

How Denmark perceives Chinese presence in Greenland

A constructivist analysis of the publications and reactions of the Danish government in relation to Chinese presence in Greenland

Master thesis project

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Abstract

The thesis questions the Danish perceptions towards Chinese presence in Greenland at the light of Denmark's reactions to Chinese companies' offers to invest in Greenland. Indeed, it appears that the Danish government intervened to prevent Chinese companies from winning a bid in Greenland twice, in 2016 and in 2018. The behaviour of the Danish government seems at least enigmatic, as Denmark wishes to strengthen its economic partnership with China and has encouraged Greenland to seek foreign investments. The thesis thus employ the securitization theory jointly with constructivism as theoretical framework to analyse Danish concerns over Chinese involvement in Greenland and reveals the connection between Denmark's stance towards Chinese interest in Greenland and its perception of China more in general. Indeed, through the content analysis of the Intelligence Risk Assessments, the research could investigate whether the "China threat" fear played a role in the Danish perceptions and reactions to the Chinese interest in Greenland. Ultimately, the "China threat" narrative seems to have been propagated by the United States, which has initiated a securitization act towards China's ambition in the Arctic and has tried to persuade its Arctic allies that their national strategic interests are threatened.

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1. Introduction

The case of Chinese increasing involvement in the Arctic has fostered the debate on the securitization of the region among Arctic states and beyond. In particular, Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland, despite being scarce, have induced Denmark to react; Danish behaviour has been partly justified by the country's role as responsible for foreign policy and defence issues concerning the whole Kingdom of Denmark.

While there could be reasons for Denmark to intervene, the attention given to avoid spurring a discussion on the topic may hide other concerns. On the domestic ground, the issue is nestled in the complex context of postcolonial relations between Denmark and Greenland, which are marked by a sensitive communication. More specifically, while the majority of the Greenlandic population seeks independence, Denmark wishes to keep Greenland under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Denmark. Indeed, Greenland grants Denmark the title of Arctic state, thus allowing Denmark to be an recognised stakeholder in a region that will offer many opportunities in the next future in terms of resources, trade routes, and ultimately power (Rahbek-Clemmensen, 2017). The contrasting views of Nuuk and Copenhagen lead Denmark to be attentive when interfering with Greenlandic affairs; as a consequence, the obstruction to Chinese investments perpetuated by the Danish government brings to the surface the postcolonial issue regarding Denmark-Greenland relations (Sørensen, 2017).

On the international ground instead, Denmark's reaction to Chinese attempts to invest in the island may reveal Danish worries towards Chinese presence in Greenland. In fact, the case of airports' renovation and construction projects in Nuuk, Ilulissat and Qaqortoq, which the Chinese company China Communications Construction Company made a bid for and promptly Denmark offered to part-finance, may give an idea of Danish perceptions of Chinese interest in the island. Denmark's attention towards China's involvement in Greenland may be linked to China's threat fear, that is China may strengthen its relation with Greenland to the point it could either become a threat for their closest ally, alias the United States, interfere in Danish-Greenlandic relations, or leave Greenland in a debt trap. Whether these worries have a basis or not, Danish perceptions of China shape Denmark's behaviour and attitude towards China.

However, Denmark still seeks to enhance its bilateral partnership with China and thus does not want to spoil their reciprocal relations. Interestingly, Denmark is securitizing some issues

that concern China, while it wishes not to generate any diplomatic precedent on the matter as it craves to strengthen their bilateral economic partnership.

Therefore, the thesis will aim to analyse and unveil the paradoxes embedded in the Danish reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland by exploring both domestic and international dynamics, in particular by focusing on the postcolonial argument on one side, and on China's threat fear on the other.

The next paragraphs will thus introduce the topic by providing a background to the research, explicit the research question, explain its academic relevance and finally summarise previous works and findings on the matter in the Literature Review.

1.1 Research background

In order to understand the untold perceptions and the attitude that Denmark assumes towards Greenland and China, it is necessary to first provide an overview on China-Denmark and Denmark-Greenland relations so as to comprehend which elements shape the Danish perceptions of the Chinese investments in Greenland.

Firstly, it is worth noting that Denmark does seek to strengthen its relations with China and improve their already highly-developed partnership; indeed, Denmark has been committed to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China since 2008 with the purpose to widen and deepen the government-to-government ties. Along with an increase in political cooperation, the last two decades have seen a surge in their bilateral trade (Bøje Forsby, 2018).

On the other hand, Denmark also encourages Greenland to attract foreign investments, which is one of Greenland's goals in order to develop its economy and become competitive in the global market. Indeed, foreign investments are seen by Greenland as a key element to achieve the long-term objective of having a self-sustained economy, although they should not become a source of dependency from foreign countries (Paul, 2021). Greenland obtained the right to conclude agreements with foreign governments in 2009, when the Act on Greenland Self-Government came into force and extended the powers granted by the 1979 Home Rule Act (The Government of Greenland, n.d.). On the other hand, Denmark holds decisional power over all security and defence issues regarding the whole Kingdom of Denmark, as officially responsible for the security and foreign policy of the Kingdom of Denmark (Act on Greenland Self-Government, 2009).

On paper, no form of discrimination has been shown towards Chinese companies willing to invest in Greenland. However, when it comes to facts, Chinese companies have found obstructions when they offered to invest in Greenland. So far, two episodes that concerned Chinese enterprises and the Danish government are particularly curious.

The first case involves a bid for an abandoned naval base in Grønnedal, South Greenland. In 2016, the Kingdom of Denmark decided to sell an unused naval base in Grønnedal; when the General Nice Group, a Chinese mining company already investing in the iron mine in Isua, South-West Greenland, applied for buying the base, Denmark turned down the offer due to security concerns. Consequently, Denmark announced that it will open the naval base as a strategic location for storing fuel and material and training personnel; more in detail, the decision to block the sale was approved by the majority of the Danish parliament and thus the base is supposed to go back to operating after more than two years of abandonment.(Matzen, 2017).

The second episode instead occurred in 2018, when China Communications Construction Company, a state-owned Chinese company, was shortlisted by the the government of Greenland with other five companies for a tender Greenland launched, with the aim to renovate and build new airports in Nuuk, Ilulissat and Qaqortoq. Denmark promptly reacted to the news by offering to part-finance the project (Jiang, 2018). Greenland complied with Denmark's response, also because it was definitely an advantageous contract for the country. Both cases show some similarities, first of all the Danish sudden intervention and the following silence on the matter.

Notably, the Chinese government has expressively shown its willingness not to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark, that is, in this case, the relation between Greenland and Denmark. Indeed, China does not intend to damage its partnership with Denmark and so it has not made any stand against Denmark's reactions to its attempts to invest in Greenland (Sørensen, 2017).

To sum up, China and Denmark have strengthened their relations in the past two decades, as the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership signed in 2008 can prove. Both countries do not intend to spoil their reciprocal relations, thus, on one side, Denmark seems indisposed to show its worry about the Chinese presence in Greenland, while on the other, China has not make any stand about Danish reactions on its attempt to invest in Greenland and does not want to interfere in Denmark's domestic affairs. Moreover, Denmark encourages Greenland to seek foreign investments for its economic development, without discriminating against

China. However, when it comes to facts, Denmark promptly responded to Chinese bids by either blocking it or making a more appealing offer to Greenland.

The analysis will thus try to unveil the Danish perceptions towards China and to define whether the China threat fear plays a role in the Danish attitude towards Chinese investments in Greenland. To better understand the discussion of the analysis, it is necessary to provide some explanation of what “China threat” fear and theory consists of.

1.1.1 Global “China threat” theory and fear

The “China threat” theory may be defined as a systematisation of the “China threat” fear by academic researchers. China is presented as an unfulfilled nation, which has a psychological need to build a vast power, since it used to have a pre-eminent position in the world centuries ago. China thus would use its economic growth as a driving force to expand its influence and challenge the West. The theory also predicts a clash between the United States and China, as the Chinese political regime with its foreign policy goals could not coexist with the United States and its ideals of freedom. Ultimately, China would present a threat to the United States and the East Asia region in particular; indeed, according to the theory, China’s research for regional power will collide with the United States interests and its allies’ security.

The “China threat” theory thus affirms that China will use its growing power to destabilise regional security; the “China threat” has taken several forms and can be categorised as 1. Ideological, 2. Economic, 3. Military and strategic. The ideological threat is traced back to China’s rising nationalism and its anti-American propaganda. The economic threat instead comes from the fact that the economic growth is not making China more democratic; on the contrary, the theory states that China will use its economic power to threaten peace and challenge the United States, which is already menaced by China’s infiltration in US capital markets and thus by the ensuing deficit. However, the most serious threat is the military one, as China wishes to replace the United States as dominant regional power and its militarisation program would be the instrument to achieve the goal. Finally, the “China threat” fear induces countries to see China as a threat because China perceives other countries as a threat to its national interests, and will consequently take measures to secure itself, which ultimately threaten other countries’ security (Broomfield, 2003).

1.2 Research question

Having provided the basis for our research work, the research question can now be explained in detail.

The paper aims to investigate the reasons why Chinese companies have found implicit obstructions in investing in Greenland; more specifically, the research will analyse the Danish stances towards the Chinese presence in Greenland to answer the question of “*how Denmark perceives the Chinese presence in Greenland*”.

Interestingly, Denmark reacted promptly to block contracts when Chinese companies were involved in the bid. At the same time, the Danish government's official justifications to its intervention in the bids have been unclear.

Moreover, in the case of the sale of the abandoned naval base in Grønnedal, the Chinese company that made an offer for the bid was not a state-owned enterprise (Jiang, 2018). General Nice Group is a private company operating for its own profits; the Danish assumption that selling the base to General Nice Group is a matter of security concern unveils the Danish concerns over the possible uses of the base by the Chinese private company or either the worry that the company would sell Grønnedal base to the Chinese state, for instance. In the case of the airports' development projects instead, Denmark did not give any explanation for its offer to part-finance the projects all of a sudden (Matzen and Daly, 2018).

Danish ambiguous attitudes may be a consequence of plural concerns embedded in the same context. Indeed, the research question involves the paradox concerning Danish perceptions of China as a threat together with Denmark's willingness to enhance its economic partnership and diplomatic cooperation with China. Denmark's enigmatic behaviour may be attributable to an attempt to securitize some issues regarding China while not damaging their bilateral relations. In this context, Denmark's perceptions of China may be ascribable to the so-called “China threat fear”, in the sense that Denmark perceives China's rise as dangerous, in particular China's new policy in the Arctic, because it may damage its national interests; more specifically, in this case, Denmark may be suspicious of Chinese attempts to invest in and interact with Greenland, since that could lead to unfavourable consequences for Denmark's domestic situation with Greenland and foreign policy with the United States, for instance. In this narrative of China as a threat, Denmark does not distinguish whether the actors are Chinese private companies or the Chinese central government.

The research thus acknowledges that Denmark's reactions may give the impressions that China is not welcomed in the Arctic, and several motivations may come into mind, such as the ones mentioned above. It is of interest to the research work to unveil which are the main concerns of the Danish government to uncover whether the issue regards the domestic domain, thus entailing the relations between Greenland and Denmark, or if it is coming from the outside. In the first case, Denmark may be concerned that Chinese investments may allow Greenland to move closer to independence, or that Greenland may distance itself from Denmark and the United States in its diplomatic stances; eventually, Denmark may be worried that Greenland could end up in a debt-trap, and thus that Greenland might be in the position to give concessions, such as the access to critical infrastructure, to Chinese companies. Other reasons could also play a role; for instance, Denmark may have been influenced by the China threat discourse perpetuated by the United States and have taken a more critical stance towards China in general or specifically in the Arctic due to some motivation that are not clear yet; these latter possible motivations regards the international or regional domain instead.

To sum up, the thesis will try to answer to the research question of "how Denmark perceives Chinese presence in Greenland" to reveal if Denmark is concerned about Chinese presence in Greenland and which reasons are attributable to such perception.

1.3 Research significance

The research presents many interesting points to the academic research on Danish Arctic policy by contributing with a qualitative analysis of official publications of the government, which provides a theoretical interpretation of the Danish perceptions of China.

Furthermore, the thesis enriches the debate over the securitization process involving the Arctic region by connecting it to the particular case of the Danish response to Chinese investments in Greenland and to the general topic regarding the global shifting balance of power and the US critical stances on China as a result. Indeed, the research reveals a nexus between the global, the regional and the domestic realms, all affecting Denmark's security.

In addition, the paper offers an analysis of the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments, an official publication of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, which may be valuable for those scholar and academic researchers that do not have access to the classified works.

Finally, the thesis considers the argument of the “China threat” fear; notably, the paper does not regard it as a theory but rather as a narrative; indeed, defining China’s rise as offensive, which means that it would lead necessarily to a conflict against established great powers, first of all the United States, may be a dangerous self-fulfilling prophecy. Therefore, the thesis contributes to making clear the importance of subjectivity in the discipline of international relations, by clarifying that our perceptions of the world are influenced by our preconceptions and unique perspectives.

To sum up, the thesis enriches the research on the securitization of the Arctic region and links the case of the Danish response to the Chinese investments in Greenland with the regional and global developments involving China and the United States. Moreover, the research may be of interest to scholars that do not have access to the classified work of the intelligence services, as the paper provides a detailed content analysis of official publications of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service. Finally, the research further explores the theme of subjectivity of the discipline of international relations by considering the “China threat” as a narrative and not as a theory.

1.4 Literature review

The following section will explore the results of the academic research done so far on the topic of Denmark’s perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland.

Firstly, Yang Jiang, researcher for the Danish Institute for International Studies, published an article in 2020 about the change in the Danish policy regarding Chinese investments registered since 2018, which includes reflections on the decisions of the Danish government regarding Chinese investments in Greenland. In fact, Chinese investments in Greenland are one of the two case studies examined in the publication, which first describes the Sino-Danish relations, to then expose the Danish recent concerns over Chinese investments. The article presents two motivations for the Danish wariness; firstly, Chinese investments may be a foreign policy tool to threaten the Danish democratic core values; secondly, Chinese investments in critical infrastructure can be used as security outposts for critical information or to control systems. Danish concerns over Chinese investments are connected to China’s so-called “sharp power” and the US pressure on Denmark to keep Chinese investments out of Greenland. The two episodes regarding the intervention of the Danish government to prevent

Chinese companies from investing in critical infrastructure in Greenland are examined and connected to the recent Danish law on screening foreign investments (Jiang, 2020).

The argument of Danish reactions to Chinese presence in Greenland has been explored also by the senior researcher at DIIS Mikkel Runge Olesen in a series of articles. One of them, “Getting by in a Troubled Arctic: The Kingdom of Denmark and the Great Powers”, discusses the topic of Danish concerns over China’s involvement in Greenland within the larger picture of the increasing tensions in the great power relations in the Arctic. After providing an overview of the involvement of Russia, the United States and China in the Arctic, the article focuses on the Kingdom of Denmark, defining a clear correlation between the US increasing attention to the Arctic and the change in the Danish Arctic policy in the latest years. Eventually, the great power rivalry in the Arctic poses a challenge to Denmark, because the autonomous regions of Greenland and the Faroe Islands acknowledge that the increasing economic and security concerns in the Arctic give them the opportunity to increase their political leverage; furthermore, economic development and growth are tied to their ambition of independence. Moreover, the United States and Greenland have increased their cooperation, which consequently diminishes the role of Denmark as caretaker of foreign policy issues of the whole realm, but also helps Denmark to convince Greenland to keep Chinese companies out of the island (Olesen, 2021).

The book “Greenland and the International Politics of a Changing Arctic. Postcolonial Paradiplomacy between High and Low Politics” edited by Kristian Søby Kristensen and Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen includes several reflections from Arctic experts and researchers on the issue of Danish policy in Greenland related to the increasing international focus on the Arctic, especially by the United States and China. In particular, the chapters “Chinese investments in Greenland. Promises and risks as seen from Nuuk, Copenhagen and Beijing” by Camilla T. N. Sørensen and “The politics of economic security. Denmark, Greenland and Chinese mining investment” by Kevin Foley are especially of interest to our research.

Camilla T. N. Sørensen, expert on Danish defence and security policy, in the chapter “Chinese investments in Greenland. Promises and risks as seen from Nuuk, Copenhagen and Beijing” analyses the concerns of Greenland, Denmark and China with regards to the issue of Chinese investments in Greenland. With respect to Denmark, Sørensen emphasises that Denmark has fostered its relation with China in the last decades; it also reports that Denmark acknowledges the possible benefits of Chinese investments for Greenland and has

encouraged Greenland to seek Chinese investments. However, the chapter also points out that Denmark regards the United States as Denmark's closest ally and that Chinese large investments in the Greenlandic mineral sector are considered risky by Denmark because of a possible political interference. Finally, Sørensen suggests that the Chinese interest in gaining influence in the Arctic is a reason for concern for the Danish government, which is afraid that China could get "too large a foothold". Overall, the topic is included within Danish-Greenlandic relations, and the author underlines the Greenlandic opposition to the Danish standing on the issue (Sørensen, 2017).

On the other hand, the chapter "The politics of economic security. Denmark, Greenland and Chinese mining investment" by Kevin Foley presents the topic of Danish perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland from a different perspective. Indeed, instead of analysing the concerns perceived by Denmark, the author examines the discourse of the Danish political elites around the issue to point out the discrepancy between the emphasis on China's ambitions in Greenland, which includes the risk of political influence brought by Chinese large investments, and the limited activities currently pursued by Chinese companies. The chapter thus suggests that the Danish political elites have overstressed the security problem related to the Chinese interest in Greenland as no large project is really taking place. Finally, the discourse of Danish politicians on the issue is described as a China threat narrative, which is then influencing the Danish response to Chinese investments in Greenland (Foley, 2017).

Another interesting analysis to our research is provided in the chapter "The Middleman—The Driving Forces Behind Denmark's Arctic Policy" in the book "Handbook on Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic" published in 2020. In the chapter, Rahbek-Clemmensen and Jedig Nielsen examine the link between Danish Arctic policy and US-Greenland relations, and points out that the recent developments in the Arctic regarding the great powers, namely the United States, China and Russia, influence the policy decisions of Denmark. Notably, the episode of the airports infrastructure project concerning the offer of the Chinese company China Communication Construction Company Ltd. is presented as a evidence of Denmark's Arctic policy in the latest years, in particular since 2016. The Danish Arctic policy has been divided in four stages since the Second World War and it has been connected to US Arctic policy. The current phase in the Danish Arctic policy is pictured as a response to the renewed US interest in Arctic security and in its position in Greenland in particular (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Jedig Nielsen, 2020).

Finally, in the article “Practicing decolonial political geography: Island perspectives on neocolonialism and the China threat discourse” on the journal *Political Geography*, Grydehøj et al. examined Greenland-Denmark relations, among other case studies, to underline the narrative about the China threat proposed by ex colonisers to their previously subjected territories. The article emphasises the attempt by ex colonising countries to perpetuate their influence over their ex colonies by presenting Chinese foreign investments as a threat to their national economies. The academic work suggests a really interesting point; by considering the China threat as a narrative and not a theory, the scholars have identified an innovative way to look at the China threat fear. Danish concerns over Chinese investments in Greenland are, according to their interpretation, part of a strategy to maintain its influence over the island (Grydehøj et al., 2021).

2. Methodology

The following chapter will focus on the research methodology by explaining the theoretical framework, the choice of theory and data, and eventually the research method. Secondly, limitations of the research project will be explored and the overall structure of the research reported.

2.1 Theoretical framework

The research question is formulated within a theoretical framework that provides the conceptual tools that will be employed to develop the analysis.

In fact, the research concerns Danish perceptions about Chinese presence in Greenland and considers how these perceptions influence Denmark’s reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland.

Therefore, the theoretical framework in which the research question is nestled is post-positivist, in the sense that the analysis will judge whether Danish reactions to Chinese companies’ offers for bids in Greenland are biased by preconceptions, thoughts or beliefs about Chinese involvement in Greenland and about China more in general.

Denmark's reactions to the Chinese presence in Greenland are thus seen as the manifestation of the government's perceptions about China more than as the response to an actual threat to the national unity or economy.

The research indeed regards the episodes concerning Chinese companies' offers in Greenland as examples of how Denmark shapes the argument of China's involvement in Greenland in terms of security issues. Traditionally, security is considered an objective judgement of some phenomena as a threat to the state, population or nation. The post-positivist approach the research adopts overcomes this definition by challenging its rationality. Defining an issue as a security problem, and consequently behaving as it is, is a social and political decision which depends on the actors involved, the context, the historical background, etcetera.

Whereas Denmark's perception of China in Greenland is the variable that the analysis will explore, the context of the research is influenced by the Danish-Greenlandic relations. The post-colonial relation between the two nations is marked by a sensitive communication that further leads Denmark to assume an attentive attitude when dealing with activities regarding Greenland. Therefore, the analysis can take into account this precondition by employing an interpretative method that permits to take into consideration the historical background in which the issue is embedded.

Furthermore, when referring to "Danish reactions", the research intends to focus on the Danish government and state agencies' response to the issue. The research refuses to take the state as a black box that responds to actions according to given preferences. The state is composed by different actors within it and opinions and perceptions on the matter may differ among them. For instance, the state of the Kingdom of Denmark includes both the Danish and Greenlandic governments; however, it would not surprise that the considerations over Chinese investments in Greenland of the Government of Greenland do not match with the ones of the Danish government. These perceptions are made visible by the discourse, that is how the narrative around the issue is framed, how the matter is presented.

To sum up, the research adopts a post-positivist theoretical framework since it intends to uncover the Danish perceptions about Chinese presence in Greenland through the analysis of Danish government and state agencies's official representation of the issue.

2.2 Choice of theory

To be consistent with the problem formulation, the theory chosen to guide the analysis must adopt a post-positivist perspective. As a consequence, traditional international relations theories do not match with our theoretical framework since they are framed within a positivist ontology, and thus they have been discarded. In fact, the most known traditional IR theories

like realism and liberalism may answer to the research question, but looking to different elements and carrying out a completely diverse analysis, which would not look at the Danish perceptions of China and Chinese presence in Greenland, but rather at the material facts that may justify the Danish wariness towards Chinese presence in Greenland. In other words, traditional IR theories take security issues as given without considering the huge relevance that the context and actor's perceptions make in defining a security problem.

Within the range of post-positivist theories, more than one theory may adapt to the research question. For the purpose of our analysis, constructivism and securitization theory best fit our problem formulation. Indeed, constructivism as a social theory allows us to use an interpretative method to analyse the issue; furthermore, the theory addresses particular importance to the discourse, which is manifestation of the perceptions, thoughts and beliefs of the actor. Through the discourse, the actor, like the Danish government for instance, frames the topic and gives it a particular meaning. Danish government's official documents may reveal their wariness towards Chinese presence in Greenland through the phrasing they use to explain the issue.

Moreover, postcolonial relations are also represented and examined through the constructivist approach. The postcolonial argument of the sensitive communication between Denmark and Greenland works as a notion of the context in which the research question is integrated more than as a matter of analysis by itself. Indeed, one of the key points of constructivism is that issues should be interpreted by considering the historical and cultural background of the actors involved, since it is their perception of the issue that shapes their behaviour, and their perception depends on their preconceptions derived from history and culture (Jackson, Sørensen, & Møller, 2019c). For this reason, post colonialism as a theory is not included in the theoretical framework.

On the other hand, the securitization theory enriches the discourse analysis around Chinese presence in Greenland by including the conceptual tools of the securitization model into the research method. Therefore, the discourse is not only taken into account in its passive form of manifestation of the actors' implicit thoughts, but also in the active version of speech act. The speech act is the way through which the actor frames and proposes an issue as a security threat; in this sense, it is both voluntary and not. Moreover, the securitization theory allows the research to investigate security as a socially constructed concept that goes beyond military capabilities. Indeed, the theory defines four categories other than the military sector,

which include, for instance, economic security and political security (Emmers, 2010). Denmark may perceive Chinese presence in Greenland as a security threat but not in military terms, for instance; it may indeed be a security issue for the collective identities or for national sovereignty in the sense of unity of the Kingdom, or either for the economy of Greenland, which then affect the economy of the whole Kingdom of Denmark.

2.3 Choice of data

Since the theoretical framework is based on the interpretative method, the choice of data will consequently be focused on qualitative data.

In order to investigate the perspective, thoughts and beliefs of Denmark towards Chinese presence in Greenland, we will look at official state documents. The purpose is to understand how the official discourse around Chinese investments in Greenland is framed, which will help us interpret the attitude of Denmark on the matter.

The content analysis will be focused on the Intelligence Risk Assessments published every year by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, which is the Danish state agency under the Ministry of Defence in charge of identification and scrutiny of security challenges for Denmark.

More specifically, the research will take into account the Intelligence Risk Assessments since 2017, which is the first year the assessments are available in English. By taking into account more years, it will be possible to notice whether there have been changes across time and consider if the issue of the Chinese presence in Greenland has grown or decreased in relevance throughout the years.

As the Intelligence Risk Assessments include all the most serious security challenges for Denmark, it is understandable that the documents explore topics that are not of interest to our analysis. As a result, the content analysis will focus on and select the parts of the publication that involve either Chinese involvement in Greenland or China in general.

The research will take into account the chapters on the Arctic, on China, the Introduction, Main Conclusions and a short chapter at the beginning of the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessments named “The new security dynamics”. The chapter on the Arctic has been selected to consider the overall developments of Arctic security and how the Chinese involvement in Greenland may have an impact on the regional level, so to understand

whether there is a connection between the perceptions of overall Chinese ambitions in the Arctic and the concerns about Chinese presence in Greenland. On the other hand, the research will also include the chapter on China to examine where it is possible to draw a correlation between Danish overall view on China and the Danish understanding of Chinese investments in Greenland. Furthermore, Introduction and Main conclusions provide an overview of perceived security threats by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service and thus are helpful to assess the relevance of a perceived Chinese threat in the overall Danish security policy. Finally, the chapter “The new security dynamics” may give useful information to connect the specific developments in the Arctic to the overall new global security challenges.

Furthermore, the analysis of Danish reactions to the Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland will take into consideration secondary data, such as news articles, press releases and publications, which describe the dynamics of the episodes. In particular, the analysis will take into account information retrieved from danish and international newspapers on the two episodes mentioned in the Research Background concerning Greenland, Chinese companies, and the Danish government. Furthermore, the analysis will consider the declaration “US View on China” of the US Embassy & Consulate in the Kingdom of Denmark to underscore the US strategy and perceptions on Chinese presence in Greenland, which may be connected to the Danish perception of Chinese presence in Greenland.

To sum up, the research will employ qualitative data, primarily official Danish state documents, US official declarations and Danish and international news articles, in order to examine the position of the Kingdom of Denmark towards Chinese presence in Greenland.

2.4 Research method

Having clarified the theoretical framework of the research and the choice of theories and data that will be employed, the coming paragraph will specify the research method, that is the process the analysis will follow.

In fact, the research will adopt a deductive method, which means that the issue will be analysed through the lenses of the theoretical framework that has been previously defined. Therefore, the analysis will use the conceptual tools of constructivism and the securitization model of the Copenhagen School to examine the discourse around Chinese presence in Greenland in Denmark.

The analysis will follow two paths. The first section will focus on the content analysis of the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments, while the second will undertake an analysis of Danish reactions to Chinese companies' attempts to invest in Greenland by looking at the episodes of the airport construction projects and of the naval base sale through the lens of the securitization model.

More in detail, the first part of the analysis will examine the Danish Defence Intelligence Service's publications by firstly looking at the structure of the publication, to have an overview of how relevant the topic is perceived and if this perception has changed throughout the years. The research will thus look at the space dedicated to the issue and the position of the topic among all matters discussed in the papers. Then, the documents will be codified to extrapolate the intentions of the writer and to correlate the main points of the documents regarding the argument of China's involvement in Greenland; the analysis will also make use of the software for qualitative analysis NVIVO 12.

Subsequently, the second part of the analysis will delve into the two episodes cited in the Research Background involving the Danish government and Chinese companies in Greenland. First, the cases will be described as they are reported by the media; the results of the first part of the analysis will thus be considered and integrated to the case study to draw a correlation between the Danish perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland as they have been extrapolated by the official publications of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, and the reactions of the Danish government in the episodes in question. Secondly, the analysis will broaden the vision of the issue by taking into account the Arctic regional security and connecting the Danish Arctic security policy to the NATO security framework and the developments in the Arctic involving the great powers. This second section will in particular make use of the securitization model.

To conclude, the analysis will be divided into two sections, although the findings of the first part will be inserted in the second part. The analysis will thus first examine the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments through a codification process; then, the second section will delve into the Danish government's reactions to the two cases involving Chinese investments in Greenland to correlate the behaviour of the Danish government with its perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland.

2.5 Limitations

Although the research aims to be complete in investigating the issue, the project occurred in some limitations that may affect the exhaustivity of the analysis.

Firstly, the language barrier restricted the availability of resources and thus the amount of data that could be scrutinised. In fact, the research employs primarily English-written sources; while some Danish sources have been taken into account thanks to digital translation, these cases have been limited to news articles retrieved from Danish newspapers, since inofficial translations could not be employed for those data whose content needed to be qualitatively analysed. This limitation has, for instance, narrowed the content analysis of the Intelligence Risk Assessments to the period after 2017, and it would have been interesting for the research to take into consideration even the year 2016, or even those before.

Furthermore, the choice to examine only the Intelligence Risk Assessments as representation of the Danish government perceptions could also restrain the research. In fact, whilst the work of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service may help the analysis to underline more easily the concerns perceived from the Chinese presence in Greenland, the state agency is focused on security issues and frames the discourse in terms of threat and security. This has an impact on the findings of the analysis, since official documents published by other state departments could express their views from a different perspective, perhaps emphasising more economic-related matters.

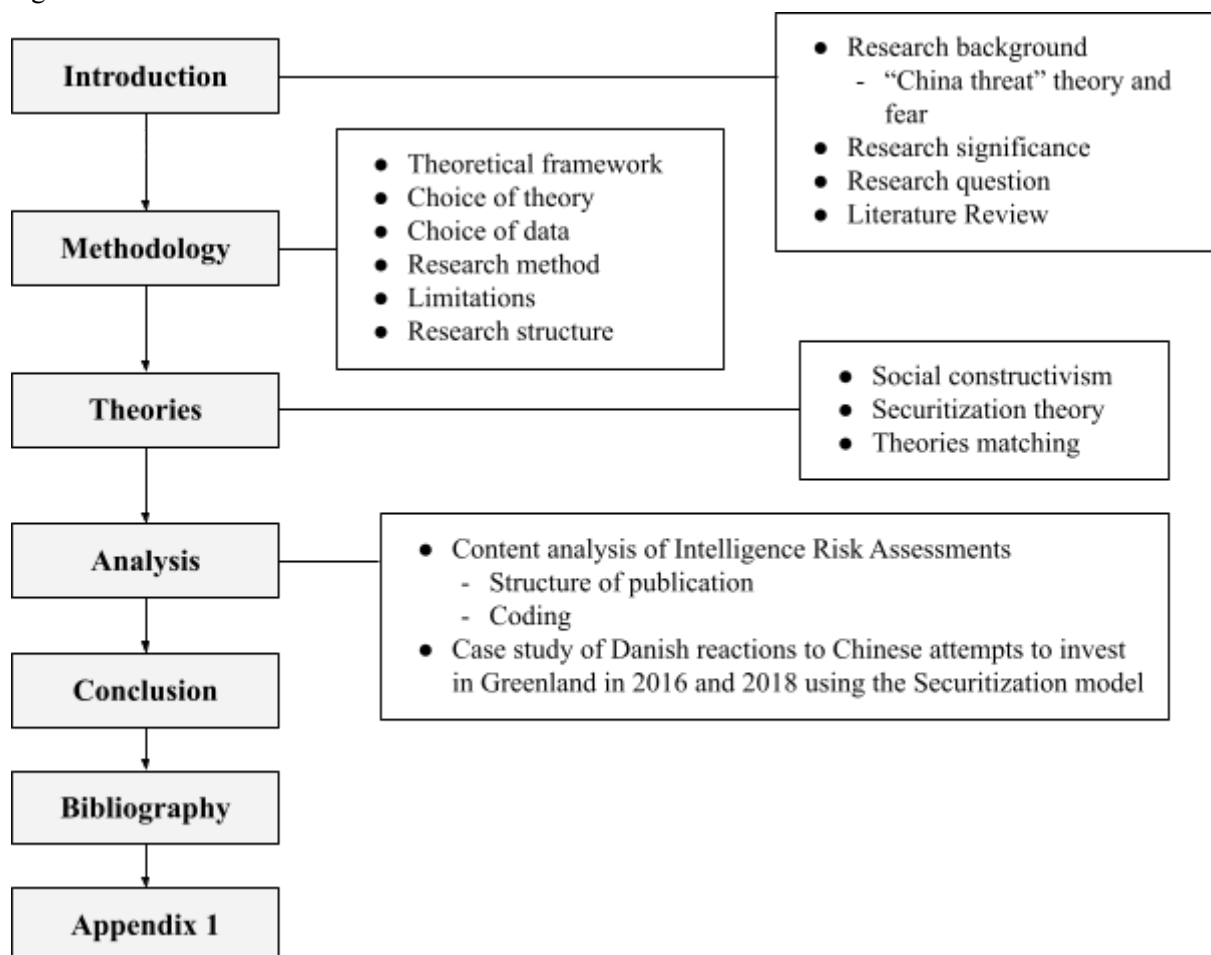
In addition, the research considers only the Danish perceptions to the Chinese presence in Greenland and takes into account the Greenlandic government's opinion marginally. The lack of an analytical review of the Greenlandic perspective confines the research to Danish concerns in Greenland without considering the Greenlandic view.

To sum up, the research work is restrained by different types of limitations. Firstly, the impossibility to consider Danish resources for content analysis has strongly affected the amount of data available. Secondly, the choice of data also limits the findings of the analysis, since publications from other state agencies that do not deal primarily with security policy could have provided different information. Eventually, the choice to focus only on the Danish perspective has also restrained the research work, which does not examine the Greenlandic view analytically.

2.6 Research structure

The following map, Figure 1, represents a scheme of the thesis structure. Indeed, the thesis begins with “Introduction”, which includes the research background, the literature review and the problem formulation. Secondly, the research moves to the methodology, where the theoretical choices and the method of research are explained. Subsequently, the “Theories” chapter describes the theories employed and how they are matched together. The analysis follows, and it is divided into two sections, as outlined in the Research Method. Finally, the conclusion provides the main findings and answers to the problem formulation. Bibliography and Appendix 1, containing the codes registered during the codification process in the analysis and the condensated units in the form of summaries, are inserted at the end of the thesis.

Figure 1. *Research structure.*



Source: personal collection.

3. Theories

The next chapter is dedicated to the description of the theories employed in the research work. Social constructivism is applied to the analysis as a general theoretical framework that allows the research to evaluate the Danish perceptions towards Chinese presence in Greenland by employing qualitative data such as discourse analysis within an interpretative research method; the next paragraph will look into the details of the theory to give an exhaustive explanation of its content and perspective. On the other hand, the securitization theory will help scrutinize the Danish reactions to the Chinese presence in Greenland through the lenses of the securitization process. Social constructivism and securitization theory give interpretation to the China threat fear Denmark may perceive. Finally, the last paragraph of this chapter will merge the two theories in a coherent framework in which they share the same post-positivist basic concepts, meanwhile they enrich each other with different analytical tools and views.

3.1 Social Constructivism

Social Constructivism is a social science theory that has applications also in the discipline of International Relations. The term “constructivist” was first designated by the IR scholar Nicholas Onuf to the discussion that was animating the field of international relations in the 70s and 80s (Kratochwil, 2017). Constructivism confronts positivist theories like realism and liberalism by claiming that they are “materialistic” theories, since they focus on material power, such as military and economic capabilities; they are thus limited in understanding reality as the international system is formed by ideas (Jackson, Sørensen, & Møller, 2019a).

The confrontation between positivist and post-positivist theories like constructivism is played both on the epistemological and ontological ground. Ontology in particular differentiates constructivism from traditional IR theories. Indeed, conventional IR theories apply a positivist ontology, according to which the world is made of material facts, which are visible, countable and identifiable; most importantly, the material world is seen as external to the observer. On the other hand, constructivism does not apply the positivist ontology, since it claims that the material world exists but the reality is socially constructed. The material facts are secondary to ideas; indeed, the importance is given to the meaning attributed to the material capabilities. As a result, for instance, security issues arise from the perceptions, thoughts, ideologies about the material facts more than from the material facts by themselves.

Also, the actors and structures that compose the international system are not given, they are socially produced and may not have a material form. An evident example is the state, which is an institution collectively created that is represented through people, places and symbols but does not exist by itself. International relations, like all human relations, consist of ideas and thoughts. There are no natural laws of society, economics or politics.

The positivist premises of an external and identifiable material world make it possible to draw a cause-effect line between elements. The positivist theories employ a “logic of consequences”. Given the rationality of actors and their a priori defined preferences, the theories allow to predict their actions depending on the different situations. On the contrary, constructivists find it hard to give the same results, since the preferences of the actors vary depending on their history, culture and ideology. Constructivists apply a logic of appropriateness, where actors choose the way they feel more appropriate with their set of norms and values.

To sum up, constructivist ontology sees the world as a social construct, whose elements cannot be defined objectively.

This argument is also connected to the second point of divergence with positivist theories. Indeed, by saying that the social world does not have natural laws, constructivism poses also an epistemological challenge to positivist theories. Theories are part of the world they try to define and thus the world and the theory influence each other; the observer cannot give an external judgement because they are placed within the structure they want to analyse. It is not possible to define whether something is univocally true or false, since the answer depends on the interlocutor and their point of view. In this sense, constructivism adapts an interpretative method.

The epistemological challenge on how we produce knowledge has also divided the post-positivist scholars; we can therefore define two lines, one more conventional, the other more critical. Conventional constructivism agrees that the material facts are secondary to the ideal ones, but it still believes it is possible to analyse and give explanations on the social world by adopting an interpretative research method. On the other hand, critical constructivism not only claims that the material world does not exist by itself, but also argue that it is not possible to give any answer because all human perspectives are subjective and biased by the ideal world they find themselves in (Jackson, Sørensen, & Møller, 2019c). The present research will employ conventional constructivism.

Having ideas as the primary elements and actors of their analysis, constructivists have provided a categorisation of ideas into four main types, which are 1. Ideologies, 2. Normative beliefs, 3. Causal beliefs, 4. Policy prescriptions. Finally, constructivism does not contrast the basic idea of traditional IR theories that states pursue their own interests, but it objects that the interests are given and defined a priori. National interests are also socially constructed. Moreover, constructivism considers power as one of the focal points of international relations, although it proposes a different definition of the concept that is non-materialist. In the constructivist perspective, power has plural forms.

To sum up, constructivism takes as primary elements the ideas, thoughts and beliefs, and argues that material facts do not tell anything by themselves, they are given with meaning by the ideas formulated on them. The constructivist approach is post-positivist and challenges traditional IR theories both on the ontological and epistemological ground. By denying the positivist assumption on the nature of the world, it also discards the causality nexus as many non-material variables influence the course of events, which are not identifiable unequivocally; therefore, the most effective method of analysis for constructivists is interpretation through qualitative data.

3.2 Securitization theory

Securitization theory provides a new conceptualization of security. The theory was developed within the movement of the Copenhagen School, which emerged at the Conflict and Peace Research Institute of Copenhagen around the late 80s of the last century. In particular, the second edition, published in 1991, of the book “People, States and Fear” by Barry Buzan stimulated a debate among scholars and colleagues on the concept of security that came to formulate a new framework to analyse security issues (McSweeney, 1996). More in detail, the Copenhagen School counts as major scholars Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, who developed a group of concepts to rethink security through the notions of securitization and desecuritization. With the attempt to reconceptualize security and to redefine the agenda of security studies after the Cold War, the Copenhagen School broadened the conception of security and provided a model to analyse how issues are securitized or desecuritized. Securitization defines the process through which an issue is not only presented as posing an existential threat to a referent object, but is also ultimately recognised like so by the referent audience.

Before looking into the practice of securitization, it is essential to describe the foundations that support the securitization model. The Copenhagen School widened the meaning of security by overcoming its traditional concept, which is restricted to military security. Indeed, the Copenhagen School adopts a multi-sectoral approach by defining five categories of security, namely military, environmental, economic, societal, and political security. The security-survival logic is maintained, since an issue is considered a security problem when it is perceived as an existential threat to a referent object, which is traditionally the state, but not necessarily. Indeed, the securitization theory includes in their analytical framework also non-state actors, which can be both referent objects and securitizing actors. The securitizing actor is the player that securitizes issues by asserting that something or someone, which is the referent object, is existentially threatened. Commonly, securitizing actors are governments, political leaders, bureaucracies or pressure groups. On the other hand, the referent object is something or someone that is existentially threatened and has a legitimate claim to survival. Referent objects and security threats vary according to the category of security; for instance, while for military security the referent object is usually the state, for economic security is the national economy.

However, whereas the conceptualization of the Copenhagen School may offer a new analytical perspective, the broadening of the concept may be problematic in the sense there could be the risk to overstretch the definition of security to the point it loses its coherence and eventually meaning. Yet, by matching the renovated and enlarged concept with the development of new conceptual tools, the theory manages to ideate a model that allows a systematic, comparative and consistent analysis of security.

The securitization model specifies the process through which an issue is securitized. Firstly, the model classifies the issue into stages, which correspond to the issue being non-politicized, politicized or securitized. A problem is not politicized when it is not included in the public debate and neither is taken into account by any form of state action; it is instead politicized when it is managed within the standard political system, namely it has become a concern of government decision, public policy and resource allocations. The shift from being politicized to being a securitized issue comes when it is considered appropriate to employ emergency actions that go beyond the standard political procedures, that are extraordinary measures.

The first or initial move through which the securitizing actor frames a problem as a security issue is called an act of securitization. The securitizing actor tries to define an issue as an

existential threat through speech act, that is the discursive representation of a certain issue as a security threat. The initial move of securitization can be taken by both states and non-state actors, which thus plays an important role in the securitization theory. Yet, the act of securitization does not mean that the issue in question has been securitized; indeed, the process is not concluded until the second stage has been successful, in other words until the referent object has acknowledged and recognised the matter as an existential threat to them. Eventually, when this stage has been completed, the securitizing actor gains the legitimacy to undertake extraordinary measures.

On the contrary, the desecuritization process works in reverse and permits the desecuritizing actor to move an issue from the security to the political or even non-political one. Notably, even though non-state actors may be able to initiate the act of securitization, states and governments have an advantage in terms of resources, especially when it comes to taking extraordinary actions.

Moreover, the securitization model of the Copenhagen School adopts a constructivist approach, in the sense that security is a socially constructed concept in the securitization theory. Indeed, contrary to the realist approach, which focuses on the material nature of the threat and takes tangible facts as proof of the reality of the threat, the Copenhagen School declares that every act of securitization involves a political decision and results from a political social act. The securitization theory examines security issues as a matter of discourse, in other words an issue may be defined as a security issue depending how the referent object reacts to the act of securitization.

Finally, the securitization process reaches success when the securitizing actor has the right, that is the legitimacy, to use extraordinary measures; however, it does not necessarily need to use them. Yet, the act of securitization is ultimately complete when it consists of both discursive (speech act and shared understandings) and non-discursive (policy implementation) dimensions.

To sum up, the securitization theory was developed within the Copenhagen School and refers to a new, widened way to think about security. Firstly, the concept of security is broadened by defining five categories of security; in addition, non-state actors are also included in the theory both as possible referent objects and securitizing actors. The theory evaluate security as a matter of discourse in the sense that an issue becomes a security matter and vice versa through speech act; defining a problem as a security issue is a political and social act that

consists in convincing the referent audience that the problem needs to be tackled as it is an existential threat to the referent object. More schematically, a question goes from being a non-politicized matter to being a politicized one. Then an issue may turn to be securitized when a securitizing actor frames the matter as an existential threat to a referent object. The securitization theory maintains the security-survival logic, which means that to be a security issue, the problem needs to be perceived as a matter of survival by the referent audience. Then the act of securitization is successful, and the securitization actor gains the legitimacy by the referent object to take extraordinary measures to tackle the security issue, which means that it acts outside the legal and common procedural framework of politics (Emmers, 2010).

3.3 Theories matching

Constructivism and securitization theory match together as the Copenhagen School adopts a constructivist approach to security. Indeed, the starting point of the securitization theory is that security is a political and social act generated through speech act and discourse which then turns into action. Security is thus a socially constructed concept according to the securitization theory. Furthermore, the Copenhagen School elaborated a model that helps analysing the way an issue is firstly politicized, then securitized. Finally, the securitization model employs an interpretative method.

The research will make use of both theories as they allow to enrich the analysis with different perspectives. Constructivism enables the paper to explore Danish reactions to Chinese presence in Greenland. Indeed, domestic relations between Denmark and Greenland are marked by their shared experience of colonialism, which still has an impact on their reciprocal relations. Clearly, Denmark-Greenland communication is still quite sensitive since Greenland is going through a decolonisation process while staying within the legislation of the Kingdom of Denmark. Through the post-positivist approach of the constructivist theory it will be possible to analyse the Danish perceptions by exploring speech act, and especially by looking at the context in which Denmark reacted. For instance, the promptness that characterized Denmark responses to Chinese companies' offers to invest may suggest the Danish wariness towards Chinese presence in Greenland. One of the basis of constructivism lies on the relativiness of the meaning of any fact according to the context in which it is nested. Whereas Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland may be seen as threatening by Denmark, the same offers from other foreign countries, which are, for instance, Greenland

and Denmark's allies, would not produce the same reactions. On the other hand, the securitization theory helps to examine Danish reactions to China in Greenland through the securitization model; Denmark may perceive China as threatening for its national security, or either for the Greenlandic national economy.

Constructivism and securitization theory works together in exploring Danish behaviour towards Chinese presence in Greenland. In fact, the Danish attitude does not look coherent at first glance. Denmark wishes to further enhance its comprehensive strategic partnership with China along with trade and bilateral economic relations; thus it does not intend to spoil its bilateral relations with China by asserting its preoccupation towards Chinese presence in Greenland. At the same time, it encourages Greenland to seek foreign investments. However, when it comes to investing, Denmark intervenes when a Chinese company could win a bid for a project or asset that may have secondary consequences, such as China owning property in Greenland. Meanwhile, the Danish government does not give an explicit explanation for their actions. In this context, securitization theory explains the way the Danish government perceives China and its consequent behaviour. On the other hand, constructivism more broadly gives interpretation for the Danish attentive attitude towards both Greenland and China, in the sense Denmark feels to be careful in intervening in Greenlandic affairs because of the post-colonialism sentiment characterizing their bilateral relations, while it cares not to deteriorate its relations with China by displaying its wariness about Chinese presence in Greenland.

In conclusion, the two theories share the same post-positivist ontology since the Copenhagen School, where the securitization theory was developed, adopts a constructivist approach towards security. In fact, the securitization theory is a constructivist theory on security, which sees security as a socially constructed concept. The research will employ constructivism as a theoretical framework to analyse Danish concerns in the relation with Greenland and China, thus its consequent attentive attitude, while it will use the tools and model of the securitization theory to investigate Danish government perceptions of China and its actions.

4. Analysis

The following chapter will be dedicated to the analysis, by examining on one hand how the issue of the Chinese interests in the Arctic and in Greenland is presented and implicitly judged by the Danish intelligence service, while on the other hand exploring Danish reactions

to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland by considering the statements of Danish and Greenlandic politicians on the matter, the Danish Arctic policy in the latest years and the US view on the Arctic; the information collected will finally be examined through the securitization theoretical model.

4.1 Content analysis of Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments

Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments are published every year by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service; the purpose of the publication is to outline the main threats and challenges that affect Denmark's security in a 10-year perspective. While the risk assessments are unclassified documents, they are based on classified work (Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2021).

In the light of deconstructing the assessments to uncover Danish perceptions over Chinese presence in Greenland, the analysis will follow some specific questions as guidelines. In particular, when examining the perceptions and beliefs that may be extrapolated from the risk assessments, the content analysis is looking not only at how the problem is presented, but how much space it is given to the issue and where it is placed, physically and in order of importance, among other threats or challenges debated in the documents. These two latter questions may be answered by looking at the structure of the publication, which means that where the Arctic, China and Chinese interests in Greenland are placed in the index can tell something about Denmark's worries about Chinese presence in Greenland, for instance.

Above all, it is worth underlining that if China and Chinese activities and interests in the Arctic are listed in the risk assessments, they are already at least a security challenge for Denmark. Indeed, in all risk assessments analysed, it is highlighted that the work of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service presented in the risk assessments is aimed at outlining the most serious current threats that could affect Danish national security (Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2017; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2018; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2020).¹

¹ No paraphrasing is needed to clarify this point.

Indeed, the Intelligence Risk Assessment 2017 states “*The Intelligence Risk Assessment from the Danish Defence Intelligence Service provides a survey of the most serious current threats that could affect Danish national security*”, which is also similarly written in the Intelligence Risk Assessment 2018 with the sentence “*Reflecting one aspect of our ambition for transparency and dialogue, this annual Intelligence Risk Assessment sets out to provide an extract of the most serious current threats and developments abroad impacting on Danish security*”.

Finally, in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2019 we find “*This DDIS annual risk assessment collates the key threats and a number of other issues abroad that have an impact on Denmark's security and strategic interests*”, while in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2020 it is written “*In the Intelligence Risk Assessment 2020, we at*

On the other hand, to explore the question of how the issue is presented, the analysis will navigate the wording and phrasing by making use of text coding. Practically, the text coding will allow the analysis to look at how concepts are related within the text and thus which are the intentions of the writer. A document codification may also make use of word frequency analysis to see which terminology is most used. However, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service has already specified in the publications that the wording and the details provided are conditioned by the fact that the Intelligence Risk Assessments are unclassified documents open to a large audience; this sentence has a double meaning. While on one side the publication work is devised for an inexpert public, who may lack of security and international relations academic knowledge, on the other side the issues exposed in the assessments are explained in a way that does not disclose secret or classified information. Indeed, from a review of the publications it is noticeable that the wording is well calibrated to appear neutral, and to report facts and other countries' concerns while omitting the Kingdom of Denmark's intentions. For this reason, the analysis will not present the results of the word frequency analysis as they will not provide different information on Danish perceptions from the codification process.

The following paragraph then unravels the questions that connect the space and position given to the issue within the document to the relevance it has for the Danish Defence Intelligence Service.

4.1.1 Structure of publication

The qualitative analysis of how an issue is dealt with by an actor by looking at the released documents encompasses a systematic look to the structure of the selected documents to visualize the relevance given to the problem in question. Where the topic is placed and how much space it is dedicated to it may give some information about how much attention is paid towards the issue.

In the case of the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments, it is worth underscoring that the Danish Defence Intelligence Service is in charge of both national Network Security Service and Denmark's foreign and military intelligence service. This has a profound impact on the publication work, since, for instance, the Intelligence Risk Assessments would not give much importance to cyber threat as they do if the Danish Defence Intelligence Service was not

the Danish Defence Intelligence Service have compiled an overview of the threats and other developments abroad that have an impact on Danish security and strategic interests.”

responsible for the IT Security Authority and National Security Service. Indeed, in the 2018 Intelligence Risk Assessment it is clarified that the choice behind the document structure is dependent on Danish Defence Intelligence Service's double role. As a consequence, that year the publication was divided in two sections, one dedicated to cyber security, the second to "the capabilities of states as well as non-state actors and their intentions towards Denmark and Danish allies, but also on a host of conditions abroad that may influence Danish foreign and security policy" (Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2018).

Generally speaking, the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments are structured as follows. First, an introduction is presented, which gives an overview on the publication work of the year in question; the index is defined just after. Then, a paragraph named "Main conclusions" succeeds and provides a sort of executive summary by describing the main points and findings. Hereafter, the security threats are debated in separate chapters, which are displayed from top priorities to less challenging issues. For this reason, indeed, it is possible to consider Danish perception of Chinese presence in Greenland and China more in general from the structure of the Intelligence Risk Assessments.

After a first look to the documents taken into account, it is already possible to define China and Chinese presence in the Arctic as at least a security challenge for Denmark; in fact, both issues have been present since 2017, which is the starting date from which the assessments are analysed.

Even more interestingly, the two security problems have scaled up in the table of contents throughout the years, which denotes an increasing attention and pressure on the two topics. Whereas Chinese interests in Greenland, which is a paragraph with the Arctic chapter, were placed as sixth in the index order in 2017, in 2020 it has moved up to becoming the second chapter. Similarly, China has advanced to being the fourth chapter in 2020, whilst in 2017 it was placed at the end of the publication, just before North Korea. The shift has been more or less gradual, meaning that the issues went through a middle phase in 2018, prior to being upgraded as top priority security issues in 2019. Notably, 2019 has marked a turning point in this case.

Moving to space, it can be seen analogously an increase in the words spent on the two topics. The gain in space denotes both a possible development in the events concerning the topic, but also the rise in details provided. The topics are thus explored with more attention since they are regarded as more relevant for Denmark's national security. China and Chinese presence in

the Arctic may have become more threatening to Denmark's national security over the past four years, since the percentage of the whole document dedicated to the chapter on China tripled from 2017 to 2020, while the chapter on China in the Arctic has faced a slighter increase. Even in the variable of space it is noticeable a prompt change between 2018 and 2019, when the room for China surged about 50% from one year to another.

Table 1 may help visualize the increase in years and give a systematic outline of how space and position may matter in considering the relevance an issue has for the writer. The clearest evidence in this sense of how Chinese presence in Greenland and in the Arctic may have become one of the most serious threats for Denmark's security comes from its upgrading in the security issues' order in the table of contents.

Table 1. Relevance of selected topics in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments since 2017, calculated by order index and percentage of whole text dedicated.

Year	Position (issue order in the index)		Space (percentage of selected content/whole document content)	
	China in the Arctic, China in Greenland	China	China in the Arctic (China in Greenland)	China
2017	6th (in the chapter "Arctic")	8th	1,35 (0,53)	1,52
2018	4th (in the chapter "Arctic")	5th	1,57 (0,43)	2,78
2019	1st (in the chapter "Arctic")	3rd	1,83 (0,57)	4,33
2020	2nd (in the chapter "Arctic")	4th	1,76 (0,59)	4,52

Source: Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2017; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2018; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2020.

Interestingly, in 2019 the Arctic chapter was the first topic debated in the document, whilst the China chapter was third in the index. The downgrading position is actually due to the insertion of a chapter called "The new security dynamics" on the shifting power of balance and the tensions among the three great powers, that are United States, China and Russia.

To sum up, the structure of the publication gives some information about the relevance an issue has for the writer by looking at the room dedicated to the topic and the position where it is placed in the index. For the purpose of our analysis, the structure of the documents reveals that both China and Chinese presence in the Arctic and in Greenland have been upgraded as more serious threats for Denmark's security according to the order of the table of contents, while they have also registered an substantial increase in the space dedicated to the to topics

in proportion to the whole content of the documents. Interestingly, 2019 has marked a turning point in terms of attention paid to both issues, since it can be noticed a surge in the trend. Finally, in 2020 the first argument discussed is the new security dynamics, which sum up the shifting balance of power and tensions risen among the great powers, namely the United States, China and Russia.

4.1.2 Codification

The codification of a document involves different steps and practices. In our case, the content analysis of the Intelligence Risk Assessments has been processed as follows. Firstly, the documents have been reviewed several times, and selected parts have been chosen to be codified. Indeed, the publication also contains parts that were not of interest for our case and would not provide any pertinent information about either Chinese presence in Greenland or China in general, such as, for instance, the chapters on cyber threats or on Middle East, North Korea and Africa as security challenges for Denmark.

Therefore, the chapters included in the content analysis are, for each year, 1. Introduction, 2. Main Conclusions, 3. The Arctic, 4. China. Moreover, for the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessment, it has been concluded that the chapter on “The new security dynamics” was worthy to be integrated in the analysis and it has been found to be crucial for connecting the results of the codification. While the chapters on China and on the Arctic, which includes the paragraphs on China in the Arctic and China in Greenland, have been taken into account as they are central to our analysis, the paragraphs of Introduction and Main Conclusions have been included as they give an overview of the whole publication and reveal the importance of the selected topics within the all Denmark’s security framework.

The picked text sections have then been divided in meaning units, which have been subsequently condensated. The meaning units have been then coded with the help of the software for qualitative analysis NVivo 12; a code that sums up the most fundamental intention of the phrase has been thus associated to each meaning units. Coding allows to categorise different phrases within the same code. The codification of the documents makes possible to see possible relationships and correlations between codes; the results of such codification is a mind map of the content seen from the intentions of the writer, that is how the writer wishes to represent a certain topic.

Translating this process to our analysis, the codification of the Intelligence Risks Assessments has provided the list of codes that is reported in Appendix 1, as it is too long to be presented here. A description for each code or set of codes has been added as a summary of the text content included. The coding process has revealed some fundamental points of Denmark's perceptions of China and Chinese presence in the Arctic, as it has made possible to uncover Denmark's security framework, that is how Denmark sees itself within the global security pattern. Moreover, by insisting on some arguments, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service intended to give a certain representation of the Chinese presence in Greenland that was supposed to produce some specific impressions. Finally, the codification has also made clear some relationships between several topics presented in the publication, such as China's ambition of influence in the Arctic and China's overall intention to grow its international influence, or the shifting balance of power and Arctic militarisation, and consequent challenges for Denmark's national security. While the results of the codification process will be explored in detail after, the analysis will now move to examine how the Chinese presence in Greenland is represented, how China as a security threat is described, and finally how the two issues are nestled in the overall picture.

To better understand the text analysis, a schematised summary of the content is presented for the two main chapters, "the Arctic" and "China"; such schematisation also allows to clarify the changes made throughout the years. The given summaries work similarly to reports of condensed meaning units. For a matter of space, the summaries are reported in Appendix 1; more specifically, the condensed units for the chapter "the Arctic" are presented under 7.2 Summary of the chapters "the Arctic", found in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020, while the summarised content of the chapters "China" are provided in the paragraph 7.3 Summary of the chapters "China", found in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020. Furthermore, in order to make the portrait of such macro-topics clearer, mind maps of each issue have been ideated.

Turning to the Chinese presence in Greenland, we will explore how the issue is pictured with the help of Figure 2, which schematises the matter. Chinese presence in Greenland is addressed in the Intelligence Risk Assessments within the framework of Chinese strategy in the Arctic, where a separated paragraph is dedicated to the Chinese interest in Greenland. From the review of the documents, it is possible to define some points which are persistently present throughout the years.

First, Chinese interests in Greenland are defined as not specific to the country itself. China is interested in strengthening its bilateral ties with all Arctic nations, and thus China intends to increase its cooperation also with Greenland for this reason. This aspect is clarified in all Intelligence Risk Assessments since 2017 at the beginning of the paragraph.

However, it is also specified that China is interested in Greenland's raw materials in particular, as part of its overall resource security strategy. The intention of China to invest in Greenland's raw materials in order to diversify its resources and energy supply is repeated every year, and it is presented as a justification for the Chinese interest in maintaining a commercial commitment in Greenland despite being economically unfavourable in the short-term. It is also explained that China applies this strategy to other raw materials exporting countries.

Furthermore, the Chinese commitment in Greenland is also connected to its ambition to increase its influence over the region. Here it is possible to notice a comparative change throughout the years. While in 2017 it is highlighted that prices for some raw materials will surge in the next future, thus giving a economic strategic purpose to the current unprofitable Chinese commitment in Greenland, in the following years this precision is omitted; on the contrary, more emphasis is given to China's aim to gain influence over Arctic matters and on the intention of increasing cooperation and research as a strategy to achieve this goal.

In addition, a consistent mention of some risks related to Chinese investments in Greenland is reported in every Intelligence Risks Assessment examined. The risk associated to Chinese investments is of political interference, due to the close connection between Chinese companies and the central state and to the strategic resource industries involved in the investments.

Eventually, an interesting point to bring up is the increasing US wariness towards Chinese interests in Greenland, which is described from 2019 onwards. Indeed, the content analysis has revealed also in the process of codification a turning point in 2019, when in the paragraph on China in Greenland and in the Arctic chapter in general it appeared for the first time a declared opposition by the United States towards Chinese increasing involvement both in the Arctic and in Greenland. More specifically, it is stated in the 2019 and 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessments that the United States regards China's growing interests in the light of their strategic rivalry on the global scale, and define them a threat to the US room of manoeuvre and position in the Arctic region, which is strategically important for the United States. In

addition, the United States is said to be intended to curb China's scope of action in the Arctic in general and in Greenland specifically, which the United States sees as part of his sphere of influence due to its location close to North America. As a result, the US enhanced focus on Greenland will have an impact on China's possibilities in Greenland.

The aspects described above are the main points concerning Chinese interests in Greenland. More systematically, as shown in Figure 1, Chinese presence in Greenland may be divided into three sections, respectively regarding China's strategy, Chinese interests and Chinese activities in Greenland. The terms "strategy" is employed in the documents to intend the plan or method to achieve the goals or interests. "Interest" includes the goals, objectives and ambitions of China in the region, while "activities" concern the current and factual actions of Chinese companies and state in Greenland, thus what the Chinese actors have done or are about to do in the island.

As noted in the first lines of the paragraph on the Chinese interest in Greenland, Chinese interests and strategy in Greenland are in fact part of a larger Arctic policy; consequently, Chinese interests and strategy in Greenland may be connected to the overall ambitions and plan for the Arctic.

Concerning the interests, China looks to Greenland for different objectives. Initially, China is interested in getting access to Greenlandic resources, in particular to raw materials; commercial interest and resource security in the form of supply diversification are firstly described as the main objectives driving Chinese interests in Greenlandic resources. However, also a political interest in gaining influence over the region is mentioned as a reason for Chinese investments in Greenland's mineral industry. Already since 2017, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service has expressed its concern over Chinese ambition of influence on Arctic matters. Throughout the years, the emphasis on Chinese intentions to gain influence in the region has increased, almost leaving behind the motivation of commercial interests, whilst keeping the intentions regarding resource security.

Chinese interests in Greenland may be traced back to the country's overall interests in the Arctic region, where indeed China aims to get access to resources and shipping routes and to increase its influence over Arctic matters. Chinese interests in resources and shipping routes are attributed to possible commercial and economic benefits and to China's overall resource security strategy; however, it is also explained that China linked the Arctic shipping routes to the Belt and Road Initiative, therefore connecting the Arctic to China's overall strategic

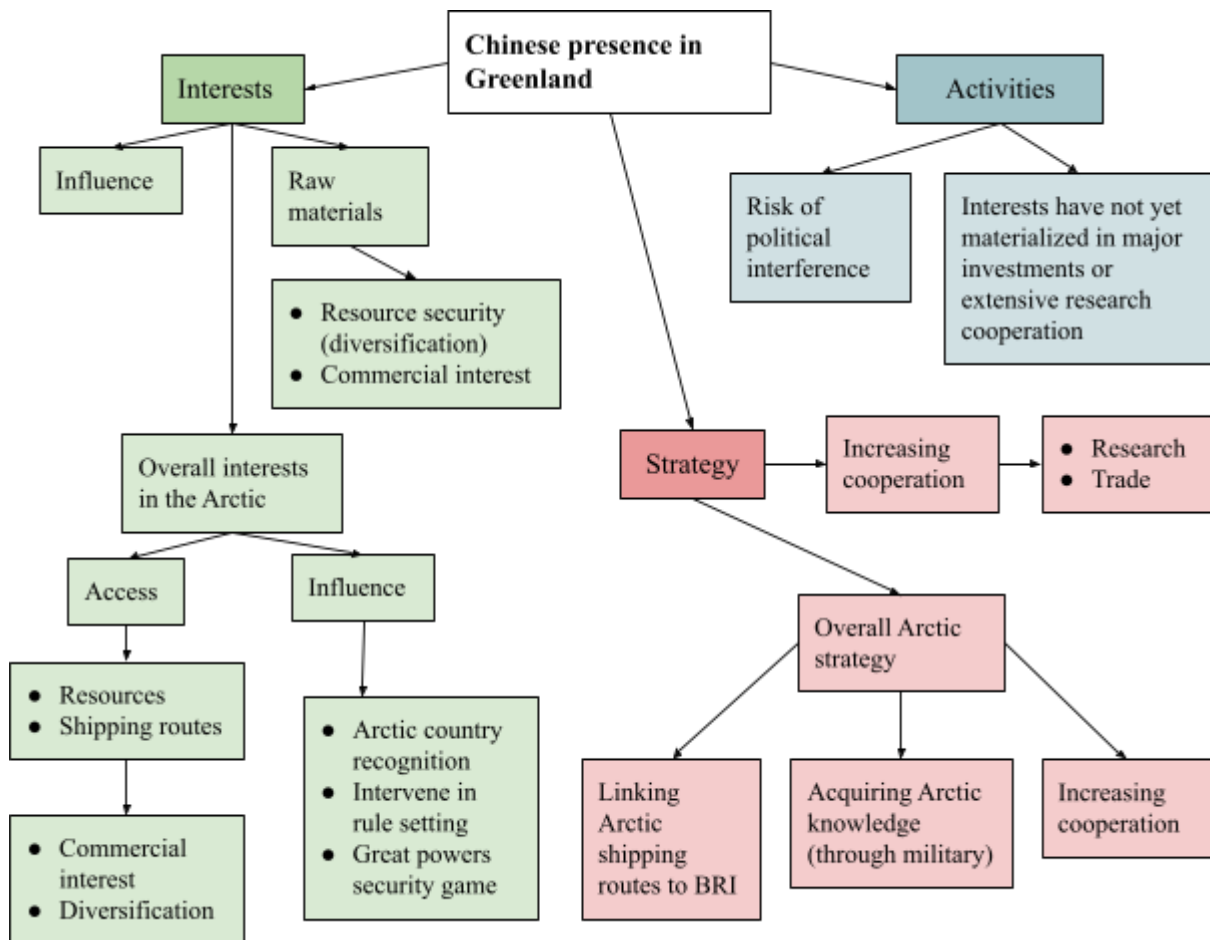
long-term objectives. China's aim for influence is indeed well explored and associated with other similar goals, which all regard China's international role and its new active approach. In fact, China seeks to increase its influence in Arctic matters and to be able to intervene in Arctic governance, which China sees at a developmental stage. China wants to be recognised as a legitimate polar nation and maritime great power, which China considers as necessary achievements to be regarded as a great power. Finally, the shifting balance of power is compromising Arctic cooperation, and leading to an increasing militarisation of the region, led especially by Russia and the United States. China's military thus considers essential to broaden its Arctic knowledge in order to be able to compete with the other great powers. Moving to the qualities of such interests, Chinese interests both in Greenland and in the Arctic are defined as persistent, long-term and growing.

Regarding the strategy, Denmark perceives that China seeks to increase cooperation, bilateral relations and research as platforms to increase its influence in the Arctic. In the case of Greenland, trade and research are in particular mentioned as cooperative tools to obtain influence, defined in the text as "entry points" for influence. The strategy for Greenland is thus comparable to the overall strategy of China's commitment in the Arctic. Cooperation is described in terms of cooperation forums and bilateral agreements, and in activities such as building infrastructure or increasing space and climate research. The decision of linking the Arctic shipping routes to the Belt and Road Initiative is also part of a strategy that aims to include the Arctic in the country's overall long-term objectives and that have the potential to further increase Chinese influence in the Arctic thanks to infrastructure construction. Finally, acquisition of Arctic knowledge and capabilities by the Chinese army, PLA, is considered of strategic importance for China due to the Arctic's military and strategic importance for Russia and the United States.

Turning to activities, the paragraph on Chinese interests in Greenland does not dedicate much space to the argument. Interestingly, Chinese commitment in Greenland is described in terms of interests and potential gains and consequences, but not much is said about the actual activities China is perpetuating in Greenland. Indeed, the 2019 Intelligence Risk Assessment declares that even though "Chinese non-state actors show persistent interest in commercial and research-related cooperation in Greenland", "the interest is still narrow and yet to translate into larger investments or extensive research cooperation in Greenland" (Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019). This would also explain why the paragraph is named "Chinese interest in Greenland". This point will be further explored later as it provides an

interesting reflection on the Danish perception of Chinese involvement in the Arctic. On the other hand, it is instead mentioned a possible risk of political interference by the Chinese state in case of large investments by Chinese companies in Greenland, especially in the case of investments in strategic resources, due to the close connection between Chinese companies and the state.

Figure 2. Mind map of representation of Chinese presence in Greenland in the Intelligence risk Assessments 2017-2020.



Source: Personal collection.

In conclusion, China’s strategy in Greenland is described as part of the overall Chinese strategy in the Arctic, which regards cooperation in research, trade and infrastructure as platforms to legitimately gain influence in the region and access to the Arctic resources. On the other hand, Chinese interests in Greenland are focused on the island’s raw materials, which would allow China to further diversify its resource supply; commercial interests are also involved, but the emphasis on this particular interest has waned through the years to highlight instead the Chinese ambition to gain influence on Arctic issues. Even in this case,

Chinese interests in Greenland match with the overall interests of China in the Arctic. Eventually, when it comes to discuss the activities perpetuated by China in Greenland, little is reported; the documents admit that the interests have not yet materialised in large investment projects, yet the Danish Defence Intelligence Service expresses its concern of the of risk of political interference regarding Chinese investments in Greenland, due to the strategic industries involved and the close connection between Chinese companies and the central state.

To some extent, the Chinese strategy, interests and activities in the Arctic resemble the country's overall strategy and intentions in the international arena. By following the schematic structure presented in Figure 3, the analysis will now focus on how China is described in the Intelligence Risk Assessments as a security threat to Denmark, which aspects are emphasised and thus which are the most relevant perceived challenges concerning China. Figure 3 guides the analysis on this topic by presenting a mind map of how China is dealt in the Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020.

China is overall presented as a top priority to Denmark national security since 2019. Chinese strategic interests are focused on two main points, which are 1. Addressing the country's domestic challenges, described in detail in the 2019 Intelligence Risk Assessment, and 2. Increasing China's role in regional and global affairs. It is thus clear from the beginning that Denmark considers that China's strategic objectives challenge the Western global influence as China aims to be more influential globally. This is a crucial point that will be further explored later. Moreover, the strategic goal of facing the domestic challenges pose a secondary problem to Denmark, as the technological development is prioritized as an instrument to solve certain economic challenges.

While some topics are persistently present throughout the years, but are not involved in particular changes across time, other new arguments pop up and enrich the number and consistency of security challenges that China poses to Denmark. Specifically, China-Russia problematic cooperation and China's South China Sea policy are included every year around the end of the chapter. On the other hand, the issue of the growing international influence is debated since the first assessment analysed, but it evolves throughout the years and grows in importance. For this reason, the international influence is shown in a separated box than foreign policy, as it involves plural different dynamics and consequences, among them the US reactions to China's development.

China is presented as a global key player, which is facing several domestic challenges, while it continues to grow in global influence and to reshape the instituted international system. China's domestic challenges are described to have an impact on the global scale, in the sense that how the country decides to face them will have a significant effect on the global economic system. China's plan to deal with such systematic issues involves a long-term development strategy divided in stages. The "Made in China 2025" plan is part of a more ambitious plan, whose final step should be completed by 2049, the year of the 100th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The goal of these strategies is to develop China to become a global leader in terms of national strength and international influence, and to have a leading role in technological, political, and cultural matters. It is noticeable in the documents a strengthened focus on China's technological development throughout the years, which is described as a problematic to the United States and western countries in general. Many Chinese tech companies have already managed to become key players in the international market and main competitors to the United States and European countries. The assessments report that China intends to further promote such development, and makes efforts to secure foreign technology through foreign investments and joint agreements with foreign companies and startups. The assessments also explain that such initiatives have already begun in North America and Europe.

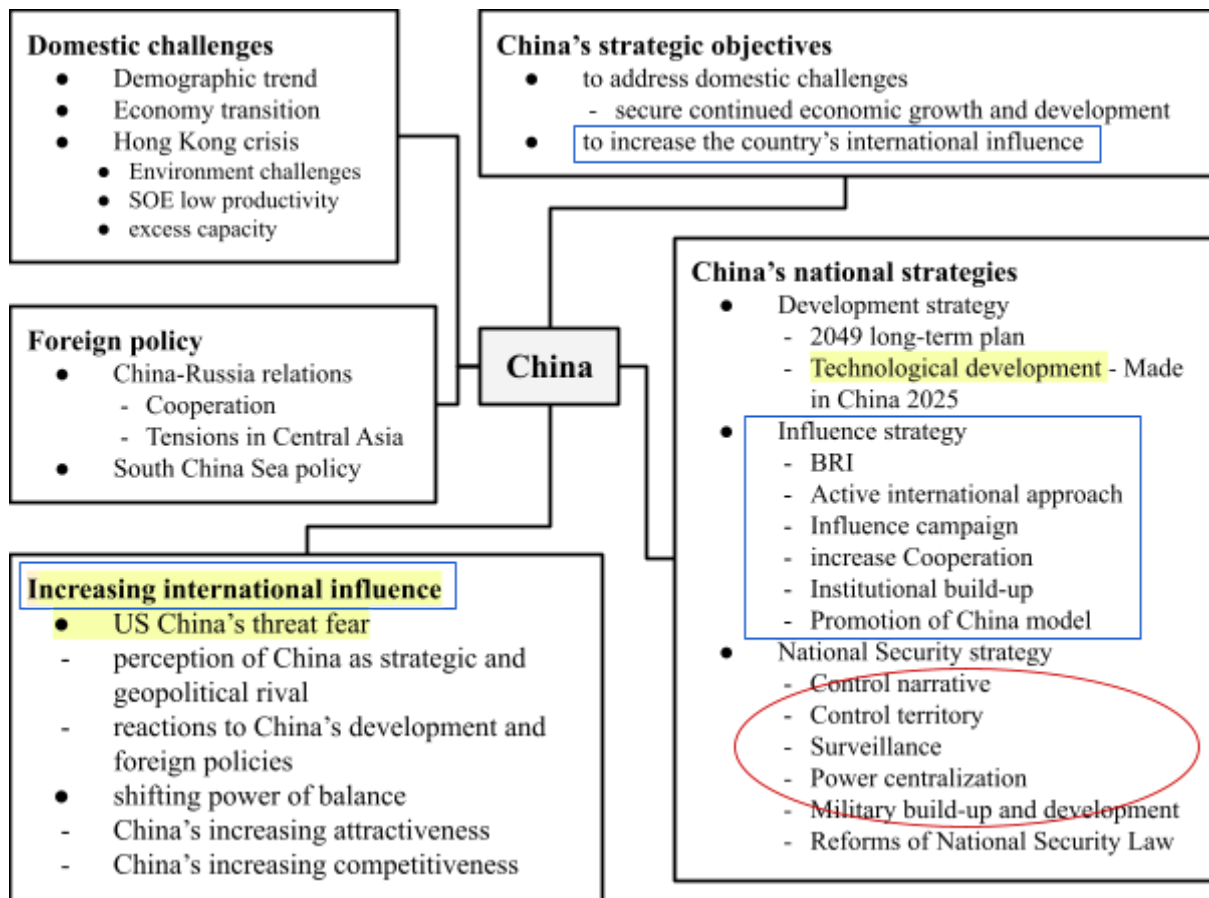
It is thus evident from the content analysis that China's technological development strategy is a major challenge for Denmark, both for its general scope, which would damage Denmark's national economy and competitiveness, both for the tool employed, that is the technological transfer from western countries' tech companies to Chinese one. More broadly, the assessments point out the Chinese national strategies that are more problematic for Danish security, and the tech development plan is one of the three, together with the influence and national security strategies. Indeed, the most explored themes regard 1. The growing international influence, the instruments employed by China to increase it, and the consequences that its phenomenon has for the US and the West; 2. The growing repressive or assertive attitude of the Chinese leadership in both its domestic and foreign policies, manifested in political and diplomatic pressure, attempt to control narrative - also through influence campaigns, power centralisation and the monitoring of population through surveillance technology; finally, 3. The technological development strategy and goals described before.

Eventually, the increasing influence of China in global and regional affairs is regarded as a security threat by the United States and it is seen as problematic for Denmark, as part of the Western world; it is a direct challenge, but also an indirect one, to the degree that the United States seeks to garner support for its critical view of China among its allies, and Denmark is one of them. Furthermore, Denmark sees itself in the critical position of “smaller states” in between the two great powers, as defined in the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessment; smaller countries that seeks close cooperation with both parties are presented in the situation of facing difficult dilemmas, especially on issues such as trade, technology development, investments, and the climate agenda. This is also the case of Denmark, which signed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreement with China, but still regards the United States and the transatlantic relationship as the most important guarantor of Denmark’s basic security policy (Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019).

Above all, it is worth underlining that the growing tensions between China and the United States, and even more generally the West, are rooted in the shifting global balance of power. The Western world is depicted in a critical condition; it is indeed losing influence both in absolute terms and comparative terms with China. China’s influence strategy seems to produce effects, since an increasing number of countries are willing to become part of the Belt and Road Initiative or to adopt Chinese surveillance systems, and more countries see Chinese entities as attractive partners. Moreover, the Danish intelligence service emphasises that China is actively promoting its national development strategy as an alternative to the Western model, which further challenges western countries and their ideals. The US foreign policy change further worsens the situation by giving more room of manoeuvre to China and fostering Western division. At the same time, China’s increasing competitiveness in innovative and technological industries is another major challenge for western countries. The stress on China’s increasing influence, Western losing power and the shifting power balance reveals Danish Defence Intelligence Service’s concerns over these topics and how they could affect Danish national security.

The assessment states that the United States is reacting to this course of action by looking at China in a strategic and security-related perspective and to US-China relations as a zero-sum game. The Danish Defence Intelligence Service is thus aware of the traditional realist security approach the United States has undertaken with respect to China.

Figure 3. Mind map of the representation of China in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2017-2020.



Source: Personal collection.

The choice of examining the security challenges that China poses to Denmark have been justified by the possible connection between Danish perceptions of China and Danish understanding about Chinese presence in Greenland, which needed to be proven.

In fact, the security threat that Denmark perceives from China looks broader than the one related to Chinese presence in Greenland; indeed, China's technological development is problematic for Denmark's economic security overall, but it is not connected to China's ambitions in the Arctic and in Greenland.

However, Chinese strategy in the Arctic and the US's China fear in the Arctic may be part of a wider picture that involves China's ambition to increase its influence regionally and globally, and the US perceptions of China's development as threatening to its national security.

The 2019 and 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessments point out the relation between great powers' tense relations and the changing world order. The developments in the Arctic, which

include increasing militarisation, are described in the terms of a great power security game that includes the United States, China and Russia. From the documents it is possible to conclude that the US Arctic strategy is directed to curb China's commitment and ambition in the Arctic, similarly to how it intends to do in other regions and globally.

Therefore, Danish perceptions of Chinese presence in Greenland are highly affected by the securitization process the Arctic is experiencing, which is a consequence of the increasing tensions in the great powers' relations.

To underline these connections, the paragraph on "The new security dynamics" in the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessment has provided some helpful information. The conceptual results of the codification have been synthesised in Figure 4, which ultimately relates the global shifting of power balance to the securitization process involving the Arctic.

Denmark perceives the increasingly tense environment in the Arctic as a serious threat to its security. Moreover, Denmark's security policy is framed within some defined security alliances and determined by Denmark's self-identification as an Arctic and European country. Denmark's perceptions of China in Greenland are thus influenced by the considerations made by the United States and NATO, which are stated to be the most important guarantor of Denmark's security policy interests in the 2019 Intelligence Risk Assessment. As a consequence, it is reasonable to conclude that the US perception of China's interests and activities in the Arctic has an impact on Denmark's security policy as well, especially since the assessments specify that the United States considers Greenland under its sphere of influence and is intended to obstacle China's involvement in Greenland.

The securitization of the Arctic is explained in terms of increasing militarisation and deteriorated cooperation. The military developments in the Arctic are mostly driven by Russia and the US military, and marginally by China, whose army aims to get Arctic knowledge and capabilities. The United States's strategy and statements contrast the principles of cooperative attitude to which the Arctic states committed to. Furthermore, the text associates the military build-up in the Arctic with a great powers' security game.

In fact, as reported in the assessments, the United States is highly concerned about China's ambitions of influence in the Arctic. At the same time, Russia also does not want China to gain influence over the Arctic region and is afraid that China's increasing role in the Arctic will come at the expense of Russia's strategic interests in the region.

China's growing influence is thus a key factor in the US and Russia's preoccupations over China's involvement in the Arctic. It is thus possible to draw a line between the great powers' activities in the Arctic and the tensions between the great powers at the global scale.

Indeed, the shifting balance of power is explained in the documents as a consequence of China's increasing international influence, Western diminished influence and internal division, and eventually the challenges posed by China to the western countries in terms of attractiveness and competitiveness.

China challenges to the West are particularly felt by the United States, which perceives China's development as a national security threat and aims to curb the trend by obstructing China in global and regional affairs, and demands support on its critical view on China to its allies. US-China rivalry is a key variable of the tensions between great powers, to which the NATO-Russia relations must be added up. Therefore, an environment of increasing frictions is developing among the United States, China and Russia.

Furthermore, the documents report China's aim of increasing its role in regional and international affairs as one of the top strategic interests of China, while China's main strategic goal in the Arctic is to enhance China's influence in the Arctic governance. It could then be deduced that China's Arctic ambitions are part of the overall national strategic interest of gaining influence globally. The Arctic is thus for China one among different regions where it aims to become influential.

The preoccupation for the growing influence in the Arctic could be then linked to the overall wariness of China's expanding influence. Consequently, the great power security game in the Arctic could be described as a transposition of the global confrontation between the great powers in the Arctic regional framework.

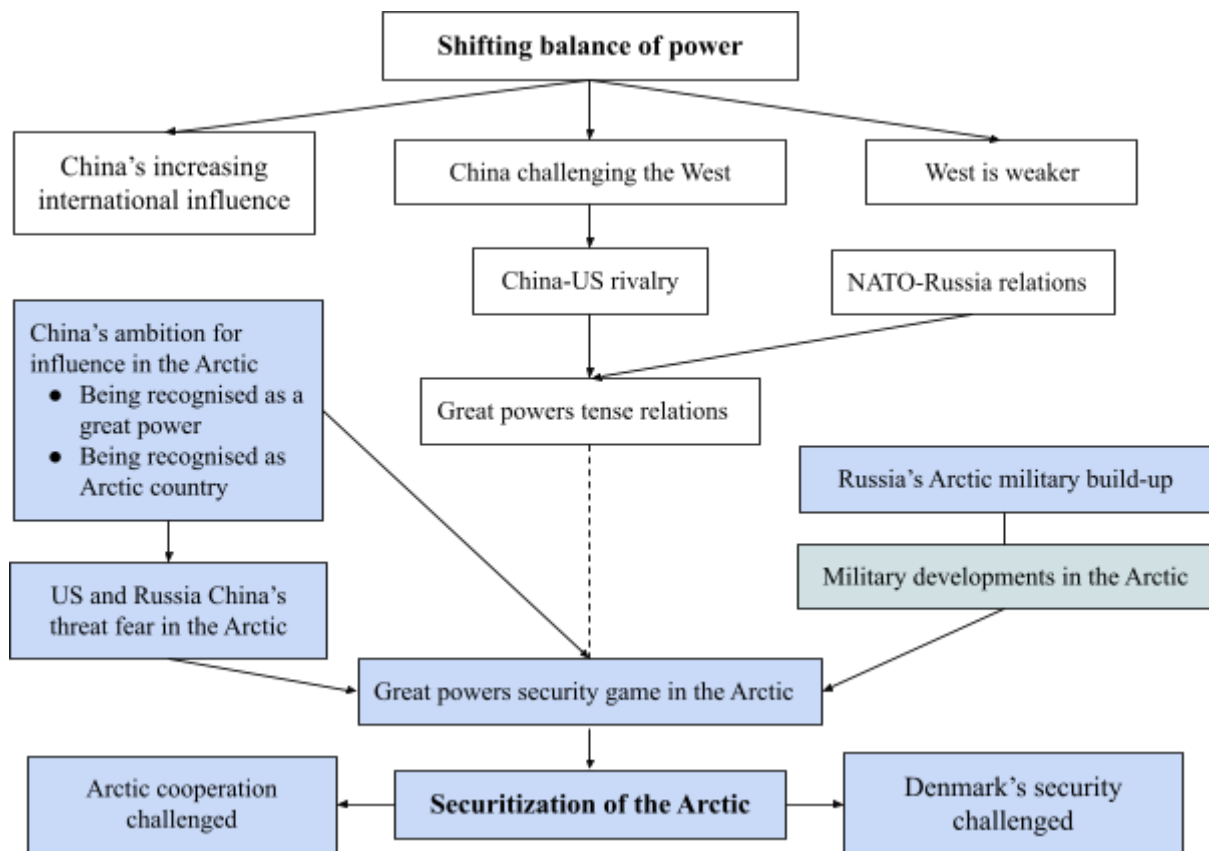
The regional confrontation of the great powers in the Arctic has determined a deterioration in the Arctic cooperative governance overall. While in the 2018 Intelligence Risk Assessment China's growing involvement in the Arctic is defined as both a challenge and an opportunity for Arctic coastal states, the following assessments omit the possibility of getting benefits from the Chinese interest in the Arctic and focus more on the great powers game and the threats China and Russia pose to the United States.

Eventually, the increased risk of tensions in the Arctic is perceived as a serious security issue for the Arctic cooperative governance and for Denmark. As Denmark's strategic interests

involve the Arctic, the developments in the Arctic region seriously affect Denmark's national security. Furthermore, since Denmark's security policy relies on the country's security alliances and cooperation agreements, the US perceived threats to its national security also include Denmark, in the sense that Danish security is also threatened if the United States and the NATO's security is menaced. The correlation between Denmark's security and the NATO security framework can be also noticed by Danish reactions to the US demand to its allies to increase their Arctic military capabilities and to align their interests to act as a counterweight to Russia and China, expressed in the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessment. Indeed, this year, the Danish government has signed a political agreement to increase Danish Defence capabilities in the Arctic and in the North Atlantic for a total amount of 1.5 billion DKK. The agreement will translate into high-tech capabilities for surveillance, increased presence and new military training in Greenland. It is clearly stated that the agreement is a result of dialogue and cooperation with the United States and other Arctic allies, within the NATO framework (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2021).

Taking into account the description of the US perceptions of China and its strategy to counteract the Chinese growing influence in the Arctic as well as in the international arena, it is noticeable that the United States perceives a threat from China and it is intended to persuade its allies that also their strategic interests are endangered by China's involvement in the Arctic, especially its NATO Arctic allies. By focusing on the US reactions to China's ambitions in the Arctic, the risk assessments reveal the act of securitization initiated by the United States, which is actively working to convince its Arctic allies to acknowledge and respond to the Chinese threat in the Arctic region.

Figure 4. *Mind map of the securitization of the Arctic within the global framework of shifting balance of power.*



Source: Personal collection.

4.1.2.1. Discussion of results

Therefore, the summarised results of the coding process will be explored hereafter by dividing them in short paragraphs, with the scope of easing their understanding.

Denmark's security framework strongly influences Danish perceptions in the security realm

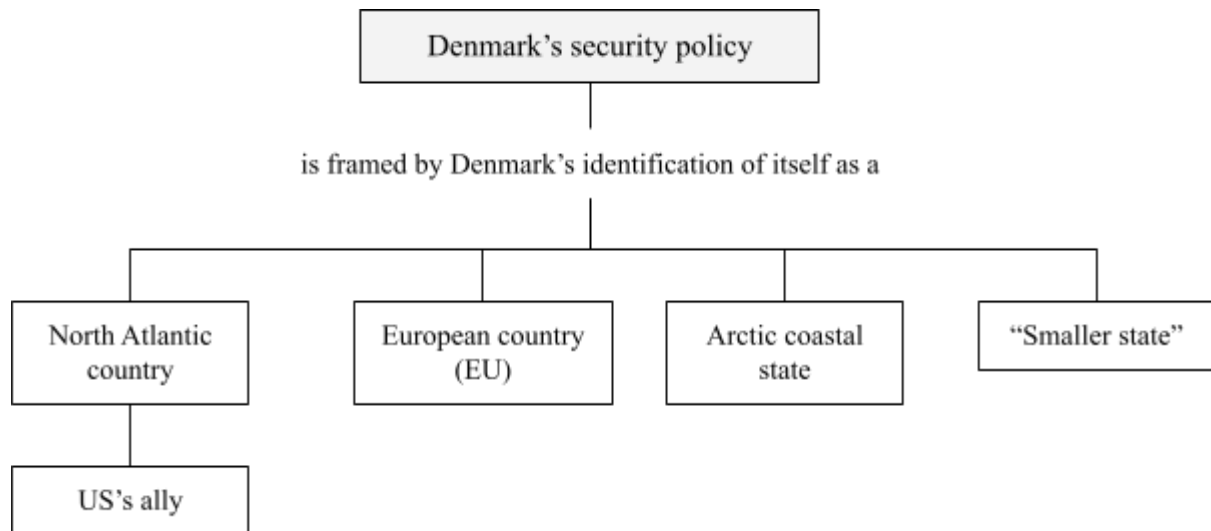
The motivation for Denmark's security challenges to be especially focused on the Arctic and on China, and as a result on China's involvement in the Arctic and in Greenland, is given by clarifying the security framework in which Denmark's national security is nestled.

In fact, the increasing focus on the Arctic as a national security issue, and especially on China's involvement in the Arctic and in Greenland, is highly dependent on the fact that Denmark defines itself as an Arctic country within the NATO security framework.

Generally speaking, the securitisation of the Arctic undermines the Kingdom of Denmark's strategic interests, and the 2019 assessment admits that it will affect the Kingdom's freedom

to manoeuvre. The Danish Defence Intelligence Service also affirms that it will be increasingly difficult for Denmark to maintain a cooperative stance in the Arctic as the country will need to defend the Kingdom's strategic interests and have consideration for the Kingdom's allies, which implies that the developments in the Arctic damage Denmark's strategic interests.

Figure 4. *Danish's security framework, as exposed in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2017-2020.*



Source: Personal collection.

Whereas these considerations may not necessarily surprise, it is interesting to point out that Denmark's perception of an issue as a security threat highly depends on the context in which Denmark's security is regarded as preserved.

The US military build-up in the Arctic is seen as an instrument to protect the NATO Arctic countries' security, and Denmark is one of them, while the increase of Arctic military capabilities by Russia or China is presented at least as a security challenge for Denmark, if not a threat.

Therefore, by looking at security as a socially constructed concept, the analysis has clarified that Denmark's perception of China in Greenland is biased by the security framework in which Denmark's security policy is embedded.

As a consequence, it is possible to conclude that the self-identification of Denmark as a western, north-atlantic, and arctic country has an impact on its beliefs towards China's presence in Greenland.

Considering the US leading role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, it may be also added that the US opinions and stances towards China and China's involvement in the Arctic and in Greenland influence Danish perceptions of China and of China's involvement in Greenland.

The Global China's threat fear plays a role in Denmark's perceptions of China's involvement in Greenland

The consideration of both chapters on the Arctic and on China has allowed the analysis to take into account a possible connection between the global developments regarding China and the West with the regional affairs concerning the Arctic countries and China; consequently, it has made possible to compare Denmark's stances towards China in Greenland with the overall Danish perceptions of China.

It can be noticed that both chapters emphasise the growing influential role of China, in the Arctic matters on one side, and on a global level on the other. Indeed, the assessments have well explored the concern over the increasing influence of China internationally and what consequences this phenomenon has on the Western international influence; interestingly, the room given to this topic has expanded over the years, meaning the Danish preoccupations have increased.

It is worth underlining the connection present in the text between China's growing role and Western decreasing influence. Proposing the international rise of China as a threat to the West reminds of China's threat fear discourse. The Danish Defence Intelligence Service presents the shifting power balance as threatening western countries' national interests, and the driving force of the menace is China's ambition to obtain a leading role in global political, technological, and cultural issues.

Furthermore, the assessments focus on the same arguments stressed by the China threat theory, which are mentioned in the Research Background; in fact, China is presented as a security threat in military, ideological and economic terms. In particular, in the chapter dedicated to China, the publications emphasises the South China policy and the military modernisation as an instrument to reach its objective in the region; moreover, the technological development and the increasing competitiveness of Chinese tech giants are presented as a economic security problem to the United States and to western countries, which used to dominate the industry. Finally, the ideological threat is also present, as China's

growing influence is described as challenging the Western global and regional influence; in addition, the assessments report that China is actively promoting its national development model. The inclusion of such perceived threats in the documents may thus reveal Denmark's China threat fear.

Simultaneously, Denmark is concerned about China's ambition for influence in the Arctic and stresses the point of China's goal to have a role in Arctic matters by enhancing its bilateral cooperation with Arctic countries. It sounds reasonable to link the two worries within the same category. Denmark perceives China's growing international influence as a threat, and the increasing role of China in the Arctic is thus part of the same concern, but focused on the Arctic region, which touches more deeply Danish national strategic interests, as Denmark is a western country generally, but an North-Atlantic Arctic coastal state in particular.

Denmark regards China's interests in Greenland as part of a broader Arctic strategy

Considering the way the Chinese interests are described, it is evident that Denmark regards Chinese interests in Greenland as part of a Chinese wider strategy revolving around the whole Arctic region. In this sense, Denmark does not think that China has a particular interest in Greenland by itself, and thus Denmark's concerns on China's presence in Greenland do not appear to be linked to the fear that China could interfere in the domestic relations between Denmark and Greenland. Although Chinese large investment projects in Greenland are regarded as risky, revealing some form of concern about Chinese businesses in Greenland, it is not possible to deduce for the content analysis that Denmark sees Chinese presence in Greenland as a threat to its national unity.

On the contrary, the risk of political interference is evaluated for investments in strategic industries, such as raw materials, and it is linked to the close connection between Chinese companies and the central state. The concern involves unfavourable economic consequences that could damage the Greenlandic economy, and have an impact on the overall national economy as a consequence. Yet the Chinese investments are seen as a possible economic security threat for the Kingdom of Denmark, as the narrative of the China threat fear suggests.

Nevertheless, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service seems more preoccupied with the relevance China could gain in the overall Arctic governance. As a consequence, Danish concerns on China's involvement in Greenland are more focused on China's ambition to play

a role in the Arctic matters and to be recognised as a legitimate Arctic nation than on possible consequences that Chinese presence in Greenland could have on Denmark-Greenland domestic relations.

China's activities in Greenland are described vaguely, while intentions and ambitions are emphasised

Interestingly, it is noticeable that the paragraph on the security challenge posed by China in Greenland to Denmark is described in terms of interests and ambitions, but little is reported on the actual activities of China or of Chinese companies in Greenland.

The assessments are mostly focused on the possibility that Chinese companies or China may want to increase their trade or research with Greenland with the aim of increasing its influence over the island. However, the documents admit that Chinese interests have not found realisation in major investments or extensive research cooperation.

As a result, Chinese interests in Greenland may sound exaggerated, in the sense that Denmark may overemphasize China's strategic ambitions in Greenland and in the Arctic as a result of its perceptions of China's involvement in Greenland as a security threat. This finding is consistent with the reflections made by the research Kevin Foley in the book chapter "The politics of economic security. Denmark, Greenland and Chinese mining investment", summarised in the paragraph Literature Review (Kevin Foley, 2017).

Denmark's perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland has changed across time

The results of the content analysis show that Denmark is concerned about the Chinese growing interest in Greenland and consider them as a serious security challenge for the Kingdom.

Overall, it can be noticed that throughout the years the emphasis has shifted from commercial interests to China's ambition of influence; while the assessments continue to report that China is interested to Greenlandic raw materials to diversify its energy resource supply and not be dependent on one region or country, the commercial interest for economic profits from the minerals in the medium-long term is not mentioned anymore after 2017. The focus is moved towards China's interests in gaining increasing influence over Arctic issues and being able to intervene in the Arctic governance, and on China's strategy to achieve the goal. In fact, the assessments insist on China's intentions to increase bilateral cooperation in trade and research

with Greenland as platforms to gain influence in the island; the same strategy is applied to all Arctic countries.

Eventually, the assessments show that Denmark's perceptions towards China's involvement in Greenland have changed over the years, by shifting the focus from commercial interests to strategic interests, primarily gaining influence and securing access to resources. As a result, it is possible to deduce that Denmark's perceptions towards Chinese interests in Greenland have grown more critical, looking at China's ambition in a more security and strategic related perspective.

The securitization of the Arctic is a consequence of the shifting balance of power

The Intelligence Risk Assessments draw a connection between the shifting power balance and the securitization process involving the Arctic. The publications are quite straightforward in identifying the causes of the increasing tensions in the Arctic in the international issues concerning the great powers. More specifically, the global shifting balance of power between China and the United States is seen as a destabilizing factor for the world order, which is in fact changing. As the United States wishes to resist the transition, it is making efforts to secure the territories that used to be under its sphere of influence. The actions and strategy perpetuated by the United States are described in an active and defensive way at the same time, as the United States is perceiving a serious threat to its national capabilities and is then reacting to a menace.

The Arctic used to be defined as an exceptional region, in the sense that it should be excluded from any international matter and its governance should be dictated by cooperation among nations. However, this does not seem to be the case anymore, and the Arctic cooperative governance is challenged by the tense relations among the great powers.

The issue can be analysed more precisely by applying the theoretical tools of the securitization model. The assessments affirm that the United States perceives a threat by China and Russia in the Arctic. As already mentioned, the security issue identified by the United States does not have its origin in the Arctic, even though it has manifested itself also in the Arctic region as a spillover effect. It is worth clarifying this point since it makes it easier to outline the dynamics of the securitization process in the region. Indeed, if the United States did not consider the increasing international influence and competitiveness of China as a threat to its international status, it would not regard Chinese activities or interest in the

Arctic with the strategic security perspective it is currently employing. Furthermore, it is noticeable that the United States' threat narrative is expanded to the NATO security region, and in the case of the Arctic, to the NATO Arctic coastal states; in fact, the United States frames the discourse around China's involvement in the Arctic as a threat to the regional stability of the Arctic that would limit the possibilities of NATO Arctic coastal states to pursue their strategic interests in the region.

Systematically speaking, it may be deducted that the United States is pursuing an act of securitization, by trying to convince its allies that their strategic interests in the region are existentially threatened by China's strategy in the Arctic, together with Russia military build-up. Thus, while the United States is the securitizing actor, the strategic interests of NATO Arctic coastal states are the referring object; eventually, the NATO Arctic states' governments are the audience to persuade.

The securitization process is still developing, but it seems overall proceeding towards a successful direction with respect to Denmark. Indeed, the call for extraordinary measures aimed at curbing China's strategy in the Arctic sounds to have been heard by Denmark, which appear to regard it as appropriate. Indeed, the assessments focus on the challenge China poses in the Arctic and how it may affect Greenland. The years 2018-2019 mark a turning point for the topic, and since then Chinese interests in the Arctic and in Greenland are described in more strategic terms. Also, Denmark's compliance with the US demand to increase Arctic military capabilities proves the Danish acceptance of the US new Arctic strategy as legitimate.

In this perspective, the Danish perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland have been shaped in the last five years by the United States, who has managed to present the China threat in the Arctic as real and thus the increased military focus as appropriate. In fact, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service declaration of increasing difficulty in balancing the defence of strategic national interests and Arctic states' cooperation reflects the securitization trend.

The United States put pressures on allies to counteract China both in global affairs and in the Arctic

While the Danish perceptions of the Chinese attempt to increase its involvement in Greenland influence the Danish reactions to the issue, it is worth underlining that Denmark has received

a call from the United States on how to deal with China in Greenland and globally, in the sense that the Intelligence Risk Assessments assert expressly that the United States has sought support from its allies to counteract China's involvement in the Arctic and has asked them to align with the US critical view of China. Precisely, the 2020 Intelligence Risk Assessment reports that "the United States is pushing for its allies to strengthen their Arctic military capabilities and align their interests in the region to act as a counterweight to Russia and China" (Danish defence Intelligence Service, 2020). After the political agreement reached this year by the Danish government with the parliamentary forces meant to increase the military capabilities in the Arctic, it may be affirmed that Denmark has complied with the US demands.

Therefore, it is necessary to clarify that, whilst Danish perceptions play a significant role in the country's reactions to China's presence in Greenland, Denmark's security alliances define a sort of commitment Denmark need to fulfil to maintain its security network stable. As a result, the analysis recognises that the perceptions of Denmark towards China's involvement in Greenland are one of the reasons why Denmark may undertake an obstructive stance towards Chinese attempts to invest in the island, but other motivations may provide reasonable explanations.

4.2 Analysis of the Danish reactions through the securitization model

In this section, the analysis will turn to the investigation of the two episodes concerning Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland in recent years that found a quite explicit obstruction by the Danish government. The paragraph will proceed by first describing the two cases the way they are presented by international and danish media; the two events are then examined within the framework of the securitization theory, so to understand whether they are part of a wider picture that involves how Denmark perceives Chinese presence in Greenland. The securitization model will be applied to underscore whether Danish behaviour follows the pattern explained by the theory by politicizing and then securitizing the issue of the Chinese presence in Greenland.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the first case analysis involves a bid for an abandoned naval base in Grønnedal, South Greenland, in 2016. At the time, the issue of the Chinese interest in Greenland was already mentioned as a security challenge for Denmark,

but it was not a top priority for Denmark's national security policy as it became after 2018. Despite this, it is evident that the Danish government directly intervened to prevent the Chinese company from buying the naval base. More specifically, at the beginning of 2016, the Danish Armed Forces had already spent three years on a comprehensive analysis of the needs of the Armed Forces in the Faroe Islands and Greenland; at that time, the naval base in Grønnedal had been closed for two years, and all functions operated in that station were moved to the new Arctic Command in Nuuk. The result of the analysis published in June 2016 did not give any information about a reopening of the naval base. On the contrary, the Armed Forces has been preparing for demolition and clean-up, and the former Minister of Defence Peter Christensen affirmed explicitly that the Ministry of Defence was not intended to maintain Grønnedal.

The Greenlandic and Danish governments were open to receive offers for the naval base, but the attitude changed when the Chinese mining company General Nice Group made an offer to buy the base in the same year. Suddenly, in December 2016, the Danish government, in conciliation with the five Danish parliamentary parties, agreed that the Grønnedal marine base needed to be reopened as a strategic, logistical support point for the Armed Forces, which should re-establish its presence in Greenland. The base would then be employed as a location for storing fuel and marine environmental control equipment, but also for training personnel.

The article "Løkke stopper kinesisk opkøb i Grønland" in the Danish newspaper *Information* also reports that the Danish Defence Intelligence Service has long been worried about an increasing Chinese presence in Greenland; nevertheless, this case was the first known episode in which the Danish government has directly intervened to prevent a Chinese acquisition in Greenland (Breum, 2016).

The decision was met with moderate unpleasantness by the Greenlandic self-government, which did not show any opposition besides commenting though. Indeed, the Government of Greenland saw the intervention not only as a missed opportunity, since it had been years that Greenland was actively working to allure foreign investments, including Chinese investments, but also a matter between the governments of Denmark and Greenland. The Greenlandic self-government was indeed concerned about the insufficient information provided about the decision over the Grønnedal base, since it appears that the Greenlandic government had not been informed about it before the press revealed it. Moreover, in the

notification received by email by the Government of Greenland, the Danish government wrote that there was an offer by the Chinese company General Nice Group, but no link between this fact and the reopening of the base has been exposed as motivation for the new defense plan.

The Grønnedal base is reported as a number of wooden barracks and a port facility, with many materials worn out as they have been used by locals. It was first built in 1942 by the US military during World War II as a defence facility to protect a mine that produced a material crucial for the production of the American fighter jets. After the war, the naval base was taken over by Denmark, which employed the complex as the headquarters for the Danish defense in Greenland, until it decided to close it.

Furthemore, the Chinese company in question, General Nice Group, was already noted to Denmark and Greenland, as it had invested in the Isua iron mine in Greenland by buying the mining license from London Mining, the British company already operating in the site. The General Nice Group is a private company based in Hong Kong which operates in different raw material exporting countries (Jiang, 2018).

It is already noticeable from a first description of the case that the Danish government appeared to behave in an extraordinary way, in the sense that it did not follow the normal practices of institutionalised politics. The government of Denmark has operated almost in secret and barely informed the government of Greenland of its unexpected and contradictory decision. Indeed, the reaction of the government of Denmark seems at least enigmatic, since in all the declarations released the Ministry of Defence affirmed that it had no intention to maintain the base in Grønnedal, before the offer of the Chinese company emerged. These interesting points will be further explored with the application of the securitization model in the next paragraphs.

In fact, a second interesting episode needs to be related with respect to an unusual behaviour of the Danish government regarding Chinese investments in Greenland.

As reported by several Danish newspapers, the Danish government stopped again a Chinese company from investing in Greenland in 2018. The investment in question concerned a huge infrastructure project aimed at expanding the airports facilities in Nuuk, Ilulissat and Qaqortoq. The construction project has a significant impact on the future prospects of the tourism sector in Greenland, but also on the finances of the island; indeed, the whole project

requires 3.6 billion DKK to be realised, which corresponds to 20 percent of Greenland's GDP (Krogh Andersen, 2018); another article reports even a larger proportion, stating the investment costs amount to 25 percent of the Greenlandic gross domestic product (Klarskov, 2018). In any case, the construction project is of an enormous magnitude for Greenland.

In July 2016, The government of Greenland established the company Kalaallit Airports A/S with the aim of building and operating the three airports, together with the selected contractors. The problem arose when a Chinese state-owned construction company, China Communications Construction Company, was short-listed as a pre-qualified contractor together with other six companies, originally; one of them withdrew its offer later.

Suddenly, the Danish prime minister of the time Lars Løkke Rasmussen pledged a financial support to Greenland for the construction project of a 1.6 billion DKK in subsidies and favourable loans (Krogh Andersen, 2018).

Several Danish newspaper, such as Politiken, Information, Jyllands-Posten and Berlingske, have published the news and reported the comments of major political figures of both Denmark and Greenland, like the former chairman of the Greenlandic self-government, the former Danish prime minister and the ministers of Finance and Defence. It is noticeable that the views of the Danish and Greenlandic governments do not agree with each other.

It is worth underlining the contrasting perspective of the two parties, since it will result important for our reflections later on. In fact, Danish politicians have been quite clear in identifying the issue as a national security problem, while the Greenlandic counterpart has downplayed the Danish concern by denying such classification and accusing Denmark to employ double-standards between Greenland and Denmark. Furthermore, it has been reported that the United States has played a part in the matter. Indeed, the Danish Secretary of Defence Claus Hjort Frederiksen discussed with the US counterpart, who drew a parallelism between China's policy in the South China Sea and China's involvement in Greenland as part of an Arctic policy (Breum, 2018a).

At the light of the information collected, it is possible to analyse the two episodes within the pattern of the securitization model. The Danish government is in fact making efforts to present the Chinese investments in Greenland as a security issue to Greenland, in particular as a threat to its economic security. Denmark depicts in both cases the Chinese investments as extremely risky for the Greenlandic economy, which is described as vulnerable due to its

small size. The same consideration has already been encountered in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments since 2017; the matter indeed was already noted and politicised at that time. In particular for the case of the infrastructure project in 2018, the intervention of Denmark has been contested by the Greenlandic government, which rejected the Danish categorisation as a security problem. Indeed, Danish politicians have expressed their concern by looking at the issue in a security perspective; the Minister of Foreign Affairs Anders Samuelsen said that “if there are security concerns, then the Kingdom must address them” (Breum, 2018a). Similarly, the Minister of Finance Kristian Jensen told it would be a horror scenario if that someone buys Danish infrastructure with the purpose of pressuring Denmark, even if it is not a political pressure. The statement is likely to be referred to the Chinese investors. Also, the Minister of Defense Claus Hjort Frederiksen considered that Denmark needs to have an emergency brake, which means that Denmark does not generally opposes Chinese investment or trade; however, having the possibility to undertake an emergency measure puts Denmark in a better position in the future to reject Chinese investments (Klarskov & Bæksgaard, 2018).

Framing the issue as a security problem as a double purpose for Denmark, in the sense that it has a theoretical aftermath and a practical result. In fact, the securitization theory explains that the securitizing actor must first start an act of securitization towards a referent object, to then subsequently have the legitimacy by the audience to undertake extraordinary measures; the audience must acknowledge the security threat as expressed by the securitizing actor. Thus to prove that Denmark is trying to securitize the issue of Chinese presence in Greenland, it is necessary to find evidence that the Danish government is in fact trying to convince its audience that the problem is an existential threat to a referent object. Furthermore, the threat narrative has a second, practical effect. The Kingdom of Denmark is a state formed by three different communities, Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, each of them having their own government; however, although the governments are autonomous with regards to the domestic affairs, besides being financially and economically linked to Denmark, the security and defence policy is unified under the authority of the Kingdom of Denmark. Therefore, whilst the Danish government could not interfere in the bid for the investment projects in Greenland if it is regarded as a purely economic agreement, it could instead intervene if any security issue is encountered.

The Danish government with its ministers have tried indeed to propose the offers of the Chinese company as a security issue in both cases. The episode of the Grønnedal base have

shown both the interest of Denmark and of the United States to keep China outside Greenland, as it has been reported that it would have been problematic for the Kingdom of Denmark to have both a Chinese and US military base in Greenland (Matzen, 2017), and also that the United States have encouraged Denmark to block the acquisition by the Chinese company (Hounshell, 2019). On the other hand, in the case of the airports construction project, several ministers of the Danish government have expressed their preoccupation with regards to the Chinese company. Also the Danish Prime Minister of the time, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, has raised concerns over the question because of the scale of the project and the debts incurred (Lucht, 2018).

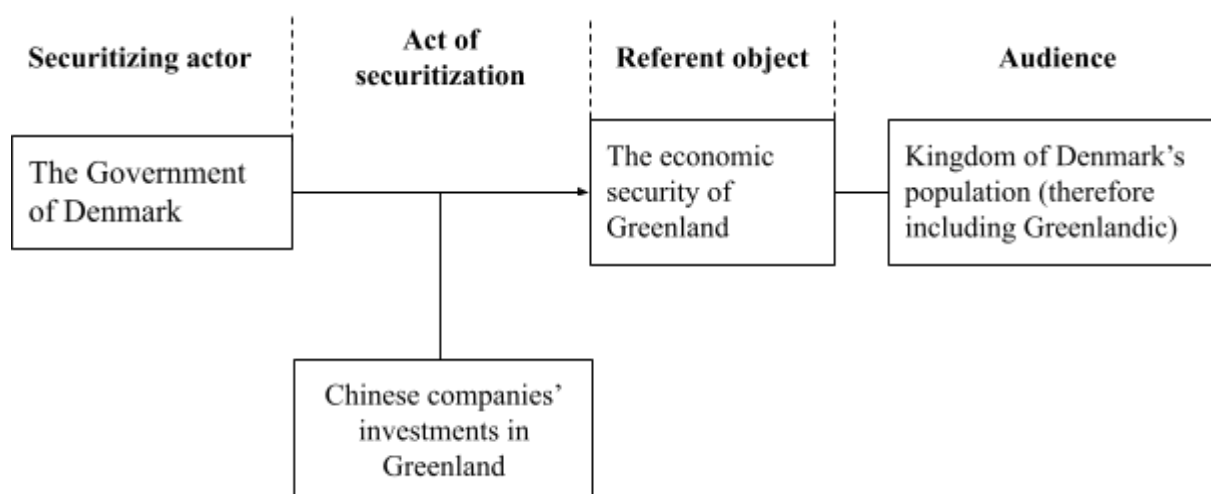
Furthermore, the two episodes have found the same conclusion, namely the intervention of the Danish government, which prevented the Chinese companies from expanding their involvement in Greenland. Notably, while the General Nice Group is a private company (Jiang, 2018), China Communications Construction Company, the Chinese company offering to build the airports, is a state-owned company, which is strongly linked with the Belt and Road Initiative, as it was involved in many infrastructure projects within the BRI agreements (China Communications Construction Company Ltd., 2018). Interestingly, the Danish government seems not to make any distinction whether the company is private or state-owned. The reaction is consistent with the statement of the Intelligence Risk Assessments that claims that Chinese investments in Greenland are risky due to the close connection between the Chinese state and the companies. Altogether, the Danish government appears to distrust Chinese companies wishing to operate in Greenland without regard to their particular characteristics.

Overall, it may be concluded that the Danish government is behaving as a securitizing actor and trying to convince the whole Kingdom of Denmark, including Greenlandic politicians and population, that the investments of Chinese companies in Greenland, if accepted, would existentially threaten the economy of the island, as the debt burden resulting from the agreement could lead Greenlandic economy in a debt trap, and perhaps Greenland could even end to be politically influenced by China. Figure 5, which provides a visualisation of the securitization process involving Chinese investments in Greenland, helps summarise the main points of reflection of this part of the analysis by schematizing them into the securitization model.

A securitization process is defined successful not only when the securitizing actor have managed to undertake extraordinary measures, but first of all when the selected audience has recognised the issue as a security threat to the referent object, and thus considers the extraordinary measures as an appropriate response to the problem. In the case of the securitization process analysed so far, it is noticeable that whilst the Danish government achieved to hinder the initiatives of the Chinese companies, thus it actually undertook actions that overcome the normal political procedures, it may be debated whether the audience has recognised such issue as a security threat. In particular, the information collected may give the opposite impression. The Greenlandic government has rejected the Danish government's classification of the issue as a security problem, and believes that the Danish government applies a double standard between Greenland and Denmark.

In conclusion, it may be deduced that the Danish government is undertaking an act of securitization by claiming that Chinese companies' investments in Greenland may seriously threaten the security of the fragile Greenlandic economy; while it managed to block the investments, and thus employed extraordinary means, it cannot be concluded that the securitization process has been successful. In fact, several Greenlandic politicians have regarded the Danish government reactions as inappropriate, thus objecting their legitimacy. Here, the postcolonial argument manifests itself, since the Greenlandic government not only blames the Danish government to adopt double standards, but also refers to be disappointed about how the issues have been dealt with by the Danish government. In particular, the government of Greenland claims that it was not sufficiently consulted in the management of the Grønnedal base case.

Figure 5. *Scheme of the securitization process involving the Chinese investments in Greenland.*



Source: Personal collection.

Notwithstanding this, the content analysis of the Intelligence Risk Assessments has highlighted that Denmark's security concerns over Chinese interests in Greenland are connected to China's ambition to gain influence in Greenland and in the whole Arctic region. Therefore, it may be argued that Denmark's concerns over Chinese presence in Greenland are not limited to the presumed threat to the Greenlandic economic security. Indeed, it seems plausible that Danish perceptions of Chinese presence in Greenland are influenced by the considerations on the overall Chinese Arctic strategy and on the repercussions Chinese ambitions may have on the geopolitical realm, which ultimately affect the security of the Kingdom of Denmark. Ultimately, while the Danish government puts efforts to convince Greenland that it should be attentive with Chinese companies initiatives in Greenland, Denmark may have further motivations driving its concerns towards Chinese presence in Greenland.

The Danish reactions to the Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland thus need to be framed within a larger picture. While it may be concluded that the Danish government is making efforts to securitize the issue of Chinese presence in Greenland, and that extraordinary measures have indeed been undertaken by the Danish state to counteract the Chinese involvement in Greenland, these remarks may be further explored by considering the framework in which Denmark is acting. In fact, the Danish fear of China does not come out of nowhere. As already noted in the content analysis, the United States may have played a role not only in the cases described above, but in the overall approach the Danish government has adopted towards Chinese companies in Greenland. The following paragraph will thus underscore the US position with regards to Chinese involvement in Greenland and in the Arctic and how it affects Denmark's security policy; by considering again the securitization model and taking advantage of the conclusions made in the first section of the chapter, the analysis will try to outline whether it could be deduced that another securitization process having Denmark's security as referent object is occurring and how it is structured.

The 2019 official declaration of the US embassy in Denmark directed to Denmark explaining the US view on the Arctic is of particular interest for our analysis, since it well exposes the US perceptions and intentions towards the Chinese involvement in the Arctic and in Greenland. Moreover, the declaration also insists on asking a change of the US Arctic allies' security policy as a consequence of a perceived serious threat coming from Chinese ambitions in the Arctic. In addition, the declaration is especially directed to Denmark and

thus strongly emphasises the role of Denmark as recipient of the message, expecting that eventually Denmark complies with the US security demands.

The declaration firstly reaffirms the security alliance between Denmark and the United States, describing the two as 360-degree security partners in the Arctic. Then, it moves to giving a personal outline of the security challenges concerning the Arctic. It states that the Arctic is attracting both regional and global interest, and several non-Arctic states are looking at the Arctic for opportunities. Among all actors involved in the Arctic, the US embassy expressly wants to focus on Russia and China.

The argument on Russia is pretty clear and connected to the country's increasing militarisation in the areas close to the borders with NATO countries. The declaration claims that Russia poses both a military menace and a threat to the national sovereignty of the United States and other NATO Arctic countries, since its territorial claims on some international waters would obstruct the Northeast passage.

On the other hand, the discussion on the threat perceived from China is more speculative. First of all, the US embassy denies the Chinese self-identification as a "near-Arctic" state, firmly stating that "there is no such thing as a 'near-Arctic nation'"; secondly, it accuses China to have the intention to "exploit" the Arctic for its natural resources and maritime potential. Thirdly, it declares that Chinese activity in the forms of investments, infrastructure and research in the Arctic resembles a common pattern employed by China in other parts of the world, and that the Chinese military will strengthen its capabilities in the Arctic to protect the national interests. According to the US embassy, China has a desire to expand influence and reach in the Arctic, as it does globally.

The declaration gives a large room to China, and it is thus visible that it considers China's activity in the Arctic as the most serious security threat in the region. In fact, the discourse then moves to the Chinese military developments in the Arctic, by saying that the Pentagon believes that China will deploy submarines in the Arctic, and revealing its concern for the joint military efforts of Russia and China during the Tsentr exercise.

Besides military capabilities, the US embassy gives other reasons why Denmark should be worried about the Chinese activity in the Arctic. The Chinese leadership's investment in the Arctic is regarded as already significant, and a correlation is made between the Arctic resources and Chinese overall raw material extraction strategy. Indeed, the US embassy

warns Denmark that the Arctic countries should be careful with China, considering “the outright exploitation we have seen from China in other parts of the world”. It is thus recognisable a first call for a potential environmental security threat.

Secondly, the US embassy shifts its attention to regional stability, claiming that Russian and Chinese activities and ambitions threaten the peaceful environment of the Arctic; the US embassy is committed to maintain the regional stability and security, besides protecting its territories in the Arctic, but also says that more needs to be done; for this reason, the United States is already strengthening its Arctic military capabilities.

Eventually, the US embassy emphasises the role and importance of NATO as a security agreement, referring that “we will remain deeply committed to our NATO Allies and we will respond to any threat to the liberties that NATO protects”; it praises Denmark’s military ability in the Arctic environment, to then ask its allies “- particularly the NATO Arctic nations - to do more as well”; The US embassy thus demands to Denmark a stronger military presence in the Arctic, by also mentioning the Arctic Command in Nuuk. In this way, the direction is pointed to Denmark, by considering the threats that could affect the Danish sovereign Arctic domain.

The US embassy reports that the Danish Supplemental Agreement to the Defence Agreement is a good start, although Denmark must do more to meet its capability and readiness requirements. Lastly, the US embassy moves to Greenland, and tells that the “Department of Defense is looking at ways to help develop Greenland’s civilian airport infrastructure for our mutual benefit that will also better connect communities and encourage tourism” (U.S. Embassy & Consulate in the Kingdom of Denmark, 2019). The sentence acquires even more meaning when related to the 2018 episode of the Danish intervention to prevent the Chinese company from winning the bid to build the airports.

Having in mind the official US view on the Arctic as reported by the US embassy in the Kingdom of Denmark, it is worth underlining the actions taken by the United States in the latest years regarding Greenland. Indeed, as the United States has decided on a more critical stance towards Chinese ambitions in the Arctic, it is imaginable that its strategy in the Arctic has changed to prevent China from gaining influence in the region; in conclusion, the United States may have enhanced its commitment in Greenland recently as part of a strategy aimed at keeping its Arctic allies united against China. These efforts may have the final purpose to align the Arctic allies with its beliefs on China’s foreign policy, an objective that has been

already reported in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments. In conclusion, the United States may be trying to convince the NATO Arctic allies that the Chinese interest in the Arctic is not an opportunity for them, but rather a serious security threat.

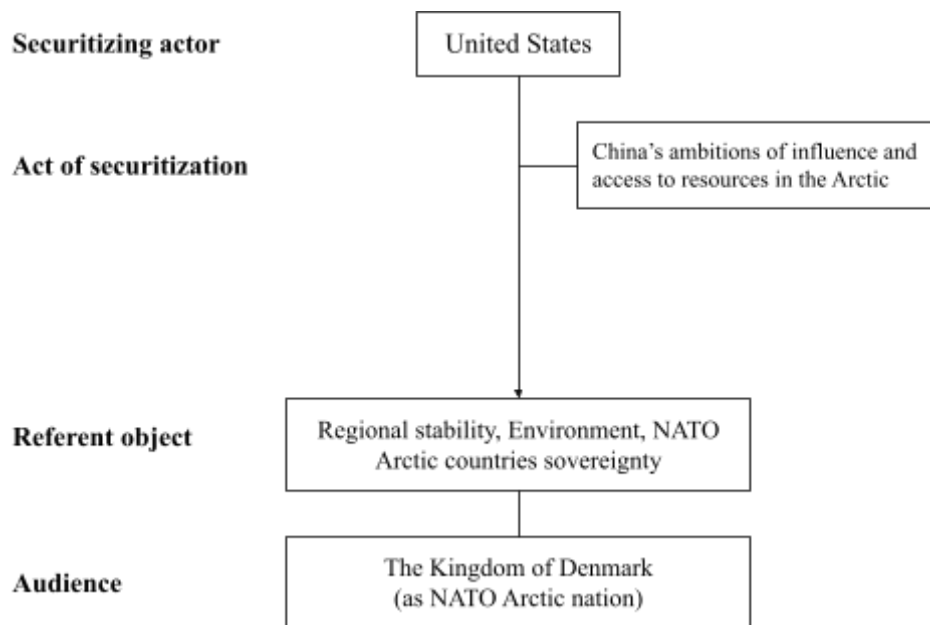
With regards to the Kingdom of Denmark, the United States has indeed fostered its commitment in Greenland in several ways. In fact, besides the offer to purchase Greenland made by the former US president Donald Trump in 2019, last year the United States agreed with the Kingdom of Denmark and the government of Greenland for a 12.1 million dollar aid package, which is referred to as a starting point for their renewed strong relations. The funding is thought to be spent in energy and resource development, education capacity building, and rural sustainable development. The nexus between the aid package and the intention to discard China from Greenland has not been hidden (Humpert, 2020a).

In addition to the 12 million dollar project, the three parties signed a new agreement on the Thule Air Base, the US Armed Forces base in north-west Greenland, in October 2020. The agreement is particularly important for several reasons; firstly, it strengthens the US-Greenland relations and gives more relevance to the Government of Greenland as an autonomous entity which may cooperate with the United States without the intervention of the Kingdom of Denmark; secondly, it is strategic to the United States to show its commitment to increase its presence in the Arctic; thirdly, the agreement is a proof for Denmark that it also represents and pursues Greenlandic interests internationally, which may strengthen the relations between Denmark and Greenland. This point is extremely relevant to Denmark, as its Arctic nation status depends on Greenland's membership of the Danish Realm. The agreement enhances the relations among the allies, but it also provides economic benefits to Greenland; Greenland is indeed in charge of the maintenance of the air base, which is financed by the United States; the commission work amounts to 200 million DKK, which is a substantial amount for the Greenlandic domestic economy. The agreement requires that the companies chosen to do the maintenance work must be either Greenlandic or Danish and based in Greenland, while the labour force employed should be mostly made of Greenlanders; the conditions are thus elaborated to be beneficial to the Greenlandic population. The agreement also intends to deepen the bilateral relations between Greenland and the United States in the fields of trade and investment, energy and mining, education, tourism and environment (Humpert, 2020b).

Eventually, the United States reopened its consulate in Nuuk, still in October 2020 (Cammarata, 2020); Lastly, the US Department of Defence promised investments in Greenlandic airports which have dual civilian and military use, just a week after the deal between Greenland and Denmark to part-finance the project was concluded (Lucht, 2018).

Considering thus the US strategy in the Arctic as it is presented to the Kingdom of Denmark, it is noticeable that the United States is seriously concerned about China's involvement in the Arctic, and in Greenland. Moreover, the United States frames the problem not only as a national strategic security issue for the United States, but as a security threat to all NATO Arctic countries. China is accused of having the intention to exploit the Arctic natural resources in a way that will harm the Arctic environment, thus posing an environmental security threat to Arctic countries. Furthermore, the United States perceives China's involvement in the Arctic as a destabilising factor for the Arctic governance, as the country's ambition for influence threatens the regional stability. Overall, it may be concluded that the United States is operating as a securitizing actor by trying to persuade its Arctic allies that China's involvement in the Arctic is a menace to their national strategic interests, which include a environmentally sustainable and peaceful Arctic. Finally, the United States has asked its Arctic allies to follow its strategy and increase their military capabilities in the Arctic to respond to the future possible threats.

As the Kingdom of Denmark agreed to enhance its military capabilities in the Arctic, which include military training in Greenland (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2021), welcomed the US Department of Defence "Statement of Intent on Defense Investments in Greenland" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2018), and signed a new agreement on Thule Air Base with the United States and the Government of Greenland (Humpert, 2020b), it may be deduced that the United States has achieved the goal of its act of securitization and Denmark agrees with the United States that China's involvement in the Arctic and in Greenland is a security issue for the Kingdom of Denmark. Figure 6 presented below provides a representation of the securitization process initiated by the United States with the aim of enhancing the military capabilities of its allies in the Arctic.

Figure 6. *Scheme of the securitization process in the Arctic explained through the theoretical model.*

Source: Personal collection.

In conclusion, the analysis of the Danish reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland has made evident the act of securitization that the Danish government has started towards the Chinese investments in Greenland; in fact, the Danish government has behaved as a securitizing actor, trying to convince an audience, the Kingdom of Denmark's population, that the economic security of Greenland would be endangered if Chinese large investments are welcomed in the island. Furthermore, Denmark perceives that not only the Greenlandic economic security is threatened, and that the overall Chinese involvement in the Arctic is a security challenge for the Kingdom of Denmark and the NATO security framework. These perceptions may be connected to a securitization process begun by the United States, which regards China's ambitions in the Arctic as a security threat to its national Arctic territories and to the overall regional stability. Therefore, the United States is making efforts to convince its NATO Arctic allies of the Chinese threat in the Arctic, and asking them to increase their military capabilities to respond to the future security developments in the region.

4.2.1 Discussion of results

The following paragraph discusses the main results of the analysis of the Danish reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland. The findings are presented separately so to ease the reading.

Two securitization processes, one integrated in the other

The analysis has identified two securitization processes concerning Denmark, which are one integrated in the other. In fact, the United States appears to have initiated a securitization process that has its NATO Arctic allies as a referent audience and their strategic national interests, the regional stability, and the environment protection as referent objects. This argument may be linked to the discussion presented in the first section of the analysis regarding the securitization process as a consequence of the shifting power balance.

Indeed, the content analysis concluded that the Danish Defence Intelligence Service perceives the shifting power balance as a driving force of the securitization process involving the Arctic. The second part of the analysis has underscored that as the United States sees China's ambitions in the Arctic and Russia's military build-up as security threats to its regional influence in the Arctic, the American superpower is making efforts to persuade its Arctic allies that also their strategic national interests are threatened in various forms.

The Kingdom of Denmark is part of the audience and appears so far to have been persuaded by the securitizing actor, since the country has complied with the US demand to enhance its Arctic military capabilities and has fostered its security cooperation with the United States.

Subsequently, the Danish government is undertaking a securitization process within the borders of the realm. Indeed, the Danish government has framed the discourse around the Chinese possible investments in Greenland as a security issue, by stating that Chinese large investments in Greenland are risky due to the close connection between Chinese companies and the central state. In the two cases described above, the Danish government could intervene as it is in charge of the security and foreign policy of the whole Kingdom of Denmark. If the two episodes were considered simply as business or economic agreements which do not have repercussions in the security realm, the Danish government would not be entitled to interfere in the questions. Consequently, it may be concluded that the Danish government has defined the possible Chinese investments in Greenland as a security threat, especially a security threat to Greenland's economic security, whilst the Danish government may be concerned also other matters concerning Chinese presence in Greenland. Eventually, the latter securitization process may not be considered either concluded or successful, since the Greenlandic population, represented by the political elites, does not recognise Chinese investments as a security threat.

The Danish government is trying to securitize the issue of Chinese presence in Greenland

The Danish reactions with respect to the naval base in Grønnedal and the bid for the airports infrastructure projects are quite evident in revealing the Danish concerns towards Chinese investments in Greenland, especially when more information about the past considerations on the marine base are provided. Indeed, it looks distinct that the choice of reopening the base in Grønnedal has been based on the aim to prevent the General Nice Group from acquiring the facility.

Indeed, the sudden and silent responses of the Danish government to Chinese companies offering to invest in Greenland appear at least enigmatic. When the reactions are considered together with the Danish considerations of Chinese investments in the Intelligence Risk Assessments and the comments of Danish politicians on the issues, it appears clearer that the Danish government is making efforts to securitize the Chinese investments in Greenland; if the issues were not described as security threats, the Danish government would not even be allowed to intervene in the matter.

The Danish government looks suspiciously at Chinese companies wishing to invest in Greenland without regard to their property structure, namely whether they are privately owned or states-owned enterprises.

Despite the efforts to frame the discourse around the Chinese investments in Greenland, the Danish government encountered difficulties in persuading the Greenlandic political representatives, who claimed that either they were not appropriately informed about the Danish government's decision or they reject the classification of the issue as a security problem, blaming Denmark to adopt double standards when dealing with Greenland.

The Danish efforts to securitize the issue of China in Greenland are challenged by the Danish-Greenlandic post-colonial relations

The Danish government's reaction has also fueled some debate around Danish-Greenland relations, and the episode has highlighted the argument of the sensitive communication between Nuuk and Copenhagen.

Indeed, in the case of the unaccomplished sale of the naval base in Grønnedal, the chairman of the Greenlandic self-government at the time, Kim Kielsen, complained that "the Danish government should have provided information to the Naalakkersuisut [the Government of

Greenland] before it came out in the press that Grønnedal will once again host the Naval Station” (Breum, 2016). When it comes to the airports infrastructure projects, the Government of Greenland blamed the Danish government to apply a double standard and rejected that the Danish government decides on the choice of contractors. In fact, the Greenlandic politician Vittus Qujaukitsoq expressed its discontent about the management of the issue to the newspaper *Sermitsiaq*, by saying that “we must not in one way or another apply for approval. This generally applies in relation to our right to self-determination”. Even more firmly, the chairman of the Greenlandic government Kielsen told to the same newspaper that “[it] is not the first time we have heard that people from Denmark are trying to slow down and try to influence us to make decisions that serve Danish interests” (Klarskov, 2018).

The declaration from the Greenlandic politicians are pretty straightforward in accusing Denmark to pursuit its own interests in Greenland and to undermine the self-determination of the Greenlandic people by precluding the Chinese companies to substantially invest in Greenland. It is also clear from the statements that the postcolonial argument plays a crucial role in the Greenlandic perceptions of the decisions of the Danish government. The Greenlandic population, as figured by its representatives, is discontented by the behaviour of the Danish government, and although it welcomes the US aid package and the agreement on the Thule Air Base, it still does not agree with Danish perceptions of Chinese companies' investments in Greenland, since it perceives the Danish attitude as illegitimate in the sense it harms the self-determination fo the Greenlandic people and the economic opportunities for the island.

Eventually, the securitization process initiated by the Danish government has encountered opposition by the Greenlandic politicians, since the attempt to present the Chinese investments as a threat to Greenlandic economic security is instead regarded by the Government of Greenland as an illegitimate intervention in Greenlandic affairs and a limitation of the self-determination of the Greenlandic people.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the thesis aimed to answer the research question of “how Denmark perceives the Chinese presence in Greenland” at the light of the Danish government’s reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland in 2016 and in 2018, when Denmark intervened in Greenlandic matters to prevent Chinese companies from winning the bids.

By employing constructivism and the securitization theory as theoretical framework, the research could take into account the post-colonial argument regarding Denmark-Greenland relations, while also making use of the securitization model to examine the case. The research questioned whether the Danish wariness over the Chinese involvement in Greenland was dictated by domestic-related concerns, for instance that Greenland could get closer to independence thanks to Chinese investments, or instead by geopolitical issues, which involve the perception of China as a threat more generally.

Firstly, the content analysis of the Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020 has revealed the connection between the self-identification of Denmark as a North Atlantic Arctic country and the consequent determination of national security threats. Indeed, Denmark makes clear to be a close ally to the United States; the NATO security framework, which Denmark is part of, influences its perceptions of China's involvement in Greenland. The US critical stances towards China's increasing international influence and China's ambitions in the Arctic have an impact on Denmark's perceptions and reactions to Chinese attempts to invest in Greenland.

The analysis of the publications of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service shows that Denmark does not appear worried that Chinese investments in Greenland could threaten the national unity of the Realm by allowing Greenland to get closer to be economically independent. On the contrary, the Danish government seems concerned that China may exert influence in the island in the same way it believes China is doing on a global and regional level. Consequently, the Danish reactions to Chinese investments in Greenland do not appear to be dictated by preoccupations on national sovereignty security.

Indeed, the simultaneous analysis of the chapters on China in the Intelligence Risk Assessments has allowed to connect the Danish concerns about China's strategy in the Arctic and in Greenland with the country's perception of China more in general. The examination of the security threats perceived by Denmark from China has permitted to uncover a connection between Danish presentation of China as a threat and the global "China threat" narrative.

The correlation may be interpreted through the securitization model. Indeed, the United States has framed the discourse around China's growing influence in the Arctic and in the international arena as a threat to Arctic and western countries and has explicitly asked to its allies to align with the US stance towards China. In addition, the United States has demanded its Arctic allies to increase their military capabilities in the region in order to respond to the

Chinese threat. The focus on China's strategy and interest in the Arctic and in Greenland in the risk assessments denotes that Denmark recognises such issues as a security threat. Furthermore, the 2021 agreement of the Danish parliament to increase the country's Arctic capabilities of 1.5 billion DKK proves that Denmark complied with the US request. Overall, it may be deduced that the United States has initiated an act of securitization towards China's involvement in the Arctic that has as referent audience the NATO Arctic coastal states and as referent objects their national strategic interests. Denmark's perceptions of the Chinese presence in Greenland are thus traced back to China's threat fear and connected to the US act of securitization aimed at portraying Chinese intentions in the Arctic as existential threat to the regional stability and the NATO Arctic states' strategic national interests.

The analysis of the Danish government's reactions to the Chinese companies' attempts to invest in Greenland enriches the reflections made so far by exposing a second, consequent act of securitization initiated by the Danish government. In fact, the Danish government appears to try to persuade the whole Kingdom of Denmark's population that Chinese investments in Greenland threaten the Greenlandic economic security. Even though the Danish government managed to use extraordinary measures to prevent Chinese companies from investing in the island, the Government of Greenland rejected to consider the two cases as security issues, which is how Denmark portrayed them, and accused Denmark to apply double standards and not to consult the Greenlandic government sufficiently. Consequently, the securitization process cannot be defined as successful, as part of the audience refuses the narrative. Finally, the Greenlandic opposition to the Danish government's behaviour shows the post-colonial argument regarding the domestic relations between the two communities of the Realm.

In conclusion, it may be deduced that Denmark perceives Chinese presence in Greenland as a threat. This perception has been linked to the global "China threat" fear, whose narrative has been employed by the United States to convince its allies to counteract China's involvement in the Arctic. Denmark appears to have complied with the US demands to increase allies' military capability in the Arctic, thus revealing that it has recognised the act of securitization initiated by the United States as legitimate and appropriate. The years 2018-2019 mark a turning point both in the US Arctic policy and in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments, which both came to emphasise China's ambition in the Arctic (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Jedig Nielsen, 2020; Jiang, 2020), perhaps as a reaction to the 2018 White Paper on China's Arctic Policy.

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7. Appendix 1

Appendix 1 reports elaborated data, which were part of the steps of the content analysis of the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments. In particular, the paragraph 7.1 reports the codes registered during the coding process with NVIVO12, while paragraphs 7.2 and 7.3 present the summaries of the condensed units respectively of the chapters “the Arctic” and “China”, found in the Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020.

7.1 Codes

The codes registered during the coding process using NVIVO 12 are thus reported in the following table, Table 4.

Table 2 . Codes recorded from the content analysis.

Name	Description	Files	References
China presence in the Arctic		0	0
China growing role	China's role and involvement in the Arctic is growing	2	2
China's activities in the Arctic	China's involvement in the Arctic is increasing and is focused on increasing research and building infrastructure.	3	13

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing activities 	China's involvement in the Arctic is increasing and evolving, including not only research extraction and sea routes, but also climate and space research, satellite communication and Arctic navigation.	3	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and infrastructure 	China is investing in research and infrastructure (build infrastructure).	1	2
Chinese activities in Greenland	Chinese activities in Greenland involve research, resource extraction, infrastructure, cultural issues and tourism. Chinese investments in Greenland are narrow.	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus areas 	Chinese activities in Greenland involve research, resource extraction, infrastructure, cultural issues and tourism.	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow investments 	Chinese investments in Greenland are still narrow.	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks with Chinese investments 	Chinese investments in Greenland are risky because of linkages between Chinese companies and central government	4	5
- Political interference	China could politically interfere in Chinese companies' large investments in strategic resources	4	5
China's military in the Arctic	China is trying to bolster its knowledge on the Arctic	5	8
China's interests in the Arctic	Chinese interests in the Arctic focus on gaining influence over the region and get access to resources. China wants to be recognised as a legitimate Arctic country and as a great power.	4	17
Ambition of influence	China wants to increase its influence over the Arctic matters.	6	11
Ambition to access	China wants to have access to Arctic resources.	4	4
Arctic country recognition	China is making efforts to be recognised as a recognised polar nation and maritime great power.	5	7
Commercial interest	China's interests in Greenland are commercial, that is access to resources and to shipping routes.	3	5
Growing interests	Chinese interests in the Arctic are growing,	5	8
Long-term interests	Arctic is a long-term objective for China, as made clear from the official linkage between Arctic shipping routes and BRI.	2	6
Persistent interest		1	1
Setting rules		4	7
Chinese interests in Greenland		4	5

• Growing interests		1	1
• Persistent interests		2	2
• Political interest	Maintaining presence in Greenland has also a political interest for China.	1	1
• Raw materials	China wants to get access to Greenlandic raw materials.	1	3
China's domestic challenges		2	3
Demographic trend	China's working age population was one of the driving forces of China's economic growth; the narrowing of the share of working age population challenges China's economy.	1	1
Economy transition	China is trying to move from an economy driven by exports to one driven by domestic consumption.	1	2
Hong Kong crisis	The Hong Kong protests are a challenge for China.	1	1
China's foreign policy		0	0
China-Russia relations	China and Russia are strengthening their cooperation but mutual scepticism persists.	1	1
• China-Russia cooperation	China and Russia are strengthening their cooperation but they will not become allies. However, they try not to harm each other for their personal interests.	4	15
• China-Russia tensions	Clashing interests in Central Asia create tensions between China and Russia.	4	8
South China Sea policy	The South China Sea is a top priority for China's foreign policy.	3	4
China's national objectives	China's national objectives are addressing the domestic challenges and increasing the country's international influence.	0	0
Ambition of influence		3	10
• Setting rules		2	3
Strategic objectives	Domestic challenges and International influence	3	5
• Global competitiveness		1	1
China's national strategies		3	4
China's development strategy	China has defined a long-term plan for the country's development. At the final stage, China should be a global leader in all matters, and a modern and prosperous country.	0	0

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2049 long-term plan 	The 2049 long-term plan defines the country's objectives and priorities for its future development. By 2049, China should be a global leader in all matters and a modern and prosperous country. The plan is divided in three stages.	2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technological development 	China aims to become a tech global leader. Invest in foreign technology - which includes also joint ventures and agreements - is one of the means to become competitive and innovative.	0	0
Cyber espionage to get foreign technology		1	1
Investments to acquire foreign technology		3	9
Made in China 2025	Long-term plan focused on becoming a global leader in innovation and technology.	2	2
Through education and research	China has invested in education and research in technology and innovation.	1	1
China's influence strategy		0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belt and Road initiative 	BRI helps China increase its international and regional influence. China makes efforts to conclude agreements within the BRI framework. China has discriminated against countries that have not signed to be part of BRI from receiving investments. Countries voluntarily want to be part of BRI. BRI projects are financed by signing countries, and make use of Chinese capabilities.	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BRI affects Denmark 		1	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BRI and China's global involvement 		3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BRI capacities 		2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BRI strategic purposes 		4	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China profiting from US policy change 	China has exploited the perceived vacuum by promising more investments to those countries that support BRI.	1	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China's active approach 	Under Xi, China has undertaken a more active approach in the international arena. The new approach is described as assertive.	5	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assertive attitude 		3	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "China is eager" 		2	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political-diplomatic pressure 		1	1

- Target initiatives		3	5
• China's influence campaign	China makes use of influence campaigns to control narratives, as it did during COVID-19 crisis. The campaigns can be also directed to Chinese audience.	1	4
• Cooperation strategy	China uses cooperation as a platform to get more influence both regionally and internationally.	4	13
• Institutional build-up	China's active role can be seen also by its institutional build-up, meaning that China creates and promotes new cooperation forums and international and regional institutions.	3	6
• Promotion of China model	China makes efforts to promote its development model to developing countries in South East Asia, Africa and South America; the model is presented as an alternative to Western model, since it does not require democratization to have modernization.	4	8
China's national security strategy		0	0
• China's military	China's military modernisation and build-up, related to South China Sea territorial claims.	1	3
- China's military build up		4	13
• Control narrative	China is trying to control the narrative about the country, as seen during COVID-19 pandemic; it conducted such campaigns also with Taiwan and Hong Kong.	1	3
- Control territory	China's territorial claims in South China Sea	3	6
China territorial claims		1	3
• Power centralization	Xi leadership has further centralised the power	3	5
• Reforms of national security law		1	2
• Surveillance	China makes extensive use of surveillance technologies to monitor and control its population; particular pressure is in Hong Kong, Xinjiang region and Taiwan. Surveillance technology allowed China to faster solve Covid-19 pandemic.	2	10
- Repressive behaviour		2	5
China's strategy in the Arctic		3	24
• China perception of Arctic cooperation	China sees Arctic governance at a developmental stage, which gives the country room for manoeuvre.	5	6
• China's strategy in Greenland	China's strategy in Greenland is the same as the overall Arctic strategy. China aims to get influence through increased cooperation and research.	3	8

- Cooperation strategy		2	3
• Influence strategy	China aims to get influence over Arctic matters by increasing cooperation and research. China has linked Arctic shipping routes to BRI, thus making the Polar Silk Road part of the country's overall long-term objectives.	0	0
- Cooperation		4	9
- Linking Arctic to BRI		3	9
Companies interests in the Arctic		1	1
• Military strategy	China aims to acquire military knowledge of the Arctic.	2	3
• Resource security strategy	China wants to get access to Arctic resources as part of its overall resource security strategy; China aims not to be dependent on any country or region for raw materials - so it applies a diversification strategy.	2	3
- Diversification strategy		4	10
- Maintaining non-profitable presence	China wants to maintain presence in the arctic and In Greenland even if it is not profitable in the short-term. It is part of its national resource strategy.	3	5
in Greenland		4	4
DDIS work	Unclassified work based on intelligence work. DDIS tries to be open to dialogue but also secret.	4	8
Denmark's security framework	Denmark's security framework is defined within the security areas of the Arctic, EU, NATO, US. Denmark is defined as a smaller state, European country and Arctic coastal state.	0	0
• Arctic states security	Militarisation of the Arctic and great power security game affects the security policy of Arctic coastal states.	1	1
- Denmark arctic policy		1	1
• EU	US foreign policy change has left Europe alone in dealing with some foreign security challenges. European countries do not take a common stance on how to deal with 5G security challenges.	0	0
- 5G security in Europe		1	1
- Europe alone		1	2
• NATO-US	NATO and US are the most important guarantors for Denmark's basic security policy interests. NATO and US security challenges also affect	6	9

	Denmark's security.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure on small states 	China-US rivalry puts pressure on small states, which seek close cooperation with both parties	2	2
Denmark's security priorities	List of top security priorities for each year (introduction).	4	6
Great power relations in the Arctic	Russia-US relations are challenged in the Arctic after Russia's military build-up. Both US and Russia are suspicious of China's interests in the Arctic and do not want China's influence to grow in the region. On the other hand, China's involvement is increasing, as it aims to get influence over Arctic matters.	6	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> China-Russia cooperation 	Russia looks at China for cooperation after Western sanctions, but it is also afraid to be dependent economically from China.	3	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia's China fear in the Arctic 	Russia fears that China's influence in the Arctic will grow at the expense of Russia's role in the Arctic.	3	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia-US against China Arctic policy 	Both Russia and the US look at China's involvement in the Arctic with some suspicions. Both countries do not want Chinese influence to grow in the Arctic	1	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security game 	US-Russia-China tense relations in the Arctic are defined as a great powers security game.	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US assertive Arctic strategy 	US has enhanced its military focus in the Arctic and aims for a stronger role for itself	1	2
- US opposing China in Greenland		2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US worries in the Arctic 	US sees Russia and China as a threat	2	2
Influence campaign	Influence campaign aimed to sway foreign countries' public opinion. Russia and China are named	4	8
Securitization of the Arctic		0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments in Arctic cooperation 	Arctic cooperation is challenged by increasing militarisation and great powers' security game in the Arctic	5	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Military developments in the Arctic 	Russia's military build-up in the Arctic and consequently increased military focus by the United States and Arctic Coastal states. Also non-Arctic states are involved, e.g. China's military goal to acquire Arctic knowledge and capabilities	7	23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tensions in the Arctic 	Militarization increases tensions in the Arctic, especially Russia's military build-up, which worries the United States and NATO. China's involvement in the Arctic is seen problematically by both Russia	6	24

	and the US.		
Shifting balance of power	The balance of power is shifting. China is getting more influential internationally, while the West is losing power.	5	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changing world order 	The shifting balance of power causes changes in the world order, where western alliances and values are challenged.	3	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technology changes security patterns 		2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China perception as a great power 	China perceives itself as a great power and seeks to be recognised as such.	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China's increasing international influence 	China is increasing its international influence in absolute terms; also, it is winning against Western influence, which is diminishing.	5	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China's influence over Western influence 	China's being seen as attractive by other countries and the willingness of certain states to adopt Chinese surveillance systems is some evidence of Chinese's increasing influence over Western one.	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopting Chinese surveillance 		1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - China attractive to foreign countries 		1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Great powers relations 	China and Russia aims for being recognised as great powers and relations between Russia, US and China are worsening,	4	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● US foreign policy change 	The US has withdrawn from many international agreements and forums, which has destabilised its security alliances, giving room to China to get more influence.	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consequences of US foreign policy change 		2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● US-China rivalry 		4	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US-China clashing interests 		1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● West against China 	China and the West are confronting each other.	1	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● West losing power 	China challenges the Western countries in the tech industry. Western countries are more divided as countries grow a more individualist behaviour. The West has lost influence in global affairs.	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - China challenging the West in tech industry 		0	0
China challenging		1	1

US tech predominance			
China competitive in high-tech		2	3
China leading in 5G		1	1
- Western division		1	2
- Western lost influence		1	1
US China's threat fear		0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US perceptions of China 	The US perceives China as its main strategic rival. China's ambition for influence in the Arctic and internationally and its strategy to become a tech global leader are a threat to the US. The US sees China-US relations as a zero-sum game and looks at Chinese activities in terms of strategic and security threats.	4	11
- China as a threat		3	5
US reactions to China	The US aims to curb China's development in general and China's ambitions in the Arctic. The US puts pressure on allies to make them align with the US foreign policy stance against China, generally and in the Arctic.	2	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US obstructing China 		3	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US pressure on allies 		4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US protecting itself 		2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US sphere of influence 	Greenland is in the US sphere of influence, China's involvement in Greenland is thus a threat to the US.	1	1

7.2 Summary of the chapters “the Arctic”, found in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020

Table 2 sums up the main points of the chapter on the Arctic by subdividing the content into thematic categories. The paragraph on Russia in the Arctic has been omitted as not relevant to the analysis, except for the parts that refers to China, which may provide some useful data. The headlines inserted in the summaries are based on the content reported in the risk assessments, but are not necessarily present in the original text; they have been added to help the reading and systematise the text according to the order in which the topics are proposed in the publications. Eventually, the content that has changed and has been added from one year

to the other has been highlighted in blue, so to emphasise the alteration of the perceptions of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service across time.

Table 3. Systematic summary of chapters on the Arctic in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2017-2020.

2017
<p>Chinese interests in the Arctic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chinese interests keep growing. ● China's interests and commitment is primarily rooted in its resources and diversification strategy. <p>Shipping lanes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China's interest in the shipping lanes are mainly commercial. ● China has included the Arctic shipping lanes to BRI, which denotes a raise in the focus on the potential of Arctic shipping lanes. ● The North-East passage will become attractive to China only when the route will be open for more months in the year. <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China's demand for raw materials will keep growing. ● China is eager to secure access to resources in different regions or countries. ● Prices for raw materials will make the Arctic a lucrative business, the reason why China maintains its interests in resources that are now not profitable in the short-term. <p>Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China has the strategic interest to gain influence on Arctic matters and cooperation. ● China uses Arctic knowledge to be recognised as a relevant partner to Arctic countries.
<p>Chinese interest in investment in Greenland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● China's ambition to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Arctic countries also applies to Denmark and Greenland. ● China aims to increase its prospect to exert influence through trade and research. ● A number of Chinese state and non-state actors are thus showing persistent interest in commercial and research-related cooperation in Greenland. ● Chinese persistent interest in Greenland, to raw materials but also tourism and fishing. ● China's current interests are linked to China's demand for minerals. ● China's political interest in maintaining a commercial presence in Greenland despite limited short-term profits. ● Part of the resource security strategy applied to other raw materials exporting countries. ● Risk of political interference related to Chinese investments in Greenland, due to close connection between Chinese companies and states and to the strategic industries involved.
2018
<p>Arctic cooperation and militarisation of the region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Arctic coastal states still follow a cooperative path on Arctic issues and are making efforts to avoid that US-Russia tensions deteriorate Arctic cooperative governance. ● Russia's military build-up in the region ● The United States and NATO are planning to boost their military presence to ensure that the maritime lines between Europe and North America remain open. ● Several non-Arctic states want to bolster their influence in the Arctic, among them China, which has increased its involvement in the region. ● China's long-term ambitions in the Arctic include strengthening its influence on Arctic governance and securing access to sea routes and resources. China's military is trying to acquire Arctic knowledge. ● It will be harder for Arctic coastal states to balance between defending their national strategic interests and maintaining a cooperative stance for solving regional issues.

China-Russia cooperation

- Western sanctions force Russia to look for non-Western partners in the Arctic. China is thus the most attractive partner for Russia.
- Russia does not want to become economically dependent on China.
- Russia wants to avoid China gaining political influence in the Arctic.

Chinese interests in the Arctic

Long-term interests

- China's long-term interests are increased influence on Arctic matters and access to Arctic shipping routes and resources.
- China has included the Arctic shipping routes in the Belt and Road Initiative, linking the Arctic with the country's overall and long-term strategic interests. As a result, Chinese SOEs have shown an increasing interest in the region, which will lead to more investments.

Influence

- China is eager to strengthen its influence on Arctic issues, and believes this ambition aligns with great power status.
- China thinks it can influence Arctic governance because as it believes that it is still at its infancy.
- China is making efforts to become a legitimate player in the Arctic and gain a role in setting the rules on Arctic cooperation.
- China's strategy to achieve its Arctic goal is to strengthen cooperation with Arctic countries on issues such as trade, culture and research, as also stated in the 2018 White Paper on Arctic Policy. Research is also instrumental to be recognised as a legitimate polar nation.

Military

- Access to the Arctic plays a military strategic role for China, because of the importance the region has for the US and Russia as military operational space.
- China's military is making efforts to strengthen its Arctic knowledge.

Resource security and diversification strategy

- China's interests in raw material and energy resources
- China's diversification strategy both for resources and shipping routes

Activities

- Apart from initiative related to resource extraction and shipping routes, China is making efforts to build capabilities and knowledge within climate research space science, satellite communication and Arctic navigation.
- Interests in the Arctic and in Greenland will continue to grow in the future.

Chinese interest in Greenland

- China's ambition to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Arctic countries also applies to Denmark and Greenland.
- China aims to increase its prospect to exert influence through trade and research.
- A number of Chinese state and non-state actors are thus showing persistent interest in commercial and research-related cooperation in Greenland.
- Chinese persistent interest in Greenland, to raw materials but also tourism and fishing.
- Research cooperation, and research initiatives in Greenland, are seen by China as a legitimate channel for influence in Arctic matters.
- China is interested in maintaining a commercial presence in Greenland despite limited short-term profits. Part of the resource security strategy applied to other raw materials exporting countries. This approach is also part of China's ambition for influence in the Arctic.
- Risk of political interference related to Chinese investments in Greenland, due to close connection between Chinese companies and states and to the strategic industries involved.

2019

Arctic militarisation and great power security game

- The Arctic coastal states still follow a cooperative path on Arctic issues and are making efforts to avoid that US-Russia tensions deteriorate Arctic cooperative governance.
- Arctic and non-Arctic states are increasing their military focus on the Arctic. Russia's military build-up in the region and consequent Arctic coastal states' increase of Arctic military capabilities

- Increased security policy positioning between the US, Russia and China. All three states have significant strategic interests in the region.
- The US cites a threat from Russia and China; the US wants to prevent the two countries from increasing their influence in the region and seeks support from its allies for this approach in Arctic forums.
- The US wants to bolster its military presence to ensure early warning and be able to ward off a potential military threat from the north.
- Both Russia and the US are increasingly concerned with China. China's ambition of influence on Arctic governance is growing. China's military is trying to acquire Arctic knowledge.
- The US sees China as a geopolitical rival.
- The developments in the Arctic will limit the kingdom of Denmark's room of manoeuvre in the Arctic. It will be harder for the Kingdom of Denmark to maintain a cooperative stance for solving regional issues, as it needs to defend its national strategic interests and have consideration for its allies.

China-Russia cooperation

- China's role in the Arctic is growing. To Russia China is both a partner, a competitor and a strategic opponent.
- Western sanctions force Russia to look for non-Western partners in the Arctic. China is thus the most attractive partner for Russia.
- Russia does not want to become economically dependent on China.
- Russia wants to avoid China gaining political influence in the Arctic.
- Chinese plans for a Polar Silk Road could undermine Russian control over the Northern Sea Route.
- Russia is keen that only Arctic states participate in the rule setting of the Arctic coastal states.
- Russia is afraid that China's increasing role in the Arctic will be at the expense of Russia's own role.

China Arctic strategy

Long-term interests

- China's long-term interests are increased influence on Arctic matters and access to Arctic shipping routes and resources.
- China has included the Arctic shipping routes in the Belt and Road Initiative, linking the Arctic with the country's overall and long-term strategic interests. As a result, Chinese SOEs have shown an increasing interest in the region, which will lead to more investments.

Influence

- China is eager to strengthen its influence on Arctic issues, and believes this ambition aligns with great power status.
- China thinks it can influence Arctic governance because as it believes that it is still at its infancy.
- China is making efforts to become a legitimate player in the Arctic and gain a role in setting the rules on Arctic cooperation.
- China's strategy to achieve its Arctic goal is to strengthen cooperation with Arctic countries on issues such as trade, culture and research, as also stated in the 2018 White Paper on Arctic Policy. Research is also instrumental to be recognised as a legitimate polar nation.

Resource security and diversification strategy

- China's interests in raw material and energy resources
- China's diversification strategy both for resources and shipping routes

Military

- Access to the Arctic plays a military strategic role for China, because of the importance the region has for the US and Russia as military operational space.
- China's military is making efforts to strengthen its Arctic knowledge.
- Some of China's efforts to build up Arctic knowledge and capabilities will be a concerted effort between civilian and military actors.

Activities

- Apart from initiative related to resource extraction and shipping routes, China is making efforts to build capabilities and knowledge within climate research space science, satellite communication and Arctic navigation.
- Interests in the Arctic and in Greenland will continue to grow in the future.

Chinese interest in Greenland

- China's ambition to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Arctic countries also applies to Denmark and Greenland. China is using cooperation on research and trade as entry points for influence.
- A number of Chinese state and non-state actors are thus showing persistent interest in commercial and research-related cooperation in Greenland.
- The interest is still narrow and yet not translated into major investments or extensive research cooperation.
- China's political interest in maintaining a commercial presence in Greenland despite limited short-term profits .
- Part of the resource security strategy applied to other raw materials exporting countries.

This approach is also part of China's ambition for influence in the Arctic.

- Research cooperation, and research initiatives in Greenland, are seen by China as a legitimate channel for influence in Arctic matters.
- Risk of political interference related to Chinese investments in Greenland, due to close connection between Chinese companies and states and to the strategic industries involved.
- China's ambitions for influence and access in the Arctic are under pressure for the US, which perceives Chinese interests in the Arctic in the light of the strategic rivalry between the two countries.
- The US aims to curb China's scope of action in the Arctic and in Greenland, which is regarded as part of the US sphere of influence.

2020

Arctic cooperation and militarisation of the region

- Tense relations between the US, China and Russia will characterise future developments in the Arctic.
- Military strategic developments in the Arctic are linked to the shifting power balance.
- The Arctic coastal states seek to negotiate when solving disagreements on Arctic issues to try to keep the Arctic out of international issues.
- Arctic cooperation is challenged by tensions between great powers.
- The US focuses on Russia's military build-up in the region and Chinese interests in the Arctic
- The US is pushing its allies to increase the Arctic capabilities and align their interests in the region to counteract China and Russia.
- Several non-Arctic states wish to play a greater role in the Arctic.
- China's interests and involvement are growing. China's interests revolve around gaining influence, being recognised as a legitimate Arctic actor, and securing access to resources and sea routes.
- All three states, the US, China and Russia, have major strategic interests in the region.
- Militarisation of the Arctic has created the preconditions for untended clashes and escalation.
- The emergence of great powers' security game is now clear.
- The development will result in sharpened political rhetoric and continue military build-up. The Arctic states will try to continue cooperation.

China-Russia cooperation

- To Russia China is both a partner, a competitor and a strategic opponent.
- Western sanctions force Russia to look for non-Western partners in the Arctic. China is thus the most attractive partner for Russia.
- Russia does not want to become economically dependent on China.
- Russia wants to avoid China gaining political influence in the Arctic and control over the region's strategic infrastructure.
- Russia will work to deny China and other non-Arctic states from participating in the rule setting of the Arctic coastal states.

China's Arctic strategy

Long-term interests

- China's long-term interests are increased influence on Arctic matters and access to Arctic shipping routes and resources.
- China is concerned about the tense relations between the great powers over developments in the Arctic, as it curbs China's scope for cooperation with Arctic states and increasing influence in the

region.

- China is aware that the United States and Russia are critical of China's ambitions in the Arctic. China is thus trying to make itself a relevant partner in the Arctic by investing in research and infrastructure which will turn China into an Arctic actor in the future.
- China has included the Arctic shipping routes in the Belt and Road Initiative, linking the Arctic with the country's overall and long-term strategic interests. As a result, Chinese SOEs have shown an increasing interest in the region, which will lead to more investments.

Influence

- China is eager to strengthen its influence on Arctic issues, and believes this ambition aligns with great power status.
- China thinks it can influence Arctic governance because as it believes that it is still at its infancy.
- China is making efforts to become a legitimate player in the Arctic and gain a role in setting the rules on Arctic cooperation.
- China's strategy to achieve its Arctic goal is to strengthen cooperation with Arctic countries on issues such as trade, culture and research.. Research is also instrumental to be recognised as a legitimate polar nation.

Resource security and diversification strategy

- China's interests in raw material and energy resources
- China's diversification strategy both for resources and shipping routes

Military

- China has an ambition to be a global great power and to be able to protect Chinese interests worldwide.
- China's military is making efforts to strengthen its Arctic knowledge. However, Chinese military activity in the Arctic is still very limited.
- Some of China's efforts to build up Arctic knowledge and capabilities will be a concerted effort between civilian and military actors.

Activities

- Apart from initiative related to resource extraction and shipping routes, China is making efforts to build capabilities and knowledge within climate research space science, satellite communication and Arctic navigation.

- Interests in the Arctic and in Greenland will continue to grow in the future.

Chinese interest in Greenland

- China's ambition to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Arctic countries also applies to Denmark and Greenland. China is using cooperation on research and trade as entry points for influence.
- Research cooperation, and research initiatives in Greenland, are seen by China as a legitimate channel for influence in Arctic matters.
- China's political interest in maintaining a commercial presence in Greenland despite limited short-term profits
- Part of the resource security strategy applied to other raw materials exporting countries.

This approach is also part of China's ambition for influence in the Arctic.

- A few Chinese state and non-state actors are thus showing persistent interest in commercial and research-related cooperation in Greenland.
- The interest is still narrow and yet not translated into major investments or extensive research cooperation.
- Risk of political interference related to Chinese investments in Greenland, due to close connection between Chinese companies and states and to the strategic industries involved.
- The US perceives Chinese interests in the Arctic in the light of the strategic rivalry between the two countries.
- The US rewards China's growing interests in the Arctic as a threat to its room of manoeuvre and position in a region that it holds as strategically important.
- The US aims to curb China's scope of action in the Arctic and in Greenland, which is regarded as part of the US sphere of influence.

Source: Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2017; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2018; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2020.

7.3 Summary of the chapters “China”, found in the Danish Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020

The content of the chapters “China” in the Intelligence Risk Assessments from 2017 to 2020 have been framed and summarised in Table 4, so to underscore how the argument is proposed and how its representation has changed and grown in details year by year. To make it more evident to the reader, the parts that have been added from one year to another have been highlighted in red.

Table 4. Systematic summary of China chapters in the Intelligence Risk Assessments 2017-2020.

2017
<p>1. International influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese leadership seeks to increase China’s international influence and behave more insistently and confidently in the international forums • China seeks to become the Asia financial and political centre. • The BRI has also the strategic purpose of align foreign countries with Chinese strategic objectives and development needs • China has exploited the uncertainty of US foreign policy by further promoting BRI
<p>2. South China Sea policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China’s military development related to the country’s ambition to get control over the South China Sea region. • The US will dispute the legitimacy of the Chinese territorial claims by employing military presence, but this will not cause a deterioration of US-China relations.
<p>3. China-Russia cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two countries are strengthening their relations, but they will not be allies as they have clashing interests in Central Asia.
2018
<p>1. Development strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the 2049 long-term plan. China aims to become a global leader in political, technological and cultural matters, and in terms of national strength and international influence.
<p>2. International Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China has adopted a more active role in global affairs and is determined to strengthen its influence globally and regionally • China actively promotes its development model as an alternative to Western model to developing countries around the world; it has never done such active steps in this front before. It is presented as an opportunity to economically modernise the country without reforming the political system. • China is eager to develop and determine the framework for cooperation and institutional build-up in Asia and globally. • China has built new international institutions. • The purpose of the BRI is to improve ties between China and the rest of Asia, Africa and Europe; the BRI concept has spread to European countries. • The BRI helped fuel China’s development and relies on excess capacity of Chinese companies and on China’s investment capital. • China seeks support for its regional and global strategic and economic priorities by linking more

countries to the BRI.
<p>3. Technological development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China has invested in education and research in order to have an innovative environment. • Chinese high-tech companies are now key players in the international market and main competitors to US and European companies. • China is focusing its foreign investments on acquiring foreign technology and strengthening the country's domestic and product development. • Presentation of the "Made in china 2025" plan and this connection to the 2049 long-term plan. • China has already started to invest in foreign high-tech industries and start-ups and joint-venture agreements in Europe and North America.
<p>4. US worries over China and US-China rivalry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United States regards China's foreign policy ambitions, such as the one of becoming the political and economic epicenter of Asia, and China's ambition to become a technological superpower as a strategic security threat. • The United States is concerned about China's growing regional and international role.
<p>5. South China Sea policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China's military development related to the country's ambition to get control over the South China Sea region. • The US will dispute the legitimacy of the Chinese territorial claims by employing military presence, but this will not cause a deterioration of US-China relations.
<p>6. China-Russia cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two countries are strengthening their relations, but they will not be allies as they have clashing interests in Central Asia.
2019
<p>1. Power centralisation and repressive attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President XI has further centralized the power. The power centralisation manifests itself also in the administrative levels, party units in Chinese companies, education system and media. • The leadership is growing less tolerant of national and international interpretations of China's political development. • China is becoming increasingly repressive, focusing on surveillance technologies to control the population. • The leadership has introduced automatic facial recognition and artificial intelligence services in the Xinjiang region to monitor the local population. • China has introduced various reforms to the national security legislation. Chinese Intelligence Services can now formally instruct companies, individuals and organisations to disclose information relating to China's national security.
<p>2. Domestic challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of economic domestic challenges (debt burden, excess capacity, SOEs low productivity, demographic trend, environmental challenges) • Transition to a domestic consumption driven economy • Hong Kong crisis
<p>3. Development strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the 2049 long-term plan. China aims to become a global leader in political, technological and cultural matters, and in terms of national strength and international influence.
<p>4. International influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China has adopted a more active role in global affairs and is determined to strengthen its

influence globally and regionally

- China is eager to develop and determine the framework for cooperation and institutional build-up in Asia and globally.
- China has built new international institutions.
- The purpose of the BRI is to improve ties between China and the rest of Asia, Africa and Europe; the BRI concept has spread to European countries.
- China seeks support for its regional and global strategic and economic priorities by linking more countries to the BRI.
- The BRI helped fuel China's development and relies on excess capacity of Chinese companies and on China's investment capital.
- China takes the initiative to design bilateral agreements within the BRI framework, while the funding of the projects is a responsibility of the respective BRI members.
- An increasing number of countries are actively choosing to become part of BRI.
- China actively promotes its development model as an alternative to Western model to developing countries around the world; it is presented as an opportunity to economically modernise the country without reforming the political system.
- China's entities are regarded as attractive cooperation partners by an increasing number of countries.
- Several countries are looking to adopt Chinese surveillance technology to monitor their population.

5. Technological development

- Chinese high-tech companies are now key players in the international market and main competitors to US and European companies.
- Investments in education and research have secured Chinese companies a leading position in the field of 5G.
- European countries have not taken a coordinated stance to handle 5G security challenges.
- China is focusing its foreign investments on acquiring foreign technology and strengthening the country's domestic and product development.
- Presentation of the "Made in china 2025" plan and this connection to the 2049 long-term plan.
- China has already started to invest in foreign high-tech industries and start-ups and joint-venture agreements in Europe and North America.

6. US worries over China and US-China rivalry

- The United States regards China's foreign policy ambitions, such as the one of becoming the political and economic epicenter of Asia, and China's ambition to become a technological superpower as a strategic security threat.
- The US looks at US-China relations as a zero-sum game and views Chinese conduct from a strategic and security-related perspective.
- The US seeks to garner support among his allies and other nations for its increasingly critical view of China.
- The tensions in the US-China relations reflect the ongoing shifting balance of power.
- The United States is concerned about China's growing regional and international role.
- The United States criticizes what perceives to be Chinese illegal conduct in the areas of trade, intellectual property rights, technology transfer and attempts to exert political influence.

7. Military build-up

- China is modernising its entire military.
- Upholding the power balance in the western Pacific region remains a top priority for China.
- Comparison of upgraded Chinese military units to the US and his allies in the Pacific.

8. South China Sea policy

- China's military development related to the country's ambition to get control over the South China Sea region.
- The US will dispute the legitimacy of the Chinese territorial claims by employing military presence, but this alone will not cause a deterioration of US-China relations.

9. China-Russia cooperation

- The two countries are strengthening their relations, but they will not be allies as they have clashing interests in Central Asia.

2020

1. International influence

- China has adopted a more active role in global affairs and is determined to strengthen its influence globally and regionally
- China is eager to develop and determine the framework for cooperation and institutional build-up in Asia and globally.
- China has built new international institutions.
- China actively promotes its development model as an alternative to Western model to developing countries around the world; it is presented as an opportunity to economically modernise the country without reforming the political system.
- China's growing influence in international forums and the promotion of its national development model would make it more difficult for Western countries to promote liberal values and democratic reforms.
- The purpose of the BRI is to improve ties between China and the rest of Asia, Africa and Europe; the BRI concept has spread to European countries.
- China seeks support for its regional and global strategic and economic priorities by linking more countries to the BRI.
- The BRI helped fuel China's development and relies on excess capacity of Chinese companies and on China's investment capital.
- China takes the initiative to design bilateral agreements within the BRI framework, while the funding of the projects is a responsibility of the respective BRI members.
- An increasing number of countries are actively choosing to become part of BRI.
- China's entities are regarded as attractive cooperation partners by an increasing number of countries.
- Several countries are looking to adopt Chinese surveillance technology to monitor their population.

2. Strategic moves

- China's long-term strategic objective is to secure its continued economic growth and development.
- Domestic challenges
- The way China will address its domestic challenges will have a significant impact on the global economic system
- Chinese economic agreements and foreign investments reflect a mixed strategy of initiatives aimed at fulfilling China's foreign policy objectives
- Chinese companies have a global competitive edge due also to the fact that they are capable of outbidding other investors thanks to economic support provided by Chinese state policy banks.
- China uses cyber operations as a tool to support strategic, security, political and economic interests and objectives - regionally and globally.

3. Technological development

- The Chinese leadership views technological progress as decisive to solve domestic challenges and to become a major power.
- China's plans for its technological development imply substantial domestic investments. China is making efforts to acquire foreign technology.
- China is using industrial espionage to gain access to foreign technology.
- China's plan for advanced technologies will improve the country's ability to set international standards. This will boost Chinese influence in technological fields which used to be dominated by Western countries in particular.

4. US-China strategic competition in the tech industry

- China's focus on developing advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence and

quantum technology, has become an element in the strategic competition between the United States and China.

- The United States regards China's prioritisation of advanced technologies as a threat to its national strategic interests and security.

5. Power centralisation and repressive attitude

- China is becoming increasingly repressive, focusing on surveillance technologies to control the population.
- China is increasing its efforts to control the foreign perceptions of China and its behaviour, in order to promote a positive narrative about China and have support for its global initiatives. China has attempted to control the narrative over the COVID-19 crisis.
- China is adopting assertive measures to quell criticism of the Chinese Communist Party and China's political system.
- China's influence operations are not directed to destabilize other countries.
- China makes use of influence campaigns with deliberate use of disinformation, false profiles, and attempts at concealing the origin of the messages.
- China develops in a more repressive direction, making use of artificial intelligence to control the population.
- China has tightened its policies in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Xinjiang region, where China perceives that its unity is threatened. The central government regards the three territories as inseparable parts of China.
- China's national security law on Hong Kong
- Chinese leadership has worked to make countries rescind their recognition of Taiwan in favour of the People's Republic of China.
- China will put pressures on the remaining countries recognising Taiwan.
- China continues to try preventing Taiwan from gaining influence in international organisations.
- Internment camps and surveillance of Uighur population in the Xinjiang region.

6. Military build-up

- China is modernising its entire military.
- Upholding the power balance in the western Pacific region remains a top priority for China.
- Comparison of upgraded Chinese military units to the US and his allies in the Pacific.

7. South China Sea policy

- China's military development related to the country's ambition to get control over the South China Sea region.
- The US will dispute the legitimacy of the Chinese territorial claims by employing military presence, but this alone will not cause a deterioration of US-China relations.

10. China-Russia cooperation

- The two countries are strengthening their relations, but they will not be allies as they have clashing interests in Central Asia.

11. US worries over China and US-China rivalry

- The United States regards China's foreign policy ambitions, such as the one of becoming the political and economic epicenter of Asia, and China's ambition to become a technological superpower as a strategic security threat.
- The US looks at US-China relations as a zero-sum game and views Chinese conduct from a strategic and security-related perspective.
- The US seeks to garner support among his allies and other nations for its increasingly critical view of China.
- The tensions in the US-China relations reflect the ongoing shifting balance of power.
- The United States is concerned about China's growing regional and international role.
- The United States criticizes what perceives to be Chinese illegal conduct in the areas of trade, intellectual property rights, technology transfer and attempts to exert political influence.

- The growing confrontation between the two countries will put pressure on smaller countries that seek close cooperation with both parties, in particular on issues like trade, technology development, investments, and the climate agenda.

Source: Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2017; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2018; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2019; Danish Defence Intelligence Service, 2020.