

**Given that *something* is worth “fighting” for:
Sovereignty assertion as
identity political negotiation¹**



Figure 1 Painted by Ellen Rittenhofer on the request of the author

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¹ Inspired by the slogan of the Royal Danish Armed Forces: “*Fordi noget er værd at kæmpe for*” [italics and quotations marks inserted by author] (fosvaret.dk).

Acknowledgements

So, here we are again: Time says 14:47, which means that my deadline for handing in my last exam is in 13 minutes. In many ways this scenario is representative of my time at Aalborg University, as it seems to have become my hobby horse to make my deadlines by the skin of my teeth. I even think I have become less and less prompt throughout the years, as it turns out that the further one gets into one's studies, the more complex the exams become (one wonders), which has not been proportional with my writing pace. Well then... Hopefully, this will be the last time I am confronted with the problem.

On a positive note, I am beyond grateful to be able to write these acknowledgements. It has been 6 long years, and there have been times where I have been convinced that academia and I were meant for divorce. I therefore owe a great deal of credit to the people who have taken part in the rite of passage it has been for me to (ok-ok - I guess I am still missing my oral defence) get my degree.

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... And now – for the last time – my time seems to be up!

Sophie Rud, 15 October 2022, 14:57

Abstract

While great powers are paying more and more attention to the Arctic, Greenland continues to move towards increased independence. The development is naturally followed by Greenland's attempts to self-determination within areas of also defence policy. However, this process is challenged by several issues: First and foremost, security and defence policy are formally under Danish jurisdiction. However, a precise demarcation of what constitutes security policy is politically impossible. If the line is widely drawn, the autonomy of Greenland will be put on a hold or even rolled back. Conversely, a tightly drawn line will mismatch the official constitutional interpretation, which insists that the Danish state has a monopoly on conducting security and defence policy. Nevertheless, in times of growing tension among the great powers in the Arctic, it is necessary for Greenland to take a stand in relation to military presence on Greenlandic territory. But when Danish jurisdiction and monopoly limit Greenlandic decision-making, Danish security policy and military presence in Greenland risk becoming internal threats to Greenlandic self-determination, which adds pressure to the fragile framework of the Community of the Realm. From a poststructuralist standpoint and by means of discourse theory, this thesis has aimed to analyse identity discourses within Danish defence policy as an attempt to identity the collective *we* that is constituent for its legitimacy as and the Greenlandic response to it through discursively played sovereignty games. The thesis shows that Danish defence policy has constructed a narrow and hierarchal understanding of the collective *we*, which challenges a Greenlandic conceptualization of defence policy and practice. I conclude that as long as policy makers fail to formulate a *we* that is open for rearticulation without total dislocation, Denmark and Greenland will continue to fight for discursive hegemony in their common identity political negotiations regarding sovereignty.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Arctic is *changing*. Rapidly. This caption is the approach in most contemporary descriptions of the region in both academic, political and media contexts, almost as if it were the introduction to a rather banal suspense novel. At the risk of repeating the platitude, I copy the cliché and refer to climate change as starting point that in many ways reset the Arctic region as we “know” it: An isolated part of the world with low temperatures, remote from Western civilization (McCannon 2012). As the ice melts, access to the region’s raw materials and resources increases, which, especially in the past decade, has resulted in a continuously tainted security picture, since the interests of the diverse Arctic actors are often incompatible (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Sørensen 2021). In the relationship between Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, the internal cohesion is also challenged – especially on a military strategic level (Søby & Mortensen 2021). With the Government of Denmark’s desire to maintain the Arctic as a stable and area without conflict (Ilulissat Declaration 2008), the focus on the Danish Armed Forces’ presence and task-solving in the region is a high-priority issue in Danish politics (Danish Ministry of Defence 2021; The Prime Minister’s Office 2022). Although the discussions on defence policy seem inevitable, the aim of this thesis is not to delve into the negotiations on how the Danish Defence should be strategically and operationally developed in accordance with the changing security situation before the next defence agreement. Instead, I want to focus on a problem I otherwise fear overlooked, since it may risk putting the discussion about the role of the Danish Defence in the Arctic back to scratch. Because even though defence policy is formally under Danish jurisdiction (Danish Constitution 1953), the presence of the Danish Defence on Greenlandic territory inevitably plays a role in Greenland’s political development towards greater secession – and vice versa. Both due to the fact that Danish decision-making only gain legitimacy if Greenland is involved (Gad & Olsvig 2020), but also because self-determination is fundamentally about deciding for oneself, which potentially places the Danish state’s coordination of its defence’s increased presence in Greenland as a threat to increased Greenlandic autonomy (Rasmussen, Rud & Gad 2022). Hence, if one takes a post-colonial stand as a point of departure, Danish defence policy should also be regarded as a Greenlandic matter (Larsen 2022).

With the desire to investigate the role of the Danish Armed Forces in a Greenland on its way to independence, this thesis will, by means of discourse analysis, examine the existing narratives in

and about Danish defence policy from both a Danish and a Greenlandic perspective. But before narrowing my focus in a concrete research question, I will go in depth with the motivation behind the choice of problem area in order to contextualize the empirical starting point of the thesis.

1. Motivation

When I started my bachelor's programme at Aalborg University, the first thing we were introduced to in our very first lecture was the Aalborg-model for the problem-based learning (PBL) that is the core philosophy of the educational activities at the institution. The overall idea is to train a result-oriented approach by applying theory and research-based knowledge to an authentic problem. A problem can be both theoretical and practical, but the main goal is to pinpoint an issue that is of relevance outside academia, while still, of course, being comprehensible and possible to analyse and "solve" through an interdisciplinary approach (Aalborg University 2014). Thus, the writing of this thesis is the run-up that will show whether I master to use relevant and experienced-based knowledge together with knowledge and skills communicated by my chosen theme frame.

The reason I start off with an overview of my university's learning objective is to introduce the reader to my choice of problem that since my internship with the Danish Defence has snowballed and created authentic wonder and curiosity during the last year of my studies. In many ways, my time as an intern was helped along by the fact that I as an AAU-student is used to working with interdisciplinary theories and methods, since collaborating with military professionals has required an understanding of - and perhaps also preparedness for - how, in practice, the world may be perceived and dealt with in many different – and often contradictory - ways. It turned out that the many hours spent desperately grasping after *meaning* in the process it has been studying meaning in the AAU lectures on philosophy of science have paid off. I will let that be the bridge that leads on to one of my anecdotes from my time "served" in the Danish Defence.

1.1 *Fieldnotes from Nuuk: On whose behalf is sovereignty claimed?*²

As an intern at the Danish Royal Defense College³ in the fall semester 2021, I participated in the Arctic Flex Module arranged by the Center for Arctic Security Studies, whose list of participants consisted of both Danish military students from the Danish Armed Forces and Greenlandic university students from Ilisimatusarfik⁴. A module that is described to have the purpose of giving

² Notes from study trip to Nuuk Greenland on November 30 2021. All persons present have been anonymized.

³ Danish Royal Defence College = Forsvarsakademiet (FAK)

⁴ Ilisimatusarfik = University of Nuuk

the students an insight into the changes that great power policy in the Arctic has undergone in recent years to teach them to analyse the implications for both the Community of the Realm and for the Danish Defence to strengthen the development of strategic initiatives (Royal Danish Defence College 2021). During a joint study trip to Nuuk, which coincidentally took place during the major power failure in November 2021 (Pedersen & Johansson), we sat together one afternoon in dim candlelight at the local seaman's home for an orientation meeting held by one of the chiefs of staff from the Joint Arctic Command (AKO)⁵. The meeting functioned as an alternative to the sessions we were supposed to have attended, but which had been cancelled due to the activation of the city's emergency response to the blackout. In an attempt to teach us about AKO's role in Greenland's emergency planning and crisis management, we were thus sat down for a briefing. However, it did not take long before the discussion among those present was given free reins. Whether people generally become braver with their questions when they are granted the opportunity to hide from the recipient's reaction behind dim lighting, I dare not claim, but after spending many hours in a classroom with the same group of people, it was noticeable that the mood was quite different just this afternoon. After listening to AKO's presentation of itself and its function as the Danish Kingdom's sovereignty exercising command in the Arctic, one of the Greenlandic students took the floor to ask the question: « So, when you say you protect the Kingdom in the Arctic, who *exactly* do you do it on behalf of? ». Although the question was probably directed at the Chief of Staff, it was clear that it also affected the remaining representatives from the Danish Armed Forces in the room. So much so, that it was one of the naval officers who took the lead and replied: « The Danish Defense is the defense of the entire Community of the Realm, so of course the soldiers also protect Greenland ». There was silence in the room until the Greenlandic student followed up with another question: « But why do you only wear the Danish flag on your uniform, then? Whose sovereignty are you then *really* asserting? After all, the Kingdom is not the same as Greenland - Greenland is Greenland's ». Although the head of CAS tried to follow up with an explanation as to why the soldiers of the Danish Armed Forces are only allowed to carry the state's flag in international contexts, it was loud and clear that legal technicalities regarding military practice could not explain the symbolic imbalance that the Danish flag seemingly provoked in this setting. After that, the room kept quiet, but oozed with discomfort and a feeling that the students from each of their respective educational institutions no longer represented *one* entity. It was clear that the spontaneous battle to

⁵ Joint Arctic Command = Arktisk Kommando (AKO)

justify the Danish Armed Forces' presence in Greenland had been fought out. Who the winner was seemed less obvious.

Nevertheless, the discussion constituted an identity political negotiation about *who* the Danish Armed Forces *really* are, and whether the community it protects and fights for is compatible with a Greenlandic self-perception. Even defence policy and practice may thus be perceived as identity politics (Hansen 2006), which essentially is a discursive negotiation about *who* we *are* in relation to others (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). When we finally left the room, I knew I had just witnessed a real-life problem that in classic PBL-style would serve as point of departure for digging deeper into Greenlandic identity politics with inspiration from this demonstrated “clash” of perceptions of who the *we* are when discussing Danish defence policy in the Arctic.

1.2 Research question

Even if ‘sovereignty’ and ‘territory’ have always been central elements in the Danish Armed Forces’ task-solving (Struwe et al 2012), the lack of conceptual clarification of the terms used to describe the units that Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands make up respectively together and separately opens up for a discursive battlefield where the distribution of authority, competences and identity may be negotiated (Gad 2020). Where the collective notion of ‘the state of Denmark’, ‘the Kingdom of Denmark’ and ‘the Community of the Realm’ by some are used as synonyms, others define them with different meanings and functions (Søby & Lin 2022: 23-24). The case from Nuuk is a concrete example of how some Greenlanders do not necessarily see themselves as an equal part of a close cohesion, and that Denmark's conventional assertion of sovereignty does not necessarily go hand in hand with a Greenlandic understanding of sovereignty. However, a collective *we* is always articulated in politics, which forms the foundation for *our* politics. It is therefore decisive for which policy is considered legitimate, how this *we* is characterized (Hansen 2006: 212).⁶

⁶ Here, I draw on a tradition between identity and foreign policy, which for long has been central to the poststructuralist research agenda. Theorists within Political Science (e.g. Wæver 2001; Hansen 2006) have used Laclau & Mouffe's discourse theoretical analysis tools to establish poststructuralism as a worthy challenger to the traditionally dominant IR realists and liberalists. I will not go into depths with these studies nor draw on them throughout my thesis. Instead, I will let myself inspire by their use of identity discourse in combination with a foreign policy focus, as I apply the same way of thinking to my focus on identity discourses within (national) defence policy and sovereignty games. The logic being that no matter what type of policy one wants to investigate, policies depend on representations of identity at the same time as the formulation of policies enable the producing and reproducing of identities (Hansen 2006: 21).

Although this thesis does not intend to try to answer who Greenland rightly *belongs* to, nor who rightly *decides* over Greenland, I will, based on the conflicting narratives about the role of the Danish Defense presence in Greenland, delve deeper into existing Danish defence policy on the Arctic and Greenland's response to it. Overall, with the goal of analyzing how identity discourses are attempted hegemonized through negotiations about sovereignty. Following a post-structuralist analysis strategy in my analysis of the Danish Ministry of Defence's Arctic Report from 2016, particularly inspired by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse-theoretical conceptual apparatus, and Rebecca Adler-Nissens and Ulrik Pram Gad's notions on rhetorically played *sovereignty games*, the thesis will attempt to answer following research question:

How is Greenland playing sovereignty games as a response to Danish defence policy on the Arctic, and have these games constituted room for Greenland's defence policy?

1.3 Research design

As the introduction and motivation behind my choice of problem field indicate, the research design of this thesis is characterized problem driven and will thus call for a problem-driven research design (Bryman et al 2021). As the research question implies, the focus is centered around identity discourses and their relationship to policy. Or put in different terms: I want to investigate the *we* in Danish defence policy by means of discourse theory and the conceptualization of sovereignty games as it defines the functionality and identity of both states and non-states (Adler-Nissen & Hansen 2018). The research question is thus best answered through a discourse analysis that can support the interpretive nature of the question (Hansen 2005). Hence, my empirically generated research question will draw upon pre-existing theories and methods.

Chapter 2 explains how the thesis with the philosophical starting point that identities exist at the level of discourse that is produced by actors who narrates stories will seek its theoretical inspiration in hegemonic and political discourse theory, which – with a focus on dislocation – opens up for new production of meaning and identity. With the purpose of applying them in the analysis, the thesis has adopted the theoretical concepts: 'Self', 'Other', 'antagonism', 'nodal points' and 'sovereignty games'. The concrete reading strategy consists of looking for discursive articulations of the Self and the Other and the stories explaining their relation. This in order to categorize the identities brought forward. Furthermore, the strategy also aims at identifying nodal points to look for logics that will hold certain "things" to be "truths" or to have the ability to become so, as new

meanings open the floor to new articulations and thus space for sovereignty games to be played.

Chapter 3 explains the choice of methods, including the selection of data, the structure of the analysis and brief discussion of some of the limitations of the study with a specific focus on the translation of data from Danish to English.

Chapter 4 carries out the empirical investigation of the Danish Arctic Strategy from 2016 as well as two chosen speech acts that constitute Greenlandic parliamentarians' reaction to Danish defence initiatives to analyse the various narratives and identity constructions in order to answer whether if Greenlandic sovereignty games have constituted room for Greenland's defence policy

Chapter 5 concludes upon the findings and provides an answer to the research question and makes suggestions for future perspectives.

Chapter 2: Identity and sovereignty as a discursive negotiation

In this chapter, I will be accounting for the main theoretical concepts of the thesis. The theoretical basis is identity. Or more specifically: identity discourse. I will in section 2.1 account for the link between the two, and how I claim to be able to analyse representation of identity in Danish defence policy by introducing the reader to my poststructuralist ontology. Section 2.1 describes the overall concept of discourse theory to demonstrate why I have chosen specifically Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's as my discourse theoretical point of departure. In 2.2, I will dig deeper into Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's conceptual apparatus and how some of their key terms will be operationalised in the analysis. In section 2.3, I will account for some of the understandings of sovereignty by briefly introducing the reader to its spectrum of meanings, which is finalized with my introduction Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Ulrik Pram Gad's concept of *sovereignty games*.

2.1 A Poststructuralist Ontology: Identity and discourse

In the social sciences, there are different perceptions of what the world is like and how it can be recognized (Bryman et al 2016). Or phrased differently: There exist different paradigms of knowledge whose internal assumptions will lead to different scientific perception of the world (Porta & Keating 2008). As different knowledge paradigms produce different answers, it is a basic principle that the chosen knowledge paradigm must allow that a problem formulation can be posed as it is posed, and that it can be adequately answered (Hansen 2006: 27).

My research question is asked on a premise that the world as we perceived it is not objectively given but is instead created through structures that are fluid, which allow for identity and discourse to change. From the confrontation with the fixed structures follows a *poststructural* philosophy of science. Poststructuralism is the development of classic structuralism in the need for the abandonment of the objective and structural description of language and cultural phenomena (Hansen 2005). Hence, poststructuralism represents a more pluralistic and experimental approach (Foucault 1972; Derrida 1982). Since the poststructuralist ontology is empty, poststructuralist theory will be able to support an adequate answer to my research question, as it focuses not on the *existence* of identity, but on the *becoming* of identity (Andersen 1999). The poststructuralist research agenda has traditionally been concerned with the relationship between *identity* and policy production, since policies rely upon representations of identity, which means that identities are

produced and reproduced through policies (Hansen 2006: 1).⁷ Furthermore, policy function as somewhat a hidden storytelling as an implicit beginning, middle and ending often contextualize its substance. This makes it possible to study and analyse policy as more than just random information or practice, but instead as actual storytelling of narratives (Wæver 2001). Thus, the following outline of the poststructuralist discourse theory and its conceptual apparatus serve as both theoretical and methodological foundation of the analysis.

2.1 Hegemonic discourse theory

Discourse theory accounts for a diverse set of assumptions and concepts from across a range of disciplines. Generally speaking, however, discourse theory is based on the concept of the *linguistic turn* in humanities and social sciences which explains how phenomena only exist through language through which they are formulated (Mayr & Simpson 2010). Hence, at the most basic level, discourse analysis is the study of language in use. However, discourse works above the levels of grammar and semantics, as it captures what happens when these language forms are played out in various social, cultural, and political arenas (Ibid: 5). Thus, language use does not merely reflect or represent our social and mental realities, but they actually help construct or constitute these realities.

But even if the different traditions within the concept of discourse theory share premises of how the social world is constituted through discourse, their approaches differ in both theoretical and analytical aspects (Brinkmann & Tanggaard 2015). Most contemporary discourse theories follow Foucault's conception of discourse as relatively rule-bound set of statements. However, many of them disagree with the tendency to identify only one *regime of truth* in each historical period (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 11). Instead, they operate with a more conflictual picture, which happens when discourses compete for hegemony. This is where Laclau and Mouffe come into the picture. As a central focal point in their poststructuralists discourse theory is *discursive struggle* (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Furthermore, Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical shift from structuralism to poststructuralism emphasizes their general focus on power and conflict to which *political* identities are created through these struggles that fight over hegemony (Hansen 2005: 179-180). I follow this

path, as the notion of identity in the context of this study is different from individual identity. Instead, the aim is to entail the political character of identity to study identity politics about *who we are* (Gad 2020).

As stated previously, the question of identity is a central problem within poststructuralist discourse analysis. To Laclau and Mouffe, identity is discourse – just like everything else in the world. This does not mean that the two theorists reject the existence of the world, but they do, however, emphasize how the world can *only* be understood through discourses (Laclau & Mouffe 2010). In other words: One cannot talk about *the discursive* and the *non-discursive* (Jørgensen & Philipsen 2011: 81). Instead, the concept of discourse must be understood as an attempt to determine meaning within a given field that otherwise is ontologically empty. This also means that Laclau and Mouffe do not distinguish between discursive and non-discursive dimensions of the social. Social practices are thus viewed exclusively discursive, and there is thus no dialectical interaction between discourse and “something else” (ibid: 16). This means that discourse is not found only in text and talk, but also in social practice such as physical sovereignty exercises, in the design of a military uniform, or through the symbolism we put into our national flags. Through articulatory practice, discourse constructs and organizes social relations in a world without an already-existing social order (ibid: 36). In the process, the discourse will seek to create *essentialism* by attempting to remove ambiguity. The production of meaning can be fixed for a time by adhering to specific articulated values that can help define meaning and identity. But this only until it is ultimately dissolved in favor of another dominant view, which may open up to new meanings and actions (Dyrberg et al. 2001). To analyze how a specific identity discourse has achieved hegemony in the construction of meaning, it is necessary to use discourse analytical tools. Therefore, Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theoretical concepts will now be explained

2.2 Conceptual apparatus

Laclau and Mouffe's conceptual apparatus is complex and multifaceted, so with the aim of an effective analysis, this thesis will limit itself to describing only some of the central concepts that have been found particularly useful in the analysis of hegemony. The concepts primarily come from Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* from 1985, which marks their shift to poststructuralism that started their prioritized focus on power and conflict and political

identities created through discursive struggles and dislocation (Hansen 2005).

Dislocation is understood as the point to which a change in discourse can be observed. Hence, the concept of dislocation from the poststructuralist discourse theory serves as the analytical starting point. This goes hand in hand with my wish to study the negotiations about sovereignty in relation to the Danish Defence's presence in Greenland, which possibly open up for new understanding of the collective *we* that otherwise seems to be self-evident in Danish defence policy. Since dislocation makes stability relative, as discourses do not exist in a vacuum, there is always a risk that the discourse may be *articulated* in a different way, which opens up for the possibility of competing discourses that fight for hegemony. This has three fundamental consequences for the structure of identity: First, a *subject* can only be understood through its subject-position which exists in a discourse or as part of a collective identity (Hansen 2005). Second, it is a basic condition that without an *Other* the identity of the *Self* would not be possible. This means that identity is dependent on *antagonism* to separate itself from something else to show what the Self's identity is. The Other is thereby both a necessity and a threat because it shows that the Self can be something else. Discourse is thus *relational* (Gad 2010: 11). Thirdly, this means that identity is *processual*, as the boundary between Self and Other is negotiable and must be constantly maintained (ibid).

Furthermore, Laclau and Mouffe argue that discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity to fix the meaning of the *floating signifier*. The privileged discursive points which partially have fixed meaning are called *nodal points* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 127). A floating signifier differentiates from a nodal point by it being empty of meaning and available to different meanings. Before being articulated, nodal points were floating signifiers, which means that floating signifiers have the potential to become nodal points (ibid).

The application of the poststructuralist discourse theory's conceptual apparatus including 'subject', 'Other [you/them]', 'Self' [I/us], 'antagonism' and 'nodal points' will support the analysis' ability to examine Self-Other relations and how the Self is positioned within a range of different identities in relation to either a collective *we* or an antagonistic *Other* – or something in between.

Furthermore, the conceptualization of sensemaking through the concept nodal points will support the identification of logics that will hold certain "things" to be "truths" or to have the ability to become so. This will help me identify the areas within defence policy from where rhetorical

sovereignty games are or could be played, as discursive *dislocation* open the floor to new articulation. However, before getting that far, I will need to account for the concept of sovereignty.

2.3 Sovereignty: From “classic” assertion to postcolonial sovereignty games

One of the claims of the thesis is that sovereignty has never been as well-defined a concept as the daily and common use of the term could give the impression of⁸. Each theory of sovereignty focuses upon a different cluster of general features, attributions and conditions to define and indicate the meaning of sovereignty, and no theory includes them all (Prokhovnik 2007). The identity of sovereignty varies across the different conceptions of it: *“For Hobbes it is a hypothetical single, meaningful performance. For Locke it is a technical requirement, and for Rousseau it is an ongoing activity rather than a ‘thing’. For Schmitt sovereignty is again a performance, invoked in the decision to acknowledge an exception, while for Foucault it is a dead letter and a false alibi”* (ibid: 14-15). In line with the quote, the research question draws on the premises that the concept has a plurality of meanings and is always up to reconceptualisation. First and foremost, due to the fact that the concept of sovereignty has a diverse and uneven past (Struwe et al 2012). Furthermore, the conditions for sovereignty have altered over the last few decades, and the close connection between the state, its monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force, its citizens and its territory are challenged (ibid: 30).

Nevertheless, upholding sovereignty and territory is a key task of the Danish Defence (forsvaret.dk 2022b), as they claim how it is necessary to uphold sovereignty over Danish territory as it can otherwise be lost (Struwe et al 2012: 17). Hence, the royal operational order makes it completely clear that if Danish territory or Danish forces outside Danish territory come under attack, they must *“engage without delay, without waiting for or obtaining an order, even if the declaration of war or state of war is unknown to the chiefs in question”* (Forsvarskommissionen 2008). Thus, the Danish Defence has a standing order to secure Danish sovereignty in case of attack – also if the attack takes place in Greenland. However, this is not so – conceptually – simple. In the Arctic, the presence of armed forces is a relatively new concept, and most Arctic societies do therefore not have an ingrained military tradition. A perspective that is often disregarded in the European context, where military and warfare have been central in shaping the nation-state (Strandsbjerg 2014). In august

⁸ The term might be even more integrated in everyday (and non-academic) language and use in Danish – however, my claim is based on a gut feeling,

2022, the NATO chief toured the Arctic accompanied by Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau to take a first-hand look at a North Warning System radar station in Nunavut. Here, they were greeted by the local elder Eva Kakolak, who welcomed the delegation with the traditional lighting of an Inuit oil lamp (Brewster 2022). The ceremony became a reminder for the top political leader that the people who inhabit Canada's North have lives and deep roots that extend beyond the state, anarchy and international tensions. A point that Trudeau emphasized by stating how: *"We can never forget that sovereignty doesn't come through soldiers or scientists. Sovereignty comes through the people who've lived here for millennia"* (ibid).

In line with this quote, I will argue that the problem I wish to investigate stems from the oblivion of exactly this perspective, as relating on a narrow scope for conventional sovereignty that primarily deals with the authority between rulers and ruled is dominating the conceptualization of sovereignty (Prokhovnik 2007: 15). From this understanding, the sovereign state dominates our conception of political order, which prevents us from grasping the dynamics that avoid a strictly sovereign form of life (Adler-Nissen & Gad 2013: 4). To an IR-realist, the state would appear as a given. According to Kenneth Waltz, sovereignty means that a state decides for itself how it will cope with its international and external problems (Waltz 1979). This perception is parallel to international law theory that traditionally sees sovereignty as an either/or question: Either the state is sovereign, or it is not. From this perspective, sovereignty becomes the exclusive right to exercise the functions of a nation-state and be able answerable to no higher authority within a specifiable territory (Adler-Nissen & Gad 2013: 4).

But even if the Western understanding of sovereignty continues to lean heavily on this basic reference that views sovereignty as a more or less binary concept that provides a legal and political solution to who has the right to rule over territory, Russia's invasion of Ukraine serves as the most topical and demonstrative example of how the concept of sovereignty is reconsidered when new phenomena change new phenomena change the infrastructure of the global community or other conditions that define the international system (Struwe et al 2012). Even though the focus of the thesis is far from the war the Ukraine, the example contextualizes the fact that sovereignty is not set in stone.

Obviously more relevant for the answering of my research question relevant is the sovereignty discussion in relation to the Community of the Realm, where the distribution of competences is up for negotiation as the traditional conceptualization of sovereignty is challenged when confronted with self-government arrangement (Jacobsen 2019; Nuttall 2018). Here, a narrow either/or understanding of sovereignty is challenged by Greenland's status as a non-sovereign constitutional hybrid, which has taken over some foreign affairs that are traditionally considered a prerogative reserved for sovereign states (Loukacheva 2007: 5). Not to forget that Greenland – just like Nunavut – is also inhabited by Inuit who claim the Arctic to be *their* home – state-status subordinate (ICC 2009; Shadian 2010; Gerhardt 2011).

As indicated previously, I want to draw on the theoretical concept of Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Ulrik Pram Gad's notion of 'sovereignty games' by drawing on their introduction in their book "European Integration and postcolonial sovereignty games" from 2003. Their reconceptualisation of sovereignty draws on insight from both EU studies and postcolonialism. Theoretically, they argue how sovereignty cannot be understood as a 'thing' that is either present or absent. On the contrary, they emphasize how sovereignty unfolds in the legal and political games that must be studied as both discourse and practice (Adler-Nissen & Gad 2013: 1). In line with their argument, this thesis considers sovereignty as a concept that can be "played" through discourse and practice, which is made possible by Greenland's ambiguous status between self-determination dependence. For Greenland, formal sovereignty appears as a desirable alternative to the present, where one assumes a state-like identity with separate territory and a culturally distinct population (Gad 2017), but with continued legal and administrative subordination to the former colonial power (Adler-Nissen og Gad, 2014: 17 - 19). As such, the present is inconsistent with the national self-image because the post-colonial hierarchy has not yet been replaced by formal, sovereign equality (Jacobsen 2020).

The notion of a *game* thus has no relation to game theory or similar rational choice approaches. What is at stake is whether the former colony should be granted subjectivity and thus be given the opportunity to articulate responsibility and authority, which can eventually expand the foreign policy scope (Adler-Nissen and Gad, 2014: 20). Central to the sovereignty game analogy is that the common understanding between the actors involved is dependent on a system of common game rules; both constitutive – the either/or distinction that defines the game itself – and the regulatory rules that are not predefined and can develop during the game (Adler-Nissen and Gad, 2014: 18-

19). In accordance with this tradition, sovereignty is in this thesis considered a claim to authority, while sovereignty game is used with the aim of drawing attention to rules, players and various features of the game (Jacobsen 2020). As the analysis will show, these features are found in the form of loud expressions of, tacit symbolic actions and in miming sovereignty, which together might serve to adjust the boundary of Greenland's own foreign policy.

3. Methods

In this chapter, I will be accounting for the methods of the thesis, including a description of the selection of empirical data, the structure and presentation of the analysis, and a discussion of some of the limitations of my investigation.

3.1 Collection and selection of empirical data

The empirical material the thesis will base its analysis on is made up of by two categories of data: First, I have chosen the Danish Ministry of Defence's Arctic Report from 2016⁹ including its appendices. The report serves as the latest, official document from the ministry's official describing of the Danish Defence's role and task-solution in the Arctic. As I will explain in greater details in the analytical chapter, the report is a result of the political Arctic Agreement from 2016, which was concluded to strengthening the Ministry of Defence's task management in the Arctic (Ministry of Defence 2022). This means that there in the current defence agreement is an explicit focus on initiatives promoting increased involvement of Greenlanders in the Ministry of Defence's task solution in Greenland. As policy texts should be selected on the basis of clear articulation of identities and policies, that they are widely read and easy to attend, and that they have the formal authority to define political position (Hansen 2006: 76), I claim that my choice is suitable for the study of identity discourses within Danish defence policy.

In a perfect world, it would have made good sense to make a comparative study of respectively official, Danish and Greenlandic defence policy. However, since defence policy is formally under Danish jurisdiction, Greenlandic policy production regarding defence often find its way as *reponse* to the Danish policy. This could be through parliamentary debates or through other political agendas or arenas. With inspiration from Ole Wæver's securitization theory, I will refer to one of the terms used to describe the rhetorical construction of existential threats, as 'speech act' is considered an important move that provides the opportunity to observe discourse as not only representing reality but also as a type of performance, which in turn results in certain reactions or responses, which may then be analysed (Eroukhmanoff 2017). The term will not serve as a theoretical concept in the analysis, but merely function as an argument for opening up for different types of data than exclusive written policy in its purest form. I will thus argue that the imbalance in

⁹ The report officially goes under the title *Arktisrapporten*

empirical material within the field of defence policy in a Greenlandic context should not be seen as an obstacle, but a finding in itself that open up for the possibility of looking at other meaningful speech acts. As Adler-Nissen and Gad argue, the discursive framework for sovereignty games, which may constitute these speech acts, can be analysed from, for example, public debates and speeches (Adler-Nissen and Gad, 2014: 22). The data for the second part of the analysis will thus consist of two political proposals and the political debates that followed them both in the Danish parliament and through media, which has then been forwarded to the general public in new articles. First, I will focus on the proposal on a change of the Conscription Act, second, I will focus on the proposal to have also the Greenlandic flag on the Sirius patrol's sled. These thematic have been chosen as I stumble upon both of them in my analysis of the Arctic Report, but also because they as events – or speech acts if one will - were significant enough to get front-page coverage in both Danish and Greenlandic media. As an extra bonus, the latter debate picks up on the discussion abouts flags from the fateful afternoon-briefing in Nuuk.

In terms of time, the data extends over a period from 2016, when the Arctic Report was published, to 2021 when the last discussion about *which flags* took place in the yearly discussion on Arctic cooperation in the Danish Parliamentary. Even though my data extents over a time period of 5 years, a focus on this timeframe will not be determined for my wish to observe potential changes in discursive structures.

3.2 Structure of the analysis

In order to be able to give as adequate an answer to the problem formulation as possible, this thesis will be divided into two sub-analyses, where the first document analysis is necessary and more or less structuring for the second. In order to get a better understanding of the *we* in the Danish assertion of sovereignty in the Arctic (and other relevant defence practices), the first analysis will seek to analyse what hegemonic discourses exist in Danish defence policy by means of a selected part of Laclau and Mouffes conceptual apparatus. However, a more detailed overview of the structure of the first sub-analysis will follow in section 4.

As pointed out already, I am introduced to both the concept conscription and symbolic representation in the my analysis Arctic Report, but the themes have become the substantial

structure for my analysis of the sovereignty games placed by Greenland in relation to Danish Defence initiatives. The analysis will be divided in two with a section to each of the events. Since I analyse political debate, there are politicians representing various parties in my data. However, I will not be focused on their ideological point of view or their connection to political parties as it would risk removing focus from the narratives and analytical points. However, the politicians' names will be noted, and their political party will be listed in the footnotes.

2.6 The quality of results

The central choice in a post-structuralist discourse analysis of a country's official policy concerns whether one should limit oneself to deal with only official political perspective or whether one should expand the empirical archive to include other intertextual references. Overall, I have prioritized the political analysis that only deviates in my references to more or less lyrical quotes I have included here and there for – more or less – the contextualizing and symbolic effects. This decision has, however, also shaped the basis for opting out of, for example, qualitative interviews, which could possibly have nuanced the analysis further. I am thus aware that the thesis is the result of selection and non-selection, which is an invariable problem for all academic analyses. But rather than aiming to produce true knowledge about a given object, the goal of the poststructuralist analysis strategy is instead to problematize the *obvious* things by demonstrating how discourses are *not* set in stone. This opens up for the possibility to contribute to a more critical recognition of specific hegemonic perceptions of e.g. sovereignty or Danish defence policy. Preferably both.

However, a fundamental limitation of this thesis is found in the extensive translation work I have done from Danish to English, as all of the chosen data is available in Danish and intended for a Danish audience. To accommodate this issue, I started off doing the analytical work in Danish, whereafter I have translated my findings into English. In this sense, I have done all the analytical thinking in my mother tongue, whereafter I have created a presentation of my findings for an English audience. In the translation process, I have obviously tried to translate as neutrally and objectively as possible, but since translations are not exclusively about linguistics, I cannot renounce a certain subjectivity in my work. I have therefore included all the Danish quotes in the footnotes marked 'TBA' (translated by author). In addition, it must be emphasized that the thesis' problematization of the Danish Defence's lack of conceptual clarification of the terms used to describe the units that make up Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands may seem less relevant

in the English language as the conceptual clarification may appear less deficient. It is therefore crucial that I manage to describe the shortcomings of the Danish concepts in English as part of my analysis work.

Chapter 4: Analysis

“Greenland is only Greenland as long as they have the sovereignty enforcement. I think that is important to remember. And we are only good at SAR because we are good at the military. This is also why we have the boys with the dogs up in the national park. There is a reason why we are present in the Arctic - to protect what we hold dear” (Rømeling 2021).¹⁰

Before I jump to the actual analysis, I would like to dwell on the quote above, which cites military personnel from AKO, for a brief moment. I came across it when reading through some of the military magazines at the Royal Danish Defence College as entertainment during lunch. Hence, the quote is not from the data I have selected as part of my empirical study, but it's clear division between the *they*, the Greenlanders, and the *we*, the Danish soldiers - which is only linked with whatever it is that the *we* hold dear - became a reminder that my selection of theory for this thesis needed to contain some sort of conceptualization of Otherness. Furthermore, the soldier, who is cited in the quotes, has in (a non-scientific part of) my mind somewhat functioned as a perceived version of an interviewee, as I imagine he would have told me the exact same thing, had conducting qualitative interviews with the operative personnel from the Danish Defence as part of my data collection. However, for now, the quote should only function as the teaser that will hopefully function as suspense as to whether it becomes obvious after reading this study what this *something* we claim to hold dear really *is*.

4.1 The Arctic Report: The storytelling about the Danish Defence in the Arctic

On 4 December 2013, the then government of Denmark decided to initiate extensive investigation on the strengthening of the Ministry of Defence's task management and effective planning in the Arctic. The purpose of the analysis was to take a closer look at the tasks and capacities of the entire ministerial area in the Arctic region, seen in the light of, among other things, the increased geographical accessibility and greater commercial activity in the area. The Arctic Report from 2016 thus constitutes the overall and detailed reporting of this particular analysis work (Ministry of Defense 2016: 8).

¹⁰ TBA: “Grønland er kun Grønland, så længe de har suverænitethåndhævelsen. Det synes jeg er vigtigt at huske. Og vi er kun gode til SAR, fordi vi er gode til det militære. Det er jo også derfor, vi har gutterne med hundene (Siriuspatruljen, red.) oppe i nationalparken. Der er en grund til, at vi er til stede i Arktis – for at værne om det, vi har kært” (Rømeling 2021).

In the following sub-analysis, I will delve deeper into how the Danish Ministry of Defense describes its future task solution in the Arctic Report with the goal of investigating its narratives about the role of the Danish Armed Forces as the actor articulating sovereignty in Greenland. I have proceeded more or less slavishly in my review of the content by reading the report's 8 chapters of a total of 248 pages chronologically from start to finish. With this reading in mind, I have chosen that my analysis will focus primarily on 1) the report's introductory chapter about the report's framework and background, 2) the chapter dealing with the Danish Armed Forces' sovereignty task and 3) the report's conclusion and recommendations. In addition, I have studied the report's appendices closely, which, among other documents, constitute an independent report (UIAP)¹¹ on the overall involvement and employment in the Danish Defense. Here, my focus has been on the analysis of opportunities for increased military employment of Greenlandic and Faroese citizens in the Danish Armed Forces. I will include some of its findings as part of my analysis.

These sections have been chosen to make it possible to study specifically the Arctic Report's presentation and framing of the Danish Armed Forces' function and sovereignty task and Greenland's role in that context, but also because the remaining chapters and appendices have a strong focus on the technicalities behind the Danish Defence's remaining operational tasks as well as the analysis's initiatives, recommendations and the economy that follows them. Content of great relevance to the understanding of the Danish Defence's task-solving, but which I choose to skip to sharpen my focus on the sovereignty task. I start off with the Arctic Report's introductory chapter, as this is where the Arctic Report's framework and conceptual clarification are introduced to the reader.

4.1.1 The framework: The state = the Kingdom of Denmark = the Community of the Realm?

In the Arctic Report's introductory chapter, the report presents the background for its analysis work by first setting out to define the Arctic, which is then followed by an inventory of existing political statements, strategies, and international agreements on cooperation in the region. In its definition of the Arctic, the Arctic Report emphasizes that the Arctic can be defined in several ways depending on whether the definition is in relation to the Arctic Circle or to the average temperature of the region (2016: 21). The Ministry of Defense has chosen to adhere to the definition of the

¹¹ The report *Underarbejdsgruppe Involvering og Ansættelse Rapport* (152 pages) is shortened: 'UIAP'

Arctic that has been developed by the Arctic Council (Arctic Council 2021). More interestingly, however, is the report's description of the relationship between the Kingdom of Denmark, Greenland and the Arctic, which is defined at the beginning of the chapter as follows:

“The Kingdom of Denmark consists of Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, which constitute the Community of the Realm. The Kingdom is thus centrally located in and covers a significant part of the Arctic, where parts of the Kingdom's population live. The development in the Arctic is therefore of great importance to the Kingdom of Denmark” (2016: 21).¹²

As touched upon in my methodology chapter (3.3), a number of different terms are generally used to describe the unit and the units that Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands make up respectively together and separately. The terminology becomes even more complicated when the same terms are translated – as here - into English, or when the meanings of the terms are compared with either Greenlandic or Faroese. Completely unambiguous usage of the terminology in both legal and political contexts is thus impossible (Søby & Mortensen 2022; Thisted & Gremaud 2021; Gad 2019). However, by studying an actor's definition and rhetoric use of a terms, one can examine what positioning this actor takes in relation to the perception of the relationship between the units and their internal distribution of authority.

In the quote above, the Ministry of Defence's use of the subject 'The Kingdom of Denmark' is equated with the subject 'The Community of the Realm' when phrasing that the Kingdom of Denmark *consists* of the three parts, which as “subsets” collectively *constitute* the Community of the Realm. When reading the Arctic Report, there does not seem to be a definitional difference in the report's use of respectively 'The Kingdom of Denmark', 'The Danish Kingdom', 'The Realm' nor 'The Community of the Realm'. They are in the text used in what seems an arbitrary order, which makes them appear as synonyms of the same *we* that create a collective and holistic *us* within the Realm. Hence, the report manages to create a close connection between both the state and Greenland, but also between the state and the Arctic – through Greenland's status as being Arctic. Laclau and Mouffe would argue that the nodal point in this constallaton is the sovereignty and

¹² TBA: “Kongeriget Danmark består af Danmark, Grønland og Færøerne, der udgør rigsfællesskabet. Kongeriget er dermed centralt placeret i og dækker en væsentlig del af Arktis, hvor dele af Kongerigets befolkning bor. Udviklingen i Arktis er derfor af afgørende betydning for Kongeriget Danmark” (2016: 21).

monopoly of the state, as the report takes for granted that the state is the subject that other actors must adapt to. In an attempt to illustrate this conceptualization in the relation between Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, I have drawn following figure:

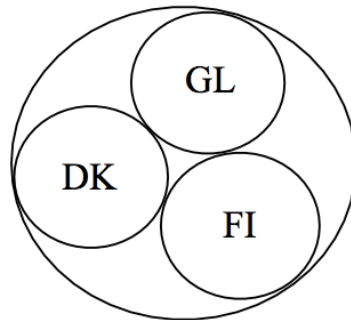


Figure 2: Collected 'we' within the Community of the Realm

The quote's phrasing of "*The Kingdom's part of the Arctic*" is used several times in the introductory chapter to delineate *where* in the Arctic region the Ministry of Defense has its responsibilities. This wording clarifies that Greenland and the Faroe Islands are regarded as the *two* units that as *one* entity is defined as the *Arctic* part of the Kingdom. Through the use of genitive, this entity is placed within a hierarchical relationship with the Kingdom of Denmark (2016: 9-10). Or put in different terms: The Arctic region is phrased to "belong" to *someone* - at least in this context of defense policy, where both Greenland and the Faroe Islands are formally under the responsibility of the state. This phrasing does not create an antagonistic relation within the collected *we* just accounted for. However, it creates a hierarchical relationship between the actors. But even if there is no *them* to detect so far in the story about *we*, the discourse production has still proven to be relational.

Does one take another look at the quote, the phrasing "*...where parts of the Kingdom's population live*" indicates that the individual populations of the three units of the Kingdom are also perceived as an entity in the report. Danes, Greenlanders and the Faroese are thus not referred to as independent nations, but as a unified population within the Kingdom. Hence, in the report's definition of the Kingdom of Denmark, ethnicity and sense of belonging are not concepts explicitly linked to the cohesiveness the Kingdom consists of. The collective *we*'s status as *being* Arctic is

thus not explicitly articulated to be linked to the “Arcticness” of neither Greenland nor the Faroe Islands.

However, in the final sentence, the quote “... *the development in the Arctic is therefore of great importance to the Kingdom of Denmark*” indicates a positioning in relation to other *actors* who have a place in the Arctic. These potential *Others* - which appear implicitly in the quote as a result of the Kingdom of Denmark only covering *a significant part* of the Arctic and thus not its total - are not explicitly described as an external threat, but they play a role in relation to the need to make it clear that the development in the Arctic is of great importance for the Kingdom of Denmark and thus a priority area.

The Ministry of Defense thus defines Denmark as a dominant Arctic state that with a central location in the region and as an influential player in the predicted development in the Arctic. But the us-and-them relationship draws on a state-logic, where Greenland and the Faroe Islands become part of the entity, the state constitutes, where the Kingdom's citizens form just *one* population. A constellation that does not make much room for Greenland to demonstrate its self-government or for Greenlanders to act independently.

4.1.2 *Is there an Other within the Realm?*

The lack of focus on the three nations within the realm is also evident in the Arctic Report's description of the background of its analysis work:

“Climate change is causing major changes in the Arctic that are changing the requirements for the Ministry of Defence's task solution in the area. Global climate change has a number of consequences in the Arctic area. For example, the temperature increase means that sea ice and ice cap are melting, which i.a. means that it is now possible to gain access to areas of the sea and land in the Arctic which have been inaccessible until now. Climate change also has a number of other consequences that affect the fish and mammals in the area. In addition to a the negative consequences, this development entails a number of opportunities in the Arctic area for the extraction of natural resources, for fishing and for tourism. Among other things, this is expected to lead to an increase in marine and air traffic in the Arctic regions, just as the northern shipping routes from Europe and North America to Asia to a greater extent will be periodically open for commercial sailing - and will thus constitute an alternative to the

significantly longer route via Suez and Panama. Finally, increased research activity is expected in the Arctic regions” (2016: 21).¹³

Although the quote only constitutes the first paragraph of the report’s background, the text serves as good example of how the Ministry of Defense perceives the framework of its task solving in the region. I have deliberately chosen to include the quote in its entire length to give the reader the opportunity to get a sense of the structure of the text and thus also how the Ministry of Defense ranks the developments that are expected to have an impact in the Arctic: Climate change seems to be the most present, but then it moves on to defining the consequences within positive and negative categories. Even if the quote primarily focuses on what consequences climate change will have for the Danish Armed Forces’ task solution, it is also mentioned that the development will have consequences both for the environment and the fish and mammals of the area. However, there is no explicit involvement of the populations living in the region. Neither is it specified *who* the opportunities for extraction of natural resources, fishing freedom and tourism are expected to benefit. Or put in different terms: The connection between the listed climate changes, the Danish Armed Forces’ role and tasks, and the people who live in the Arctic region is out of focus.

The point of highlighting this is not to argue that the Danish Armed Forces are completely indifferent to the people of the Arctic. On the contrary, one may read the quote as an example of the Danish Defence’s functional description being so embedded around a discursive nodal point that it would be considered a pleonasm to point out *who* the Danish Defense is present in the region for. Ergo, the logic of the existing discourse leads to an implicit focus on the well-being of the population groups, as it is self-evident that the Danish Armed Forces are in the region to protect *its* population no matter *who they* are.

¹³ TBA: “Klimaforandringerne medfører store forandringer i Arktis, som ændrer kravene til Forsvarsministeriets opgaveløsning i området. De globale klimaforandringer har en række konsekvenser i det arktiske område. Fx betyder temperaturstigningerne, at der sker afsmeltning af havis og indlandsis, hvilket bl.a. bevirker, at det nu er muligt at få adgang til havområder og landområder i Arktis, som hidtil har været utilgængelige. Klimaforandringerne har endvidere en række andre konsekvenser, herunder for fisk og pattedyr i området. Udover en række negative konsekvenser medfører denne udvikling en række muligheder i det arktiske område, herunder for udvinding af naturressourcer, for fiskeri og for turisme. Dette forventes blandt andet at medføre en stigende skibs- og flytrafik i de arktiske egne, ligesom de nordlige skibsruter fra Europa og Nordamerika til Asien i tiltagende omfang periodevis vil være åbne for kommerciel sejlads – og vil dermed kunne udgøre et alternativ til den væsentligt længere rute via Suez og Panama. Endelig forventes der en øget forskningsmæssig aktivitet i de arktiske egne” (2016: 21).

The primary reason for digging into the lack of focus on the Arctic peoples is thus to emphasize that the Danish authorities' narrative regarding the role of the Danish Defence may be read as an institutionalized discourse, where consideration for the Arctic populations is an incorporated part of the fact that *they* are the responsibility of the state. This becomes another self-evident "truth" that circles around a similar nodal point that constitutes the DNA of the Armed Forces. Hence, the spectrum of values is communicated implicitly, which, without further reference, resonates with the precious quote "... - *to protect what we hold dear*" (Rømeling 2021). This undefined *what* may serve as a *floating signifier* on the edge of *dislocation*, which serve as a suitable time for rearticulating meaning through e.g. rhetorically played sovereignty games.

A counterargument could be that Ministry of Defense narrating of an *us* is difficult to question or rearticulate. Both because it is produced implicitly, but also because the demonstration of authority draws on the basis of a task description that, in the worst case, constitutes offensive fight against external threats. A scenario that may stabilize the collective *we* within the Kingdom - internal differences subordinated – due to the need of protection to survive. If so, however, one may argue that this collective *we* will only last as long as an antagonistic Other - in the form of an external threat - functions as a reminder of the "things" both Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – the *we/Self* - may agree is worth holding dear or to fight for.

4.1.3 The sovereignty task – the most important one! But to whom?

Taking care of defense and security policy is defined in the Danish constitution as a state matter that cannot be taken over by Greenland or the Faroe Islands within the current legal framework (Danish Constitution 1953). Defence-related issues in the Arctic parts of the Kingdom are therefore the responsibility of the Danish Ministry of Defence (The Danish Ministry of Defence 2022). The Danish Defence thus describes itself as "... *the defence of the entire Community of the Realm*"¹⁴ that solves all the state's defence-related tasks (Forsvaret.dk 2022a). If the Defence Command¹⁵ were asked to define the most important function of the Danish Armed Forces, the answer would probably be the sovereignty task, even though the tasks that follow the concrete exercise of sovereignty are manifold. If you do a quick Google-search and visit the official website of the Danish Defence, it is on the front page described how: "*The Danish Defence asserts the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark in the entire Community of the Realm. The Joint Arctic Command has*

¹⁴ TBA: "... *hele rigsfællesskabets forsvar*" (forsvaret.dk 2022a)

¹⁵ The Defence Command = Forsvarskommandoen

responsibility for an area from the Faroe Islands in the east to the waters around Greenland in the north and west. The tasks include military defence, but the Danish Armed Forces also support with a wide range of tasks of a more civilian kind ...” (Forsvaret.dk 2022b).¹⁶ The Joint Arctic Command is thus considered *joint* and *Arctic* as it is a joint operational territorial command comprised of personnel from all services in the Danish Armed Forces that also operate in the Faroe Islands (ibid). As we formalized within common sense practice.

In the Arctic region, the Danish Armed Forces are thus in charge of primarily two types of tasks, where the most important task is defined as the assertion of Denmark's sovereignty in the entire Community of the Realm. In addition, the Danish Armed Forces function as coastguard by agreement with Naalakkersuisut. This means that the Danish Defence is responsible for SAR tasks, environmental protection, fisheries inspection and sea surveying (The Ministry of Defence 2016: 40). The coastguard function is shared with the Greenlandic authorities who, as a rule of thumb, are responsible for the sea territory within 3 nautical-miles from the coast. In reality, however, these dividing lines are more or less fluid (ibid). In the Arctic Report, the Ministry of Defense describes its task portfolio as follows:

“The tasks of the Royal Danish Armed Forces are laid down in the Defense Act. In § 2, section 2 of the law it is stated that the Danish Defense aims to assert Denmark's sovereignty and ensure the country's continued existence and integrity. This applies in the entire Kingdom, including Greenland and the Faroe Islands. In order exercise the assertion of sovereignty throughout the Kingdom, as prescribed by law, a necessary presence and surveillance of the territory is required” (Ministry of Defense 2016: 42).¹⁷

As the quote indicates, there is in the legal text and the comments thereto no notice of or distinction between the different territories of the Danish Kingdom, which means that the sovereignty task

¹⁶ TBA: “Forsvaret hævder kongeriget Danmarks suverænitet i hele Rigsfællesskabet. Arktisk Kommando har ansvaret for et område fra Færøerne i øst til farvandene omkring Grønland i nord og vest. Opgaverne omfatter det militære forsvar, men Forsvaret støtter også med en lang række opgaver af mere civil karakter ...” (Forsvaret 2022b).”

¹⁷ TBA: “Forsvarets opgaver er fastlagt i forsvarsloven. Af lovens § 2, nr. 2 fremgår, at Forsvaret ... har til formål at hævde Danmarks suverænitet og sikre landets fortsatte eksistens og integritet. Dette er gældende i hele Kongeriget, herunder Grønland og Færøerne. For at udføre denne suverænitetshævdelse i hele Kongeriget, som loven foreskriver, forudsættes en fornøden tilstedeværelse og overvågning af territoriet” (Forsvarsministeriet 2016: 42).

applies to the same extent in relation to both Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands (2016: 55). The report thus explicitly defines the Arctic parts of the Danish Kingdom as Danish land territory, which through the report's later use of the formulation "in the nature of the matter" (2016: 56) is described to also include the Greenlandic and Faroese landmasses. There does, in other words, not seem to be a difference between referring to Greenland as "part of Denmark's borders" or as delimited "Greenlandic territory".

In general, the task of sovereignty is solved through a physical presence on the Kingdom's territory and through monitoring with an aim of recognizing violations of the territory or the use of force if necessary (2016: 56). More precisely, it is described in § 2, no. 2 of the Defense Act, that the Danish Defence is an important security policy tool, which aims to ensure the continued existence and integrity of the country (2016: X). By *the country* is meant Denmark, even if the operative task solution is carried out on Greenlandic territory. By "violations of the territory" is thus a potential threat created in relation to external Others who might challenge Denmark's position as a sovereign, Arctic state. Here, the Danish Defence narrates itself and its functions through an us-and-them storytelling with international hierarchy as the nodal point. From this perspective, the internal dynamics of the Kingdom do not seem to have strategic significance, and the Arctic Strategy does not relate to the fact that Greenland itself might pose a threat to the sovereignty of the Danish Kingdom if Greenland through means of sovereignty games dislocate the discourse that narrates collected *we*.

Section 4 of the Defence Act specifically states that "*The Defense must be able to detect and reject violations of Danish sovereignty and carry out official duties*" (Ministry of Defence 2016: x). If you read the entire Arctic Report, the concept of sovereignty is only used in relation to Denmark or the Kingdom. Despite the fact that the terminology 'state', 'country', 'nation' is used more or less loosely in the report, the combination of 'Greenland' and 'sovereignty' is not seen used in any sentence structure. In other words, sovereignty is by definition Danish, and the function of Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the sovereignty equation is the responsibility of the Danish authorities. From a Greenlandic perspective, one could question whether the Defence Act's dictation of defence force to ensure the continued existence and integrity of the Danish state is at odds with Greenland's desire for increased independence. Ironically, the Danish Defence's desire to avoid violations within the Kingdom's territory from the outside world could possibly be perceived as an internal violation of Greenland's self-governing territory. It thus becomes clear that a Danish

goal of maintaining Danish sovereignty can be perceived as a threat to Greenlandic autonomy due to the lack of recognition that it is not a nodal point – or the “nature of the matter” if one will – that Danish sovereignty must be valid on Greenlandic land. The Ministry of Defence's attempt to unify the Kingdom subordinate. This is where the whole idea of the sovereignty game comes into play, as Greenland, by loudly voicing dissatisfaction or by politically miming sovereignty, gets the opportunity to position itself as a more sovereign actor than the Arctic Report has shown to give room for. Until now, the analysis has demonstrated how a pure focus on the state sovereignty in the context of defence policy may only be maintained as long as both the Kingdom of Denmark and all of the units within the Community of the Realm are defined as one actor with one unified national sovereignty.

4.1.4 *Who is equal before the law(s)?*

In the postcolonial theory, Arctic researchers have shed light on how narratives within constitutional understandings affect the relationship between Greenland and Denmark (Gad 2020; Thisted & Gremaud 2021). Here, it is argued how the Self-Government Act from 2009 stages two form of equality between Denmark and Greenland in the preamble of the law, which goes as follows:

“WE, MARGRETHE THE SECOND, by God's Grace Queen of Denmark, hereby announce that: The Danish Parliament has passed the following Act, which We have ratified by giving Our assent: Recognising that the people of Greenland is a people pursuant to international law with the right of self-determination, the Act is based on a wish to foster equality and mutual respect in the partnership between Denmark and Greenland. Accordingly, the Act is based on an agreement between Naalakkersuisut [Greenland Government] and the Danish Government as equal partners” (Naalakkersuisut 2009).¹⁸

The law explicitly recognizes that the people of Greenland is a people with the right of self-determination in accordance with international law, emphasized by the fact that the act is based on an agreement between Naalakkersuisut and the Government of Denmark as *equal* partners. Still, in

¹⁸ Unofficial translation of the official Danish preamble: *“VI MARGRETHE DEN ANDEN, af Guds Nåde Danmarks Dronning, gør vitterligt: Folketinget har vedtaget og Vi ved Vort samtykke stadfæstet følgende lov: I erkendelse af, at det grønlandske folk er et folk i henhold til folkeretten med ret til selvbestemmelse, bygger loven på et ønske om at fremme ligeværdighed og gensidig respekt i partnerskabet mellem Danmark og Grønland. Loven bygger i overensstemmelse hermed på en overenskomst mellem Naalakkersuisut og den danske regering som ligeværdige parter”* (Selvstyrelsen 2009).

these two sentences of the act, “*the preamble postponed equality, intimating the motivation for the act to be ‘a wish to foster equality and mutual respect in the partnership between Denmark and Greenland’ ... Formally, then, the Danish and Greenlandic peoples are presently equal as eligible for sovereignty; however, equality as sovereign is postponed for the future*” (Gad 2020: 35).

In a political context, Danish politicians have a hard time figuring out how to balance their rejection of hierarchy whenever mentioning the Community of the Realm while also explaining what equality among unequal partners may specifically mean. Most Greenlandic politicians remain committed to equality as *sovereignty*, so what organizes the party system is generally speaking how fast one wants to progress with formal sovereignty (ibid: 36).

In the Arctic Report, it is described how the Danish Conscription Act¹⁹ states how all Danish men are subject to conscription and are therefore conscripted. In principle, this also includes the Greenlandic and the Faroese people as both nations define as Danish citizens are thus *equal* before constitutional formalities (Danish Constitution 1953). However, the Arctic Report explains how the Conscription Act dictates that only those with residency in Denmark are required to show up for session processes²⁰ (ibid: 70-71). Introducing conscription for Greenlanders living in Greenland will thus require a change of law, which means that – despite the fact that the report has defined the three nations of the Community of the Realm as the Kingdom’s population (ibid: 21) – there is still a difference in which obligations and responsibilities the individual Danish citizen has towards the Danish state. However, the way in which the Danish Ministry of Defence distinguishes between the ones who need to serve their duty in the military and the ones who do not is hypothetically not determined on basis of neither ethnic nor cultural roots or background. Instead, one’s place of residency becomes decisive of one’s fate. This pragmatic guideline may undermine the potential claim that one has to be Danish to join the army. Or vice versa: That one has to be either Greenlandic or Faroese to definitively avoid it. Following this logic, the idea that the Kingdom constitutes an entity among its population may live on as the rules regarding conscription is not formally based on cultural or historical considerations, but instead determined on circumstances that are possible to formalize – such as one’s home address. In practice, however, distortions within the conscription processes probably exist if it results in only a small number of Greenlanders end up joining the Army. From a Greenlandic perspective, the selection criteria may be hard to define as

¹⁹ Conscription Act = Værnepligtsloven

²⁰ Session processes = sessionsbehandling/Forsvarets Dag

completely neutral as permanent residence in Denmark has strong Danish connection. A circumstance that emphasizes that the Danish Defence is a Danish authority that primarily employ and train Danish soldiers to fight for Danish interest.

In an attempt to deal with exactly his issue, the conclusion of the Arctic Report lists “*further initiatives for the involvement of Greenlandic citizens*”²¹ as one of its recommendation on its list of topics and capacity areas that require closer analysis (2016: 248). This as a result of a separate analysis done by a sub-working group while having produced a separate report on how there might be remaining potential for the employment and involvement of the Greenlandic population in defence and emergency tasks in Greenland (The Ministry of Defence 2016, appendix UIAP). As part of its results, the UIAP report argues how young Greenlanders generally perceive the Danish Defence as “... *something exotic and distant with no Greenlandic ownership*” (ibid: 80).²² In one of its sections, the report describes how one of the surprising findings has been the realization that there is practically no Greenlandic participation in relation to the sled patrol Sirius, which to a great extent makes use of traditional Greenlandic skills and know-how. It is therefore found relevant to analyze the possibility of strengthening the recruitment and involvement of Greenlandic society and Greenlanders in this “Greenlandic capacity”²³ (ibid: 68), since:

“The patrol’s modus operandi draws to some extent on traditional Greenlandic methods of transport, navigation and survival in the Arctic area, and can thus be said to contribute to maintaining these methods. Paradoxically, the maintenance of these traditions is not rooted in Greenlandic society, as it is primarily young Danes who man the sled patrol” (ibid: 68).²⁴

Hence, the Arctic Report highlights how the Sirius patrol may have special potential to contribute to a positive narrative about the Danish Armed Forces' tasks in Greenland by relating it to a discourse of greenlandicness that draws on notions of traditional ways of Inuit life. In some way, the report presents the realization as a solution to creating *ownership* in the relation between the Greenland and the Danish Defence, but also in the re-creation of a connection between Greenland and traditional indigeneity. By highlighting that the maintenance of old Inuit tradition *paradoxically* is

²¹ TBA: “Yderligere initiativer til involvering af grønlandske borgere” (2016: 80).

²² TBA: “... noget eksotisk og fjernt, som ikke har et grønlandsk ejerskab” (2016: 80).

²³ TBA: “Grønlandske kapacitet” (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2016, bilag UIAP: 68).

²⁴ TBA: “Patruljens modus operandi trækker i nogen grad på oprindelige grønlandske metoder til transport, navigation og overlevelse i det arktiske område, og kan således siges at medvirke til at vedligeholde disse metoder. Paradoksalt nok forankres vedligeholdelsen af disse traditioner ikke i det grønlandske samfund, da det primært er unge danskere, der bemander slædepatruljen” (The Danish Ministry of Defence 2016, bilag UIAP: 68).

in the hands of the Danish Defence, the Ministry of Danish Defence manages to narrate itself as the superior subject that has the power and ability to practice culture. Furthermore, the narratives draw on a nodal point that relate a traditional Greenland to a modern Greenland's current modus operandi even though Greenlandic identity discourse – as the analysis will show – has more facets than that. Furthermore, in order to strengthen identification and closeness in the relationship between Greenland and the Danish Armed Forces, the report also suggests that careful consideration should be given to whether the uniform of the Danish Defence should have both the Danish flag and Greenlandic symbol sewn onto it:

“... it should be considered carefully whether the uniform may have both the Danish flag and a Greenlandic symbol sewn on. This could create ownership and visibility towards Greenlandic involvement and give the young people a visible profile to show their peers in Greenland ... Such a marking will possibly mean that other young Greenlanders will perceive the Greenlandic soldiers as role models and exponents of the strengthened Greenlandic involvement...”

(Ministry of Defence 2016, appendix UIAP: 80).²⁵

In contrast to the Arctic Report's overall description of its sovereignty task, this quote indicates two things: First, that the analysis of UIAP has shown there are cracks in the overall understanding of the Danish Defence's role in Greenland seen from a Greenlandic perspective, and that the collected *we* within the Kingdom might not be as unified as imagined or hoped for. Second, the nodal point that indicated the holistic *us* within the Realm in the introduction turns out to be contested by the lack of ownership. Even though the discourse will seek to create *essentialism* by attempting to remove ambiguity the production of meaning by referring to common values, this only until it is ultimately dissolved in favor of another dominant view. The leads us on to dislocation of the existing discourse that now has to search for new meaning. The Danish solution to this problem is Greenlandic symbolism as the tool chosen to make the Danish Defence appear less exotic and to create a stronger ownership with the Greenlandic society. This in an attempt to structure and stabilize the a new collective *we*. I will let that be the last for now, since the following sub-analysis

²⁵ Translated by author: “... [det] bør ... overvejes nøje, om uniformen kan have påsyet både dansk flag og grønlandsk symbol. Dette ville kunne skabe ejerskab og synlighed overfor den grønlandske involvering og give de unge en synlig profil overfor deres jævnaldrende i Grønland ... En sådan afmærkning vil muligvis betyde, at andre unge grønlandere vil betragte de grønlandske soldater som rollemodeller og eksponenter for den styrkede grønlandske involvering i Forsvarets opgaveløsning i Arktis” (The Danish Ministry of Defence, bilag UIAP: 80).

will pick up on the thematic in my analysis of the sovereignty games that Greenland play in the discussions on Greenlandic symbolism in the Danish Defence

4.1.5 Summery

The document analysis of the Arctic Report from 2016 has given insight into some of the nodal points that have created homogenic discursive articulations that construct the identity of the Danish Defence within the policy chosen as the empirical study. The report - which at first glance may appear more or less neutral in its presentation of its task solving due to stylistic neutrality and references to law text - has shown to contain sections that both directly and indirectly inscribe the Danish Armed Forces' core set of values and worldview into a discourse that largely places Greenland in a hierarchical relationship in the Kingdom of Denmark. State sovereignty is in focus, and Greenland's role and function in that context is not touched upon per se, but instead placed in an integrated position in the Community of the Realm as a unit synonymous with the two consisting nations within the same entity. From this perspective, the dominating discourse has not had to compete for hegemony, as Greenland's say on the matter will not show in official Danish policy. At least not until findings from the UIAP has indicated that there are cracks in the storytelling. As a clear takeaway is the term *ownership*, which is the Ministry of Defence's choice of word when describing the feeling of Otherness felt by the Greenlandic population when describing their relation to the Danish Defence. This dislocation of the existing discourse upon of for new meaning and new storytellings of the role of the Danish Defence in the Arctic.

4.2 Sub-analysis: Sovereignty negotiation in practice: who plays the game?

"But it will be quiet again for long, long minutes in this world's largest and most beautiful National park. It is Danish, but has so little to do with Denmark. It is Greenlandic, but not a single Greenlander lives there. It is blasphemy to talk about ownership. This magnificent country belongs only to oneself" (Bjerre 1999: 196).²⁶

²⁶ TBA: "Men det bliver stille igen i lange, lange minutter i denne verdens største og smukkeste Nationalpark. Den er dansk, men har så lidt med Danmark at gøre. Den er grønlandsk, men der bor ikke en eneste grønlander. Det er blasfemi at tale om ejerforhold. Dette prægtige land tilhører kun sig selv" (Bjerre 1999: X).

The quote above originates from the Danish travel journalist Jørgen Bjerre's description of Sirius; Denmark's sled patrol and military presence, whose task is to monitor and enforce sovereignty in the national park in Northeast Greenland (Arctic Command 2022). In my poor attempt to lyrically encapsulate a similar message, the quote resonates with the revelation I have often made myself on my flights over the Greenlandic mountains: That it is very likely pointless to try to claim one's rights in a country whose only stable and continuous example of the exercise of power very well is to be found in the superiority of its nature. Nevertheless, ownership and belonging are often – as the previous document analysis has also shown - core concepts of the discussion about the Danish-Greenlandic relationship (Rastad 2008, Thisted & Gremaud; Gad 2017). Hence, in the following sub-analysis, will delve deeper into these sovereignty negotiations by looking at my chosen speech acts. As accounted for in section 3, they serve as “responses” to some of the defence policy initiatives Denmark has promoted in the 5 years.

4.2.1 *Who has the responsibility to protect?*

On 1 February 2017, and with reference to the recommendations in the Ministry of Defence's Arctic Report, the Danish People's Party (DPP)²⁷ presented a proposal for parliamentary resolution on equality between all parts of Community of the Realm with regard to serving military service (Retsinformation 2017). As comments in the proposal, great emphasis was placed on the fact that the current legislation on Danish conscription is considered outdated, as it originates from one of the earliest conscription laws dating back to 1849 (ibid). Seen in the light of the development that Greenlandic and Faroese societies have undergone since then, DPP believes that it is only *natural* to look at whether it still *makes sense* that Greenlandic and Faroese men are exempted from conscription (ibid). The party bases this nodal point on the fact that *they* are three equal parts in Community of the Realm, and that the citizens should therefore be treated equally with regard to the *possibility* of being able to do military service. In the proposal, they specifically refer to the Greenlandic Self-Government Commission²⁸, which in April 2003 submitted a report on self-government in Greenland, when stating how:

²⁷ Danish People's Party (DPP) = Dansk Folkeparti (DF)

²⁸ Self-Government Commission = Grønlands Selvstyrekommision: The Home Rule Government of Greenland decided at the turn of the year 1999-2000 to set up a commission on self-government. The background was the development that had taken place since home rule was introduced in 1979, where more and more areas had been taken over, at the same time as Greenland's relationship with the international world was changing. The Commission submitted its report on 11 April 2003, in which it proposed a "Partnership Treaty between Greenland and Denmark on Greenland's right to self-determination" to signal that - also in the future - a good and close relationship in the Community of the Realm was desired, and that this relationship should be based on the perception of equal parties who mutually respect each other (Retsinformation 2003: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ft/20031SS00003>)

"The Commission ... wrote that a combination of conscription and civil social duty should be introduced... for the Greenlandic youth, as there is a growing desire among the Greenlandic youth to help take personal responsibility for the society's future. At the same time, the Commission believed that if Greenland... wants to enter into a real partnership with Denmark, the Greenlandic people cannot avoid taking share of the responsibility and making their contribution to taking care of their country by introducing conscription and making efforts in the field of coast guarding, patrolling in the national park and civil preparedness" (Retsinformation 2016).²⁹

In the proposal, the DPP presents a political narrative that stems from a discourse that emphasizes that the only way to take real responsibility for one's country is by contributing to its conventional defence. In order to become a *real* part of the collective *we* of the Community of the Realm to enter into an *equal* partnership with Denmark, the Greenlanders must contribute by taking part in taking care of their country. In the process, the DPP implicitly articulates an us-and-them discourse by creating two categories represented respectively the Danes who dutifully assume their responsibilities, and the Greenlanders who escape due to outdated legislation. If you put this way of thinking to the extreme, the DPP articulates an underlying threat that makes equality between Denmark and Greenland impossible, as long as the Greenlanders are exempt from making their contribution to the defence of Greenland.

If one jumps back in time to study what the Self-Government Commission's announced in 2003, the Commission's recommendation regarding conscription is formulated as follows by the then chairman, Jakob Janussen: *"Why should it be young men from Jutland and the islands who are currently manning the surveillance vessels on naval station Grønnedal? As a sailing nation, I find it obvious that young Greenlanders are sessioned for the defence of Greenland and eventually also replace the Danes in the Sirius sled patrol ... We imagine that a small amount of youngsters from e*

²⁹ TBA: *"Kommissionen skrev således, at der bør indføres en kombination af en værnepligt og en civil samfundspligt ... for den grønlandske ungdom, idet der i den grønlandske ungdom er et voksende ønske om at være med til at tage et personligt ansvar for samfundets fremtid. Samtidig mente kommissionen, at hvis Grønland vil indgå i et reelt partnerskab med Danmark, kommer det grønlandske folk ikke uden om at tage et medansvar og yde sit bidrag til at tage vare på sit land ved at indføre værnepligt og yde en indsats inden for kystbevogtning, patruljering i nationalparken og civilt beredskab" (Retsinformation 2016).*

each generation will be called up for military service in the future, while others do community service in a self-governing Greenland” (Ritzau 2003).³⁰

Although the DPP and Jakob Janussen clearly agree that the Greenlandic youth in a self-governing Greenland must contribute to the defence of Greenland, the starting points for their arguments are more or less counter-narratives and do not draw upon the same nodal point. Where the DPP draws on a discourse that emphasizes the fact that the Greenlanders do not live up to their responsibilities, the chairman of the Self-Government Commission narrates how increased conscription in Greenland could to a replacement of Danish soldiers. He is thus emphasizing a discourse that does not highlight an equal partnership between Denmark and Greenland as Greenland’s preferred future. Instead, he plays a sovereignty games by implicitly arguing for Greenlandic independence when emphasizing how defence tasks in Greenland should optimally be carried out solely by Greenlanders. In contrast to the collective *we* or *us* promoted by the PBB as Greenland’s only way to increased equality, the Self-Government Commission draws on a discourse that establishes an us-and-them narrative where the goal is not to fight shoulder to shoulder with Denmark, but in instead making the Danish Defence in Greenland redundant. Within the process, Janussen draw on characteristics in the Greenlandic society that creates a Greenlandic identity discourse that highlights the fact the Greenland, as a sailing nation, of course has the ability to take of Greenlandic waters themselves. Maybe it even requires a Greenlander to fulfill such a task satisfyingly.

4.2.2 To be or not to be ... peaceful?

Going back to focusing on DFF’s proposal from 2017, the Greenlandic MPs were asked by a Greenlandic newspaper to comment on the proposal ahead of the parliamentary debate. The then MP Aleqa Hammond (independent member) drew on the same independence discourse as did Jakob Janussen when arguing that an extension of conscription only make sense if it is for Greenland’s own sake: *“If you want to increase the possibility of conscription, I am fine with it, if it happens to increase participation at the military bases in Greenland, as well as in the assertion of sovereignty in Greenlandic waters ... A big no to Greenlandic soldiers taking part in military actions to defend*

³⁰ TBA: *”Hvorfor skal det være unge mænd fra Jylland og øerne, der i øjeblikket bemander overvågningsfartøjerne på flådestation Grønnedal? Som sejlernation finder jeg det oplagt, at unge grønlandere indkaldes til forsvaret af Grønland og på sigt også erstatter danskerne i slædepatruljen Sirius ... Vi forestiller os, at en lille del af en ungdomsårgang fremover indkaldes til militærtjeneste mens andre gør samfundstjeneste i et selvstyrende Grønland”* (Ritzau 2003).

Denmark” (Sørensen 2017).³¹ According to Hammond, Greenland’s contribution to conscription should thus only be to strengthen Greenland’s defence and to mark Greenland’s participation in the sovereignty task in the Arctic. An extended conscription must thus have the sole purpose of strengthening the defence of Greenland and not the Danish Armed Forces in general. Here, Hammond creates an antagonistic relation to the Danish Defence, as she implicitly implies how Greenlandic participation in Danish defence tasks does not fit the overall nodal point that calls for Greenland as an independent actor. Hence, the collective *we* articulated in the Arctic Report is nowhere to be seen in her argumentation. Instead, Hommonds plays a clever sovereignty game by rhetorically performing authority when claiming to be in a position where Greenland should be able to pick and choose between defence tasks of interest if they were to vote yes to the proposal.

MP Aaja Chemnits Larsen (IA)³², however, was not as positive towards the proposal:

“It does not benefit Greenland to force Greenlanders into the Danish Armed Forces. After all, we are in Greenland not concerned with going to war. And we really want Greenland to be a peaceful place. Therefore, I also think that the focus must be on the tasks that are in Greenland and the skills we need in Greenland ... Today it is only the Danish Parliament's decision whether the Danish Armed Forces participate in military operations, while Inatisisartut ... will not be involved in the decision... If one wanted Greenland to join war, I think it is really important that all our elected officials have the opportunity to be involved” (ibid).³³

These points turn the DPP argument about wanting to take account of Greenland's opportunity to enter into an equal relationship with Denmark by giving all citizens equal opportunities to join the Danish Defence upside down. Instead, Chemnitz counter-narrates the extended conscription as a compulsion imposed on the Greenlandic people since the Greenlandic parliament has no authority in relation to political processes regarding the Danish Defence. Furthermore, Chemnitz emphasizes

³¹ TBA: *“Hvis man vil øge muligheden for værnepligt, så har jeg det fint med det, hvis det sker for at øge deltagelsen på militærbaserne i Grønland, såvel som i suverænitethåndhævelsen i de grønlandske farvande ... Blankt nej til at grønlandske soldater deltager i militære aktioner for at forsvare Danmark”* (Sørensen 2017).

³² IA = Inuit Ataqatigiit = democratic-socialist party (ia.gl/da/)

³³ TBA: *“Det kommer ikke Grønland til gode at tvinge grønlænderene i Forsvaret. I Grønland er vi jo ikke optaget af at gå i krig. Og vi vil jo rigtig gerne have, at Grønland er et fredeligt sted. Derfor synes jeg også, at fokus skal være på det opgaver, som er i Grønland og de kompetencer, vi har behov for i Grønland ... Det er i dag alene Folketingets beslutning, om Forsvaret deltager i militære operationer, mens Inatisisartut ... ikke bliver medinddraget i beslutningen ... Hvis man ønskede, at Grønland skulle gå med i krig, så synes jeg, at det er rigtig vigtigt, at alle vores folkevalgte har mulighed for at blive inddraget”* (Sørensen 2017).

how focus should be on Greenland's future, which should not be characterized by neither war nor contributions to Danish participation in military operations.

Although the two MPs do not fully agree on whether or not conscription in Greenland would be advantageous, both politicians speak into a collective, Greenlandic *we* created by dislocation from the conflictual discourse Danish Defence - and thus Denmark - represents. Especially, Chemnitz speaks into an identity discourse that define the Greenlanders as a peaceful people who do not want to contribute to increased militarization nor give up Greenlandic authority by agreeing to join Danish military missions dictated by the Danish Parliament. Hammond's no to Greenlandic contributions to Danish defence tasks puts the antagonistic relationship between Greenland and Denmark at the forefront and emphasizes that the two countries' interests are not naturally compatible.

In continuation of the MPs' statements, the issue was also discussed during a debate on defence and security policy in Inatsisartut in 2017. There were also discursive struggles to be found here, when Justus Hansen (D)³⁴ argued that conscription will give Greenland the opportunity to participate in international operations and thus contribute to world peace: *"We must contribute. With this in mind,, it is necessary to introduce some form of conscription, so that we constantly have the opportunity to contribute to, for example, peacekeeping operations and the like ... As an independent state, we have an obligation to contribute to world peace"* (Turnowsky 2017a).³⁵ Just like DPP, Hansen relates his argument to a discourse that frames taking responsibility within conventual military practice as a positive future for Greenland. However, DPP and Hansen differ in whether the goal is for an equal partnership with Denmark or whether it is practice along the way to Greenlandic statehood. However, articulating an interest in increased participation in defence tasks worldwide is a way to play mimic sovereignty through independent participation within the international arena, which also frames Greenland as an independent actor within defence practice.

The counterargument came from Ane Hansen (IA), who emphasized that: *"We have always been a peaceful nation, and our role in the world community should be to spread the message of peace. We*

³⁴ Demokraatit = social-liberal party (demokraatit.gl)

³⁵ TBA: *"Vi skal bidrage. På den baggrund er det nødvendigt at indføre en form for værnepligt, så vi konstant har mulighed for at kunne bidrage til eksempelvis fredsbevarende operationer og lignende ... Som selvstændig stat har vi en forpligtelse til at bidrage til verdensfreden"* (Turnowsky 2017a)

must not participate in wars” (ibid). Hansen has her focus elsewhere in her storytelling of Greenland as a peaceful place whose role should be different from everyone else’s by on the international scene. Here, she draws on a discourse that corresponds with the West's understanding of the Arctic and the Arctic populations, where romantic images of nature and stereotypes play a significant role. To a certain extent, these perspectives are thus mimed by the Arctic people themselves who contrast the peaceful and traditional with the brutal and modern represented by the colonial power (Ryall et al 2010). However, by drawing on the uniqueness of Greenland’s position and reputation, Hansen also manage to play a sovereignty game that draws on the authority it has to be the one with no enemies. She also positions Greenland in an antagonistic relation to Denmark, since the DPP’s proposal is framed as Denmark’s attempt to take the peace and quiet from Greenland.

Last, but not least, Jens Erik-Kierkegaard (S)³⁶ argued how Greenland: *“As an independent nation, we must protect and monitor our borders, so I think we must have conscription of some sort ... If we expect that others protect our country, then we must also contribute to the international tasks ... It could also be a way to prepare ourselves for independence”* (ibid).³⁷ Here, Erik-Kierkegaard somewhat frames an external threat as the driving force for wanting to participate in the Danish Defence. However, the comment does not fall within an antagonistic relation to Denmark. Instead, he frames Greenland’s future as problematic if the practice for independence does not include also military exercises. This discourse falls within a traditional either/or sovereignty thinking: If you want to keep your territory, you must be able to protect it.

But before these - to a certain extent competing narratives within Greenlandic identity discourse that all favor Greenlandic independence - got the chance to compete for hegemony when the DPP proposal was finally discussed during a parliamentary debate in April 2017, it was rejected by the Danish Parliament. The then Minister of Defence Claus Hjort Frederiksen’s announced how: *“There is no desire from the Home-Rule government of the Faroe Islands and in the Self-Government of Greenland to introduce conscription. The government of Denmark respects that. We*

³⁶ S = Siumut = social-democratic party (siumut.gl)

³⁷ TBA: *“Som selvstændig nation skal vi jo beskytte og overvåge vores grænser, så jeg tror vi skal have en værnepligt under en eller anden form ... Hvis vi forventer, at andre skal beskytte vores land, så må vi også bidrage til det internationale arbejde ... Det kunne netop være en måde at forberede sig på at stå på egne ben”* (Turnowsky 2017a).

see no reason for it, just as there is no current need for it either” (Hyldal 2020).³⁸ The first sentence of the announcement from the Minister of Defence indicates that the government is respectful and accommodating towards the wishes of the governments of Greenland and the Faroe Islands, which gives certain form of equal decision-making competence. However, this narrative is undermined by second half of the announcement that indicates how the government of Denmark’s decision was also made on a basis of a lack of need for recruitment. Or put in different terms: As long as there is no urgent need from the Danish side, Greenland may very well decide of its own. This may be a reminder that – even if Greenland manage to play sufficient sovereignty games, the Minister of Defence is willing to listen to, it is end the end the interest of Denmark that define Danish defence policy.

4.2.2.1 Greenlandic soldiers in limbo

The political discussions in Greenland regarding a possible amendment of the Conscription Act have shown that Greenland’s relationship with the Armed Forces is characterized by several discourses: Some which highlight the Danish Armed Forces as a Danish institution Greenland is only interested in contributing to through parts of the task solving. Others which see Greenlandic participation as a way to practice statehood and thus also sovereignty.

What remains is the question of how to deal with the Greenlanders who have already served as part of the Danish Armed Forces. One of the latest initiatives regarding this matter received attention on the occasion of the Flag Day³⁹ on 5 September 2021, when MP Aja Chemnitz Larsen wrote an article in Flagmagasinet. Here, she focused on the foundation of Veteran Project Greenland⁴⁰, which was established as an attempt to form networks and efforts targeted at Greenlandic veterans. She begins her post by pointing out how: *“If you had asked people in the street in Greenland five years ago if there are veterans in our country, they would have looked at you with wonder. If you do*

³⁸ TBA: *“Der er i Landsstyret på Færøerne og i Grønlands Selvstyre ikke noget ønske om, at der indføres værnepligt. Det respekterer regeringen. Vi ser ikke grund til det, ligesom der heller ikke er et aktuelt behov for det”* (Hyldal 2020).

³⁹ Flag Day = Flagdag: Every year on 5 September, Danish men and women are recognized and paid tribute to the great effort they have made on behalf of Denmark. Flag Day thus aims to support all those who have fought and worked under Danish military service. Every year, Folk & Sikkerhed publishes Flag magazine, which contains articles and posts from various contributors (www.flagdagen.dk).

⁴⁰ Veteran Project Greenland = Veteranprojekt Grønland (veteranprojekt.dk)

*it today, you will find some people who know veterans, but overall, the veteran area in Greenland is something only a few know about” (Larsen 2021).*⁴¹

The fact that the Danish Armed Forces have not made a huge effort to recruit Greenlandic soldiers until now, this analysis has detected is due to Danish legislation and Greenland’s lack of desire for a change of law. But the fact that there in Greenland has not been a focus on recognizing and taking care of living Greenlandic veterans is more likely due to a lack of tradition within the field in Greenlandic society. Chemnitz thus continues the article by highlighting how:

*“Veterans in Greenland are part of the Danish veteran policy and can use the Veterans’ Centre’s offer of support, advice and treatment, either via online treatment or at a local network psychologist. But there are no specific offers in the Greenlandic healthcare system for veterans. I think the symbolism here is really unfortunate, since the veterans – regardless of the fact that we do not have our own defence – have made a huge effort on behalf of all of us” (ibid).*⁴²

The quote indicates that there is a symbolic problem in the fact that Naalakkersuisut does not recognize its Greenlandic veterans by taking responsibility on an equal footing with the Danish system - even if Greenland itself does not have its own defence. Regardless of the specific need for this, the argument indicates that the Greenlandic soldiers, who have formally fought under Danish flags, are a part of a Greenlandic *we* that should be strengthened. In this process, Denmark serves both as a counter and a mirror image by being, on the one hand, the Other, from which Greenland seeks to differentiate itself. On the other hand, Denmark represents the societal legacy from the old colonial power, which constitutes some of the basic components for the political *raison d’être* to create an independent Greenlandic state that takes care of its soldiers within the same model as Denmark (Gad 2020). Furthermore, the consequences of not establishing a system that can take over for Denmark will be for the Greenlandic soldiers to have a hard time getting fully integrated into the Greenland *we*.

⁴¹ TBA: “Hvis du for fem år siden spurgte folk på gaden i Grønland, om der er veteraner i vores land, ville de kigge uforstående på dig. Gør du det i dag, vil du finde enkelte, som kender veteraner, men samlet set er veteranområdet i Grønland noget kun få har kendskab til” (Larsen 2021).

⁴² TBA: “Veteranerne i Grønland er en del af den danske veteranpolitik og kan bruge Veterancenterets tilbud om støtte, rådgivning og behandling, enten via online behandling eller hos en lokal netværkpsykolog. Men specifikke tilbud i det grønlandske sundhedssystem til veteraner findes der ingen af. Symbolikken heri mener jeg er rigtig ærgerlig, da veteranerne – uanset at vi ikke har vores eget forsvar – har udført en kæmpe indsats på vegne af os alle” (Larsen 2021).

4.2.3 Flag as a symbol of sovereignty

In most European countries, the national flag is something that sways in front of state institutions. In Denmark, the Dannebrog has become part of the traditions of also private life - but it has not always been that way. Dannebrog was originally a warlike symbol, which was reserved for the navy and the Royal House. The story of Dannebrog is thus the story of Denmark's development from autocracy to democracy, but also the story of a Danish identity (Benthien to Altinget 2003). Greenland did not receive the Greenlandic flag Erfalasorput⁴³ as a divine gift from above as Dannebrog in Estonia, but is instead the result of a democratic process - negotiated and voted through in the Landsting in Greenland in 1985 after long deliberations (ibid). Where the design differs from the Nordic cross tradition, the red and white colors ensure the bond with Denmark. However, the most important symbolism of Erfalasorput is the references to the distinctive Greenlandic nature: The circle that breaks the horizontal lines in the flag signals the ascent of the sun over the ice cap (Andersen 2016). In the same way as Dannebrog, Erfalasorput has become a symbol of the Greenlandic people as an independent nation in the Community of the Realm (Summer 2017).

With this review and strong flag connotations in mind, it is perhaps not so surprising that in the context of current defence policy flags also play a role. It has nevertheless not been possible for Denmark and Greenland to agree on which flag the Danish Sirius patrol should keep on the sleds when they slide across the ice in North-Eastern Greenland (Folketinget 2020). In 2020, the then Minister of Defence, Trine Bramsen, proposed that Dannebrog should be joined by Erfalasorput on the sled. She argued for the symbolic value of the change when she emphasized how: *"This is first and foremost about us clearly signaling that we promote safety and security with the Greenlandic colleagues. We do it together and have a shared responsibility"* (Lind 2020).⁴⁴ The then Minister of Danish Defence draws on the holistic *we* presented in the Arctic Report and frames the task-solving as if it was equality shared between Danish and Greenlandic colleagues. This discourse frames Denmark and Greenland as equal partners.

⁴³ Erfalasorput = "our flag" in Greenlandic

⁴⁴ TBA: *"Det her handler først og fremmest om, at vi klart signalerer, at sikkerheden og trygheden løfter vi med de grønlandske kollegaer. Vi løfter det sammen og har et fælles ansvar"* (Lind 2020).

In Greenland, the announcement was initially received positively in Naalakkersuisut, when the then Naalakkersuisoq for Foreign Affairs, Ane Lone Bagger, praised the Danish government for its initiative in a press release: *“If they live up to the intention and the Sirius patrol starts using our flag, it sends a message that the Sirius patrol is also part of the Greenlandic society. I look forward to our youth becoming part of the Sirius Patrol, where they will be able to use our flag”* (The Danish Parliament (2020b)).⁴⁵ In contrast to the Minister of Defence, Bagger – who is otherwise positive towards the minister’s proposal – draws heavily on an us-and-them narrative when phrasing how *they* will need to live up to the intention of using *our* flag, making a clear distinction between who is Danish and who is Greenlandic even though it is not stated explicitly.

However, the initiative was not only received positively in Greenland. While the largest opposition party, IA, shared Naalakkersuisut’s enthusiasm and considered that the use of the Greenlandic flag could also be seen as a signal for greater Greenlandic participation in the assertion of sovereignty, the Chairman of Inatsisartut’s Foreign and Security Policy Committee⁴⁶, Aleqa Hammond (NQ)⁴⁷, saw the proposal as an expression of a Danish “charm offensive” against Greenland, triggered by the need to tie Greenland closer to Denmark at a time when there is major political interest in Greenland and the Arctic from the outside world: *“The Danes’ gratitude to Greenland has never been greater than now, when the eyes of the world are aimed at Greenland. If they had respect for our flag, they would have come up with that proposal a long time ago”* (Hyldal & Brøns 2020).⁴⁸ One could claim that Hammond somewhat frames a narrative that highlights how Denmark is playing sovereignty games with Greenland in order to (re)gain a better relationship now that Greenland is becoming that more interesting to the international world. By turning the offer down, the sovereignty game has been turned around as Hammond claims to have called Denmark’s bluff.

Pele Broberg (PN)⁴⁹ expressed on his social media how Erfalasorput does not belong on either Danish soldiers, Danish military units or Danish equipment and continued by emphasizing how: “...

⁴⁵ TBA: *“Hvis de lever op til hensigten og Sirius-patruljen begynder at anvende vores flag, sender det et budskab om, at Sirius-patruljen også er en del af det grønlandske samfund. Jeg ser frem til at vores unge bliver en del af Sirius-patruljen, hvor de vil kunne anvende vores flag”* (Turnowsky 2020a).

⁴⁶ Foreign and Security Policy Committee = Udenrigs- og Sikkerhedspolitisk Udvalg

⁴⁷ NQ = Nunatta Qitornai = pro Greenlandic independence and decentralization
(da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nunatta_Qitornai)

⁴⁸ TBA: *“Danskernes taknemmelighed til Grønland har aldrig været større end nu, hvor verdens øjne er rettet mod Grønland. Hvis de havde respekt for vores flag, var de kommet med det forslag for længe siden”* (Hyldal & Brøns 2020).

⁴⁹ PN = Partii Naleraq = centrist party (naleraq.gl)

the flag currently only represents the Greenlandic population, but is intended to be the official flag of the Republic of Greenland. Regardless of when this happens, the flag does not belong on Denmark's military, nor do our young people!"(Turnowsky 2020b).⁵⁰ Brogberg brings in antagonism in his description of the Danish Defence as he does not at all recognize the *we* within the Danish policy initiative. On the contrary, his sovereignty game unfolds as a clear rejection of the offer of symbolic sovereignty made by Denmark with the flag initiative. By not wanting the piece offering, the war is ongoing. Furthermore, the clear dismissal a certain distance from the presence of the Danish Defence on Greenlandic territory in general.

The proposal by the Minister of Defence also caused a stir among the Danish parties in the Danish Parliament. In the recurrent discussion on the opportunities and challenges of the Community of the Realm from May 2021, the spokesperson on Greenlandic matters for the Conservative People's Party (CPP)⁵¹, Ramus Jarlov, pointed out how: *"Defence policy is a joint task ... That's why it surprised me ... that now it was no longer the flag of the Community of the Realm that is supposed to be on the Sirius patrol and the Danish Defence in general in Greenland, but now the Greenlandic flag should also to sway when the defence of the Community of the Realm's traveled around. Greenland does not take part in the defence tasks at all, so why does that flag have to be there, when the Community of the Realm already has a flag that marks the joint tasks?"* (The Danish Parliament 2021a).⁵² This comment supports the nodal point identified in the Arctic Report: The nature of the Community of the Realm and of Danish defence policy is collective *we*, which means that there should only be *one* flag on the patrols. Furthermore, it is the Danish flag that represent the community, which is also the nature of the constellation: A hierarchal relation between the state and its nations that places the state on top.

Rasmus Jarlov got support from the then spokesperson on Greenlandic matters from DPP Danish, Søren Espersen, who in the Danish media expressed how the party was against the idea because

⁵⁰ TBA: *"... flaget repræsenterer lige nu kun den grønlandske befolkning, men er tiltænkt at skulle være republikken Grønlands officielle flag. Uagtet hvornår dette sker, hører flaget ikke hjemme på Danmarks militær, ganske ligesom vores unge!"* (Turnowsky 2020b).

⁵¹ Conservative People's Party (CPP) = Konservativ Folkeparti (K)

⁵² TBA: *"Forsvarspolitikken er jo en fælles opgave ... Derfor har det undret mig ... at nu var det ikke længere rigsfællesskabets flag, der skulle være på Siriuspatruljen og forsvaret i øvrigt i Grønland, men nu skulle det grønlandske flag også vaje, når rigsfællesskabets forsvar rejste rundt. Grønland deltager jo ikke forsvarsopgaverne overhovedet, så hvorfor skal det flag være der, når nu rigsfællesskabet har et flag, som markerer de fælles opgaver?"* (Folketinget 2021a).

Greenland's foreign and security policy is taken care of by the Danish government: *"It simply does not work. They have no obligation whatsoever in relation to the military. So, we could perhaps talk about it in the future when Greenland carries out actual tasks in relation to Danish foreign and security policy. But that is not the case now"* (Lind 2020).⁵³ This framing creates and us-and-them narratives that – again – places Greenland in a position where action needs to be taken if equality wants to be granted. The authority the flag will provide will be taken in the acceptance in doing what is told.

4.2.4 Summery

As the discussion has shown, there is nothing simple to the concept of ownership, belonging or symbolism. Or at least there is nothing simple to the feelings and meanings they provoke. Whether it comes to the discussion on Greenlandic participation in defence tasks, recognition and appreciation of Greenlandic soldiers by their home country or flag symbolism, it is the collected *we* that fails to create meaning without ambiguity that challenge the way for straight paths to fully structured identity discourses. As the second sub-analysis demonstrates, Greenland is not only playing sovereignty games with Denmark in an attempt to widen its scope for policy maneuvering. Greenland is also playing sovereignty games with itself in the process of figuring out the *we* that the games are played and gambled on behalf of. In the meantime, the flags on the dog sleds and on the Danish soldiers' left shoulder are probably going to continue with a lonely Dannebrog. However, not having defence policy as a deliberate choice is also a type of power move. Thus, by saying no to Danish defence initiatives, Greenland holds Denmark checkmate - at least until the next round of sovereignty chess.

⁵³ TBA: *"Det går simpelthen ikke. De har ingen som helst forpligtigelse i forhold til det militære. Så vi kunne måske snakke om det ad åre, når Grønland udfører et aktivt stykke arbejde i forhold til dansk udenrigs- og sikkerhedspolitik. Men det sker ikke nu"* (Lind 2020).

5.1 Conclusion and policy implications

In the attempt to answer how Greenland is playing sovereignty games as a response to Danish Defence policy in the Arctic, I have discovered that even with the best cards at hand, Greenland will not be able to play its cards strategically smart if the internal identity discourses are structured primarily in an us-and-them-structured relation to Danish defence policy. Even though Denmark – as the Other – serves as a necessity that shows Greenland – the Self – what it may become, the antagonistic nature of the relation possesses a threat to the existence of any collected *we* – both in Danish and Greenlandic defence policy.

Furthermore, the analysis has demonstrated in practice how identity production is processual and that the negotiations about sovereignty within the Community of the Realm will continue to require constant negotiation to maintain its meaning in a changing world. The *we* that makes sense now, does not necessarily make sense tomorrow. Hence, as long as policy makers fail to formulate a *we* that is open for rearticulation without total dislocation, Denmark and Greenland will continue to fight for discursive hegemony in their common identity political negotiations regarding sovereignty. Or anything, really.

I was once told that it is not true to the academic writing style to include new empirical data in the study's concluding section. However, as this is my last piece of writing as my time I student, I dare to take the chance with the basis in the reasoning that I have saved the best for last:

“When I talk to people in Greenland, there has also been great concern about all these huge military ships that are constantly sailing back and forth very close to the coast in Nuuk while flutting the Danish flag. There are many who see this as something scary, if you can put it that way. And when asking the ones who patrol, they said that they thought it was to spread a sense of safety. So, sometimes there is some kind of misunderstanding occurs. But I also think it is important to point out that this is also where we are a different people, which you have to find a way to keep in mind” (The Danish Parliament 2021b).⁵⁴

⁵⁴ TBA: “Når jeg snakker med folk i Grønland, har der også været en stor bekymring over alle de her kæmpe militærskibe, der hele tiden sejler frem og tilbage meget kystnært ved Nuuk og flagrer det danske flag. Det er der mange, der ser som noget lidt skræmmende, hvis man kan sige det sådan. Og når man selv har spurgt dem, der patruljerer, så sagde de, at de jo tænkte, at det var for at skabe tryghed. Så der er jo en eller anden form for misforståelse, der nogle gange opstår. Men jeg synes også, det er vigtigt at pointere, at det også er der, vi er et andet folkefærd, som man bliver nødt til at tage hensyn til på en anden måde” (The Danish Parliament 2021b).

It was not until the very end up my writing process that I stumbled upon Aki-Mahilda Høegh-Dam's contextualization of the exact same problem field as the one I have accounted for in my introduction. To a great extent, the quote could have served as the motivation for my research question. The irony found in the fact that the same sovereignty practice can create both a feeling of fear and safety within a community that is supposed to constitute a collective *we* is a puzzle that requires deeper analysis and patience to (if it is even possible) fully explore. However, I resonate with Høegh-Dam's following policy implication that serves as a good piece of advice as to what we do next in the negotiation about what it is, we are fighting for, and whether it is given that we do so. For once, I will let *a* Greenlandic MP's word be the last:

"I also think it is incredibly important that we have dialogues about how we take these frictions that also happen into account, i.e. disagreements, either internally in Greenland or between the Community of the Realm, when they occur. It is also for this reason that we lack some form of structure that means that different parties from here also understand the positions of all parties from the Greenlandic side. Because it is also only through understanding that we can actually move on to a proposed solution" (The Danish Parliament 2021b).⁵⁵

⁵⁵ TBA: "Jeg synes også, det er utrolig vigtigt, at vi netop har de her dialoger omkring, hvordan vi så tager hensyn til de her gnidninger, der også sker, altså uenigheder, enten internt i Grønland eller mellem rigsfællesskabet, når der er sådan et emne. Det er også derfor, at vi mangler en eller anden form for struktur, der gør, at forskellige partier herfra også forstår alle partiers holdninger fra grønlandsk side. For det er jo også kun via forståelse, at vi egentlig kan komme videre til et løsningsforslag" (The Danish Parliament 2021b).⁵⁵)

Dengang jeg drog afsted

*“... For pigen og vort Land
vi kæmpe alle Mand,
og vé det usle Drog,
der elsker ej sit Sprog,
og ej vil ofre Liv og Blod for gamle Dannebrog ...”*

[English version]

*“... For the girl and for our country,
all men will fight,
woe the wretched sluggard,
who loves not his language,
and will not sacrifice life and blood for old Dannebrog ...”⁵⁶*

The Three Years' War created two new national symbols: Dannebrog and the common land soldier. Peter Faber's battle song “*Dengang jeg drog afsted*” combined the two as became an encapsulation of a national feeling (Benthien to Altinget 2003). Not so surprisingly, no equivalent exists in a Greenlandic context. Lyrics TBA.

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