



The BIPOC agenda at KHiO suggests that there are aspects of Norway's history as marginal and dominated country—indeed, a colony—that may deserve some attention. 50 years of oil-wealth has obliterated the colonial awareness. But a quirkiness of the political culture indicates the contrary.

Norway's sense of being a *different country* dates back to 1972, when it voted against membership in the EU. This was one year after the oil-finds that changed the country. The time when Picasso/Nesjar finished the *fishermen facade* of Erlin Viksjø's Y-block, with concrete armed with *river-stones*.

As the building is presently being demolished a new chapter of what one could call Norway's *muffled elites* has begun. Structurally, artists—whether Norwegian, or working here—are part of this group. This is *not* new. When Picasso came to work on the project, he took the name Pablo Pedersen.



The present flyer explores whether/how *passing* insights—such that emerge under the makeshift conditions of *liminality*—can/should *somehow* be contained. And what the failure to do so entails in terms of *alienation*: mainly the alienation of *work*, according to one of the most creative ideas of Marxism.

Beyond the turn to *discourse*-production in the art field, as an obvious case in point, the question of how much knowledge of local language, culture and history is needed to make statements of any consequence—or, weight—is entangled with the said alienation of work, consciousness and values.

The question of linguistic and cultural knowledge is itself entangled with colonial histories, even in Europe. It is still improbable that residencies in France and Germany—both historical and colonial powers—will be very successful without a knowledge of local language, culture and history.

In post-colonial countries like Norway, however, this is *possible*. Like any country with a post-colonial history in which the language of the *hegemons* is local currency. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Norway, for instance, academics and artists would publish in German and French: i.e., publications issued from *Oslo*.

On local terms, the educated elite was—for this and other reasons—a *muffled* group. And after 400 years of Danish dominion, which can be compared to the 400 years of Turkish dominion in Greece, Norway was *de facto* a colony. The 19<sup>th</sup> century became one of gradual emancipation.

It started with the constitution of 1814—inspired by the French Revolution in 1789—and legitimately claimed with the emancipation from the Swedish protectorate (a child of the Napoleonic wars) in 1905. The model became Western after WWII (1945) but from a vantage point of Northern *marginality*.

Present day Norway—what young people and new residents have seen—is the child of the *oil-age*: which started with the findings in 1971. In other words, it has a 50 years history. The sense that people here sense that Norway is a *different country*, however, has roots in the colonial history.

My knowledge of this should be *situated* and *positioned* (Haraway). If your family in Norway has no *farmers/fishermen* (nor merchants)—as is my case—the chances are that their forebears have been civil servants, engineers or involved in mining (as a forerunner of the country's weak industrialisation).

That is, often landowning families that would be part of the governing elite, whether they were involved in *politics* or the *corporate* sector. Their sense of legitimacy would incorporate *authority* and *ethics*. Their sense of *solidarity* would typically be *philanthropic* within the framework of the *liberal* nation.

Eventually, these milieus would eventually form an *amalgam* with social democracy. A good number of them embracing socialism while remaining conscious of their wealth and background. The point being that they are virtually *invisible*, and you have to be a deep part of this society to spot it.