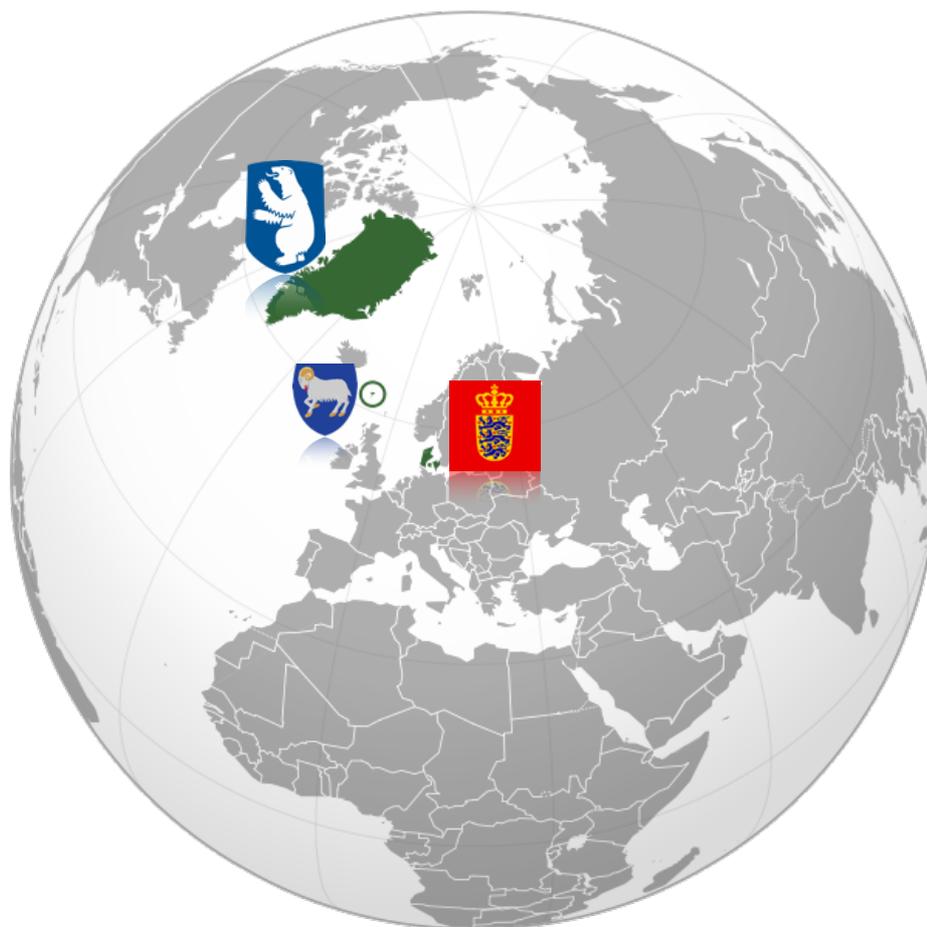


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# Rethinking the Realm

How an independent Greenlandic foreign policy may secure the future of the Realm.

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# Contents

RESUMÉ (in Danish)	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1 Motivation and relevance	5
1.2 Understanding the thesis	5
1.2.1 Actors	6
1.3 Hypothesis	6
2. Method	6
2.1 Research design	6
2.2 Theory	8
2.3 Analysis	8
2.4 Perspective	8
2.5 Scope of the thesis	8
3. Theory	9
3.1 Neorealism	9
3.2 Liberalism	10
3.3 Postcolonialism	11
ANALYSIS	
1. Two equal partners?	15
1.1 The Act on Greenland Self-Government	15
1.2 Uranium: an economic or defence policy question?	16
1.3 Part conclusion	17
2. Danish neorealism in the Arctic	18
2.1 The Ilulissat declaration	19
2.2 Master thesis on Danish security policies in the Arctic	20
2.3 CMS paper on consequences and opportunities to Denmark in the Chinese Arctic policy	21
2.4 Part conclusion	22

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3. Greenlandic liberalism and postcolonialism	23
3.1 Greenlandic liberalism in a historical context	23
3.2 The Igaliku agreement	25
3.3 The Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020	26
3.4 The ICC Charter	27
3.5 Greenlandic postcolonialism	27
3.5.1 Opening of the Representation in Washington D.C.	28
3.5.2 New Year's reception at the Representation in Brussels	28
3.5.3 Greenland's boycott of the Arctic Council	29
3.6 Part Conclusion	29
4. Conclusion	30
PERSPECTIVE	33
LITERATURE	35

**Abbreviations/acronyms used:**

AC	= the Arctic Council
A5	= the Arctic Five (the five Arctic states)
CMS	= Center for Military Studies (University of Copenhagen)
IR	= International relations
JC	= Joint Committee
KoD	= Kingdom of Denmark
MOU	= Memorandum of understanding
SAR	= Search and rescue
UNCLOS	= The UN Convention of the Law of the Sea.

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## Resumé

Bacheloropgaven adresserer de fundamentale uoverensstemmelser i Rigsfællesskabets konstruktion, som gør at det i dets nuværende form ikke kan fortsætte, fordi a) dels må føre til, at Grønland bryder ud af Rigsfællesskabet, b) dels at udenlandske investorer holder sig væk fra Grønland, fordi de er usikre på kompetencefordelingen mellem Grønland og Danmark.

Opgaven bygger på en kvalitativ diskursanalyse af bl.a. den Grønlandske Selvstyrelov, videnskabelige artikler fra Center for Militære Studier, grønlandsk-danske postkoloniale videnskabelige artikler, citater fra den grønlandske formand for Naalakkersuisut, samt initiativer fra grønlandsk side for at styrke en selvstændig international profil. For den grønlandske del af analysen, har udfordringen været at finde tilfredsstillende førstehånds kildemateriale, da der ikke forefindes meget akademisk materiale, udover fra dansk side, angående grønlandske synspunkter, hvilket svækker analysen. Konklusionernes validitet, bør dog ikke lide under dette faktum.

Analysen finder at dansk udenrigs- og sikkerhedspolitik er baseret på neorealisme, hvorimod den grønlandske pendant, historisk er baseret på liberalisme, samt elementer af postkolonialisme. Disse skoler i internationale relationer er om ikke modsatrettede, så uforenelige i en samlet sikkerheds- og udenrigspolitik. En anden central problemstilling er, at Grønland har adopteret den Westphalske (Europæiske) opfattelse af en moderne monokulturel stat, hvorfor Grønland arbejder mod suverænitæt, rigsfællesskab eller ej.

Konklusionen bliver derfor, at Grønland ikke kan acceptere et rigsfællesskab uden egenbestemmelse på den sikkerheds- og udenrigsmæssige politik i Arktis. Konflikten medfører usikkerhed for især asiatiske investorer, som ikke forstår kompetencefordelingen mellem grønlandske og danske myndigheder. Danmark og Grønland må derfor på kort sigt klart definere de juridiske rammer for udenlandsk investering i Grønland (hvilken regering investorerne skal henvende sig til). På længere sigt må Rigsfællesskabet konstrueres således, at det tømmes for indhold, hvorved det bliver et partnerskab i overensstemmelse med ordlyden i Selvstyrelovens præambel. Grønland skal kun vælge Danmark til som samarbejdspartner inden for selvvalgte områder. Danmark vil dog stadig være en vigtig spiller i Arktis, fordi Grønland har størst fordel ved at indgå et militært, og til dels, økonomisk samarbejde med Danmark, for ikke at forstyrre magtbalancen i Arktis.

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# Introduction

## 1. THESIS DISCUSSION

### 1.1. Motivation and relevance

The implementation of the Act on Greenland Self-Government (hereafter the Act), symbolically introduced on the Greenlandic national day 21 of June 2009, saw major changes for Greenland's ability to represent itself in international relations. However, the Act does not allow Greenland an independent foreign nor defence policy, as both remain affairs of the Realm<sup>1</sup>. Despite being two equal partners *de jure* following the Act, the *de facto* status remain, that Denmark is the sole sovereign state, and therefore the official representative of the Realm in international fora such as the Arctic Council. This does limit Greenlandic foreign policy, as it is allowed only to act on behalf on the Realm in matters exclusively concerning Greenland, and on fields of responsibility which have been taken over by the Self-Rule<sup>2</sup>. Being an autonomous part within the Kingdom of Denmark, with its own 31 seat parliament, Greenlandic leaders has opted for an ever more independent and stronger say in foreign policy issues concerning Greenland. Thanks to the notable focus on the Arctic from key economic players globally, Greenland looks eagerly to fully extend its own influence on international matters allowed within the barely five year old Act on Self-Government. This have already given way for clashes within the Realm between the Greenlandic and the Danish government, most notably after the zero-tolerance uranium mining ban was lifted by the Greenlandic parliament in October 2013, leading to Danish concerns over the Realm's foreign and defence policy.

### 1.2 Understanding the thesis

The main scope of this thesis is to prove, that Danish foreign and defence policies are based on neorealism as theoretical background. The Greenlandic theoretical base had a liberal approach until recently, however it has now turned towards more postcolonial funded policies, due to the March 2013 elections to the Greenlandic parliament, leading to the formation of a new government. These diverging theoretical standpoints are incongruous when aiming at a single voice for the Realm, internationally. The point of the thesis is to argue for a common defence policy for the Realm and a foreign policy that

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<sup>1</sup> Act on Greenland Self-Government, chapter 4, section 11, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Act on Greenland Self-Government, chapter 4, section 12, 1.

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gives more leeway for Greenlandic international priorities, thus creating a de facto equal partnership within the Kingdom of Denmark. This is also of interest to Denmark, in order to keep its role as a mediator between the great powers in matters concerning the Arctic.

### **1.2.1 Actors**

The Kingdom of Denmark (I use the term 'the Realm' henceforth), consist of three entities, Denmark and the two self-governed territories, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. My focus is on discussing the possibilities for a more predominant Greenlandic voice in the Realm's foreign and security affairs, and not the Realm as a whole, hence the Faroe Islands are left out of this thesis.

Other actors introduced in this work are important international forums, such as the ICC and the Arctic Council. These are relevant to the discussion about Greenland's current and future ability to act on behalf of the Realm, with policies deriving from Nuuk.

### **1.3 Hypothesis**

I want to prove that the current model, where the Danish government have full competence over the Realm's official foreign and defence policies, weakens both Greenland and the Realm internationally. Allowing Greenland a more independent foreign policy will secure the future existence of the Realm, because it will consist only of an area Greenland cannot nor should want to take responsibility of alone, the defence. Cooperation on defence in Greenland would still allow Denmark a significant role in the Arctic.

*Danish foreign and defence policy is based on neorealism, whereas the Greenlandic ditto is based on liberalism, although recently also with postcolonial features. This inevitably leads to conflict within the Realm, mostly on economic-based foreign policy matters. A common defence policy on the contrary, is the most desirable solution for both actors.*

## **2. METHOD**

### **2.1 Research design**

I chose a qualitative approach to collect my data. To prove how Danish foreign and defence policy is based on neorealism, and the Greenlandic ditto on liberalism and postcolonialism, I have collected several reports, papers, articles, declarations and laws in

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order to support my hypothesis.

Qualitative approach includes some benefits and concerns to the scientific quality of the research. A qualitative research uses observation as data collection method, which is useful to generate in-depth descriptions of organisations or more specifically in this case, policies, by the use of first-hand information. A further benefit to the qualitative research is, that the data collection method can be adjusted, as the research progresses. However the flexibility may turn into the study's greatest weakness in that the researcher cannot see him or herself free from bias selection of the chosen sources. Qualitative studies are often more time consuming, and the coding is more difficult, as the data is specific to the actual research only, and often not applicable to other situations.<sup>3</sup>

The sources deriving from the qualitative approach are used in a discourse analysis to deconstruct neorealism as the dominant theory within international relations. My discourse analysis looks to uncover the power structures behind the dominating discourse in the Arctic region, as being set by the Arctic sovereign states. It addresses the differences in power between the actors (mainly Denmark and Greenland), and the nature of conflict due to diverging IR policies.

In order to limit bias, I have chosen sources mostly from liable institutions, representing the two actors in this thesis, the Danish and Greenlandic government. I have collected reports and papers from the University of Copenhagen, Center for Military Studies and the Danish Defence. All these sources, some more directly than others, represent and prove the views of the Danish Government, as they are public institutions. Some sources from the university may explicitly claim that their views are not necessarily the view of the Danish government, however analysing the amount of measures adopted by the Danish Government in Arctic matters, may prove otherwise.

Academic sources representing the views of the Greenlandic government (the Naalakkersuisut) are at the best, limited. As a consequence, I use citations from Greenlandic leaders in news, the Naalakkersuisut calendar for IR related initiatives, along with laws, international agreements and similar sources, where Greenland is a signatory.

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<sup>3</sup> **California State University**, Long Beach: *Qualitative Research*: <http://www.csulb.edu/~msaintg/ppa696/696quali.htm>

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## **2.2 Theory**

Basing the hypothesis on the predetermined conflict between two partners, who base their foreign and defence policies on different theories, I introduce the main features of neorealism, and its traditional theoretical opposite, liberalism. Thirdly, I spend the major part of the theory section to explain postcolonialism in a Greenlandic context, presented in six possible scenarios for the future of the Realm, by Post.Doc Ulrik Pram Gad from the University of Copenhagen.

## **2.3 Analysis**

I use the mentioned sources to elaborate on the hypothesis, first by proving the uneven partnership, secondly that Danish government policies are based on neorealism. Third, I prove that Greenlandic foreign and defence policy historically were based on liberalism, and recently with elements of postcolonialism. The analysis shows how these various theories cannot together form a singular voice for the Realm in foreign and defence policy, which makes it necessary to rethink who should hold the competence in the Arctic region.

## **2.4 Perspective**

My hypothesis is as much a future optimal scenario as a contemporary issue. So far no scholars and no Greenlandic leaders are discussing a revision of the five year old Act on Greenland Self-Government, leaving such argumentation without scientific support in an analysis. My perspective offers a scenario for the future construction of the Realm, serving both Greenlandic and Danish interests, inspired by the scenarios' set up by Ulrik Pram Gad.

## **2.5 Scope of the thesis**

Greenlandic foreign and defence policy covers more than the topics treated here. The aim is not to address all international relations, but only to prove by the use of few fora such as the AC, that Greenlandic foreign policy is based on liberalism, and recently mostly on postcolonialism. My analysis of Danish defence policy is based on its Arctic policies, which is pivotal, although not all dominant in its defence policy. This thesis is restricted only to topics with direct relevance to the future structure of the Realm, and a more predominant Greenlandic foreign and defence policy. Thus other postcolonial topics such as language, literature and other soft power issues will not be dealt with.

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### 3. THEORY

This section introduces the three theories on which the analysis is based. To each theory, I present the part of the theories mentioning *the nationstate*, a keyword to understand the conflicts among the Danish and Greenlandic governments. Specific to this thesis, neorealism addresses the security question, whereas postcolonialism deals with the concept of a nationstate. Liberalism embraces the idea of non-state international organs for the Arctic indigenous peoples.

#### 3.1 Neorealism

The foundation of neorealism is largely dedicated to Kenneth Waltz, and it is his works that I refer to when presenting this school of IR.

The major contribution from Waltz, especially when compared to liberalism, is the idea of a system and its changes that are observable elements of IR. These elements are nation-states. The system is shaped by the balance of power, where politics at an international level is anarchic, as opposed to the hierarchic order in national politics. This leads states to focus on security and survival as their highest priority, in an international *self-help* system. This structural self-help system limits cooperation among states, due to the fear of relative gains for other states.<sup>4</sup>

States balance their power in two strategies: internally and externally. Internally they build up economic and military capability, while externally building alliances to weaken opposing ones. States within the system only differ in their capabilities, and when these change, the system change. Such change only occur with the rise or fall of great powers, leading to power shifts. Historically this change happens because of war. This however is more unlikely in the 21st century, because thanks to globalism, war between the great powers would have devastating impact on the world economy.

The international system may exhibit several poles, divided into three levels: a unipolar, a bipolar and a multipolar level. All states' primary goal to survive, lead them to find alliances among the leader(s) of the incumbent system. To Waltz, a multipolar system followed the bipolar system of the Cold War. This may be subject to discussion, however the rise of power of especially China (economically), but also other emerging economies, (in the Arctic, Russia) justifies the theory that currently a multipolar system exists.

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<sup>4</sup> Daddow, Oliver: *International Relations Theory*, 2nd edition, Sage Publications, London, 2013, 131.

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### 3.2 Liberalism

Liberalism has several contributors, but a key player was the former US president Woodrow Wilson, who summed up many of the liberal views on international affairs in his 'Fourteen Point' speech to the US Congress in 1918.<sup>5</sup>

The basic ideas of liberalism contains some basic values such as cooperation, peace and progress. Liberalism embraces the idea of complex interdependence, where IR are becoming more like domestic politics, with relations on many levels, other than that of the state. In a still more globalised world, IR will increase in importance, realism is still important, but international institutions does have a say in international politics. This is one of the major distinctions from realism, which argues anarchy is prevalent in IR, thus making the security and survival of the state the most important goal for the state.

My aim is not to present all fourteen points from Wilson's speech, however some key points helps to show Greenlandic foreign policy. Wilson did not view the international scene in harmony, but believed that international order could be constructed via international organisations. Wilson's first point '*Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at a call for transparent and honest diplomacy*',<sup>6</sup> support the liberal idea of international institutions as guardians of the norms of international behaviour. Point 3 argues a removal of economic barriers. The argument is: the deeper the economic ties between countries, the less likely is an outburst of war among trading partners. The points 5-13 argues the need for national self-determination, dismantling of empires and democratic governance. These points indirectly had a historic impact to Greenland, as it was incorporated into Denmark after the Second World War, in order to avoid pressure from the United Nations. Among others, this chapter of the Danish-Greenlandic colonial history has helped nurture Greenlandic postcolonial policies. The liberal internationalism as described by Woodrow Wilson in his fourteen points are also known as Idealism or Utopian Liberalism, both labels sum up the arguments by the critics of liberalism.<sup>7</sup>

Usually realism is the opposite to liberalism, however neorealism applies more to Danish foreign policy regarding the Arctic and Greenland, thus neorealism is used as the other to liberalism here, even if this is not in theory the customary way of comparing the schools. Realists are the strongest critics of liberalism, believing that liberalists place too

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<sup>5</sup> Daddow (2013: 88)

<sup>6</sup> (ibid.)

<sup>7</sup> (ibid.)

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much emphasis on the power of international organisations, as these do not have the power to alter state interests. Through empirical data, disclosing where the big decisions are made in matters concerning the Arctic, arguments can be made that these are all made between sovereign nation-states. However, the pure realist theory, where a Hobbesian anarchic state is prevalent internationally, is not applicable to the Arctic, as a rare mutual understanding between the Arctic states is predominant, agreeing that no disputes will be solved through armed conflict. In my analysis, I elaborate further on the neorealism and liberalism debate in the Arctic. The last school I include, postcolonialism, serves to give an in-depth understanding disputes between Greenland and Denmark, in particular after the March 2013 elections.

### 3.3 Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism is a field spread widely over the world addressing the relationship between an empire and its former colonies. Literature on British colonies is rich, of the more remarkable ones are the observations made by the Indian Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's adopting of 'satyagraha'<sup>8</sup>, designating truth, love and non-violence, as the key method to obtain 'Swaraj'<sup>9</sup>, home rule, show that these topics are not specific to Greenlandic postcolonialism. The postcolonial identity discourse usually tries to make essentialist distinctions between the colony and the colonial power, often by referring to traditional values, language and other precolonial features. This essentialist distinction, depicting the colonial power as 'the other'<sup>10</sup>, helps to create an identity for the postcolonial society. One of Gandhi's greatest observations is the clear distinction between what is actually the other. It is not the colonial power's subjects (in India the Englishmen), but the modern civilisation. However Gandhi's work is chiefly made prior to the independence of India in 1947. His vilification of 'modern civilisation', although not Marxist, is a denunciation of capitalism. Globalism, in particular after the Cold War, have relied on capitalism and its liberal features. An answer to a more elaborate Greenlandic postcolonial discourse thus cannot rely on observations by Gandhi or other contemporary writers.

Greenland hosts several features unique or very rare compared to other postcolonial societies, most importantly the size of the population (barely 57,000) making

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<sup>8</sup> **Hiddleston**, Jane: *Understanding Movements in Modern Thought: Understanding Postcolonialism*, Acumen, 2009

<sup>9</sup> (ibid.)

<sup>10</sup> **Pram Gad**, Ulrik: *En postkolonial grønlandsk-dansk fremtid? Tre scenarier for Rigsfællesskabets opløsning - og tre for dets beståen og forandring.*, Københavns Universitet, Kbh, 2009, 5.

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the road for independence almost impossible without importing especially high-skilled labour.

Post.Doc from the University of Copenhagen Ulrik Pram Gad offers a *post-post-colonial* Greenlandic identity<sup>11</sup> in order to not exclude the substantial minority of monolingual Danish-speaking Greenlanders. This view conflicts with the essentialist identity, as language is the single most important element in Greenlandic postcolonialism. The discussion about a postcolonial identity is not however the only major clash between Denmark and Greenland. Almost a paradox (although not different from other postcolonial societies), Greenland has adopted the Danish, or more correctly, Westphalian model of a state, the prerequisites being a homogenous culture, and a sovereign distinctive political structure. Hence, the Realm with three (including the Faroe Islands) distinctive cultures (languages) and a pluralistic political organisation (two self-ruling parliaments and the sovereign one in Denmark), is an anomaly<sup>12</sup> condemned to cease in the future. Pram Gad offers three scenarios for the discontinuation, and three scenarios for change and sustaining the Realm<sup>13</sup>. I present the last two, and briefly summing up the first four, as these are less relevant here.

In the first scenario, given number 0, because it is the least likely, the perception of the nationstate is altered in both Greenland and Denmark, by accepting multicultural and pluralistic political centres i.e., both in Nuuk, Torshavn and Copenhagen.

The scenarios 1-3 all conclude by seceding the Realm. Scenario 1 occurs with a radical change in the relation between the two countries, most likely if large amount of oil was discovered in Greenland, making economic help from Denmark unnecessary. *'The larger the hydrocarbon revenue, the less the change for survival of the Realm'*<sup>14</sup>

Scenario 2 is the most likely according to Pram Gad. The Realm needs a good story to continue. So far Denmark refers to the 300 years cultural and historical bonds, while Greenland tells the story of suppression by its former colonial power, Denmark.

Scenario 3 and 4 leads to the conclusion of the Realm. In scenario 3, Denmark changes its story from educating its old colony, into an open distaste towards Greenlandic ungratefulness. Scenario 3 does not tell how this distaste materialises, whether it be a)

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<sup>11</sup> Pram Gad, Ulrik: *Post-colonial Identity in Greenland? When the empire dichotomises back - bring politics back in*, Journal of Language & Politics, vol 8, no. 1, pp. 136-158, 2009

<sup>12</sup> Pram Gad (2009: 5)

<sup>13</sup> Pram Gad (2009: 12-14)

<sup>14</sup> (ibid.) My translation from Danish.

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throwing Greenland out of the realm, or b) removing the political privileges given in the Act on Self-Rule. Scenario 4 sees it from the Greenlandic point of view. Danish paternalism is unacceptable, because it had serious implications to Greenlandic society between World War 2 and the Home Rule in 1979. Greenland would not accept a reintroduction of paternalistic policies from Denmark.

The last two scenarios' describe how the Realm can continue by radically changing their views both Denmark (scenario 5) and Greenland (scenario 6).

*Scenario 5:*

This scenario is probably the most relevant to my discussion, as the author suggest Denmark explicitly acknowledge the Danish-Greenlandic relationship as an equal between two partners. This is done by allowing Greenland to declare independence whenever deemed ready. Recalling the Act on Greenland Self-Government of 2009, this is possible following a referendum in Greenland. The author miss to address the *de facto* uneven relationship, but partially makes up for it by addressing Danish politicians and their lack of understanding to how the future of the Realm is best upheld: by allowing Greenland to become independent, and by giving the best means to help them on their way. In short, Denmark need to erase the colonial power relations as far as possible. The author calls for a 'no strings attached'<sup>15</sup> block grant to Greenland helping investing in new hydrocarbon industries, and hereafter hoping for some Greenlandic thankfulness resulting in a continuation of the Realm, but between two independent nations.

*Scenario 6:*

The last scenario, seen from the Greenlandic point of view, highlights the paradox that the future of the Realm is only viable if it becomes unnecessary. Only in this way, Greenland would perceive the Realm as something not representing the Danish Other, but a voluntary relationship (or the best of opportunities offered, remembering Greenland must cooperate with another nation on some areas due to its small population).

One of the major contributions offered by the author is the call for a new understanding of the relationship between Greenland and Denmark. Greenland should be accepted as not a partner in a relationship with Denmark, but an independent player on an open market, who can freely chose its best *business* partner. Economic theory would say that a small producer (actor) relying on one large associate (provider) is unhealthy.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Pram Gad (2009: 14)

<sup>16</sup> Pram Gad (2009: 15)

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The Self Rule can itself chose to change business partner, as they control most transport of goods and people through public owned companies. This is however not economically feasible on a short and middle term time frame, because most goods and persons travel to and from Denmark. These dynamics cannot be changed by making a traffic hub in Reykjavik/Keflavik on Iceland, or deciding to import most goods from Canada. The reason for the change being so difficult is the dynamics of economic, historical and cultural relationships between Denmark and Greenland. Danes work in Greenland and refer to the market they are most comfortable with, Denmark. Even Greenlanders prefer mostly to do business with Danish partners, because they are educated in Denmark, they know the goods from Denmark, but most importantly, they share a common language, Danish. As the first foreign language in Greenland, the language makes the biggest barrier to entry for other than Danish (and possibly some Nordic) partners. Pram Gad explicitly suggests making English the first foreign language in Greenland, as this would lead Greenlanders to embrace globalisation (or the modern civilisation, the same dilemma Gandhi's India dealt with), because English in Greenland is not seen as a suppressors language, as is Danish.

The conclusion to the scenarios presented is: in order for Greenland to step out of the post-colonial state, Greenland need to acknowledge and accept it is not obliged to refer to Denmark in all matters, it can create and build its own relationships and partners. No actor in international relations are completely free to choose partners, however the biggest barrier is the mental one in the minds of Greenlanders (and Danes).

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## Analysis

The purpose of the analysis is to present the uneven relationship between Denmark and Greenland within the Realm, to prove that Denmark bases its foreign and defence policies on neorealism, and that Greenland does so on liberalism. I have chosen three sources to each part to prove my hypothesis.

The analysis departs from the preamble in the Act on Greenland Self-Government, discussing briefly the legal frames of the Act's chapter 4 as presented by Ole Spiermann, in his response to the Danish government on behalf of the Greenlandic counterpart (Naalakkersuisut). To prove Danish defence policies are based on neorealism, I include the Ilulissat declaration, the master thesis by Michael Tolstrup and the Center for Military Studies' (CMS) paper on Chinese arctic policy.

To prove Greenlandic liberalism I include the Igaliku agreement, the Kingdom of Denmark strategy for the Arctic 2011-20, quotes by the current Greenlandic Premier, and the Naalakkersuisut New Year's Reception in Brussels.

### 1 TWO EQUAL PARTNERS?

#### 1.1 The Act on Greenland Self-Government

The preamble of the Act of Greenland Self-Government:

*Recognising that the people of Greenland is a people pursuant to international law with the right of self-determination, the Act is based on a wish to foster equality and mutual respect in the partnership between Denmark and Greenland. Accordingly, the Act is based on an agreement between Naalakkersuisut [Greenland Government] and the Danish Government as equal partners.<sup>17</sup>*

The preamble, seemingly liberal in its outlook, acknowledges Greenland as an equal partner and that Greenlanders have the right of self-determination. Chapter 4 concerning foreign affairs, is not equally liberal. In chapter 4, § 11(3) the exact wording is:

*The powers granted to Naalakkersuisut in this Chapter shall not limit the Danish authorities' constitutional responsibility and powers in international affairs, as foreign and security policy matters are affairs of the Realm.*

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<sup>17</sup> The Act on Greenland Self-Government (2009: 1)

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Further, §§ 12(4) and 13 elaborate on the extent of Greenlandic foreign competence. This competence only goes as far as to where Danish authorities finds it not in conflict with security matters found to be affairs to the Realm. Thus security affairs of the Realm ultimately are dealt with by the Danish Government, undermining the wording of the preamble. In particular § 13(4) is clear on the power relationship between Denmark and Greenland, as the Danish Government is not obliged to follow the views of Naalakkersuisut when concluding agreements under international law.

The Act on Greenland-Self Government is a law that can be replaced by another law in the Danish Parliament. Greenlandic politicians holds two of 179 seats in the Danish Parliament, thus the Danish Government (or a simple majority) could rule back the law. This is however a theoretical debate, because it would compromise the legal tradition of respecting agreements signed by both partners.

## **1.2 Uranium: an economic or defence policy question?**

The Ole Spiermann response is requested by Naalakkersuisut to clarify the question upon who holds the competence of exporting uranium from Greenland. The Danish Government and Parliament (Folketinget) have claimed that export of uranium from Greenland is a defence policy matter of the Realm. The Naalakkersuisut on the other hand, claim uranium export is an economic question, hence under Greenland responsibility, since the mineral resource area is taken over by the Greenlandic Self Rule.

Ole Spiermann concludes in his response to the Danish Government, that the Act's §12(4) cannot be used upon *possible* scenarios affecting the defence and security policies, but only scenarios that *do* affect.<sup>18</sup>

The Danish Government have not yet officially reacted to the January 2014 response from Ole Spiermann, but both Greenland and Denmark agrees upon cooperating on matters concerning uranium. An agreement concerning cooperation on uranium between the two governments, is to be signed in the second half of 2014<sup>19</sup>.

What the Act and the Ole Spiermann response show, is the Danish Government's obvious power in the relationship between the two governments. It is still unclear what is to be the exact content in the upcoming cooperation agreement between Greenland and

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<sup>18</sup> **Spiermann**, Ole: *Responsum: om udenrigspolitiske beføjelser i forhold til uran og andre radioaktive materialer i Grønland*. Bruun & Hjejle, Kbh., 2003, 13.

<sup>19</sup> **Rottbøll**, Emil: *Grønland giver sig ikke uden kamp*. Information, 2014 <http://www.information.dk/484498>

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Denmark. What does remain clear however, is the fact that the balance of power is not to equalise (or shift) in the foreseeable future. The Danish Government have on the uranium question proved its unwillingness to let the Naalakkersuisut decide on matters potentially affecting Danish foreign and defence policy. The less flattering part of the argument, is when the Danish Government claim questions such as with uranium, to be a defence matter of the Realm. Hereby the Danish Government use the Realm as an excuse to exercise power over areas taken home by Naalakkersuisut, in order to be in full control of any potential foreign affair matter that may affect the Realm, ergo also Denmark.

Using the argument that defence policies are matters of the Realm, and consequently matters of the Danish Government, such statements questions the *raison d'être* of the Realm, because it represents what Pram Gad calls 'the Danish other' to Greenland. Further, it does not stem with the sound of the preamble, claiming Denmark and Greenland to be equal partners within the Realm.

It is important to recall that the Spiermann response is ordered by the Naalakkersuisut, and the judicial interpretation thus fits the Greenlandic point of view. Yet the question remains how the two partners can become genuinely equal.

### **1.3 Part conclusion**

The dispute about who holds the competence on the export on uranium, exposes the differences in how to interpret the Act, and the power relationships between the two partners. Denmark sees it as a prerogative to alone have the final decision on defence and foreign policy matters, even on areas taken home by the Naalakkersuisut. Naalakkersuisut on the other hand wants to have full responsibility in those areas, and consider it as natural steps towards independence.

The Act is a law made in the Danish Parliament, it does not overrule the constitutional law of the Realm and can be ruled back by implementing a new law in the Danish Parliament.<sup>20</sup> This is but a theoretical opportunity, as it most unlikely will occur, because it would jeopardise the agreement structure, where each part respect laws and agreements signed on behalf of both.

The starting point for a more equal relationship, and consequently the survival of the Realm, is when Denmark genuinely begins to *trust* its Greenlandic partner, however

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<sup>20</sup> The Act on Greenland Self-Government (2009: 1)

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this may compromise Danish influence internationally, as Greenland does not share Danish policies and priorities internationally on all fields.

## 2 DANISH NEOREALISM IN THE ARCTIC

The historical relationship between Denmark and US, thanks to Greenland and the Thule Radar and Air Base, is relevant for the understanding of why Denmark pursues a foreign and defence policy based on neorealism. I have left such account out of this work, because it alone would far outweigh the limits of this thesis. Alternatively I sum up a few important points: The US-Danish relationship was crucial until the end of the Cold War, due to Danish security concerns about Denmark's short distance to the Soviet, including the unknown threat from behind the iron curtain. The US relationship remains central for Denmark today, especially with the rise of new powers, in Arctic matters most importantly China and Russia. US on the other hand regard Greenland as not only a US sphere of interest, but pivotal to US defence, being part of its 'perimeter strategy'<sup>21</sup>, a strategy to uphold US defences and warning systems, at some distance from US mainland.

The Danish strategy choosing the US as partner is in thread with Waltzian neorealism, as smaller states like Denmark are subject to seeking self-preservation, known as the minimum level in the balance of power and stability theory. The theory assumes international politics is a self-help system, and great powers such as the US exerts power at maximum by seeking world domination. Waltz argued that international politics after the Cold War was a multipolar system (bipolar prior). One could argue, the system until recently was unipolar, as the US remained the only great power, with its military strength undoubtedly uncontested since the end of the Cold War. Further, most countries attempt in various ways to adopt, or claim to adopt, democracy and a capitalist economy.

Hence, Denmark has no alternative partner to the US, plus historically had no choice but to accept US military presence (because of its perimeter strategy) in Greenland during the Cold War, in order to retain sovereignty over Greenland.

Denmark needs today however no more to focus mainly on self-preservation, and thus tries to maximise its influence in the self-help system by putting itself in the middle among the arctic states, as a mediator. It has to be stressed that it is the states Denmark tries to influence, seen with the formation of A5 (the five arctic states), via the Ilulissat

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<sup>21</sup> **DUPI:** *Grønland under den kolde krig - Dansk og amerikansk sikkerhedspolitik 1945-68*, Kbh., 1997, 60.

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declaration. Denmark does so in order to act up its own influence, because it recognises the strategic importance of the Arctic, most evident with the Ilulissat declaration and the Kingdom of Denmark Arctic Strategy 2011-20.

Denmark cannot call itself an Arctic State without representing Greenland. This explain why Denmark is resilient to give Greenland a more independent voice in international fora. Denmark hides behind seemingly liberal policies, well aware that Greenland is not yet able to perform alone all mandatory tasks in foreign affairs, because the economy and the population is not yet capable. Having Greenland leaving the Realm, it would unquestionably result in Danish influence being greatly reduced internationally. In such scenario, Denmark would be of little strategic and economic interest to the US, but also other key economic players such as China. This is why Denmark has required a minimum of fundamental state tasks remaining with the Danish Government, such as foreign affair matters, as described above in the section about the Act on Greenland Self-Rule.

The following three sources show support the hypothesis that Denmark pursues a neorealism based policy in the Arctic. a) the Ilulissat Declaration, b) the master thesis by Michael Tolstrup and c) the CMS paper on Chinese policy in the Arctic .

## **2.1 The Ilulissat declaration (May 2008)**

The Arctic Council (AC) is an international fora containing sovereign states, but also NGO's such as the ICC (Inuit Circumpolar Conference). The AC is known more for its non binding and at times bureaucratic handling of cases, mostly because of the several actors and their different status (states and NGOs'). Denmark found a vacuum by taking the initiative to the Ilulissat declaration, allowing Denmark to become a more noticeable player in the Arctic, creating the Arctic five (A5) with the five arctic coastal states.

The declaration may appear liberal on the surface, thanks to many of its liberal themes, such as emphasising cooperation between the members, but also in international fora like the AC and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council<sup>22</sup>. Respect for international law and the environment are further highlighted in the two pages declaration. However looking at the structure of the A5, all five signatories are sovereign states. Bringing the Arctic coastal states together in a forum separate from the AC, where the ICC and other prominent environmental NGO's such as the WWF is represented, Denmark has created a notable

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<sup>22</sup> The **Ilulissat Declaration** (2008: 2) [http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Ilulissat\\_Declaration.pdf](http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Ilulissat_Declaration.pdf)

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forum in the Arctic for sovereign states only. Being well aware of Greenlandic economic dependence on Denmark for many years to come, the Ilulissat Declaration has been a clever move for the Danish Government to consolidate its presence in the Arctic, despite the introduction of the Act on Self-Rule in Greenland one year later, in 2009.

## **2.2 Master thesis on Danish security policies in the Arctic (2011)**

Although this source does not represent the views of the Danish Government, reality remains that the author is employed at the Danish Defence, and the thesis supervisor employed at the Center for Military Studies (CMS) at the University of Copenhagen. This gives strong indices that the views expressed are or will be adopted by the Danish Government. The CMS makes scientific work and expert recommendations to the Danish Government, which despite disclaimers in the produced papers, are often adopted as Danish policy. This is why I chose to include Tolstrup's thesis, and the following paper by CMS on Chinese policy in the Arctic.

Michael Tolstrup is a Danish officer employed at the Danish Defence. His master thesis has been supervised by Lars Bangert Struwe, Ph.D. from CMS. Tolstrup explicitly bases his analysis on neorealism, using Buzan's *holistic security policy theory*<sup>23</sup> from 1991, split into the following five sectors: political, military, economical, environmental and social sector.

The conclusion of the thesis argues that the countries cannot act in a single sector isolated. Security policy in the Arctic reaches into the economic and environmental sectors, thus national policies and strategies must be seen more broadly covering possibly all five sectors, since one factor in sector x may affect sector y<sup>24</sup>.

Most important to my analysis is the conclusion on the military sector. Tolstrup argues that an upgrade on military capacities are necessary due to the expected rise in traffic in the Arctic (tourism and transport activities due to melting ice). However upgrading military capacities makes the other Arctic states anxious, as seen following Russian military expansion in the Arctic. All in A5 except Russia are NATO allies, and the conclusion is typical for a small state: Tolstrup sees Denmark as the mediator between the

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<sup>23</sup> Tolstrup, Michael: *Danske sikkerhedspolitiske udfordringer i Arktis*, Forsvaret, Kbh., 2011.

<sup>24</sup> Tolstrup (2011: 46)

<sup>25</sup> Tolstrup (2011: 47)

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great powers, and hence should turn the attention to Russia without losing the US<sup>25</sup>.

This is a rather vague conclusion without no elaboration to the point, unfortunately.

Tolstrup's conclusions are built on the perception that the Arctic is subject to a bipolar systemic level analysis, with the US and Russia being the two great powers. The three minor powers (Canada, Denmark and Norway) must maximise their influence within the social and environmental sector, since these are not high on the agenda to the great powers, as is military and economy.

### **2.3 CMS paper on consequences and opportunities to Denmark in the Chinese Arctic Policy (2014)**

Equal to the other sources, this one may seem liberal in its outlook, however looking into the details of its recommendations, one can see the neorealist themes are evident.

The paper hails international cooperation, in particular within the Arctic Council, since *the current political atmosphere favours cooperation and communication*<sup>26</sup>.

Being a small state, Denmark needs to work on strengthening the Arctic Council and the Arctic Five (A5), while on the other hand supporting international laws such as the UN Law of the Sea. This brings into light the point of including this paper here: although liberal as far international law and cooperation is concerned, Denmark should maximise its influence in the state-based fora such as the A5 and the AC. The paper concludes China has only commercial interest in the Arctic, and like Tolstrup's thesis, this paper argues Denmark takes on the role as the arbitrator, introducing China to the Arctic, through the Arctic Council.

The paper continuously refers to the US as a close ally, and the historical bonds between the US and Denmark.<sup>27</sup> The paper recommends including China on US premises (the US strategy towards China is to limit its regional power, but have it take greater 'responsibility' internationally). The recommendation is interesting, because it suggest including another great power into the close cooperation between the Arctic coastal states. This may be to diversify Danish opportunities, since the Arctic is not highest on the US agenda (most followers of IR would know of the US pivot to the Pacific). China is one of few actors able to make the heavy investments required in Greenland. Recognising US

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<sup>26</sup> Fuglede, Mads et.al.: *Kina, Grønland, Danmark - konsekvenser og muligheder i kinesisk Arktispolitik*, Center for Militære Studier, Kbh., 2014, 30.

<sup>27</sup> Fuglede et.al. (2014: 20)

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military presence and the bonds to Greenland, Denmark needs to have the US look at the Arctic from the Danish perspective, persuading US to sign the UNCLOS and making a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for a greater cooperation on search and rescue (SAR), coast guarding etc.

Waltzian neorealism does not give room for cunning and skilful diplomacy<sup>28</sup>. However, skilful diplomacy is what Denmark needs to perform in order to successfully introduce China to the Arctic without antagonising the US (and Russia, the other great power in the Arctic. Russia however is interestingly barely mentioned in this paper).

Denmark seeks to maximise its influence in the Arctic by being the partner welcoming China to the Arctic, hoping for its (economic) benevolence. This paper briefly mentions Danish-Greenlandic disputes over uranium and economic/foreign affairs. Like Tolstrup's thesis, this paper stresses the importance of international state-based fora in order to secure Danish interest in the Arctic. It does not address further Greenlandic views other than stating the mentioned disputes.

Once again this can be seen as prove for the lack of understanding in Denmark towards Greenlandic economic and foreign priorities. By not addressing Greenlandic views on further cooperation in the AC and A5, introducing China in order to have US become more active in the Arctic, is a major flaw to this paper and Danish Arctic policies in general. By continuously addressing Danish policy in the Arctic, without addressing possible diverging Greenlandic policies, such papers further undermine the possibilities for the future existence of the Realm.

## **2.4 Part conclusion**

Danish historical dependence on the US, and US strategic interests in Greenland, explain current Danish foreign and defence policies. After the Cold War, Denmark needs no more to focus solely on state-survival. Denmark is trying to maximise its influence at the external level, following the Waltzian balance of power theory. With the emergence of other great powers in the Arctic, Denmark has seized the opportunity to take advantage of the power vacuum in the Arctic, allowing itself to become a mediator between the two Arctic great powers, Russia and the US, but also other newcomers, most notably China. This vacuum is only economical, as US would not by any means tolerate a Danish shift towards another power, due to Greenland's strategic importance to US defence.

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<sup>28</sup> Daddow (2009: 132)

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Despite seemingly liberal statements, such as supporting international fora with nation-states, cooperation among states on SAR etc., Danish foreign policy in the Arctic is based on neorealism, because it seeks maximum influence with the purpose of own economic benefit, and securing its own presence in the Arctic by strengthening fora with nation-states as members.

### **3. GREENLANDIC LIBERALISM AND POSTCOLONIALISM**

Having showed how Danish policies in the Arctic are driven by neorealism, this part reveals how Greenlandic policies historically are based on liberal values. Since the March 2013 elections to the Greenlandic Parliament (Inatsisartut), Greenlandic foreign policy has focused on creating a distinct profile from the Danish/the Realm's profile, thus bringing elements of postcolonialism into the analysis.

This last element of the analysis, proving how Greenlandic liberalism/postcolonialism is in conflict with Danish neorealism, serves to prove my hypothesis that status quo in the relationship between Denmark and Greenland, within the frame called the Realm, is unfruitful for both partners in its current form, and even more so in the long run.

The biggest obstacle to an analysis on Greenlandic foreign and defence policies, is the lack of firsthand sources. Consequently this part of the analysis draws upon statements from Greenlandic leaders in news articles and policy papers/news from the Greenlandic government. Such sources may be of dubious academic value, but they help to prove the hypothesis about the theoretical foundation of Greenlandic foreign policy. Other more reliable sources e.g. scholars' historical account on Greenlandic policies, along with nongovernmental sources such as the ICC charter, gives depth to my conclusions.

#### **3.1 Greenlandic liberalism in a historical context**

This section presents a handful of the historically most important events in the US/Danish/Greenlandic relationship on defence matters, among these the Igaliku Agreement. The historical account follows Clive Archer's in his publication on US Bases and Missile Defence in Greenland (see literature list). Archer's account addresses the origins of the trilateral relationship from World War Two. My focus is primarily on the postcolonial era, thus from the 1979 Home Rule and onwards. Further, Archer applies a three-level game

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analysis to explain the US/Danish/Greenlandic relationship.<sup>29</sup> The game analysis helps to understand the historic power relation between the three players and the likely development back into a two-level game analysis regarding defence matters in Greenland, however with an US-Greenland analysis, as opposed to the historical US-Denmark one.

Clive Archer has altered Robert Putnam's original two-level game analysis into a three-level game analysis in order to explain the political development in Greenland since the introduction of the Home Rule in 1979. The game analysis traditionally contains two levels: Level One is the international level, where national governments seek to maximise their own potential to satisfy domestic pressures and limit adverse effects in foreign developments. Level Two is the national level, where domestic groups pressures the government to adopt favourable policies. The traditional analysis has developed into a three-level game in Europe following Paterson: the domestic, the EU and the international level. Archer applies the three-level game to the US/Danish/Greenlandic relationship: Level One (US-Denmark), Level Two (Denmark, including Greenland) and Level Three is the intra-Realm (Danish-Greenlandic).<sup>30</sup>

The introduction of the home rule in 1979 allowed a local assembly (parliament) in Greenland, with local politicians, and a premier, requesting influence on foreign and security policy issues, relevant to Greenland (particularly the Thule Air Base), although still under jurisdiction of the Danish State. Greenland was developing into a separate entity, with the result that defence matters were no longer solely a part of the two-level negotiations between the Danish Government and its US adversary.<sup>31</sup>

In 1984, the left-wing party IA called for a referendum in Greenland regarding new radar stations to the DEW-line (Distant Early Warning), leading to a US withdrawal of the request (choosing instead to develop the North Warning System in Canada), closing its Greenlandic stations in 1992.<sup>32</sup>

In 2000, debates over the Thule radar upgrade led to Greenlandic concerns over the susceptibility to an attack. Greenland again stressed the importance on being present at any discussions about the Thule Air Base, and that it wanted to take no part in a new nuclear proliferation or a new Cold War. Greenland lead a hardline policy towards the US,

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<sup>29</sup> Archer, Clive: *Greenland, US Bases and Missile Defence: New Two-Level negotiations?*, Cooperation and Conflict, Sage Publications, 2003, 126.

<sup>30</sup> (ibid.)

<sup>31</sup> Archer (2003: 137)

<sup>32</sup> Archer (2003: 138)

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by calling for a renegotiation of the 1951 treaty (see below in 3.2) prior to any changes at the Thule Air Base.<sup>33</sup>

By 2001, despite having no formal decision-making power in Greenland, an establishment between Greenland and Denmark was made, where the Home Rule assembly and administration was to be consulted on foreign and security matters affecting Greenland. The Greenland Commission on Self-Government, set up in 1999, was to investigate the prospect of a '*broadening of Greenland's competence, role and potentialities in the foreign and security policy area*'.<sup>34</sup>

The Igaliku agreement in 2004 set the scene for the latest of trilateral agreements, modifying the 1951 agreement still valid today (March 2014), now with added agreements, focusing largely on economy, technical matters and environmental issues.

In the 2009 Act on Greenland Self-Government, the preamble states that the governments of Greenland and Denmark are to be seen as equal partners. Greenlandic foreign and defence policy has yet to develop into a level-one relationship with the US (or any other nation-state), as Greenland remains part of the Kingdom of Denmark.

In Greenland, the US role as military ally is more equivocal than in Denmark. The brief historical account above, shows that Greenlandic politicians are not keen on military presence by foreign powers on Greenlandic territory. Historically, Greenlandic politicians have argued for a demilitarised Arctic region, cooperation among its actors, and a voice for the indigenous people of the region. Several sources show how Greenland pursues a distinct liberal approach in international relations (IR). The ones dealt with here are: a) The Igaliku Agreement, b) The Kingdom of Denmark (KoD) strategy 2011-2020, c) the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) charter. The Arctic Council (AC) was used above to prove Danish neorealism, however albeit the seemingly liberal text, the AC is a nation-state forum (having Denmark representing Greenland), and consequently excluded from this part.

### **3.2 The Igaliku Agreement**

The August 2004 agreement is an amendment to the still valid 1951 agreement on the Defence of Greenland, regarding the American Air Base at Thule. In addition to the amendment, two Joint Declarations (JC) on: i) economic and technical cooperation, and ii)

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<sup>33</sup> Archer (2003: 141)

<sup>34</sup> Archer (2003: 140)

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environmental cooperation were signed.<sup>35</sup> The importance of the Igaliku Agreement with respect to this thesis, is the acknowledgment of the Greenlandic Home Rule (as of 2009, Self Rule) in the first bullet point to the amendment. Additionally, the Joint Declarations are major contributions to Greenlandic political priorities. International economic cooperation and environment are key liberal policies.

The current discussions concerning the extent of atomic waste at the closed Camp Century US base on the icecap, show Greenlandic devotion to the environment as a key policy.<sup>36</sup> However, the JC on environment focus on prevention and protection, thus the agreement does not entail clean up of decades of cumulated waste at closed bases around Greenland the Thule Air Base. The discussions on the responsibility for cleaning up the closed military installations in Greenland, has developed into a political hot potato.<sup>37</sup> US/Danish stalling to take on responsibility for the pollution, show how Greenland's adversaries prioritise defence policies over environmental concerns, which is in thread with the neorealism based analysis applied to Danish defence policy in the Arctic above.

### 3.3 The Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020

The KoD strategy embraces several core liberal values. The main focus of the strategy is to promote international cooperation, peace in the Arctic based on international law (e.g. UNCLOS), growth and development, and final but not least, respect for the delicate Arctic environment.

Despite the textbook-worthy liberal topics, the KoD strategy explicitly mentions that: *"The Kingdom's Arctic strategy intends no change in the power-sharing that exists between Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, including policy areas taken over and their funding."*<sup>38</sup>

Similar to the AC and the Ilulissat Declaration, although seemingly expressing liberalism based values, small passages like the one above, show the clear power relationship

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<sup>35</sup> The **US Embassy in Denmark**: Press release: *Enhancing cooperation between United States and Greenland.*, Cph. 2006, <http://denmark.usembassy.gov/gl/iapressrelease2.html>

<sup>36</sup> **Krebs**, Martine Lind: *Doris kræver bedre svar*, KNR, Nuuk, 2014, <http://www.knr.gl/da/nyheder/doris-kræver-bedre-svar>

<sup>37</sup> **Broberg**, Hanne: *Lidegaard: Ingen fare ved Camp Century's spildevand*, Sermitsiaq.AG, Nuuk, 2014 <http://sermitsiaq.ag/lidegaard-ingen-fare-ved-camp-century-s-spildevand>

<sup>38</sup> **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark**: *Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020*, Cph., 2011, [http://um.dk/en/~media/UM/English-site/Documents/Politics-and-diplomacy/Arktis\\_Rapport\\_UK\\_210x270\\_Final\\_Web.ashx](http://um.dk/en/~media/UM/English-site/Documents/Politics-and-diplomacy/Arktis_Rapport_UK_210x270_Final_Web.ashx).

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between the partners in the Realm. The argument that the neorealism power structure remains, where the nation-state is the dominant player in the Arctic, is dealt with above, discussing Denmark's foreign and defence policies in the Arctic.

Regardless of the underlying power structure within the Realm (and externally), it is important to acknowledge that core liberal values are now pivotal in the Kingdom of Denmark's official Arctic strategy, which is more in line with Greenlandic historical foreign and defence policies. The KoD Arctic strategy is one of the clearest papers on Danish concessions to Greenlandic liberal policies allowing them to influence the Realm's Arctic policies.

### 3.4 The ICC Charter

The ICC is an international indigenous peoples' organisation, representing around 160,000 Inuit living in the Arctic regions of Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Chukotka (Russia)<sup>39</sup>. The ICC Charter from 1977 lay out the main aims, most importantly in article 3 (purpose), with 7 listings. Of the more important are: to promote rights for inuit at international level, participation in political and economical institutions, wise management of non-renewable resources, and importantly, greater 'self-sufficiency' in the Arctic region.<sup>40</sup>

Article 4 of the charter lists the functions and powers of the council, e.g establish policies, support political and economic actions, undertake assistance and 'appropriate action', and make recommendations. All points emphasise the common interests of Inuit.

The charter stresses Inuit sovereignty based on a *non-state form* of sovereignty, as this is seen as a process. This however is in contrast with recent Greenlandic priorities, for instance seen by the Act on Self-Government, along with the current Greenlandic Premier's utterances on the independence question. These factors unveil that Greenlandic policy is to follow the Westphalian approach of nation-building, proving the core conflict in the Greenlandic-Danish discussions about the construction of the Realm.

### 3.5 Greenlandic postcolonialism

Historically, Greenlandic postcolonialism dates back to the years prior to the introduction of the Home Rule in 1979, with the birth of political parties in Greenland. This part deals

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<sup>39</sup> The **ICC**, *About ICC*, 2014, <http://inuit.org/en/about-icc.html>

<sup>40</sup> The **ICC Charter**, Nuuk, 2010, <http://inuit.org/en/about-icc/charter.html>

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with elements in the most recent development in Greenlandic postcolonialism, which has been revived after the March 2013 elections to the Greenlandic Parliament (Inatsisartut).

The amount of first hand academic sources to prove current Greenlandic postcolonialism is practically nonexistent. Consequently, all sources presented here, are quotes, implementations or actions by the Greenlandic government (Naalakkersuisut), mainly deriving from the Naalakkersuisut itself or the news media.

The current Naalakkersuisut pursues an active foreign policy, focusing on strengthening Greenland's international profile as a distinctive and reliable partner. Recalling the Pram Gad postcolonial theory above, Greenlandic and Danish foreign policies are in conflict, as both follow the Westphalian interpretation of a nation-state. In an interview with the Arctic Journal, Greenlandic Premier Aleqa Hammond, expressed she *"thinks and acts as a premier of an independent nation"*.<sup>41</sup> The following three measures show how the assertive foreign policy of the current Naalakkersuisut builds on postcolonial features.

### **3.5.1 Opening of the Representation in Washington D.C.**

The *acting* is implemented by opening a representation in Washington D.C., connected to the Danish embassy, and with the aim to strengthen trade and economic relations. This has brought forward some critical voices from Copenhagen, who claims that Greenland is pushing its limits in international relations.<sup>42</sup> According to the Greenlandic representative in Washington D.C., Inuuteq Holm Olsen, it is a question of meeting foreign stakeholders directly, and refers to the representation in Brussels to the EU, along with the Faroese representations in London, Reykjavik, and the soon to come Moscow representation. Once again, the discourse reveals how the defence and foreign policy question is highly politicised in both Nuuk and Copenhagen, with the Self-Act's Chapter 4 being interpreted differently.

### **3.5.2 New Year's reception at the Representation in Brussels**

Further actions are implemented by the current Premier to strengthen Greenland's international profile. One of the more remarkable is the Premier's first New Year's reception at the representation in Brussels, for any relevant partners in the EU and its

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<sup>41</sup> McGwin, Kevin & Johannesen, Steen Ulrik: *Increasingly independent, diplomatically speaking*, The Arctic Journal, 2014, <http://arcticjournal.com/politics/increasingly-independent-diplomatically-speaking>

<sup>42</sup> (ibid.)

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members. Due to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Greenland, giving economic aid to educational purposes in Greenland, the Minister for Education, Nick Nielsen also attended the reception at Brussels. Such high-level receptions shows how the Naalakkersuisut specifically aims at creating an independent profile (separate from Denmark) to current and possible future international partners.

### 3.5.3 Greenland's boycott of the Arctic Council

The biggest turmoil internationally, caused by the assertiveness of the Naalakkersuisut played out in the summer of 2013, when Greenland chose to ban the Arctic Council (AC) for three months until August the 19th. Greenland was not satisfied with the Swedish Chairmanship of the AC, as they did not accept Greenland had its own chair at the table of the council, although this was practise prior to the Swedish chairmanship. The Canadian chairmanship (from May 2013) reintroduced the practice with Greenland and the Faroe Islands having their own chairs at the table.<sup>43</sup>

The ban must be seen within a greater time span than the summer of 2013. The AC chairmanships are biannual, thus Greenland had been without a chair for two years prior to the ban. Greenland already had diplomats working throughout the Swedish chairmanship to reintroduce the chair for Greenland, however after the March 2013 elections in Greenland, which resulted in a new Naalakkersuisut, the new policy was an either-or proposition to the Swedish chairmanship, which was denied. Critics argue that banning the AC was an unnecessary aggressive approach, potentially harming Greenland in the council. This is arguably what occurred on September 2013, when the Canadian chairmanship chose to inculcate formal rules of the meetings in the AC. As a result, the Greenlandic flag is no longer used on the AC homepage, the flag is no longer hoisted, and the name tags at meetings must say 'Denmark', as opposed to prior, where 'Greenland' was accepted.<sup>44</sup> These are the formal rules of the AC, as it is an international fora for sovereign states, however prior to the Greenlandic boycott, a more pragmatic approach was followed, in order to recognise the Self Rule of Greenland.

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<sup>43</sup> **Ritzau:** *Grønland er tilbage i Arktis Råd efter boykot.* Politiken, 2013, <http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/ECE2052660/groenland-er-tilbage-i-arktisk-raad-efter-boykot/>

<sup>44</sup> **Christensen,** Hagen Højer: *Aleqa har intet fået ud af sin boykot af Arktisk Råd,* KNR, 2013, <http://www.knr.gl/da/nyheder/aleqa-har-intet-faet-ud-af-sin-boykot-af-arktisk-raad>

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### **3.6 Part conclusion**

Greenlandic foreign and defence policy has historically been based on liberal values, which can be seen through key events in the US-Danish-Greenlandic relationship from the Second World War until today.

Greenland is a key player in the Arctic due to its strategic placement and its size. Greenland was a signatory of the Igaliku Agreement between US and Denmark, with two Joint Declarations agreeing to respect Greenlandic environment and cooperate on economic and educational strengthening between the US and Greenland. Further Greenland have successfully incorporated several of its policies in the KoD Arctic Strategy, focusing on peaceful cooperation, environment and economic growth in the Arctic region. However, Greenland's small population, and the fact that it is not a sovereign state, makes it vulnerable, although it works hard to create its own distinctive profile internationally. Thus cooperation with Denmark is necessary, since Greenlandic actions can be heavily reciprocated internationally, as seen with the Arctic Council incident, where Greenland can no longer sit at the table with its own flag and name, due to the high-stake boycott of the council's meeting in Kiruna, Sweden in May 2013.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

The current Greenlandic Government has adopted the Westphalian model of a sovereign nation state, leading to the fundamental conflict over the dispute about who holds the competence in foreign matters in Greenland and Arctic matters. The pre-March 2013 approach in Greenland focused on obtaining economic independence and to strengthen the Greenlandic foreign policy profile within the Realm, without antagonising Denmark.

Regardless of who hold the political power in Greenland, they work towards independence, which is why the current structure of the Realm is not only fragile, it is impossible to maintain, because both the Naalakkersuisut, and the opposition wants a stronger Greenlandic profile internationally.

Despite the preamble in the Act on Greenland Self-Rule, the two partners are not equal. The Act is a law passed by the Danish Parliament, and can in theory be ruled back by a majority in the Danish Parliament, where Greenland holds only 2 of 179 seats. Chapter 4 of the Act discusses the foreign affairs of the Realm. The chapter makes clear that foreign and defence policies are Danish prerogatives, where the Danish Government

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is not compelled to follow the policies by Naalakkersuisut. The Ole Spierrmann response, on behalf of the Naalakkersuisut to the Danish Government, concludes Denmark has no foreign affairs competence on areas completely taken over by the Naalakkersuisut, if the policies only *may* affect the defence or foreign affairs of the Realm. The Danish Government can only exert such power if Naalakkersuisut policies actually *do* affect defence or foreign affairs of the Realm.

Danish neorealism is evident in its foreign and defence policies in the arctic. Danish historical military dependence on the US, including the US strategic interest for Greenland, have formed Danish policies in the arctic after the Second World War. The US-Danish relationship is an example of a small state, who seeks alliance with a great power in order to secure its own existence. This alliance was important in the Cold War era, however now, with no obvious threat to the Danish nation-state, Denmark externally seeks to maximise its influence, following the Waltzian balance of power theory. Denmark has done this by exploiting the power vacuum in the Arctic, via the 2008 Ilulissat declaration creating the Arctic Five (A5), an organ consisting of the five sovereign Arctic states, differing from the Arctic Council who has non-state members, such as the ICC (although they have no vote rights). The A5 consolidates Denmark in the Arctic since Greenland is not a sovereign state, making it Denmark's only *raison d'être* in the Arctic.

Denmark has in the last years worked to introduce China into the Arctic region as a key economic player, since China is the only actor with the buying power necessary to make the huge investments in the Greenlandic mineral sector and infrastructure, along with its interest in shorter sea routes to Europe and North America. China however remains a '*near arctic state*' (a Chinese definition), ergo not an Arctic State. Russia and US in particular accept Chinese presence in the Arctic, as long their interests remain solely scientific and economical. Denmark tries to maximise its power in the social and environmental sector, where the great powers are less present. In the military sector, Denmark is sidelined by Russia and the US, and must seek its influence by working for greater cooperation on search and rescue (SAR), coast guarding, etc. In the economical sector, Denmark have succeeded creating a unique cooperation among the five nation states in the Arctic, lobbied for China to become a permanent observer in the Arctic Council, and signed the Joint Committee agreements with the US and Greenland regarding greater economic cooperation in Greenland. Denmark's neorealism approach in the Arctic is the result of its small-state status, the historical dependence on US military

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support, and its vulnerable status in the Arctic, only possible with Greenland remaining within the Realm.

Greenland has historically exercised a liberal foreign policy. Since the introduction of the Home Rule in 1979, Greenlandic politicians have worked for promotion of peace, preserve the environment and international cooperation on economy, education and science, all key liberal issues. Greenlandic governments have been less keen on US military presence in Greenland than the Danish, which current quarrels over the responsibility for cleaning up waste around the old American bases (most notably Camp Century, placed on the icecap) shows.

After the March 2013 elections to the Greenlandic Parliament (Inatsisartut), the new Naalakkersuisut have pursued a more assertive foreign policy, starting new traditions, such as the high-level New Year's Reception at the EU-representation in Brussels. The Naalakkersuisut works decisively to brand Greenland as a self-governing, reliable key player in the Arctic, and a prospecting area for mineral and hydrocarbon investments.

The assertive policy may have lead to some loss of influence in the high-stake boycott of the May 2013 Arctic Council meeting in Kiruna, Sweden. The Greenlandic three month boycott led to the incumbent chair, Canada, to inculcate the formal rules of the AC, which benefits sovereign states, resulting in the removal of the Greenlandic flag from the AC homepage, and having name tags at meetings writing only 'Denmark'.

The AC boycott reveals how an international conflict among sovereign states and a non-sovereign actor, usually turns out in favour of the sovereign state. Despite arguing who is the initiator of the conflict, the neorealism interpretation of international relations, where whenever conflict occur, the strongest part clears the table, leaving the weaker part as a loser, which creates a vicious circle, where international negotiations are often seen as an all-or-nothing competition. Denmark has benefited (although in this case unwillingly) from the Greenlandic boycott, further strengthening its position in the AC, since only the Danish flag and the denomination 'Denmark' is now accepted at meetings.

Greenland must accept working closely with Denmark while still being a part of the Realm, because the diverging agendas cause uncertainty to other actors, thereby weakening chances for, in particular, economical cooperation with other sovereign states, who does not understand the legal construction of the Realm, and which government to consult.

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## Perspective

Uncertainty about the legal construction of the Realm, and who to address when seeking representatives of the Realm in matters concerning the Arctic/Greenland, leads key players such as China to be reluctant towards economic engagement in Greenland. In China, the term *peaceful rise* is often mentioned, meaning that Chinese rise as a 21st century economic superpower, should not disturb already consolidated power structures outside China. Other nations, in particular Japan and South Korea, are equally insecure about the legal framework of the Realm. Which government should be consulted when investing in the natural resources industry in Greenland? Can Denmark prevent an agreement between Greenland and a country, only due to concerns over possible security issues? Is it not less time-consuming, and consequently more profitable to invest elsewhere, than in a bureaucratic bi-governmental system in a country with a sparse population, heavily regulated labour laws, and no infrastructure?

The Nordic countries may have a less cautious approach towards the construction of the Realm, since the Nordic countries are well known to autonomous regions, such as the Swedish speaking autonomous region in Finland, the Åland Islands. The cultural region of Sápmi, cross bordering Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, is less comparable to Greenland, since there is no singular parliament or autonomous region as such, however the regions under the Nordic countries have been allowed local parliaments since the 1990's.<sup>45</sup>

Unfortunately, investments cannot be determined by cultural and historical similarities, but by who is willing to take the risk to invest billions of dollars in Greenland. So far no Nordic or North American countries have shown such willingness, and only China and South Korea show moderate interest, but express concerns over who holds the competence. This inevitably leads to the part conclusion, that the Realm needs a much clearer distinction between who holds the competence in certain areas in the Arctic.<sup>46</sup>

Cultural and historical ties to Denmark and the Nordic countries do not legitimise a Realm where Denmark is the only sovereign state, and thus the stronger partner. Therefore, the following points needs to be addressed, when rethinking the Realm:

First, Denmark and Greenland needs to clarify the legal uncertainties in order to

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<sup>45</sup> **Sápmi**, Sweden: *A people among the people, a land in the land*, 2009  
[http://www.eng.samer.se/servlet/GetDoc?meta\\_id=1145](http://www.eng.samer.se/servlet/GetDoc?meta_id=1145)

<sup>46</sup> **Krebs**, Martine Lind: *Uklar kompetence mellem Grønland og Danmark*, KNR, Nuuk, 2013  
<http://www.knr.gl/da/nyheder/uklar-kompetence-mellem-grønland-og-danmark>

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break down the barriers to entry for foreign investments in Greenland. With both countries following the Westphalian model of a nation-state, the conflict about who holds the foreign policy competence would never be solved. The conflict is hazardous, not only to the economic development of Greenland, but to Denmark and its geopolitical importance in the Arctic. If the Act on Self-Rule continues in its current form, Greenland will see no new foreign investments, which is vital to maintain the high level of welfare in Greenland.

Second, Greenland needs to recognise the importance of Denmark as a geopolitical stabiliser in the Arctic. A weak independent Greenlandic sovereign state, may dangerously alter status quo, with the rare mutual understanding between the Arctic states regarding a peaceful Arctic. Consequently, Greenland needs to acknowledge the close and in many ways beneficial ties to Denmark and choose to cooperate with Denmark on areas where Greenland, due to its small population and economy, cannot maintain itself, especially diplomatic missions abroad, and military functions (coast guarding, surveillance, SAR etc.).

Third, Denmark must allow a stronger Greenlandic foreign policy profile. Denmark has no natural right to be present in the Arctic, and is of much less interest to the US, without Greenland. Denmark exerts cunning diplomacy by having created the A5, and working actively to include China in the Arctic, but would lose its gained power if not in some form of union with Greenland. Both the current Greenlandic Premier and her predecessor have worked actively to create a stronger Greenlandic international profile. Denmark must acknowledge the fact that although it enjoys advantages on several areas compared to Greenland, i.e. on diplomacy and military, it should in the future be as an actor in an open market, and not as now, a former colonial power, who dictates its former colony's foreign and defence policies on what too often seems to be predominantly in Denmark's own interest.

The Realm cannot continue in its current form, and can only survive if *emptied for content*, using Pram Gad's terminology. The most important decision remains: reconstruct the Realm to consist of three genuinely equal partners, but with clear distinctions on who holds the competence within areas Greenland cannot uphold itself. Ultimately, Denmark needs to recognise Greenlandic independence will happen, and ought to support this path, in order to persuade Greenland to remain in some form of union with Denmark, which would undoubtedly be beneficial to both partners, and the Arctic region as a whole.

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