Rethinking Neoliberalism for the Nordics

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This contribution is less a diagnosis of Nordic countries and more a perspective from a double outside. First, it seeks to define series of questions that can be put to the development of Nordic countries from different conceptual or theoretical points of view on neoliberalism; secondly, it offers the perspective of an outsider living and working in Denmark for a number of years. Key theoretical paradigms include viewing neoliberalism as an “art of government” (governmentality studies), a “thought collective” (history of ideas) and as a form of “path dependency” (political economy, urban geography, and so forth). A further viewpoint concerns common religious background of such countries and its relation to both Nordic social democracy and its current critique (economic theology). Finally, there is the consideration of the effects of neoliberalism and its linkages to the rise of right-wing populist parties and movements in these countries and attitudes and practices toward immigrants, refugees and other non-citizen residents.