

Abstract

Successive governments in Denmark have refused to acknowledge and have denied their political and moral responsibilities for granting transitional justice for U.S. Virgin Islands. The Danish hegemonic national narrative, embedded during the last 100 years, differs from the counter narrative from the former Danish West Indies. I will argue that the aspect of denial is more complicated than it is perceived to be. I propose that uncovering these complexities is imperative to understand denial. This can occur on the individual as well as the collective levels, with the notion that they relate to each other. Denial on a collective level, which constitutes refusal of moral and political responsibility, can manifest as a form of non-decision-making by politicians. The counter-narratives about Danish perpetrators and their legacy of 250 years of slavery are in need of attention as they are rather marginalized. As many other former colonial societies, the Danish hegemonic narratives entail postcolonial nostalgia addressing historical injustices. Significantly, this also requires us to emphasize the denials and resistance to denials of various categories of victims and perpetrators, and more importantly observers or bystanders. This is because categories of observers or bystanders appear to be marginalized in the debate regarding transitional justice and memory politics. One of the central focuses of this study is about the *resistances* - the counter-narratives to the Danish hegemonic narratives in context to narrative struggles over the memories of the Danish period of colonialism in the former Danish West Indies. One commemoration took place in 2017, which was the observance of the 100th for the transfer sale to US. This in turn provided a window of opportunity to debate the Danish historical injustices and atrocities that occurred during 250 years of slavery. Astrid Nobro Andersen In the study entitled “*No apology*” from 2017 made is part of her book, she uncovered how “innocence colonialism” has manifested as ignorance, which has enabled denial concerning the Danish historical injustices and has contributed to the occurrence of structural inequalities. Year 2020 marked the year were the killing of George Floyd propelled Black life beyond the borders of The USA, swept through the world, and became a new global emerging norm. It subsequently also reached Denmark. This also provided a window of opportunity to debate the Danish historical injustices and atrocities. I will theoretically engage my research in the field of memory politics and transitional justice. The analytical part is divided into two themes: denial and resistance to denial. This study utilize Shaul R. Shenhav (2015) “*Analyzing Social Narratives*” and engages in a thin analysis from the period 1917 to 2016 concerning Danish denial of transitional

justice to U.S. Virgin Islands. Thereafter the study will engage in a thick analysis from 2017, 2018 and 2020, which is divided into three events. Firstly, the Freedom Statue in 2017, which was sent from USVI. Thereafter, in 2018, the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018, which was created in collaboration between Denmark and USVI. Lastly the BLM mobilization in 2020, which has become the new emerging global norm. I can conclude that the Freedom statue in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018 constituted two core elements challenging the Danish hegemonic narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands. The elements were the lack of adequate teaching in Denmark about DK colonial history and why Denmark should apologize for 250 years of slavery. The BLM’s narrative, on the other hand, constituted three core elements challenging the same Danish hegemonic narratives. However, they differ in two core elements. Firstly, BLM was dismantling statues representing white supremacy, and secondly, they argued that there is structural racism in Denmark today. BLM third core element argued that there is a need for creating a new colonial history museum in Denmark. I conclude that BLM third core element shares similarity with the core element from the “Freedom” statue in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018, which pointed the lack of adequate teaching in Denmark about DK colonial history

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“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter”

West African proverb

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1 Introduction

In the last two decades, ‘memory’ as well as ‘globalization’ have become an increasing focus point for academics. As a result, lately there has been a paradigm shift in the field of memory studies from national towards the connection that exists between collective memory formations and ‘globalization’ (Crete 2011: 9), as Bell argues ‘*memory politics is a truly global phenomenon*’ (Bell 2009: 348). However, in academics, there is no consensus regarding the multiplicity aspects of globalization, with the one exception, the ‘trans-national’ phenomena, which also are very highly debated subjects. Since its beginnings in the 1970s, it has been referred to as prompting and influencing various structures and processes. Since the 1980s, national memory cultures were considered relatively anchored within the national borders due to the establishments of state officials, elites and intellectuals. They were the gatekeeper for the communication as well as the interpretation and memory construction (Stepnisky 2005). This consequently manifested in ways that led to the national memory becoming embedded into the habitus of most citizens (Connerton 1989). The axes between individual, society, state and nation are based on the premises of national memory and the reproduction over time has maintained it (Appadurai 1990). However, as time passed societies changed and it has now become ‘global times’, where the identities of individuals and groups are in flux. Cultures are now considered more as hybrids. People all over the world are encountering otherness constantly (Gergen 1991).

However, this perspective is challenged and disputed by Anthony D. Smith. He argues that the nation-state is alive and well (Smith 1995). He argues a methodology based on a national perspective, which has engaged the right wing of the political spectrum. Moreover, globalization has not constructed a universal culture that has eroded national forms of identification, due to memory. Furthermore, if memory is the key aspect in identity, then we can eliminate that there is global identity in the making (Smith 1995: 24). Smith argues that *‘Humanity’ in the abstract has no memory nor rituals, the essential aspects of human social life. It is still the national state that is the most powerful provider of these. Nation-state forms of ritual, thinking and memorizing remain more salient and more powerful than an ‘artificial and standardized universal culture [that] has no historical background, no developmental rhythm, no sense of time and sequence ... alien to all ideas of “roots,” ... [This] global culture is fluid, ubiquitous, formless and historically shallow’* (Smith 1995: 22).

This argument and perspective are not shared by Beck. His premises echo Bell's argument that *'memory politics is a truly global phenomenon'* (Bell 2009: 348). In his cosmopolitan theory which could be considered on the left wing of the political spectrum, he argues that the globalization/trans-nationalization constitute cosmopolitanizing. The concept is constructed around the new *'cosmopolitan'* memory formations, which are considered global-spanning. It prevails *"beyond and is irreducible to national, state-controlled forms of memory and that are based around chronologies that may differ markedly from the senses of history promoted by nationalist myth-making"* (Inglis 2016 :145). One of the key mechanisms in his theory is to some degree based on how the global-spanning *'cosmopolitan'* memory formation is communicated. Landsberg argues that the essential driving force is the media *"whereby trans-national forms of memory are created, disseminated and in turn transformed, then one would certainly have to include the media"* (Landsberg 2004). The media have allowed information outside the national context and this has prompted increased public skepticism, which has directly challenged the official national historical narratives (Inglis 2016:148). Moreover, the power of the trans-national mass media can be seen as eroding national as well as local forms of memory and more significantly *"They can generate forms of emotion and feeling that can reach across borders, creating new communities of affiliation and remembering"* (Landsberg 2004).

In recent years, it has been customary to evoke Holocaust memory as, *"the pre-eminent trans-national, cosmopolitan form of memory, due to its capacity to capture imaginations within and across many, if not almost all, national contexts"* (Levy and Sznajder 2002). This notion led to a generalization and expansion of human rights discourses (Inglis 2016:152). The principles of the International Criminal Court were based on the Nuremberg trials where the memory of Holocaust has emerge as a global moral norm. *"Holocaust not just as a pan-European memory formation but a more broadly trans-national one, operating as both a source of universal moral norms and global icon"* (Assmann 2010). Holocaust memory can be perceived as *'a common and non-partisan issue in the international arena, one of very few that all countries can unite towards'* (Dreyfus and Stoetzler 2011: 70). Hence bypassing national identity and sovereignty (Alexander 2009: 69). The Holocaust memory has been instrumental in establishing truth and reconciliation commissions globally which aims to promote historical truth as a path towards enshrining human rights (Teeger and Vinitzky-Seroussi 2007). Rothberg argues that the processes of memorializing the Holocaust operates in dialogue with contemporary discourses of decolonization in Africa (Inglis 2016

:149,152) A new global norm emerged related to the Holocaust and it has rejuvenated the fight for decolonization and racial justice in Africa.(Inglis 2016 :149,152)

In the aftermath of the brutal police killings, specifically of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in the US, it became the catalyst for social change in a cosmopolitan perspective. It galvanized the Black Lives Matter (BLM) mobilization narrative to eliminate racial injustice not only in the US but moreover across the world. Statues have been dismantled throughout Africa as well as “*Across the U.S., statues of Christopher Columbus have been beheaded and pulled down. In Bristol, England, a statue of slave trader Edward Colston was forced down by protesters. And in Antwerp, Belgium, a towering statue of King Leopold II,*” (Global Reporting Centre 29.06.2020).

Colonization and racial injustice have also become issues in Denmark, which was the seventh largest slave nation in the world. Denmark occupied and colonized the former Danish West Indies, now U.S. Virgin Islands,(USVI) for nearly 250 years. Governments and societies such as the Danish have the option to apply transitional justice measures to achieve redress for the historical injustices and atrocities caused by their legacy of slavery. This can be manifested through both legal as well as non-legal measures, official apologies and reparations for the descendants. However, for the last century, the Danish government has been reluctant to use such measures and has remained in denial as to their political and moral responsibilities. There has been a considerable lack of acknowledgement concerning Danish historical injustices relating to 250 years of slavery in the former Danish West Indies. It is puzzling because Denmark is part of the UN and the human right doctrine encouraged by the Nuremberg trials but is in denial of seeking historical truth as a path towards enshrining human rights (Teeger and Vinitzky-Seroussi 2007). In this master thesis, I am particularly concerned with recurring resistance to denials as well as the political and moral responsibility. Moreover, the transnational elements that have influenced the narrative struggles regarding memories in the 250 years of colonialism and how this specifically relates to the notions of race, resistance, and denial. Two statues were significant in that regard. The “Freedom” unveiled in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary“ unveiled in 2018 both connected to the 2017 centennial observance in Denmark for the sale of the former Danish West Indies. Both constituted a counter narrative to the Danish hegemonic narrative and denial. In 2020, the BLM mobilization also reached Denmark also became a counter narrative to the Danish hegemonic narrative and denial. I advocate that acquiring more in-depth knowledge regarding race, power relations and social inequalities can increase our understanding of the political strategies applied by individuals and

groups to resist denial. The aim is to obtain further knowledge regarding further social strategies to address the denials of political and moral responsibility by the Danish governments, as well as other political actors, with the purpose to obtain justice and equality.

1.1 Problem formulation

“How is the Freedom and Queen Mary statues social narrative strategy in 2017 and 2018 different or similar than the BLM mobilization in 2020 regarding challenging the hegemonic narratives of Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands”.

1.2 Research Question

2017-2018 1. How did the narrative struggles about the Freedom and Queen Mary statues addressing Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands in Denmark in 2017-2018?

- a) What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the Freedom statue?
- b) What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the Queen Mary statue?
- c) What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles?
- d) Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?

2020 2. How did the narrative struggles about BLM addressing Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands in Denmark in 2020?

- a) What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the BLM mobilization?
- b) What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles?
- c) Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?

1.3 Research motivation

The motivation for this thesis research has firstly been the puzzle to understand why there has not been transitional justice in context to the former Danish West Indies from Denmark for more than hundred year since it sale to the USA. Moreover, there is an increasing need for more research concerning the ever-growing concept of globalization and memory in relationship to transitional justice and historical injustice, especially in Denmark where little research has been conducted. Secondly, the BLM mobilization has become the new emerging norm, which have been highly debated and contemporary issues in a global context. Moreover, uncover social strategies as a resistant to denial, for further use.

1.4 Existing Research

In this chapter, I will describe the existing research, which this thesis is building on. As previously mentioned, there is very little research in Denmark concerning reparation for the USVI. However, Astrid Nonbo Andersen, historian and researcher from Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), wrote her PhD thesis on this specific subject. In 2017 it was published in a book called *"No Apology, memories of the Danish West Indies and the demand for compensation for slavery"*. In 2018, she also published in the Journal of African American History *"The Reparations Movement in the United States Virgin Islands"*. In her research, she argues that one of the key obstacles for obtaining reparation for the USVI is the difference in perspectives between USVI and Denmark concerning Denmark's 250 years of colonial history in the former Danish West Indies. She argues that one of the fundamental reasons why Denmark has a different perspective of transnational memory is because of the narrative she defines as *"Innocent colonialism"* (Andersen 2017: 37, 48-57). This narrative has for more than 100 years been one of the key obstacles preventing the USVI from receiving reparation or a public official apology from the Danish government. Andersen also mentions three other key factors: firstly the fear that an acknowledgement of any wrongdoing could trigger lawsuit for financial compensation (Ibid 220). Secondly, it would set a precedent that would open for other demands (Ibid: 215). The last factor is that the Danish position concerning reparation and apology is aligned with that of other European states as well as that of the US. At this point in time, there is very little indication that the US or any European states are going to change their official positions (Andersen 2018:127). I intend to utilize her research in the thin analysis and builds on it in my thick part of my analysis were my research concentrate on a different time period,

because her research ends in 2017, where my research is entailing 2017, 2018 and 2020. Moreover, my research focus is on social strategies as a resistant to denial.

1.5 Literature search

In this chapter, I will describe the literature research process carried out in relation to this thesis. The purpose has been to identify and select the literature deemed most relevant in relation to this thesis. The thesis research question is significant in that regard because it guides the project literature research. I will conduct a narrative literature review. The purpose is to establish an overview of the area of the study as well as to highlight the research significance and justification for the research question. Furthermore, the purpose is also to identify what is already known, as well as to investigate if there is a gap in the literature because of limited literature or unanswered research questions in my study area. Moreover, I will also determine whether there are any significant controversies or inconsistencies among the different sources. Additionally, I aim to identify the different relevant theoretical and methodological approaches, which could be beneficial for this project (Bryman 2016:91, 95). In this paragraph, I will elaborate on my literature review and research process. Firstly, I aim to become familiar with the social phenomena of my research; this I will achieve by requiring a reasonably comprehensive coverage of the existing literature. I will start by examining the most recent research concerning my specific study field. Hence, I will start with examining the Astrid Nonbo Andersen book, which I have previously mentioned. In addition, I will also be utilizing Pauline Stoltz' book from 2020 call "*Gender, Resistance and Transnational Memories of Violent Conflicts*". The reason is that she offers another approach than Nobro regarding memory and reparation, which is beneficial to my research. After examining their research, I will proceed to identify the limitation of my project research question. I will divide the social phenomena into two themes: "Denial" and "Resistance to denial" I will apply a critical perspective concerning the strengths and deficiencies of the different sources. Moreover, the author's objective as well as the implications of his or her findings (Bryman 2016:95-98).

1.6 Research design

In this chapter, I will describe the research of this thesis. The design is structured with the aim to answer the research questions of the thesis. It is composed around nine chapters, which unfold as follows. The first chapter is an introduction to the study, whereas the second chapter is a description of the existing research on which my research will be building on. I will then proceed in the third chapter to explain my literature search and how I will utilize it. The fourth chapter is the conceptual theoretical framework of the thesis, which consists of the following parts: transitional justice, memory of politic, implicated subjects, denials and transnational affective relations, resistance and affective relations, representation, body and emotions and mediated habits, images, networked affect and social change. I will elaborate regarding some differences of opinions concerning these concepts and theories, and how these relate to the research questions of the project. In the fifth chapter, I will proceed to explain the position and approach of the thesis in relation to philosophy of science and methodology. Thereafter, I will provide a short overview of the chosen empiri and analytical strategy. Moreover how it relates to the research question of the thesis. I will then proceed with providing a historical background context in chapter six, which is the thin analysis of Denmark from 1917 to 2016, divided into two themes: denial and resistance to denial. I will then briefly provide a historical background context to the seventh chapter, which is the thick analysis of Denmark, also divided into two themes: denial and resistance to denial in relation to the Freedom statue in 2017. The seventh chapter is also the thick analysis of Denmark, likewise divided into two themes: denial and resistance to denial in relation to the, "I am Queen Mary " statue in 2018. The eighth chapter I also will then proceed with providing a historical background context, which is the thick analysis of Denmark, divided into two themes: denial and resistance to denial in relation to the BLM mobilization in 2020. The ninth chapter will be the conclusion based on the thin and thick analyses around the two analytical themes of the thesis as well as the context and the conceptual theoretical framework.

2. Conceptual theoretical framework

In his chapter, firstly, I will describe some different perspective regarding the concept and theories and how these relate to the study research questions. One of this study central argument is the need to emphasize on more in-depth consideration regarding the complexities of race, denials as well as emotions of victims, perpetrators and the inclusion of observers. This will assist us better understanding instances of resistance to the political and moral denial of responsibility for human rights and historical injustices that occur in U.S. Virgin Islands.

2.1 Transitional Justice

Within the field of Transitional justice, some emphasize the notion of justice, whereas others emphasize the process of transition. Nevertheless, it entails in one way or another both elements, which raises important questions, “*what kind of society is envisaged and how the transition should or could be accomplished*”. (Ibid:5). Transitional justice is a relatively new concept. The term first emerged in the 1990s; however, the concept has since gained global significance. The original foundation of the concept predominantly focuses on the “*legal approach to human rights violations committed by departed regimes*” (Gready & Robins 2014: 340). The ideology of transitional justice is foremost based on the thinking of the global north, which is often associated with liberalism. The implicit assumptions of the global north regarding transition and/or justice are therefore the foundation on which the discourses and practices of transitional justice rest. Buckley-Zistel et al. argue that the challenge is to reveal what these underlying assumptions concerning transitional justice practice and discourse entail in addition to “*how they influence – or limit – the practice of transitional justice*”. (Buckley-Zistel et al., 2014:1). The concept has drawn its inspiration from the aftermath of the Second World War. Here it is important to mention historical events such as the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials and various South American countries transitioning from dictatorship to democracy. The concept later expanded to include other aspect of redress for past wrongs such as tribunals, trials, truth commissions, memorial projects and reparations (Gready & Robins 2014: 339,340, (Buckley-Zistel, Koloma Beck, Braun, & Mieth, 2014: 1). In that regards it is worth mentioning the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and the international criminal tribunals, such as the tribunals of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. (Buckley-Zistel et al., 2014: 1). In recent years, there has been an effort to expand the concept of transitional justice to include

aspects of social and cultural rights as well as political and civil rights (Buckley-Zistel et al., 2014:6).

There has been an ongoing debate in academia concerning the definition of transitional justice. Some in academia defines the concept of transitional justice primary as an legal approach. This I will argue is a very narrow definition, where the focus only is on law. Generally, the central focus is on legal theory in the field of transitional justice, which has prompted some scholars to argue the importance of expanding the framework for how justice may be defined (Bell et al 2007) (Ibid:6). Buckley-Zistel, Koloma Beck, Braun and Mieth, refer to transitional justice as, “*an umbrella term for approaches to deal with the past in the aftermath of violent conflict or dictatorial regimes.*” (Buckley-Zistel, Koloma Beck, Braun, & Mieth, 2014:1). Because of the complexity ranging from very narrow, only the legal aspeckt to the broad, umbrealla approach, it becomes somewhat an unclear definition. Gready & Robins argues a more critical perspective that, “*The performance and impact of transitional justice mechanisms have been at best ambiguous and at times disappointing, critiqued, for example, for treating the symptoms rather than the causes of conflict.* (Gready & Robins 339,340). This perspective is important since transitional justice mechanisms merely treat the symptoms rather than the causes of conflict. Buckley-Zistel argues that we have to acknowledge that there is not one universal theory of transitional justice, but rather an umbrella of diverse approaches to conceptualizing the phenomenon. (Buckley-Zistel, Koloma Beck, Braun, & Mieth, 2014:1). An alternative definition is argued by Anja Mihr, who equates transitional justice as: ‘*a concept and a process that encompasses a number of different legal, political and cultural instruments and mechanisms that can strengthen, weaken, enhance or accelerate processes of regime change and consolidation*’ (Mihr, 2017:1). Mihr’s alternative definition becomes more of a holistic definition, which is useful regarding my research. She emphasizes that the instruments and mechanisms do not necessary equate with a positive result, hence we have to be able to comprehend transitional justice in a more complex manner. Buckley-Zistel et al argue that since the field of transitional justice is extremely heterogeneous, which in turn has prevented a universal theoretical language from emerging. Therefore, the lack of ability to cross-disciplinary boundaries, which include law, political science, sociology, psychology and anthropology. Each discipline differs especially in perspectives and methodology, which makes it problematic to establish what “*exactly transitional justice is and is not.*” Clark and Palmer 2012). Buckley-Zistel et al., 2014:7). The different disciplines may at times be in contention with each other, because the different perspectives and approaches lead to particular foci of research. This is significant in context to the

research objective and epistemological and ethical stand-points, because the argument rests on the assumption that everybody including the researcher is preconditioned in context to his or her cultural background. Hence, each researcher brings “*different experiences, interests and sets of values into the analysis of justice during times of transition*” (Buckley-Zistel et al 2014:4). Often theories in the field of transitional justice, is seeking a highly normative agenda, which serves as a baseline for how transitional justice ought to be. (Ibid:4). This becomes problematic since it is only a Western world norm perspective. Lately there has been produced a body of literature which challenges transitional justice as an emerging global Western norm (Nagy 2008) and reevaluates it from a local perspective (McEvoy and McGregor 2008; Hinton 2010; Shaw et al 2010). Their criticism is that the Western norm often supports a specific view concerning justice, truth and reconciliation. In this project, there will not be a focus on the debate concerning the global north hegemony ideology in relation to the global south. Since Denmark and the USA, which are the focus of this study, are both considered the global north. The project will therefore apply the Western normative approach in relation to Denmark and USA.

When I am applying Mihr’s holistic definition, I will be using the Reiter model, in order to get a better grip on the limitations in transitional justice in context to norms and mechanisms. The model is divided into three different levels of analysis, which illustrate how transitional justice can be evaluated:

- (1) *The micro or individual level* in context to recognition, reparation and reconciliation. The focus is on the individual as either victims or perpetrators and to what degree that perception is able to alter different group’s views in society.
- (2) *The meso or institutional level* is in context to institutional assessments of peculiar mechanisms with the aim of obtaining justice, truth and reform. Hence, it encompasses legal courts, truth commissions and reparation programmers, such as cultural memorial projects.
- (3) *The macro or national/global level* relates to peace, democracy and human rights, which often entail law and politics. There is a central focus on whether specific choices of mechanisms correlate with a positive longstanding success on measures of democracy and human rights. This entails universal trends or if new norms have emerged which are successful in improving democracy and human rights (Reiter, 2017).

Riter and Mihr's holistic definition neglects two important questions: Firstly, *Which level to emphasize on first?* and secondly, *Which combination of the three levels is preferable transitional justice?* . It is notable to point out that all three levels in the transitional justice model focus on the victims and perpetrators relationship, and consequently neglects observers or bystanders. I will argue that, generally, transitional justice and memory politics emphasize predominantly the binary relationship between victims and perpetrators in the triad model. This consequently neglects the category of observer. Hence, I argue that changing the attention towards the observer will enable me to strengthen the nexus in the triad model. One approach, which further aids that perspective, is transnational affective relations, which I will be applying in my study (Pedwell, 2014). The approach entails how feelings, such as nostalgia, can transform into denial (Cohen, 2001), Innocent colonialism and colonial aphasia. This consequently becomes a reinforcement of historical injustices (Stoler, 2011).

2.2 Memory politics

Rigney argues that memory and activism interrelate with each other. There is a relation between Memory activism, the memory of activism and memory in activism. *Memory activism*, referee to individuals who are trying to produce cultural memory with the aim to command the future remembrance. Whereas, *the memory of activism* refers to how social change is culturally recollected in context to previous mobilizations. I will argue that *Memory activism* and *the memory of activism* is a valuable tool for my project concerning the narrative struggles in Denmark. (Rigney 2018). Thus it will be utilized in the thick analyzation phase, where the focus is on 2017, 2018 and 2020. I will investigate two statues, which arguably is a memory activism approach. Both statues build on *Memory in activism*, which refers to how mobilizations form new movements in the present, on the background of cultural memory of previous social struggles. Halbwachs argues that individual memories are the basic premises of collective memory. He contends that individual and collective memories are interrelated. His argument rests on that *collective memory*, which is circulated throughout society such as in Denmark is encompassing the individual's knowledge, perception and feeling regarding the past. This entails to what degree individuals identify or morally judge the past relating the two events of 1848 emancipation and 1878 Fire Burn and 250 years of slavery. Furthermore, to what degree collective memories are able to inspire individuals as a template for their behavior and identity. (Halbwachs, 1992; Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). *Commemoration* refers to determining who is and who is not worthy of celebration in relation to pivotal events. Furthermore,

who merely deserve remembrance without any celebration (Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). Stoltz argues, “*Struggles over commemoration emphasize the socially constructive as well as the political dimensions of memory.*” (Stoltz 2020:28). I find this relevant to my study because it is also significant in the context of talk about the politics of memory. Olick argues that in memory studies, it is implicit that different nations recall different historical events. Likewise, different groups within the nation recall different events or remember the same events differently (Olick, 2016: 45).

2.3 Implicated Subjects, Denials and Transnational affective relations

I previously argued that Transitional justice and memory politics predominantly emphasize on victims and perpetrators in the triad model. Therefore, I will move the attention towards the observer and transnational affective relations, which in turn will help strengthen the nexus in the triad model. I propose that we need to pay more attention to the emotions of observers to be able to solve my query concerning puzzle of this study. It hence relates to one of this study research question *Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles.*

In 2019 Rothberg suggested that we are in need of a concept for describing ‘*the manifold indirect, structural, and collective forms of agency that enable injury, exploitation, and domination but that frequently remain in the shadows*’ (Rothberg, 2019:1). He argues that beside the generally rather weak triadic model of victim, perpetrator and bystander, we should apply the category of the *implicated subject*. His argument rests on that we must by-pass the idealized myths concerning the innocent bystanders. Just because they merely “bystanders” does not make them innocent, he defines them as those who ‘*occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes*’ (Rothberg, 2019:1). Rothberg’s reasoning relates to my previous argument about the binary approach in research concerning transitional justice and memory politics. Rothberg argues that privilege is not necessarily equal to implicated subjects. Hence, not all black individuals are victims and not all white individuals are perpetrators.

He argues the need to reexamine the concept of historical and political responsibility of implication. In context to holding implicated subjects accountable to both moral as well as political aspects of historical injustice. (Rothberg, 2019:200). I find Rothberg’s argument regarding the connection between implication and accountability only one way of pursuing transitional justice. I also need to

encompass denial for a more comprehensive understanding of the struggles in the present concerning transitional justice memory politics and the triad model of victims, perpetrator and observers. One of the central arguments of my study is that in order to study denial I also have to include resistances to denial. This will create the possibility for more in-depth and informed decisions about the future, in context to why and where resistances emerge. Moreover, what is the cause for the lack of success? The concept denial is uncomplicated to comprehend as an individual psychological mechanism. However, it is also a collective mechanism, such as in cases where a whole nation can slip into denial. Cohen introduced the term ‘states of denial’, which refers to ‘*internal psychic states*’ as well as ‘*states*’ of organized governments or nations” (Cohen & Husain, 2008). He argues that denial can entail both personal official or cultural aspects. Moreover, it can also be in either in a historical or a contemporary context, this approach is important in relation to the involvement of actors as victims, perpetrators or observers. I find Cohen's perspective beneficial for my study, because I will argue that Denmark is what Cohen defines as in a state of denial in relation to historical or contemporary context. It is significant that Cohen distinguishes among different aspects regarding what victims, perpetrators or observers deny: *literal denial* refers to the denial concerning facts and knowledge of facts. *Interpretive denial* refers to the denial concerning a particular interpretation of a fact. *Implicatory denial* refers to the denial in context to specific psychological, political or moral implications, which often is the outcome of denial of facts and the conventional interpretation of facts (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). The fourth aspect of denial is *post-moral denial*, which refers to the lack of action or refusal to care, which leads to an indifference concerning knowledge and facts (Cohen & Husain, 2008). Cohen`s different aspects of denial are key to my study because firstly, as mentioned, Denmark has been somewhat inactive in acknowledging fact and responsibility for 250 years of slavery.

I will apply the transnational perspective with the argument that it will be beneficial to understand the denials of perpetrators, bystanders and observers. In addition to the understanding of resistances and collective activism against such denials, I will in that context, specifically apply Pedwell’s approaches, which she defines as *transnational affective relations* (Pedwell, 2014). Furthermore, it is a valuable tool for me to understand the friction between the individual and the collective narratives. Additionally, it lends the possibility to focus on victims and perpetrators as well as bystanders and observers.

2.4 Resistance and Affective Relations

As previously mentioned, the context to this study concerns the lack of engagement of powerful governments, to comply with global trends and norms in relation to historical injustices. Power in this context relates to the imbalance between the former colonized and the ex-colonial power such as the Danish government. One of the central aspects in this study research question is what kind of resistance is able to alter the symbiotic relationship between power and resistance in context Denmark and the former Danish West Indies. We can divide resistance in two different aspects. Where the first approach focuses on the individual relations that subjects have with others, the second aspect emphasizes that there are various approaches to practice resistance, which can be regarded as a sliding scale: ‘*everyday resistance*’ (Lilja et al., 2017). which entails; sarcasm, passivity, laziness, disloyalty or avoidance, which often seems invisible. ‘*Organized resistance*’, (Ibid) entails; riots, social movements or the formation of political parties. However,, “*The link between everyday resistance and organized resistance remains unclear*” (Ibid). Furthermore, on the premises of transnational affective communities I propose the need to increase our attention regarding transitional justice and memory politics in context to how feelings, emotions and body can materialize as denial. On a positive note it can however also become a vehicle of hope and social change. The aspect relates to my research question regarding “*What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles*” as well as if there were “*a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles* .

2.5 Representation

Hutchison argues that in some specific circumstances throughout history, traumatic events have ‘*snowballed*’, which she argues can emerge into a collective form of meaning and feeling. This Hutchinson defines as an ‘*affective community*’. (Hutchison, 2016, 2019). Pedwell in turn uses the term ‘*affective relations*’ to underscore the relational nature of emotions (Pedwell, 2017:17–18). These specific circumstances to a certain degree entails that suffering of some traumatic events becomes part of a collective consciousness and memory. She further argues that representations and interpretations “*examine the parallel politics of emotions and community including of emotions and resistance*” (Hutchison, 2016, 2018). This aspect is important, since some particular representations of traumatic events can become resources in context of everyday as well as organized resistance. Furthermore, merge into political strategies within various political arenas.

Pedwell defines the terms of ‘affective relations’ when the role of emotions and affect is considered in transnational politics. Her central argument is that *“theorising transnational links among emotion, power and social transformation requires that we examine affective relations, rather than isolating individual emotions as unified and discrete entities”* ...[this] involves addressing the *imbrication of emotion and feeling with structural relations of power in the context of contemporary bio politics and geo-politics*’ (Pedwell, 2014:18). The aspect that emotions and some particular representation of traumatic events can have a profound impact on society is relevant for this study’s research question in the thick analysis *Was there a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?*

Hutchison contends that (IR) international relations scholars have embraced the study of emotions in world politics and argues that some scholars referred to it as one of the ‘*great frontiers*’ of the field. The important question is exactly *how* emotions matter. Hutchison's central argument is that the key is the representations of emotions particularly in context to trauma. (Hutchison, 2018 :287).

2.6 Body and Emotions

Hutchison suggests that creating a link between emotions, affect, and bodies will provide us with a holistic engagement concerning how emotions matter in world politics (Ibid:286). She argues that bodies and emotion are intertwined with society and culture where the key point is that regardless of social norms and values, the bodies also have the ability to possess ‘*agential capacities*’. This entails that the body and the representation is able to resist power. Moreover, is able to *“re-shaping social and political perspectives, priorities, values and norms”* (Ibid:290). Ted Hopf, argues in context to international relations that the bodies may *“ shift towards affect helps to understand how individuals and collectives can overcome the emotional ‘habits’ that constitute and confound the status quo (in all of its guises and iterations) in world politics.* (Ibid:293). Hutchison's argument that we should equate the physical body as a representations of emotions, relates to this study research question in the thick analysis *“What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles”*.

2.7 Mediated Habits: Images, networked affect and social change

Pedwell argues that when we focus more on habit it then may assist us in a more comprehensive understanding concerning the potentials and limits of ‘progressive’ social change. Moreover, how, and under which conditions, affective transformation can emerge in society. (Pedwell, 2017). For the past decades there has been attempts in cross disciplinary fields to “*rethink the contemporary workings of social life from the unconscious habits of white privilege*” (Sullivan, 2005, 2015), (Ibid:5). Pedwell further argues that if we consider that affect is the binding aspect, which are *compelling us to inhabit our sensorial responses to images*” (Pedwell, 2017: 6). Pedwell hence suggest that if we regard affect and habit as a symbiotic relationship, it will help us gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics for the individual as well as the socio-political change today.(Ibid:1,4). Pedwell examines the specific relations between affect, habit, visual images and media technologies. Pedwell argues, that if we accept the premises that some specific affective reactions to visual representations has the ability to becoming a progressive catalyst of responses, it can lead to action regarding injustice. The significant question that emerges is “*how it is that we understand the workings of such material and socio-political process?*” (Ibid:14), or in other words how are images able or unable to move us and furthermore how does the end result push towards broader forms of personal or social transformation (Ibid).

Pedwell contends that to enable us to gain a more comprehensive understanding between the links of visual images, media technologies and social change we need increasingly to be attuned to the relations between affect and habit. When so it is important that we explore the logics of the ‘double law of habit’ more in-depth (Ibid: 22). Pedwell describes the double aspect in relation to habit, which she defines as the ‘double law of habit’. She applies it in context to specific technological and social aspects of contemporary digital culture. She argues that on one side the individual reaction to the continually ever stream of strong visuals can lead to cognitive disaffection. She uses the term “wearing off” the shock factor, which happens because of the relentless media flow of shocking images we are exposed to constantly in 24 hours news cycle. Yet on the other side of “double habit” the critical concerns remain regarding what “*new habits are being engendered through our everyday engagement with the visual affectivities of social media, and how might such processes relate to the desires for ‘progressive’ social change*” (Ibid:20).

Pedwell suggests that we need to focus on the development of an ‘*affective connection*’, because she argues that it “*sustains sensation to enable different forms of affective inhabitation*” (2006: 5).

She explains that affect is able to involuntarily contribute to a joint push towards critical inquiry. Likewise, it also has the capacity to become the binding technique that prolongs our connection with an image, despite that after we physically have turned away, it is still able to compel us to recognize and reflect on *“the sensorial intensity of our encounter and its critical implications”*. (Idid:24). Carrie Rentshler and Samantha Thrift central claim is that digital technologies are able to connect people across social and geographical boundaries. Moreover, they are also able to enhance political consciousness-raising and organizing. More importantly, they may also have the power due to online visual media to *“move us in novel and salient ways”* (Ibid: 17). This is relevant to my study in relation to my research question in the thick analysis concerning *what transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles*.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, I will explain the research position and approach of the project in context to the philosophy of science and methodology. Furthermore, I will outline how the chosen method and theory relate to the thesis research question.

3.1 Philosophy of Science

One significant aim in methodology is to outline the thesis research position regarding the project epistemology and ontology impetus, which is the core foundation for building research agendas (Lamont 2015:24, 25). The ontology impetus relates to the research field in which the research is going to be undertaken, whereas the epistemology impetus relates to how the research acquires acceptable knowledge. This chosen position of this thesis is the interpretivism approach, which entails that the project ontology impetus is the “social world”. Moreover, the thesis epistemology impetus relates to how knowledge is produced and reproduced (Ibid:20).

3.2 Social constructivism

The key focus of the interpretivist research approach is to understand the *“social meanings”* in relation to *“ideas, norms, beliefs and values that underlie international politics”* (Ibid:19). My argument rests on the following: When utilizing the interpretivist research approach, it provides me with an understanding of the Danish as well as the US ideology norms, values, beliefs in context to denial for transitional justice. The approach also contends that all individuals always interpret the social world through their specific preconditions to his or her cultural norms, values and beliefs.

Moreover, is based on the notion that the researcher is part of the social field he or she is researching; hence, the researcher is part of the research. Therefore, the interpretivist research approach utilizes the phenomenology or the hermeneutics perspective. Phenomenology contends that as a researcher one should so to speak “bracket” one’s precondition concerning one’s own culture norms, values and beliefs. On the other hand, the hermeneutic approach, which I will be applying, contends that the central aspect of interpretation is that we have to challenge our precondition. (Birkler 2007:95,97). This relate to Buckley-Zistel et al2014 argument that each researcher brings “*different experiences, interests and sets of values into the analysis of justice during times of transition*” (Buckley-Zistel et al2014:4).

Encompassed in the interpretivist paradigm is social constructionism where the central agenda is to explain the process concerning how social actors construct the social world through interaction, One fundamental belief for social constructionism is that the “truth” is merely determined, and limited by consensus. Furthermore, the truth should always be viewed in context to history and different cultural settings, which are always in a constant state of revision. Hence, truth becomes a relative term. With that notion regarding truth, constructivism regards the social world as being constructed into social categories such as gender, national identity and ethnicity and race (Bryman 2016:30). The perspective that truth is always in a constant state of revision in context to race is shared by Miron and Inda, which argues that through history there has always been a racial discourse embedded in texts, institutional sites, and rituals, which implicitly draw on preexisting ideologies and racist beliefs. However, they also contend that race is a process in which the meanings of any given racial terms have the possibility to change as, for example, the word “Black” became significant in regards of empowerment such as the Black Power movement of the 1960s (Miron and Inda 2000:102). Lyman argues that the foundation of race relations are based on continually changing social constructions that categorizes and identify individuals within “*hierarchically perceived racial groups*” (Lyman 1990:148). The race relations are identified by a shifting color line that divides whites and nonwhites. This line are not to be understood as a straight line but rather an array of ramparts (Blumer 1963:323). Blumer illustrates his point with the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which successfully was able to breach the outer point of the color line (Blumer 1963:328). Blumer is arguing that race and ethnicity in the public media become key elements in context to the collective perception of racial groups.

3.3 Analyzing Social Narratives

In this chapter I will explain the chosen method for the thesis research, which is Analysis Social Narrative and how it relate to the thesis research question. Shaul R. Shenhav (2015) “*Analyzing Social Narratives*”. The method: Analysis Social Narrative will be utilized in the thin analysis as well as the thick analysis of this study, with the purpose of answering the research question of this study. Shenhav argues that, “*Stories have the capacity to portray and sustain personal experiences, desires, fears, values, and identities*” (Shenhav 2015:22). Hence, stories can be considered a key element in establishing a shared identity and group formation. Furthermore, it also may be accredited with developing and sustaining traditions and culture. However, he argues that stories also have the capacity to “*perpetuating inequality, discrimination, racism, chauvinism, and other wrongs committed by groups*” (Ibid). Shenhav argues that because of the capacity of the stories they are “*essential in the maintenance and legitimating of dominant power and ideologies*” (Shenhav 2015:20). Shenhav further argues that particular governments are rigorous concerning establishing and maintaining national stories, through means such as speeches by state leaders, national ceremonies, and schoolbooks. These stories illustrate the concept of self-narration, when they are presented as “*stories told by the nation to the nation about the nation*”(Ibid:23). Shenhav explains that the analysis of social stories and especially national stories has a far reach. He argues that historical events in national stories change through time and are able to reveal significant shifts in state society relations. It has widely been acknowledged that stories are preserving and sustaining collective memories or national collective memories such as in Denmark and the USVI shared stories encompass one significant quality because they have the capacity to forward information and beliefs from previous generations. However, it is also significant that it entails the aspect of forgetting. Hence, stories are able to “*serve as a powerful mechanism for simultaneously discounting, silencing, and deleting an endless number of other events, characters, and points of view*” (Ibid:24).

Shenhav defines the term “story,” as a chronological sequence of events deriving from a narrative perspective, which entails the characters that are involved in the events. From a theoretical perspective, the relationship between two chronological events becomes a requisite condition for the story to exist. When a specifically privileged story represents historical, social as well as political events, it consequently creates a barrier for other alternative narratives to challenge the hegemony discourse. If we assume that stories have the capacity to undermine an individual's belief

in the truth regarding history and national stories, a fundamental question emerges concerning the role of reality and truth in social life (Ibid: 71). Shenhav explains that to a certain degree states control the dissemination of stories through means such as, print, radio, TV, internet, and education systems. In relation to Denmark, it relates especially to the education system and to some degree radio and TV. Shenhav therefore argues that the modes of production become an important factor for framing narratives as “*true*” or “*common sense*,” as well as not being truthful (Ibid:74).

In the field of narratology, there has been a long tradition to distinguish between “*story*”—*the events themselves in chronological order—and “text”—the discourse or form in which these events are recounted*” (Ibid 22). Shenhav points out that theoretically, when we remove the text and narration from the story, it will in turn create the possibility to analyze, “*what is being told or thought out, without dwelling on how it is narrated*” (Ibid:22). Shenhav first defines three key aspects in social narratives; 1st is the *story* that refers to what is being conveyed. 2nd is the *text*, which refers to the modes of production and representation of the story. 3rd is the *narration* which refers to the manner of which the story is conveyed. Shenhav argues a minimalist definition of narrations as ‘*the narration of a succession of events*’ Hence, this includes a range of the phenomena (Ibid:17). Shenhav argues these three key aspect have to be added with an essential element *multiplicity*, which becomes the fourth key aspect in social narratives.(Ibid 66). Shenhav argues that “*Multiplicity*” *lies at the heart of social narratives as a fourth key element*”. He defines the term with *the process of repetition and variation through which narratives are reproduced at the societal sphere*” (Ibid:56). When there are multiple versions of a narrative, it can become extremely forceful, specifically in context to norm setting for a group. A pervasive narrative entails the capacity to effect group members' judgment of and responses to a given situation, Moreover, it also entails the capacity to obtain hegemony status over other narratives. It will commonly be perceived as conveying truths and therefore alternate versions of the truths, may be perceived as, “*different*” or “*odd*.”. Shenhav argues that when analyzing the element of multiplicity in a social narrative, the question should be what specifically is being multiplied? or what is the *core element*, which is the common denominator to the various multiplied narratives (Ibid:51). Shenhav defines a *dominant social story*, which is regarded as normal or perceived as compulsory, embraced by group members. The implicit premise is that dominant stories eliminate other stories. Shenhav argues this is not necessarily the case and that it is possible that dominant stories are able to coexist with other social stories. This can occur when there is a *proximity between stories*. It relates to the degree of similarity or dissimilarity between story versions. Whereas, *competing stories* relates to social

stories, which are repeatedly challenging the national hegemonic story. Shenhav argues from a theoretical perspective, that the focus should be centered on the fight among the stories, each with the aim to obtain hegemony, which sometimes is identified as a counter-narrative. Intertextuality is a beneficial approach to account for power relations in relation to text, despite the role of the individual. It can highlight how the power of text may be derived from projecting “common sense,” Shenhav contends that presumably the most fundamental aspect in context to narrative research is the relationship between story context to normative perspectives and social reality.

3.4 Analysis strategy

In this chapter, I will explain the thesis analysis strategy. The study engages with two different aspects of narratives which include both a thick and a thin analysis. The thin analysis aims to understand the *social narrative strategy* resistance to denial there has been Denmark from 1917 – 2016, whereas, the thick analysis aims is to understand the *social narrative strategy* resistance to denial in Denmark in 2017, 2018 and 2020. The aim is to uncover historical events and contexts, specifically stories of denial in regards to Danish historical injustices. Moreover, the social strategy of resistance to Danish denial. The focus of the study is the thick narrative analysis of three events with the aim to reveal social strategies of resistance to Danish denial. Moreover, this lends the opportunity to observe how these open-ended national narrative struggles are related to global cosmopolitan narrative struggles, such as BLM, and in what manner the global society should confront historical injustices. The aim with the thin narrative analysis, on the other hand, is to identify past social strategies of the Danish denial displayed by political, legal and social elites as well as the media. Shenhav points out that theoretically, when we remove the text and narration from the story, it will in turn create the possibility to analyze, “*what is being told or thought out, without dwelling on how it is narrated*” (Shenhav 2015:22). Shenhav first defines three key aspects in social narratives which are going to be applied in the thick analysis:

The 1st is the *story* that refers to what is being conveyed, which relates to the project research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the Freedom, “I am Queen Mary” statue and BLM mobilization in 2020?* I will analyze and highlight which core element constituted multiplicity. The 2nd is the *text*, which refers to the modes of production and representation of the story. Finally, the 3rd is the *narration* which refers to the manner in which the story is conveyed. Both relate to the thesis

research question concerning *what transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles*. (Shenhav 2015:17)

3.5 Empiri

In this chapter, I will describe and argue my chosen empiri for the research thesis thin and thick analytical phase as well as its limitations. The scope of my thesis presents different limitations in regards to selecting the empiri for the thesis. Firstly, the time-period for the thick analysis has been limited from the 21.10.2016 to 05.09.2020 Secondly there is the limitation of a maximum of 80 pages to this thesis. The choice of the different actors chosen for the thin as well as the thick analysis is based on that they are leading actors in Denmark and USVI who debate concerning communication and reproduction of Danish colonial history. Since the Danish government has denied reparation for USVI in the past 100 years, I have chosen to include actors who are decision makers trying to change the Danish norms and values concerning obtaining transitional justice in Denmark. Hence, I will be utilizing empiri from the Danish parliamentary debates from 1996 to 2020. Lastly, I have chosen empiri from respected USVI, US and Danish national newspapers.

4 Thin analysis

In the thin narrative analysis phase, I will conduct an analysis of previous strategic narratives of governments and other memory actors in context to denial and obtaining transitional justice for USVI. The purpose of the thin narrative analysis is to serve as a background for the following chapter, which is the thick analyses of 2017, 2018 and 2020 concerning denial and the obstacle of obtaining transitional justice for USVI. In June 1945, Denmark and the US became part of the United Nations (UN) as well as 193 other countries. Whereas the U.S. Virgin Islands since 1946 has been on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories and therefore has no autonomy under international law. (The United Nations and decolonization 15.05.2019). Both Denmark and the US have shown interest in advancing national norms of transitional justice as well as at the same time sidestepping or contesting emerging global norms. In this chapter, I will present examples of some of the strategic narratives from the Danish as well as the US governments, which has been utilizing in regards of contesting or ignoring emerging global norms of transitional justice for USVI from 1917 up to 2016.

4.1 Historical Context Denmark

I find it necessary to introduce the background up to 1917, because specific aspects are essential in regard to denial and resistance to denial in Denmark concerning obtaining transitional justice for USVI. Due to the limitations of this study, I have only included a few yet very significant aspects, which I will pick up for further analysis later in this study. Firstly, religion was a fundamental aspect of the Danes' lives in the 18th century. Christianity was introduced in the former Danish West Indies now USVI. In 1733, the Moravian Church, led by Count Von Zinzendorf, was established on St. Thomas. It later became the most influential church on the islands. Count Von Zinzendorf brought his religious conviction to the islands. This dictated that the social hierarchy was divinely determined because *“God had ordained social inequality, including slavery”* (Mason 2001:399).



“1 1760 Johann Valentin Haidt (1700-1780) First Fruits showing 25 different ethnicities converted by Moravian missionaries. Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, PA”

This religious belief constituted that white Europeans were at the top of the social hierarchy, whereas the Africans were at the bottom. This view legitimized and maintained the conviction among white Europeans that they were in all aspects intellectually superior to Africans. This was a central argument used as the justification and the moral rationale for the colonization of Africa and the West Indies since it was believed that they were actually helping the “primitive” Africans. The ideology of the social hierarchy, white supremacy and the “primitive” Africans, derived from the Moravian church, continued after the 1848 emancipation in the former Danish West Indies and became a fundamental part of academia throughout the world. In 1871 Hebert Spencer's theory “Social Darwinism” became a legitimation through pseudo-science for white supremacy. In 1901, he was introduced into the Danish academia specific in philosophy and sociology and in the general school education system where it became well accepted (Andersen 2008, 104-106) Andreassen and Henningsen, both Danish researchers, also argue that Spencer's theory was well established within Danish society. They argue that especially in 1905, one event in “Tivoli” in Denmark was created to illustrate the racial hierarchy and confirm the white supremacy. The event featured two children taken from St Croix and forcefully put in a cage and exhibited as primitive animals. (Andreassen & Henningsen 2011).



Uncle Sam lures the West Indies away after paying Denmark a nice sum in 1917. It is from the left Saint Thomas, Saint Croix and Saint John (1899-1926) Photo: The Granger Collection/Polfoto.

The ideology of Danish white supremacy and the primitive West Indies carried on up to the sale of the islands in 1917. March 31st 1917 became the official day where the US formally took possession of the Danish West Indies from Denmark and renamed them the U.S. Virgin Islands. The US bought the Danish colony for \$25 million, due to the islands' strategic location in relation to the Panama Canal (library of congress 2020).

I previously mentioned in the existing research chapter that innocent colonialism is one the most significant obstacle for USVI to obtain transitional justice as well as the difference perspective between USVI and DK concerning the transnational memory of Denmark's 250 year of colonial history in the former Danish West Indies. The term entails four different key factors: Firstly, the military defeat in 1864 in Schleswig Holstein became a significant turning point for the Danish kingdom. "*What is lost outwards must be gained inwards*" (Danmarkshistorien.dk 2020) became the new ideology. During the same time period, Denmark changed from the rule of monarchy to the rule of democracy. This became another key factor due to the creation of a new Danish national

narrative that aimed to legitimize democracy as we know of today. N.F.S Grundtvig became the principal disseminator of a new national history narrative. He excluded the 250 years of colonialism history and instead included ordinary Danish people such as farmers (Andersen 2017: 37,48-51). Another key factor is that the new national narrative marginalized 250 years of Danish colonial history to an appendix in the history books. This approach was maintained up to the present day where innocent colonialism is still a very important "orientation point" that many Danes take as a starting point in relation to the Danish colonial history. The last key factor was due to lack of challenges to the concept innocent colonialism from the descendants from the former Danish West Indies. When the sale was complete in 1917, nearly all communication was terminated between the now USVI and Denmark. In addition, there were no descendants that immigrated to Denmark defined as repatriates. This was very abnormal compared to other colonial powers at that time such as the Netherlands, UK, France and the US (Andersen 2017:55,57).

4.2 Danish Denial 1917-2016

In this chapter, I will focus on the Danish narratives from 1917 to 2016. It is interesting that the implication of "Innocent colonialism" were embedded throughout Danish society during the last century and has resulted in that Denmark as nation has slipped into a state of denial of its own colonial past. (Cohen & Husain, 2008). It is also notable that despite Denmark became part of the UN 1945 as well as the Durban convention in 2001, still remained in post moral denial. Hence no redness for transitional justice up to 2016. I will argue and illustrate that the core elements told from 1917 to 2016 were about why DK should not apologize for 250 years of slavery. These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the DK hegemonic narrative about why DK should not apologize for 250 years of slavery. *"I do not think it makes sense for people who have not been personally involved in the slave trade to apologize to people who have not been exposed to it"* (Finans 12.20.2016). *"It is not practice, as the questioner also says, that Danish governments apologize for the policies of previous times or previous governments"* (DK Parliament 2013).

The UN General Assembly Resolution 260 from 1948 stated that, “*genocide is a crime under international law, contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and condemned by the civilized world. Recognizing that at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and being convinced that, in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international co-operation is required*” (UN General Assembly Resolution 260). Nearly 20 years later the UN resolution norm set was not noticeable in Denmark, however the element of literal denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9).” was notable in academia. In 1967, Thorkild Hansen's trilogy book called “*The Slaves Coast*” “*the Slaves ships and Slaves*” and “*the Slaves islands*” was published, which later won the Nordic literature prize in 1971. He expressed contempt for the lack of acknowledgement concerning the Danish colony history and education (Andersen 2017:89).

Out take from Er undskyldninger særligt svære for Danmark? : “*Jeg finder det imidlertid ikke meningsfuldt, at personer, der ikke personligt har været involveret i slavehandel, skal undskylde over for personer, der ikke har været udsat derfor*”(Finans 12.20.2016)

In 1998 at the St. Croix anniversary for 150 years of emancipation, Senator Bryan’s claim: “*No Dane can be a friend of mine until Denmark has apologized for slavery*”.(Andersen 2018:114)- The debate concerning apology was actually discussed a few days earlier in the Danish parliament. The Danish government’s position to an official apology of the slavery to USVI displayed implicatory denial by exhibiting indifference regarding the psychological, political or moral implications of Danish slavery. It also displayed post-moral denial, since there was no acknowledgement of responsibility, hence no readiness for transitional justice (Cohen, 2001: 7–9, Cohen & Husain, 2008). Minister of Foreign Affairs Helveg Petersen responds in regards to an official apology, that this present government was not involved with slavery. Hence the official response for the reparation claim was, “*I do not think it makes sense for people who have not been personally involved in the slave trade to apologize to people who have not been exposed to it*” (Finans 12.20.2016).

Out take from World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance Declaration: A speech given in Durban 2001 by the Danish Minister of the Interior Karen Jespersen. Throughout the speech, reparation was never mentioned, though it stated that the . *“manifestations of racism and racial discrimination exist in all parts of the world including, unfortunately, in my own country”* (DK Minister of the Interior 01.09. 2001). She was relating to the refugee problems in DK, which had slowly started to become a major problem. Therefore, the speech predominantly centered on gender equalities, racism and freedom of religion (Ibid).

Out take from § 20-spørgsmål S 429 Om de tidligere Dansk Vestindiske Øer: *”Men det er ikke praksis, som spørgeren også siger, at danske regeringer undskylder for tidligere tiders eller tidligere regeringers politik”* (DK Parliament 27.11 2013).

In 2013, the Danish parliament again debated the idea of an official apology to USVI, which was proposed in 2005. It was notable that Nick Hækkerup, member of the Danish current government a left wing coalition, echoed the 1998 response from the previous Danish government, hence displaying post moral and implicatory denial, (Cohen, 2001: 7–9, Cohen & Husain, 2008). *“It is not practice, as the questioner also says, that Danish governments apologize for the policies of previous times or previous governments”* (DK Parliament (PM time 1:06) 27.11 2013).

4.3 Resistance to Denial in Denmark 1917-2016

In this chapter, I will focus on resistance to Denial in Denmark . It is notable that the 1998 event became the first window of opportunity for resistance and hence the first official claim for reparation. I will argue and illustrate that the core elements told in relation to the narrative struggles from 1917 to 2016 were that DK should apologize for 250 years of slavery. These counter narratives of resistance to Danish Denial together produced the multiplicity that challenge the DK hegemonic narrative *“No Dane can be a friend of mine until Denmark has apologized for slavery”*. (Andersen 2018:114) *“To condemn the institution of enslavement and seek reparations from Denmark”* (Andersen 2018). *full formal apology; repatriation cultural institutions;* (Moffett & Schwarz 2018: 1 *“The inhuman philosophy of white supremacy and black inferiority was inculcated into European*

peoples to justify the atrocities which were being committed by a Christian people upon fellow human beings. That philosophy continues to poison our society today.” (Du Plessis 2003: 646).

The first resistance as a counter narrative challenging the Danish denial occurred in 1996.

Introduced in a speech in 1996, the US Virgin Islands historian Arnold Highfields proposed the idea of reparations entailing exchange programs, scholarships for training and an official Danish apology. However, the news was never picked up by the Danish media (Andersen 2018:113,114).

Whereas,, in 1998 the Danish media cover an event on the islands. The year marked the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the Danish West Indies, among the guest were USVI Senator Bryan, who was infuriated by the lack of higher-ranking official representation from Denmark. He forced himself on to the stage, which was captured by the Danish national TV. He stated that: *“No Dane can be a friend of mine until Denmark has apologized for slavery”*. (Ibid:114).

Bryan took inspiration from the Pan African movement in the US, when he also argued that the all the focus of the event was on Peter von Scholten and not as much on the local heros such as General Buddhoe and Queen Mary (Andersern 2017:108,109). It is notable that it became an issue concerning who is and who is not worthy of *Commemoration* (Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). Moreover, as Stoltz argues, *“Struggles over commemoration emphasize the socially constructive as well as the political dimensions of memory.”* (Stoltz 2020:28)

Maybe the most significant precursor of the present human rights system was the movement of anti-slavery in the nineteenth century. Nearly two centuries after, in 2001, the movement achieved an important milestone at the Durban conference called the “United Nations World Conference against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance” (Du Plessis 2003: 625). The conference was inspired by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) event in 1992. The event also went under the name the “Group of Eminent Persons for Reparations" and was also the first Pan African Conference on Reparations (Du Plessis 2003: 631,638, Moffett &Schwarz 2018: 1). At the event, Lord Gifford made the argument that the legacy of the slave trade committed by societies such as the US and Europa still is an important problem today *“The inhuman philosophy of white supremacy and black inferiority was inculcated into European peoples to justify the atrocities which were being committed by a Christian people upon fellow human beings. That philosophy continues to poison our society today.”* (Du Plessis 2003: 646). This related directly to the Morivan

church as well as the Danish legacy of slavery and the embedded social Darwinism of the 19th century. Before the Durban Conference the most divisive issues, which concerned reparation for slavery, nearly derailed the Conference (Ibid:625). Despite disagreements there were 50 nations, including Denmark, that agreed to the declaration issued as the last document of the conference (Buser 2016:7). It stated: *“We acknowledge that slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity, and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade, and are among the major sources and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance...We recognize that colonialism has led to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance”* (Hassmann (2004:2).

The sentence, *“crime against humanity and should always have been so”* became a legal caveat called inter-temporal, which means that no nation can be prosecuted today, if it was legal at the time. (Du Plessis 2003: 632). This wording was unacceptable to the Caribbean delegates, who considered it a serious setback and withdrew from the convention. Hilary Beckles, a delegate from Barbados at the Durban conference, argued that it *“represented the most profound epistemological opportunity of the twenty-first century: Who would own and possess intellectual sovereignty over the interpretation of the past.”* (Andersen 2018:123). This is an important aspect, because it relates to who has the right to the dominating story concerning the legacy of slavery.

In 2004 inspired from the Durban 2001 convention, Shelly Moorhead of the US Virgin Islands founded the org. ACRRA (African-Caribbean Reparations & Resettlement Alliance). Less than one year later, they had gathered support from the local politicians and community leaders. In 2005 the 26th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands adopted resolution 1680 that stated: *“To condemn the institution of enslavement and seek reparations from Denmark”* (Andersen 2018). This was clearly influenced by the 2001 Durban convention. Later that year a delegation from USVI went to Denmark, though not as a diplomatic visit to discuss the issue of reparations. The most favorable outcome of the trip was the *“Memorandum of Understanding”*, which entailed educational collaboration with the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) and ACRRA. (Andersen 2017:197).

In early 2014 the prestigious law company Leigh Day announced that (CARICOM)The Caribbean Community will propose legal action for reparations of slavery. Where USVI to some degree is part of. They stated that *“[t]he complaint will undoubtedly go to the governments of Britain, France, Netherlands, and very likely Sweden, Norway, and Denmark”* but also that *“[t]he final decision on*

this has not yet been made". Whereas if their complaint is rejected "*CARICOM nations will take their individual cases to the International Court of Justice*".²⁵ (Buser 2016:8). They then presented CARICOM's Ten Point Plan for reparations: (1) *full formal apology*; (2) *repatriation*; (3) *indigenous peoples development program*; (4) *cultural institutions*; (5) *public health crisis*; (6) *illiteracy eradication*; (7) *African knowledge program*; (8) *psychological rehabilitation*; (9) *technology transfer*; and (10) *debt cancellation*. (Moffett & Schwarz 2018: 1). It is notable that CARICOM demand for historical injustice entail all three levels of Reiter's Transitional Justice Model (Reiter, 2017).

Hassmann and Lombardo point out that when comparing the CARICOM reparations claims in contrast to the Jewish Holocaust, the causal nexus between direct victims and perpetrators was more apparent in context to the Jewish's victims. Furthermore, it could be observed that time was a factor because seeking justice became more difficult as time passed (Moffett & Schwarz 2018: 9-10).

Du Plessis and many other scholars argue that it will not be a feasible strategy for reparation for slavery and hence "*must draw on moral arguments to secure political settlement of reparation claims*" (Du Plessis 2003: 637, Moffett & Schwarz 2018: 19).

5 Thick analysis Freedom Statue 2017

In this chapter, I will analysis the Freedom Statue. Firstly, I will procced with the historical context.

5.1 Contextual Background 2017



Photo: Maitri

It is common knowledge in Denmark that Governor General Peter von Scholten abolished slavery in 1848 and granted the enslaved their freedom. However, the Danish interpretation is quite different in the USVI. Their perspective is that the enslaved revolted and demanded their freedom because the Danish state in 1847 decided to phase out slavery over a 12-year period. The revolt was comprised of several hundred slaves in Frederiksted as well as on the rest of St. Croix. To avoid the violent confrontation, Peter von Scholten was forced to grant the slaves their freedom. A central figure who emerged from the revolt was the enslaved man John Gotlieb, also called General Buddhoe. He has been accredited for preventing that the revolt did result in violent confrontation and is revered as a freedom fighter on the USVI (Danish national museum 2020). The Freedom statue is also referred to locally as the 'Conch Blower' as it symbolizes the call for the rebellion in

1848 where the slaves emancipated themselves. The Freedom statue was created in 1998 by sculptor Bright Bimpong from Ghana for the purpose of celebrating the 150th observance of the abolition of slavery (Holbæk Museum 2020). It was commissioned by Walter Brunne, whose heirs donated his copy of the statue to Denmark in collaboration with St. Thomas/St. John Committee of the Virgin Islands Historic Preservation Commission and St. John Historical Society (Ibid).

5.2 Danish Denial 2017

In this phase, I will analyze my research question: *What narratives and counter narratives Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the Freedom statue?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the Danish narratives and will argue and illustrate that it constituted two core elements told in relation to the Freedom statue in 2017. The first element was about adequate education about Danish colonial history. The second was about why Denmark should not apologize for 250 years of slavery.

These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative about adequate education about Danish colonial history. Hence, made the counter narrative from USVI seem “different or odd” (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *“The statue inscribes itself in an increasingly lengthy processing of our historical role in the transatlantic slave trade (Information 11.11.2016). “The Danish high schools have taught the history of the former Danish West Indies for generations...Unimaginable kilometers of text have been written about Denmark's past with slaves” (Berlingske 03.11.2016). It was also notable that intertextuality was applied with the aim of projecting “common sense,” with the narrative.” I recommend Miss Frederiksen and others with holes in the historical knowledge to read the author Thorkild Hansen's award - winning trilogy, published from 1967” (Ibid).*

These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative about why Denmark should not apologize for 250 years of slavery: *“The story of Denmark's past as a slave trade nation and colonial power is a unique story of white guilt. It's on the verge of falsifying history, but it's wildly popular...However, the debate about this chapter in Danish history is so one-sided that it scares the documentation.... The story is squeezed into a postcolonial narrative template with whites in the role of villains and Africa as the raped continent.... There is apparently a need for guilt” (Information 11.11.2016). “Slavery is being made*

into a chapter which is over". That's just what it is" (Berlingske 03.11.2016). "However, to give an official apology, we think it would be a wrong step to take...because nothing really comes out of saying sorry...If we say sorry for the one, why do we not also say sorry for the second, third and fourth dark chapter in Danish history. None of the current inhabitants of the islands have been slaves, and none of us have been slave owners. If we are to apologize to the West Indies, we must also apologize for the Stockholm Massacre" (Berlingske (25.03 2017).

Out take from, Historieløshed om dansk slavehandel: *"Der er skrevet uanede kilometer tekst om Danmarks fortid med slave..... Folkeskolen har i generationer undervist i Danmarks ejerskab og salg af De Vestindiske Øer, Slavetiden bliver gjort til et overstået kapitel«. Det er lige, hvad det er. ...Det er fint, at vi danskere igen og igen minder os selv, hinanden og den større omverden om vores fortid som kolonimagt, men jeg kan ikke få øje på nytteværdien af det yderligere kollektive selvpineri, Jeg anbefaler fru. Frederiksen og andre med huller i den historiske viden at læse forfatteren Thorkild Hansens prisbelønnede trilogi, der udkom fra 1967" (Berlingske 03.11.2016).*

March 31st 2017 marked the 100th observance of the sale of the former Danish West Indies where it became obvious that the embedded denial and “innocent colonialism” still were weaved into the Danish cultural fabric. The former Danish ambassador Niels Erik Andersen argued, in context of the upcoming 2017 observance, that the Danish history of colonialism is common knowledge in Denmark. Thus, he displayed literal denial concerning the fact as well as interpretive denial, since he was arguing his particular interpretation (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“Unimaginable kilometers of text have been written about Denmark's past with slaves”* (Berlingske 03.11.2016), followed up by *“the Danish high schools have taught the history of the former Danish West Indies for generations”* (Ibid). He proceeded in the following paragraph to exhibit implicatory and post-moral denial with the implication that there is no concern for psychological or moral implication or transitional justice concerning the aspect of 250 years of slavery (Cohen, 2001: 7–9, Cohen & Husain, 2008). *“Mrs. Frederiksen is right that "Slavery is being made into a chapter over". That's just what it is”* (Berlingske 03.11.2016). In the next paragraph, he then turned the victim and perpetrator aspect around with the outcome that the Danish people suddenly become the victims, *“It is good that we Danes again and again remind ourselves, each other and the larger world of ours past as a colonial power, but I cannot see the utility of the further collective self-torture”* (Ibid). In the last paragraph, he again displayed literal and interpretive denial concerning the educational material from 1967 regarding the Danish colonial history with his statement (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“I*

recommend mrs. Frederiksen and others with holes in the historical knowledge, to read the author Thorkild Hansen's award - winning trilogy, published from 1967" (Berlingske 03.11.2016).

Out take from, Den hvide mand vil være skyldig: *"Fortællingen om Danmarks fortid som slave handelsnation og kolonimagt er en entydig fortælling om hvid skyld. Den er på grænsen til historieforfalskning, men den er voldsomt populær... Statuen skriver sig ind i en efterhånden langvarig bearbejdning af vores historiske rolle i den transatlantiske slavehandel... Debatten om dette kapitel i danmarkshistorien er imidlertid så ensidig, at det skæmmer dokumentationen. Historien presses ned i en postkolonial narrativ skabelon med hvide i skurkerollen og Afrika som det voldtagne kontinent. Der er åbenbart et behov for skyld"* (Information 11.11.2016).

The Danish sociologist Ulla Holm also commented on the then upcoming 2017 observance. In her narrative, she argues against the fact that the perpetrators were predominately Caucasian Europeans and Americans in context to slavery, and thereby is close to falsifying history. Thus, she displayed literal denial, since it is a well-documented fact that the perpetrators were white Europeans and Americans. Furthermore, her specific interpretation becomes interpretive denial as well as implicatory denial since she was not concerned with the psychological or moral implication of 250 years of enslavement. This in turn manifests as implicit post-moral denial, with the implication that there is no need for transitional justice concerning the Danish aspect of slavery (Cohen, 2001: 7–9, Cohen & Husain, 2008). *"The story of Denmark's past as a slave trade nation and colonial power is a unique story of white guilt. It's on the verge of falsifying history, but it's wildly popular"* (Information 11.11.2016). She continued that recently Denmark has received the statue Freedom from the West Indies that should remind the Danes about our past as a slave nation. In the following sentences, she again exhibits literal and interpretive denial in context to the Danish consciousness of the history of slavery (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *"The statue inscribes itself in an increasingly lengthy processing of our historical role in the transatlantic slave trade..."* *"However, the debate about this chapter in Danish history is so one-sided that it scares the documentation"* (Information 11.11.2016). In the last paragraph, she carries on with the same premises and again conveys the previous aspect of literal, interpretive, implicatory and post-moral denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *"The story is squeezed into a postcolonial narrative template with whites in the role of villains and Africa as the raped continent. There is apparently a need for guilt"* (Information 11.11.2016).

Out take from, Hvis Danmark undskylder for slaveriet, kan det ødelægge vores selvbillede:

”Men derfra og til at give en officiel undskyldning, der synes vi, at det ville være et forkert skridt at tage,---Nej, for der kommer jo ikke rigtig noget ud af at sige undskyld...Hvis vi siger undskyld for det ene, hvorfor siger vi så ikke også undskyld for det andet, tredje og fjerde mørke kapitel i Danmarkshistorien” ”Ingen af øernes nuværende beboere har været slaver, og ingen af os har været slaveejere. Hvis vi skal undskylde over for Vestindien, skal vi vel også sige undskyld for Det Stockholmske Blodbad ” (Berlingske 25.03 2017).

Michael A. Jensen, foreign affairs spokesperson for the Danish Liberal Party (V), Member of the Danish coalition government at that time, commented on whether there should be an official apology from Denmark in 2017. This could occur in connection with the Danish Prime Minister’s trip to USVI for the marking of the 100th observance. Jensen acknowledged that it was a “dark” chapter in Danish history. However, he went on to display post-moral denial by arguing that there is no need for an official apology from Denmark to USVI. Thus, he also displayed implicatory denial, since he showed lack of concern for both the psychological, political and moral implications of Danish involvement with slavery (Cohen, 2001: 7–9 Cohen & Husain, 2008). *“However, to give an official apology, we think it would be a wrong step to take.. because nothing really comes out of saying sorryIf we say sorry for the one, why do we not also say sorry for the second, third and fourth dark chapter in Danish history”* (Berlingske 25.03 2017). Søren Espersen from the right-wing political party called the Danish People’s Party (DF) also joined the debate. He also displayed implicatory denial and neglect of any political, moral and psychological implications for the Danish legacy of slavery (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). Moreover, he also displayed post-moral denial that consequently dismisses any further attempt concerning readiness for transitional justice (Cohen & Husain, 2008). *“None of the current inhabitants of the islands have been slaves, and none of us have been slave owners. If we are to apologize to the West Indies, we must also apologize for the Stockholm Massacre”* (Berlingske 25.03 2017).

5.3 Resistance to Danish Denial 2017

Analysis Research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the Freedom statue?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the USVI's counter narrative and will argue and illustrate that it also constituted two core elements told in relation to the Freedom statue in 2017. The first element was about lack of adequate education about Danish colonial history in Denmark. The second was about why Denmark should apologize for 250 years of slavery.

These counter narratives of resistance constituted that there is a lack of colonialism history education in DK, produced the multiplicity that challenges the Danish hegemonic narrative and denial *"How do you bring up the painful topic of slavery in a country that has largely forgotten its role as a slave-trading, colonial nation?..In Denmark, there's recognition that the country has been suffering from cultural amnesia.. When we tried to get across what actually happened, why Denmark might have owed the people of the Virgin Islands some sort of reparation, it fell on deaf ears because history has not been taught"* (St. John Trade Winds News 16.01.2016). *"The sculpture helps to focus on a dark chapter in Danish history and increase awareness of Denmark's past and connection to the West Indies"* (Københavns kommune 28.04 2017).

These counter narratives of resistance constituted why Denmark should apologize to USVI for 250 years of slavery produced the multiplicity that challenges the Danish hegemonic narrative and denial. *"I think it is absolutely crucial that the Danish state assumes responsibility... "Many of those who speak out against an apology speak from a Danish perspective. It does not make sense for us to apologize, and that is true enough. As Danes, you and I can not use it for much, but there is also a recipient, and for many of them, an apology will be a step on the road to reconciliation with the past. (Berlingske 25.03 2017). "Denmark left them in a sad constitution, and therefore owes them both an apology and some form of compensation.... All governments have rejected this on the grounds that those involved have long since died. But that reasoning does not hold..... Some see poverty and lack of initiative as a direct consequence of the slave past'"* (Berlingske 27.03.2017). *"Together with several other citizens of Denmark, we declare to be troubled about a deeply regrettable past, in which the forefathers of the population on the U.S. Virgin Islands were enslaved and against their will were forced to labor for masters, many of whom came from Denmark. For this, although belated, we apologize in the spirit of love"* POW (24.03.2017).

In the article from USVI called “*As Centennial Approaches, a Gift From the Virgin Islands to Denmark*” artists, historians, educators, and others in the U.S. Virgin Islands debated a very important question in relation to the commemorate in 2017 of the 100 observance of the transfer between Denmark and the US. “*How do you bring up the painful topic of slavery in a country that has largely forgotten its role as a slave-trading, colonial nation?*” (St. John Trade Winds News 16.10.2016). This question is of great significance, because it speaks to the predominant predicament of the Danish embedded innocent colonialism, which consequently makes it difficult to obtain transitional justice. The article goes on agreeing with Andersen’s argument about innocent colonialism that is partly due to the fact that “*ties were severed between Denmark and its Caribbean colonies*” (Ibid). The Virgin Islands historian David Knight was primus motor for sending the Freedom statue to Denmark for the 100 observance in 2017 with the aim to challenge the DK hegemonic narrative about innocent colonialism, and to challenge the lack of education about Danish colonial history “*In Denmark, there’s recognition that the country has been suffering from cultural amnesia*” (Ibid). He continues with that, “*I find it frustrating. I believe that all countries that were part of the slave trade should admit culpability*” (Ibid). He argues that this predicament caused claims for why reparation and transitional justice have been denied. “*When we tried to get across what actually happened, why Denmark might have owed the people of the Virgin Islands some sort of reparation, it fell on deaf ears because history has not been taught*”. (Ibid).

Out take from Folkegaven ’Freedom’ udstilles for første gang i København: “*Skulpturen er med til at sætte fokus på et mørkt kapitel i Danmarkshistorien og øge kendskabet til Danmarks fortid og forbindelse til De Vestindiske Øer*” (Københavns kommune 28.04 2017).

On the 31st March 2017, the Freedom statue was unveiled for the first time at the event “West Indies Days” in Copenhagen’s city hall. The event marked the 100 years of observance of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the United States and included theater, lectures and movies. It is notable that Carl Christian Ebbesen from the right-wing political party. The Danish People’s Party (DF) acknowledged the lack of awareness regarding the Danish colonial history. “*The sculpture helps to focus on a dark chapter in Danish history and increase awareness of Denmark’s past and connection to the West Indies*” (Ibid).

Out take from, Hvis Danmark undskylder for slaveriet, kan det ødelægge vores selvbillede: “*Jeg synes, at det er helt afgørende, at den danske stat påtager sig et ansvar, og jeg mener, at man bør følge op med konkrete initiativer. De Vestindiske Øer er præget af tårnhøj fattigdom og et*

meget lavt uddannelsesniveau...Mange af dem, der taler imod en undskyldning, taler jo ud fra et dansk perspektiv. Det giver ikke mening for os at undskylde, og det er jo rigtigt nok. Som danskere kan du og jeg ikke bruge det til særlig meget, men der er også en modtager, og for mange af dem vil en undskyldning være et skridt på vejen mod forsoning med fortiden” (Berlingske 25.03 2017).

The 31st March 2017 became a significant date because the question concerning an official apology, previously debated in Danish Parliament in 2013, emerged again. The politician Nikolaj Villumsen (x) displayed readiness for transitional justice with his statement *"I think it is absolutely crucial that the Danish state assumes responsibility, and I believe that should follow up with concrete initiatives. The West Indies are characterized by high poverty and a very low level of education.. Denmark should help them to emerge from the crisis"* (Ibid).

Benjamin Asmussen, a Danish historian and museum inspector at the M/S Museum of Maritime Affairs, also displayed readiness for transitional Justice with his statement. *"Many of those who speak out against an apology speak from a Danish perspective. It does not make sense for us to apologize, and that is true enough. As Danes, you and I can not use it for much, but there is also a recipient, and for many of them, an apology will be a step on the road to reconciliation with the past"* (Ibid).

Out take from Vi skal ikke undskylde, men i stedet hjælpe de Vestindiske Øer: *Danmark efterlod dem i en sørgelig forfatning, og derfor skylder dem både en undskyldning og en form for erstatning. Det har alle regeringer afvist med den begrundelse, at de involverede jo for længst er døde. Men den begrundelse holder ikke.... Nogle ser fattigdommen og det manglende initiativ som en direkte konsekvens af slave-fortiden” (Berlingske 27.03.2017)*

A few days later Bertel Haarder, The Danish Minister of Culture also displayed readiness for transitional justice with his statement: *"Denmark left them in a sad constitution, and therefore owes them both an apology and some form of compensation.... All governments have rejected this on the grounds that those involved have long since died. But that reasoning does not hold..... Some see poverty and lack of initiative as a direct consequence of the slave past"*(Ibid).

Out take from Venstre om Danmarks vestindiske slavefortid: »Der kommer jo ikke rigtig noget ud af at sige undskyld: *"Fogh udviste statsmandskab, da han undskyldte i forbindelse med 60-året for befrielsen. Jeg ville ønske, at Løkke på samme måde på nationens vegne træder i*

karakter ved 100-året for salget af De Vestindiske Øer,« sagde Morten Østergaard til Politiken” (Berlingske 31.03.2017).

The politician Morten Østergaard (Radical left) likewise displayed readiness for transitional justice. He referenced that in 2005 the former prime minister apologized for the involvement of the Danish state with the German Nazi regime in the 1940s. *‘Fogh exhibited statesmanship when he apologized in connection with the 60th anniversary of the liberation. I would like Løkke to similarly, on behalf of the nation, steps into character at the 100th anniversary of the sale of the West Indies’* (Ibid).

It was significant that in 2017 the Moravian Church in Denmark and USVI released a statement apologizing for the Danish horror of slavery in the Virgin Islands. The apology came in conjunction with the recent United Nations commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. *“Together with several other citizens of Denmark, we declare to be troubled about a deeply regrettable past, in which the forefathers of the population on the U.S. Virgin Islands were enslaved and against their will were forced to labor for masters, many of whom came from Denmark. For this, although belated, we apologize in the spirit of love”* POW (24.03.2017).). It notable that it relate to Reiter`s 2nd level in his Transitional justice model, which concern is about reparation programmers such as apology, (Reiter, 2017).

Analysis research question: *What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles*

In this chapter, I will argue and illustrate which transnational elements were important in the 2017 narrative struggles. Firstly, the 2017 centennial observance became a window of opportunity for resistance to Danish denial: *“With the upcoming centennial, we wanted to spark the conversation in Denmark and here in the Virgin Islands to discuss our history, and to ensure our children know about their history”* (St. John Trade winds News 16.10.2016). The modes of production were through Danish and USVI internet-based publications (Shenhav 2015:17). I will argue that the Freedom statue representation is related to memory activism, with the aim to produce cultural memory to command the future remembrance in Denmark. The statue is also related to memory of activism because the aim for social change was building on previous cultural mobilization from the 1848 revolt where the slaves emancipated themselves (Rigney 2018).

Furthermore, the statue representations did create a link between emotions, affect, and the body of the Freedom statue in context to how emotions matter in world politics (Hutchison:286). I will also argue the emotions represented by the statue were not able to alter social norms and values in Denmark. (Ibid:287). Hence, I will argue that the representation of the Freedom statue did have the ability to possess to a small degree entail ‘agential capacities’, and thus was able to “*re-shaping social and political perspectives, priorities, values and norms*” (Ibid:290).

These narratives together produced the new narrative, which partly re-shaped the Danish political perspectives as well as values and norms: “*There is no justification for slavery. It is unforgivable. The true heroes of the past are the men and women of the Virgin Islands who defied suppression. They were not given their freedom. They took it back.. Men like General Buddhoe. Who led the rebellion of 1848... Fighting for emancipation...Fierce women like Queen Mary, Queen Agnes and Queen Mathildal...I will launch a five year scholarship program*” (Danish prime minister speech 31.03.2017).

Out take from, As Centennial Approaches, a Gift From the Virgin Islands to Denmark: The president for St. John Historical Society Lonnie Willis announced that. “*With the upcoming centennial, we wanted to spark the conversation in Denmark and here in the Virgin Islands to discuss our history, and to ensure our children know about their history*” (St. John Trade winds News 21.10.2016)

Out take from, Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen's address at Transfer Day St. Croix 31 March 2017: The Danish prime minister's speech on March 31st 2017 in USVI did not include the word apology. However, he did state that” *There is no justification for slavery. It is unforgivable*” (Danish prime minister's speech 31.03.2017). It is very notable that he changed the centuries old perception of “innocent colorism” by acknowledging that: “*The true heroes of the past are the men and women of the Virgin Islands who defied suppression. They were not given their freedom. They took it back... Men like General Buddhoe. Who led the rebellion of 1848... Fighting for emancipation...Fierce women like Queen Mary, Queen Agnes and Queen Mathildal*” (Ibid). It is also very notable that he ended his speech offering transitional justice in the form of free education in Denmark for USVI students echoing U.S virgin islanders Arnold Highfields reparations demand from 1996: “*Tomorrow, I will make a visit to the University of the Virgin Islands, where I will launch a five-year scholarship program*” (Ibid). It notable that it relate to Reiter`s 2nd level in his Transitional justice model, which concern is about reparation programmers, (Reiter, 2017). It were

also notable that the USVI heroes and heroin was now worthy of *Commemoration* (Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). Moreover, as Stoltz argues, “*Struggles over commemoration emphasize the socially constructive as well as the political dimensions of memory*” (Stoltz 2020:28).

Analysis Research question: *Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?*

In this chapter, I will argue that there was no transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles in 2017. I will argue that the Freedom statue representation did not snowball into a collective form of meaning and feeling which emerged into an ‘*affective community*’ in Denmark. (Hutchison, 2016, 2019). Hence, the statue did only engage a few implicit bystanders, those who “*occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm*” (Rothberg, 2019:1).

6 Thick analysis “I am Queen Mary “ statue 2018

In this chapter, I will analysis the I am Queen Mary. Firstly, I will procced with the historical context.

6.1 Contextual Background 2018



“I am Queen Mary” Statue at the old Danish West Indies customhouse in Copenhagen 2018 Photo: Nils Meilvang.

The Danish inhuman treatment of slaves in the former Danish West Indies continued despite the slaves emancipating themselves in 1848, 250 years of slavery were still entrenched in the social life of the free slaves. Their legal status had changed, but they still lived under dire circumstances. In 1878, rumors and fears regarding the continuation of the strict work regulations from 1849 led to a violent rebellion erupting on St. Croix. Residential houses, confectioneries, sugar fields and warehouses as well as fifty plantations on St. Croix burned to the ground. Hence, the rebellion is locally referenced to as the “Fire Burn”. There were specifically three women, Mary, Agnes and Mathilda, who were the key persons in the revolt; they later obtained status as heroines in USVI. The leader was Mary Thomas, also known as Queen Mary (The Danish National Museum 2020). The Danish-Caribbean artist Jeannette Ehlers and La Vaughn Bell from St. Croix created the “I am

Queen Mary” statue. Since there is no knowledge about Mary Thomas appearance, they decided to use both of their own bodies for the statue, with the aim of the statue becoming a hybrid of bodies, nations and narratives (Peripeti 29.30.2018).

6.2 Danish Denial 2018

Analysis Research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the I am Queen Mary statue?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the Danish narratives and I will argue and illustrate that it constituted one core element in relation to the “ I am Queen Mary “statue in 2018. The core element was about miss-representation of the Danish colonial history. These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative about miss- representation of the Danish West Indies colonial history, hence making the counter narrative from USVI appear “different or odd.” (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *“The "I am Queen Mary" monument at the West Indies Warehouse contains so many unspoken agendas that one wonders if it does not create more confusion than awareness of history. The statue is rather a piece of distinctive political art, which under a thin historical varnish promotes the artists 'own attitudes' In other words, the two artists have placed themselves in the historical context, thus abolishing the monument's apparent character of a memorial to a specific person. On many levels there is a long way from Frederiksted in 1878 to the USA in the 1960s, and the two characters Queen Mary and Huey P. Newton have - apart from roots in Africa. “The monument is not so much thought of as a tribute to the concrete rebel on St. Croix, but to rebels in general...In reality, it is only apparently and to a lesser extent about Denmark's colonial past, and to a much greater extent about a struggle against oppression and for the equality of minorities (and women)” (POW 12.04.2018).*

Out take from, Political art with a thin historical varnish: *” I am Queen Mary”-monumentet ved Vestindisk Pakhus rummer så mange udtalte dagsordner, at man kan spørge sig selv, om det ikke skaber mere forvirring end bevidsthed om historien. Statuen er snarere et stykke markant politisk kunst, som under en tynd historisk fernis promoverer kunstnernes egne holdninger.... De to kunstnere har med andre ord sat sig selv ind i den historiske kontekst og dermed ophævet monumentets tilsyneladende karakter af mindesmærke over en konkret person. Der er på mange planer et stykke vej fra Frederiksted i 1878 til USA i 1960erne, og de to figurer Queen Mary og*

Huey P. Newton har – udover rødder i Afrika – Med andre ord er monumentet ikke så meget tænkt som en hyldest til den konkrete oprører på St. Croix, men til oprørere generelt. København har altså fået opstillet en statue, der hylder og anbefaler det væbnede oprør som et middel til at opnå politiske forandringer i fremtiden. .. Den handler i virkeligheden kun tilsyneladende og i mindre grad om Danmarks kolonifortid, og i langt højere grad om en kamp mod undertrykkelse og for minoriteters (og kvinders) ligeberettigelse, gerne med voldelige midler. De penge er dog givetvis bedre givet ud på monumenter med en klarere varedeklaration og knap så mange politiske dagsordner, der bedre opfylder hensigten med at skabe bevidsthed om Danmarks kolonihistorie” (POW 12.04.2018).

Special political adviser in the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs Nikolaj Bøgh commented on the “I Am Queen Mary” statue. He began by describing that the statue was created to remind the Danes of their colonial history. However, questions if this was the case. He then proceeds to displaying interpretive denial, since he states his particular interpretation of a fact. Thus, he was also displaying implicatory denial since he was not concerned with the psychological, political or moral implications regarding the free slaves working condition in 1878 (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“The “I am Queen Mary” monument at the West Indies Warehouse contains so many unspoken agendas that one wonders if it does not create more confusion than awareness of history. The statue is rather a piece of distinctive political art, which under a thin historical varnish promotes the artists 'own attitudes'.* (POW 12.04.2018). He goes on again displaying the same constellation of interpretive, implicatory denial as well as post moral denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“In other words, the two artists have placed themselves in the historical context, thus abolishing the monument's apparent character of a memorial to a specific person.”* (POW 12.04.2018). Nikolaj Bøgh proceeded to comment on the symbolism that the statue represents. He described the throne and the manner in which Queen Mary sits and draws a parallel to a picture of Newton, the founder of the Black Panther movement in the US, who also sits on a similar throne. He carries on pointing out that the movement from the 1960s civil right era was known for paying *“tribute to the right to violent rebellion “* (Ibid). With that argument, he goes on in the next sentence to displaying interpretive denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“On many levels there is a long way from Frederiksted in 1878 to the USA in the 1960s, and the two characters Queen Mary and Huey P. Newton have - apart from roots in Africa - ”* (Ibid). He goes on arguing that the statue does not represent the Danish colonial history with the statement, *“In other words, the monument is not so much thought of as a tribute to the concrete rebel on St. Croix, but to rebels in general”.* (Ibid). He moves on displaying interpretive

denial, due to his particular interpretation of a fact (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). He implicitly argues that the statue is literally suggesting violence in context to present time: *“Copenhagen has thus erected a statue that pays homage to and recommends the armed uprising as a means of achieving political change in the future.* (POW 12.04.2018). He proceeds to again display interpretive denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“In reality, it is only apparently and to a lesser extent about Denmark's colonial past, and to a much greater extent about a struggle against oppression and for the equality of minorities (and women), preferably by violent means”* (POW 12.04.2018). Nikolaj Bøgh ends by comparing the “I am Queen Mary statue” with the freedom statue with the conclusion that *“the money is certainly better spent on monuments with a clearer declaration of goods and hardly as many political agendas that better fulfill the intention of creating awareness of Denmark's colonial history”*. (Ibid).). It is notable that it became an issue concerning who is and who is not worthy of *Commemoration* (Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). Moreover, as Stoltz argues, *“Struggles over commemoration emphasize the socially constructive as well as the political dimensions of memory.”* (Stoltz 2020:28)

6.3 Resistance to Danish Denial 2018

Analysis research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to the I am Queen Mary statue?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the USVI's counter narrative, and I will argue and illustrate that it constituted one core element in relation to the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018. The core element was about the lack of adequate education about Danish colonial history in Denmark. Specifically, a lack of knowledge of the resistance towards the Danes and that the black women were essential in the development of Caribbean societies. These counter narratives of resistance to Danish denial together produced the multiplicity challenge towards the Danish hegemonic narrative about adequate education concerning the Danish colonial history in Denmark (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *“One thing is that we almost never hear about our past as a colonial power, but that we did not hear at all about the resistance forces that were against Denmark is another thing. This is the incredibly important dimension we hope to open up to”* (Feminisme 15.03. 2018) . *“Women were absolutely central to the development of Caribbean societies, both ideologically and practically,” adequate representation of Danish-West Indian history”*. *It asks us first and foremost the question of whether we have the courage to accommodate stories other than our own”* (kristeligt dagblad 03.04.2018). *“We soon found out that we were not the only ones who had not*

learned anything about Danish colonial and slave history in school, and for those who had, the notion was that 'Denmark was not as bad as the other European great powers' (idoart.dk 19.04.2018).

Out take from, Danmark får sit første monument, der forestiller en sort kvinde: *"En ting er, at vi næsten aldrig hører om vores fortid som kolonimagt, men at vi så overhovedet heller ikke hører om de modstandskræfter, der var mod Danmark, er en anden ting. Det er den utroligt vigtige dimension, vi håber, at åbne op for"* (Feminisme 15.03. 2018).

The statue "I am Queen Mary" was commented on two weeks prior to its unveiling on the 31st March 2018. In a feministic publication, the artist Jeannette Ehlers challenged the Danish hegemonic narrative concerning the lack of heroes and heroines that resisted the Danish colonial regime: *"One thing is that we almost never hear about our past as a colonial power, but that we did not hear at all about the resistance forces that were against Denmark is another thing. This is the incredibly important dimension we hope to open up to"* (Feminisme 15.03. 2018).

Out take from, I Am Queen Mary". Jes Fabricius Møllers kritik af ny skulptur rammer ved siden af: *"Kvinder var helt centrale for udviklingen af de caribiske samfund, både ideologisk og praktisk, en fyldestgørende repræsentation af dansk-vestindisk historie,Den stiller os først og fremmest spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt vi har mod på at rumme andre fortællinger end vores egen"* (kristeligt dagblad 10.04.2018).

Associate Professor at the Danish SAXO-Institute Gunvor Simonsen has conducted research in the US Virgin Islands on government, gender, religion, and race during the Danish rule of the West Indies (Saxo.2020). She argued that it should not be problematic that the sculpture depicts a woman as a heroine. She then utilizing an old West African proverb called "Sankofa", which constitute, that we have to look to the past to understand the present. She then argues that, *"Women were absolutely central to the development of Caribbean societies, both ideologically and practically.* She then challenges the claim that the "I am Queen Mary" statue did not represent the Danish West Indies colonial history and argues that the statue is an *"adequate representation of Danish-West Indian history"* (kristeligt dagblad 03.04.2018). She ends the article with the important question which is challenging the Danish hegemonic narrative that excludes all other narratives (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51).; *It asks us first and foremost the question of whether we have the courage to accommodate stories other than our own"* (kristeligt dagblad 03.04.2018).

Out take from, Hvem er det? Tænker du, og hvorfor ved jeg ikke det?: *"Hurtigt fandt vi ud af, at vi ikke var de eneste, der ikke havde lært noget om dansk koloni- og slavehistorie i skolen, og for dem der havde, var forestillingen særligt, at 'Danmark jo ikke var ligeså slem, som de andre europæiske stormagter Det udvisker andre menneskers historier og får folk til at føle, at deres historier ikke er vigtige."* *"Indtil løven har sin historiker, vil jægeren altid være helten."*(idoart.dk19.04. 2018).

In the publication idoart.dk, La Vaughns explains that the Danes are not familiar with the Queen Mary story. She then goes on to challenge the lack of information in the Danish school system concerning the DK history of colonialism, which has legitimized and maintained the innocent colonialism. *"We soon found out that we were not the only ones who had not learned anything about Danish colonial and slave history in school, and for those who had, the notion was that 'Denmark was not as bad as the other European great powers'"*(Ibid). La Vaughn likewise goes on to challenge the consequences of the hegemonic narrative of innocent colonialism which excludes other narratives that end up as odd (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *"It erases other people's stories and makes people feel that their stories are not important "*. (idoart.dk19.04. 2018). Jennete Elhers then proceeds to contest that self-determination will occur by using an old west Africa proverb *"Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter"* (Ibid). It is notable that it relates to Hilary Beckles at the 2001 Durban conference where he argued that *"the most profound epistemological opportunity of the twenty-first century: Who would own and possess intellectual sovereignty over the interpretation of the past."* (Andersen 2018:123).

Analysis research question: *What transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles*

In this chapter, I will argue and illustrate which transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles concerning the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018. Firstly, the 2017 centennial became a window of opportunity for resistance to Danish denial in 2018, since it was revealed on the 31st March 2018, exactly one year after the 2017 observance of the sale of the former Danish West Indies (Dr.dk 31.03.2018).

The modes of production were through Danish internet based publications (Shenhav 2015:17). I will argue that the statue representation is related to memory activism. Jeannette Ehlers and Lavon Bell as individuals were trying to produce cultural memory with the aim to command the future remembrance. The statue is also related to memory activism. Their aim for social change was building on earlier cultural heritage, recollected from the 1960s Civil right area as well as BLM (Rigney 2018). *“It is about connecting the African diaspora and creating coherence between the narratives and the stories of resistance. That's why she's sitting in the same chair as Huey P. Newton. He and the Black Panther party, like many other movements, have fought against the same things that the rebels in the Virgin Islands fought against under Fireburn... And that is the same thing that the Black Lives Matter movement and our generation are fighting against today”* (Idoart.dk19.04. 2018).

In that context, I will argue how emotions matter in world politics and that the representation of the statue did create a link between emotions and affect, and further that the bodies of the two artists emerged as one in the “I am Queen Mary” statue (Hutchison 2019:286). *‘The tradition of highlighting the racialized body to use it as an artistic medium for criticizing racism against blacks and browns - a form of racism with deep roots in Western colonialism.’. ” the art of performance and a performative imagery to focus on how the effects of racialization manifest themselves as bodily experience. I Am Queen Mary represents “a bridge between the two countries. It is a hybrid of our bodies, nations and narratives* (Perspective 01.12.2018). *“The postcolonial structures can be difficult to spot, especially if one has not experienced what it means to live in a colonized body”* (Idoart.dk 19.04. 2018). *“Belle and Ehlers’ avatar similarly embraces the proud body politics of Black protest in her unflinching gaze and frontal posture “I Am Queen Mary as having a strictly corrective relation to the textual and visual perversions of the archive (as offering an “accurate” representation to counteract the abundance of racist imagery in circulation)”* (Peripeti 29.30.2018).

I will further argue that the representation of the “I am Queen Mary” statue did not alter social norms and values in Denmark. (Ibid:287). Hence, I will argue that the representations of the statue did not have the ability to possess ‘agential capacities’, thus, able not to “*re-shaping social and political perspectives, priorities, values and norms*” (Ibid:290).

Out take from, Hvem er det? Tænker du, og hvorfor ved jeg ikke det?: *”Det handler om at forbinde den afrikanske diaspora og skabe sammenhæng mellem fortællingerne og historierne om modstand. Det er derfor, hun sidder i den samme stol som Huey P. Newton. Han og Black Panther partiet har, ligesom mange andre bevægelser, kæmpet mod de samme ting, som det oprørerne på Jomfruøerne kæmpede mod under Fireburn. Og det er det samme, som Black Lives Matter-bevægelsen og vores generation kæmper mod i dag, ...De postkoloniale strukturer kan være svære at få øje på, særligt hvis man ikke har oplevet, hvad det vil sige at leve i en koloniseret krop. Som hvid europæer født ind i en eurocentrisk verdensopfattelse, opvokset i et hvidt majoritetssamfund, kan undertrykkende strukturer være så godt som umulige at forstå”.* (Idoart.dk 19.04. 2018).

In the article concerning art expression, Ehlers explains the concept of “I am Queen Mary”. *“It is about connecting the African diaspora and creating coherence between the narratives and the stories of resistance. That's why she's sitting in the same chair as Huey P. Newton. He and the Black Panther party, like many other movements, have fought against the same things that the rebels in the Virgin Islands fought against under Fireburn. And that is the same thing that the Black Lives Matter movement and our generation are fighting against today”* (Idoart.dk 19.04. 2018). She then adds . *”The postcolonial structures can be difficult to spot, especially if one has not experienced what it means to live in a colonized body. As white Europeans born into a Eurocentric worldview, raised in a white majority society, can oppressive structures be virtually impossible to understand* (Ibid).

Out take from, Den sorte krops plads i den hvide historie: Jeannette Ehlers’ dekoloniale undersøgelse af “den vestlige modernitets mørkeste side: *“Traditionen for at fremhæve den racialiserede krop for at bruge den som et kunstnerisk medium for kritik af racismen mod sorte og brune mennesker – en form for racisme med dybe rødder i den vestlige kolonialisme.[...]performancekunsten og et performativt billedsprog for at stille skarpt på, hvordan racialiseringens virkninger ytrer sig som kropslig erfaring [...]underminerer den patriotiske fortælling, der har forherliget nationens rolle i afskaffelsen af slavehandelen og slaveriet “en bro mellem de to lande. Det er en hybrid af vores kroppe, nationer og fortællinger.*

[...] *Hvem vi er som samfund handler mest om, hvordan vi husker os selv. Dette projekt drejer sig om at udfordre Danmarks kollektive erindring og forandre den*” (Perspective 01.12 2018).

Anne Ring Petersen argues that the two artists are building on a proud tradition from the black arts activism from the 1970s where, *“the tradition of highlighting the racialized body to use it as an artistic medium for criticizing racism against blacks and browns - a form of racism with deep roots in Western colonialism.”*. (Ibid). and goes with that *“the art of performance and a performative imagery to focus on how the effects of racialization manifest themselves as bodily experience”* (Ibid). Furthermore, that the statue *“undermines the patriotic narrative that has glorified the nation's role in the abolition of the slave trade and slavery”* (Ibid). The article ends with La Van explaining a key element regarding that statue: *“I Am Queen Mary represents “a bridge between the two countries. It is a hybrid of our bodies, nations and narratives. [...] Who we are as a social worker is most about how we remember ourselves. This project is about challenging Denmark's collective memory and changing it”* (Ibid).

Out take from, I Am Queen Mary: An Avatar in the Making ”In her research about the “I am Queen Mary” statue strategy, Nina Creamer argues that it is *“having a strictly corrective relation to the textual and visual perversions of the archive (as offering an “accurate” representation to counteract the abundance of racist imagery in circulation)... Belle and Ehlers’ avatar similarly embraces the proud body politics of Black protest in her unflinching gaze and frontal posture.* (Peripeti 29.30.2018).

Out take from, Oprørs Dronning fra Vestindien får syv meter høj statue lavet af flamingo:

The “I am Queen Mary ” statue was revealed on March 31st 2018, exactly one year after the 2017 observance of the 100th observance of the sale of the former Danish West Indies. BLM used the opportunity to attach themselves to revelation of statue. They became part of the “I am Queen Mary” march which went from Christians harbor where the three queens was incarcerated to the West Indies warehouse where the statue was revealed (Dr.dk 31.03.2018).



Jeannette Ehlers and La Vaughn Belle: *I Am Queen Mary*, 2018. Photo: Thorsten Altmann-Krueger

Analysis Research question: *Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?*

In this chapter, I will argue and illustrate that there was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles in 2018. I will argue that the “I am Queen Mary” Statue’s representations of emotions in context to trauma has to little degree, become part of a collective consciousness and memory in Denmark (Hutchison, 2016, 2019). Furthermore, I will argue, that the statue to little degree snowballed into a collective form of meaning and feeling that emerged into an ‘*affective community*’ in Denmark. (Hutchison, 2016, 2019). Hence, it have to a little degree engaged implicit bystanders those who “*occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm*” (Rothberg, 2019:1). “

“It gives a place for non-whites to feel seen and heard, while the sculpture can hopefully arouse the curiosity of both white and black people towards history” (Feminisme 15.03.2018). “Black Lives Matter is associated for most with American civil rights activists who take to the streets to protest police violence against blacks and racism in society. But today, the civil rights organization will

march in Copenhagen. It happens in connection with a new statue of a black woman from the Danish West Indies being inaugurated today” (Dr.dk 31.03.2018).

Out take from, Danmark får sit første monument, der forestiller en sort kvinde: *”Nu får sorte og brune mennesker et sted nu, hvor de kan se sig selv repræsenteret på en positiv måde. Det giver et sted til ikke-hvide til at føle sig set og hørt, samtidig med at skulpturen forhåbentlig kan vække både hvide og sortes menneskers nysgerrighed over for historien” (Feminisme 15.03. 2018).*

Jeannette Ehlers states the need for positive symbols that people of color in Denmark can relate to and that can also engage white people, *”Now black and brown people get a place now where they can see themselves represented in a positive way. It gives a place for non-whites to feel seen and heard, while the sculpture can hopefully arouse the curiosity of both white and black people towards history” (Ibid).*

Out take from , Oprørs Dronning fra Vestindien får syv meter høj statue lavet af flamingo *”Black Lives Matter associeres for de fleste med amerikanske borgerrettighedsaktivister, der går på gaden for at protestere mod politivold mod sorte og racisme i samfundet. Men i dag vil borgerretsorganisationen marcherer i København. Det sker i forbindelse med, at en ny statue af en sort kvinde fra Dansk Vestindien i dag bliver indviet.” (Dr.dk 31.03.2018).*

When the “I am Queen Mary” statue was revealed It was interesting that BLM also became part of the event, *“Black Lives Matter is associated for most with American civil rights activists who take to the streets to protest police violence against blacks and racism in society. But today, the civil rights organization will march in Copenhagen. It happens in connection with a new statue of a black woman from the Danish West Indies being inaugurated today. (Ibid).*

7 Thick analysis BLM 2020

In this chapter, I will analysis the Black lives Matter mobilization. Firstly, I will proceed with the historical context.

7.1 Contextual background USA 2020

As in the previous chapter, I also find it necessary to introduce the background up to 2020, because specific aspects are significant in regard to denial and resistance to denial in the USA and US Virgin Islands. Due to the limitation of this study, I have again only included few yet very significant aspects, which I later in this study will pick up for further analysis. The USA in contrast to Denmark has a great deal of descendants of slaves, who still struggle to become integrated into American society on even terms.

In 1865, in the aftermath of the Civil War, the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified and abolished slavery in the United States. The year also marked the creation of the Ku Klux Klan, which is the most inhuman organization of the Jim Crow era white supremacy. In the decades that followed, the Jim Crow laws rapidly spread with an increase of impact and furthered the cause of denial. It entailed that African Americans were being excluded from many establishments. Furthermore, African Americans were labeled as “colored” and were segregated from the “whites” in places such as schools, waiting rooms, water fountains, restrooms. The process was encouraged by a conservative U.S. Supreme Court, because it narrowed the scope of the Fourteenth Amendment, which protects due process and equal protection of the laws. (Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery 2006:65) The white supremacy ideology became implicitly. This occurred through different forms of social control ranging from “coon songs” and blackface minstrelsy to academia where Social Darwinism emerged in the fields of anthropology and sociology. This consequently gave scientific authority to stereotyping blacks (Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery 2006:68).

A great number of Virgin Islanders was in favor for “the Transfer in 1917,” and tried to embrace their new American identity. However, the Virgin Islanders now experience the effect of the southern Jim Crow laws. The US Marine where the principle administrate of the territory until 1931, which displayed anti-black racism in their encounters with the Virgin Islanders (Andersen 2018:109). Claude McKay a young Caribbean migrants is six years after his arrival in the United

States writing in 1918, that *“It was the first time I had ever come face to face with such manifest, implacable hate of my race, and my feelings were indescribable.* (Verso 11.11. 2017). He expressed that *“The prejudice he saw and experienced in the Caribbean was mainly rooted in class distinction, with less emphasis on race and color”* (Ibid).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Americans played a leading role in establishing the international humanitarian guidelines, which occurred in connection with the Nuremberg trials. The USA provided judges and prosecutors for the Nuremberg trials. Moreover, they drafted Germany's first reparation policies for victims of Nazi atrocities, A regime which ideology where based on social Darwinism. Following this, the U.S. courts and legislatures have become the premier venues for reparations claims of different sorts. A great number of American political leaders have been very vocal in demanding that leaders of other nations should *“acknowledge and make amends for the misdeeds of their predecessors”*. However, the US was not concerned about their *“own history, particularly in regard to slavery”* (Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery 2006:82).

In 1955, a black woman named Rosa Park changed the course of history in the USA. When she was arrested for refusing to give her bus seat to a white man, it sparked the civil right movement, where Dr. Martin Luther King emerged as the leader of a huge mass protest. The protest was not the first collective protest against the southern Jim Crow system, but it became a *“unique historical significance by demonstrating that an African-American community could remain united and resolute in its determination to overcome segregation”* (The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and educational Institute 2020: 1). King described the bus boycott prompted by Rosa Park as a consequence of accumulation of racial injustices, which he defined as a *“form of slavery.”* (Ibid:5,7). The protest got national press coverage where King advocated for nonviolent resistance to segregation and stated that this is *“not a war between the white and the Negro but a conflict between justice and injustice”* (Ibid:15).

Kings was able to merge the biblical admonitions with Gandhian principles, which engaged not only colored people. This sets the Montgomery protest apart from earlier integration efforts, due to the involvement coming from “*all social strata*” (Ibid:17,3 The demonstration in 1965 concerning the right to vote for people of color, took place in Selma and became another historical event. There were about 250 people arrested and King decided to kneel and pray for the arrested (Time.com 25.09. 2017).



Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. kneels with a group in prayer prior to going to jail in Selma, Alabama. Photo: Getty Images



Huey P. Newton, a civil rights activist, founded the Black Panther Party for Self Defense with Bobby Seale in Oakland, California in 1966. Photo courtesy the Library of Congress.

One of the notable civil right organization in 1960 eras where the Black Panther Party founded in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. Their agenda where *“protecting and promoting the civil rights of oppressed people, primarily black Americans, and on combating police brutality”* (Richmond magazine 07.04 2017).

Despite that, USA withdrew from the 2001 Durban convention among the many aspects of strategy; there was one notable paragraph in the conference, which I find relevant. Paragraph 90 states that in regards to new media such as the internet the intention is to, *“seek, receive and impart information can make to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; we reiterate the need to respect the editorial independence and autonomy of the media in this regard”*. (2001 Durban Declaration). The Black Lives Matter (BLM) mobilization was founded in reaction to decades of police killings of people of color in the US. Its aim is to utilize the internet and smartphones as the source of resistance to denial. *“In 2014, a white police officer shot and killed an 18-year-old Black man, Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Mo., setting off a week of protests. The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter became firmly associated with a movement to reduce police violence toward Black people”* (The first amendment encyclopedia 2020)

2016 was the year where the Civil Rights movement emerged into the present, when in August of that year the black NFL player Colin Kaepernick unexpectedly decided to kneel during the National anthem. This symbolic act of civil disobedience directly related to 1965, where Dr. King knelt during a march in Selma. Kaepernick stated that, *"I am not going to stand up to show pride in a for a country that oppresses black people and people of color"*. His act of civil disobedience have been met with hostile responses, specifically from President Donald Trump, who stated at a political rally in 2017, *'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now, out,'*" (Time.com 2017). However, by others he is regarded as a hero.



Photo: Chael Zagaris / Getty Images

The Danish debate concerning statues in 2017 was about the erection of new statues. Statues were also heavily debated in the US in 2017. However, the focus in the US was not about erecting new ones but on the contrary about tearing down old ones. August 12, 2017 became a new focal point for the racial division in the US. It arose from the US legacy of slavery and present racism. The reason behind the division was caused by the decision of city hall to remove two southern Confederate monuments depicting Thomas Jefferson and General Robert E. Lee in Richmond. Specifically the last one prompted heated debate and chaos. Large gatherings of different affiliations with white supremacy rallied against the tearing down of the statue in Charlottesville. The rally included participants such as: Nazis, white nationalists, white power activists and the Ku Klux Klan (Nelson and Harold 2018:107). The rally became the specter of rising fascism in the US. Their torchlight march where they chanted the fascist slogan, *"Jews will not replace us,"* referred back to the era of Nazi Germany (Hawes Spencer 2018).

At the same time, another gathering was formed which constituted antiracist protesters. Chaos erupted when the two gatherings confronted each other (Nelson and Harold 2018:107). However, President Donald J. Trump refused to condemn the white supremacy rally but instead insisted “*that some of the rally’s participants were “very fine people”* (Ibid:107).



Frame from witness video, showing Derek Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck

On May 25, 2020, Minneapolis police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, because he had used a counterfeit \$20 bill to pay for his cigarettes. The arrest became a “*symbol and rallying cry for protesters*” for BLM (New York Times 31.05. 2020) because of the horror that occurred when the white police officer, Derek Chauvin, for eight minutes and 46 seconds was kneeling on Floyd's neck as he was pinned to the ground (Ibid). From the start of the ordeal, it appeared that Floyd was in a distressed state. This prompted witnesses to start filming the atrocity, which was captured on multiple mobile phones and shared widely on social media.. Mr. Floyd continually said, ‘*I can't breathe*’ as well as ‘*Mama*’ and ‘*please*’, and “*They're going to kill me, man,*”, “*Don't kill me.*” (CNN 23.06. 2020). Officer Chauvin kept his knee on “*Floyd's neck for two minutes and 53 seconds after he became unresponsive*” (Ibid). Floyd died shortly after at the hospital (Ibid).

7.2 Danish Denial 2020

Analysis research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to BLM?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the Danish narrative where I will argue and illustrate that it constituted three core elements told in relation to the BLM mobilization in 2020. Firstly, that the DK statues did not represent white supremacy. Secondly, that there is no structural racism in Denmark today, and thirdly that there is no need for creating a new colonial history museum in DK.

These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative that the Danish statues did not represent white supremacy. Thus, the counter narrative from BLM is made to be perceived as “different or odd.” (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51).. *These sculptures, which no one knows who imagines, and which all pass by every single day without giving them a thought, are now suddenly accused of racism, capitalism, fascism and general patriarchal oppression*”.(Berlingske 21-06-2020).

These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative that there is no structural racism in Denmark today, hence causing the counter narrative from BLM to be perceived as “different or odd” (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *“To say that there is racism in Denmark is so offensive to me. Are there any that exceed a limit? Yes. But no to the fact that there is racism”*. *“Do I mean then that it is widespread? I actually do not think it is. In fact, I believe that the Danes are a very open and tolerant people who, as it were, welcome people with open arms and treat other people well”*.(Danish parliamentary 22.06.20202). *“Racist winds are blowing at the moment. We thought we were hoping that skin color as a political and discursive means of power had ended up on the manure of history, but we were wrong. A left-wing radical movement insists on establishing a race-based conflict...The most extreme insist that racism against non-whites is 'structural' and that white people cannot experience racism”*. *“White supremacy” which is something that one without facts accuses particularly conservative endorse that white people en bloc should be carriers of a kind unfair privileges solely because of their skin color and that these privileges cause a more or less unconscious, but racist, oppression of other groups. “The truth is that while there are undoubtedly people who are more privileged than others, it is a completely undocumented, hateful claim that it should be about skin color....The very claim that a*

group of people, because of conditions they have not chosen themselves (their skin color), is morally defective, is profoundly and deeply racist” (Berlingske 14.07.2020).

These narratives of denial together produced the multiplicity maintaining the Danish hegemonic narrative about reasoning for not creating a new colonial history museum in Denmark. Thus, they cause the counter narrative from BLM to be perceived as “different or odd.” (Shenhav 2015:20,41,51). *“One of the themes is whether Denmark should have an actual colonial history museum. An significant dissemination of a rather small theme in Danish history. It is all in all an interesting and quite comprehensive representation of colonial history, not least in light of how relatively little it actually fills in Danish history. Denmark was a rather small colonial power in the European context, and trade with the colonies did not mean much to the economy, which was predominantly domestically based that skin color and ethnicity are a special qualification in relation to understanding the conditions, which it can not be in Danish society, where we are fundamentally in favor of human equality. The whole premise that Danish colonial history has been forgotten and suppressed is, to put it mildly, debatable” (POW 30.06.20202).*

Out take from, Fire krænkelssessikre statuer: Her er du som skulpturturist på sikker grund:

”Hele verden blevet undertrykkelses- og krænkelssesbevidst i en grad, så ingen kan vide sig sikker. Disse skulpturer, som ingen ved, hvem forestiller, og som alle går forbi hver eneste dag uden at skænke dem en tanke, bliver nu pludselig beskyldt for racisme, kapitalisme, fascisme og generel patriarkalsk undertrykkelse” (Berlingske 21-06-2020).

The global phenomenon of tearing down statues that represent white supremacy also occurred in Denmark. It quickly became a heated discussion in the Danish media where Holger Dahl, architecture reviewer and author, joined the debate. He acknowledged the travesty concerning the killing of George Floyd and the effect it had caused. *“The whole world has become oppressive and offensive to a degree so that no one can know for sure” (Ibid).* He highlighted that it was specifically about white supremacy statues located in cities throughout the western hemisphere. He then went on to argue that the Danish statues does not represent white supremacy and hardly anybody knows about them. Thus, he displayed literal and interpretive denial since it is his particular interpretation (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“These sculptures, which no one knows who imagines, and which all pass by every single day without giving them a thought, are now suddenly accused of racism, capitalism, fascism and general patriarchal oppression” (Berlingske 21-06-2020).*

Out take from the Danish Parliament debate 2020. F 65 Om den indenrigs- og

udenrigspolitiske situation: *"At sige, at der er racisme i Danmark, er så anstødeligt for mig. Er der nogle, der overskrider en grænse? Ja. Men nej til, at der er racisme..Mener jeg så, at det er udbredt? Det mener jeg faktisk ikke det er. Jeg mener faktisk, at danskerne er et meget åbent og tolerant folkefærd, som sådan set tager imod folk med åbne arme og behandler andre mennesker godt.som Not everything is for white people, not even for those who have turned up in solidarity. This is how it sounded from the spokesperson for Black Lives Matter, Bwalya Sørensen, in connection with a demonstration in Copenhagen earlier this month"* (DK Parliamentary debate 22.06.2020).

In the last Danish parliamentary debate before the summer break, Kristian Thulesen Dahl from Danish Peoples Party, (DF) responded to Pernille Skipper's argument, from Red-Green Alliance, a left wing party prompted by the BLM narrative that there was structural racism in Denmark. Skipper continues that the Danish parliament needs to wake up and acknowledge the fact and implement laws to combat structural racism. Thulesen Dahl replied that there were already laws in place concerning racism, hence no need. Pia Kjærsgaard (DF), representing the same right-wing populist party, also joined the debate. She argued that just because some ethnic minorities women with scarves did not get employed, was of the cultural implication and had nothing to do with the skin color. She proceeded to display literal denial when argued that there is no racism in Denmark, hence she marginalized it. This becomes her specific interpretation regarding racism, thus also exhibiting interpretive denial which manifests into implicatory denial, due to lack of concern regarding the psychological, political or moral implications of those who actually are experiencing racism in Denmark (Cohen, 2001: 7–9) *"To say that there is racism in Denmark is so offensive to me. Are there any that exceed a limit? Yes. But no to the fact that there is racism"* (DK Parliamentary debate (Time 3:49 PM). 22.06.2020). Søren Pape Poulsen from The Conservative party (C) a right wing party, also became part of the debate and echoed Pia Kjærsgaard's argument that there was no racism in Denmark. He trivialized it by implying that it sometimes happens to everybody for many reasons. Hence, he exhibited the same aspect of literal, interpretive and implicatory denial as Kjærsgaard (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *"Do I mean then that it is widespread? I actually do not think it is. In fact, I believe that the Danes are a very open and tolerant people who, as it were, welcome people with open arms and treat other people well"*. (DK Parliamentary debate (Time 4:47 PM) 22.06.2020).

His answer is notable in that his life partner is of African descent and has experienced racism in Denmark, which is known to the public. Pernille Vermund from New Right (NB) representing another right wing party responded to Skipper's argument and became part of the debate. She argued that it was BLM that exhibited racism in the manner they were conducting their demonstrations. Deflecting the real issues, hence displaying the same recurring theme of literal, interpretive and implicatory denial as Kjærsgaard (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“Not everything is for white people, not even for those who have turned up in solidarity. This is how it sounded from the spokesperson for Black Lives Matter, Bwalya Sørensen, in connection with a demonstration in Copenhagen earlier this month”* (DK Parliamentary debate (Time 3:41 PM) 22.06.2020).

Out take from, Eva Selsing: Selve idéen om hvidt privilegium er dybt racistisk: *“Der blæser racistiske vinde for tiden. Vi troede, vi håbede, at hudfarve som politisk og diskursivt magtmiddel var endt på historiens mødding, men vi tog fejl. En venstreradikal bevægelse insisterer på at etablere en racebaseret konflikt, De mest yderligtgående insisterer på, at racismen mod ikke hvide er »strukturel«, og at hvide mennesker ikke kan opleve racisme »hvidt overherredømme« som er noget, man ryggesløst anklager særligt borgerlige for at gå ind for.. at hvide mennesker en bloc skulle være bærere af en art uretfærdige privilegier alene på grund af deres hudfarve, og at disse privilegier medfører en mere eller mindre ubevidst, men racistisk, undertrykkelse af andre grupper.. Sandheden er, at mens der utvivlsomt findes mennesker, som er mere privilegerede end andre, så er det en komplet udokumenteret, hadefuld påstand, at det skulle handle om hudfarve... Selve det at hævde, at en gruppe mennesker på grund af forhold, de ikke selv har valgt (deres hudfarve), er moralsk defekte, er dybt og inderligt racistisk.* (Berlingske 29.06.2020).

Eva Selsing, philosopher and author, described the new emerging norms that have reached Denmark through BLM. She states that the premises that the narrative struggles concerning racism and politics were long in the past, hence not an issue today, thus manifesting literal denial. Because her argument rests on her specific interpretation, she also displayed interpretive denial, which emerged into implicatory denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). This is a significant premise which aims to annihilate all further counter narrative. *“Racist winds are blowing at the moment. We thought we were hoping that skin color as a political and discursive means of power had ended up on the manure of history, but we were wrong. A left-wing radical movement insists on establishing a race-based conflict”* (Berlingske 14.07.2020). She proceeds to describe that the Anglo-Saxon world is starting to get worried, since the establishments such as the media, politicians and academia

sympathize with the “radical left wing”. Notably, she employs the same decorative terminology as Donald Trump is known for using. In response to the last Danish parliamentary debate where Pernille Skipper declared that structural racism actually also is a Danish problem, she again exhibited her previous constellation of literal, interpretation implicatory denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“The most extreme insist that racism against non-whites is 'structural' and that white people cannot experience racism”* (Berlingske 14.07.2020).

She there by displayed reverse racism, where suddenly the perpetrator becomes the victim, which entails her previous constellation of literal, interpretation implicatory denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“In the slipstream of this movement, a range of hateful concepts that can be used to control and suppress critical voices against the left-wing extremist power of definition have seen the light of day”* (Berlingske 14.07.2020). She then goes on exhibiting her recurring term of reversed racism and the same constellation of literal, interpretation implicatory denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“White supremacy” which is something that one without facts accuses particularly conservative endorse ...that white people a bloc should be carriers of a kind unfair privileges solely because of their skin color and that these privileges cause a more or less unconscious, but racist, oppression of other groups”* (Berlingske 14.07.2020). The recurring term of reverse racism is carried on into the next paragraph. Hence, the same also goes for her previous constellation of literal, interpretation, implicatory denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“The truth is that while there are undoubtedly people who are more privileged than others, it is a completely undocumented, hateful claim that it should be about skin color....The very claim that a group of people, because of conditions they have not chosen themselves (their skin color), is morally defective, is profoundly and deeply racist”* (Berlingske 14.07.2020).

Out take from, Skal vi have et museum for dansk kolonihistorie: *”kølvandet på den enorme anti-racistiske bølge, der fulgte efter amerikaneren George Floyds død i forbindelse med en brutal anholdelse, er der også opstået en heftig debat i Danmark. Et af temaerne er, hvorvidt Danmark burde have et egentligt kolonihistorisk museum,.. [...]Det er alt i alt en interessant og ganske omfattende repræsentation af kolonihistorien ikke mindst set i lyset af, hvor relativt lidt den reelt fylder i Danmarkshistorien... Danmark var en i europæisk sammenhæng ret lille kolonimagt, og handelen med kolonierne betød ikke det store for samfundsøkonomien, som i helt overvejende grad var indenlandsk baseret. at hudfarve og etnicitet er en særlig kvalifikation i forhold til at forstå forholdene, hvad det jo ikke kan være i det danske samfund, hvor vi grundlæggende går ind for*

menneskers ligeværd. Hele præmissen om, at dansk kolonihistorie er glemt og undertrykt, er i øvrigt mildt sagt diskutabel” (POW 30.06.20202).

Special political adviser in the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs Nikolaj Bøgh, who was very vocal in the 2017 Freedom statue debate, also felt the need to become part of the BLM debate. *“In the wake of the enormous anti-racist wave that followed the death of the American George Floyd in connection with a brutal arrest, a heated debate has also arisen in Denmark. One of the themes is whether Denmark should have an actual colonial history museum” (POW 30.06.20202).* He proceeded to explain that some political parties such as the Danish political party SF, The Socialist People’s Party which is a left wing party *“want Denmark’s colonial history in a museum” (Ibid).* He then goes on to argue that the Danish colonial history is well represented in Denmark given that it is an insignificant part of Danish history. Thus, he displays literal and interpretive denial since this is his interpretation. (Cohen, 2001: 7–9). *“A significant dissemination of a rather small theme in Danish history. It is all in all an interesting and quite comprehensive representation of colonial history, not least in light of how relatively little it actually fills in Danish history” (POW 30.06.20202).* He goes on to illustrate the previous combination of literal, interpretive denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9), with his argument that *“Denmark was a rather small colonial power in the European context, and trade with the colonies did not mean much to the economy, which was predominantly domestically based” (POW 30.06.20202).* He proceeds to argue that if there should be a new colonial museum in Denmark, it should be under the Danish National Museum structure and finds it dubious that the new proposed museum should include individuals with ethnic backgrounds from the former colonies. *“that skin color and ethnicity are a special qualification in relation to understanding the conditions, which it can not be in Danish society, where we are fundamentally in favor of human equality” (Ibid).* He ends by again displaying the same constellation of literal, interpretive denial (Cohen, 2001: 7–9), with his argument that *“The whole premise that Danish colonial history has been forgotten and suppressed is, to put it mildly, debatable” (POW 30.06.20202).*

7.3 Resistance to Danish Denial

Analysis research question: *What narratives and counter narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands were told in relation to BLM?*

In this chapter, I will focus on the BLM counter narrative where I will argue and illustrate that it constituted three core elements told in relation to the BLM mobilization. Firstly, that there is structural racism in Denmark today and secondly that there is a need for creating a new colonial history museum in DK. Thirdly a violation of white supremacy statues in DK.

These counter narratives of resistance to Danish denial together produced the multiplicity challenge to the Danish hegemonic narrative about there being no structural racism in Denmark. *“But one cannot go and pretend that there is no racism because on paper there is no racism. And you can not just say: Well, I'm just in my everyday life incredibly color blind. Because if you do not talk about racism and discrimination, you will be blind to the problems that exist in our society and that affect so many of our fellow citizens. There is racism in Denmark. It affects everyday life, it is embedded in our systems, and it is time that we get a Parliament that actively fights it. I think it needed to be said, and I think we, the Parliament, need to wake up, because when people around the world say 'Justice for George Floyd', it does not just mean something far away in the United States. This means justice for everyone affected by racism, also in Denmark.. I would say the far right in the Parliament, because it emerges now that they do not want to acknowledge that for 20 years in Danish politics, they have shamed minorities, sexual minorities, brown citizens, black citizens with legislation and with rhetoric, targeted. And then one must still not say that yes, there is racism”* (The Danish Parliament debates 22.06.2020).

These counter narratives of resistance to Danish denial together produced the multiplicity challenge to the Danish hegemonic narrative about there being no need for creating a new colonial history museum in Denmark. *“Denmark's past must come to light. It must be examined, turned and discussed. This is how we learn from the story.... the death of the black American George Floyd, results in the proposal for a colonial history museum in Denmark”* covers museums in locations that, because of their own historical function and role call for reflection” (Berlingske 14.07.2020).

These counter narratives of resistance to Danish denial together produced the multiplicity challenge to the Danish hegemonic narrative about white supremacy stature *“Since the big Black Lives Matter demonstration, we have heard of attacks on the Ludvig Holberg statue in front of the Old Stage, on the equestrian statues of Frederik VII and Frederik V”* (Berlingske 21-06-2020).

Out take from the Danish Parliament debates 2020. F 65 Om den indenrigs- og

udenrigspolitiske situation: *”Men man kan ikke gå og lade, som om der ikke findes racisme, fordi der på papiret ikke er racisme. Og man kan heller ikke nøjes med at sige: Altså, jeg er jo bare i min hverdag utrolig farveblind. For hvis man ikke taler om racisme og diskrimination, bliver man jo blind overfor de problemer, der er i vores samfund, og som rammer så mange af vores medborgere. Der er racisme i Danmark. Det rammer i hverdagen, det er indlagt i vores systemer, og det er på tide, at vi får et Folketing, der aktivt bekæmper det. Jeg synes, det trængte til at blive sagt, og jeg synes, at vi, Folketinget, trænger til at vågne op, for når der rundtomkring i verden bliver sagt »Justice for George Floyd«, betyder det ikke kun noget langt væk i USA. Det betyder retfærdighed for alle, der rammes af racisme, også i Danmark lovgivning herinde, som er skræddersyet, som jeg siger, til at ramme de såkaldte indvandrere. Det er jo sådan lidt blevet et begreb for alt muligt. Det er bl.a. sådan noget som håndtryks lovgivning, maskeringsforbud og lignende. Det er for mig at se lovgivning, som understøtter og legitimerer en opfattelse af, at der er nogle, der er værre end andre på grund af enten deres oprindelse, etnicitet eller hudfarve. jeg vil sige den yderste højrefløj i Folketinget, for det kommer jo frem nu, at man ikke vil anerkende, at man i 20 år i dansk politik har udskammet minoriteter, seksuelle minoriteter, brune borgere, sorte borgere med lovgivning og med retorik, målrettet. Og så må man stadig ikke sige, at jo, der er racisme” hvis vi kunne lovgive os til, at der ikke skulle findes racisme, så synes jeg da, at vi skulle tage og gøre det med det samme, men udfordringen er jo, at det sker i relationen mellem mennesker* (The Danish Parliament Debats 22.06.2020).

The last Danish parliamentary debate before the summer break was heavily influenced by the coronavirus, yet also by the BLM mobilization. Pernille Skipper, started the debate concerning the BLM mobilization, which now was becoming a national discussion about structural racism in Denmark. She argued that it was not only in the US that there is structural racism but also in Denmark, and she encouraged the Danish parliament to wake up to the reality: *“But one cannot go and pretend that there is no racism because on paper there is no racism. And you can not just say: Well, I’m just in my everyday life incredibly color blind. Because if you do not talk about racism*

and discrimination, you will be blind to the problems that exist in our society and that affect so many of our fellow citizens. There is racism in Denmark. It affects everyday life, it is embedded in our systems, and it is time that we get a Parliament that actively fights it. I think it needed to be said, and I think we, the Parliament, need to wake up, because when people around the world say 'Justice for George Floyd', it does not just mean something far away in the United States. This means justice for everyone affected by racism, also in Denmark". (DK Parliament debate (Time 3:16 PM). 22.06.2020). She went on to argue that Kristian Thulesen Dahl's (DF) had been instrumental in creating legislation that had led to structural racism and discriminations in Denmark. "Legislation in here, which is tailored, as I say, to hit the so-called immigrants. It has become such a concept for everything. It is i.a. such things as handshake laws, masking bans and the like. It is for me to see legislation that supports and legitimizes a perception that there are some who are worse than others because of either their origin, ethnicity or skin color (Ibid: Time 3:27 PM).

Sikandar Siddique from the Independent Greens Party. (IG) a left wing party, became another very vocal voice of resistance to the Danish denial. He unexpectedly suggested one minute of silence in respect for George Floyd. In response to the argument that there were laws in place for racism, he also argued that the right wing political party DF has influenced laws that have manifested into discriminations and structural racism in Denmark. "I would say the far right in the Parliament, because it emerges now that they do not want to acknowledge that for 20 years in Danish politics, they have shamed minorities, sexual minorities, brown citizens, black citizens with legislation and with rhetoric, targeted. And then one must still not say that yes, there is racism" (Ibid: Time 10:25 PM). Morten Østergaard from the Radical Left (RV) a party in the middle of the political spectrum also responded in regard to the need for more legislation about racism. He argued that it is not possible to legislate against racism because it is occurring in the interaction between individuals. Here he implicitly confirms the embedded racism in the Danish cultural fabric. "If we could legislate that there should be no racism, then I think we should take and do it right away, but the challenge is that it happens in the relationship between people" (Ibid: Time 3:56 PM).

Out take from, Fire krænkelser sikre statuer: Her er du som skulptur turist på sikker grund:
"Vi har siden den store Black Lives Matter-demonstration hørt på angreb på Ludvig Holbergstatuen foran Gamle Scene, på rytterstatuerne af Frederik VII og Frederik V," (Berlingske 21-06-2020).

Holger Dahl, architecture reviewer and author, highlights that *“Since the big Black Lives Matter demonstration, we have heard of attacks on the Ludvig Holberg statue in front of the Old Stage, on the equestrian statues of Frederik VII and Frederik V”* (Berlingske 21-06-2020).

Out take from, Danmarks mørke fortid skal frem i lyset: *”Danmarks fortid skal frem i lyset. Den skal undersøges, drejes og diskuteres. Sådan lærer vi af historien. Derfor må det hilses velkommen, når en global debat om racisme og fortidens synder, der i kølvandet på den sorte amerikaners George Floyds død atter er blusset op, udmønter sig i forslaget om et kolonihistorisk museum i Danmark”... Begrebet »samvittighedssted« dækker over museer på lokationer, der på grund af deres egen historiske funktion og rolle maner til eftertænksomhed”* (Berlingske 28.06.2020).

It was interesting that in the aftermaths of BLM, the question regarding the need for a colonial history museum in Denmark emerged. *“Denmark's past must come to light. It must be examined, turned and discussed. This is how we learn from the story. Therefore, it must be welcomed when a global debate on racism and the sins of the past, which has flared up again in the wake of the death of the black American George Floyd, results in the proposal for a colonial history museum in Denmark”*.(Ibid). The Danish Parliamentary Culture Committee has responded positively concerning an official request for a new Danish colonial history museum, though with the caveat that it has to be under the National Museum. (Ibid).

Analysis Research question: *Which transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles?*

In this chapter, I will argue and illustrate which transnational elements were important in these narrative struggles about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands in relation to BLM in 2020. Firstly, the death of George Floyd became a window of opportunity for resistance to Danish denial in 2020. The BLM modes of production were through smartphone technology and the internet, especially Twitter hashtags (Shenhav 2015:17). *“Today the digital age has reduced reliance on a middleman. Smartphone technology has allowed African Americans to shine the spotlight in places camera crews would never reach. Black people can now make the rest of the world bear witness to the way racism shapes their everyday encounters”* (The Condensation 04.05.2020). *“Historically, hashtags developed as an informal method of highlighting ideas in unformatted text and trying to grow conversation around a topic* (Pew research 15.08.2016). It is notable that the BLM mobilization strategy has incorporated Paragraph 90 of the 2001 Durban Declaration. It states in regards to engaging in new media such as the internet, that its aim is to *“Seek, receive and impart information can make to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; we reiterate the need to respect the editorial independence and autonomy of the media in this regard”* (2001 Durban Declaration).

I will argue that the mobilization is related to memory activism because the aim for social change was building on previous cultural mobilizations from the 1960s Civil right movement as well as Kaepernick’s act of defiance exhibited in 2017 by kneeling during the US national anthem (Rigney 2018). *“Kneeling has become a symbol of the organization Black Lives Matter's fight against racism and discrimination”* (TV 2, 05.09.2020). This is significant in context to *“The link between everyday resistance and organized resistance remains unclear”* (Lilja et al., 2017). Here I will argue that the BLM mobilization is a hybrid between individual and organized resistance which entails riots and social movements (Ibid). An individual with *“Smartphone technology”* is now able *“to shine the spotlight in places camera crews would never reach”* (The conversation 04.05.2020). The individual action emerged into organized BLM resistance. *“Our strategy is to organize and mobilize people, actively working to broaden international conversation about the impact of state violence on black people and communities, because we are decentralized, chapters are autonomous and develop their own strategies. They know what’s best for their communities”* (PR Week US. 10.02.2016).

I will argue the Danish BLM strategy is similar to other international BLM mobilization strategies which entail defacing racist monuments as well as mass protests and political reforms. *“Since the big Black Lives Matter demonstration, we have heard of attacks on the Ludvig Holberg statue in front of the Old Stage, on the equestrian statues of Frederik VII and Frederik V”* (Berlingske 21.06.2020). *“We are going over to Christiansborg to shout at the politicians. Denmark has interfered in a positive way in apartheid, and we must do it again. We must say something. If you do not say anything, then you are complicit. I want Denmark to be on the right side of history when it comes to human rights”* (TV 2. 07.06.2020). However, the Danish BLM differs from other BLM chapters, as well as the 1960s Civil rights movement, in regards to engaging implicit bystanders. The Danish BLM chapter created rules regarding how the implicit bystanders should conduct themselves in the BLM demonstration: *“the blacks shall go in front, and the whites shall go back”*

I will argue that the symbolic manner of the killing of George Floyd, which constituted a white officer kneeling on the neck of a black man, resonates with the visual image of white supremacy and its implication of the social racial hierarchy. A hierarchy integrated into the fabric of the US and Danish society due to their legacy of slavery and Social Darwinism. I will also argue that this particular symbolic imagery of the killing of George Floyd became the significant key representation of trauma and emotions. Hence, it had the ability to become a progressive catalyst of responses that led to action regarding injustice and has had a profound impact on society (Pedwell, 2014:14). The effect of the image did not “wear off” in the relentless media flow of shocking images exposed constantly in the 24-hours news cycle. It became where *“new habits are being engendered through our everyday engagement with the visual affectivities of social media, and how might such processes relate to the desires for ‘progressive’ social change”* (Ibid:20). I will also argue, in context to how emotions matter in world politics, that the BLM representations of the real life killing of George Floyd did create a link between emotions, affect, and the body of George Floyd (Hutchison:286). I will further argue that the BLM representations of emotions, particularly in context to trauma, were to some degree able to alter social norms and values in Denmark. (Ibid:287). Thus, I will argue that the BLM representations in 2020 had the ability to some degree to possess ‘agential capacities’, hence were not capable of *“re-shaping social and political perspectives, priorities, values and norms”* (Ibid:290).

Out take from, The communications goals and strategies of Black Lives Matter: Shanelle Matthews, lead communications strategist for US BLM, explains that they endorse divergent strategies and meaningful collaboration *“Because we are decentralized, chapters are autonomous and develop their own strategies. They know what’s best for their communities”*. (PR Week US. 10.02 2016). She proceeds with *“Our strategy is to organize and mobilize people, actively working to broaden international conversation about the impact of state violence on black people and communities* (Ibid).

Out take from, Viral videos of racism: how an old civil rights strategy is being used in a new digital age: Media scholar Aniko Bodroghkozy argues that the 1960s civil right strategy was to become part of the news. However, *“Television networks, with one eye on the bottom line, did not want to discomfort their white viewers”* (The conversation 04.05.2020). He goes on to explain that *“Today the digital age has reduced reliance on a middleman. Smartphone technology has allowed African Americans to shine the spotlight in places camera crews would never reach. Black people can now make the rest of the world bear witness to the way racism shapes their everyday encounters”* (Ibid).

Out take from, Stor demonstration med Black Lives Matter i København *”skal vi over til Christiansborg for at råbe politikerne op. Danmark har blandet sig på en positiv måde i apartheid, og det skal vi gøre igen. Man skal sige noget. Hvis man ikke siger noget, så er man medskyldig. Jeg vil gerne have, at Danmark er på den rette side af historien, når det drejer sig om menneskerettigheder”* (TV 2. 07.06.2020).

Bwalya Sørensen, spokesperson for Danish BLM, argued that there was structural racism in Denmark and challenged the Danish parliament to be on the right side of human rights: *“We are going over to Christiansborg to shout at the politicians. Denmark has interfered in a positive way in apartheid, and we must do it again. We must say something. If you do not say anything, then you are complicit. I want Denmark to be on the right side of history when it comes to human rights”* (Ibid).

Out take from. Utilfredse demonstranter i Odense: Folk kunne være blevet væk på grund af regler *”De sorte skal gå foran, og de hvide skal gå bagved”* (TV 2 Fyn 10.06.2020).

It is highly significant that the Danish BLM strategy suddenly differs from other international BLM mobilizations. A few days later after their previous event in Copenhagen, where more than 15.000 people became part of a massive demonstration, the Danish BLM chapter decided to enforce a rule concerning how their demonstrations were conducted. The rule was directed towards white people, who were now forced to only be in the back of the demonstration., whereas the black should be in the front: *“the blacks shall go in front, and the whites shall go back”* (Ibid). It was also notable that after the new rule only 300 people became part of the BLM demonstration in Odense, the third largest city in DK (TV 2 Fyn 10.06. 2020).

Out take from ”Fire krænkelse sikre statuer: Her er du som skulptur turist på sikker grund:”*Vi har siden den store Black Lives Matter-demonstration hørt på angreb på Ludvig Holbergstatuen foran Gamle Scene, på rytterstatuerne af Frederik VII og Frederik V,”* (Berlingske 21-06-2020).

Holger Dahl, architecture reviewer and author, highlights that *“Since the big Black Lives Matter demonstration, we have heard of attacks on the Ludvig Holberg statue in front of the Old Stage, on the equestrian statues of Frederik VII and Frederik V”* (Berlingske 21-06-2020). It were notable that it became an issue concerning who is and who is not worthy of *Commemoration* (Schwartz, 2016: 10–12). In addition, as Stoltz argues, *“Struggles over commemoration emphasize the socially constructive as well as the political dimensions of memory.”* (Stoltz 2020:28)



Christian Eriksen og Kasper Dolberg kneels at the Nations League match between Denmark and Belgium in the Park. Photo: Scanpix Denmark

Out take from: Her knæler Danmarks landshold: - En forvridning af demokratiet, siger professor: *"At gå ned på et knæ er blevet et symbol på organisationen Black Lives Matter-bevægelsens kamp mod racisme og diskrimination Det er blevet en global gestus"* (TV 2 05.09.2020).

Kasper Schmeichel, a goal keeper on the Danish national soccer team, responded to recent critic to why the Danish national team choose to kneel in solidarity with the BLM mobilization, with *"Kneeling has become a symbol of the organization Black Lives Matter's fight against racism and discrimination"* (Ibid). The symbolic act is inspired by Colin Kaepernick, who knelt in 2016 during the US national anthem, and *"It has become a global gesture"* (Ibid).

Out take from: The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges: Social activism on Twitter.

According to Pew Research concerning Twitter, *#Ferguson was the most used social-issue hashtag in the 10-year history of the platform, while #BlackLivesMatter was third. Historically, hashtags developed as an informal method of highlighting ideas in unformatted text and trying to grow conversation around a topic"* (Pew Research 15.08.2016).



Photo: Nikolai Linares/Ritzau Scanpix

Analysis research question: *Was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles?*

In this chapter, I will argue and illustrate that there was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles in 2020. I will argue that the symbolic death of George Floyd, unexpectedly and to a very high degree, did snowball into a collective form of meaning and feeling, which emerged into an ‘transnational affective community’ in Denmark (Hutchison, 2016, 2019). Over 15.000 people participated in the Copenhagen demonstration, despite it being in the midst of the corona pandemic. Hence, it has to a very high degree engaged implicit bystanders those who “occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm” (Rothberg, 2019:1). This is significant in relation to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which also successfully was able to breach the outer point of the color line (Blumer 1963:328). Moreover, it also engaged Greenland, which is another dark chapter of Danish colonial history: *“There has been this whole thing demonstration about Black Lives Matter, and I know that there are a lot of Greenlanders who sympathize with them because there are also many who experience some form of discrimination or racism”* (Danish parliamentary debate 22.06.2020). These narrative displayed a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, *“I think it is unfair that people around the world are treated so badly regardless of their skin color. Racism also occurs in Denmark. We are world citizens, so it is important to mark. I think it is violent and unethical what has happened”.. “I am deeply shocked that something like this can happen, which belongs to 'way back'. It affects us all. We have people from all countries here, so it's a matter of solidarity”* DR (31.05.2020) *“The players from Denmark and Belgium have*

decided to kneel before the match tonight to mark the fight against racism and discrimination...It's unusual. It is not often that we see a collective in the football world in Denmark that is manifesting itself in this way... We are against all forms of discrimination. We do not tolerate and accept it. It has nothing to do with politics, it has to do with humanitarian issues” (TV 2, 05.09.2020).

Out take from, 2.000 på gaden i København efter sort amerikaners død: *I think it is unfair that people around the world are treated so badly regardless of their skin color. Racism also occurs in Denmark. We are world citizens, so it is important to mark. I think it is violent and unethical what has happened “I am deeply shocked that something like this can happen, which belongs to 'way back'. It affects us all. We have people from all countries here, so it's a matter of solidarity”* DR (31.05.2020)

Few days into the aftermath of the death of George Floyd, demonstrations in the US had now spread to the rest of the world, which also reached Denmark. The first BLM demonstration in DK took place on May 31st 2020. About 2000 people took part in a peaceful demonstration at the US embassy in Copenhagen. One of the protesters, Lea Rejmers, illustrates that the new emerging norm has created a transnational affective community, based on solidarity *“I think it is unfair that people around the world are treated so badly regardless of their skin color. Racism also occurs in Denmark. We are world citizens, so it is important to mark. I think it is violent and unethical what has happened”*. The notion of transnational affective community, based on solidarity was also evident in another protester Anita Mac *“I am deeply shocked that something like this can happen, which belongs to 'way back'. It affects us all. We have people from all countries here, so it's a matter of solidarity”* DR (31.05.2020) One week later, another BLM demonstration took place, though this time the crowd numbered 15.000 people. As one publication put it, *“What happened?”* TV2 (07.06.2020)

Out take from, the Danish Parliamentary debate 2020. ”F 65 Om den indenrigs- og udenrigspolitiske situation: *”Der har jo været hele den her demonstration om Black Lives Matter, og jeg ved, at der er rigtig mange grønlændere, som sympatiserer med dem, fordi der også er mange, der oplever en form for diskrimination eller racisme”* (DK Parliamentary debate 22.06.2020).

It was interesting and notable that one of the Greenlandic members of the Danish parliament, Aaja Chemnitz Larsen (IA), engaged in the Danish Parliament debate in 2020. She highlighted that there were unspoken problems concerning Greenland.. She went on to display a transnational affective community, based on solidarity., *“There has been this whole thing demonstration about Black Lives Matter, and I know that there are a lot of Greenlanders who sympathize with them because there are also many who experience some form of discrimination or racism”* (DK Parliamentary debate (Time 8:34 PM) 22.06.2020). Thus she concludes her argument about there being a need for knowledge about the history of Greenland in DK.

Out take from: ”Her knæler Danmarks landshold: - En forvridning af demokratiet, siger professor: ”Spillerne fra Danmark og Belgien har besluttet at knæle forud for kampen i aften for at markere kampen mod racisme og diskrimination, Det er usædvanligt. Det er ikke så tit, at vi ser et kollektiv i fodboldverdenen i Danmark, som er ude at manifestere sig på denne måde, Vi er mod alle former for diskrimination. Vi tolererer og accepterer det ikke. Det har ikke noget med politik at gøre, det har med humanitære problemstillinger at gøres (TV 2, 05.09.2020).

It is notable that soccer, the pride of Danish sport, engaged in the BLM mobilization. Prior to the match between Denmark and Belgium, the Danish national soccer team decided to display a transnational affective community, based on solidarity: *“The players from Denmark and Belgium have decided to kneel before the match tonight to mark the fight against racism and discrimination”* (TV 2, 05.09.2020). Early in that week, the Danish national team had also decided to kneel before the match with England. The Danish soccer expert Flemming Toft acknowledged the unusual display of transnational affective community, based on solidarity: *“It's unusual. It is not often that we see a collective in the football world in Denmark that is manifesting itself in this way”*(Ibid). The player Kasper Schmeichel responded to the recent criticism with *“We are against all forms of discrimination. We do not tolerate and accept it. It has nothing to do with politics, it has to do with humanitarian issues* (Ibid).

8. Conclusion

I can conclude that the “Freedom” and “I am Queen Mary” statues' social narrative strategy in 2017 and 2018 both differ and have similarities with that of BLM in 2020, in regards to challenging the Danish hegemonic narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands.

The Freedom statue in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018 constituted two core elements challenging the Danish hegemonic narratives about Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands. The elements were the lack of adequate teaching in Denmark about DK colonial history and why Denmark should apologize for 250 years of slavery. The BLM’s narrative, on the other hand, constituted three core elements challenging the same Danish hegemonic narratives. However, they differ in two core elements. Firstly, BLM was dismantling statues representing white supremacy, and secondly, they argued that there is structural racism in Denmark today. BLM third core element argued that there is a need for creating a new colonial history museum in Denmark. I conclude that BLM third core element shares similarity with the core element from the “Freedom” statue in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary” statue in 2018, which pointed the lack of adequate teaching in Denmark about DK colonial history.

I can further conclude that the “Freedom” statue and the “I am Queen Mary” statue in context to BLM both differ and share similarities regarding which social narrative strategy elements were important in the narrative struggles in relation to Danish colonialism in the US Virgin Islands. The “Freedom” statue and the “I am Queen Mary” statue both used the 2017 centennial observance as a window of opportunity for resistance to the Danish hegemonic narrative. BLM’s window of opportunity differed because it emerged in the aftermaths of the death of George Floyd in 2020, which amplified the BLM mobilization. Both statues used memory activism as well as memory of activism, however they differ in building on previous social mobilizations. Where the Freedom statue related to the 1848 revolt where the slaves emancipated themselves, the “I am Queen Mary” statue related to the 1878 Fire Burn Revolt as well as the 1960s Civil right era, especially the Black Panther movement as well as BLM. The BLM in 2020 differed because it did not utilized memory activism, However it related to memory of activism because it build on the 1960s civil right era mobilization but embodied all events of white supremacy. Both statues’ modes of production were through Danish and USVI internet based publication, whereas BLM modes of production were through smartphones and the internet. A strong tool is that an individual with a smartphone is able

in real time to record injustice and, hence, is able upload to the internet without the intermediary such as established media and their by have independent editorial freedom.

The BLM also differs because the BLM mobilization is a hybrid between individual and organized resistance such as mass demonstration in Denmark.. BLM also differ with the two statues because BLM are creating decentralized and autonomous chapters with their own strategies. I furthermore conclude that both statues and BLM representations did create a link between emotions, affect and body in context to how emotions affect world politics. The “Freedom statue” representation of emotions and trauma did, even though to a very little degree, alter the social norms and values in Denmark. Here it is notable that the Danish prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, acknowledged that it was the slaves that gained their own freedom in 1848 and thereby opened up a debate which could lead a re-shaping of the Danish political perspectives as well as the Danish hegemonic narrative of innocent colonialism. A tangible example of transitional justice was the launch of a five year scholarship program for the youth in USVI. BLM became a the new global norm in a global context. The fact that for example football players in Denmark dropped to their knees in solidarity did not in itself alter the social norms or re-shape the Danish political perspectives nor the DK hegemonic narrative of innocent colonialism. However, still it sparked a debate in Denmark and got media coverage.

The BLM also differ and have similarities with the two statues in regards to what degree there was a transnational affective community, based on solidarity, created in these narrative struggles concerning Danish colonialism. The “Freedom” and “I am Queen Mary” statues did not snowball into a collective form of meaning and feeling which emerge into an affective community in Denmark. Hence, they did not engage implicit bystanders. Whereas BLM differed because the symbolic death of George Floyd engaged over 15.000 people that participated in the Copenhagen demonstration, despite it being in the midst of the coronavirus, did snowball into a collective form of meaning and feeling which emerged into an affective community in Denmark. Hence, BLM has to a very high degree engaged implicit bystanders. BLM also differed in relation to two statues because the movement also engaged Greenland, which is another dark chapter of Danish colonial history. Lastly, BLM strategy in Denmark in the beginning shared the similarity with the two statues because they were aiming to engage implicit bystanders. However, the two statues had very little effect and did not succeed in that regard. BLM was very successful in Denmark in achieving exactly that engagement. They later changed their strategy regarding engaging implicit bystanders.

Thus, BLM differ in relation to the two statues because they created rules that exhibited reversed racism. Consequently, they lost significant support of the engagement from implicit bystanders. I can further conclude that the symbolic visual image of the killing of George Floyd resonates with white supremacy and the implication of the social racial hierarchy, Social Darwinism and the legacy of slavery, both in US and in Denmark. It became the significant key representation of trauma and emotions.

In regards to the existing research and further social strategies

With the aim to get closer to obtaining transitional justice for USVI, I can conclude that specifically in the Danish context, that the Danish embedded hegemonic narrative of “innocent colonialism” has resulted in USVI still awaiting transitional justice from Denmark despite Denmark being a member of the UN and the 2001 Durban convention. However, I can conclude that the social strategies from the “Freedom” statue in 2017 and the “I am Queen Mary ” as well as the BLM mobilization 2020 revealed some social strategies which can be beneficial for further mobilization in the quest for transitional justice. The recurring theme, which constitutes denial based on lack of education becomes a paradox. How can one apologize, when the ones who should be giving it do not know why an apology is needed? Hence, the social strategies should continue building on the narrative, which constitutes the need for more teaching about colonial history in Denmark. It is imperative that the Danes know their own true history if transitional justice is to move forward. This can only be successful if the Danish narrative entails the perspective from USVI. The new proposed colonial history museum in Denmark will take its point of reference from the perspective of USVI. Hence, *“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter”*

I can furthermore conclude, in a more international as well as in a Danish aspect, that it could be beneficial to utilize observance or anniversaries as a window of opportunity for resistance to a hegemonic narrative. I can also conclude that the modes of production are a significant aspect where specific new technology such as smartphones and the internet become very beneficial because they can become a global gathering point of resistance. Moreover, they bypass the mainstream media and create editorial independence and autonomy. I can also conclude that it will be beneficial to apply memory of activism because it is necessary to continually remind and vocalize that injustice occurs, specifically if there is a window of opportunity that can illustrate that it is happening in context to the present day. This is in context to the notion that the longer time

passes the less trauma and emotions resonate, especially in the 24-hoursnews circle. Memory activism, on the other hand, could be beneficial because it can entail memory of activism. However, it often comes from a personal narrative interpretation, which could become debatable. I can furthermore conclude that representations, which create a link between emotions, affect, and body can be beneficial in context to changing norms and values. I can also conclude that representation of trauma and emotions can become significantly beneficial if the representations symbolically are able resonate not only with one specific event but are able to embody all implication of white supremacy, Social Darwinism and the legacy of slavery. Hence, will engage implicit bystanders and create a transnational affective community, based on solidarity. That, consequently, could have a profound impact on society.