

“Essentially it’s a large real estate deal”

How the US’ proposal to purchase Greenland has changed the way Danish politicians talk about the US and the relation between Denmark and Greenland



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Abstract

This dissertation examines how the US' proposal to purchase Greenland of August 2019 has affected the way in which Danish politicians talk about the US in a broader landscape of actors and the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Greenland and Denmark.

With a poststructuralist philosophy of science, the ontological positioning of the dissertation is that discourse is identity made up of narratives. With this philosophical starting point, the main theoretical framework consists of theories inspired by the concept of Foreign Policy Identity and develops the specific theoretical concepts *Self and Other*, *radical Other*, *less-than-radical Other*, and *plurality of Self*. These concepts are applied in a discourse analysis of the narratives presented by Danish politicians in two texts, which are two Danish parliamentary debates concerned with the Arctic Region from respectively 2018 and 2019. These texts are strategically chosen as they took place respectively before and after the US' purchase proposal.

It is concluded that there is a difference in the way in which the US is presented in a broader landscape of actors before compared to after the purchase proposals. The narratives on Russia and China remain unchanged in both debates, as they are almost exclusively constructed as radical Others. The narratives on other countries are unchanged as well, as these are exclusively constructed as less-than-radical Others in both debates. What changes drastically when comparing the two debates is that the US in the 2018 debate is constructed in mixed narratives placing them both in the less-than-radical Other category but also the radical Other category, while they are constructed mainly as a radical Other in the 2019 debate, and they are even sometimes mentioned alongside Russia and China. The US also receives more attention in the 2019 debate.

It is furthermore concluded that the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Greenland and Denmark has changed. These perspectives differ depending on the nationalities of the parliamentarians. In 2018, the Greenlandic and Faroese politicians are critical towards Denmark and sometimes construct it as a radical Other. The criticism continues in 2019 though to a lesser extent, and even with a narrative of togetherness occurring. In both debates, the need for equality is brought forward along with Greenlandic agency being highlighted. In 2018, Danish politicians mainly construct the relation in terms of a plurality of the Self, which changes drastically in 2019, where it still exists but is much less dominant with several narratives expressing Greenlandic agency, calling for equality, and narrate it as cooperation, which is in contrast with the 2018 dominance of the plurality narrative, and this could indicate a relation closer to that of a less-than-radical Other.

1. Introduction

1.1. Motivation

The Danes raised what was perhaps the biggest cheer of the year when they bluntly told Donald Trump where he could put his importunate bid to “buy” Greenland. The US president reacted by cancelling a long-planned state visit to Copenhagen in a fit of pique (Tisdall, 2019)

In his two articles titled respectively “Reasons to be Fearful”, and “Reasons to be Cheerful”, Simon Tisdall of the British newspaper the Guardian reviewed 2019’s major international news. In the “Cheerful” section, Tisdall deemed the Danish response to the President of the US’ proposal to purchase Greenland in August of 2019 as “perhaps the biggest cheer of the year”. This shows us two very important things: first, it shows us this is an event of international significance and relevance, and second, it shows us that being part of the Arctic puts the Danish Realm in an important position in the international sphere. But did this major event influence this important position?

Denmark holds a very special membership in an exclusive group of only 8 states as members of the Arctic Council. Denmark’s role in the Arctic only exists due to Greenland being an Arctic country and Greenland’s membership of the Danish Realm¹ (“Rigsfællesskabet”, n.d.). The Arctic region has in the last decade become an arena for geopolitical and economic interest and activities, and the region has globally gained quite a lot of attention in recent years by both the media and academia. Climate change and the anticipation of a permanently passable Northwest Passage and Northeast Passage have contributed to this interest in the region (Rasmussen & Merckelsen, 2017, p. 83). Exener-Pirot (2015) has stated that “The only thing I can claim with certainty is that as the Arctic becomes a more important political region, more political actors have wanted to be included in its work” (Exener-Pirot, 2015). Furthermore, Østhagen (2019) notes that “the region’s growing importance within the international system is becoming increasingly apparent”, mainly due to “the region’s abundant resources, predominantly oil and gas” and the

¹ The Danish Realm, also known as the Kingdom of Denmark, consists of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. The Faroe Islands and Greenland are partly autonomous with ‘home rule’, which was instated in respectively 1948 and 1979, and Greenland obtained ‘self rule’ in 2009. The Faroese Home Rule and the Greenlandic Self Rule meant that they took over certain political areas and within these areas have the legislative and the executive power (“Rigsfællesskabet”, n.d.).

region being “rich in other natural resources, such as minerals, as well as living marine resources such as fish and crab” (Østhagen, 2019). With an increased international attention towards the Arctic region in the mid-2000s came a wave of national Arctic strategies, which Danish policymakers naturally noticed. This led to the publication of a draft strategy in 2008, primarily focusing on the potential consequences for Greenland concerning a higher extent of self-determination (Jacobsen, 2019b, p. 3). In 2007, a group of Russian scientists planted a flag on the bottom of the ocean near the North Pole, and the fear of a race for resources and territory in the region caused the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs to arrange a meeting between the five Arctic Coastal States, Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Norway, Russia, and the US, and create the Ilulissat Declaration, in which the five states promise each other to solve conflicts in the area amicably and through the use of international organs and legislations. The Declaration positioned Denmark as an active actor for the first time and ultimately led to the publication of an actual Arctic strategy in 2011, which can be characterised by a broadened perspective going beyond Danish-Greenlandic relations (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Thomassen, 2018; Jacobsen, 2019b, p. 3).

Evidently, a great number of things are going on in the region currently, making it highly topical and highly relevant to investigate. In Denmark, the increasing importance of the Arctic is for instance apparent in the fact that it was announced a top 5 foreign policy priority in 2017, and the fact that there since 2011 have been annual debates on the Danish Realm and on the Arctic (Jacobsen, 2019b). Marc Jacobsen (2019a) has done an investigation of parliamentary debates on the Arctic and on the Danish Realm between 2011 and 2018 (Jacobsen, 2019b). He concludes that shifting Danish governments and parliamentarians have formulated a more Arctic-focused foreign policy identity in line with the development of new strategies and new national policies for the region (Jacobsen, 2019b, pp. 19-21).

However, the most recent debate analysed in Jacobsen’s (2019b) investigation is the 2018 parliamentary debate on the Arctic, and these conclusions thereby predate the US’ purchase proposal. The President of the United States had planned a visit to Denmark on 2 September 2019. In August 2019, the President admitted to having discussed with his advisors that the US should purchase Greenland and compared it to a real estate deal (Kielgast & Gram, 2019). Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen called the purchase proposal “an absurd discussion”, and said that Greenland is not for sale, and that Greenland is Greenlandic and not Danish, causing the President of the US to first call the comments made by Frederiksen for nasty and inappropriate, and ultimately to cancel his planned visit to Denmark (Ingvorsen, 2019). The interactions between

Denmark and the US in August 2019 make it extremely relevant to investigate if the patterns in Danish Foreign policy, identified by Jacobsen, were strong enough to remain after the US' interventions.

1.2. Problem Area and Research Question

Since the US is a big player internationally, the interactions were quite strong and caused for some intense comments, and the fact that it received a lot of attention, this major event raises the puzzle of whether the Danish position in relation to Greenland has changed due to the purchase proposals. Therefore, the objective of this dissertation is to investigate if the ways in which Danish politicians talk about the US as part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic has changed and if and how the way Danish politicians talk about the relation between Denmark and Greenland has changed in light of these events. Assuming that the US' interventions had an impact, the dissertation will be guided by the following research question:

- 1) How did the US' intervention change the way Danish politicians talk about the US as part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic?**
- 2) Along with the new role of the US, in which ways might the way Danish politicians talk about the relation between Greenland and Denmark have changed?**

Put in a more theoretically charged vocabulary, the purpose of this dissertation is to examine whether the foreign policy identity discourse has changed before and after the US' purchase proposals, and whether a change in the discourse concerning the US in a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic have affected the narratives told about the relation between Greenland and Denmark. Using poststructuralist discourse analysis, this dissertation investigates the above research question by doing a comparative analysis of two Danish parliamentary debates on the Arctic in order to be able to conclude in what ways the purchase proposals have changed the Danish positioning in relation to Greenland. As the research question deals with relations between countries and how these are talked about, this requires a focus on the concept of Foreign Policy Identity, as foreign policies depend upon representations of identity, and foreign policies produce and reproduce identities. Foreign policy is a discursive practice, in the sense that policy and identity are interlinked. Discursive enactments of foreign policies shape identities (Hansen, 2006, pp. 1, 16).

Basically, to *talk about* other actors is a discursive enactment of identity, and to deal with relations between countries and how these are talked about is to deal with foreign policy identity. Therefore, the investigation of how Danish politicians talk about the US in a broader landscape of actors and how Danish politicians talk about the relation between Greenland and Denmark requires a focus on Foreign Policy Identity.

The two Danish parliamentary debates are the 2018 and the 2019 debate on Arctic matters, and these have been chosen, as they represent the ‘before’ and ‘after’ of the US’ purchase proposals, which took place in August 2019, and the debates are from respectively 9 October 2018 and 9 October 2019. These materials will therefore through a comparative analysis allow me to conclude upon the research question.

1.3. Research Design

The research design of this dissertation can be characterised problem driven. Research designs in the social sciences are often categorised as either problem-driven or theory-driven research designs. Theory-driven research takes its starting point in a theoretical framework or argument in the literature and sets out to test, improve, or modify the argument through empirical studies. Problem driven research begins with a practical problem or phenomenon which needs to be examined further. This approach makes use of more specific empirically generated analytical questions and looks at previous attempts to study it in order to make use of existing theories and methods rather than engagement in disciplinary debates (Jacobsen, 2019a, pp. 18-19; Shapiro, 2002, p. 598). This dissertation is problem-driven rather than theory-driven, as the main objective is to explore the empirically generated research question, and because the investigation draws upon pre-existing theories and methods. Nevertheless, pursuing this empirical question has produced new theoretical insight, namely a phenomenon which I discuss under the label “plurality of the Self” (see section 2.2.5), though the main objective remains the problem rather than the theory, and the primary methods and theories drawn upon in this dissertation are pre-existing. This theoretical contribution is thus secondary to the main objective of investigating the problem at hand.

The ontological positioning at its core is that identities exist at the level of discourse, and that they are produced by actors telling narratives (see section 2.1). With this philosophical starting point, the dissertation seeks its theoretical inspiration in theories of Foreign Policy Identity and develops the specific theoretical concepts *Self and Other*, *radical Other*, *less-than-radical Other*, and *plurality of Self* with the purpose of applying them in an analysis of the *narratives*

presented by the Danish parliamentarians in the two parliamentary debates before and after the US' intervention. The concrete reading strategy consists of looking for explicit discursive articulations of the Self and the Other, and the stories explaining their relation, in order to be able to categorise the identities brought forward in relation to the specific theoretical concepts and thereby characterise the discourses of the debates. This will allow for a comparison of the identities constructed in the two debates in order to see if these have shifted from the 2018 to the 2019 debate.

Section 2 explains how a poststructuralist ontology focusing on identity and discourse lays the foundation for a theoretical framework taking its starting point in Foreign Policy Identity and with a relational understanding of identity, and how the theoretical concepts of *Self and Other*, *radical Other*, *less-than-radical Other*, *plurality of Self*, *narratives*, and *plasticity* can be utilised with the purpose of analysing the two texts. Section 3 explains the methods, including the selection of materials, the structure and presentation of the texts in the analysis, and a brief discussion of some of the limitations of this study. Section 4 carries out the empirical investigation, a discourse analysis of the two texts, the parliamentary debates from 2018 and 2019 respectively, and analyses how the various narratives and identity constructions have changed between the two debates, in order to be able to ultimately conclude how the US' intervention has changed the way Danish politicians talk about the US as a part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic, and if and how the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Denmark and Greenland has changed along with the new role of the US. Finally, section 5 concludes upon the findings and provides an answer to the research question, discusses some of the reservations of this study, and makes suggestions for future perspectives.

2. Theory

In this section, I will be outlining the main theoretical concepts of this dissertation. The theoretical starting point for this dissertation is identity, and more specifically Foreign Policy Identity, and in section 2.1 this will be elaborated, along with the link between discourse and identity, and my perspective on identity and foreign policy discourse. Section 2.2 describes the concrete theoretical concepts, including *Self and Other*, *radical Other*, *less-than-radical Other*, *plurality of Self*, and how these will be operationalised for the analysis. In section 2.3, I outline how relational identities can be narrated, as I explain the term *narrative* and argue how I deal with the notion of *plasticity* in the Danish-Greenlandic relation to the Arctic. Finally, section 2.4 summarises the theoretical framework.

2.1. A Poststructuralist Ontology: Identity and Discourse

The purpose of this dissertation corresponds with a poststructuralist philosophy of science, as the poststructuralist research agenda is concerned with scrutinising “the relationship between identity and foreign policy”, since foreign policies rely upon representations of identity, and identities are produced and reproduced through foreign policies (Hansen, 2006, p. 1). I therefore place myself among IR poststructuralists such as Ole Wæver (2002), Lene Hansen (2002; 2006), Iver Neumann (1996), and Marc Jacobsen (2019a), who have all dealt with analysing identity and Self-Other constructions in the field of International Relations. From the poststructuralist perspective, foreign policy is a discursive practice, and foreign policy discourses are social, as policymakers address political opposition and the wider public with a view to institutionalising their understandings of identities. This perspective on identity separates poststructuralism from the liberal and constructivist perspective on ideas as variables in foreign policy analyses by arguing that the identities of states, groups, or other types of collectivities cannot be separated from the discursive practices which are mobilised in the presentations and implementations of foreign policies (Hansen, 2006, p. 1). Some of the critics of poststructuralism argue that poststructuralists regard all readings as equally valid and that everything is acceptable. However, as Hansen argues, this is a misleading perspective, since the methodology of discourse analysis requires readings based on explicit discursive articulations of identities and signs and paying attention to how signs are interrelated, how Selves and Others are constructed, and how certain policies are legitimised. Therefore, if an analysis overlooks, misinterprets, exaggerates or downplays, the reading becomes weaker (Hansen, 2006, p.

41). This, I is naturally counteract by carrying out a careful investigation of the explicit discursive articulations of the identities presented in the materials.

As argued by Hansen (2006), the ontological and epistemological centre of poststructuralist discourse analysis is identity, which is comprised of and produced through foreign policy, and it is discursively and relationally constituted (Hansen, 2006, p. 33). This corresponds with my investigation, as this dissertation deals with identity in the context of foreign policy, and how it is constructed relationally and discursively through narratives. Thus, as mentioned, the ontological perspective at its core is that identity is discourse created by narratives.

2.1.1. Discourse and Identity

At the most basic level, discourse analysis is the study of language in use. Discourse works above the levels of grammar and semantics, as it captures what happens when these language forms are played out in various social, cultural, and political arenas (Mayr & Simpson, 2010, p. 5). Meaning can be viewed as emerging from the differences in various concepts, for instance distinguishing a type of animal from other types of animals, and language thereby becomes a system that can be studied. Everything that entails statements about meaning needs to understand these systems, and there is thereby a discursive element in essentially everything. Discourse can be said to be a system for the formation of statements. Discourses are made up of statements, and the unity and coherence of a discourse are simply found in the regularities exhibited in the relations between different statements (Wæver, 2002, pp. 29-30). The question of identity is a central problem within poststructuralist discourse analysis. The study of identity as discursively constituted is more or less synonymous with the relational constitution of identity; defining a collective based on who is and is not a part of it. The study of the discursive construction of collective identity is thus the study of how social divides are created. It is the study of how differences gain meaning in discourse, and it is thereby also the study of which conventions for the creation of meaning are drawn upon in the articulation of which differences are meaningful (Frello, 2003, pp. 31-32). My investigation creates a close link between discourse and identity. Discourse analysis in this dissertation is therefore the study of the discursive markers – or the language in use - distinguishing the Self from the Other, which will be explored further in section 2.2.

2.1.1. My Perspective on Identity and Foreign Policy Discourse

The theoretical starting point is Identity in Foreign Policy, since it is a necessary concept for understanding relations between countries and how these are talked about, since dealing with relations between actors in the international sphere is to deal with foreign policy, and talking about other actors in a foreign policy context is essentially the discursive enactment of identity, thus requiring an understanding of the concept of Foreign Policy Identity.

Many different scholars have conceptualised and utilised the concept of identity in the context of foreign policies and studies thereof. Since the theoretical and methodological approaches of this dissertation are similar to that of Jacobsen's (2019a) research, and since I am basing my reasoning for conducting this study on the grounds that adding new information to Jacobsen's study is necessary, it would seem logical and practical to adopt his theoretical framework. However, as the scope of Jacobsen's study is larger and more diverse and includes a larger set of data, it is necessary to make a theoretical delimitation, rather than simply adopting the entire framework. Therefore, my theoretical approach primarily focuses on the aspect dealing with Self-Other relations in Foreign Policy Identity, as it is at the epicentre of dealing with identity and discourse with the purpose of analysing relations between actors in a foreign policy context. I mainly draw upon Hansen's framework, as laid out in her 2006 work, "Security as Practice". This framework is utilised for mainly three reasons: first, it fits within the overall purpose of this dissertation, as it deals with Foreign Policy Identities and Self-Other relations and thereby provides tools to answer the research question; second, the framework is particularly wired for dealing with debates, and Hansen argues that discourse and identity are produced through and constitutive of foreign policy, and particularly through foreign policy debates² (Hansen, 2006, pp. 33, 39), and it is therefore ideal for the materials which are political debates concerned with foreign policy affairs; third, Hansen's concepts relate to the concepts not deriving (directly) from her framework, including *plurality of the Self*, *narratives*, and *Layered Foreign Policy Identities* (see sections 2.2.5, 2.3.1, and 2.3.2). Hansen argues that foreign policies are dependent upon representations of identity, and that formulations of foreign policies produce and reproduce identities. Foreign policy is to be understood as a discursive practice, and these intertwine and articulate ideals and material factors to the extent that they are inseparable. Conceptualising foreign policy as a discursive practice is to imply that policy and identity are closely linked, since it is through discursive enactments of foreign policies that identities are shaped, and this identity is meanwhile constructed as the legitimisation for the

² This refers to foreign policy debates from a wide perspective and not limited to concrete debates in for instance a parliament, but it also includes for instance a wider societal debate or a direct or indirect debate in the media.

proposed policy (Hansen, 2006, pp. 1, 16). Furthermore, Jacobsen (2019a) argues that foreign policy identity is a discursive practice which draws upon identity representations of the country of origin and other international actors, with the purpose of constructing and reconstructing meaning for the nation they represent and search for the acceptance of relevant audiences (Jacobsen, 2019a, p. 41).

To summarise, my perspective on Foreign Policy Identity, with a starting point in mainly Hansen's (2006) but also Jacobsen's (2019a) frameworks, is that discourse and identity produce and constitute foreign policy, foreign policies are dependent upon identity representations, and foreign policies produce and reproduce identities. It is a discursive practice, in the sense that policy and identity are closely linked, as the discursive enactments of foreign policies shape identities and identity constitutes the legitimisation of a given policy. By drawing upon identity representations of the country of origin and other actors of the international sphere, foreign policy identities construct and reconstruct meaning for the nation it represents. This raises the question of how a concrete analysis of foreign policy identity might be carried out, which leads to the concrete theoretical concepts used for the analysis and how they can be operationalised for the purpose of this paper, and this will be explored in the two following sections, 2.2 and 2.3.

2.2. Identity as relational

2.2.1. Linking and Differentiation

Explicit discursive articulations are required to identify a discursive construction, meaning that it is necessary to identify terms indicating a clear construction of the Other or of the Self. However, identity constructions are not simply achieved through the classification of one certain sign for the Self or the Other but rather by locating this sign within a larger system. This can be done through the dual processes of linking and differentiation. Meaning and identity are made up of a series of interrelated signs constituting relations of sameness while and the same time differentiating them from another series of juxtaposed signs. Hansen argues that even though identity is constructed relationally, not all texts construct the juxtaposition of the Self and the Other in a clear and explicit manner. For instance in the construction of an Other as 'underdeveloped', the sender will most likely not declare the Self as 'developed'. Such repetitive juxtapositions would not only be unendurable and inefficient, but the implicit Self-parts of the juxtapositions are not supposed to be questioned. The implicit Self-parts are not only supposed to resonate but are strengthened by the

articulation of the construction of the Other. Therefore, the construction of identity should analytically be placed within an attentive investigation of the signs being articulated by a certain discourse or text, the ways in which they are coupled to attain discursive stability, the occurrence of instabilities and slips between these constructions, and the ways in which competing discourses construct similar signs to different effects (Hansen, 2006, p. 39-40).

2.2.2. Identity as Self-Other Relations

Identity is constructed relationally, and Hansen argues that the conceptualisation of identity as discursive, relational, political, and social, signifies that foreign policy discourses always articulate a *Self* and several *Others* (Hansen, 2006, p. 6). Hansen argues that identity is often constructed in a juxtaposition to a radically different Other, though the differences between the Self and the Other are not necessarily radical differences. The identity of the Self will thus be different from both the radical Other and the less-than-radical Other, while the radical Other compared to the less-than-radical Other appears less different (Hansen, 2006, pp. 6, 39, 41). The analytical concerns are the degrees of difference and Otherness, which Selves and Others are produced in foreign policy discourses, and how difference is constructed (Hansen, 2006, p. 45). The degrees of differences dealt with in this dissertation are made up of the three categories radical Other, less-than-radical Other, and plurality of Self, and these will be gone through below in the following three sections.

For the purpose of my analysis, to look for utterances of Selves and Others is basically to look for personal, possessive, and reflexive pronouns and proper nouns in the form of geographical place names. In the case of the pronouns, using first person singular and plural, for example “we”, “I”, “myself”, “ours”, “ourselves”, signify references to the Self. References to the Other is thus second and third person in all numbers/genders, though in this case, mostly neuter and epicene/plural are relevant, meaning for instance “it”, “itself”, “they”, “them”, “theirs” “themselves”. Proper nouns in the form of geographical places are in this instance almost exclusively country names, and in this case the main Self is Denmark, the Realm, and the Kingdom, and for the sections dealing with the Greenlandic and Faroese perspectives, the Self is Greenland and the Faroe Islands, respectively, and also the Realm and the Kingdom. The Other is mainly all other countries, for instance the US, Russia, or Canada. The position of the speaker in relation to the geographical place thus also has a meaning for the construction of the Self. In other contexts, a Danish person might refer to Denmark as an Other, though in this context, it is safe to assume that Danish politicians refer to the Self when referring to Denmark.

2.2.3. The Radical Other and the Self

In order for the state, the Self, to construct its identity, it needs to articulate threats, and consequently, the justification of the existence of national identity is driven by constructions which turn difference into Otherness. Constituting a number of differences as inherently evil, abnormal, irrational, primitive, or dangerous is to construct the Other as a radical Other. Political leaders have historically legitimised certain security policies through constructing for instance other countries, political groups, or ethnic groups as Others who threaten the security and the social fabric of the national Self, and have consequently taken advantage of the generalised resentment of those whose identities are jeopardized by the “play of difference, contingency, and danger” (Hansen, 2006, p. 34). Identity constructions of radical Otherness stem from two problems of evil: the first problem is that the human experience of unfairness, the suffering of life, and the inescapability of death create a resentment and a need to place responsibility with someone; the second problem is that addressing this need places responsibility with the Other through the definition of the Other in terms of the sore spots in the Self’s own identity as irrational or evil (Hansen, 2006, p. 34).

When looking for instances of radical Otherness in the texts, I will look for negative attributions of an Other and critical expressions, for instance the articulation of the Other as threatening, dangerous, worrisome, concerning, or challenging.

Though constructions of radical Otherness make up an important part of foreign and security policy, not all parts of foreign policy appropriate such radical measures, and even the radical Other is often placed within a more complex set of identities (Hansen, 2006, p. 33). Constructions of less-than-radical Others might also occur in foreign policy identity discourses.

2.2.4. The Less-than-radical Other and the Self

As mentioned, the Self is not necessarily positioned in relation to a radical Other but sometimes in relation to a less-than radical Other. The less-than-radical Other is less different from the Self than the radical Other, though the Self is indeed different in comparison to the both of them (Hansen, 2006, pp. 6, 39, 41). Foreign policy identity discourses often refer to a more complex construction of identity than simply the Self versus the Other, where there in addition to the radical and threatening can exist for instance friends, acquaintances, or role models, who also contribute to the construction of identity (Hansen, 2006, pp. 37, 39; Shriver, 2013, p. 16). Basically, the radical

relation does not constitute identity on its own, but chains of less-than-radical Others help nuance the construction of identity, and the illustration of the construction of the Self in relation to an antagonistic other is evolved and expanded to also make room for less-than-radical Others (Shriver, 2013, p. 16). It is a recognition of differences in the Other who is not an enemy.

To look for utterances of less-than-radical Others is to identify discourses of differences but without negative attributions. The attributions and qualities of the less-than-radical Other can thus be positive or neutral, and they for instance includes friendship, neighbour, partnership, cooperation, agreement, or ally.

2.2.5. Plurality of the Self

Plurality of the Self is my own concept. The need to include this concept stems from the recognition that describing certain actors, particularly in the case of Greenland, as a less-than-radical Other is not necessarily enough, as there are varying degrees of closeness involved in certain constructions. Furthermore, a relation might be close and tight-knit but without necessarily having neutral or positive attributions but in fact negative attributions, yet without being a radical Other. Plurality of Self means that the Self is a plural, in the sense that the Self and the Other is equal to “Us” and “Them” but the “Us” can expand and contract. Thus, the Self can include someone else in the Self, whilst still recognising that this someone else is not the Self itself, in the sense that it is not as central as the Self. The concept of plurality of the Self involves a construction of a close relation. This occurs when there is a category or a group including the Self and one or several other actors, mainly countries in this case, involved. It is not the same as a less-than-radical Other, as plurality of the Self is a closer relation, there is often a “we” involved, in the sense that something is internal, and it is not necessarily a neutral nor positive relation. This is particularly relevant for the case of the internal relations between Denmark and Greenland (see sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.2), as the constructions of the plurality of Self in the Danish-Greenlandic relations can be both positive and negative pluralities. We can think of it as a family or community construction, where the community is still a community, even though there might be internal struggles. The Self is still the centre of this “cosmos” of the plurality, and the other part of the Self is thus a secondary Self. The Self can both be the central Self or the secondary Self, which can also be seen in the case of Greenland, as Greenland is aware of its status as a secondary Self and calls for equality within the plurality. Put in a simple manner, the key difference between less-than-radical Other and plurality

of the Self is that the less-than-radical Other construction lies in recognising differences but in a non-hostile manner, whereas the plurality construction is a family or community construction.

The operationalisation of this term lies in identifying a degree of internality, family or community constructions, as the Self and one or more actors are constructed as an entity, closeness, and tight-knit relations, regardless of whether all of these attributes identified are positive, neutral, or negative.

2.3. Narrating Relational Identities

2.3.1. Narratives

Narrative is mainly utilised throughout this dissertation as my own interpretation, which is loosely based on Hansen's (2006) *discursive enactments* and Judith Butler's (1999) concept of *performance*. From my perspective, narrative is a way of expressing that utterances and statements create stories. In other words, it is the recognition of the fact that discursive utterances are stories that are being told. Narrative is not utilised as a theoretical concept as such to describe the identity constructions and the degrees of Otherness, but it is rather the recognition of the fact that the Foreign Policy Identities brought forward throughout the texts are stories, narratives, that are being told about the Self and the Other. It is therefore utilised as a term rather than an analytical concept applied to the texts. Butler argues that identity can be viewed as a substance, a self-identical being, and that this appearance is achieved through performative twists of language and discourses concealing the fact that "being" an identity is essentially impossible. Identity is both intentional and performative, and the use of the word performative suggests a dramatic element in the construction of meaning and identity (Butler, 1999, pp. 25, 179). Hansen (2006) describes how in a foreign policy context, identity comes into being through discursive enactments of foreign policies (Hansen, 2006, p. 19). Narrative is thus the recognition that constructions of identities in Self-Other relations are made up of stories, narratives. These narratives occur in the statements given in the materials, and for this dissertation, it means that when referring to something as a narrative, it refers to the story that is embedded within a statement or a number of different statements.

2.3.1. Zooming in and out: Plasticity in Identity Constructs and Layered FP Identities

Something which complicates the characterisation of the identity constructions and Self-Other relations is that these constructions can be fluid. One particular aspect that complicates identity is

how the Danish construction of the Self is not always a stable construction and can to a certain extent be quite plastic, in the sense that it can zoom in and out and include or exclude the rest of the Realm depending on the context. If the Self sometimes means Denmark and other times Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, defining the Self and its identity construction and the relation to the Other can be complicated. One way of approaching this is through Wæver's (2002) framework of layered foreign policy identities³. Jacobsen (2019b) makes use of this concept and applies it to the context of the Danish Realm, replacing 'Europe' with 'Arctic'. Jacobsen argues that in the second layer, the Danish core is related to the Arctic through the relationship with Greenland in the Danish Realm (Jacobsen, 2019b, pp. 4-5)

Concerning the question of plasticity in identity constructions, I therefore follow Jacobsen's (2019b) arguments, and utilise this to express that due to the mechanisms happening in the second layer that is the Danish-Arctic relation, the Danish external presentation and participation in Arctic matters can *only* be relevant in the context of the Realm, since Denmark without Greenland would not be Arctic. Therefore, for the purpose of my analysis, the only time where Denmark is relevant on its own is when the relationship between Greenland and Denmark is dealt with. Whenever other countries are involved, 'Denmark' always means 'the Realm' in the context of the Arctic; though this does not apply the other way around, as Greenland is an Arctic country on its own and does not need Denmark to define its Arcticness. This concept will thus not be utilised as an analytical strategy or theoretical framework as such, but it is rather a 'baseline', since the legitimacy of the two debates lies within the second layer, as Denmark's presence and relevance in the Arctic relies upon the Greenlandic membership of the Realm, without which the debates would be completely redundant and thereby non-existent. The framework of layered identities is thus not utilised as a theoretical concept applied in the analysis, but it is nevertheless important for the justification of considering Denmark on its own to be an irrelevant actor in an Arctic foreign policy context, as the relation to the Arctic is gone without the relation to Greenland, and Denmark therefore only means the Realm in international contexts concerned with the Arctic.

³ Wæver focuses on the European context and suggests a three-tiered structure of discourse analysis and a relational understanding of identity. The first layer is the construction of the concepts of state and nation, and it revolves around what the idea of the state is, what the idea of the nation is, and how they are tied together. This is the foundation of a country, which has developed throughout history and is thus very rarely changed. The second layer deals with how the basic constellation from the first level is connected to 'Europe'. The third layer consists of the specific European policies pursued by specific groups of actors, often political parties, and it is at this level the concrete policies are found (Wæver, 2002, p. 33)

2.4. The Theoretical Framework Summarised

My theoretical framework consists of foreign policy identities in Self-Other relations, and how the Self is positioned within a range of different identities in relation to different types of Others, including the concepts of the radical Other, the less-than-radical Other, and plurality of the Self. These terms form the theoretical foundation of identifying the narratives presented in the materials. In the examination of the foreign policy identities presented in the 2018 and 2019 debates, I will be looking for signs of Otherness and the degrees of Otherness by identifying different markers such as negative attributions, positive or neutral attributions, and community constructions. My framework recognises that identity constructions are stories being told, which is found in the use of the term narratives. The concept of plasticity allows for the recognition that Denmark in relation to other countries in an Arctic contexts always means Denmark and Greenland.

Thereby, answering the question of how the US' intervention has changed the way Danish politicians talk about the US as a part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic, and if and how the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Denmark and Greenland has changed along with the new role of the US involves a careful investigation of the texts and the language in use by using the theoretical framework as the enabler allowing to look for signs of the different degrees of Otherness, in order to categorise the identities presented in the two texts and compare them to see if the narratives have changed after the US' interventions. This way, the theoretical framework is utilised in an analysis which allows me to answer the research question.

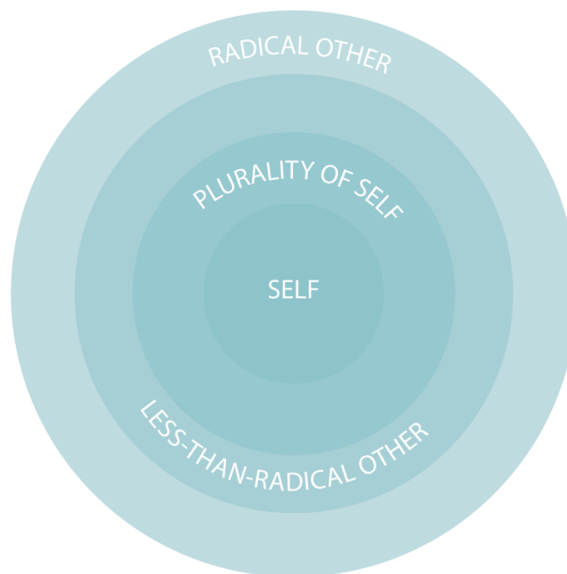


Fig. 1 (compiled by author): Visual representation of how the Self is placed at the centre of a cosmos connected to the other actors with varying degrees of Otherness.

2. Methods

This section deals with the methods of this dissertation, including a description of the selection of empirical data, the structure and presentation of the analysis, and a discussion of some of the limitations of this investigation.

2.1. Collection and Selection of Empirical Data

The empirical data is made up of text in the form of two debates on the Arctic cooperation in the Danish Parliament from 2018 and 2019 respectively (Folketinget, 2018; Folketinget, 2019). These debates take place once every year and have done so since 2011. They are based on a written review done by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but they are at the same time affected by current affairs (Folketinget, 2011). Every year since 2014, a ‘twin’ debate dealing with the Realm has also taken place, which is based on a written review done by the Prime Minister (Folketinget, 2014).

Hansen (2006) argues that texts are to be selected based on three criteria: first of all, they are characterised by a clear articulation of identities and policies; second, that they are widely read and attended to; and finally, that they have the formal authority to define political position (2006, p. 76). The two chosen parliamentary debates thus fall within these criteria, and are therefore ideal materials for this investigation. Furthermore, Jacobsen (2019a) argues that parliamentary debates are convenient as empirical data, since politicians are often put in situations where it is necessary to mobilise a high amount of rhetorical power, whilst often drawing upon constructions of the Self and the Other in the attempt to legitimise certain policies (Jacobsen, 2019a, pp. 4-5).

The 2018 debate represents the ‘before’, and the 2019 debate represents the ‘after’ of the US’ purchase proposals, which took place in August 2019, and the debates are from respectively 9 October 2018 and 9 October 2019. These materials will therefore through a comparative analysis allow me to conclude how the US’ intervention has changed the way Danish politicians talk about the US as a part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic, and if and how the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Denmark and Greenland has changed along with the new role of the US. The materials thereby provide me with the information needed to shed light on the problem at hand and eventually conclude upon the research question, and they are therefore highly suitable materials for this dissertation.

2.2. Structure and Presentation of the Analysis

The analysis first deals with the 2018 debate, followed by the 2019 debate, and finally an analysis of the similarities, differences, and changes between the two debates, as this structure allows me to answer the research question. The first two sections of the analysis will both be structured in four parts: US-Denmark relations, Russia/China-Denmark relations, Other countries-Denmark relations and Greenland-Denmark relations. In order to be able to explore what has changed from the 2018 debate to the 2019 debate, I will be examining these exact different relations. The relation to the US and the relations between Denmark and Greenland are relevant to look at because they are at the heart of the research question and the purpose of this dissertation. Russia and China take up a lot of space in the two debates and therefore deserve a section of their own, and they also help to showcase the complexity of the constructions of Otherness, and how Denmark is placed within a web of identity constructions. Finally, the constructions of the relations to other countries might also have changed and could potentially also show something about the various Other-constructions, and these will therefore also be explored.

As this is a political debate in the Danish parliament, there are politicians representing various parties, and different opinions will be brought forward and sometimes most likely also different narratives and identity constructions. I will not be mentioning names or parties, in order to avoid removing focus from the narratives and the analytical points, because it is outside the purpose of this dissertation to analyse the connection to the political parties but rather to examine the identity constructions brought forward in this forum. The politicians' names, nationalities, and political parties are to be found in the footnotes. For the two sections dealing with the relations between Denmark and Greenland and the Faroe Islands, sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.2, there will be two subsections: one dealing with the perspectives of the Danish politicians, and the other dealing with the Greenlandic and Faroese perspectives, since there in this case are some clear differences in the narratives presented depending on the nationalities of the politicians.

2.3. Limitations

As with all academic investigations, this dissertation naturally has its limitations. One of these limitations is the scope of this dissertation, as there are restrictions in terms of the time frame and the page numbers, which adds external pressures to the writing process and limits the extent of this dissertation. However, as the methods, theories, and materials have been chosen to suit this exact

framework with the scope and its limitations in mind, the investigation is for this purpose satisfactory.

The restrictions in terms of time and space do not allow for a large set of data, and this is naturally reflected in the amount of data used in this investigation. However, the materials have been chosen strategically with the purpose of answering my research question, and it will thereby allow me to adequately conclude upon the findings.

Another restriction concerning the materials is that the two texts, the two parliamentary debates, are in Danish, and the quotes utilised in the analysis are translated into English. This could potentially cause a problem, as some things could get lost in translation. All in all, this is not going to cause any significant issues for my analysis, as the importance of translating the texts weighs up the potential issue of having linguistic disruptions with a mix of Danish and English and also of prospective readers not being able to understand Danish.

4. Analysis

This section contains the analyses of the two parliamentary debates on the Arctic from 2018 and 2019, using the methodological and theoretical framework laid out in sections 2 and 3. The 2018 debate will be analysed first in section 4.1, followed by the analysis of the 2019 debate in section 4.2, and finally section 4.3 analyses the two debates with a focus on the key similarities and differences in order to be able to conclude whether the US' intervention has changed the way Danish politicians talk about the US as a part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic, and if and how the way in which Danish politicians talk about the relation between Denmark and Greenland has changed along with the new role of the US.

4.1. 2018 Parliamentary Debate on the Arctic

Following the methodological and theoretical frameworks laid out in sections 2 and 3, this section deals with the 2018 Parliamentary debate on the Arctic, structured in four different parts dealing with different identity and Self-and-Other constructions in US-Denmark relations, Denmark-Russia/China relations, relations with other countries, and Denmark-Greenland relations, and finally a section summarising the different findings of the analysis of the 2018 debate.

4.1.1. US-Denmark relations: The Friendly Neighbour who Instigates Tension

The US is mainly presented in two different narratives, as a less-than-radical Other in the form of a natural ally and as a radical Other in the form of someone who contributes to the 'tension' in the Arctic. On a question of what Denmark needs to pay attention to regarding American interests in military matters in the Arctic, it is argued that⁴:

Greenland is after all situated where Greenland is situated, and Greenland is a close neighbour to both the US and Canada, and since the US is our ally, it is obvious that they are a part of it. They solve a great number of tasks for us, including surveillance and other things, and I therefore think that the Americans in many ways play a natural part of it and have also in many ways been a shield for the Greenlandic population for many years. And then of course there have been examples of them being a little bit

⁴ Henrik Brodersen of the right-wing party *Dansk Folkeparti*, the Danish People's Party

careless with the environment and so on, but I think the Americans have to be preferred over some of the others that have been mentioned (Folketinget, 2018)

Here, the construction of the US as less-than-radical Other is created, as this narrative is for instance legitimised by using the term “ally” but also the term “neighbour”, which is typically associated with someone that lives close to you and helps you. Furthermore, terms such as “natural” and “obvious” show that this is something which is given and even manifest and thus something which cannot be questioned. Presenting the Americans as a “shield for the Greenlandic population” shows first of all that the US is considered to be the big and strong one who is capable of protecting, and second of all that the Greenlandic population is in need of protecting, and finally it presents a narrative in which there is a debt of gratitude and even an obligation towards the US. The criticism towards the US is proactively anticipated by saying that they have been “a little bit careless with the environment and so on”, and by using “a little bit” and “and so on”, he is belittling their carelessness with the environment. This statement in relation to the statement on the US as a shield presents it as though the Americans deserve for their less ideal behaviours to be disregarded, since they are a neighbour that acts as a shield and are an obvious “part of it”, but also because they are to be preferred over “some of the others that have been mentioned”. By “others” he is most likely referring to other nations showing interest in the Arctic which was mentioned in an earlier statement⁵, including Brazil, Turkey, Singapore, India, and China (Folketinget, 2018). Rather than naming these countries, distancing language is used by calling them “some of the others”, which both contributes to the point of legitimising the US as a friend and a natural ally, while it at the same time distances them simply by referring to them as “others” and thus making their interests in the Arctic less relevant compared to those of the US. Another statement also presents the US as a less-than-radical other⁶:

We have seen recently that Denmark - preferably in cooperation with the US – actively took part in the airport projects in order to avoid Chinese involvement and dominance in this field (Folketinget, 2018).

The US is presented as a means to avoid Chinese influence, and someone Denmark can cooperate with against China, meaning the US is a less-than-radical Other assisting Denmark against a radical

⁵ Henrik Brodersen

⁶ Magni Arge of the Faroese left-wing separatist party *Tjóðveldi*, the Republican Party

Other, China, as they are constructed in a negative light as someone who is to be “avoided”. Notably, the cooperation with US is to be preferred, which reinforces the construction of the US as a less-than-radical Other to Denmark, and thereby also showcases how identity constructions are not simply constituted of radical Others against the Self but also “preferred” less-than-radical Others.

As mentioned, the US is also presented as a radical Other in the debate. This can be seen in the following quote where it is argued that Russian armament in the Arctic is connected to the US’ interest in the region, which contributes to increased tension in the Arctic⁷:

Is it not connected to the investment interest that the US has recently presented to Greenland. The US needs to arm itself in Greenland. In other words: the mantra about peace, low tension, and cooperation which is repeated in the review as a goal which has already been achieved through the Danish and Greenlandic initiatives via the Illulissat Declaration does unfortunately not look as sustainable as the review prescribes. [...] The US has upgraded the radar on Thule Air Base and is now declaring itself that the Base is directly involved in the functioning of the missile shield (Folketinget, 2018)

This quote shows that the US’ actions do not align with the Danish and Greenlandic interests of “peace, low tensions, and cooperation”, and that the US through their non-approved behaviours of armament, upgrading the radar, and having the Base involved in the functioning of a missile shield are contributing to what is narrated as unsustainable practices. The US is presented as someone that does not fit in with the Danish Self-understanding in the identity construction of peace, low-tension, and cooperation and is thus in this narrative a radical Other. Another narrative in which the US is a radical Other arises in the following question on increased tension in the Arctic⁸:

Despite the fact that the Illulissat declaration has been re-confirmed, there is still an armament going on which everybody can see. [...] We see it in the form of the American interest in dual use of airports in Greenland. What is the biggest challenge of the Kingdom in the near future regarding this armament in the Arctic? (Folketinget, 2018)

⁷ Aleqa Hammond of the Greenlandic centre-left separatist party *Nunatta Qitornai*, the Descendants of Our Country

⁸ Aleqa Hammond

Here, a connection between “American interest” and “challenge” is created, making this a radical Other construction, and it is stated that this is something “which everybody can see”, making it something obvious that is difficult to question or argue against. Another radical Other construction can be found in the following quote⁹:

There is of course the Americans where we in extension of Denmark’s work with avoiding Chinese financing of new airports on Greenland experience that the American Ministry of Defense – perhaps a bit surprisingly – turned up and declared itself ready to analyse it and possibly invest in Greenlandic Airports. I am saying all of this because it illustrates what is going on in the Arctic Region at the moment, which is that some of the big actors are taking steps that risk increasing the tension (Folketinget, 2018).

The US is presented as someone who contributes to the increased tension in the Arctic by creating a link between the US’ interest, and also the Chinese interest, to the increased tension taking place in the Arctic, and the US is thus a radical Other going against the Danish Self-understanding of non-tension.

4.1.2. Russia and China as threatening radical Others

China and Russia are put in the same category here, as they are several times put in the same categories during the debate and similar narratives are created around the two. Both countries receive a lot of attention, and predominantly from a critical perspective. One particular radical Other construction taking up a lot of space in the debate is how Russia and China are considered to be threatening. In the debate, it is expressed¹⁰ that Russia and China pose a risk, as Russian and Chinese ships might cut sea cables in the Greenlandic Sea and thus cut the internet connection. This is followed up by a statement¹¹ saying that anyone who breaches someone else’s territory and carries out attacks such as these are doing it because they want to cause harm or collect information

⁹ Nick Hækkerup of the Danish party *Socialdemokraterne*, the Social Democratic Party

¹⁰ Aaja Chemnitz

¹¹ Henrik Brodersen

that they should not possess (Folketinget, 2018). Another statement focusing on Russia argues that¹²:

We need to be aware of potential conflicts in the Arctic, and we need to pay special attention to the Russians – we have also heard about the Chinese. And in the past couple of years, with an increasingly aggressive foreign policy from for instance Putin’s side, we need to look into a possibly intensification of the level of conflict in the Arctic with strong concern. In Denmark we have experienced violations of our own Airspace and military exercises close to our borders, and even Sweden has considered it necessary to raise their defence budgets and re-establish conscription because of Putin’s behaviour – even here in the Nordic countries. That is why we need to pay attention to increased Russian military activity in the Arctic region (Folketinget, 2018).

With terms such as “increasingly aggressive foreign policy”, “intensification of conflict”, “violations”, “increased Russian military activity”, a clear connection between mostly Russia but also China and conflict is created and image of these as a threatening Others takes form. Other utterances presenting Russia as a radical Other include: the Russians are building up armaments¹³, the Russian aggression is intensifying¹⁴, Great Britain is placing 800 soldiers in Northern Norway permanently because they believe the danger of a Russian aggression is too large¹⁵, and raising the question of whether it is sensible to cooperate with them in the North when conflicts in the South are taking place¹⁶ (Folketinget, 2018).¹⁷ The following quote on China further contributes to these critical narratives¹⁸:

China published their first Arctic strategy, in which it is established that the Arctic, according to the Chinese understanding, is not to be viewed as a defined region, and that it is not up to the Arctic states to decide the rules and norms of the region. China

¹² Erling Bonnesen of the Danish party *Venstre*, the Liberal Party

¹³ Aleqa Hammond

¹⁴ Sjúrdur Skaale of the Faroese Social Democratic Party, *Javnaðarflokkurin*, the Equality Party

¹⁵ Sjúrdur Skaale

¹⁶ Sjúrdur Skaale

¹⁷ What is meant by “Conflicts in the South” is the cases of Crimea, Salisbury, and supporting Assad (Folketinget, 2018)

¹⁸ Nick Hækkerup

has a role to play, according to them, when it comes to research, sailing, resource extraction, fishing, cable and pipeline laying, etc. That is – compared to how it has been in the past – something brand new and much more offensive from the Chinese side. (Folketinget, 2018)

The implicit meaning here is that the Arctic *is* a defined region, it *is* up to the Arctic states to decide the rules, and that they are *not* entitled to play a role, even though they believe they do – “according to them”. Furthermore, it strengthens the narrative that Chinese interest and attention in the Arctic is offensive and thus unwanted, which can also be seen in the following, where it is argued that¹⁹:

[...] since the Chinese interest in co-financing airport building in Greenland is now being taken over by Denmark and the US, I do not think the Chinese interest in investing in the Arctic will disappear (Folketinget, 2018).

Stating that the Chinese interest will not disappear implies a wish for it to disappear, which essentially constructs it as a threat. Here, a characterisation of China is given and their claim to the Arctic is questioned²⁰:

[...] [the Chinese] are now actively saying that they feel like they are a natural part of the Arctic. This is a viewpoint that I in no way share (Folketinget, 2018)

Deeming their claim to be illegitimate signifies a right to be the judge of whose claim to the Arctic is legitimate or illegitimate, and having the right to evaluate such a thing indirectly denotes the Self’s understanding of its claim as legitimate. Furthermore, it directly distances China from this context by explicitly stating that their belief of being a natural part of the Arctic is not shared.

With all of these utterances, a construction of Russia and China as radical Others takes form, whilst an implicit Self is created also created: one that sticks to the rules, is being threatened, has a legitimate claim to the Arctic, and one that is less militarised, more peaceful, and shies away from conflict. Interestingly, this narrative of the peaceful Self is being challenged by the following statement on Russian behaviour²¹:

¹⁹ Aleqa Hammond

²⁰ Henrik Brodersen

²¹ Erling Bonnesen

[...] This might also raise the question of whether we should increase our military presence in the Arctic, of course without contributing to an escalation of the militarisation of the region (Folketinget, 2018).

Here, Danish armament in the Arctic is being legitimised both on the grounds of the Russian armament taking place but also because of the peaceful narrative in itself: more military presence but without escalating militarisation. The statement is thus both challenging the narrative whilst also upholding it by arguing for armament for the purpose of less conflict.

4.1.3. Other Countries as less-than-radical: Partnerships and ‘Exotic Countries’

A number of other countries are mentioned in the debate, though these do not nearly take up as much space as the US, China, Russia, and Greenland do. On the high amount of attention and rising interest in the Arctic, it is expressed that²²:

When the negotiations on the Arctic take place, there are observers from such exotic places as Brazil, Turkey, Singapore, and India. That is not exactly what one usually connects with the Arctic. I certainly did not, until I was made aware of the extent of the Global interest (Folketinget, 2018)

Labelling these countries as “exotic” and expressing that it is “not exactly what one usually connects with the Arctic” denotes a questioning of the legitimacy of them as observers. However, it is also an expression of fascination and exotisation. This is what Hansen addresses as a subcategory of less-than-radical Other, where the Other is constructed as “exotic and different from the West yet mysteriously attractive” (Hansen, 2006, p. 35). In this context, this group of countries is constructed as different from the Self in their exoticness and non-Arcticness. Another construction of other countries involves considering them as partners²³:

²² Henrik Brodersen

²³ Anders Samuelsen, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time and member of the Danish right-wing party *Liberal Alliance*, the Liberal Alliance

It is very positive that the five coastal states to the Arctic Sea and China, Japan, the EU, South Korea, and Iceland on 3 October 2018 signed an agreement with the purpose of securing that no fishing will take place in the high sea part of the Arctic Sea, until there is a sufficient amount of scientific proof that it will take place in a sustainable manner. The agreement is a good example of international cooperation in the Arctic (Folketinget, 2018)

The presentation connects these countries to a “good example” and “international cooperation”, and is thus a narrative of partnership with less-than-radical Others. Interestingly, China who is otherwise almost exclusively portrayed as a radical Other throughout the debate is here in the company of other less-than-radical Others. Another instance of a positive relation with another country can be found in the following presentation of Canada²⁴:

As another good example of cooperation in the Arctic and the principles in the Ilulissat Declaration, the Kingdom of Denmark and Canada in May 2018 put together a joint working group with the purpose of looking at the unresolved maritime law matters between the Kingdom and Canada (Folketinget, 2018)

A conflict is presented here, “unresolved maritime law matters”, but with the purpose of looking at solving the conflict. “Good example” and “cooperation” portray a positive relation, making this a presentation of a less-than-radical Other.

4.1.4. Denmark-Greenland Relations: Conflicting Views and Shifting Perspectives

Throughout the debate, quite different narratives are brought forward when it comes to Denmark-Greenland relations, and this mainly depends on whether the politicians are Danish or Greenlandic and Faroese, which is why the two perspectives will be gone through separately, the Danish politicians’ perspective first, followed by the Greenlandic and Faroese.

²⁴ Anders Samuelsen

The Danish Narratives: Positive Plurality of the Self

First of all, a widely used narrative is a form of positive plurality of the Self, in which Denmark is the centre of the Self and Greenland is the secondary Self. It is quite often highlighted by Danish politicians that the members of the Realm cooperate, are an entity, and are stronger together. It is for instance argued that²⁵:

The Arctic is a highly prioritised foreign policy area for Denmark and the Realm. It is essential that Denmark together with the Faroe Islands and Greenland has a clear and sharp focus on this area. [...] It should be underlined how important the Realm is in the Arctic, and our voice is a lot stronger when we stand together and when we cooperate (Folketinget, 2018).

First, the three actors are separated by naming each of the three members, though by using the word “together”, a connection is still created and a sense of togetherness. Immediately after, the terms “our voice”, “we stand together”, and “we cooperate” are used, which refers back to the Realm and are terms that construct the three nations as an entity. Using terms such as “essential” and “our voice is a lot stronger” creates a necessity and an insistence on the togetherness. This construction of positive plurality is continued²⁶:

It is a massive responsibility which rests on the only nation, the only Kingdom, which is a member of both NATO, the EU, and Arctic Five. No other country in the entire world is. Maybe we should take it a bit more seriously. [...] We are a great power when it comes to climate research, and it is one of the greatest things we contribute with in the World’s evaluation of how much and in what ways you can negotiate. [...] This too calls for increased coordination and strengthening (Folketinget, 2018)

The Realm is constructed as something unique, “the only nation, the only Kingdom” and “no other country in the entire world is”, and as a great power and this is utilised to justify a closer relation in the plurality. This argument is seconded in the following quote²⁷:

²⁵ Henrik Brodersen

²⁶ Martin Lidegaard of the Danish centre-left party, *Radikale Venstre*, the Danish Social-Liberal Party

²⁷ Naser Khader of the Danish party, *Det Konservative Folkeparti*, The Conservative People's Party

It is not to be taken for granted that the Kingdom has such a strong voice as we do today. It requires that we continue to focus on the area, and that we continue to have a strong internal cooperation with our fellow Realm members Greenland and the Faroe Islands (Folketinget, 2018)

Seemingly, the ‘we’ that is referred to not always the same ‘we’, as the first refers back to the Kingdom which encompasses all three actors, while the second seems to refer to Denmark, as he calls for more cooperation with Greenland and the Faroe Islands. This presents the centrality of the Self as the primary Self in plurality with the secondary Self. Like the previous quote, this quote constructs a strong and powerful Self which is in a plurality, and this has its basis of existence and needs to remain due to its strength and power. Furthermore, the use of the word “internal” signifies that this is a construction of a plurality of the Self. This plurality construction is strengthened when it is argued that²⁸:

We need to send a clear signal that we stand together in the Realm – we stand together in the Arctic and we will of course not be pressured out of this (Folketinget, 2018)

The plurality of the Self and the secondary Self here exists against the radical Others, as he puts the ‘we’, the Self, in contrast to those that “we need to send a clear signal” to and those who attempt to “pressure” the Self “out of this”. A different view is presented in the following quote which addresses a problem in the relation between the two²⁹:

First of all it goes without saying that Greenland should be a part of it, when matters concerning the Arctic are discussed, because that concerns Greenland. We have actually [...] suggested that we should look at the whole method of cooperation in the Realm. Should there be a Realm minister – a post which rotates between the three countries – who works with making things function in the cooperation? But first of all we need to get to a place where it is taken for given that when it concerns Greenland, Greenland should be at the table (Folketinget, 2018)

²⁸ Erling Bonnesen

²⁹ Rasmus Nordqvist of the Danish green centre-left party *Alternativet*, the Alternative

“Cooperation in the Realm” makes it a borderline less-than-radical Other construct, as there does not seem to be an entity construction present and “cooperation” is a typical less-than-radical Other construct. Meanwhile, saying “making things function” suggests that something is not functioning ideally as it is right now, since something needs to be done in order for it to function. A notion of inequality can be found when it is addressed that Greenland is not “a part of it”, and it is argued that this inequality should be countered as “Greenland should be at the table”.

Another interesting narrative of inequality emerging from the Danish perspective, though from a different angle that does not address the inequality, is the Greenlandic dependency on Denmark as a protector, which can be seen in the following statement³⁰:

Among the initiatives taken by the government is the cooperation agreement with the Greenlandic Self Rule about the emergency management, which means that Greenland can request the Danish Emergency Management Agency for assistance in case of accidents and crises (Folketinget, 2018)

Here, it becomes evident that the relationship between Denmark and Greenland is not an equal relationship, as the Denmark is someone that protects Greenland. It implies that Greenland needs Denmark to protect them and have someone they can request assistance from. This also becomes evident when it is argued that³¹:

The Defence deals with the Danish parts of the tasks in the Arctic. The main task is of course of military character. There needs to be a defence of Greenland and the Faroe Islands too (Folketinget, 2018)

The Defence refers to the Danish Defence, and Denmark is constructed as someone that *needs* – it is a necessity - to defend Greenland and the Faroe Islands, and it thereby shows Denmark’s responsibility towards Greenland and the Faroe Island, who, in this narrative, are constructed as incapable of defending themselves. It is also stated that³²:

³⁰ Carsten Bach of the Danish right-wing party, *Liberal Alliance*, the Liberal Alliance

³¹ Henrik Brodersen

³² Henrik Brodersen

I am delighted to see that the Government's foreign and security policy strategy prioritises the Arctic, and that it focuses on economic development for the people of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. [...] It is only natural that the Government does as much as it can to handle the interests of the Greenlandic and Faroese people in the Arctic (Folketinget, 2018)

Here, there is also a need for protection, but rather than military protection, it is economic development for the people, and Denmark's responsibilities in securing economic development. Thus, Denmark is constructed as having both an economic and military protective responsibility towards Greenland.

The Greenlandic and Faroese Narratives: Denmark as the Radical Other

Something which defines the narratives presented by the Greenlandic and Faroese politicians in the debate is the construction of the relation between Denmark on one side and Greenland and the Faroe Islands on the other side mainly as an issue in which Denmark is the radical Other who does not understand Greenlandic issues, coordinate with Greenland, or address the Greenlandic matters properly. This can for instance be seen in the following statement in which an inequality in the relation is addressed³³:

It would be interesting to see how you could strengthen the competencies in Greenland, with a view to taking over more and more and becoming more and more equal partners (Folketinget, 2018).

If work needs to be done in order for the partners to become more equal, it means that they are not equal as it is right now. A similar point is articulated in the following quote where it is expressed that Greenland feels ignored when it comes to matters concerning them³⁴:

Very often Greenland feels overlooked and is not invited to the table when topics that have to do with Greenland are discussed; for instance when Denmark is talking to the US about possible airport building or armament in the Arctic areas, where Greenland

³³ Aaja Chemnitz of the Greenlandic socialist separatist party *Inuit Ataqatigiit*, the Community of the People

³⁴ Aleqa Hammond of the Greenlandic centre-left separatist party *Nunatta Qitornai*, the Descendants of Our Country

is mentioned but is not at the table. After all, Greenland is a major part of the foreign policy in Denmark. What needs to be done in order to ensure that this equality can become stronger? (Folketinget, 2018)

As with the above quote, this quote addresses the inequality in the relation and calls for equality. Denmark is constructed as someone who blocks Greenland's access to certain fora, and since Denmark blocks something for Greenland, it goes against Greenlandic interests and the presentation of Denmark in this narrative is leaning towards the radical Other category. The issues between the two actors are addressed more directly in the following quote³⁵:

The most surprising thing for me though is the points which are not addressed in the review. It seems like all potential areas of conflict between Greenland and Denmark have been left out of the review (Folketinget, 2018).

This presents something quite different than the overall positive picture of cooperation, unity, plurality, and non-radicalness that the Danish politicians are painting. On the contrary, in this construction, Denmark seems to be a radical Other, since there is a potential conflict between them. The following quote also presents Denmark as an obstacle³⁶:

It saddens me to see the hindrances that Danish formalism sometimes puts in the way of a natural development of the cooperation between the Faroese, Icelandic, and Greenlandic people (Folketinget, 2018)

A group of the former Danish colonies is constructed, where Denmark is the radical Other, who is hindering the cooperation between the three nations. Apart from the above narratives of Denmark acting as a hindrance, a narrative which also emerges is that Denmark is dependent on Greenland, which shifts the perspective from the discourse in which Greenland needs Denmark for protection and development presented by some of the Danish politicians. It is expressed that³⁷:

³⁵ Aleqa Hammond

³⁶ Magni Arge

³⁷ Aaja Chemnitz

The Realm is represented in the Arctic among powerful and influential countries primarily because of Greenland's role in the Arctic. Naturally, efforts with the North Atlantic nations should be considered and respected (Folketinget, 2018)

A give-and-take relation is presented, where Denmark belongs in the privileged company that is the Arctic countries only because of Greenland, and Denmark needs to respect and consider Greenland because of this dependency. This is seconded in the following quote³⁸:

In the much-discussed Taksøe Report, which was released a couple of years ago, the Realm was referred to as an Arctic power. The possibilities are there of course first and foremost because of Greenland and second of all because of the Faroe Islands, and that shows how important Greenland and the Faroe Islands are to Denmark's position and Denmark's weight in the world. It also shows how important and how dependent Denmark's foreign policy is on a good relationship and a strong cooperation within the Realm (Folketinget, 2018).

Once again, it is expressed that Denmark depends on Greenland and the Faroe Islands and for this reason needs to maintain a good relationship with them to remain in this powerful position provided by the two other members of the Realm.

4.1.5. Summary

The US is constructed a less-than-radical Other in the form of a manifest ally that helps and protects Denmark against radical Others such as the Chinese, someone Denmark ought to have a debt of gratitude towards and appreciate, and as someone who is to be preferred over other nations. However, in some ways the US is also constructed as a radical Other, when it is brought forward that they are contributing to an increased tension in the Arctic region, which goes against the Danish Self-image of peace, low tension and disarmament.

The main narratives on Russia and China present them as radical Others with Russia being aggressive and arming and China invading and investing. Chinese influence is unwanted and Russian meddling and military activities are also unwanted. The narratives on the two countries are

³⁸ Sjørður Skaale of the Faroese Social Democratic Party, *Javnaðarflokkurin*, the Equality Party

in contrast with the main implicit Self-presentations of peace, disarmament, avoiding conflict, and sticking to the rules.

Other countries than the above mentioned countries play a smaller role throughout the debate. These countries are mainly presented in a positive or neutral light, in the form of less-than-radical Others for Denmark to cooperate with.

The most dominant Danish perspective on the Greenland-Denmark relations is that of a positive plurality of the Self, in which the Realm is praised as an entity, a great power, and an emphasis is put on the importance of the togetherness of the parts of the Self. Furthermore, another narrative presents a perspective of Greenland needing Denmark for protection and development, both on military and economic matters. And finally, one perspective emerges in which an inequality between the parts of the Self is addressed and the need to make this relation more equal. The Greenlandic and Faroese perspectives provide quite different narratives, where Denmark is the radical Other who blocks and hinders Greenlandic and Faroese access to certain fora and cooperation with other actors, along with a critical tone towards Denmark highlighting the inequality in the relation with a view to making the relation between them more equal. Furthermore, it is brought forward that Denmark is dependent on the Realm to maintain the powerful position in the Arctic and therefore needs to maintain a good relationship with Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

4.2. 2019 Parliamentary Debate on the Arctic

Following the methodological and theoretical frameworks laid out in sections 2 and 3, this section deals with the 2019 Parliamentary debate on the Arctic, structured in four different parts dealing with different identity and Self-and-Other constructions in US-Denmark relations, Denmark-Russia/China relations, relations with other countries, and Denmark-Greenland relations, and finally a section summarising the different findings of the analysis of the 2019 debate.

4.2.1. The US: Disrupting the Peaceful Self and Contributing to Increased Tension

A clear narrative arising throughout the debate which is given quite a large amount of attention is a very critical stance towards the US, in the sense that the US is considered to be disrupting the peace

in the Arctic region and that they are threatening the Danish peaceful Self-understanding. The following quote shows this critical stance and directly addresses the US' purchase proposals³⁹:

Trump perhaps thought that he could simply buy Greenland – good lord, has he not yet figured out how a country works, maybe it is about time. He was at least told that he could not, and that was good (Folketinget, 2019)

With the use of the wordings “simply”, “good lord”, and “it is about time”, there seems to be a quite strong disapproval of the purchase proposals and, by extension, of the US, which thereby shows us a critical stance towards them. This narrative can also be found when it is argued that⁴⁰:

When it is coming from a country that starts and ends its sentences with “America first”, I believe you need to be more than naive, if you cannot see that this is about massaging the Greenlandic and the Danish public for the purpose of at a later time being able to open the door that they have already put a foot in (Folketinget, 2019).

The US is thus portrayed as someone who “massages” Greenland and Denmark, which is quite a critical term, and along with the utterance “you need to be more than naive”, this shows a disapproval of the US. This disapproval can also be found in the following quote about the US⁴¹:

I think the Americans plan to pressure Denmark and pressure the Realm to a higher degree of presence. And our line needs to be that we insist on the fact that it can be a defence of our own borders but not in a way that unnecessarily provokes the Russians so we contribute to a military armament race (Folketinget, 2019).

The narrative created here is the Danish Self-understanding of being peaceful and disapproving of military expansions, which comes forward when it is argued that “we” do not want to “contribute to a military armament race”. Furthermore, using the word “pressure” about the US' plans makes it a critical utterance. It seems that the US is threatening Denmark by pressuring and by going against

³⁹ Bent Bøgsted of the right-wing party *Dansk Folkeparti*, the Danish People's Party

⁴⁰ Karsten Hønge of the Danish green socialist party *Socialistisk Folkeparti*, the Socialist People's Party

⁴¹ Karsten Hønge

the Danish values of not wanting to contribute to a military armament race, making the US a radical Other in this narrative. A similar point is raised when it is argued that⁴²:

The US has been a lot more offensive lately, because in the beginning they were not interested in the Arctic Region at all, but they have started to do so, and their eye for the Greenlandic Airports is in my opinion a problem just as their already upgraded radar system in Thule Pituffik is a problem as well. This has not even been discussed with Greenland, it has not even been discussed with Denmark. They say it was just a change of some equipment, but in reality this is an upgrade to a new situation (Folketinget, 2019)

“Offensive”, “problem”, and “it has not even been discussed” are all utterances that show the disapproval of the US, and it is thus another narrative in which the US is a radical Other. Furthermore, it is argued that “they say” followed by “in reality”, which is essentially accusing the US of lying about the “reality”, which in this case is argued to be an “upgrade to a new situation”, which, coupled with the use of “offensive” and “problem”, is not a positive and welcomed new situation. A similar narrative is also brought into the context of an explicit peaceful Self-understanding⁴³:

I would like to hear [...] about the fact that the US wants a concrete place in the Greenlandic Airports, with their defence too, and possibly a deep water port for their destroyers. These are atypical things, when we for many years have talked about the fact that we do not want any more armament in this part of the world (Folketinget, 2019)

The explicitation of the manifest – “for many years” – Self-understanding of not wanting more armament is challenged or threatened by the US doing military activities characterised as “atypical things”, and the US is thereby also a radical Other in this narrative. This peaceful Self-understanding is also brought forward when it is argued that⁴⁴:

⁴² Christian Juhl of the Danish green socialist party *Enhedslisten*, the Red-Green Alliance

⁴³ Christian Juhl

⁴⁴ Martin Lidegaard of the Danish centre-left party, *Radikale Venstre*, the Danish Social-Liberal Party

Of course we are allied with the US, but we are at the same time a nation which, along with the other Nordic nations, has fought for non-armament and peaceful relations (Folketinget, 2019)

Contrasting the US with the strong explicitation of the peaceful Self-understanding implicitly suggests that the US is not peaceful and goes against this Self-understanding. Interestingly, the US is in here portrayed as an “ally”, contrarily to the above statements showing clear and almost indisputable disapproval towards the US. At the same time, the use of the word “but” suggests that the US is not a manifest and unconditional ally. This statement therefore nuances the narrative and places the US somewhere between a less-than-radical and radical Other, by on the one hand arguing that the US is an ally, which is a typical less-than-radical Other construction, whilst on the other hand arguing that they are going directly against the Self-understanding of non-armament and peaceful relations. Another less-than-radical construction can be seen in the following quote:

I expect [...] a much higher degree of American interest in Greenland, also with the opening of a consulate for the first time since the 1950s. And the cooperation we will have in the Kingdom and especially between Greenland and the US contains a lot of opportunities, so I am looking forward to developing that (Folketinget, 2019)

This narrative clearly differs from the other narratives presented above, as it constructs a much more positive perspective on the US. The utterances “cooperation”, “opportunities”, and “looking forward to” show that this is a less-than-radical Other construct.⁴⁵

4.2.2 Russia and China: Intensification of Conflict and Increased Military Activities

China and Russia are portrayed as radical Others who intensify a conflict, contribute to an increased amount of tension via armament, and challenge a Danish peaceful Self-understanding. This can for instance be seen, when it is argued that⁴⁶:

⁴⁵ This positive perspective on the US seems a bit curious in the context of the other statements which are more negatively loaded and narrate the US as a radical Other. This could potentially be explained by the fact that this is the Minister of Foreign Affairs giving a statement, and because of his important diplomatic role, it could be argued that he will therefore take a more positive stance towards other countries as a way of maintaining good relations or avoiding conflict. However, it is beyond the scope of my theoretical and methodological starting point to make any assumptions as to why he is saying this, and I can therefore not conclude on it, but I can observe that the US is not exclusively portrayed as a radical Other and is a less-than-radical Other in this specific narrative.

Another concern for those of us that live in the region [...] is the military expansion in the region. The Minister says in his review that especially Russia is prioritising a military expansion in the Arctic and is consolidating its military position along the northern flank of Russia. Even though the Kingdom and the Arctic States have a goal of low tension in the region, this may be challenged by the Russian consolidation. This is a concern that we are experiencing in our part of the region (Folketinget, 2019).

Evidently, the Russian military consolidation is seen as a challenge to the Self's understanding of preserving the low tension, and by being in contrast with the Self, Russia is thus a radical Other in this narrative. This perspective is seconded in the following statement⁴⁷:

The Danish Defense Intelligence Service has among other things pointed to the fact that the Russian military expansion in the Region contains offensive elements to a larger extent. This includes the preparations for being able to deploy fighter aircrafts [...] on a base in the northern Arctic Ocean. The base is situated approximately 1000 km from Greenland, and this distance makes it possible for Russian fighter aircrafts to be able to reach the airspace above Northeastern Greenland at short notice, and [...] they will be able to reach Thule Air Base. This is an example of the questions that we naturally need to deal with together with our allies, but these things do not change our goal of low tension (Folketinget, 2019)

Once again, the Self narratives of low tension are explicated by saying “our goal of low tension”, and the Russian military activities are elaborated and put at a distance by saying “offensive elements”. These utterances tell us that the Russian activities go against the peaceful Self-understanding and that they are “offensive”, and they can thereby be considered disapproved and thus contribute to the radical Other narrative on Russia. These radical Other narratives are also present when it comes to China⁴⁸:

⁴⁶ Edmund Joensen of the Faroese liberal party *Sambandsflokkurin*, the Union Party

⁴⁷ Jeppe Kofod, Minister of Foreign Affairs and member of the Danish party *Socialdemokratiet*, the Social Democratic Party

⁴⁸ Bent Bøgsted of the right-wing party *Dansk Folkeparti*, the Danish People's Party

This can happen through the Arctic Council, where it is still a mystery [...] how China can play a role. In fact, they do not have anything to do with the Arctic (Folketinget, 2019)

Here, it is clearly stated that China is not welcome in this forum, as they do not belong, raising a very clear radical Other construction. Another critical narrative on China is raised⁴⁹:

There is quite a lot of talk about security policy, and I can see that the minister welcomes China – and others – in the Arctic Region concerning economic activities and research activities. That concerns us, because we have seen how China has acted in many other places and has done investments and has gained a lot of power (Folketinget, 2019)

The “concern” shows that the Chinese activities are not “welcomed”, which shows a radical Other narrative. The critical narratives on Russia and China can also be seen in the following quote arguing a connection between climate change and armament⁵⁰:

I would therefore kindly like to remind the government that climate change is intensifying this conflict. Especially oil and gas are mentioned in the debate, and I would like to say one word with an encouraging smile: the North Sea. The fact that the ice is melting [...] with the current pace is connected to the armament. If we want to avoid that the Arctic Region is caught in a race between the US, Russia, and China, it is absolutely necessary that we take part in the fight to stop the climate crisis (Folketinget, 2019)

Interestingly, the US is put in the same company as Russia and China here, as the three actors are portrayed as threats to both climate change and armament and to the Arctic Region as a whole,

⁴⁹ Peter Seier Christensen of the Danish right-wing party *Nye Borgerlige*, The New Right

⁵⁰ Sikandar Siddique of the Danish green centre-left party *Alternativet*, the Alternative

making it a construction of the three as radical Others. This can also be seen in the following statement on the increased level of tension in the Arctic⁵¹:

[...] the Arctic Region has an increasing geopolitical significance for the strategic balance between the US, Russia, and China. This can be seen in the military intensification that Russia is doing in the Arctic Region, it can be seen in the Chinese Arctic Strategy of 2018 [...] in which China describes itself as a near-Arctic state, even though they are in fact quite far away from the Arctic Region, and the US has recently prioritised the Arctic Region, which is increasingly viewed through a security policy prism. You could say that geopolitics have moved into the Arctic Region. It has for a long period been taken for granted that the Arctic Region is a region characterised by peace and low tension. That is no longer something we can take for granted, but one could definitely say that the goal of low tension to a larger extent is challenged (Folketinget, 2019)

Once again, the US is placed in the same category as China and Russia: a category of countries that “challenge” the “peace and low tension”, and it is something which Denmark cannot “take for granted”, and this once again threatens the peaceful Self-presentation, making these three actors radical Others. Furthermore, China’s self-description as near-Arctic is challenged by saying “even though they are in fact quite far away”. A slightly different presentation of China can be seen in the following⁵²:

We have a positive view on China’s active engagement in the Region. Both Greenland and Denmark can gain something good from the cooperation with China in the Arctic, both in relation to the Arctic Council and to the potential commercial activities, but of course we do not want to be naïve [...]. If you consider the Danish Defence Intelligence Service’s public risk evaluation, it is estimated that the Chinese military has an increased interest in the Arctic Region and is strengthening its knowledge of the region [...]. In the same way, Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands together

⁵¹ Jeppe Kofod, Minister of Foreign Affairs and member of the Danish party *Socialdemokratiet*, the Social Democratic Party

⁵² Jeppe Kofod

need to [...] consider how we make the most of this development, whilst taking the necessary precautions (Folketinget, 2019).

Here, a slightly more nuanced narrative on China is presented, which stands in contrast to the narratives above, in which China is narrated as a radical Other that challenges the low tension in the region. Here, the narrative is that China's presence is a positive thing that Denmark can gain from in terms of trade and cooperation, which would be typical traits of a less-than-radical Other. However, the image is nuanced slightly, when it is argued that "we do not want to be naïve", and that the risk evaluation shows that the Chinese military has an increased interest in the region, and that it is "necessary" to take "precautions", which seems like a construction of a radical Other, and this presentation of China therefore places it somewhere in between the two categories of radical and less-than-radical Other.⁵³

4.2.3. Other Countries: Interest and Constructive Cooperation

As with the 2018 debate, some other actors are mentioned throughout this debate, though they do not take up as much space as the US, China, Russia, and Greenland. India is for instance presented in the following quote⁵⁴:

[...] As an example, I could mention that I was at a meeting last week at the EU's Arctic Forum with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs from all of the other Nordic countries and the Baltic States and even the Indian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Indian Minister for Foreign Affairs explained his interest with the fact that there are severe global climate changes happening, and these are most clearly seen in the Arctic, and the fact that there are new possibilities for business and trade. And of course the World's second most populated nation show its interest in the Arctic. [...] This is simply an illustration of the growing interest for the entire area.

⁵³ As with the US, this positive perspective on China seems a bit curious in the context of the other statements which are more negatively loaded and narrate China as a radical Other. Especially considering the fact that the Minister, who gave this statement, has also given statements with China as a radical Other. Once again, this can be explained by the fact that this he is the Minister and is taking a more positive stance as a way of maintaining good relations or avoiding conflict. It is beyond the scope of my theoretical and methodological framework to make any assumptions as to why this statement stand out the way it does, but I can conclude that China is not exclusively portrayed as a radical Other.

⁵⁴ Kasper Roug of the Danish party, *Socialdemokratiet*, the Social Democratic Party

The use of the word “even” about India suggests some degree of curiosity or non-regularity, since this word was not used to characterise the Nordic Countries or the Baltic States, and it seems that they are taken for granted as belonging to the Forum, whilst India is not. India thereby seems farther away in this context, though the presentation that follows about India is not negative, which the use of a relatively neutral language including words such as “interest” and “business and trade” show us, and India is thereby not considered a radical but a less-than-radical Other. The EU⁵⁵ is another actor which is presented as a less-than radical Other⁵⁶:

[We] appreciate that the EU is showing an interest in the Arctic Region, especially when it is focused on climate change, the environment, and sustainable investments. [...] It is of course important to prioritise the good and constructive cooperation.

“Good and constructive cooperation” and the fact that they “appreciate” the “interest” shows that this is a less-than-radical Other construction.

4.2.4. Greenland-Denmark relations

As with the 2018 debate, quite different narratives are brought forward when it comes to Denmark-Greenland relations in this debate depending on the nationality of the politicians, which is why the two perspectives will once again be gone through separately, the Danish politicians’ perspective first, followed by the Greenlandic and Faroese.

The Danish Perspective: Plurality, Greenlandic Agency, and Addressing Inequality

The narratives from the Danish perspective are quite diverse, and show signs of internal equality, bring forward Greenlandic agency, and construct a plurality of the Self, which can be found in the following quote⁵⁷:

⁵⁵ Even though the EU is not a country like all of the other actors in this analysis, it is nevertheless presented with similar traits as countries, for instance in this case where “cooperation” is a word used to describe the relation with the EU, and it therefore does not make a difference that the EU is not a country when characterising the identity construction.

⁵⁶ Kasper Roug

⁵⁷ Bent Bøgsted

[We] are strong supporters of the Realm [...] for a number of reasons – historical and cultural reasons and faith and family bonds that tie our people together and have done so for hundreds of years (Folketinget, 2019)

A construction of closeness can be found as it is argued that there are many things that are “binding our people together”, which indicates a plurality of the Self construct. This can also be found when it is argued that⁵⁸:

There are many signs [...] that the world, also besides the US and China, is showing an interest in Greenland, and this means we need to stay together as a Realm – two countries tied together in a bond, to peoples tied together by history and the thousands of families that make up the Danish-Greenlandic community. [...] There are bonds that tie together across the board. That is why it is important that Denmark shows in every way possible that we care about the Realm, and that we support Greenlandic interests, because there should never be an opposition in Greenlandic and Danish interests. Internally we can disagree on many things but externally we are a unity, like a family that may have big fights but still sticks together when it really matters (Folketinget, 2019)

Here, the construction of closeness is quite strong with the uses of “bond”, “tied together”, “community”, “unity”, “family”, “stick together”, “internally”, making this a plurality of the Self construct. In this narrative, there seems to be an ‘us against them’ when it is argued that “the world” is “showing an interest in Greenland” as a reason to stay together, along with the use of “internally” versus “externally”. We also see a sign that the plurality is not necessarily always positive whilst still constructing it as a close relation: “like a family that may have big fights but still sticks together”. A somewhat different narrative can be found in the following⁵⁹:

I think this is an obvious task which should be done jointly, not just by Denmark and Greenland, but by Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Island, who can all contribute in their own way to this research [...]. I think it is just as obvious that this is

⁵⁸ Bent Bøgsted

⁵⁹ Karsten Hønge

something that should be done jointly. I think for instance the building of the ship and the financing would be a Danish task, but it is obvious that it needs to be in close cooperation with Greenland and the Greenlandic University (Folketinget, 2019)

This quote differs from the two quotes above by saying “Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands” rather than “the Realm” or “Danish-Greenlandic”, which could be seen as a slight move away from the plurality of the Self construct. This seems more realistic if you consider the use of “cooperation”, which is a typical less-than-radical Other construct. Another narrative moves away from the plurality of the Self construct by constructing Greenlandic agency⁶⁰:

I would be delighted if [...] there were to be Greenlandic soldiers in those forces present. Why should they not make an effort? I am sure a lot of people would actually want to, and that they want to make an effort for their own country [...]. Of course they have the option of enlisting when they come to Denmark, but it is not the same as having your own little force on Greenland. That is something I think we should look into, but of course only if you in Greenland want this for yourselves. Of course we do not want to force this upon you (Folketinget, 2019)

The Greenlandic agency is highlighted with sentences such as “for their own country”, “only if you in Greenland want this for yourselves”, “we do not want to force this upon you”. These utterances give an agency to Greenland, as it suggests that Greenland is capable of acting on its own and can make an independent choice without Denmark forcing something upon Greenland. This Greenlandic agency is also approached in the following quote:⁶¹

Denmark is isolatedly not at all an Arctic country, but it is via our cooperation with Greenland that we have anything at all to say in the Arctic. That is why it is important that we say that the Greenlandic voice, and the Faroese voice for that matter, in all places where it is possible should speak on behalf of the Realm, because they are the ones who know what is important, and they are the ones who know how to proceed (Folketinget, 2019).

⁶⁰ Bent Bøgsted

⁶¹ Christian Juhl

Addressing that Denmark is not an Arctic country on its own is atypical for what has previously been seen in the 2018 debate, at least from the Danish perspective. Furthermore, once again, the word used on the connection to Greenland is “cooperation”, which is a typical word used about the countries that fall into the less-than-radical Other category. Furthermore, Greenlandic agency is highlighted with the use of “the Greenlandic voice”, “they know what is important”, and “they know how to proceed”, indicating that Greenland has its own opinions, knowledge, and is capable of speaking for itself. Another interesting narrative occurring addresses an inequality between Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands⁶²:

The approach [...] is that we are three peoples, three nations, three small nations [...]. And that is why it is a natural thing that the Faroe Islands and Greenland should be included at the negotiating table, and that we need to work towards a community of equal partners (Folketinget, 2019)

The utterance that “we need to work towards a community of equal partners” and the wish to include the Faroe Islands and Greenland indicate that there is not equality in the relations as it is right now, whilst at the same time expressing a wish to move towards more equality. This is also highlighted, as it is expressed that “we are three peoples, three nations, three small nations”, since putting the three nations in the same categories in this context gives the impression of equality. The question of equality is also addressed in the following statement⁶³:

A question has been raised about how we in practice can include both the Faroe Islands and Greenland in foreign policy matters [...], and that is a highly prioritised area for me [...]. It is important that we can share information, and that we are equal in the Realm (Folketinget, 2019)

Here, the importance of equality is once again highlighted, along with the wish to prioritise the inclusion of the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Another quote addressing this notion of equality constructs the three countries as increasingly more equal⁶⁴:

⁶² Karsten Hønge

⁶³ Jeppe Kofod

⁶⁴ Martin Lidegaard

It is my impression that there both on the Faroe Islands and in the Greenlandic society is a growing [...] sensation of – and perhaps this is also starting to occur in Denmark – us being three small states with common interests (Folketinget, 2019)

Rather than for instance using the term “the Realm”, as has been seen before, it is expressed that Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands are “three small states with common interests”, which can be seen as a move away from the construction of Denmark as the primary Self and Greenland and the Faroe Islands as the secondary selves, and it also suggests a more equal relation between them, as they are put in the same category and recognised as three states, rather than an entity. Like the two previous quotes, it is suggested here that the equality has not always been there and is something new, as it is a “growing sensation”, along with the utterance that something has changed in the Danish perspective, “perhaps this also starting to occur in Denmark”, suggesting that this was not always the case.

The Greenlandic and Faroese perspectives: Inequality, Greenlandic Agency, and Criticism

The Greenlandic and Faroese politicians of the parliament bring forward a couple of different narratives, as they address inequality, bring forward Greenlandic agency, and hold a sceptical stance towards Denmark. Concerning inequality, it is argued that⁶⁵:

The time has run out for Danish politicians to decide Greenland’s foreign policy. The words are the Prime Minister’s. [We] agree [...]. President Trump recently gave Greenland some needed attention, not just abroad but also here in Denmark, and for many people this was a realisation that we should not take the Realm for granted. More than ever before is there a need to fight for a more equal partnership (Folketinget, 2019)

The quote directly addresses the purchase proposals and argues that it has changed the Danish perceptions of the Realm, as it “was a realisation that we should not take the Realm for granted”. The call for equality is once again addressed, “equal partnership”; this time from the Greenlandic perspective. It is constructed as a fight, suggesting that gaining equality in the relation is a struggle.

⁶⁵ Aaja Chemnitz of the Greenlandic socialist separatist party *Inuit Ataqatigiit*, the Community of the People

Later on in the same statement, it is also argued that⁶⁶ “it is first and foremost important that we become equal members of the Parliament” (Folketinget, 2019), once again highlighting the fact that the relation is not equal as it is right now. Another perspective dealing with the US’ purchase proposals brings forward Greenlandic agency⁶⁷:

First and foremost, we have earlier backed that Greenland gets its own Arctic strategy, and that this takes place in coordination with Denmark. The government handled Trump’s offer to buy Greenland very well. [...] We stood side by side. Naalakkersuisut⁶⁸ declared that Greenland was open for trade but not for sale. I do not think we have heard the last words from this episode. We need to handle soft power and an increased charm offensive from the American side together. At the same time Greenland needs room to move and the chance to do foreign policy on its own on devolved areas (Folketinget, 2019)

The Greenlandic agency can be found with the use of the utterances “own Arctic strategy” and “do foreign policy on its own”, as these construct an ability for Greenland to act on its own. Interestingly, this quote also brings forward a construction of togetherness: “in coordination with Denmark”, “we stood side by side”, and “together”. Furthermore, Greenland and Denmark are constructed in contrast with the US in an ‘us versus them’ relation, as they need to “handle the soft power and increased charm offensive from the American side together”. Similarly to the prominent narrative of the 2018 debate, it is once again addressed that Denmark does not have a say in the Arctic without Greenland and the Faroe Islands⁶⁹:

[...] I am wondering why the review points out that [...]: “Activities related to the relation between Denmark and respectively Greenland and the Faroe Islands will be dealt with in the annual review on the Realm” [...]. Denmark is only a part of the Arctic because of the Realm. That is why it is curious to talk about the Arctic without talking about the Realm. The Arctic and the Realm are inextricably linked together

⁶⁶ Aaja Chemnitz

⁶⁷ Aaja Chemnitz

⁶⁸ The Government of Greenland

⁶⁹ Edmund Joensen of the Faroese liberal party *Sambandsflokkurin*, the Union Party

[...]. Without the Faroe Islands and especially Greenland, Denmark would not even be a part of the discussion about the Arctic (Folketinget, 2019)

This raises a construction of a form of dependency on the Faroe Islands and Greenland, as “Denmark would not even be a part of the discussion”. Finally, a certain suspicion towards a change in the Danish utterances occurs, with the following critical statement⁷⁰:

The Prime Minister has said that she would incorporate Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the foreign policy to a larger extent, and that I am of course happy about, but I know that the problem when it comes to the Arctic perhaps is that you need to agree with the two others. It is easier to agree with yourself than with the two others. So if you need to deal with the Greenlanders saying one thing and the Faroese saying another thing, you end up saying: drop it. There is a danger that this is how it is perceived (Folketinget, 2019)

There seems to be a certain suspicion towards the Prime Minister’s promise and a sceptical stance towards it, as it is argued that “there is a danger” that the Danes might “drop” trying to agree with Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

4.2.5. Summary

Concerning the US, there is a concrete disapproval of the purchase proposals, and the US is portrayed as someone who “massages” Greenland and Denmark. They are among other things characterised as “offensive” and as a “problem”, showing a clear radical Other construct. The US is considered to be threatening the Danish Self-understanding of being peaceful and disapproving of military expansions. This Danish Self-understanding is explicated and put in contrast with the US’ military activities, creating two opposites where the US is portrayed as a radical Other. The narratives are nuanced slightly with utterances characterising the US as an “ally” and using terms such as “cooperation”, “possibilities”, and “looking forward to”. However, the majority of the narratives on the US remain critical and narrate the US as a radical Other.

The narratives on Russia and China are that they are intensifying a conflict in the Arctic Region, threatening the peace and low-tension, and increasing the tensions, particularly

⁷⁰ Sjørður Skaale of the Faroese Social Democratic Party, *Javnaðarflokkurin*, the Equality Party

through military expansions and economic investments considered to be leading them to power. Interestingly, the US is sometimes in this debate placed in the same category as Russia and China, and is also considered to be contributing to the increased tension. This constructs these actors mainly as radical Others who challenge a Danish Self-understanding of peace and disarmament. However, one contrasting narrative on China arises, as their business and trade activities are welcomed as beneficial for Greenland and Denmark, though it is at the same time pointed out that they pose a risk through their military interests, and this particular statement thus places them somewhere between a radical and less-than-radical Other.

Other actors are mostly constructed in rather neutral terms as less-than-radical Others that show an interest in the Arctic Region and are interested in cooperation and trade.

From the perspective of the Danish politicians, the narratives on Greenland contain a construction of closeness and thereby a plurality of the Self, though this narrative does not stand alone. There are several narratives moving away from the plurality construct which instead express Greenlandic agency, and the word “cooperation” is used, which is characteristic of a less-than-radical Other construct. The question of equality is addressed, as Danish politicians express both that there is inequality in the relation right now, that the relation is becoming more equal, and there is a call for a more equal relation. From the Danish perspective, it is also addressed that Denmark is not an Arctic country on its own. From the perspective of the Greenlandic and Faroese politicians, it is directly addressed that the purchase proposals have changed the Danish perceptions of the Realm, and it is argued that there needs to be a more equal partnership. There is a construction of togetherness of Greenland and Denmark, and the two are also put in opposition to the US, as it is argued that they need to stand together against the US, whilst at the same time bringing forward Greenlandic agency. Denmark is being praised for incorporating Greenland and the Faroe Islands to a larger extent, though it is received with a certain suspicion and scepticism.

4.3. From 2018 to 2019: Some Unchanged Narratives, Some Different Narratives, and New Identity Constructions

The narratives on Russia and China remain relatively unchanged in the 2018 and 2019 debate. These narratives mainly revolve around Russia and China being radical Others by intensifying a conflict in the Arctic Region through military expansions and economic activities. This is contrasted with a Danish Self-understanding of peace, low-tension, and disarmament, placing China and Russia in direct opposition to Denmark. Similarly, the narratives on other actors such as Canada,

India, and the EU also remain relatively unchanged from the 2018 to the 2019 debate, as they in both debates play a much smaller role than Russia, China, the US, and Greenland. These other actors are mainly characterised in relatively neutral terms as less-than-radical Others showing an interest in the region in terms of cooperation and trade.

From 2018 to 2019, some major differences in the narratives on the US can be identified. First of all, the amount of attention that the US gets in the 2019 debate is drastically larger than that of the 2018 debate. In the 2018 debate, “Trump” is not mentioned at all, “the US” is mentioned 12 times, and “the Americans” and “American” are mentioned a total 10 times. In the 2019 debate, “Trump” is mentioned 10 times, “the US” is mentioned 38 times, and “the Americans” and “American” are mentioned a total of 38 times. These numbers make up an interesting point on their own, by showing that the US gains a lot more attention in the 2019 debate, and this simply illustrates that something has changed, which confirms the assumption set up in the research question. A change can also be found in the narratives, as in the 2018 debate, the US is placed somewhere between a less-than-radical Other and a radical Other, as it is brought forward that they are an ally that help and protect Denmark against radical Others such as the Chinese, someone that Denmark ought to appreciate, and that their presence is to be preferred over other nations, whilst they are also constructed as someone who contribute to an increased tension. The narratives in the 2019 debate are drastically different, with the majority of the utterances on the US constructing them almost exclusively as a radical Other, including a concrete dissatisfaction towards the purchase proposals, characterising the US as “offensive” and as a “problem”, and the US doing disapproved military activities contributing to the tension. Interestingly, in the 2019 debate, the US is also sometimes placed in the same categories as Russia and China, making up a group of actors that increase the tension in the Arctic, as Denmark gets caught between these radical Others who challenge the Self’s values of peace and non-armament. This is a major shift, as they are never mentioned in the same context as Russia and China in the 2018 debate.

The narratives on Greenland-Denmark relations have also changed from the 2018 to the 2019 debate. As mentioned in the two analyses, the perspectives on Denmark-Greenland relations differ depending on whether the parliamentarians are respectively Danish or Greenlandic/Faroese. From the Greenlandic/Faroese perspective in the 2018 debate, there is a very critical tone towards Denmark, constructing Denmark as a radical Other in some of the narratives, where Denmark is for instance viewed as someone who blocks Greenlandic and Faroese access to certain fora and hinders cooperation with other actors. In the 2019 debate, the Greenlandic and

Faroese parliamentarians remain critical, as can be seen in the 2018 debate, though it seems that the tone is slightly less critical in the 2019 debate; for instance when a narrative of togetherness occurs, as it is argued that Denmark and Greenland ought to stand together and handle the US together. In the 2018 debate, a critical tone towards Denmark emerges from the Greenlandic and Faroese perspectives with a view to making the relation between them more equal. Similar narratives can be found in the 2019 debate; it is directly addressed that the purchase proposals have changed the Danish perceptions of the Realm, as it is argued that there needs to be a more equal partnership, and the importance of Greenlandic agency is also highlighted.

In the 2018 debate, from the Danish perspective the main narrative of the relation to Greenland is a construction of a plurality of the Self, and this relation is praised and narrated as an entity, a great power, and the importance of the togetherness of the parts of the Self is emphasised. Furthermore, a narrative on Greenland needing Denmark for protection and development emerges, and one statement highlights inequality between the two and calls for more equality. In the 2019 debate, the image is quite different. The plurality of the Self narrative exists but is much less dominant. There are several narratives that express Greenlandic agency and talk about cooperation rather than the closeness and plurality dominating the 2018 debate, which could indicate a relation closer to that of a less-than-radical Other, rather than the dominant plurality of the Self narrative seen in the 2018 debate. Addressing the inequality in the relation does not just emerge in one statement as it does in the 2018 debate, but several politicians in the 2019 debate express inequality in the relation right now, that the relation is becoming more equal, and that the relation should be more equal.

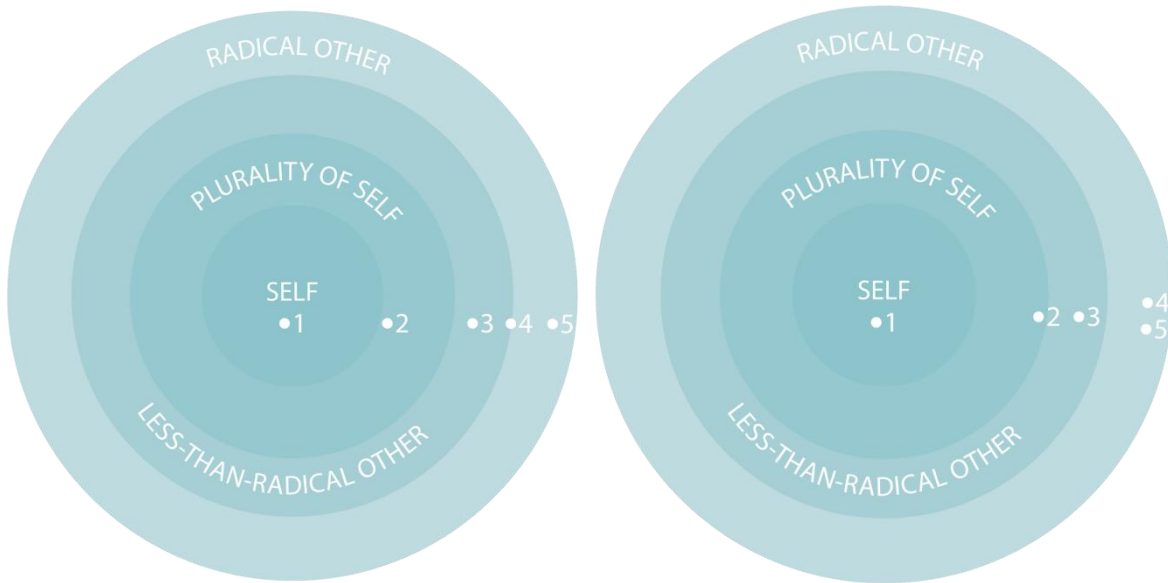


Fig. 2 and 3 (compiled by author): Visual representation of the differences between the 2018 narratives and the 2019 narratives: how the various other countries are placed in relation to Denmark - from the perspective of the Danish politicians, i.e. excluding the Greenlandic and Faroese politicians' perspectives. 1 – Denmark, 2 – Greenland, 3 – Other countries, 4 – the US, 5 – China and Russia. In figure 2, Denmark is the Self, Greenland is relatively close to the Self in the plurality of the Self category, other countries are less-than-radical Others, the US is somewhere between a radical and less-than-radical Other, and Russia and China are radical Others. In figure 3, Denmark, other countries, and China and Russia remain unchanged, while the US has become a clear radical other, and Greenland has moved farther away from the plurality of the Self construct and is closer to belonging to the less-than-radical Other category.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Findings and Conclusions of the Investigation

In light of the research carried out by Jacobsen (2019b), the investigation carried out in this dissertation has uncovered the effects of the new developments in the form of the US' intervention, as these interventions made it highly relevant to further investigate the – possibly – new situation. Therefore, the purpose of this dissertation has been to examine whether the foreign policy identity discourses have changed before and after the US' purchase proposals, and whether a change in the narratives told about the US in a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic have affected the narratives told about Greenland. The research has been based on the following research question:

- 1) How did the US' intervention change the way Danish politicians talk about the US as part of a broader landscape of actors in the Arctic?**
- 2) Along with the new role of the US, in which ways might the way Danish politicians talk about the relation between Greenland and Denmark have changed?**

Using poststructuralist discourse analysis, this dissertation has investigated the above research question by doing a comparative analysis of two Danish parliamentary debates on the Arctic with a focus on Foreign Policy Identity. With an ontological starting point in identity and discourse, the concept of Foreign Policy Identity brought me to the theoretical concepts of Self and Other, radical Other, less-than-radical Other, and plurality of Self, and the narration of these concepts brought me to the concepts of narrative and plasticity. The empirical materials were made up of two Danish parliamentary debates from respectively 2018 and 2019, representing the 'before' and 'after' of the US' interventions. A comparative analysis of these two debates focusing on Foreign Policy Identity would thereby allow me to answer the research question. Based on the discourse analysis of the 2018 and 2019 Danish parliamentary debates on the Arctic, I can hereby conclude:

- 1) The assumption that something has changed before compared to after the US' interventions was correct. The narratives on Russia, China, and other countries remain relatively unchanged, with Russia and China being constructed clearly as mainly radical Others in both 2018 and 2019, and other countries taking up a smaller role and are constructed as less-than-radical Others in both 2018 and 2019. The narratives on the US have changed significantly from a mixed narrative placing them somewhere between a less-than-radical

and radical Other in the 2018 debate to mainly a construction of a radical Other and sometimes being placed in the same category as the two radical Others, Russia and China, in the 2019 debate, in which the US also receives more attention, which is a notable difference in itself.

- 2) The assumption that the way in which Danish politicians talk about Greenland has changed before compared to after the purchase proposals also turned out to be correct. The narratives on Greenland-Denmark relations differ depending on the nationalities of the parliamentarians in both 2018 and 2019. From the Greenlandic/Faroese perspective, the tone is very critical towards Denmark, sometimes constructing it as a radical Other in the 2018 debate, and this critical tone continues in the 2019 debate, though to a lesser extent and even with a narrative of togetherness occurring. In both 2018 and 2019 the inequality in the relation and the need for more equality are brought forward. From the Danish perspective, the main narrative in 2018 is a plurality of the Self construct. This changes quite drastically in the 2019 debate, as the plurality of the Self narrative exists but is much less dominant, as several narratives express Greenlandic agency, call for equality, and talk about cooperation rather than the closeness construct and plurality of the Self narrative dominating the 2018 debate, which could indicate a relation closer to that of a less-than-radical Other.

5.2. Reservations

A relevant question to ask is what could be done to qualify the investigation even more. As mentioned, the scope of this dissertation has caused for some limitations in terms of time available to conduct the study and space in the form of a limit on the amount of key strokes available.

The scope has made it necessary to make some delimitations, and this was for instance, as mentioned in section 2.3, reflected in the empirical materials, consisting of two texts. A larger and more diverse set of empirical data could have qualified the conclusions further by providing a better understanding of the discourses, for instance by including news media, reports, and reviews. However, the data used in the investigation has been strategically chosen with the purpose of answering my research question, and this data turned out to be sufficient for this exact purpose, as it allowed me to satisfactorily conclude upon my findings.

As a reasoning for conducting my study, and as a part of my research question, I argue that the US' purchase proposals might have affected identity constructions, making it relevant to examine 'before' and 'after' the proposals. Another event which could potentially also have had an

effect is the Danish general election of June 2019, resulting in a victory for the “red bloc”, which lead to the resignation of Lars Løkke Rasmussen and his minority coalition government, consisting of *Venstre* (the Liberal Party), *Konservative* (the Conservatives), and *Liberal Alliance* (the Liberal Alliance). A new Prime Minister, Mette Frederiksen, was appointed to lead the single party minority government consisting of *Socialdemokraterne* (the Social Democratic Party), relying on the support of *Enhedslisten* (the Red-Green Alliance), *Socialistisk Folkeparti* (the Socialist People’s Party), and *Radikale* (the Social-Liberal Party). This event can potentially have had an effect on the Danish Foreign Policy Identities, as a new government might bring new policies, discourses, and new identity constructions, and it could be argued that since too many variables are at play, it cannot be argued with certainty what the determining factor was. However, as my analysis showed no clear tendencies in terms of political parties, the election explanation seems unlikely. Furthermore, the US’ purchase proposal was mentioned several times during the debate, which shows that it was something that took up space and clearly affected the politicians of the Danish parliament.

5.3. Future Perspectives

The investigation carried out in this dissertation opens up for future perspectives of new investigations. The most pressing and topical perspective is to consider how the current moves made by some of the major actors in the Arctic, including Russia and the US, might be affecting the Danish position. In the spring of 2020, the Arctic region in general and Greenland and Denmark in particular have received a lot of attention, and a lot of new developments with the potential of having an effect on Foreign Policy Identities have taken place.

As examples of these new developments, three key developments can be identified: first of all, even though the US’ purchase proposals were immediately rejected by both Greenland and Denmark, as the president of the US’ new budget request proposed a consulate in Greenland, including giving the State Department \$587,000 to build a permanent consular service outpost with the purpose of establishing “a permanent diplomatic presence in Greenland” (Cammarata & Lippman, 2020). At the NATO summit of December 2019, the Danish prime minister announced plans for more strategic cooperation with the US in the Arctic, and a promise of increased surveillance. The US last had a consulate in Greenland between 1940 and 1953, and with the opening of the consulate, the US will be one of only two countries to have a consulate in Greenland, the other being Iceland (Skydsgaard et al, 2019). The second development is Carla Sands’, Ambassador of the US to Denmark, moves and in particular the announcement of an economic aid

package for Greenland. Carla Sands (2020) in an article published in April of 2020 on the Danish news site *Altinget* expresses that Russian aggression and Chinese greediness make it necessary for Greenland to instead cooperate with the US, as the US' vision is that they want to be the preferred partner in the Arctic that focuses on cooperation, democratic values, sustainable development, and wealth, unlike the Russian and Chinese visions. She presents that the American government is developing a substantial package of economic aid with the purpose of supporting growth in Greenland (Sands, 2020). Greenland accepted this deal, and the US will invest \$12.1 million dollars in the mining industry, tourism, and education (Sørensen, 2020). Third, in light of the US' economic aid for Greenland, the Russian ambassador to Denmark, Vladimir Barbin, expressed his concerns in an open email to the Danish newspaper *Politiken*. He argues that with the US' direct link between financial support for Greenland and criticism of Russia, the Americans are threatening the peace in the Arctic region. Barbin believes that the accusations made by Carla Sands against Russia and China are undermining decades of peaceful development and co-existence in the Arctic region. He further argues that the US' behaviour goes directly against the content and the spirit of the 2008 Illulissat Declaration, in the sense that the US is creating a divide among the Arctic states with the formation of coalitions and that this is threatening the situation in the region and undermining the other Arctic nations' tasks of promoting peace, security, and international cooperation in the Arctic region (Kjeldtoft, 2020).

These developments have the potential to affect the situation, and it therefore is necessary to follow how these new developments might manifest in the way in which Danish politicians position themselves in relation to the US and to Greenland-Denmark relations, and also how these Foreign Policy Identities manifest themselves in concrete foreign policy developments.

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