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Publication date:
2006

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication from Aalborg University

Citation for published version (APA):
Frello, B. (2006). *Cultural Hybridity: Contamination or Creative Transgression?* Akademiet for Migrationsstudier i Danmark, Aalborg Universitet.

AMID Working Paper Series 54/2006

Cultural Hybridity
– Contamination or Creative Transgression? [1]

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Research on migration and its relation to culture, cultural identity and cultural processes, is becoming increasingly 'globalized' not only in scope but also with regard to the perspectives on 'culture' which are being applied and implied. A consequence of this changing agenda is that transgression concepts – such as 'hybridity', 'diaspora', 'creolization', 'transculturalization' and 'syncretism' – have to an increasing extent become key concepts in various attempts at escaping the 'methodological nationalism' (Beck 2000) of traditional social theory and develop conceptual spaces within which it is possible to grasp and to study cultural identity without resorting to cultural essentialism. These attempts open up new possibilities and new problems – e.g. they are being criticised on the one hand for being elitist and on the other hand for reproducing the very idea of cultural purity which they are supposed to transcend – and furthermore they are being criticised for simply inventing new names for phenomena which have existed for centuries.

In this paper I focus on the analytical perspectives of this new agenda. I argue that the fact that transgression concepts reproduce the categories which they are supposed to transcend is not only a problem but also an analytical strong point in that they highlight conventional understandings of purity, belonging and culture. Danish country music such as the music performed by Jodle Birge is not usually considered 'hybrid' whereas Hindu country music certainly would be. Therefore we should not only be concerned with asking questions such as "what 'is' hybridity and how can the many forms of hybrid experience be given space in a world of nation states?" We should also ask questions such as 'how are notions of – and distinctions between – transgression and purity applied, by whom, to what ends, and articulated with which other elements?' Turning such notions into analytical, rather than descriptive, concepts will open up new fields of study.

The 'conceptual context' within which the discussion of transgression concepts takes place is of course the discussion and the critique of essentialist and substantialist notions of culture, that is, the idea that cultures are bounded; the idea that human beings are the bearers, rather than the creators, of culture; the idea that cultures can be meaningfully described in terms of their 'content'; and the idea that cultural groups have some kind of

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[1] Frello 1995 contains a longer and more thorough, Danish version of the argument presented here.

natural affiliation with a specific territory. This is the so-called 'classical' anthropological idea of culture and of the relation between culture and place, which is also found in the romantic idea of the nation.

Hence, the use of transgression concepts is very much concerned with overcoming the taking-for-granted ness of some kind of natural relation between culture, place and identity. And the reason is that this idea of some deep connection between culture, place and identity leads to specific problems. One is the problem of how to come to terms with border-crossing and more generally of people who are 'in the wrong place'. Identity and culture have been *territorialized* in specific ways in accordance with the idea of a natural connection between cultures, peoples and places, and this creates acute problems for people who do not 'fit in', whether they are refugees or migrants or ethnic minorities or whatever (Malkki 1992). And it is this territorialization of identity and culture which the focus on transgression concepts is aimed to overcome.

Transgression concepts

A variety of concepts have been employed in the endeavour to transgress this frame. The concepts of syncretism, creolization and hybridity all carry traces of their use in different contexts. The concept of syncretism historically refers first and foremost to fusions of religion. The concept of creolization has primarily been used within linguistics where it refers to pidgin languages becoming native languages[2]. The hybridity concept is historically linked to biology in that it refers to interbreeding across species. Furthermore, it has been applied in relation to miscegenation, which also connects it to racism. These terms are now being applied to conceptualize matters, quite different from the ones they initially referred to. They are employed to capture phenomena and movements, which cross categories such as nations, cultures, civilizations and religions. The literature on hybridity, creolization etc. is full of examples of 'surprising' blends that challenge the conceptualization of cultures as internally coherent and geographically separated units. Jan Nederveen Pietersee presents the following list of 'hybrid' phenomena:

> How do we come to terms with phenomena such as Thai boxing by Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish bagels, Chinese tacos and Mardi Gras Indians in the United States, or 'Mexican schoolgirls dressed in Greek togas dancing in the style of Isadora Duncan'. (Nederveen Pietersee 1995:53)

This quote lists 'surprising' *blends* of cultural phenomena. Transgression concepts, however, are also employed to grasp positions, which fall *beside* the notion of a world of bounded cultures. That is, positions, which are 'on the margin' – neither completely inside, nor completely outside. It is the attempts at grasping these deviant positions, which have brought about further conceptualizations, such as the 'in between' and the 'third space' (Bhabha 1994).

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[2] On syncretism, see Chen 1998. On creolization, see Sebba 1997. On the concept of creolization used in cultural analysis, see Hannerz 1992 and 1996.

The huge focus on transgression is not just a result of a realization of the changes of the world which are related to new waves of migration, new media etc. It is also related to a critique of the *suppressing* aspects of the understanding of culture as something which is bounded and territorialized. This critique of the concept of culture is not just related to the nation state, and thereby to the critique of nationalism. It is also related to de-colonization and to the exclusions and discriminations that followed and still follow from the legacy of imperialism. And therefore it is related to a critique of the naturalized self-understanding of the West as the top of all civilization.

In relation to recent social and cultural theory, the application of transgression concepts therefore has a clear critical dimension, and this implies that to some extent e.g. the concept of hybridity, which I primarily will focus on here, has been used to indicate on the one hand an emancipating position and on the other hand something which is supposed to have a critical edge to it per se – that is, simply by virtue of *being* hybrid or by virtue of possessing an ambivalent position somehow.

To the extent that transgression concepts are applied in a celebratory fashion, what is usually being celebrated is on the one hand various mixtures of cultural elements with different origins, and on the other hand 'transgression' as such: the hybrid, the mongrel, ambivalence, etc. and also the very ability to be 'at home' in different cultural settings. This celebratory approach is perhaps most prevalent in the earlier discussions and analyses. One finds it e.g. in Ulf Hannerz' discussion of the cosmopolitan. Hannerz defines cosmopolitanism as a certain metacultural position, which implies a detachment from the culture of origin and a willingness to engage with the other – that is, an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences (Hannerz 1992, 1996).

Criticizing hybridity theory

Both the celebration of transgression in terms of blending or mixing and the idea of some privileged experience, which is possessed by people who live 'across cultures' have been objects of fierce critique. For now I will mention just two typical points of critique. One is drawing attention to the fact that speaking of 'mixture' presupposes the existence of something which can be mixed. Jonathan Friedman argues that cultures were never pure and that the concept of hybridity therefore tells us nothing, since all of us are and always were cultural hybrids. Therefore, he argues that transgression concepts presuppose the very idea of purity with which they aim to reckon. The essentialist notion of culture is the precondition for the astonishment at the experience of cultural hybridity in terms of the mixture of elements from different geographically based cultures.

> In the struggle against the racism of purity, hybridity invokes the dependent, not converse, notion of the mongrel. Instead of combating essentialism, it merely hybridises it. (Friedman 1999:236)

In accordance with this point, Friedman criticizes Nederveen Pietersee's example of the Moroccan girls practicing Thai-boxing in Amsterdam for resting on an essentialist notion of culture: the reason why it appears to be a 'hybrid' phenomenon rests, according to Friedman, on a notion of cultures in the plural – that is, culture as something which is bounded and confined to specific places – something Thai, something Moroccan and something Dutch, which can then, subsequently, be mixed.

Friedman ties his critique of the concept of hybridity to a critique of the concept of cosmopolitanism as it is primarily represented by Hannerz. Friedman emphasizes that the celebration of hybridity as a critical position is actually the elite's celebration of itself, since only privileged groups can make use of the possibilities offered by the transgression of territorial and cultural boundaries[3]. Non-privileged groups, such as work migrants and refugees have not chosen the life 'in-between' cultures – and it does not necessarily grant them a privileged position neither as regards insight nor possibilities. Claiming that others – e.g. migrants and refugees - are 'hybrids' is therefore an act of power on the part of the cosmopolitan elite. It is a way of depriving them of their right to self-definition just as it is a way of dismissing ordinary people's attempts at asserting their own cultural identity by labelling them essentialists and redneck nationalists (Friedman 1997). Hybridity is therefore only meaningful as a self-definition, according to Friedman, not as a definition of others.

Consequently, according to Friedman, the characterization of the present in terms of an increasing hybridization is not an adequate diagnosis of the state of the world, but rather an expression of the self-identity of the cosmopolitan elite. The problem according to Friedman is, however, that it involves a hidden normativity and that if judged in terms of its correctness as a diagnosis of the world of today it is simply wrong. Friedman makes this conclusion simply by looking at what is happening in the world:

> In a world of multiplying diasporas, one of the things that is not happening is that boundaries are disappearing. Rather, they seem to be erected on every new street corner of every declining neighbourhood of our world. It is true that a little bit of this and a little bit of that are flowing across all sorts of boundaries, but they are not being used to celebrate hybridity. Quite the contrary, they are incorporated and naturalized by group formation that strives to homogenize and maintain social order within its own boundaries. (Friedman 1999:241)

Since boundaries are not manifestations of objective cultural differences, they do not automatically break down when cultural elements blend. Boundaries are socially constructed and they can pop up when they are least expected. Hybridity is therefore only meaningful as a self-definition, according to Friedman, and not as a definition of others. Friedman maintains that the right to claim cultural 'purity' should be given back to

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[3] This is also the centre of the critique, which is offered by Pels 1999. A similar critique of the transnational (or 'ex-territorial') elite is presented by Bauman (e.g. Bauman 1998 and 2001) as part of his discussion of identity and community in postmodernity. Bauman's project is, however, very different from Friedman's, since he shares with the hybridity theorists the critique of the assertion of communities based on cultural purity.

'ordinary people' – without them being accused of chauvinism and nationalism by a self-congratulating cosmopolitan elite.

I will argue that these points of critique on the one hand do have some relevance. On the other hand, the critique is deeply flawed. The relevance of the critique consists in the perspectives it raises for a wider discussion of the analytical perspectives of transgression concepts. I will come back to this below.

What is cultural transgression?

The point of departure for Friedman's critique is the assumption that all hybridity theorists share the same conception of hybridity, that is, as a blending of cultural elements[4]. However, even though some theorists use the term 'hybridity' to indicate a simple 'blend' of cultural elements – as exemplified by the quote from Nederveen Pietersee – a closer study of the field of hybridity theory reveals a much more complex image. A substantial number of hybridity theorists do not assert that 'pure' cultures are being undermined simply as a consequence of the blending of cultural elements. Rather, the argument is that the *idea* of pure cultures is undermined because the contingency of the construction of 'purity' becomes evident by virtue of hybridization[5]. In this case 'hybridization' consists both in conscious attempts at 'displacing' the idea of purity and in the fact that we all to an increasing extent are confronted with people who do not 'fit' into our conceptions of cultural purity. According to this argument hybridity follows from questioning (previously taken-for-granted) categories, rather than from blending (previously pure) cultures.

Consequently, the point of this kind of hybridity thinking is not that we all now start identifying ourselves in terms of hybridity and then live happily ever after[6]. Rather, the point is that the struggle over identity will hardly cease. As Friedman notes, people still insist on cultural purity and they erect boundaries on that basis. This simple statement of facts, however, does not in itself amount to an argument against hybridity theory in general[7]. Friedman's critique misses the mark because he does not distinguish between two versions of hybridity theory. On the one hand, we find the version which claims that – as a consequence of an increased exchange of cultural elements – we are all seeing ourselves

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[4] Or more precisely, the same conception of cultural transgression. The critique does not depend on the application of the term 'hybridity'.

[5] This is actually also the argument, which is put forward by Nederveen Pietersee. Friedman discusses the quote out of context.

[6] Friedman describes the postmodern cosmopolitans' naive dreams for the future like this: "the position we are all mixed, and we intellectuals are the representatives of the hybrid world, the oppositional, liminal, betwixt and between, category busters that shall lead the new 'revolution'. This 'we are the world' hybridity is part of the evolutionary identity of the cosmopolitan, one that moves from lower to higher levels of 'cultural' integration" (Friedman 1999:238).

[7] Hannerz, as could be expected, does not accept Friedman's stating of the empirical fact of people erecting boundaries "on every new street corner" as a valid basis for a critique of his own position. In a comment (although not explicitly directed to Friedman), he states: "It could hardly be that if people do not think of culture as pure, stable, and timeless, they should be allowed to veto those of our analytical, or at least proto-analytical, notions which suggest otherwise". (Hannerz 2000:15)

increasingly as hybrids. On the other hand, we find the version in which it is claimed that ideas of purity will constantly be displaced and disturbed. As Stuart Hall (1996) has pointed out, the fact that essentialism has become theoretically deconstructed does not automatically imply that it has also become displaced politically. Cultural globalization may lead to the rise of essentialist identity politics as well as to the formation of hybrid identities.

Furthermore, Friedman ignores that the central concept of 'transgression' carries different meanings in different theories. The difference can be illustrated by briefly considering the difference between the position of Hannerz and Hall, respectively.

Ulf Hannerz primarily locates the critical potential of transgression in the cosmopolitan who, in Hannerz' account, is characterized by the ability to rise above the local perspective, that is, the ability to engage in other cultures and at the same time have a reflexive distance vis-à-vis his own cultural background. According to Hannerz some groups are more likely to be cosmopolitans than others. The typical cosmopolitans are members of translational occupational cultures, such as diplomats or intellectuals whose "decontextualized knowledge can be quickly and shiftingly recontextualized in a series of different settings" (Hannerz 1996:109). Although migrants or refugees cross borders they are, according to Hannerz, not the most likely cosmopolitans. Because of their vulnerable situation they will more likely seek to avoid the cultural challenges, which are implicated in moving to a new place.

In addition to Hannerz, Friedman includes various other theorists in his critique of the cosmopolitan, post-modern elite. Among these is Stuart Hall. In Hall's writings, however, the possibility of occupying a transgressive position vis-à-vis conventional cultural categories is first and foremost occupied by the very migrants and refugees, whose position according to Hannerz is too vulnerable for them to be able to form the basis of a cosmopolitan outlook. Hall writes:

> You have to be familiar enough with it [the centre] to know how to move in it. But you have to be sufficiently outside it so you can examine it and critically interrogate it. And it is this double move or, what I think one writer after another have called, the double consciousness of the exile, of the migrant, of the stranger who moves to another place, who has this double way of seeing it, from the inside and the outside. (Hall in Hall and Sakai 1998:363-4).

Hence, Hall – like Hannerz – can be said to equip transgression with a form of potentially special insight. The possibility of occupying this position is, however, possessed by completely different groups of people than the ones, which Hannerz grants prominence. And the basis of the critical potential is very different from Hannerz' approach. The antipole of the 'double consciousness', which Hall mentions, is not inhabited by the 'locals', that is, the ones who stay in one place and do not challenge their own cultural horizon. Rather, the antipole is the very imperial centre: It is England (or, in concordance with an expansion of the argument which Hall often makes: the West), which according to its self-image possesses exactly the global outlook that makes the insight into other cultures possible. Hall focuses on how the penetration of the centre by marginalized groups undermines this naturalized dominant position of the centre.

> The displacement of the 'centred' discourses of the West entails putting in question its universalist character and its transcendental claims to speak for everyone, while being itself everywhere and nowhere. (Hall 1996:446).

Consequently, we are dealing with a substantial shift in perspective when compared to Hannerz' notion of the cosmopolitan. The belief in the critical potential of hybridity, which Friedman criticizes, does not have the same form and foundation in the two theories and it can therefore not be criticized on the same grounds.

Stuart Hall – along with other theorists on cultural transgression, such as Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy - writes from a position, which is inspired partly by poststructuralist theory. This theoretical point of view implies that identity in general is conceptualized as being constituted through – rather than being simply an expression of – difference[8]. As a consequence of this distinction, the hybrid position is understood primarily in terms of 'displacement', rather than in terms of 'blending'. This implies that the hybrid position is invested with a critical capacity to undermine dominant formations by insisting on the presence of otherness within the dominant centre: If one insists on being both black and British, it involves problematizing an understanding of Britishness as an essentially white identity, just as insisting on being a Danish Muslim undermines the construction of 'pure' Danishness as something essentially connected to the Christian faith[9].

Hence, Hall invests the hybrid position with a critical capacity. This does not imply, however, that people in hybrid positions, such as migrants and refugees, take over the central, universalist, transcendental position, which the West, according to Hall, has successfully claimed for itself. Hall's contention is, on the contrary, that no enunciative position is neutral and universal. We all speak "from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture" (Hall 1996:447). The potentially critical capacity does not lie in a position, which is raised *above* the local and the specific, as it does in the case of Hannerz' discussion of the cosmopolitan and as it does in the case of the general image of the post-modern cosmopolitan, which Friedman constructs and subsequently criticizes. According to Hall, the potential for criticism lies in the specific marginal position's potential for displacing the centred perspective and thereby undermining the taking-for-grantedness of the perspective of the centre.

Hence, when talking about hybridity theory and transgression concepts we must distinguish between at least two forms. Friedman only discusses one of them, that is, transgression as the 'mixture' or 'blending' of cultural forms. As Friedman correctly indicates, this idea implies a notion of pre-constituted, bounded cultures. The other way of talking about transgression, which in my discussion is represented primarily by Hall is, however, not about 'mixture' but about 'displacement'. Furthermore, what is being 'displaced', is not

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[8] This of course rests on Derrida's distinction between 'difference' and 'differance'. For a brief discussion of how and to what extent Hall draws on this distinction, see Hall 1991.
[9] On being black and British, see Hall 1991 and Gilroy 1987.

'cultures' but naturalized categories. Therefore the elements which disturb and displace the categories, should not be conceptualized as the 'culturally different' but as the 'excluded'.

Hybridity and power

Ien Ang turns a critical gaze towards certain applications of the concept of hybridity as she tells the story of Ian Anderson, "a Tasmanian Aboriginal Descendant of Truganini" (Ang 2001:195). She describes Anderson as one of the 'living legacies' of the enforced miscegenation, a strategy which in Australia has been used to dispose of the indigenous population and create a white Australia[10]. From the beginning of the 1970s 'multiculturalism' has replaced 'whiteness' as the official Australian discourse on national identity. This implies that national identity is presented as inclusive rather than exclusive, and it has given occasion for a political reaction to the defence of a white Australia. From this perspective one may interpret 'hybridity' as a possible positive position for the children of 'mixed' connections between whites and aborigines: as a positive valorisation of the very miscegenation that used to be seen – from the point of view of celebrating whiteness - either as a (threatening) 'contamination' of whiteness or as a (welcome) dilution of aboriginal blood. The spread of discourses on hybridity and multiculturalism may be interpreted as a positive consequence of the displacement of the exclusive 'whiteness'- discourse, which used to dominate narratives of Australian national identity. Anderson, however, does not embrace this positive interpretation. To Anderson, accepting a categorization as 'hybrid' implies accepting a reduction of indigenous history to a history of cultural and historical loss. Therefore, he chooses to emphasize the importance of confirming his identity as an indigenous Australian. Ang sums up the story as follows:

> It is clear then, that for Anderson; hybridity does not stand for happy fusion but for 'racial' disappearance, for the fatal completeness of genocide and the impossibility of Aboriginal survival. (Ang 2001:196).

Thus, not everybody who occupies a 'marginal' position perceives hybridity as a positive alternative to the idea of cultural purity. Applying alternative concepts does not automatically solve political problems of marginalization and oppression. Celebrating hybridity can be potentially oppressing, as can celebrating purity.

> The problem is (…) that the very equation of hybridity with harmonious fusion or synthesis – which we may characterize as 'liberal hybridism', simplifies matters significantly and produces power effects of its own, which reveal some of the problems with an uncritical use of the idea of hybridity. (Ang 2001:195)

This example illustrates that transgression concepts do sometimes work in favour of hiding unequal power relations, rather than undermining or criticizing them. There are therefore

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[10] Ang notes that Truganini was "the last Tasmanian aborigine" according to white Australian mythology. Her death in 1876 therefore occupies a central place in the understanding of the aborigines as a people who were doomed to extinction (And 2001:210, note 1).

plenty of good reasons for critically scrutinizing this theoretical and empirical field rather than simply implying that transgression concepts have some kind of inherently critical function. They can be applied in favour of various interests just as it is the case of the idea of purity.

Therefore, it is relevant – as Friedman does - to criticize Hannerz' discussion of cosmopolitanism for working in favour of elevating his own position to a point of privileged insight and that Hannerz therefore politicizes without recognizing that he is entering a political discussion. Furthermore, part of the field of cultural studies is open for a critique of romanticizing the hybrid position. Nevertheless a huge part of the critique which someone like Friedman presents, misses the mark if hybridity is understood in terms of position or in terms of a deconstruction of fixed identities and naturalized categories, rather than as a question of the mixing of substances.

Friedman does, however, introduce some interesting perspectives through his critique. He argues that hybridity only makes sense as a self-definition. It is not something that you can define in others, since cultural elements have always been mixed and therefore, we are all in some sense hybrid and have always been. This is, on the one hand, a very simplistic argument, and its limits can be illustrated by returning to the question of the Danish Muslims: I will suggest that the Muslim who insists on being 'purely' Danish probably does more in terms of hybridizing Danishness than the person who claims to be a 'hybrid' between a Muslim and a Dane. And the reason for this is that as long as Islam is articulated as something *other* than Danishness, it does not threaten the idea of cultural purity. If you insist, on the other hand, that Islam can be an *integral part* of Danishness, then we really have a case of contamination going on, if we adopt the point of view of a defence of purity. So, insisting on purity can in effect be hybridizing indeed, if the self-definition in question combines differences which are generally held to insurmountable.

Hence, the question of hybridity cannot be reduced to a question of self-identity. However, through his critique Friedman does introduce an important agenda, because what he does, in effect, is that he asks the question of who has the right to define what is pure and what is impure (that is, mixed or hybrid). This means that he focuses on the political perspectives of articulations of hybridity and purity and by doing this, he indicates an important research agenda. He does not, however, show an interest in exploring the theoretical and analytical perspectives of the agenda that he introduces. His own agenda appears to be predominantly polemical.

Friedman defines his own position in terms of a critique of power, and so do many of the hybridity theorists which he criticizes. They all share a self-definition of adopting a 'critical' stance towards power, although they disagree completely when it comes to pointing out who has the power and what power consist of. In Friedman's case, the power which is criticized is in the possession of the cosmopolitan elite, while it for Hall is a question of the dominant discourse of the centre. I find Hall's position much more eye-opening and interesting than Friedman's – or Hannerz' for that matter – but my argument here is a different one. I will

argue, that the perspectives in focusing on transgression concepts not only consist in directing attention towards the naturalizations of relations of power which discourses of *purity* imply, such as Hall argues. They also direct attention to the very complex struggles over power, identity and legitimate speech positions which are involved in discourses of *transgression* – or 'impurity'. So, my argument is that there is power involved in discourses of transgression just as there is power involved in discourses of purity. And this is why the discussion that Friedman introduces, is welcome.

One way of clarifying my argument is to articulate it as a question of studying the power of definition in relation to the distribution of the pure and the impure, and as a question of studying how value is ascribed to purity and impurity, respectively. The question is, how 'hybridity' or 'impurity' or 'transgressions' are made the object of knowledge, by whom and with which kinds of consequences. When hybridity appears as the object of knowledge in certain ways and in certain contexts, then it establishes certain positions and identities and relations for people. Analyzing articulations of hybridity and purity means analyzing how transgression is articulated – e.g. how and if transgression is articulated as a reference to 'inherent' traits which can be deemed positive or negative; and it means analyzing who has the power to define oneself or others as hybrid or 'impure', in which contexts and articulated with which other elements; and which conventional understandings of cultural difference organize the distribution of purity and impurity.

Therefore an analytical perspective on hybridity can imply focusing on how cultural classifications establish cultural categories in ways, which imply that certain combinations of cultural forms appear as surprising and/or disturbing – and therefore as relevant objects for scholarly studies (such as Moroccan girls practising Thai-boxing in Amsterdam), while other combinations of cultural forms appear to be natural and self-evident (such as the combination of Danishness and Christianity) – or at least they appear possible and comprehensible although maybe slightly odd. This might shed light on how come that when you talk about hybridity within Danish popular music, everybody will immediately think of *Outlandish*, and not *Jodle Birge*. *Jodle Birge's* combination of the Danish pop-tradition with Tyrolean pants, yodelling and country music is somehow not as 'transgressive' as is 'Danish' hip hop in Arabic, English and Spanish. *Outlandish* represents the hybridization of culture and the undermining of purity; *Jodle Birge* represents Danish traditionalism no matter how 'hybrid' his music can be proving to be. The political implications, which often implicitly or explicitly accompany the evaluations of the various kinds of music are closely related to conceptualizations of hybridity and purity which ties them to conceptualizations and evaluations of cultural 'distance'.

An analytical perspective on hybridity implies focusing on how such cultural classifications take place in a field which is marked by unequal relations of power and how they in turn have power effects. Thus part of the struggle over hybridity and purity concerns the question who can occupy the legitimate speech position when it comes to defining and distributing purity and impurity.

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Director: Professor dr. phil. Ulf Hedetoft

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