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- . *Last Tales*. New York: Random House, 1957.
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# Europeanization and Cultural Identity

## Two Worlds of Eco-capitalism

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### INTRODUCTION

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION scholars have explored the extent to which states and societies in a region defined as "Europe" align policies and redefine institutions to conform to a collective identity. This process, which is referred to by scholars such as Johan P. Olsen as "Europeanization," has in and of itself generated conflicts between separately defined sub-regions within Europe.<sup>1</sup> This article analyzes the material and cultural motivations underlying Scandinavian resistance to European-level governance relying on insights from recent field work in Norway and Iceland.

As I have argued elsewhere, the effects of Europeanization reach deeply into the domestic political economies of both European Union (EU) member-states and those states that have decided against joining the EU, such as Norway and Iceland.<sup>2</sup> By signing the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement, Norway and Iceland are legally bound to conform to decisions made in Brussels yet are not full participants in the political process of regional governance. For states which have such distinctive policies and institutions, the EU challenges basic principles of social organization, notions of economic sovereignty and, as this article will demonstrate, traditions of natural resource management.

<sup>1</sup> Johan P. Olsen is the leader of a team of international research scholars at ARENA (Advanced Research on the Europeanization of the Nation-State), University of Oslo, Norway.

<sup>2</sup> See Christine Ingebritsen, *The Nordic States and European Unity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1998, 2000).

Recent comparative studies of European integration have shown how the Scandinavian way is increasingly contested by Europeanization. As Paulette Kurzer has argued, the EU has mandated a reform in state alcohol monopolies, which represents a major change in a social institution among citizens self-defined as heavy drinkers.<sup>3</sup> In northern Scandinavia, state alcohol control includes high levels of taxation, centralized distribution and sales, and social support for those dependent on alcohol. Market solutions are slowly being introduced, yet these contradict the interventionist philosophy of protecting the citizen and community from excessive drinking. In a separate study, Jonathon Moses and Ton Notermans identify the ways in which Scandinavian central bankers have adjusted national economies to EURO-requirements.<sup>4</sup> Economic convergence has corresponded to higher levels of unemployment in northern Europe with only the Norwegians avoiding the double-digit unemployment typical of continental Europe.

Another contested arena of regional politics that has yet to be systematically explored shares the characteristics of social and economic institutions (the absence of a "good fit" between the EU and Scandinavia) yet is distinct from these other issue-areas because convergence is neither underway nor likely in the foreseeable future. This conflict is over the regulation of the commons and the political legitimacy of natural resource extraction, and it is likely to be one of the most contentious issues in this new millennium. Within Europe, there are two opposing views of how the environment should be governed and whether particularly resources should be exploited. I refer to these paradigms as "two worlds of eco-capitalism."<sup>5</sup> In contrast to other issue-areas, this conflict has yet to be reconciled by political authorities.

Relying on recent insights from the international relations literature and the role of norms, this article begins with a discussion of how the opponents in this eco-conflict frame the issues. What are the fundamental differences between Continental and Nordic norms

<sup>3</sup> Paulette Kurzer, "Market Integration and the Mobility of People: Europeanization of Values and Beliefs," in *Globalization and the European Political Economy*. Ed. Steven Weber. (NY: Columbia UP, 2001), pp. 29-64.

<sup>4</sup> See Robert Geyer, Christine Ingebritsen and Jonathon Moses, eds. *Globalization, Europeanization and the End of Scandinavian Social Democracy?* (Houndmills, UK: MacMillan, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> The term borrows from Gosta Esping-Andersen's "three worlds of welfare capitalism" outlined in *Politics Against Markets* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1985).

of environmental management? The discussion provides examples of two issue-areas where no agreement has been reached and the cultural conflict endures. The concluding section discusses the broader relevance of these findings for other issue-areas, and for our understanding of the European integration process.

## TWO WORLDS OF ECO-CAPITALISM

Continental Europe has effectively overcome traditional conflict by increasing economic interdependence and by formalizing political cooperation sector by sector. However, Europe's founding fathers, the so-called "men behind the decisions,"<sup>6</sup> did not anticipate the environmental movements of the decades to follow or the ways in which scarce natural resources have become contested within Europe.

Since the Stockholm Conference on the Environment held in 1972, the whale has become symbolic of the separation of man from nature. The prediction that humans will exploit common resources beyond carrying capacity is represented by the age of commercial whaling. Technological improvements in whale hunting permitted larger and larger catches, and industrial whalers nearly exhausted particular species of whales in the world's oceans. In order to prevent the errors of the past, environmentalists have taken up the cause of protecting particular mammals (especially the so-called "charismatic megafauna," elephants and whales) with a missionary zeal. Eco-warriors such as Paul Watson and members of Sea Shepherd along with Greenpeace activists have elevated international attention to the plight of whales and contributed to a widespread view that whale hunting is unethical. Adopting a whale, viewing whales in their natural habitat, and returning whales held in captivity to their natural surroundings represent cultural changes in the relationship between man and nature. Global opposition to whale hunting also plays a critical role in relations between states because more citizens have become politically mobilized to "save whales" and national governments are encouraged to punish those engaged in whale hunting.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See Glenda Rosenthal, *The Men Behind the Decisions* (Lexington: DC Heath, 1975).

<sup>7</sup> Recent outrage over Japanese whale hunting and a call for sanctions by the US government, coupled with the ads placed by the World Wildlife Fund condemning Norwegian commercial whaling are examples of a new dimension in global eco-politics.

The majority of European Union states condemn whaling and have established a common agreement to manage the environment collectively because it is a transborder issue. Only by working together, it is argued, will European states be able to overcome resource management conflicts. The regional solution is intended to replace individual (less efficient) national solutions, and this has been extended to the resources of the sea. However, in Europe's northern corner, the two providers of Europe's vital marine resources (Norway and Iceland) are unwilling to accept European-wide norms of environmental governance.

Thus, the Europeanization process must reconcile fundamental differences in collectively held attitudes about the relationship between man and nature. As seen from Europe's northern periphery, pooled sovereignty has undesirable spill-over effects. Ultimately, European judicial authorities may be called upon to resolve conflicts over appropriate environmental management in an area of relatively new competence to the court. At stake are resources vital to two national economies, and the rest of Europe.

Recent international relations theorizing offers new possibilities for understanding environmental conflict by examining how actors define their interests differently. Norms, defined as "collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors within a given identity,"<sup>8</sup> are contested within Europe between an urban, industrialized group of citizens in the core and a rural, late-developing, resource-dependent group of citizens in the periphery. While this analysis focuses on "states" as the appropriate boundaries, this core-periphery distinction may also be found within a given state, as in the case of Denmark. Greenpeace Denmark finds its support in the core, while the Faroese and Greenlanders endorse traditional lifestyles and reject preservationist norms. The eco-conflict between these opposing groups over the question of the political legitimacy of whaling is highly charged, as is a second, yet unresolved conflict pertaining to fishery management.

<sup>8</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996): 5.

## PROTECTING THE WHALE, OR PROTECTING THE WHALER?

For citizens residing in the European core, whales are considered intelligent creatures and should be protected according to principles of international law. Although the Basques, Dutch, Germans, and British were once world leaders in whale hunting, these societies no longer defend this practice, nor do they hang on to past images of seafaring glory. Collectively, the member-states of the European Union maintain a "no whaling" position. When Portugal applied to join the European Union, the government was required to abandon the practice of whaling, and Norway and Iceland would be expected to do the same should they eventually join. Public opinion against whaling is strongest in the United Kingdom and Germany, yet throughout the European Union (including Sweden and Finland), a majority of citizens oppose whaling. From a Continental perspective, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), an organization founded to oversee global whaling, is "correct" in endorsing a ban on commercial whaling. And as a signatory of the CITES treaty (an international agreement to ban trade in endangered species), the European Union is an important actor in determining which species are considered endangered. Many whale species, including those in northern waters such as the minke whale, are currently listed as endangered. The "no civilized people kill whales" norm is collectively shared among those who no longer depend on natural resources for their survival.

For citizens residing in western Scandinavia, whales are no different from other natural resources. Originally called *lvalfisk* [whale fish], these creatures are respected in the folklore, sagas, and Nordic legends not only for their intelligence and beauty, but as a source of wealth and sustenance. In an image from the sagas (see figure 1), an Icelander "flenses" (a Norwegian word, *å flense*, meaning "to clean") a whale. According to Icelandic laws, the whale was common property, and the meat was shared with the community. In Norway, contemporary images celebrate the glory days of Norwegian whaling (1880s-early 1900s), which occurred just as the state became independent from neighboring Sweden. A prominent sculptor, Knut Steen, portrays the daring whaler in a monument located in Sandefjord, once a major whaling center south of Oslo.



Figure 1. Image of Icelandic whaling from the 13th century Icelandic code of law. (Reprinted from "To Icelanders, Whales Were a Godsend," Johann Sigurjonsson, *Oceanus*, V. 32, #1, Spring 1989, p. 29. Used by permission.)

Norwegians and Icelanders define themselves as seafarers and adamantly defend the rights of whalers to "harvest" whales from the surrounding seas. The representatives from these societies maintain that they are respecting national tradition, and they object to the preservationist orientation of the International Whaling Commission. Once founded by whaling states to protect the industry, the organization's membership is now dominated by a strong anti-whaling majority. In protest of the unscientific basis of IWC decision-making, Norway decided to resume whaling in 1993 and has permitted limited minke whale hunts according to national regulations. Iceland, on the other hand, has curtailed its commercial whaling and has officially resigned from the IWC. As stated in the foreign ministry's document, "Iceland's Position on Whaling:"

Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic, bordering the Arctic Circle. The 280 thousand inhabitants of Iceland are overwhelmingly dependent on harvesting the living resources of the sea.... Under international law coastal states have the right to utilise the living marine resources which occur in their exclusive economic zones. The position of Iceland has always been that these resources should be utilised and, in line with this the Althing, the legislative assembly of Iceland, passed a resolution in 1999 stating that whaling should resume as soon as possible.<sup>9</sup>

According to reliable sources in Iceland, an occasional whale is trapped inside a net and brought to shore for local consumption. However, the whaling fleet owned by Icelandic whaler Kristian Loftsson remains inactive, and there are no immediate plans to resume whale hunting. As important to Icelandic policy as the criticism from the international community and its European partners is the threat of trade sanctions from the United States. Under the US Pelly Amendment, countries that engage in whaling or trade whale products may face trade sanctions against products exported to the United States. Thus far, this has not occurred, yet Icelandic dependence on fisheries and the presence of a NATO base at Keflavik have complicated the issue. Although international pressure on Iceland has affected the number of whales caught off the coast of Iceland, the illegitimacy of whaling abroad has not changed domestic norms.

<sup>9</sup> Icelandic Foreign Ministry, "Iceland's Position on Whaling," Reykjavik, January 2000, p. 1.

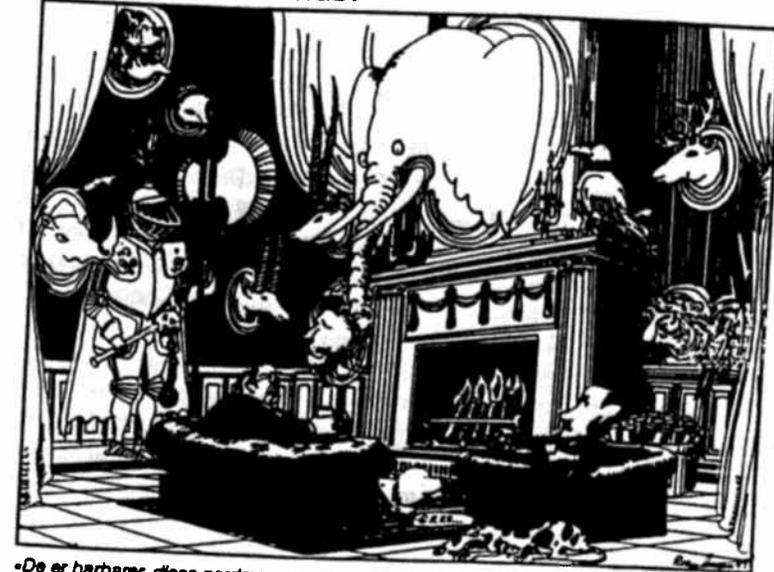
Although Norwegians are viewed by some as breaking the law, the IWC permits its members to file a formal reservation, and the Norwegian government has done so in accordance with international law. For Norwegians, responsible environmental management begins at home. A strict national quota and licensing system allow the government to oversee the annual whale hunt. In the 2000 season (which began in May and ended in October), the government permitted 655 whales to be caught. The licenses were granted to a group of small, coastal fisherman in contrast to the large ocean whalers of a previous era of whale hunting. For these fishermen, the whale hunt accounts for thirty percent of their annual income as well as providing food for their families. There is no readily available alternative to this economic activity in the remote Lofoten Island region of northern Norway, an area that has always depended on marine resources. When Greenpeace activists first appeared along the Norwegian coast, these fishermen were puzzled and angered. As one whaler put it, "why should people who don't even know me object to how I make a living up here in Norway?"<sup>10</sup>

It should be pointed out, however, that not just the whalers in these societies endorse whaling. There is no organized opposition to whaling in either Iceland or Norway, only a few members of the local branches of Greenpeace. The collective experience of economic hardship has had consequences for a collective sense of identity. Many Icelanders and Norwegians consumed a "poor man's steak" following the Second World War, when whale meat became accepted as part of their national culinary tradition. And recipes for preparing hvalkjøtt (whale meat) are easy to come by in both societies to the present day. A revival of a mid-winter feast in Iceland has increased the demand for whale meat as a kind of nostalgic delicacy. Even those who are not engaged in hunting whales support the tradition and strongly object to what they see as international interference in domestic politics. As suggested by the cartoon depicting "Brits against whale hunting," the opposition to whaling is hypocritical, since other types of hunting are permitted (see figure 2).

As one of the wealthiest European nations, why do Norwegians insist on whaling, particularly when the international community so actively opposes such activity? According to Mariette Korsrud,

<sup>10</sup> Interviews conducted in the Lofoten Islands, northern Norway, May 2000 with three members of the small coastal whaling fleet preparing to begin the seasonal whale hunt.

### BRITER MOT HVALFANGST



«De er barbarer, disse nordmennene».

Roar Hagen/Verdens Gang

Figure 2. "They are such barbarians, these Norwegians." (Reprinted from Ivar Windheim, "Hvalfangst," *Hvor hender det?*, #1, August 23, 1993, p. 1. Used by permission.)

president of the Nordland Fishermen's wives organization and a political activist, "the issue is not whether Norway can afford or not afford to whale, it is about the right to harvest [our own] natural resources."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, in the issue-area of whaling, there are irreconcilable cultural differences between the norms of European-wide governance and the norms of Nordic peoples who are self-defined as seafarers and responsible resource managers.

### POOLED RESOURCES OR NATIONAL MANAGEMENT SCHEMES?

A second area where Europeans disagree over how to manage the environment is with regard to the conflict between the Continent

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Mariette Korsrud, Lofoten Islands, Norway, May 2000.

and the Nordics over fishing policy. Norway and Iceland are the largest providers of fish and fish products to the European continent. Domestically, fisheries are of vital importance to each economy, particularly in Iceland. Norwegians have determined that their next leading export sector (after the oil and gas has been depleted) will be fisheries, because of abundant resources and technological improvements in aquaculture. Fisheries are best protected relying on national management schemes according to the views of both the Norwegian and Icelandic governments. These resources, it is argued, are too vital to be shared, and the management system developed by Norway and Iceland is portrayed as far superior to a Continental or Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).<sup>12</sup>

From a Continental perspective, fisheries should be managed collectively. These are common resources and a "sustainable catch" should be determined for each species at the regional level. Spain and Portugal have been active supporters of opening up Norwegian and Icelandic fishing grounds to joint exploitation against strong opposition from fisheries in both these countries.

According to Nordic fishermen, they are closer to nature than those residing in more urbanized EU member-states. As Niels Einarsson argues,

fishers often refer to their occupation as a natural way of life: they are hunters and an integral part of the ecosystem...fishers like to juxtapose what they see as a natural way of living with the lives of "city dwellers" who, they claim, are becoming ever more removed from nature, living in crime ridden, inhumane surroundings and buying all their products from the supermarket.<sup>13</sup>

Norwegian and Icelandic preferences for independence from a regional fishing regime have become more challenging as European cooperation has deepened. The Treaty of Rome included cooperation in fisheries in the original text, but the conditions for cooperation were not formally spelled out until the accession of Spain and Portugal, two important fishery-dependent states. A European-wide cooperation agreement in

<sup>12</sup> According to interviews conducted in Norway and Iceland, the EU is less restrictive regarding catch sizes and has not adopted a "discard ban," thereby allowing fish to be thrown back and encouraging overfishing.

<sup>13</sup> Niels Einarsson, "A Sea of Images: Fishers, Whalers, and Environmentalists," in Gisli Pálsson and E. Paul Durrenberger (eds.), *Images of Contemporary Iceland: Everyday Lives and Global Contexts* (Iowa City: U Iowa P, 1996), pp. 54-5.

fisheries was signed in 1983 known as the Common Fisheries Policy or "Blue Europe." This agreement established a common regulatory framework for the size of catches, methods of fishing, and trade between states.<sup>14</sup> The Common Fisheries Policy also includes provisions for compensation to fisherman as a consequence of reductions in total allowable catches (TACs), just as the "Green Europe" or Common Agricultural Policy provides support to farmers. And as is typical of the history of European integration, a more limited arrangement was accepted by EFTA (European Free Trade Area) states a few years later. Norway and Iceland agreed to liberalize trade in fish and fish products with EU member-states in 1989. Some species of fish are monitored in cooperation with the EU, however both governments maintain national fishing regimes with distinctive management principles.

According to an Icelandic expert, the Continental fishing regime has permitted overfishing and has endangered the levels of particular fish stocks. The strict quota and licensing system adopted by the Icelandic government, on the other hand, has been much more stringent and has achieved the aims of conserving fish stocks. And as one Norwegian researcher noted, EU representatives have visited Norway to learn how the government has implemented a conservationist regime in its coastal waters.

In the spring 2000 meeting of CITES, a proposal was put forward to list cod as an endangered species thereby forbidding trade between states in this fishery. Although the proposal did not receive adequate support, the fish-dependent societies of Norway and Iceland fear the day when fish become protected under a global regime and are elevated to the same status as whales.<sup>15</sup>

With regard to the two issues, the norms of the Continent and the norms of two Scandinavian states show no signs of convergence. The more the EU criticizes its northern neighbors for continuing to hunt whales, the more principled these peoples become in defending the practice. And the subordination of resource management to a regional level appears unlikely, since representatives from Norway and Iceland contend that their policies are more effective than they would be with European cooperation. At stake are material interests, as well as collective identities.

<sup>14</sup> David Lewis, *The Road to Europe* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 72.

<sup>15</sup> Discussion with Rune Frovik, High North Alliance, Reine, Norway, May 2000.

## FRAMING THE CONFLICT: CORE VS. PERIPHERY

The unresolved conflict in contemporary Europe is cultural, and it engages how (and if) resources should be used. In the relationship between man and nature, Europeans disagree over whether whaling is a legitimate activity and have yet to resolve which level of governance is appropriate to manage the commons effectively. This eco-conflict is outlined in figure 3 below:

		Marine-dependent Nordics		Other Europeans	
		Man	Nature	Man	Nature
Rights/Whales		☹			☹
		National	Regional	National	Regional
Governance		☹			☹

Figure 3. Two Worlds of Eco-Capitalism. (Developed in consultation with Ron Jepperson, Thomas Risse and Tanja Boerzel, European Union Institute, Florence, Italy, May 11, 2000.)

The Norwegians and Icelanders collectively endorse the rights of fishermen to extract the resources of the sea. However, in the European core, a process of transferring rights from man to nature and from nation to region is well underway—and is increasingly requiring the periphery to defend its practices. Each side of this conflict claims legitimacy, and there is no conceivable way of reconciling these competing positions.

## CONCLUSION

The study of European integration has yet to engage the cultural consequences of embedding diverse national systems under one regional authority. For particular peoples, such as the Norwegians and Icelanders (along with the Greenlanders and Faroe Islanders), the resources which have made survival and prosperity possible are jeopardized by compliance with European-wide rules. Nor do these

peoples accept that outsiders should be the ones to oversee how resources are governed.

If and when the Norwegians and Icelanders reconsider the pursuit of European Union membership, the practice of whaling and the retention of national fishery management systems will be difficult, if not impossible to maintain. Although this may represent a victory for those who wish to end whale hunting, the consequences for Europe's most vital fishing area may be more detrimental—if, in fact, the Common Fisheries Policy proves to be a less restrictive regime, as the Norwegians and Icelanders have maintained.

Thus far, too little scholarly attention has been devoted to examining the consequences of European integration which engage deeply held views about what kinds of behavior are legitimate or illegitimate in our modern, global society. Scholars should be encouraged to critically examine what kind of society the European Union is creating and the trade-offs for those participants in this process that do not conform to the ways of the strong.

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### INTERVIEWS (ICELAND AND NORWAY, WINTER AND SPRING 2000)

- Bjørn Andersen, Norwegian whaler, Lofoten Islands.
- Bjørn Hugo Bendiksen, Vice-Chairman, Norwegian Whaler's Union.
- Rune Frovik, Executive Director, High North Alliance, Reine.
- Alf Haakon Hoel, Norwegian political scientist and whaling policy expert.
- Jo Høyer, Information Director, The Institute of Marine Research, Bergen, Norway.
- Mariette Korsrud, Norwegian Political Activist, Lofoten Islands.
- Kristian Loftsson, Icelandic Whaling Company President, Iceland.
- Janne Haaland Matlary, Norwegian State Secretary, Oslo, Norway.
- Johan Sigurjónsson, Executive Director, Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Reykjavik, Iceland.
- Lars Svásand, Norwegian political scientist, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.
- Dag Sveen, Art Historian, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.
- Baldur Thorhallsson, Icelandic political scientist and EU expert.
- Oran Young, Center for Advanced Research, Oslo, Norway.

## Reviews

- Tone Selboe. *Kunst og erfaring: En studie i Karen Blixens forfatterskap*. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1996. Pp. 181.

Karen Blixen's texts offer a rich field of inquiry for scholars interested in questions of interpretation. Tone Selboe's dissertation rises to this challenge. As she herself notes in her introduction, her study "combines a hermeneutic perspective with a thematic and rhetorical reading," and its aim is to "investigate which meaning is created in the text and how it is created." Thus she applies a variety of critical approaches—ranging from Hans-Georg Gadamer through Walter Benjamin to Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida—to selected texts by the Danish writer. Selboe chose these texts, she tells us, because they interested her or because they have been relatively neglected by literary criticism.

Selboe's point of departure is the provocative "Sorg-Agre" [Sorrow-acre]. Although in some respects, this tale seems close to oral tradition, Selboe argues that it creates the illusion of a folktale, but has far more in common with the novel as Walter Benjamin characterized it in opposition to storytelling in his essay, "The Storyteller." For Selboe, Blixen's tale mediates between oral and written traditions. The inscription on the stone raised to commemorate Anne-Marie's deed suggests many different stories. Thus the stone—and the tale as a whole—bring into oscillation a set of apparent oppositions: story and novel, folktale and *Bildungsroman*, understanding and explanation, and even tragedy and comedy.

In contrast, Selboe's interpretation of *Den afrikanske Farm* or *Out of Africa* emphasizes the role of loss in the creation of a work of art. "Africa represents in Blixens account the magical reality that has to be lost—to appear as alien—so that the work of art can be born" (67). The three tales "Syndfloden over Norderney" ["Deluge at Norderney"], "Drømmerne" ["The Dreamers"], and "Det ubeskrivne Blad" ["The Blank Page"] illustrate a poetics based on theatricality and the mask.