en større mulighed for realiserbarhed gennem virksomheder, der opererer indenfor en økonomisk nyttetækning. Dette eksemplificerer måske, hvad der for Lyotard markerer en manglende fortælling om sandhed, som kunne give videnskaben sin privilegerede position i det netværk af viden, som voksede frem med det postmoderne (Lyotard 1996) – videnskabens værdi reduceres her til et bidrag til økonomisk duelighed og ren nytte. At realiserbarheden kan ske gennem andre sociale former, som for eksempel Wright (2010) har gjort gældende, tilsidesættes ofte. Man kan sige, at bestemte dele af videnskaben selv har bidraget til at underminere videnskabens status ved at pege på de problemer, der knytter sig til forholdet mellem viden og virkelighed.

Kampen om det virkelige i videnskabsteori

Den segmentering og dermed også problematisering af viden, som vi oplever i politik og hverdagsliv i dag, korresponderer med bevægelser, som har fundet sted på det videnskabsteoretiske felt i løbet af de sidste to århundreder. Filosofien har altid forstået at stille sig skeptisk overfor en direkte eller naiv realistisk position, der antager at virkeligheden er, som vi opfatter den, dvs. at der ikke er et skel mellem virkeligheden og den måde den fremstår for os på. Indenfor de sidste godt hundrede år bliver denne skepsis forvandlet fra en bevidsthedsfilosofisk til en sociologisk skepsis, som tager form af den nævnte forestilling om, at viden er socialt konstrueret, og

angår måden denne konstruktion foregår og måden, hvorpå denne viden bruges (Lock og Strong 2010; Collin 2007).

På det epistemologiske plan kunne man fremføre den pointe, som Daniel Dennett og Timothy Williamson argumenterede for i indledningen til dette nummer, at teorierne om det post-moderne og socialkonstruktionisme ikke alene fungerer som beskrivelser af noget, der sker i samfundet, men selv kommer til at legitimere dette skred og bidrage til det. Et eksempel er socialpsykologer à la Kenneth Gergen, der argumenterer for, at viden er direkte afhængig af de sociale relationer: "Alt, hvad vi antager som værende sandt, rationalt eller godt, konstrueres i vores relationer med hinanden" (Gergen og Mellon 2017, 17). Det virkelige bliver således det, der er konsensus om mellem flere personer, og disse personer kan via deres kommunikative konsensus bidrage til at skabe virkeligheden: når "vi kommunikerer med hinanden", hævder Gergen, "så skaber vi den verden, vi lever i" (op. cit., 18).

I denne type teorier opfattes det forhold, at det sprog vi bruger, når vi taler om virkeligheden, kunne være anderledes, som et udtryk for, at det ikke giver mening at hævde, at ét sprog er mere sandt end et andet. Alt afhænger af spillet, forstår man, og: "Ud fra moderne standarder er det... mere acceptabelt at spille spillet ved navn 'det er sandt, at jorden er rund', når man flyver fra Kansas til Köln. Og det er mere nyttigt at spille 'jorden er flad'-spillet, når man rejser rundt på landjorden i Kansas" (op. cit., 27).

Denne form for relativisering rummer samtidig en form for emancipatorisk sigte. Konstateringen af, at vores sprog og tænkning baserer sig på kategorier, der rummer opfattelser, som virker determinerende og reducerende på vores erkendelse af virkeligheden, bruges til at definere et projekt, som går ud på at befri subjektet fra de sprogligt overleverende betydningers fremmedbestemmelser. Det vil sige, at udvikle et sprog, hvor det ikke er kollektive overenskomster, som sprogbrugeren ubevidst viderefører, men et sprog, hvor den enkelte bevidst skaber betydning og indhold i overensstemmelse med en bestemt intention.

Dermed kunne man hævde, at alle almene kriterier suges ud af grundlaget for viden, og det synes også at være resultatet, hvis man forholder sig til indholdet af den *refleksive pragmatisme*, Gergen taler for. Det handler om at forstå, argumenterer han, at specifikke videnskrav lægger op til at nogen profiterer, mens andre

bliver undertrykt. Hvad betyder dette for muligheden for at en videnskabelig forklaring kan oplyse lægmand? At videnskabsmanden undertrykker lægmandens egen forklaring? Perspektivet synes snublende nær det perspektiv, som Donald Trumps rådgiver Kellyanne Conway artikulerede, da hun blev bedt om at forholde sig til, at hendes kollega havde løjet om antallet af deltagere ved præsidentens indsættelse: Der var ikke tale om en løgn forklarede hun, men om alternative fakta.

Frygten for viden

Paul Boghossian har analyseret forskellige afskygninger af relativiseringen af viden under overskriften *Fear of Knowledge* (Boghossian 2006). Bag frygten gemmer sig risikoen ved at diskutere og forholde sig til om noget er mere rigtigt end andet, fordi det medfører en mulighed for, at man ikke har ret, og derfor skal, ikke bare ændre sit synspunkt, men forpligte sig på en ny viden.

Et traditionelt argument imod relativisme, som Boghossian præsenterer, kan tolkes som følger. At hævde, som Gergen gør ovenfor, at det ikke giver mening at sige at et sprog er mere sandt end noget andet, fordi hvert enkelt sprog, så at sige, skaber den virkelighed vi lever i, er at sige, at der ikke eksisterer nogle kendsgerninger i kraft af hvilke et af disse sprog er mere i overensstemmelse med hvordan tingene er, i og for sig selv end de andre sprog. Der findes derfor ikke nogen overordnede eller globale kendsgerninger for, når vi hævder at udtrykke og begrunde sådanne, så er det altid relativt til et specifikt sprog, at de kan og vil blive accepteret. Så udsagnet 'Jorden er flad' er faktisk sandt og begrundet for tilhængerne af Flat Earth Society, mens 'Jorden er rund' gælder for de fleste andre.

Boghossian (2006, 53) hævder nu, at denne tankegang er uholdbar, fordi enhver relativisme må - på trods af at den hævder det modsatte - være forpligtet på en form for korrekthed, der rækker udover den selv, dvs. udover det sprog eller verdensbillede i hvilket den er formuleret. Boghossian påpeger således, at relativisten havner i et dilemma, når denne påstår, at "der findes ikke nogen overordnede kendsgerninger og begrundelser". På den ene side kan vi forstå denne påstand som det den er, nemlig en ytring der vil sige noget generelt. Men i så fald undergraver relativisten sit eget udgangspunkt. På den anden side kan vi forstå påstanden som relativt korrekt, dvs. korrekt i relation til relativistens verdensbillede.

Men da mister den jo sin brod, og må forblive impotent i kritikken af andre positioner der mener at kunne begrunde noget generelt og korrekt. Hvis den omvendt hævder at sige noget, der er mere sandt end sine modstandere, må der altså være noget på færde som forlener den med en større grad af korrekthed end de andre – og dermed forlader den relativismen.

Begrundelser for realisme

Også fra et sociologisk perspektiv, har der været rejst kritik af den form for relativisme, som socialkonstruktionismen bliver eksponent for, hvilket Bjerre tager op i sin artikel her i dette nummer, hvor Michael Youngs sociale realisme præsenteres. Ifølge denne tilgang ender socialkonstruktionismen som en idealisme – idet begrebet om det sociale bliver forstået som noget rent sprogligt eller mentalt, der eksisterer i individernes forestillingsuniverser her og nu – og derfor kan ændres ved at ændre "mindset" eller skifte sprog.

Man kan således beskyldte Gergen og andre socialkonstruktionister for at begå den såkaldte *transcendentale fejlslutning*, som består i at forveksle ontologi og epistemologi. Gergen går således ud fra, at fordi verden kun kan nås igennem vores konstrukter (epistemologi), så er verden genstand for vores konstruktion (ontologi).

Accepten af epistemologisk konstruktivisme - at vi kun har adgang til virkeligheden igennem begrebslige konstrukter - er imidlertid langt fra det samme som at antage en ontologisk konstruktivisme - at virkeligheden i sidste ende er produktet af vore egne, og derfor subjektive konstrukter, hvilket er betingelsen for, at vi kan ændre på virkeligheden ved at tænke og tale anderledes om den. Det forhold, at vi udover en naturlig virkelighed også lever i en social og dermed symbolsk virkelighed, og at det er igennem tilegnelsen af en social virkeligheds symboler, at vi bliver i stand til at forholde os mentalt og diskursivt til såvel vores naturlige som sociale omverden, betyder imidlertid ikke, at der så ikke eksisterer nogen anden virkelighed.

Positioner som social og kritisk realisme viser på forskellig vis vejen til en forståelse af, hvad det virkelige er, som på den ene side accepterer, at der findes noget, som er virkeligt, dvs. eksisterende uafhængigt af vores erkendelse af det, men som på den anden side gør op med hverdagsbevidsthedens, empirismens og den direkte

realismes antagelser om det virkelige, som noget der lader sig erkende direkte.

Kritisk realisme

Kritisk realisme tager sin begyndelse i Kants transcendentale idealisme, ifølge hvilken forudsætningen for erkendelse er forståelse af erkendeapparatet selv, og accepten af at tingen-i-sig-selv ikke kan erkendes. Modsat denne pointe, men i forlængelse af den transcendentale filosofiske tankegang, lancerede Roy Bhaskar forestillingen om transcendental realisme (Bhaskar 1975). Med dette begreb accepterer Bhaskar, at opgaven er at forstå erkendelsens betingelser, og at disse ikke direkte kan afledes fra selve erkendelseshandlingen, men han accepterer det ud fra den realistiske præmis, at virkeligheden lader sig erkende. Modsat den empiriske realisme, argumenterer Bhaskar for en kritisk realisme, der antager, at det virkelige ikke kan ligestilles med den måde tingene faktisk forekommer, men snarere må henvise til de mekanismer, som gør, at virkeligheden fremtræder på en bestemt måde; de såkaldte kausale mekanismer. Det virkelige er altså ikke virkeligheden, som vi direkte erfarer den, men sådan som vi lærer den at kende ved at forstå dens årsagssammenhænge. På den baggrund sonder Bhaskar mellem det han kalder *empirisk*, hvilket henviser til de erfaringer, vi gør (det vi observerer nogen gør); det han betegner det *faktiske*, hvilket henviser til den måde fænomenerne fremtræder for os (vores oplevelser); og så det *virkelige*, hvilket henviser til de mekanismer, der muliggør det empiriske og faktiske. Det kunne eksempelvis være de strukturer, der giver aktørerne bestemte tilskyndelser. For Bhaskar kan disse mekanismer være både naturlige og sociale, dvs. de naturlige regulariteter vi lærer at kende gennem videnskabelige eksperimenter (Bhaskar 1975), såvel som sociale strukturer der påvirker menneskers handlemåder (Bhaskar 1979).

Med Baskhars sondring mellem det reelle, det faktiske og det empiriske, kan man relatere til Sklars forsøg (i dette nummer) på at forstå, hvordan forskellige repræsentationer dannes gennem forskellige medier. Disse repræsentationer gør hver især krav på at udgøre en særlig form for viden om det de repræsenterer. Sklar analyserer Philip Roths roman *The Plot against America* som udtryk for en kontra-historisk potentialitet, dvs. en fiktiv fortælling der forsøger at vise, hvordan vores faktiske virkelighed kunne være an-

derledes, hvis andre begivenheder var indtruffet. Det særlige ved Roths fremstilling, ifølge Sklar, er, at fiktionen har et meget realistisk skær, fordi den grunder i de amerikanske jøders reelle historie, beskrevet af Roth gennem Holocaust og anti-semitiske strømninger som Roth oplevede som dreng i USA. Modsat Holocaustbenægtere og ensidige antisemitiske repræsentationer af jøder, så formår Roth at tage udgangspunkt i en kompleks virkelighed, hvor disse falske repræsentationer har en realitet, som del af noget større, og dermed også et potentiale til at kunne have ændret historien.

Så med Bhaskars sondringer i baghovedet udgør den reelle jødiske historie (Roths barndom og Holocaust) den virkelighed, hvori det empiriske (det der observeres) og det faktiske (hvordan det der observeres fremtræder for os) finder sted. I Roth's tilfælde fungerer den reelle jødiske historie som den virkelighed, den baggrund, på hvilken Sklar, som læser, forstår Roths roman. Det faktiske består så i, at Sklar mener, at Roths kontra-historiske narrativ, som fiktion, formår at være mere reel, realistisk eller fremstå som rummende mere af den komplekse kulturelle virkelighed der forudsættes, end de anti-semitiske forestillinger af samme virkelighed.

Social realisme

Den sociale realisme operer på samme grundlag, som den kritiske realisme (Moore 2013). Modsat socialkonstruktionismen er antagelsen i social realisme, at det forhold, at viden konstrueres i den sociale virkelighed ikke betyder, at man subjektivt kan ændre på hverken viden eller virkelighed. Der kan sagtens eksistere en virkelighed, der er uafhængig af vores perception, selvom vi kun kan møde denne virkelighed, idet vi applicerer kategorier og begreber, som vi henter fra den sociale virkelighed, som vi er socialiseret ind i. Ligesom den kritiske realisme søger at forstå det virkelige, som en dybere realitet – end det som når erkendeparatet direkte - gør social realisme det samme. Med udgangspunkt i sociologien, argumenterer den sociale realisme for, at virkeligheden er samfundet, forstået som en bagvedliggende, transcendental struktur, der ikke blot udgør et system af sociale fakta, men også en struktur, der determinerer vores opfattelse af disse fakta. Udgangspunktet er således en antagelse om, at alt vi opfatter - vores egne tanker, de begreber andre bruger om os, de ting, der er vores omverden og de institutioner, vi er en del af - er virkelige, men virkelige

på forskellige niveauer, hvorfor man kan sondre mellem naturlige, psykologiske og sociologiske fakta.

Forskellen i disse niveauer eksisterer ikke blot på et ontologisk plan der angår, hvad virkelighed er, men også på et epistemologisk plan, som angår vores erkendelse af virkeligheden.

Pointen er altså, at vores måde at erkende virkeligheden på forudsætter, at vi er en del af den, dvs. at vi har tilegnet os sprog, begreber og forståelsesrammer, som vi kan organisere virkeligheden ud fra. Det betyder, at det virkelige ikke blot er noget vi erkender, men også selve forudsætningen for, at vi kan erkende noget.

Hvor realisme og konstruktivismen i dag anskues som modsætninger, er det pointen med den sociale realisme, at den virkelighed, vi har adgang til gennem sanserne, er konstrueret – og at de mentale konstruktioner – vi gør brug af for at forstå vores virkelighed ligeledes er konstruktioner. Man kan således godt acceptere, at vi har med konstruktioner at gøre uden at det dermed bliver mindre virkeligt, fordi sociale konstruktioner får karakter af fakta; dvs. måder at tænke, handle og føle på, som er kollektivt defineret – love, regler, forventninger og institutionaliserede praksisser. Og pointen er nu, at sociale fakta er virkelige i den forstand, at individer støder ind i dem, på samme måde som det kan støde ind i materielle ting. Et forbud mod incest er såvel retlig, som moralsk givet. Det er socialt konstrueret, men ikke subjektivt dekonstruerbart. Det kan ikke ændres ved at vi taler på en anden måde. Det samme gælder vores viden om verden i øvrigt, hvis jeg hævder at solen drejer rundt om jorden, så konstruerer jeg ikke et alternativt faktum, men konstruerer en meget perifer position for mig selv som videnssubjekt i de fleste sammenhænge.

Man kan diskutere, hvor Vistisen og Jensen placerer sig i spændingen mellem socialkonstruktionismen og social realisme, når de kritiserer den utopiske designtænkning for ikke at tage dens mulighedsbetingelse på sig. Idet den utopiske tænkning går ud fra virkeligheden som en dekonstruerbar mulig realitet, argumenterer de for, at den mangler at anerkende designets reelle mulighed for implementering, selvom det er en *designfiktion*. Det virkelige bliver altså det, der omsættes til noget. I Vistisen og Jensens strategiske designforståelse tæller virksomheder og deres økonomiske systemer, som de instanser, der bedst forstår faktisk at realisere designet.

Ideologi, ideologikritik og kritik af ideologikritikken

Det transcendentale udgangspunkt for den tankegang, der præger den sociale (og til dels også den kritiske) realisme, er, at viden er en del af den sociale virkelighed, som derfor både opfattes som en betingelse for og resultatet af, at vi erkender verden fra en given position. Denne tanke kan kritiseres for blot at reproducere tingene som de er, uden at tage stilling til, hvordan forholdet mellem tingene er struktureret af magt, position og status. Den kan med andre ord kritiseres for at være ideologisk.

Forstået på denne måde risikerer den sociale realisme at blive til en traditionalisme eller konservatisme, hvor erkendelsen består i en reproduktion af de betingelser, der antages at muliggøre den i første omgang. Dermed kan man sige, at videnskaberne er genstand for en ideologisk forvrængning, sådan som det ville kunne formuleres med udgangspunkt i ideologikritikken. Formålet med denne er at vise, eller afsløre, hvordan sociale processer og erkendelsen af dem, ofte reproducerer de bestående magtforhold, uden at denne reproduktion er erkendt.

Hvor kritikken ovenfor bestod i at pege på mulighedsbetingelser for at erkendelse kan komme i stand, så peger ideologikritikken på, at de pågældende mulighedsbetingelser har basis i en fordrejning af virkeligheden. Hvad der præsenteres som virkeligt, for eksempel betingelsen for det empiriske og det faktiske i Bhaskars terminologi, viser sig at være et udtryk for, hvordan bestemte folk, sociale lag eller statusgrupper oplever det, og gerne vil have andre folk til at opleve det. Kritikken går så på at afsløre, at hvad der præsenteres som det reelle egentlig kun er faktisk, og det dermed er en partikulær og ideologisk forståelse af, hvordan tingene hænger sammen (ofte indhyllet i en smuk forestilling), der presses ned over hovedet på alle andre.

Som Bjerre beskriver det i artiklen i dette nummer, så er det, der traditionelt er blevet forstået som en dominerende classes interesser, blevet fremstillet som objektivt, således at de dominerede også definerede sig ud fra det.

En ideologikritisk analyse vil, for eksempel, se forholdet mellem dokumentaristen og indbyggerne i Randers som et forhold mellem de dominerende og de dominerede i kamp om virkeligheden. Hvor dokumentaristerne har en intention om at bryde med dommen om Randers, hvilket er den forestilling, de forsøger at indhulle

dokumentarudsendelsen i, så gør Christensen og Hansen opmærksom på, at de faktisk reproducerer de selvsamme fordomme. Rigtig nok diskuterer man fordommene, men man tillægger ikke randrusianernes forståelse af den virkelighed, de lever i, nogen betydning. Dokumentarens reelle formål er derfor nærmere, at vise at deres egen virkelighed er den rigtige. I et ideologikritisk perspektiv afsløres dokumentaren derfor som noget andet end det den prætenderer at være. Den er ikke en virkelighedstro fremstilling af byen Randers, der gør op med fordomme, men en fremstilling der sigter imod, kæmper for, at fastholde dokumentaristernes syn på Randers som det rigtige, det virkelige, modsat den virkelighed, som randrusianerne opfatter.

Kan man afsløre forvrængning uden selv at forvrænge?

Når man først begynder denne kritiske diskussion af, hvordan viden bliver en del af en kamp om virkeligheden, så kan man fortsætte med et yderligere niveau, hvor det er kritikken, der gøres til genstand for kritik. Bjerre henviser således i sin artikel til den slovenske filosof Slavoj Žižeks kritik af denne form for ideologikritik. Argumentet er, at hele præntentionen om at kunne afsløre noget, eller trænge frem til en dybere virkelighed, i sig selv er ideologisk, fordi den forudsætter, at der bag afsløringen findes en ikke-ideologisk virkelighed (Žižek 1989).

Tager vi ovenstående sammenstilling af dokumentaristerne, randrusianerne samt Christensen og Hansen som eksempel, så kan den i Žižeks perspektiv ikke forstås som en neutral beskrivelse af, hvordan det reelt set hænger sammen. Altså at man trænger ind til hvad der virkeligt foregår i dokumentaren. For Žižek er der nemlig ikke nogen omfattende virkelighed bag den ideologiske; vores symbolsk strukturerede og ikke nødvendigvis harmoniske virkelighed, er alt der er. Pointen er stadig ideologikritisk, men i en negativ forstand. Nemlig, at man ikke kan undgå en ideologisk imprægneret forståelse, og dermed heller ikke give mening til selve ideen om at afsløre noget, for der er ikke noget at sætte i stedet for det afslørede. Ideologikritikken derfor hverken kan eller skal sætte noget i stedet for det afslørede, som for eksempel handlingsanvisninger for, hvordan man kan gøre op med ideen om en dokumentar som en neutral beskrivelse, fordi disse også vil også være ideologiske. Ideologier er i stedet præcist det som virkeligheden bygger på.

Ideologikritikken kan derfor kun være negativ og ikke direkte positiv, det er de ubekendte og ikke-anerkendte ideologiske lag der ledsager forsøgene på at forstå noget vi kan gøre opmærksom på. Omvendt kan den dog så være indirekte positiv gennem den kritiske analyse selv, der indirekte åbner for nogle nye muligheder for bevidst- eller samfundsmæssiggørelse (Bjerre og Laustsen 2010, 37). Men hvis kritikken forsøger at være direkte positiv, at sige sådan her er det eller bør det forstås (som når vi siger, 'I virkeligheden er det...'), eller 'Faktisk forholdet det sig sådan...'), så falder den for de selvsamme betingelser som den kritiserer, nemlig at der er et sted hvorfra man kan opretholde en skelnen mellem virkeligheden og forkerte/korrekte repræsentationer af den. Den kritiske impuls hos Žižek anerkender altså ikke nogen afslørbar virkelighed bag en given ideologi, tværtimod hævder Žižek (1994, 7), at ideologier godt kan være sande selvom de er ideologier. Sagt på en anden måde, man kan godt have ret, men af de forkerte grunde. Det så vi ovenfor i eksemplet med Clearinghouse, der er ikke noget i vejen med at anvende etablerede videnskabelige kriterier omkring evidens, men når det bliver spændt ud til at dække alle former for videnskabelige praksisser uden hensyntagen til deres særegenhed, så er det ideologisk fordi man 'glemmer' at nævne, hvad motiverne er (en politisk opprioritering af én slags forskning på bekostning af en anden).

At kritikken kun kan være negativ formulerer Žižek på den måde, at det sted, hvorfra kritikken udøver sin kritik overfor ideologien må "...forblive tom, den kan ikke besættes af nogen positivt bestemt virkelighed – så snart vi giver efter for fristelsen, er vi tilbage i ideologien" (Žižek 1994, 17). Der er derfor heller ikke et særligt sted, hvor kritikken kan gøre noget positivt, dvs. realiserbart, med sin kritik. Man kan derfor måske spørge, om dette dog ikke i sidste ende gør Žižeks ideologikritik impotent i en praktisk forstand. Kritikken forbliver kritisk og spørgende, teoretisk set, men den mangler evnen til at realisere sine kritiske indsigter, at gøre dem til praktiske indsigter der forsøger konkret at svare på de spørgsmål den stiller. Hvad kunne man for eksempel gøre i praksis, for enten at dæmme op for eller nuancere evidensforskningen?

Det er som om, at ideologikritikken i Žižeks forstand ikke formår, vil eller tør slå bro mellem teori og praksis. Hvis den radikale teoretiske indsigter af Kants kritiske projekt er, at vi ikke kan nå en fuld-

stændig beskrivelse af, hvordan verden i den bredeste og dybeste forstand hænger sammen, så er dette dog stadig forbundet til den praktiske indsigt af Kants kritiske projekt, at vi stadig skal turde og dermed forsøge at agere efter og realisere de indsigter, vi trods alt mener vi har opnået. Hvis det forholder sig sådan, så skal vi acceptere den uundgåelige fordrejning eller skævhed af vores forestillinger, at de ikke kan fange helheden og er ideologiske, men forståelsen af dette fratager os ikke en forpligtelse på, i praksis, at forsøge at basere vores gøren på, hvordan verden i den bredeste og dybeste forstand hænger sammen.

Afrunding

Vi har i denne artikel forsøgt at give et billede af, hvordan nogle temaer fra de forskellige artikler i dette nummer relaterer til det overordnede tema viden og kampen om det virkelige, samt at identificere disse kampe indenfor de klassiske videnskabsteoretiske perspektiver. I den forbindelse har vi påpeget, hvordan forskellige nye former for centralisering finder sted midt i en verden, hvor vidensarkitekturen decentrerer. Vores argument har været, at viden hermed bliver noget, der bruges strategisk både, når det gælder politik og hverdagsliv, og at denne strategiske brug af viden medfører en principiel relativisme, som videnskabsteoretiske positioner, som socialkonstruktionismen synes at understøtte. Modsat dette syn på viden har vi peget på, hvordan positioner, som den kritiske og sociale realisme påpeger, at virkeligheden har en ikke-relativerbar faktisk karakter, som bør danne grundlag for den fælles vurdering af viden. Til sidst argumenterede vi med henvisning til ideologikritikken for, at enhver form for viden må etablere sig på et grundlag, som er beslægtet med ideologi, hvorfor al brug af viden indeholder en skævhed og magt, som den kun delvist selv kan være opmærksom og dermed eksplicit omkring. Konstateringen af dette medfører dog ikke en relativisme, da det, som argumenteret ovenfor, er muligt at identificere sprog som er mere i overensstemmelse med virkeligheden end andre. Det er i diskussionen af kriterierne for, hvad der tæller som gyldig viden, den akademiske videns grundlag ligger.

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