

NATO in the Arctic?

Comparing the Danish and Norwegian Perspectives



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Summary

This thesis sets out to investigate how Denmark and Norway has differed on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic, and why they have taken different positions regarding the issue in a period ranging from 2007 to 2016. From afar, the two countries seem rather similar, both in terms of culture, geography and alliance affiliations. From this perspective it can come across as puzzling that the two countries would not hold the same attitude towards a subject of seemingly mutual importance.

A broad historical comparison focusing on both foreign, defence, and security policy came to show that one should not judge a book by its cover. Though the two countries share great similarities, there are noticeable differences in the paths they have followed. These differences were reflected in the Arctic policy in general, and in the more particular issue of a possible enhancement of NATO's role in the Arctic. It is found that, while Norway has continuously sought to promote an enhanced and increased role for NATO in the Arctic areas, Denmark had done little to endorse such attempts. Rather, Denmark has proved somewhat unenthusiastic, or maybe even reluctant, to increase the Alliance's role in the region.

To answer why Denmark and Norway has differed on this issue, this thesis employed a framework for foreign policy analysis that facilitated an analysis from three different explanatory levels. This was done in order to ensure a more fulfilling and multifaceted explanation of the puzzle. Three theoretical concepts has been utilised, namely that of neoclassical realism, geopolitics and strategic culture.

It is found that Denmark and Norway has held similar positions as relatively small powers in the international system, where both have sought to bandwagon the US while balancing Russia. However, as the Cold War came to an end the countries have come to differ in terms of geopolitical outlook, and while Norway has had several good reasons for seeking NATO presence and attention to its Arctic areas, Denmark has had no such incitement, and has instead taken a reluctant approach towards this issue, since an enhanced NATO presence might work against the country's interests. Russian attitudes and the proximity to the regional great power have influenced the two different outlooks quite markedly, and it is a large part of the explanation for why Norway seeks more allied presence in its Arctic territories, while Denmark has not seen the need for such initiatives. It is also found that the differing attitudes have to some extent been affected

by different strategic cultures. While Norway has continuously held a strong belief in the need and indeed use for a relatively strong national defence coupled with the presence of allies in its Arctic territories, no such use or need has been found in Denmark, which has not had any precedence of seeking to maintain a strong territorial defence in its Arctic areas, either by itself or through its allies.

Though the different theoretical tools employed proved helpful for solving this particular puzzle, it is found that geopolitics has constituted a large part of this explanatory picture, and that, coupled with the other theoretical concepts employed, it can explain why Norway and Denmark have consequently and continuously held different positions on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic region.

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Part I. Introduction and foundation

Introduction

Observed from afar, Denmark and Norway do indeed seem similar in many aspects. The two have been part of the same Kingdom until 1814, they share a somewhat common heritage and a similar language, and they are both small Scandinavian welfare states located at the outer rim of the European continent. Also, both Denmark and Norway are long-time members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), they both have territories in the Arctic region,¹ and it would seem uncontroversial to state that both of them have sought a close relationship with the US. These are fundamental similarities, but that is not to say that the two countries are alike in their position on all the questions or issues that might arise from these comparable features. An example of this has been the issue of whether or not NATO's role in Arctic developments should be increased.

The Alliance has previously been heavily present in the region during the Cold War, but as the bipolar tensions came to an end, NATO presence has diminished quite markedly. That is not to say that the Arctic region has not received international attention. Through the 2000s and 2010s several estimations have been put forward about the consequences of a deteriorating or unstable relationship in the region, and some have even warned about potential conflicts in the area. In spite of these bleak predictions, a major crisis has yet to arise, and the Arctic developments have continued to evolve around cooperation rather than conflict.² The international attention has followed the regional attention, and the Arctic coastal states have all come to direct more resources and overall focus to the region that is gradually opening up as the ice continues to melt. This has meant an increase in both civil and military activity in the

¹ Denmark has Arctic areas through the constellation of the Kingdom of Denmark, which, apart from Denmark, consists of the Faro Islands and Greenland, the latter being geographically located inside the Arctic region as defined below. As Denmark administers the foreign policy of Greenland, it can be considered an Arctic coastal state. For more on the constellation of 'Rigsfællesskabet', see Udenrigsministeriet, "Rigsfællesskabet", last visited June 4, 2017.

² For more on the issue of "warners" and "reassures", see Mikkel Runge Olesen, "Cooperation or Conflict in the Arctic: A Literature Review", *DIIS Working Paper* 2014:08 (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2014).

areas, and one could think that this would have facilitated an increased NATO engagement in the area. This has, however, remained somewhat limited, and at present NATO has no clear role in the region.³

Following this development, Norway has seemingly taken an active stance in promoting an enhanced role for NATO in Arctic developments, and the country has been referred to as the most active proponent in this endeavour.⁴ In contrast, the literature on the subject does not seem to mention like-minded Danish attempts. In fact, the attitude of Denmark is rarely elaborated upon, but it has been described that the country has not pushed for increased NATO presence in the Arctic,⁵ and that Denmark is concerned that it would lead to a decline in the otherwise cooperative environment in the region.⁶ It therefore seems that Norway and Denmark has held different position on this issue, but it remains unclear exactly how they have differed.

Hence the next question. Why have they seemingly held differing attitudes regarding this issue? Following the above, one could think that the two countries would take a similar stance on this subject, because both are naturally, by territory or alliance affiliation, invested in the Arctic development and in the NATO organisation. Observed from a distance, it is simply puzzling that the two otherwise comparable countries have held somewhat different positions on the possibility of increasing NATO's role in the Arctic. This thesis thus sets out to solve this puzzle by seeking to explain the following research question:

How has Denmark and Norway differed on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic, and why have they taken different positions regarding this issue?

Though this would seem a contemporary and relevant topic, it is a rather unexplored field in the current academic literature. However, several authors have touched on subjects that are correlated. Generally, the current literature can be divided into two categories. The ones that seek to compare or investigate the foreign, defence, or Arctic

³ Ragnhild Grønning, "NATO reluctant to engage in the Arctic", *High North News*, November 24, 2016.

⁴ Luke Coffey, "NATO in the Arctic: Challenges and Opportunities", *The Heritage Foundation*, June 22, 2012.

⁵ Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arktis og Ukraine krisen. Perspektiver for Rigsfællesskabet" (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2015.), 23.

⁶ Magnus Nordenman, "The Naval Alliance. Preparing NATO for a Maritime Century" (Washington: The Atlantic Council, 2015), 11.

policy of Denmark and Norway in a historical perspective, and the ones that take their starting point in the issue of NATO's role in the Arctic.

A prominent example of the former is the works of Håkon Lunde Saxi.⁷ His comparative studies have mainly centred on how and why the defence policy of Denmark and Norway has differed in a historical perspective. This wide scope of analysis left little room for exploring newer Arctic policy and the different attitudes to NATO in the region, but nevertheless it offers a good insight into the differences between Denmark and Norway. The same can be said for the work of Bertel Heurlin⁸, who has set out to analyse and compare the defence policy of the Scandinavian countries in a historical perspective. Though an insightful and thorough study, not much space is dedicated to investigating the different attitudes regarding NATO in the Arctic. The same goes for the research of Peter Viggo Jakobsen who has conducted comparable research on the Nordic countries, but with a main focus on the different forms of participations in peace operations in the post-Cold War era.⁹ Also, several dissertations have been written on similar topics. However, those that have taken a comparative approach has done so by focusing on other subjects,¹⁰ and those that have explored the Danish strategy more narrowly has done so without looking to the NATO issue.¹¹

The other group, taking its starting point in the role of NATO in the Arctic, has several relevant contributions, but none of them have conducted a thorough analysis on the subject, and it is often stated that the different Arctic members disagree on the issue,

⁷ Håkon Lunde Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy. A Comparative study of the post-Cold War era", *Defence and Security Studies*, No. 1 (2010); Håkon Lunde Saxi, "Defending Small States: Norwegian and Danish Defence Policies in the Cold War Era", *Defence and Security Analysis* 26:4 (2010); Magnus Petersson and Håkon Lunde Saxi, "Shifted Roles: Explaining Danish and Norwegian Alliance Strategy 1949-2009", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 36:6 (2013); Håkon Lunde Saxi "So Similar, Yet so Different: Explaining Divergence in Nordic Defence Policies", in *Common or Divided Security? German and Norwegian Perspectives on Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Robin Allers, Carlo Masala and Rolf Tamnes (Peter Lang: Frankfurt, 2014).

⁸ Bertel Heurlin, ed., *Nationen eller Verden? – De nordiske landes forsvar i dag* (København: Jurist og Økonomforbundets forlag, 2007).

⁹ Peter Viggo Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches to Peace Operations. A new Model in the Making?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

¹⁰ Marie Mellander, "Del og hersk: virker det stadig? Bidrag til at forklare Danmark og Sveriges Rusland-politikker 2002-2013" (Thesis, University of Copenhagen, 2014); Edit Lauglo Endsjø, "Slår den Arktiske fred revner? Danmark og Norges Udenrigspolitik i forhold til Rusland i Arktis" (Thesis, University of Copenhagen, 2016); Louise Hjuler Mikkelsen and Lars Middelboe Pedesen, "Dansk Arktis Politik. Analyse af Rigsfællesskabets Arktiske Udenrigspolitik 2004-2011" (Thesis, University of Copenhagen, 2012)

¹¹ Louise Rynne, "Dansk arktisk strategi og Nordvestpassagen" (Thesis, Forsvarsakademiet, 2013); Marianne Lynghøj Pedersen and Mette Langhoff, "Use it or Lose it. En analyse af Rigsfællesskabets engagement i Arktis" (Thesis, Copenhagen University, 2013).

but not much effort is put into explaining why this is.¹² Additionally, the literature within this tradition is several years old, which furthers the need for a study focusing on different perceptions of NATO's role in the Arctic, since a lot has happened since 2013, most notably the Ukraine crisis.

It therefore seems that there is much room for a study with the particular purpose of analysing how and why Denmark and Norway has differed on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic, not just because this is a largely unexplored area in the academic field, but also because the new developments and the future perspectives possibilities in the Arctic makes it a relevant issue to examine in greater detail.

This thesis is split into 4 parts. The first and present part aims to act as an introduction while also seeking to outline the overall framework for the thesis by clearly defining its scope, the methods and theory used, and by outlining Arctic context relevant for the task at hand in short. Part II seeks to analyse and compare Norwegian and Danish attitudes towards NATO in the Arctic within a framework of, how the two countries have differed in foreign, security and Arctic matters historically. Part III then builds on the previous findings, and seeks to explain why Denmark and Norway has held different attitudes towards the issue through a theoretical perspective, while part IV offers a conclusion on the subject and a perspective on the present and future.

Definitions and scope of the thesis

As the discussion surrounding the topic of NATO in the Arctic is relatively new, the study will primarily direct its focus on a contemporary timeframe ranging from 2007 to 2016. The year 2007 marks a renewed security interest in the Arctic for both Norway and Denmark spiked by the Russian planting of a titanium flag on the seabed of the North Pole,¹³ and 2016 is as close to current events as possible, while still allowing time

¹² See: Helga Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic: is the Atlantic alliance a Cold War relic in a peaceful region now faced with non-military challenges?", *European Security* 20:3 (2011); David Rudd, "Northern Europe's Arctic Defence Agenda", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, vol 12, issue 3 (2010); Charles M. Perry and Bobby Andersen, *New Strategic Dynamics in the Arctic Region. Implications for National Security and International Collaboration*, (Cambridge: The Institute of Foreign Policy Analysis, 2012); Beata Górká-Winter and Marek Madej eds., *NATO Member States and the New Strategic Concept: An Overview* (Warsaw: Polski Instytut Spraw Miedzynarodowych, 2010); Irina Zhilina, "The security aspects in the Arctic: The potential role of NATO", *Nodicum – Mediterraneum*, 8:1 (2013).

¹³ Jo G. Gade and Paal Sigurd Hilde, "Nordområdenes sikkerhetspolitiske betydning for NATO" in *Norge og Rusland. Sikkerhetspolitiske utfordringer i nordområdene*, red. Tormod Heier and Anders

to analyse the most recent events. This timeframe is not seen as a limitation, and considerable time will be dedicated to looking back in history in order to understand and explain the contemporary differences of the two countries in a more fulfilling manner. It will become apparent that the Danish and Norwegian Arctic attitudes have historical roots, which need to be brought forward in order to understand the current dissimilarities.

This being said, the Arctic policies and strategies are part of a bigger picture, and cannot be separated from the overall foreign interests and considerations of the two countries. Time and effort will therefore be dedicated to comparing the foreign, security and defence policies of the two countries that relate to the Arctic policy. While looking to the overall foreign policies and strategies of Norway and Denmark, much of potential importance is left out. For instance, this research will not focus on how the European Unions affects the Danish and Norwegian Arctic policy, and neither will it focus on how bilateral relationships with states outside the Arctic region have affected the Norwegian and Danish attitude. Foreign and security strategy is of course a grand mix of interests and relations related to different areas and different relations, but in order not to get lost in the many particularities, the focus remains on the factors that has been regarded as having had the most influence on the respective Norwegian and Danish Arctic policies.

Though different expressions exist, this study will refer to the area as the Arctic region but will for the sake of variety also use terms like the High North. Both refer to the same area, which is here understood, in accordance with the Arctic Council, to encompass the whole of Alaska, the northern parts of Canada and Russia, all of Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands and the Northern parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland¹⁴. This definition is portrayed on the following map:¹⁵

Kjølberg (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2015); Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Arctic Turn – How Did the High North Become a Foreign and Security Policy Priority for Denmark?" In *Greenland and the International Politics of a Changing Arctic - Postcolonial Paradiplomacy between High and Low Politics*, red. Kristian S. Kristensen and Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017) [forthcoming].

¹⁴ Definition outlined by: Danish Ministry of Defence, "Forsvarsministeriets fremtidige opgaveløsning i Arktis" (Copenhagen: Ministry of Defence, 2016), 22.

¹⁵ Illustration 2

Arctic administrative areas

compiled by
Wenfred K. Dallmann,
Norwegian Polar Institute



With this definition, 8 Arctic states can be identified, namely Canada, The Kingdom of Denmark (through Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. Beyond the natural focus on Denmark and Norway, this thesis will also to some extent focus on Russia. By far the state with most Arctic territory, Russia is in close proximity to both Denmark and Norway, and has traditionally both directly and indirectly affected the foreign and security policy of the two countries.¹⁶ This remains to be the case in the Arctic.¹⁷ Coupled with the fact that Russia is the only Arctic coastal side not a member of NATO (the others being Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and

¹⁶ For more on this, see Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy"; Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted Roles"; Saxi, "So Similar"; Heurlin, *Nationen eller Verden*.

¹⁷ Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Ukraine crisis moves north. Is Arctic conflict spill-over driven by material interests?", *Polar Record* 53:268 (2017), 6.

the US), and that Moscow has opposed including the organisation in the Arctic development, it must be expected to have had an effect on the attitudes of Denmark and Norway regarding the issue.¹⁸ It will become apparent that this is in fact very much the case, so when one looks at the Arctic policies of Denmark and Norway, one must also consider the Russian stance.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that when the thesis refers to an ‘enhanced’ role for NATO in the Arctic, it should often be understood as an increased Alliance presence in the region. This can be in the form of increased conjoined exercise and training, through better integration of national military headquarters and the NATO command structure, or in overall increased awareness and active engagement in the security developments in the region.

The methodological approach and reflections

This thesis sets out to analyse a research question, which can be divided into two parts. Firstly, it seeks to analyse *how* Norway and Denmark has held different positions on increasing NATO’s role in the Arctic, and secondly, it sets out to investigate *why* they have differed on this issue. The thesis is therefore of a fundamentally comparative qualitative nature due to its narrow focus on Norway and Denmark, and because the comparative element is central to both the research design and the analysis.¹⁹

The scope of this thesis therefore necessitates a comparative approach, where the cases of Norway and Denmark are analysed and compared both from a historical and a theoretical perspective. It has therefore drawn on the fundamental aspect of the structured, focused comparison for guidance. It is ‘structured’ in the sense that it analyses the same aspects and variables of both states, and ‘focused’ because it only seeks to deal with relevant features and theories to the case examined.²⁰ Put differently, this has meant that the cases of the Norwegian and Danish positions have been analysed on similar terms and from the same angles, and that the theory employed have been utilised in a consistent way. However, as this thesis sets out to explain a puzzle and not

¹⁸ Perry and Anderson, *The New Strategic Dynamics*, 147-148.

¹⁹ Lotte Bøgh Andersen and Viola Burau, ”Komparativ forskning i statskundskaben”, *politica* no. 3 (2007): 256-257.

²⁰ Concepts drawn from Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 67.

to build or test theories through general questions asked throughout the study, this method will not be pursued much further.²¹ Nevertheless, the foundations of the approach has provided an important method for comparing the position of the two country's to a visible, methodical and fulfilling degree, which will be employed throughout the thesis both in a historical and more contemporary context.

Beyond utilising this comparative approach, the analysis of *why* the two countries differ has followed a particular form of the process-tracing method. This has been outlined by Derek Beach and Rasmus Brun Pedersen, and is termed explaining-outcome process-tracing.²² Specifically, this method builds on the definition put forward by Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett that process-tracing involves “attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable”.²³ In the case of this thesis, the independent variables are the different theoretical concepts utilised, while the dependent variable is that Denmark and Norway has held different position on the issue of NATO in the Arctic.

The causal mechanism, or causal chain, will in this regard be of a historical nature, since it will be argued that the positions of Denmark and Norway have been formed by previous experiences and external developments. An example in this context, which will also be followed later, is to examine how the concept of geopolitics can explain why Norway and Denmark has differed on this issue? Here, the causal mechanism of the country's specific history and interests are analysed and compared to explain the differences from this independent (theoretical) variable.

Following the method of explaining-outcome process-tracing, this thesis seeks to put forward an “explanation of a puzzling outcome in a specific historical case”.²⁴ This ambition is case-centric in nature, since it is not the goal to build or test theories, but rather to construct an explanatory framework through the pragmatic use of theories.²⁵ The theoretical concepts employed has therefore been chosen for their explanatory value, and because they offer different perspectives on the same question, guided by a

²¹ George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 67-69.

²² Derek Beach and Rasmus Brun Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods. Foundations and Guidelines* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 3.

²³ George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 206

²⁴ Beach and Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods*, 3.

²⁵ Beach and Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods*, 11.

framework formulated by Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel,²⁶ which will be accounted for in the theory section. Furthermore, they have been chosen because it is held that they are all needed in an explanation of the difference between Norway and Denmark, which should account for the important aspects of the outcome, with no redundant parts being left out.²⁷ It must also in this respect be noted that this thesis does not seek to offer the full explanation for the difference, since neither time, space, nor the general complexity of human affairs allows the fulfilment of this goal. This has necessitated analytical selectivity in which perspectives has been examined. It has nevertheless sought to incorporate what has been as the three most relevant perspectives and theories for explaining this puzzle, which will be elaborated upon in the theory section of this thesis. The strategy employed is therefore abductive reasoning, which is a combination of the deductive and inductive approach, where an effort is made to offer an explanation of the subject at hand.²⁸

The thesis thus sets out to:

- I. Analyse the Danish and Norwegian stance on the issue from a historical perspective by utilising a comparative approach, hereby looking to *how* they differ
- II. Analyse *why* they have differed by using a comparative approach coupled with the explaining-outcome process-tracing method, engaging different theoretical concepts

The approach is therefore heavily context-based because it seeks to account for the difference between the two countries over time, and through an analysis of which prominent factors have affected these attitudes.²⁹ This is seen as imperative, because, as will become apparent, the attitudes of Norway and Denmark towards this particular issue should be seen as part of a larger picture.

²⁶ Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012).

²⁷ Beach and Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods*, 18.

²⁸ Beach and Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods*, 19.

²⁹ Andersen and Burau. "Komparativ forskning i statskundskaben", 259.

Interviews

Besides being based on current literature on the subject and various official documents from Denmark and Norway, this thesis is also founded on interviews. This is a contemporary and on-going topic, and as already shown, not much has been written on the subject. Since this is also a sensitive area where national interests are in play, it must be expected that the internal discussions and considerations behind the policies of the two countries are conducted behind closed doors. These doors are not easily opened, which accentuates the need of interviews with people close to the decision-making process with inside knowledge, and central researchers with vast experience and knowledge on the field.

Four interviews have been conducted as part of the qualitative research for this thesis. Two have been with Norwegian participants and the other two with Danish participants. In both cases, interviews have been conducted with an expert on the subject and a civil servant with inside knowledge on the issue. This has been done in order to ensure that both country-perspectives are represented somewhat equally. Though the participants all had knowledge on both the Danish and Norwegian attitudes toward the issue, it must be expected that they have most in-depth knowledge of the country in which they reside. The experts that participated were:

- **Paal Sigurd Hilde**, an associated professor based at the Centre for Norwegian and European Security, which is part of the Institute for Defence Studies in Norway. His areas of primary research areas are, amongst others, NATO, the Arctic and Norwegian security and defence policy.³⁰
- **Kristian Soby Kristensen**, a senior researcher and also the deputy head of Centre for Military Studies, which is part of Copenhagen University. His primary research areas are, amongst others, NATO and the transatlantic relationship, and Arctic security policy.³¹

These researchers have contributed significantly to this thesis, both in terms of background knowledge and as directly incorporated points and arguments. They have

³⁰ For more information, see: https://forsvaret.no/ifs/en/hilde_paal_sigurd.

³¹ For more information, see: <http://cms.polsci.ku.dk/english/staff/?pure=en/persons/9513>.

been treated as expert interviews,³² and are therefore considered as valuable and valid sources of information on the subject. The civil servants interviewed as part of this thesis has wished to remain anonymous, but has nevertheless agreed that the interviews has been transcribed. In this context it is important to state, that I have chosen the imperfect, yet realisable analysis. It is preferable to cite sources by name, since this adds validity to the content. However, this is, as will become apparent, a largely un-debated and seemingly sensitive issue, and not much has been written or stated that directly reflect why Norway and Denmark has chosen different paths. The insight provided by the interviews with civil servants has therefore primarily been used as background knowledge for this research, but has also been referred to when underlining important aspects and back already existing points.

The interviews have followed the lines of a semi-structured interview, where themes and questions have been formulated beforehand in an interview guide that has been used in every interview (found in appendix 1). This approach allows for deviations from the structure and the questions asked, and therefore allows for a more fluid conversation where follow-up questions are employed.³³ The interviews are focused on content rather than on semantics and how things are said, and the transcription is therefore based on the same approach (found in appendix 2-5), where words that are meaningless or otherwise disruptive to the overall content are left out.³⁴

Now, as the main methodological approach and considerations have been outlined, it is time to portray the theoretical outlook and framework employed, coupled with an outline and explanation of which tools that are utilised to explain the main puzzle of this thesis in a fulfilling and comprehensive manor.

The theoretical outlook of neoclassical realism

As it is the aim of this research to analyse how and why they Denmark and Norway have differed on this particular issue, a greater theoretical framework for understanding

³² Steiner Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Interview. Introduktion til et Håndværk*, 2. edition (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2009), 67.

³³ Lene Tanggaard and Svend Brinkmann, *Kvalitative Metoder* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2010), 37-40.

³⁴ Steiner Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Interview. Det kvalitative forskningsinterview som håndværk*, 3. edition (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2015), 241.

and analysing foreign policy is much needed, which is offered by the approach of neoclassical realism.³⁵ This can be said to be a prevailing school in contemporary foreign policy theorizing, that is to be understood against a background of systemic neorealism.³⁶ Where neorealism as represented by Kenneth Waltz³⁷ seeks to explain the outcomes of state interaction through a systemic lens, neoclassical realism is more concerned with the behaviour of individual states and their foreign policies.³⁸ Furthermore, a systemic focus is mainly based on an analysis of the incentives and constraints that an anarchical, uncertain world with a limited amount of resources exerts on any given state in question.³⁹ This realization is not abandoned by the approach of neoclassical realism, but rather complimented with a focus on a domestic state level, because it is believed that systemic pressures must be translated through intervening unit-level variables.⁴⁰

The theoretical approach of neoclassical realism can be described as a two-step approach when analysing and explaining a countries foreign policy. First of all, the scope and ambition of a states foreign policy is driven by its place in the international system and by its relative material power, or capabilities, which is why this is where an analysis of foreign policy must find its starting ground. Second, the foreign policy of a country is also determined by domestic constraints and perceptions.⁴¹ In this line of reasoning, if one is to understand and explain a particular foreign policy course of a state, or even compare two different states attitude towards the same problem, both external and internal variables must be accounted for and looked to. The relative power of a state is in this regard measured in terms of the capabilities or resources with which states can influence each other⁴² - examples being military power, resources and the gross domestic product of a state. Other than being relative in the sense that it is related to other states, it is also because the material factors of states are interpreted and perceived by human beings, which do not necessarily have a consistent and clear image

³⁵ First of all as outlined by Gideon Rose, "Review Article. Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", *World Politics* 51, No. 1 (1998).

³⁶ Mourtizen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy* 7.

³⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

³⁸ Rose, "Neoclassical Realism", 145.

³⁹ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Steven E. Lobell, and Norrin M. Ripsman, *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3.

⁴⁰ Rose, "Neoclassical Realism", 146.

⁴¹ Rose, "Neoclassical Realism", 146-147.

⁴² Rose, "Neoclassical Realism", 151

of the relative power at their disposal in their own country (or others for that matter) on a day-to-day basis.⁴³

Beyond offering a theoretical backdrop for foreign policy analysis, neoclassical realism is also rooted in some basic assumptions and premises, which will act as a guiding tool for this research. It is assumed that states within the international anarchical system will seek to control and shape their environments with their relative power to promote self-interests, thus pursuing a sense of security and a maximisation of power in an otherwise unsafe and competitive world, which are assumptions that build upon the roots of classical realism and neorealism.⁴⁴

All in all, neoclassical realism can seek “to explain variation in the foreign policies of the same state over time or across different states facing similar external constraints”.⁴⁵ This makes it a highly relevant theoretical starting ground for the task at hand. But in order to provide a fulfilling answer to the puzzle, a more specific theoretical framework is needed.

A framework for foreign policy analysis

Explaining and analysing the foreign policies of Denmark and Norway is complicated because many different variables affect the course taken by a country. This is why the approach of neoclassical realism will be coupled with a framework portrayed by Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel.⁴⁶ The approach of Mouritzen and Wivel is complimentary and adds another layer, or step, to the neoclassical realism approach.⁴⁷ Where neoclassical realism distinguishes between two levels in an analysis of international relations, namely that of the international system and of the state, Mouritzen and Wivel opens up for an analysis and explanation of foreign policy from three levels of analysis; the systemic-, interstate-, and intrastate level.

Where the systemic level is focused on an analysis of state capabilities and the balancing of power in an anarchical international system where states are regarded as moving, non-fixed billiard balls, the interstate level seeks to analyse the relations of a state from a perspective of non-mobility, meaning that states are more receptive and

⁴³ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 7; Rose, “Neoclassical Realism”, 153.

⁴⁴ Taliaferro, Lobell, Ripsman, *Neoclassical Realism*, 5.

⁴⁵ Taliaferro, Lobell, Ripsman, *Neoclassical Realism*, 21.

⁴⁶ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*.

⁴⁷ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 7.

responsive to their immediate environment than that of the overall international system. The last explanatory level, namely that of the intrastate, looks to what restraints and possibilities the domestic environment has on a states foreign policy.⁴⁸

The three explanatory levels are described as steps on a ladder, the systemic level being the highest. Going down the ladder is arguably not necessitated in an analysis of foreign policy and international relations if the first step and most simple step, the systemic level with its basic assumptions of state behaviour, proves sufficient in explaining the actions and paths taken by a state in a given situation. This is based on a parsimonious approach, where the simplest explanation or theory, is preferred when seeking to explain foreign policy.⁴⁹ Thus, if the systemic step fails to provide an explanation, one must move to the interstate level and so forth. However, this project is not founded on that reasoning. Rather, it is the purpose to mobilize each of the explanatory levels for a more comprehensive and well-founded explanation where different angles are taken into consideration for explaining the puzzle of this thesis. This will also leave greater room for an intrastate explanation, which would potentially otherwise fall in the background.⁵⁰ This should not be seen as an outright rejection of a parsimonious approach, since this thesis cannot and will not claim to describe the full picture. Rather, it is the aim to point to some central factors for understanding the puzzle, which does entail selectivity in terms of which theoretical approaches are chosen, coupled with selectiveness in the vast amount of empirical material that might be relevant for the task at hand.⁵¹

Before moving on it is important to note that the explanatory levels are analytical constructs that are meant to guide the analysis, and that they are not regarded as a true reflection of reality. The levels are regarded as interrelated and dependent variables for explaining foreign policy. But, as noted by Håkon Lunde Saxi, as analytical tools, the division of an analysis into subcategories can provide useful counterpoints that help

⁴⁸ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 25.

⁴⁹ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 6.

⁵⁰ Christopher Hill, "The particular and the general: The challenge for foreign policy studies", Review of *Explaining Foreign Policy: International Diplomacy and the Russo-Georgian War* by Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel, *International Politics Reviews*, 2, no. 1 (2014), 40-41.

⁵¹ One could also contend the notion that parsimony must be balanced against explanatory power all together. For this view, see: Taliaferro, Lobell, Ripsman, *Neoclassical Realism*, 23.

bring forth the bigger picture, thus providing a more comprehensive analysis and explanation.⁵²

The explanatory levels and theoretical choices

Now, to guide the research further, each level of explanation will be coupled with theoretical tools, and an outline of their underlying explanatory logic and basic assumptions. This should add clarity to the research focus on the different levels, while adding several explanatory concepts and important terms to mobilize in the research ahead.

The systemic level of explanation: Neoclassical realism, capabilities and the international system

At the very basic, the systemic level of explanation is here founded on the idea that the international system is anarchic, and that the lack of a universal overarching government creates uncertainty for the states, since politics is regarded as a perpetual struggle among different states for material power and security.⁵³ This anarchical reality bears with it a pervasive uncertainty over the potential threats to the units within the system, and the guiding principle for the foreign policy of states is based on self-help and self-interests in terms of security and survival.⁵⁴ As states are ultimately left to themselves for ensuring their own security, the relative power of the different states become important. They are measured in a state's capabilities, which are comprised of variables such as the size of population and territory, economic capabilities and military strength.⁵⁵ The power is relative because it is measured in comparison to other states. Because states cannot be sure of each other's intentions since there is no international sovereign to prevent states from attacking each other, they tend to base their security strategies on power calculations.⁵⁶

Balancing is said to be a commonly used strategy in this worldview, where states often seek to curb the power of the strong by seeking security through coalitions, hereby

⁵² Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 10.

⁵³ Taliaferro, Lobell, Ripsman, *Neoclassical Realism*, 4.

⁵⁴ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 30.

⁵⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 131.

⁵⁶ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 30-31.

detering them from attacking or taking advantage of the weaker states.⁵⁷ This can be termed external balancing, while internal balancing usually rests on the build up of capabilities, often of the military kind.⁵⁸ In contrast, states can also bandwagon to survive in the anarchical system by seeking to join a polar power in an alliance or in a coalition instead of pursuing a balancing act. By doing so, states hope to gain more than they would potentially lose by seeking to balance the polar power, which therefore makes it reasonable from a perspective of self-help and the strive for security.⁵⁹ Bandwagoning is arguably also an often-followed strategy in a unipolar world, where there is no incentives to seek to counter the great power because there is little doubt of its supremacy. Therefore, balancing or showing enmity is avoided, both by second-tier states and lesser nations.⁶⁰

As neoclassical realism holds the fundamental belief that a country's foreign policy is first and foremost defined by its relative power vis-à-vis the international system, this is where any analysis of foreign policy issues must take its start.⁶¹ It will therefore seek to characterise which positions Norway and Denmark has held within the international system, and look to how these position has affected them, especially in regards to the US and Russia.

The interstate explanatory level: Geopolitics and self-interests

Several of the basic assumptions of state interaction and behaviour listed above will also be applied to this explanatory level. That is, states are entities struggling for their self-interests in terms of security, influence, wealth, and material power in an anarchical world system.⁶²

Another fundamental understanding on this level is that states are immobile, and that this non-mobility means that each state is faced first and foremost with a specific and stable environment. Since it is also held that power and incentive wane with distance, it follows that the environment surrounding a state will have a big impact on its foreign

⁵⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 127.

⁵⁸ Anders Wivel, "Realismen efter Waltz: Udvikling eller afvikling?", *Politica*, 34, nr. 4 (2002): 434.

⁵⁹ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 126.

⁶⁰ William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", *Quarterly Journal: International Security*, Vol. 24, no. 1 (1999): 24-25.

⁶¹ Rose, "Neoclassical Realism", 146-147; 150-151.

⁶² Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman, "Introduction", 4.

policy.⁶³ This is important to emphasize because the previous explanatory systemic level does not take the geographical setting of states into account. It is also important to note because the challenges a state seeks or faces are likely to originate mostly from its proximate environment and the strong states that project power in the area.⁶⁴ To be more direct, geopolitics is centred around world politics with a particular emphasis on state competition and the geographical dimension of power.⁶⁵ Even more bluntly put, the location of a state affects its interests, its perception of threats and its general outlook. Therefore the geopolitical analysis will find its starting ground by looking to the respective geographic and geopolitical environments that Denmark and Norway has been facing, and to what implications these security surroundings has had on their foreign and security policies in general, and Arctic attitudes in particular.

How states seek to preserve their interests when facing a potential threat from a regional power can vary, but is also often understood in terms of balancing and bandwagoning. Balancing can in this context be defined as a state's counteracting, in high politics, of a great power in its near environment, either by itself or through an ally.⁶⁶ Following the fundamental premises of the realist thought, states chose to balance if it is in their interest and capability to do so in the pursuance of security and power maximisation.⁶⁷ The act of bandwagoning follows the same lines as described on the systemic explanatory level, and is an act whereby a state seeks to cooperate with a stronger state or an alliance with the potential of advancing its security, power, influence or economical position.⁶⁸ It is also important to note that balancing and bandwagoning is not the only strategic path a state can follow. States can also seek to *bind* a potentially threatening state-power in a web of commitments through international organisations and agreements, thus making further aggressive or threatening and otherwise unwanted actions unreasonable.⁶⁹ The difference from the

⁶³ Hans Mourtizen, *Theory and Reality of International Politics* (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998), 1.

⁶⁴ Mourtizen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 34-36.

⁶⁵ Gearóird Ó Tuathail, "General Introduction. Thinking Critically about Geopolitics", in *the geopolitics reader*, Second edition, ed. Gearóird Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby and Paul Routledge (London: Routledge, 2006), 1.

⁶⁶ Hans Mourtizen, "Choosing Sides in the European Iraq Conflict: A Test of New Geopolitical Theory", *European Security*, 15:2 (2006): 146.

⁶⁷ Taliaferro. Lobell, Ripsman, "introduction", 5.

⁶⁸ This definition is build on: Waltz, *Theory of Internaitonal Politics*, 126.

⁶⁹ Mourtizen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 21.

systemic level is that these strategies can now be primarily aimed at a nearby regional power, because local balance of power might loom larger in the calculations of states.⁷⁰

At this explanatory level it is therefore the aim to mobilize the above tools for explaining how the different geopolitical realities have affected the Danish and Norwegian foreign and security policies, and how this has formed their actions and attitudes regarding the issue of NATO in the Arctic. This will be done through the theoretical constructs of balancing, bandwagoning and binding, which helps to explain and underline why Denmark and Norway has held different positions. It will become apparent that the proximity of Russia has had a great impact on the dissimilarities between the two countries, but that the restraining factors of geopolitics cannot in itself account for these differences.

It is important to note that one could also seek to draw on other theoretical concepts in conjunction with the geopolitical outlook on the interstate level. For instance, one could look to alliance politics within NATO, and how the fear of being left out in the cold or trapped in otherwise unwanted conflicts have affected Norwegian and Danish attitudes and policies towards NATO.⁷¹ Though this might have added a valuable addition to the research, this is regarded as one of minor influence. As will become apparent, this is not as much an issue regarding the fear of abandonment or entrapment in the NATO organisation, but more a question of how Norway and Denmark perceives the threats and hardships originating from their geographical environment – or, indeed the lack hereof. The interstate analysis will therefore focus on looking to the impact of geopolitics and the resulting self-interest of Norway and Denmark.

The intrastate explanatory level: Strategic culture

As an attempt to clarify the meaning of the otherwise rather ambiguous term, culture can firstly be defined as “values, norms, and assumptions that guide human action”.⁷² This is the case for both decision makers and the population of any given culture or nation. When the subject turns to that of a nation’s foreign, defence, and security policy,

⁷⁰ Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World”, 28.

⁷¹ For more on this issue, see: Glenn H. Snyder, “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics”, *World Politics* Vol. 36 no. 4 (1984).

⁷² Peter H. Wilson, “Defining Military Culture”, *The Journal of Military History*, 72:1 (2008): 14

it is often the case that culture is understood and spoken about as a strategic culture.⁷³ The strategic culture of a nation is affected greatly by its history and geography, which is also why countries think and act differently about strategic matters.⁷⁴ In the words of Jack Snyder, strategic culture can be defined as "... the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to... strategy".⁷⁵ Strategic culture is therefore not something that is made up by few individuals from day to day, but something widely shared by the members of a 'national strategic community' over time. Notably, strategic culture is also concerned with "the perceptions of risk, goals, and the relative willingness to use force" of a society'.⁷⁶ The willingness to use or indeed show force is here also understood as a country's willingness to use its armed forces, be it in a strong territorial defence or a forward-leaning posture in operations outside a nation's territorial boundaries. This very much intertwines it with the concept of defence culture, which can be defined as "the discourse on how and why military power is needed and the practice by which military power is used".⁷⁷ These concepts constitute an important part for explaining the puzzle of this thesis, and it will become apparent that the two countries have seemingly come to develop 'different ideas, emotional responses and patterns of habitual behaviour' in their defence and security policy, and that this is somewhat founded in differing geography and historical experiences.

It is important to emphasise that culture is not static, and that it evolves and adapts. Often large changes in a strategic culture are facilitated by external or otherwise traumatic shocks to a country, which can be caused by war or the consequences that conflicts bear with it.⁷⁸ Though adaptable, strategic culture is nevertheless perceived as a relatively slowly changing and overreaching phenomenon, and this analysis will therefore seek to point to the overall patterns and differences between Denmark and Norway. As will be shown, it is partly due to the steadfastness nature of the strategic

⁷³ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 11.

⁷⁴ Collin S. Gray, "Out of the Wilderness: Prime Time for Strategic Culture", *Comparative Strategy*, 26:1 (2007), 5-6.

⁷⁵ Jack Snyder quoted in Gray, "Out of the Wilderness", 6. For other definitions of strategic culture, see Lawrence Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture and Ways of War* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2006).

⁷⁶ Wilson, "Defining Military Culture", 14.

⁷⁷ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, "'What's the Use of It?': Danish Strategic Culture and the Utility of Armed Force", *Cooperation and Conflict* vol. 40:1 (2005): 72.

⁷⁸ Gray, "Out of the Wilderness", 7.

cultures that the two countries have held different positions regarding this particular issue.

When examining the different strategic cultures, this thesis will therefore look to overall patterns of how the two have responded to the changing world around them in their defence and security policy, and how these general reactions or lack hereof have come to form the differing responses to the development in the Arctic. This will be done by looking to existing literature on the subject coupled with official documents and state practise.

Before moving on, it is important to note that other domestic factors and variables could potentially hold some explanatory value for this issue. For instance, one could seek to analyse how different actors and institutions within the states have affected the outcome of the Arctic policies through an analysis of bureaucratic politics.⁷⁹ Also, one could seek to examine how domestic politics and public opinion have affected the Norwegian and Danish attitude.⁸⁰ Furthermore the defence policy of Norway and Denmark may also have been impacted by the different cultures, interests and contentions between the various sections of the military.⁸¹ Though these factors may have had an influence on the Norwegian and Danish positions, the issue of NATO in the Arctic has seemingly been a somewhat undisputed or at least un-debated topic in the public within the two countries.⁸² That is not to say that different opinions on the subject have not existed – they likely have – but the overall positions of the two countries have largely appeared uniform and consistent throughout the period examined. Therefore, one must look to the bigger picture in the pursuit of explaining the puzzle from an intrastate perspective. Strategic culture offers just that, and is an overarching theoretical concept that enables an analysis of the general patterns in Norwegian and Danish defence and security policy,

⁷⁹ Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis", *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, issue 3 (1969).

⁸⁰ For more on the effect of public opinion on foreign policy, see: Thomas Risse-Kapen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies", *World Politics* Vol. 43, No. 4 (1991).

⁸¹ For more on the issue of 'værnskultur', see: Michael Hesselholt Clemmensen, *Værnskulturerne og Forsvarspolitikken*, (Århus: Politica, 1986).

⁸² This is confirmed in the various interviews and general research conducted as part of this thesis; Interview with Danish civil servant 27/04-17; Interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen, 25/04-17; Interview with Norwegian civil servant, 19/05-17; Interview with Paal Sigurd Hilde, 04/05-17.

which have come to affect their different positions in the Arctic, and also, to some extent, their perceptions of NATO's role in the region.

Also on a domestic level, there is a quite obvious difference between Denmark and Norway. Norway is one state, while Denmark is a Kingdom made up of three different entities. Has this had any effect on why the two countries have held different opinions regarding NATO in the Arctic? Or more directly, is a possible Greenlandic averseness part of the explanation for the overall Danish hesitancy to engage NATO more actively in the region? Again, there has not been much public nor scholarly debate on this issue. Furthermore, the latter question entails that Denmark has an interest in including NATO in the Arctic. However, as will be argued, there is little evidence of Danish precedence for seeking a strong allied presence in its Arctic territories after the Cold War, nor is there, from a geopolitical perspective, any strong incitements for promoting it. The difference in unity within the Kingdom of Denmark and Norway and its possible impact on this particular issue will therefore not be the focus of the intrastate explanatory level.

The intrastate analysis will instead focus on mobilising the concept of strategic culture, since this category enables an analysis of how steadfast patterns of behaviour have affected the rather consistent Norwegian and Danish attitudes towards an increased role of NATO in the Arctic. This also entails leaving out other potentially interesting variables at the intrastate level, but it is seen as preferable to mobilize a broad theoretical concept in depth that hold some explanatory power, instead of mobilizing various more confined theoretical concepts with less explanatory value.

A contextual outline: The Arctic, NATO and Russia

As the general scope, framework and theory of the thesis has been defined, attention is now turned to a more general introduction to the subject. The following is a short outline of the dynamics in the Arctic and on which roles NATO and Russia has played in the region. This is intended to work as a backdrop for further analysis, as it offers some background information on important factors and players, which have come to form or affect the Danish and Norwegian Arctic policies.

The dynamics of the Arctic

The interest in the Arctic region is nothing new, and has historical roots of conflict and cooperation. During World War II the Arctic Ocean provided an important corridor for allied shipping to the Soviet Union, and afterwards during the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War, the contested control over the Arctic sea-lanes of communication and the risk of nuclear exchange filled the otherwise remote and cold region with heightened tension.⁸³ With the end of the Cold War the global interest shifted away from the Arctic, and what followed was a period of relative quietness in the icy region.

Since then a lot has happened, especially in terms of climate change. The ice in the Arctic is melting with worrying haste, and 2016 has been a record-breaking year in this trend.⁸⁴ With lesser ice comes greater accessibility, and this has facilitated a renewed focus to be directed at the region, especially with an eye on economical gain. Both the Northern Sea Route stretching along the northern coast of Russia and the Northwest Passage through running through the waters of the Canadian archipelago has the potential of significantly reducing the distances travelled for the shipping industry. The prospects of reduced costs as the waters become more accessible has gotten the attention of many states far away from the Arctic region, China being a prominent example.⁸⁵ The Arctic states also have significant economical interests in region, mainly centred on resource extraction, be it oil, gas or fish.⁸⁶ It should therefore not come as a surprise that a renewed attention has been directed at the region.

The attention has manifested itself in different ways, but mainly along cooperative lines. The establishing of The Arctic Council in 1996 is a prominent example. Here, the Arctic states, observer states (at current 12 non-Arctic countries accepted as observing states) and various participants that represent indigenous populations in the Arctic region discuss cooperation in Arctic affairs, leaving out security and geopolitical issues. As an inter-governmental forum without legal personality, the Arctic Council cannot issue binding regulations, but it can act as decision-shaping institutions that affect

⁸³ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic", 337.

⁸⁴ Chris Mooney, "2016's super warm Arctic winter 'extremely unlikely' without climate change, scientist say", *The Washington Post*, December 28, 2016.

⁸⁵ Perry and Andersen, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 8.

⁸⁶ For more on the economic potential in the Arctic, see: Kathrin Keil, "Economic Potential" in *Arctic Security Matters*, ed. Juha Jokela (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2015).

national and international legislation.⁸⁷ Another prominent example of the cooperative trend is the Ilulissat Declaration established and agreed upon by the five Arctic coastal states in 2008. Here, the five country's agreed that they would remain committed to the regulations of the United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and that they would orderly settle 'any possible overlapping claims' in the Arctic.⁸⁸ This was important, because at the time, and still to this day, there are some legal disagreements in the region, examples being the territorial dispute over Hans Island located between Canada and Greenland, various disagreements over the legal definitions of the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage, and lastly on the different territorial claims based on extensions of different continental shelf's stretching far into the seabed of the Arctic Ocean.⁸⁹

The renewed attention is also apparent if one looks to the national developments, where all the Arctic states have formulated an Arctic strategy or an Arctic policy. Several of the Arctic states, here most prominently Russia, has also invested heavily in military capabilities in the Arctic, which has made it by far the biggest player in the region.⁹⁰ This also holds true in terms of geography, and the sheer size of the Russian Arctic territory is easily visualized by looking at a globe from above.

Notwithstanding the military build up in the region and the renewed interests of various actors with differing interests, the developments in the Arctic have primarily been following cooperative lines. Most notably opposed to this trend was the event in August 2007 where a Russian submarine planted a titanium flag on the Seabed 4300 metres under the North Pole, which immediately sparked concern and scholarly debate as to whether this assertive approach was an indication of what was to be expected of Russia in the Arctic.⁹¹

All in all it can be said that the development in the Arctic has so far been based on a common interest of the Arctic states in a stable and cooperative environment, where

⁸⁷ Juha Jokela, "Arctic Governance" in *Arctic Security Matters*, ed. Juha Jokela (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2015), 37-38.

⁸⁸ Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Ilulissat Declaration*, Arctic Ocean Conference (Ilulissat, 2008), 1.

⁸⁹ Mikkel Runge Olesen, "Common and competing interests", in *Arctic Security Matters*, ed. Juha Jokela (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2015), 44-49.

⁹⁰ Nils Wang, "Sikkerhedspolitik i Arktis – en ligning med mange ubekendte". (Copenhagen: Atlantsammenslutningen, 2012), 4-5.

⁹¹ For more on this issue, see Olesen, "Cooperation or Conflict in the Arctic".

conflicts elsewhere has not been allowed to affect the cooperation in the region.⁹² This has so far been successful, but it has been tested with the Russian actions in Georgia, Crimea and most recently in Syria, which has largely been criticised by the four other Arctic coastal states, all members of NATO. In effect of its members, the Alliance is, directly or indirectly, part of the Arctic, and it is therefore relevant to outline what role the Organisation has played in the region.

NATO in the Arctic

The Arctic primetime of NATO dates back to the Cold War. The shortest air distance between the US and the Soviet Union was across the Arctic Ocean, and a heavily militarised arms race took place in the region and involved intercontinental missiles, long-range bombers and submarines that patrolled the area with ballistic missiles.⁹³ The NATO countries, with the US in the front seat, also utilized several bases in the Arctic area, and the Alliance no doubt had a strong geostrategic incentive to be militarily present in the region.

As the tension of the Cold War waned, so did the presence of NATO. The region was no longer an area of potential conflict, and what followed was a period where the number of active military NATO installations were reduced.⁹⁴ NATO was still present in the Arctic region, but with a very limited scope and mostly via its Arctic member states, which increasingly directed their national focus on the region during the 2000s after a relative low point during the 1990s.⁹⁵

NATO was rather late to direct its attention back to the Arctic region, and it was relatively low-key when it finally did. In January 2009 NATO held a seminar in Reykjavik, which was to some extent a reaction to the Russia's flag-laying incident and the Russian-Georgian War in 2008.⁹⁶ The then-NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Sceffer noted in his keynote speech that clearly, the Arctic "is a region that is of

⁹² Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arktiske Usikkerheder", *DIIS Report* 2014: 20. (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies): 15-17.

⁹³ Zhilina, "The security aspects in the Arctic", 6.

⁹⁴ Zhilina, "The security aspects in the Arctic", 10.

⁹⁵ Sven G. Holtsmark, "Towards cooperation or confrontation? Security in the High North", *NATO Defence College* No. 45 (2009): 3.

⁹⁶ Haftendorn, "NATO and the Arctic", 340.

strategic interest to the alliance”,⁹⁷ and in the Chairman conclusions it was noted that the participants agreed “that it [remained] a priority to preserve the current stability in the High North as a region of low tension by managing the ongoing limited increase in military activities in a transparent, deliberate and measured way”.⁹⁸ However, the seminar did not lead to any immediate and concrete actions to increase the presence of NATO in the Arctic, and despite attempts to add a substantive paragraph on the Arctic in the Strasbourg-Kehl NATO summit declaration the same year, efforts were blocked by Canada, who did not want Alliance attention drawn to the region.⁹⁹ The declaration therefore ended by noting rather vaguely that the High North had generated increased international attention, and that it welcomed the initiative of the Reykjavik NATO seminar, which had raised the interest of the Allies.¹⁰⁰

The High North, or the Arctic, has not since been mentioned in the NATO summit communiqués or declarations, and there is no mention of its importance in the Alliance’s Maritime Strategy from 2011.¹⁰¹ Then-Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen noted in 2013 that “at this present time, NATO has no intention of raising its presence and activities in the High North”.¹⁰² He has since taken a new attitude towards the issue, and stated in 2014 that the changing dynamics of the Arctic region would require that NATO developed a new strategy for the area.¹⁰³ In other words, a renewed and reinforced role of NATO in the Arctic has been, and still is, ambiguous and disputed.

With this, it is important to note that NATO is to some extent present in the Arctic, and has been so throughout the period in question. Fundamentally, NATO is indirectly part of the Arctic through the concept of collective defence as stated in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty,¹⁰⁴ which also encompass the territories in the region. Furthermore, the Alliance members conducts annual military exercises in Norway and

⁹⁷ Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, *NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on security prospects in the High North* (Reykjavik: NATO Seminar, 2009).

⁹⁸ Seminar on Security Prospects in the High North, *Chairman’s Conclusions* (Reykjavik, 2009).

⁹⁹ Haftendorn, “NATO and the Arctic”, 341.

¹⁰⁰ NATO, *Strasbourg-Kehl Summit Declaration* (Strasbourg-Kehl: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2009), paragraph 60.

¹⁰¹ NATO, “Alliance Maritime Strategy” (Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2011).

¹⁰² Page Wilson, “Between a Rock and a Cold Place? NATO and the Arctic”, *E-International Relations*, November 28, 2013.

¹⁰³ Luke Coffey and Daniel Kochis, “NATO Summit 2014: Time to Make Up for Lost Ground in the Arctic”, *The Heritage Foundation*, August 21, 2014.

¹⁰⁴ NATO, *The North Atlantic Treaty* (Washington: The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 1949).

Iceland, and the capabilities of the NATO Integrated Air Defence System, including sensor installations, fighter aircrafts on quick reaction and interception alert, coupled with the regular early-warning surveillance flights, all extend to the Arctic region.¹⁰⁵ However, even though NATO is to some extent present in the area, the direct presence is not overwhelming and has yet to be codified in an Arctic strategy, and at present it seems fair to say that the Alliance remains reluctant to engage in the Arctic region.¹⁰⁶

One of the reasons for the reluctance of including NATO in the Arctic is, that only 4 out of the 5 coastal states in the Arctic are members of the Alliance, and Russia has previously been clearly dismissive of NATO's potential role in the region.¹⁰⁷ It therefore seems reasonable to explore the Russian position in the Arctic before engaging in an analysis of how and why Denmark and Norway has differed on the issue.

Russia in the Arctic

Russia is a very dominant player in the Arctic, and has generally sought to remain the frontrunner in region by building up and maintaining a strong military presence, and by resisting the inclusion of organisations like NATO.¹⁰⁸

Equally, the Arctic presence of Russia dates back, and peaked during the Cold War. Coupled with its military presence in the region during this period, the Soviet Union was also eager to explore, develop, and utilize its Northern Arctic territories. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the following economic recession marked a steep downhill for Russia's Arctic engagement, and even though an Arctic military presence was still aspired by Moscow, economic hardship put a temporary stop for further investments.¹⁰⁹ Since then, the Russian Arctic focus has indeed experienced a revival. Moscow released an Arctic strategy in 2001, started prioritizing a reinvestment in the area in 2005, and the aforementioned flag-planting incident in 2007, coupled with a new Russian Arctic strategy released in 2008, shows rather clearly that the region has played

¹⁰⁵ Perry and Anderson, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 145.

¹⁰⁶ Grønning, "NATO reluctant to engage in the Arctic".

¹⁰⁷ Perry and Anderson, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 147-148.

¹⁰⁸ Nils Wang, "Hvad er der på spil i Arktis?", *Ræson*, No. 1 (2014): 14.

¹⁰⁹ Kristian Søby Kristensen and Casper Sakstrup, "Russisk Politik efter Ukraine krisen" (Copenhagen: Center for Militære Studier, 2016), 5-6.

an important role for Russia from a symbolic, economical, and strategic standpoint.¹¹⁰ It also becomes apparent that Russia has led an ambiguous Arctic strategy. On the one hand, Russia has continuously infringed the airspace and territorial waters of the other Arctic states.¹¹¹ Coupled with the general build up of military capabilities and the flag-planting incident, one could easily interpret Russia as a threat to the Arctic stability. On the other hand, Russia has pursued a path of international cooperation through international law. It is part of the Arctic Council, it has signed the Ilulissat Declaration and has so far followed the provisions of UNCLOS on disputed territorial claims. An example of this is, that the country settled a long-time maritime dispute with Norway in 2010 concerning territories in the Barents Sea.¹¹² This can be explained by noting that it is very much in the interest of Russia to cooperate in the region. The Russian economic possibilities in the region are much depended on western investment and know-how, because the extraction of oil and gas in the Arctic is rather challenging. Russia therefore needs a stable environment with good relations to its Arctic neighbours.¹¹³ It is also worth mentioning that, other than economical interests in the region, Russia has a strategic interest, which is founded on maintaining a strong military presence in the region coupled with nuclear capabilities, since this can act as a balancing and deterring factor for NATO and the Alliance countries.¹¹⁴

For the most part, a cooperative environment has so far persisted in the Arctic, but the relationship between Russia and the other Arctic states have been tested by recent Russian actions.¹¹⁵ This is very clearly shown in the relations between Russia and NATO, where the Alliance suspended ‘all practical civilian and military cooperation’ with Russia in the NATO-Russia Council in response to the Ukraine crises – a council that was otherwise set up to increase cooperation.¹¹⁶ To further complicate the

¹¹⁰ Kristensen and Casper Sakstrup, ”Russisk Politik efter Ukraine krisen”, 7-8

¹¹¹ Rasmus Nilsson, ”Revanche – Russere – Retfærdighed” (Copenhagen: Center for Militære Studier, 2014), 32.

¹¹² Mikkel Runge Olesen, ”After Ukraine: Keeping the Arctic Stable”, *DIIS Policy Brief* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2014), 2.

¹¹³ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arktiske Usikkerheder”, 19-21; for more on Russia’s economical interests in the Arctic, see Jørgen Staun, ”Ruslands strategi i Arktis” (Copenhagen: Forsvarsakademiet, 2015).

¹¹⁴ Ekaterina Klimenko, ”Ruslands politik i Arktis”, *Udenrigs* no. 1 (2016): 45-46; Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arktis og Ukraine krisen”, 19.

¹¹⁵ Stephanie Pezard et. al. *Maintaining Arctic Cooperation with Russia. Planning for Regional Change in the Far North*, (California: RAND Corporation, 2017), 2.

¹¹⁶ NATO, ”Relations with Russia”, last updated April 6, 2017.

relationship, western sanctions directed at Russia have affected its ability to extract resources in the Arctic.¹¹⁷

The deteriorating relationship between the West and Russia has therefore also affected the cooperation in the Arctic, and there is a potential risk that conflicts elsewhere will spill-over into the region, even though this has so far been prevented.¹¹⁸ Further adding to the story is the fact that Russia has continuously emphasised that NATO has no part to play in the Arctic.¹¹⁹ Therefore, it seems that the Arctic cooperation is still working due to a common interest in stability, but at present the cooperation is strained, and an enhanced NATO presence in the region might affect this development in an undesirable way.¹²⁰ A stronger military presence of the Alliance might lead to a security dilemma. In this scenario, both sides would continuously build up military capabilities to enhance their security by seeking to outmatch the opponent, thus lowering the security of the counterpart, ultimately leading to a more tense and unsecure situation for both parts.¹²¹

Russia's renewed and increasing interest in the Arctic also becomes apparent if one looks to its military presence in the region. In the period of 2007-2014 leading up to the Ukraine crisis, Russia has modernized its Arctic capabilities. This was much needed due to the state of the military forces and its technology, and it has increasingly focused on a modernization of its Northern Fleet stationed in the Murmansk region, coupled with a focus on coastal- and air defence, radar surveillance, and infrastructure.¹²² It was planned that the Northern fleet was to be upgraded with new frigates, new strategic submarines, and corvettes, and an Arctic brigade was announced to balance Norwegian and Canadian military deployments while an increasing number of military exercises were conducted.¹²³

After the 2014 Ukraine crisis, Russia has continued to invest in Arctic capabilities. The perceived importance of Arctic security was underlined in 2014 by including the expanding Russian forces in the Arctic in a Joint Strategic Command North, with more

¹¹⁷ Klimenko, "Ruslands politik i Arktis", 43.

¹¹⁸ For more on the subject of potential spill-over, see: Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arktiske Usikkerheder".

¹¹⁹ Nilsson, "Revance – Russere – Retfærdighed", 32.

¹²⁰ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arktiske Usikkerheder", 23.

¹²¹ For more on the potential security dilemma in the Arctic, see Kristian Åtland, "Interstate Relations in the Arctic: An Emerging Security Dilemma?", *Comparative Strategy*, 33:2 (2014).

¹²² Kristensen and Sakstrup, *Russisk politik efter Ukraine krisen*, 9-10.

¹²³ Kristensen and Sakstrup, *Russisk politik efter Ukraine krisen*, 10-13.

resources to fund new equipment and increased training in several large-scale exercises – an example being a 2015 exercise mobilizing 12,000 troops and 250 aircrafts.¹²⁴ In addition, several airbases have been established or re-established in the Russian Arctic territories, enabling a stronger missile-defence whilst adding several new radar sites to the areas.¹²⁵ To be more exact, 14 new operational airfields have been unveiled, and as the following map indicates,¹²⁶ Russia now has a large amount of military installations scattered throughout its Arctic territories:



Furthermore Russia has 13 anti-submarine warfare aircrafts and 14 maritime patrol aircrafts that are capable of long-distance flying in the area. Lastly, as of 2015, the Northern fleet was comprised of 9 ballistic missile submarines, 4 nuclear powered, guided missile submarines, 13 nuclear powered submarines, and 7 diesel-electric

¹²⁴ Siemon T. Wezeman, "Military Capabilities in the Arctic: A New Cold War in the High North?", *SIPRI Background Paper* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2016): 13-14

¹²⁵ Ekaterina Klimenko, "Russia's Arctic Security Policy. Still quiet in the High North?", *SIPRI Policy Paper* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2016) 21.

¹²⁶ Illustration 3

submarines with upgrades and additions in the making. The number of submarines is however far from the previous level, and to put it into perspective, Russia inherited 240 submarines from its Soviet predecessor.¹²⁷ However, even though the list goes on, this should not necessarily be seen as a worrying sign. There is a high degree of continuity in the Russian military investments before and after the Ukraine crisis, and the cooperative attitude of Russia has largely been maintained throughout the period in the region.¹²⁸

Following the above outline, Russia has an interest in maintaining its relative strength in the Arctic region by resisting NATO involvement and by building up military capabilities, where it is currently a regional great power.¹²⁹ It will become apparent that the Russian capabilities are rather great when compared to both Denmark and Norway, especially in terms of military spending, and that this fact has affected the two Nordic states in different ways. With this backdrop, we now turn to the specific case of Denmark and Norway.

¹²⁷ Kathleen H. Hicks, ed., "Undersea Warfare in Northern Europe", *CSIS Report* (Lanham: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2016), 8.

¹²⁸ Kristensen and Sakstrup, *Russisk politik efter Ukraine krisen*, 23.

¹²⁹ Nils Wang, "Hvad er der på spil i Arktis?", 14.

Part II. What is the difference?

This chapter is dedicated to analysing the different positions of Denmark and Norway regarding the potentially enhanced role of NATO in the Arctic. It is therefore the aim to answer *how* they have differed, whereas *why* they differ will be the purpose of the following chapters. However, to answer how they have differed on this particular issue, a broader analysis and comparison is needed. Not just in terms of the policies and strategies followed in the respective Arctic areas, but also in more general terms. The Arctic policy of the two countries is an intertwined part of a general foreign, defence and security strategy, and thus cannot be separated from the overall picture. This is why the following will take its start by analysing and comparing these overall strategies in a historical perspective from a period ranging from the start of the Cold War where both countries became members of NATO to 2016, since this adds valuable and needed insight for when the focus is turned more specifically to the Arctic. How they differ therefore becomes a complicated question, but it is nevertheless worth the time to investigate in full, since this also becomes an important part of understanding *why* they have differed.

A historical comparison: The general picture

Both Norway and Denmark were founding signing members of NATO, and both states came to rely on the safety that the Alliance, and in particular the US, could provide. During the Cold War both countries found themselves in a geopolitically exposed area, but the two came to navigate differently through the decades of international bipolar tension

The overall strategy of Denmark during the Cold War was to promote cooperation and reassurance and to lead a policy of non-provocation towards the Soviet Union, and the country was not the strongest proponent of a tough NATO deterrence strategy. Put

differently, Denmark was a dove, and not a hawk within the Alliance.¹³⁰ This strategy came at odds with the general view and interests in NATO several times, but mainly during periods of greater tension. During the strained period in the late 1970's and 80's a majority was formed in the Danish parliament that opposed the existing NATO deterrence strategy, and from 1982 to 1988 the opposition forced the Danish Government to pursue a 'footnote policy' in the Alliance, hereby effectively distancing Denmark from several NATO initiatives. This was not well received, and Denmark was marked an outsider in the NATO community.¹³¹ However, it was not the only period where Denmark found itself at odds with initiatives promoted by NATO and the US. Throughout the Cold War the country did not allow foreign-led military bases in times of peace on the territory of Denmark proper, and Copenhagen tried to resist that nuclear capabilities would enter Danish territory, the informal exception being Greenland, where the US utilized several bases. This base- and nuclear policy was also pursued by Norway, but where Denmark was seen as the 'reluctant ally' within NATO, Norway was seen as the 'loyal critic'.¹³² The Danish détente strategy is clearly indicated by the continuously low levels of defence spending compared to other NATO allies, amongst them Norway, which also led to internal criticism in the Alliance.¹³³

While Norway sought to cooperate with Russia and promote cooperation and reassurance, Norway followed a more forceful deterrence strategy compared to Denmark. Norway's shared land-based and sea-based border with Russia was a great cause of concern in the country. It was therefore a permanent strategy for Norway to direct the attention of the Alliance on the 'flanking problem', whereby Oslo sought to engage and enforce the military commitment and contribution of NATO to its northern territories, which was in close proximity to a heavily militarised Russian area.¹³⁴ Somewhat related, Norway was a strong opponent of expanding NATO's area of interest beyond the North Atlantic. This meant opposing attempts and proposals to

¹³⁰ Nikolaj Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement 1973-2006*, vol. 6, *Dansk Udenrigspolitik Historie* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2006), 648.

¹³¹ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 650.

¹³² Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted Roles", 762.

¹³³ Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted roles", 765-766.

¹³⁴ Rolf Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995*, vol. 6, *Norsk utenrikspolitikk historie* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1997), 75-77.

engage NATO in other regions or areas, while also opposing NATO enlargement.¹³⁵ Interestingly this position was shared by Denmark during the Cold War period.¹³⁶

Another interesting difference in the period can be found in the military structure of the two countries. Despite having the smallest population of the two, Norway was able to mobilize three times the number of reserves that Denmark could during the Cold War, while the Danish army was considerably more mechanized. This can partly be justified by the difference in geography, where Norway greatly outweighs the Danish mainland in terms of landmass. But it was also because the Norwegian armed forces were more structured around the possibility of holding back a possible attack until allied reinforcements could arrive. The same cannot be said about Denmark, where few believed that the Danish armed forces would be able to defend the country for that long.¹³⁷

With the end of the Cold War a new reality appeared. This potentially allowed for a redefinition of foreign interests and defence policy, and while Denmark rushed to restructure its foreign strategy, Norway still remained somewhat focused on its traditional defence structure.

As the traditional threat changed, so did the role and aims of NATO. This was already recognized in the 1991 Strategic Concept, which called for an increased focus on mobile forces with a shorter response time that could engage in NATO operations.¹³⁸ While Denmark responded with establishing a deployable mechanized brigade of 4500 soldiers, Norway remained fixed on its territorial defence forces with long response time and less strategic mobility.¹³⁹ This focus is very apparent in the defence agreements from the time period. Where Denmark came to the conclusion that there was no immediate territorial threat to the existence of the country, Norway remained focused on territorial defence and the potential threat of Russia.¹⁴⁰ The difference continued well up in the 90's, where Denmark gradually shifted away from territorial

¹³⁵ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 96.

¹³⁶ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 24.

¹³⁷ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 25-27.

¹³⁸ NATO, *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept* (Rome: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 1991).

¹³⁹ Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted Roles", 769.

¹⁴⁰ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 25-27.

defence, while Norway to some extent remained focused on upholding homebound defence capabilities, and hereby followed a path of ‘military foot-dragging’.¹⁴¹

Denmark experienced an unprecedented level of territorial security in the aftermath of the Cold War, and was now surrounded by allies or friendly neighbours.¹⁴² Denmark was also fairly quick to respond to the new role and aim of NATO, and came to pursue an expanded idea of security policy by promoting and contributing to military operations and to the expansion of NATO in the Baltics.¹⁴³ This has since been deemed a militarisation of the Danish foreign policy¹⁴⁴ or simply an activist foreign policy.¹⁴⁵ Denmark hereby became a proponent of NATO enlargement and a supporter of operations outside the immediate NATO territory, the so-called ‘out-of-area’ operations, which contrasts the attitude held during the Cold War. Norway continued to oppose NATO enlargement in the 1990’s, and remained focused on NATO-Russian relations.¹⁴⁶ Here, Norway followed a path of continuity based on both deterrence and cooperation with its Russian neighbour, and Norway continued to seek Alliance presence in its northern territories by promoting the need for military exercises.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, throughout the 1990s Norway promoted the idea of a tri-service operative NATO commando on Norwegian territory where officers of both the UK and the US would have leading position.¹⁴⁸

The new role of NATO was promoted by the US, and Denmark was more than willing to alter its armed forces in order to keep the US engaged in Europe.¹⁴⁹ Denmark took part in the blockade of Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and took a forceful role both in Bosnia and in Kosovo, and Denmark hereby came to be at the

¹⁴¹ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches to Peace Operations*, 156.

¹⁴² Bertel Heurlin, ”Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden: Ligheder og forskelle hos de nordiske lande” in *Nationen eller Verden - De nordiske landes forsvar i dag*, ed. Bertel Heurlin (København: Jurist og Økonomforbundets forlag, 2007), 45.

¹⁴³ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 650.

¹⁴⁴ Bertel Heurlin, ”Denationalisation of Danish Armed Forces and Militarising of Danish Foreign Policy”, in *Denationalisation of Defence*, red. Janne Haaland Matlary and Øyvind Østerud (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 119-120.

¹⁴⁵ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches*, 94; Petersen, *Globalt og Europæisk Engagement*, 651.

¹⁴⁶ Petersson and Saxi, ”Shifted Roles”, 770.

¹⁴⁷ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 134-136.

¹⁴⁸ Paal Sigurd Hilde and Helene Forsland Widerberg, ”Norway and NATO: The Art of Balancing”, in *Common or Divided Security? German and Norwegian Perspectives on Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Robin Allers, Carlo Masala and Rolf Tamnes (Peter Lang: Frankfurt, 2014), 203.

¹⁴⁹ Håkon Lunde Saxi, ”So Similar”, 264-265.

centre of the NATO organisation.¹⁵⁰ It was therefore much in line with the Danish foreign policy to embrace the New Strategic Concept of NATO in 1999, where it supported the US backed idea that NATO should direct its focus even further to operations out-of-area. The initiative was viewed with scepticism by Norway, but this was toned down in fear of being singled out in the Alliance.¹⁵¹

Norway had also engaged in the NATO operations throughout the 90's, but it had done so with less engagement. In Bosnia, while Denmark contributed with combat troops, Norway concentrated on supplying supporting elements such as engineers and medical units, which gave little credit within the NATO alliance.¹⁵² In Kosovo both Denmark and Norway send F-16 aircrafts and ground forces to the NATO-led operation, but Norwegian forces were relatively slow to arrive. Seemingly this led to a military reform shortly thereafter that created the Norwegian Army High Readiness Force.¹⁵³ Norway hereby initiated a reform where it shifted some of its focus and resources away from national defence, and invested in the ability to contribute to expeditionary operations. The change of focus was late to arrive, and where Denmark was described as a NATO outsider during the Cold War, one can arguably state that the roles had now shifted, and that Norway had now taken the backseat within the Alliance.¹⁵⁴

Both countries showed their support to the US after the 9/11 attacks in 2001 by making immediate and similar contributions to the American-led operation in Afghanistan instigated in early 2002. However, the two countries differed on the issue of Iraq, and where Denmark contributed with expeditionary troops from the beginning of the campaign, Norway chose to withhold its modest contribution until a UN mandate had been secured.¹⁵⁵ Denmark hereby cemented its position as a staunch US supporter, while Norway remained critical of the operation and its foundation in international law.¹⁵⁶

This should also be seen in the light of the defence agreements in the period.

Denmark had been increasingly focused on threats far from its near environment, and it

¹⁵⁰ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 651.

¹⁵¹ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 40-41

¹⁵² Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted Roles", 770-771.

¹⁵³ Petersson and Saxi, "Shifted Roles", 771.

¹⁵⁴ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 30.

¹⁵⁵ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 47-49.

¹⁵⁶ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 60-61.

was held in a defence report from 2003, that there was no conventional threat to the Danish territory in the near future, but that future threats to Denmark would originate from new challenges on a more global level. This was followed up by the 2005-2009 Defence Agreement, in which it was underlined that the Danish military would now primarily focus on international operations, and not on territorial defence.¹⁵⁷ The same year, a few months prior, Norway presented its 2005-2008 Defence Agreement. A lot had happened, and Norway presented a plan that was much like the Danish, relying partly on deployable troops that could contribute in international operations. However, the Norwegian defence retained a greater focus on national tasks. Much of the Norwegian resources were allocated to its navy, and even though the navy was also intended as a deployable part of the military, its main tasks remained national.¹⁵⁸ Norway's gradual shift in focus and its participation in the out-of-area operations were welcomed in Washington, and it was also seen as a necessity to keep close ties to the US. However, it was still underlined that military presence was needed in its resource-rich Arctic areas.¹⁵⁹

This picture has to a large extent remained true through the 2000s and 2010s. The Danish Defence Commissions of 2008 and the later Defence Agreements are founded on the premises that threats with great consequences to Denmark are unlikely to occur, and the focus has remained on expeditionary troops, that can contribute to international missions and as a foreign policy tool for Denmark.¹⁶⁰ Norway has with its 2008 defence agreement prioritised the need for national military presence, especially in the High North,¹⁶¹ and has therefore kept, and to some extent reinforced, its focus on national tasks.¹⁶²

This should also be seen in light of the overall international development. As previously noted, the relationship between the NATO Alliance and Russia has been deteriorating through the late 2000s and 2010s, where Russia has taken a more self-assertive stance both in its near environment and abroad, notably in Georgia, Ukraine

¹⁵⁷ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, "Mod skiftende fjender", in *Helt Forsvarligt? Danmarks Militære Udfordringer i en Usikker Fremtid*, ed. Hans Mortensen (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2008), 12-13.

¹⁵⁸ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy", 54-55.

¹⁵⁹ Saxi, "So Similar", 269-270.

¹⁶⁰ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen et. al., "Ukraine-krisen og forandringerne af dansk forsvars- og sikkerhedspolitik" (Copenhagen: Center for Military Studies, 2014), 39-40

¹⁶¹ Saxi, "So Similar", 270.

¹⁶² For more on this issue, see Hilde and Widerberg, "Norway and NATO".

and Syria. In this light, Norway has taken a more proactive role in the debate concerning NATO's out-of-area role in conjunction with other countries, where it has advocated for an increased focus on the Alliance's core functions, namely that of collective defence within NATO territories, or a so called in-area focus.¹⁶³ Denmark on the other hand initially kept its eye on the importance of out-of-area operations,¹⁶⁴ but has nevertheless directed more attention to its Arctic territories, which will be elaborated upon below.

A historical comparison: The Arctic policies

With the above comparative analysis as a framework for understanding the fundamental differences between the Danish and Norwegian foreign, defence and security policies, it is now time to direct the attention to comparing the Arctic strategies and policies of the two countries in a historical perspective.

The Danish Arctic policy has first of all revolved around US presence in Greenland, and Denmark has, in periods, outsourced parts of its defence in its Arctic areas to the US.¹⁶⁵ During the Cold War, the US and NATO had a strategic interest in Greenland because of its geopolitical location. The Thule Air Base was therefore established in 1951-1952 as part of a strategy to assist long-range bombers and missiles to reach the Soviet Union, and was since used as part of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System defending the North American continent against the potential attack from Soviet intercontinental missiles.¹⁶⁶ In a 1951 Danish-American defence agreement Denmark gave the US permission to free movement for public or military vessels and aircrafts through Greenland's territory, which were considerable rights to concede to a foreign country.¹⁶⁷ Though the military role of Denmark in Greenland was limited it did however play a role in handling political issues that arose with the US presence. Throughout the Cold War several incidents caused political dispute, amongst them the debate surrounding an

¹⁶³ Rolf Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy: From the Arctic Frontier to the Afghan Battlefield", in *Common or Divided Security? German and Norwegian Perspectives on Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Robin Allers, Carlo Masala and Rolf Tamnes (Peter Lang: Frankfurt, 2014), 53-54.

¹⁶⁴ Górka-Winter and Madej, *NATO Member States and the New Strategic Concept*, 33-35.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Kristian Soby Kristensen.

¹⁶⁶ Nikolaj Petersen, "Arktis - Den nye dimension i dansk sikkerhedspolitik", *Tidsskrift for Søvæsen* 5 (2009): 307.

¹⁶⁷ Kristian Soby Kristensen, "Greenland, Denmark and the Debate on Missile Defense. A Window of Opportunity for Increased Autonomy", *DIIS Working Paper* no. 14 (2004), 4-5.

upgrade of the Thule Air Base radar in the 1980's, where Greenland sought more influence on the US-Denmark security agreements.¹⁶⁸ The US presence in Greenland remained until the end of the Cold War, and this much to the benefit of Denmark. Throughout the period, Greenland has been used as a 'bargaining chip' in Washington and in NATO, where Denmark, the otherwise 'reluctant ally', could gain some leverage or slack on other political issues.¹⁶⁹

After the Cold War the geostrategic importance of Greenland diminished, and so did the US presence in the country. In 1991 Denmark, Greenland and the US agreed that the latter would withdraw from most of its Greenlandic bases, hereby leaving the Thule Base as the only functioning US base in the country.¹⁷⁰ The Thule Base remained important, and in 2004 it was agreed by the US, Denmark and Greenland to upgrade the Thule Radar as part of a new American-led defence initiative, while also adding Greenland to the 1951 Danish-American defence agreement.¹⁷¹

After a period marked by relatively low interest, Danish attention was directed back to its Arctic areas in 2007, where the Kingdom focused on promoting cooperation while seeking to avoid a militarisation in the region.¹⁷² As part of this cooperative path, Denmark rushed to establish the Ilulissat declaration shortly after the Russian flag-planting incident in 2007 which could be perceived as power demonstration, whereby the Arctic coastal states agreed that they would follow a path along the lines of cooperation and adherence to international law.¹⁷³ In the midst of this renewed attention, self-rule was implemented in Greenland in 2009, and the country hereby gained further independence within the Kingdom, while still leaving the areas of defence and security policy to Denmark.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸ Petersen, "Arktis – Den nye dimension", 307-308.

¹⁶⁹ Kristensen, "Greenland, Denmark and the Debate on Missile Defence", 5; Also termed the 'Greenlandic Card'. For more on this issue, see: Anders Henriksen og Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Grønlandskortet. Arktis' betydning for Danmarks indflydelse i USA" (Copenhagen: Center for Militære Studier, 2017).

¹⁷⁰ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt engagement*, 342.

¹⁷¹ Petersen, "Arktis - Den nye Dimension", 313.

¹⁷² Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arctic-vism" in Practise: The Challenges Facing Denmark's Political-Military Strategy in the High North", *Arctic Yearbook 2014* (2014): 4.

¹⁷³ Nikolaj Petersen, "The Arctic Challenge to Danish Foreign and Security Policy" in *Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change* ed. James Kraska (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 156.

¹⁷⁴ Danish State Ministry, "Act of Greenlandic Self-Government", Act no 473 (Denmark: State Ministry, 2009).

Throughout the period the Danish military presence in Greenland has been somewhat limited. During the Cold War the primary focus rested upon exercising sovereignty by being militarily present in Greenland, by inspecting fishing activities and by maintaining the ability for sea rescues.¹⁷⁵ These have remained the tasks for the Danish Armed Forces (DAF) in and around Greenland, mainly with a focus on enforcing Danish sovereignty by virtue of presence and surveillance.¹⁷⁶ After the Cold War and in the early 2000s the Greenlandic territory was mostly seen as an area where the DAF had to be present to maintain tasks of low importance to national and international diplomacy. This can be seen through a remarkable non-mention of both Greenland and the Arctic in the Danish defence agreements of 1999 and 2004.¹⁷⁷ However, the 2008 defence commission and the defence agreements of 2010-2014 and 2013-2017 has put the Greenlandic areas back on the map, and a reinforced focus have been directed to the Arctic as one of the prime theatres of the DAF after the Afghanistan mission is winding down.¹⁷⁸

Norway also relied heavily on the contribution from NATO, and the US in particular, during the Cold War as a border-state to the Soviet Union. Oslo continuously tried to direct the attention of the Alliance to its 'Northern flank' to make the defence of Norway more credible, and several initiatives were taken, amongst them a joint command structure, earmarked forces and military exercises in the area.¹⁷⁹ Norway contributed to the joint NATO defence structure first of all with its geostrategic position as a springboard for possible operations against Russia, and the country had a key role as a platform for communication, navigation, early warning systems and intelligence in the area.¹⁸⁰ However, Norway remained wary about its relationship to its opposing neighbour, and this military position was coupled with a policy of reassurance and cooperation with Russia. The Norwegian Arctic policy throughout the Cold War can therefore be described as a balancing act. First of all by balancing deterrence with reassurance in its relationship with Russia to maintain relations while keeping a forceful

¹⁷⁵ Petersen, "Arktis – den nye dimension", 306.

¹⁷⁶ Marie Ackrén and Uffe Jakobsen, "Greenland as a self-governing sub-national territory in international relations: past, current, and future perspectives", *Polar Record* vol. 51, issue 4 (2014): 406.

¹⁷⁷ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Arctic Turn", [forthcoming].

¹⁷⁸ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arctic-vism", 7-8.

¹⁷⁹ Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", 52.

¹⁸⁰ Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", 53.

position, and secondly by balancing integration and screening in its relationship with NATO hereby promoting NATO presence in its northern territories while not allowing this presence to be too forceful.¹⁸¹

The Svalbard issue was an important part of this balancing act. Throughout the Cold War the Norwegian-Soviet relationship was strained over the issue of Svalbard, and Oslo sought to keep the areas from being drawn into the midst of the East-West conflict.¹⁸² The issue revolved around the territories and resources in and around Svalbard, and the status of the island as a de-militarized zone, as established by the 1920 Svalbard treaty.¹⁸³ While the archipelago has been an area of contention, it has also been a scene of cooperation between Norway and Russia throughout the Cold War. Both states sought cooperation due to security related geostrategic concerns, but also out of economical concerns since both wanted to extract resources from the rich waters and seabed surrounding the islands.¹⁸⁴

As the Cold War came to an end, the focus of both NATO and US turned away from the Northern parts of Norway. However, Norway remained fixed on the security of its Arctic areas and fought an up-hill battle to redirect NATO attention back to its territories throughout the 1990s, as the focus had shifted to out-of-area operations.¹⁸⁵ These initiatives were coupled with a path of cooperation with the Russian neighbour, and can therefore be seen as a continuation of the Cold War policy.¹⁸⁶

The turn of the century was marked by a lower interest in the Arctic. The limited attention on the High North were however short lived, and was already revoked in 2005 with the accession of the Stoltenberg II government, which stated that the High North would now be given top-priority.¹⁸⁷ The publishing of the *Norwegian Government's High North Strategy* in 2006 further manifested this renewed focus, which was first and foremost concerned with economical and environmental issues in Norwegian Arctic territories.¹⁸⁸ The 2006 also stated that the Government would seek to maintain the

¹⁸¹ Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 199-200.

¹⁸² Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 257.

¹⁸³ Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", 49.

¹⁸⁴ Leif Christian Jensen, *International Relations in the Arctic. Norway and the Struggle for Power in the New North* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 37-39.

¹⁸⁵ Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 202.

¹⁸⁶ Paal Sigurd Hilde and Helene Forsland Widerberg, "NATO's nye strategiske konsept og Norge", *Norsk Militær Tidsskrift* no. 4 (2010): 12.

¹⁸⁷ Jensen, *International Relations in the Arctic*, 55.

¹⁸⁸ Gade and Hilde, "Nordområdenes sikkerhetspolitiske betydning for NATO", 95.

interest of allies and partners in the North, and that it would “encourage increased participation in military exercises and training in the region”.¹⁸⁹

The relative low period ultimately ended in 2007, and Norway’s attention was now decisively redirected to its Arctic areas.¹⁹⁰ Norway still had a prominent economical interest in its Arctic areas due to natural resources and fisheries, and still sought to maintain cooperation with Russia. This was successfully exemplified by a 2010 agreement where the two countries settled on an old maritime dispute concerning delimitations in the Barents Sea.¹⁹¹ However, Norway has since begun strengthening its defence posture in its Arctic areas by investing in military capabilities, which has been reasoned with the importance of upholding a credible ability to exert sovereignty and conduct surveillance.¹⁹² Also, as previously mentioned, Norway has promoted an in-area initiative to increase NATO preparedness for facing future potential challenges in and around NATO territory – including the High North.¹⁹³

In comparison, Norway and Denmark have followed different paths in the Arctic areas, but some similarities do exist. First of all, both countries have relied on the presence of NATO, and in particular the US, as part of their deterring strategies aimed at the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Where Denmark allowed the US to take on a big role as part of the defence in Greenland while maintaining a low military presence, Norway retained a more active part in the defence of its northernmost territories. Denmark and Norway housed bases that were part of the overall NATO surveillance and intelligence network, and both countries to some extent maintained Allied presence in its Northern territories after the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, both countries have remained orientated on cooperation with the Soviet Union, and later Russia, while apparently keeping a watchful eye on the Russian movement in the areas. However, Norway has to some degree remained more focused on deterrence through national military capabilities,

¹⁸⁹ Norwegian Government, “The Norwegian Government’s High North Strategy” (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006), 20.

¹⁹⁰ Hilde and Widelberg, “Norway and NATO”, 204-205.

¹⁹¹ Perry and Anderson, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 34-36.

¹⁹² Perry and Anderson, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 36-37.

¹⁹³ Paal Sigurd Hilde, “Armed forces and security challenges in the Arctic”, in *Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic. Regional dynamics in a global world*, ed. Rolf Tamnes and Kristine Offerdal (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 152.

but also to some degree through the efforts to promote allied presence in its Arctic territories.

More recently, the Ukraine crisis in 2014 has affected the Arctic strategies of the two countries in comparable ways, and both states have sought to maintain good relations with Russia to the extent that it did not contradict NATO policy, while also upping deterring initiatives in the region aimed at potential Russian aggression.¹⁹⁴ In other words, both have led a dual-track policy in their dealings with Russia. However, the strategies and initiatives have remained different, and these dissimilarities seem to have affected the respective attitudes on whether or not NATO should have a more active role in the Arctic. To examine these differences, we now turn to the yet more narrow issue of how Norway and Denmark have differed on this particular topic in the period ranging from 2007 to 2016.

A contemporary comparison: NATO in the Arctic?

In order to clearly highlight the differences between Norway and Denmark, each of the countries' attitudes will be examined by firstly looking to the respective relevant official documents such as Arctic strategies, defence agreements and defence commissions, secondly by directing the focus to which actions and initiatives the two have taken related to the issue, and lastly by comparing the overall Norwegian and Danish attitudes to an enhanced NATO role in the Arctic. In other words, the following will seek to analyse what has been said, and what is done in relation to the issue. Though it must be expected that official documents are carefully written and are thus filtered through numerous of interests and concerns, it is often what is left out that proves to be important. The documents therefore provide some insight into what Norway and Denmark pursues in the Arctic, and to some extent also what they seek to avoid.

Norway: The persistent proponent

In the period examined Norway has released two documents that outline its Arctic strategy. *New Building Blocks in the North* was released in 2009, and is split into two parts. The first part is focused on cooperation in the region, and both outlines and

¹⁹⁴ Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Ukraine crisis moves north", 10-11.

reasons the increased Norwegian military focus on the High North.¹⁹⁵ The second part looks more broadly to the development in the region but is also much focused on describing its “good neighbourly relations” with Russia.¹⁹⁶ Prior to this statement it is noted that “NATO is present and must continue to be present in the High North, where the main task of the organisation is to help in maintain stability and predictability and to preserve the low levels of tension that has traditionally characterised the region”.¹⁹⁷ Though not outlining the specific role of NATO, Norway seemingly found that the Alliance has an important part to play in the region.

In 2014 the Erna Solberg-led government presented the report *Norway’s Arctic Policy*, which appears to be the new governments brochure-formed answer to the previous Stoltenberg-led government’s High North Strategy.¹⁹⁸ Formulated after the Ukraine crisis, it is stated several times that Norway and its allies stand behind the regulations of international law, but that the country still seeks to cooperate with Russia in the North.¹⁹⁹ In continuation it is stated that Norwegian military presence in the Arctic, and also that of its allies through training and exercising, is an important condition for stability and security,²⁰⁰ and that the presence of the Alliance is natural prolongation of the Norwegian membership in NATO.²⁰¹ Furthermore, a closer cooperation between the Norwegian joint headquarters in Bodø and NATO’s command structure is promoted with the reasoning that it would strengthen the Alliance’s ability to manage potential situations of crisis in the North.²⁰² Norway hereby remained focused on promoting NATO’s role in its Arctic strategies, but this time around with concrete suggestions as to how this role should manifest itself.

If attention is directed to other official documents relevant to the Norwegian Arctic policy, several reports, commissions and defence agreements have been released in the period. Firstly, it is interesting to note than in the 2007 Chief of Defence’s *Defence Study*, it was stated that the primary security concern in Norway would be in its

¹⁹⁵ Norwegian Government, “New Building Blocks in the North. The next Step in the Government’s High North Strategy” (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009).

¹⁹⁶ Norwegian Government, “New Building Blocks in the North, 54-57.

¹⁹⁷ Norwegian Government, “New Building Blocks in the North, 52.

¹⁹⁸ Arne O. Holm, “Fra Kabul til Nordkloden”, *High North News*, November 18, 2014.

¹⁹⁹ Norwegian Government, “nordkloden. Verdiskaping og ressurser. Klimaendringer og kunnskap. Utviklingen nord på kloden angår oss alle” (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014), 11, 16.

²⁰⁰ Curiously, the examples of ‘training and exercising’ as allied presence is only mentioned in the English translation.

²⁰¹ Norwegian Government, “nordkloden”, 16.

²⁰² Ibid.

northern territories, and that the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF) needed to maintain an ability to stand up to any minor uses of force within its territory. It was believed that the threat was now more based on minor incidents aimed at bending the political will in Norway, and it was regarded that these were most likely going to happen in sea- or air territory.²⁰³ The 2008 long-term defence plan for 2009-2012 followed this analysis, and further stated that the Norwegian northern territories would continue to be its most important strategic area, where an increased military presence was needed.²⁰⁴ It was also mentioned that Norway should work towards an increased NATO attention and an understanding from its allies on the challenges in the High North, and that it should undertake regular exercises and training to increase the presence in the area.²⁰⁵ The same line was followed in a new strategic concept for the NAF in 2009 both in terms of Allied presence through exercises and training in the Northern parts of Norway,²⁰⁶ and that Norway had to continue working for allied attention to its Northern territories.²⁰⁷ In 2012 a new long-term agreement for the NAF was released, where, much like the in 2014 Arctic strategy, a reinforced bond between the national joint headquarters in Bodø with NATO's command structure was promoted.²⁰⁸ It was argued that this would give the Alliance a more visible role in the north, increase the knowledge and situational awareness of NATO, and that the presence of NATO in the area was a 'legitimate and natural prolongation' of the Norwegian membership.²⁰⁹ Natural or not, it is apparent that Norway has rather consistently promoted the presence of NATO in its Arctic areas while also upgrading its own military position in its northernmost territories.

The same patterns are present if one looks to defence related official documents released after the Ukraine crisis. In the 2015 defence commission *Unified Effort*, it was underlined that the future relationship with Russia was going to be strained.²¹⁰ This necessitated an increased NATO awareness through exercises and training in Norwegian territory, and the term 'deterrence' is used in reference to the need for

²⁰³ Sverre Diesen, *Forsvarssjefens forsvarsstudie* (Oslo, 2007), 5-6.

²⁰⁴ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "St.prp. nr. 48. Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier" (Oslo, 2008), 12.

²⁰⁵ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "St.prp. nr. 48. Et forsvar til vern", 37-38.

²⁰⁶ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "Evne til innsats" (Oslo, 2009), 41.

²⁰⁷ Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "St.meld. nr. 15. Interesser, ansvar og muligheter. Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk", (Oslo, 2009), 91.

²⁰⁸ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "Prop. 73 S. Et forsvar for vår tid" (Oslo, 2012), 26.

²⁰⁹ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "Prop. 73 S. Et forsvar for vår tid", 31.

²¹⁰ Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge, "Et felles løft" (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2015), 66.

increased national and allied military presence in its northern areas.²¹¹ Again it is suggested that the command in Bodø should be tied closer to the NATO's command system because this would 'bind NATO and Norway closer together', and furthermore that a direct line should be established to connect Bodø to the commands in US and Britain.²¹² The 2016 defence agreement is much in line with the commission's advice, and it is stated that Norway should remain committed to conducting exercises and training for Allied forces in its northern areas, since this presence increases the knowledge and awareness of the northern territories, while also showing alliance solidarity.²¹³

Norwegian actions and initiatives largely confirm what can be concluded from the official documents. Throughout the period, Norway has hosted and prepared a number of exercises in its northern territories where NATO members and partners have been invited. This practise began in 2006 with Operation Cold response, which has since been conducted several times, examples being the 2010 exercise that included 9000 troops from 14 different countries,²¹⁴ and the 2016 exercise also with 14 nations participating, but with 15.000 troops taking part in the training exercise.²¹⁵ Also, Norway has hosted several NATO-led anti-submarine warfare exercises in its northern waters, and the 2016 exercises involved more than 5000 troops.²¹⁶ The list goes on, and it is apparent that Norway has put action behind its words, and has largely been successful in promoting conjoined allied exercises and training in and hereby presence in its Arctic territories. Further cementing this point is, that it was agreed in 2016 that 330 US marine troops should be sent to Varnæs, located close to Trondheim in Norway, with the purpose of taking part in military training in harsh Arctic temperatures.²¹⁷ As noted by a Norwegian civil servant, this is however on a strictly rotational basis.²¹⁸

²¹¹ Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge, "Et felles løft", 78.

²¹² Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge, "Et felles løft", 76.

²¹³ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, "Kampkraft og bærekraft. Iverksettelsesbrev til forsvarssektoren for langtidsperioden 2017-2020" (Oslo, 2016), 32.

²¹⁴ Perry and Anderson, *The New Strategic Dynamics*, 37.

²¹⁵ Norwegian Armed Forces, "Cold Response 2016", accessed May 19, 2017.

²¹⁶ John J. Hamre and Heather A. Conley, "The Centrality of the North Atlantic to NATO and US Strategic Interests", in *NATO and the North Atlantic. Revitalising Collective Defence* ed. John Andreas Olsen (Abingdon: RUSI Whitehall Paper, 2017), 48-49.

²¹⁷ Dan Bilefsky and Henrik Pryser Libell, "Cold War Jitters Resurface as U.S. Marines Arrive in Norway", *The New York Times*, January 16, 2017.

²¹⁸ Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

Norway has also been rather consistent in trying to direct NATO attention to the Arctic, and has at several occasions briefed the NATO council on the developments in the region, both in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2013. Also in an attempt to direct attention and promote understanding of the developments in the region, Norway has invited NATO ambassadors to its northernmost territories in 2007, and the North Atlantic Council to Bodø in 2013 to discuss Arctic issues.²¹⁹ Partly related, Oslo has advanced the notion of a closer cooperation between the Norwegian joint headquarters in Bodø with NATO's command structure, reasons being that this would strengthen the Alliance's awareness and ability to manage crisis situations in the North. This would to arguably bring NATO closer to the High North, since Norway moved its headquarters to Bodø in 2010, effectively placing inside the Arctic as defined above.²²⁰

Very much related, beginning in 2007-2008 Norway has been a prominent advocate for an in-area focus of NATO, most notably exemplified by the 'core area initiative' in 2008, where it was suggested that NATO should begin to devote more attention to security challenges within Alliance territory.²²¹ This should be seen in the backdrop of the various distant NATO operations like in Afghanistan, which demanded most of the Alliance attention at the time. It was presented shortly after the Russian intervention in Georgia, which served as a catalyst for Norway and other states that sought to promote NATO's emphasis on collective self-defence and an enhanced military visibility in Europe.²²² This notion was eventually successfully put forward, and accepted by the other member states in the 2010 Lisbon Summit declaration.²²³ Norway has since taken an active role in promoting the need for a strengthened bond between NATO and national headquarters while also underlining the need of joined training and exercising.²²⁴ Interestingly, the core area initiative and its general suggestions is very much related to what Norway has sought from NATO in the Arctic, where it has continuously called for cooperation between Bodø and the NATO command, while also

²¹⁹ Gade and Hilde, "Nordområdernes sikkerhetspolitiske betydning for NATO", 38; Paal Sigurd Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security – The Norwegian Perspective", in *Northern Security and Global Politics. Nordic-Baltic strategic influence in a post-unipolar world*, ed. Ann-Sofie Dahl and Pauli Järvenpää (London: Routledge, 2014), 100.

²²⁰ Duncan Depledge, "Hard Security Developments" in *Arctic Security Matters*, ed. Juha Jokela (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2015), 61.

²²¹ Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security", 100-101.

²²² Interview with Paal Sigurd Hilde.

²²³ Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security", 100-101.

²²⁴ Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", 54.

calling for more Alliance awareness and overall presence in the region. The numerous large-scale exercises in the Norwegian Arctic territories prove to some extent that this has been successful. Norway has therefore taken a very active role in promoting and encouraging NATO presence in the Arctic, especially within its own northern territories, while also promoting an overall redirection of NATO's focus to Alliance territory.

Denmark: The silent treatment

Denmark has released two official documents outlining its Arctic strategy. The first was a proposal for a strategy called *The Arctic in a Time of Change* and was released in 2008, the same month as the Ilulissat declaration was formulated in Greenland, which was part of an effort to place Denmark centrally in the Arctic developments.²²⁵

Although this was the stated attempt, the strategy first and foremost looks inward instead of outward, and not much is stated that address the overall security situation in the Arctic area. It seems to a large extent that the strategy was first and foremost a Danish attempt of improving relations with Greenland, which stood before the implementation of Self Rule in 2009.²²⁶ Furthermore worth noting is that NATO is not mentioned when the subject of Arctic cooperation is broad forward.²²⁷ In fact, NATO is only mentioned one time throughout the document, and this is not in the context of regional security.

In 2011 Denmark put forward its new Arctic strategy. Beyond symbolizing a general shift in Danish Arctic policy where the Kingdom acted as a unified actor that formally looked past internal issues, the new strategy looked more to the international development in the region.²²⁸ Though it is recognised that the renewed interest in the region might bring challenges with it in terms of sustaining peace and stability in the region, the attention remained fixed on cooperation and on avoiding a militarization of the Arctic.²²⁹ This did not mean that the presence of the Danish Armed Forces (DAF) was reduced, and it is ascribed an important role in exercising sovereignty and conducting surveillance in and around the Danish Arctic areas. Both tasks are regarded

²²⁵ Home Rule of Greenland and Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Arktis I En Brydningstid. Forslag Til Strategi for Aktiviteter I Det Arktiske Område" (Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008), 7-8.

²²⁶ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Arctic Turn" (Forthcoming).

²²⁷ Home Rule of Greenland and Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Arktis I En Brydningstid", 13-17.

²²⁸ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Arctic Turn" (Forthcoming).

²²⁹ Government of Denmark, Government of Greenland, and Government of the Faroe Islands, "Strategy for the Arctic 2011– 2020" (Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011), 9-10.

as central in the region that is opening up to more activity, and it is noted that ‘While the Kingdom’s area in the Arctic is covered by the NATO treaty Article 5... the enforcement of sovereignty is fundamentally a responsibility of the Realm’s central authorities’.²³⁰ While pointing to the importance of NATO’s collective defence for Danish safety, the exercise of sovereignty is hereby regarded as a Danish task, and not one in which NATO should participate.

Several other relevant official documents have been released in the period, the first of them being the 2008 Defence Commission report that held several similarities to the 2011 Arctic strategy.²³¹ Firstly, it is recognised that the climate change will increase activity in and around the Arctic areas, which will require more military presence with the aim of exercising sovereignty and upholding surveillance.²³² Secondly, it is noted that even though the sovereignty of Denmark is ultimately secured in a strategic perspective through the collective defence of NATO, the exercise of Danish sovereignty and the safeguard of Denmark’s existence and integrity ultimately rests with the DAF.²³³ This trend seems to continue through the defence agreements of 2010-2014 and 2013-2017. Not much is said about the potential role of NATO in the Arctic region, but the Alliance is generally referred to as a ‘cornerstone’ in Danish defence and security policy, that acts as a general strategic guarantee for the sovereignty of Denmark.²³⁴ The importance of NATO is hereby restated, but the focus remains on how the DAF can continue to uphold its functions in the Arctic.²³⁵ Amongst other initiatives the 2010-2014 agreement created an Arctic command, hereby streamlining and pooling the previously divided Faeroe Islands and Greenland Commands.²³⁶ Furthermore, the 2013-2017 agreements added more Arctic capabilities to the arsenal, including a new Knud-Rasmussen-class inspection vessel and 9 new Seahawk helicopters.²³⁷ It is therefore clear that the DAF had directed some attention to the Arctic areas, but not in the context of NATO.

²³⁰ Government of Denmark, ”Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020”, 20.

²³¹ Danish Defence Commission of 2008, ”Dansk Forsvar - Globalt Engagement. Beretning Fra Forsvarskommissionen Af 2008” (Copenhagen: Ministry of Defense, 2009), 17.

²³² Danish Defence Commission of 2008, ”Dansk Forsvar”, 72.

²³³ Danish Defence Commission of 2008, ”Dansk Forsvar”, 97-98.

²³⁴ Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2010-2014” (Copenhagen: Christiansborg, 2009), 1; Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2013-2017” (Copenhagen: Christiansborg, 2012), 1.

²³⁵ Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2010-2014”, 2; Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2013-2017”, 3-4.

²³⁶ Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2010-2014”, 10-11.

²³⁷ Danish Parliament, ”Forsvarsforlig 2013-2017”, 10-11.

In 2016 an extensive analysis of the future tasks of the Danish military in the Arctic was published. In a prior but related security outline it is stated, that the Ukraine crisis has affected the overall security environment and that the developments in the Arctic have become more unpredictable.²³⁸ Taking its offset in this outline, and in line with previous official documents regarding the Arctic, the continued importance of the NATO membership is mentioned,²³⁹ but that the tasks of sovereignty enforcement still rests with Denmark in times of peace.²⁴⁰ Though relations have deteriorated with Russia, it has not seemingly led Denmark to come to support the idea of an increased NATO presence in the Arctic.

The same year ambassador Peter Taksøe Jensen released a report, in which he had been tasked to review the strategic and core interests of Denmark.²⁴¹ He had done so focusing much on a unified Danish Kingdom as an ‘Arctic great power’, and had also looked to the changing relationship between the West and Russia and its possible implications for the Arctic.²⁴² The report notes that there are signs of an increasingly self-assertive Russian Arctic policy, and that the increased scepticism which the general Russian actions and military build up in the Arctic is regarded with, might facilitate the need for an increased NATO focus in the region.²⁴³ This is however only reflective of the author’s standpoint and not that of the Danish Government, and considerations of NATO’s enhanced role hereby continued to be somewhat absent from Danish public documents.

As actions often speak louder than words – especially if these are part of cautiously formulated official documents – it seems meaningful to turn the attention to which actions or initiatives Denmark has taken regarding the potential role of NATO in the Arctic. Needless to say, they are few.

It seems that Denmark has yet to host a military exercises where a large number of NATO-members have participated. In 2015 Denmark conducted the preparedness

²³⁸ Arbejdsgruppen vedr. styrkelse af forsvarsministeriets opgaveløsning i Arktis, ”Sikkerhedspolitisk redegørelse om udviklingen i Arktis” (Copenhagen: AGFOA, 2016), 3, 14.

²³⁹ Danish Ministry of Defence, ”Forsvarsministeriets fremtidige opgaveløsning i Arktis”, 52.

²⁴⁰ Danish Ministry of Defence, ”Forsvarsministeriets fremtidige opgaveløsning i Arktis”, 65.

²⁴¹ Peter Taksøe-Jensen, ”Dansk diplomati og forsvar i en brydningstid. Vejen frem for Danmarks interesser og værdier mod 2030” (Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016), 93.

²⁴² Taksøe-Jensen, ”Dansk diplomati og forsvar i en brydningstid”, I, 9-10, 29.

²⁴³ Taksøe-Jensen, ”Dansk diplomati og forsvar i en brydningstid”, 72.

exercise ‘Arctic Response’ in and around Greenland, where both Icelandic and American troops were involved.²⁴⁴ Otherwise it would seem that military exercises in and around Greenland is first and foremost conducted by Denmark, which has recently begun exercising with its F-16 fighters in the region.²⁴⁵ This does not mean that Denmark has not been participating in other military exercises in the region, but that Denmark has refrained from hosting these events.

Also, Denmark has been relatively passive in NATO forums on the matter. During the previously mentioned Reykjavik conference in 2009 regarding Arctic issues, then-Defence Minister Søren Gade agreed that the role of NATO should be discussed, but without speaking for or against a possible enhanced NATO role.²⁴⁶ Since then, not much has officially been stated regarding the topic, and it would seem that Denmark has followed a 2009 recommendation about avoiding to problematize Arctic in a NATO-context.²⁴⁷ According to a Danish civil servant, it is recognised that NATO should follow the developments in the Arctic, but that Denmark does not see the Alliance having an active role in the region.²⁴⁸

As previously noted, Denmark has been a strong supporter of the out-of-area NATO focus, and has contributed forcefully in a multitude of operations, and Denmark has previously opposed the logic of collective in-area defence versus out-of-area operations, arguing that both are important for the security of NATO members.²⁴⁹ While initially opposing the Norwegian core area initiative and its implications, Denmark, like other critics, came around, and the NATO Lisbon summit declaration came to reflect a renewed geographical focus and the linking NATO command to national joint headquarters.²⁵⁰ This is not as far as to say, that Denmark has called for this transition, or that the Kingdom has made any calls for increased NATO presence neither in the Arctic nor in its Arctic areas. The worsening relationship between Russia and the West has not seemingly led to a more engaging position on the matter, and Denmark has not

²⁴⁴ Arbejdsgruppen vedr. styrkelse af forsvarsministeriets opgaveløsning i Arktis, ”Sikkerhedspolitisk redegørelse om udviklingen i Arktis”, 17.

²⁴⁵ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”The Ukraine crisis moves north”, 10.

²⁴⁶ Søren Gade, ”Speech by Danish Minister Søren Gade, session three ‘options for closer cooperations’” (Reykjavik: Seminar on Security Prospects in the High North, 2009), 3.

²⁴⁷ Henrik Jedig Jørgensen and Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Hold hovedet koldt! En scenariebaseret undersøgelse af forsvarrets opgaver i Grønland frem mod 2030” (Copenhagen: Dansk Institut for Militære Studier, 2009), 3.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Danish civil servant.

²⁴⁹ Gorka-Winter and Madej, *NATO Member States and the New Strategic Concept*, 33-34.

²⁵⁰ Hilde and Widelberg, ”Norway and NATO”, 210-213.

taken many initiatives that could draw NATO closer to the region. Though NATO has directed some of its attention back to in-area developments, this has not primarily been in the Arctic, but rather in Eastern Europe, where the Baltic States have called for NATO support.²⁵¹ In 2016 Denmark agreed to contribute to the so-called Enhanced forward presence-operation in the Baltics by sending around 200 soldiers to Estonia.²⁵² This would indicate that Denmark does not oppose an in-area focus of NATO all together, but that it would rather support engagement elsewhere. It would therefore be reasonable to state, that throughout the period, Denmark has clearly not sought to enhance NATO's role in the Arctic.

What is the difference?

Throughout the period noticeable differences have existed between the Norwegian and Danish positions regarding NATO in the Arctic. Norway has continuously drawn the Alliance closer to its Arctic areas by conducting training and exercises, by promoting an increased awareness and knowledge about the region, and indirectly by promoting an in-area focus in NATO circles, which has come to reflect the developments in the Alliance. While initially sceptic about the implications of the new development in NATO, Denmark came to agree on the subject, and in accordance to a Norwegian civil servant that has followed the developments, there is no great difference between the two countries on this issue, and both have “whole-heartedly supported” the last two NATO summit declarations.²⁵³ Albeit this might be true, Denmark has not come to support, at least publically or through initiatives, that NATO should have an active part to play in the Arctic. This is furthermore confirmed by a Danish civil servant, and by an interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen.²⁵⁴ The Norwegian initiatives have been manifold, and it is confirmed by a Norwegian civil servant that they indeed are “very keen for NATO to keep good situational awareness of the developments in the High North as a consequence of NATO's increased, or renewed... focus on collective security”.²⁵⁵

From the above it can be concluded that Norway has promoted an enhanced role for NATO in its Arctic areas. It has done so by advancing an increased NATO presence and

²⁵¹ Ian Birdwell, “The NATO of the New North”, *Center for Maritime Security*, May 16, 2017.

²⁵² Danish Ministry of Defence, “Fremskrudt tilstedeværelse/Enhanced forward Presence”, Juli 2016.

²⁵³ Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

²⁵⁴ Interview with Danish civil servant; interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen.

²⁵⁵ Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

awareness in the Arctic through initiatives and general proposals in NATO context. Denmark has made no such advancements, and it is has become somewhat clear that Denmark does not see a more active or enhanced role for NATO in the Arctic. Though there is not much evidence that would indicate that Denmark has attempted to counter or block Norwegian initiatives, it seems fair to state that Denmark has not been unenthusiastic about enhancing NATO's role or presence in the region beyond the present limited role of offering a security guarantee through collective defence. The absence of overall discussion and initiatives on the matter could also lead one to state, that Denmark has been somewhat reluctant to engaging NATO more actively in the region.

Now, as the differences have become rather apparent, the obvious question of *why* comes to mind. Why has Norway persistently proposed an enhanced role and presence of NATO in the Arctic, whilst Denmark has taken a seemingly more unenthusiastic stance towards the issue?

Part III. Why have they differed?

It is now the aim to answer *why* Norway and Denmark has differed on the issue of NATO in the Arctic. This will be done by utilizing the different theoretical, explanatory levels, which all add important additions to understanding the foreign policies and attitudes of the two countries.

The systemic explanatory level: Neoclassical realism, capabilities and the international system

First of all, both in line with the neoclassical theoretical approach and the framework of Mouritzen and Wivel, one must look to the systemic level in order to understand the basic mechanisms behind Norway and Denmark's attitudes and political directions.

Both countries are part of a unipolar international system led by the US, which has prevailed since the end of the Cold War.²⁵⁶ Unipolarity can be defined as a structure in which one state's capabilities are too great to be counterbalanced.²⁵⁷ Though not only a matter of military spending, the difference in capabilities can be hinted by noting that the US' defence budget amounted to 597.5 billion US\$ in 2015, while Russia used 65.6 billion US\$.²⁵⁸ In comparison, Denmark used 3,45 billion US\$ in 2015, while Norway's defence spending amounted to 5.51 billion US\$.²⁵⁹ As previously mentioned, Russia has undergone an economic upturn prior to the 2014 Ukraine crisis, and has increasingly marked itself on the international stage, both in the Arctic and elsewhere. Though a big power in the Arctic, especially in terms of military capabilities as was portrayed earlier, Russia is still lacking far behind the US in terms of all-around capabilities, and in 2015 it was estimated that while Russia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounted to

²⁵⁶ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 31.

²⁵⁷ Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", 9.

²⁵⁸ International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Chapter Two. Comparative defence statistics", *The Military Balance*, 116:1 (2016): 19.

²⁵⁹ International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Chapter Four: Europe", *The Military Balance*, 116:1 (2016): 89; 124.

9,329.3 US\$, the US' GDP was estimated to be 56,115.7 US\$.²⁶⁰ Numbers aside, both the US and Russia still have great influence internationally, and both countries seem to dwarf both Denmark and Norway in terms of relative capabilities, and it can reasonably be stated, that they have done so throughout the period examined.

The dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War would arguably give an incentive for Norway and Denmark to balance the new unipolar power of the US, because the overwhelming power could be perceived as a threat for other states that seek security and survival in an anarchical world where there is no security guarantees.²⁶¹ However, this has not been the case, and both Norway and Denmark has followed a bandwagoning strategy in its relations with the US. In fact, in a unipolar world like today where the US' relative power is of such a great magnitude, there is great incentive for second-tier states to bandwagon, or at least to avoid showing enmity toward the unipole, due to the great difference in capabilities.²⁶² This especially holds true for small states. Both Norway and Denmark can be said to fall into the category of 'small states' if measured by power resources and the following influence this permits in the Arctic. In this respect, it would be hard for both states to defend themselves militarily or exert influence on regional politics without being members of Alliances or international organisations.²⁶³ The same can also be expected on an international level, and this can explain why both countries have followed a strategy of bandwagoning in their relationships with the US, since this has secured their interests, power and safety in an otherwise unsafe world.²⁶⁴

The above historical comparison shows that this has been a consistent track in the foreign and security policies of Denmark and Norway, and both countries have continued to award great importance to their relationship with the US and NATO.²⁶⁵ This has also been the case in the Arctic, where both countries allowed presence on their territories throughout the Cold War. But in their strategy of bandwagoning, the two countries have also differed. While both countries had some reservations

²⁶⁰ "GDP per capita (current US\$)", The World Bank, visited 17/05-2017, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>.

²⁶¹ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 31-32.

²⁶² Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", 24-25.

²⁶³ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Ukraine crisis moves north", 3.

²⁶⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 126.

²⁶⁵ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 48-50; Tamnes, "Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", 51-52.

concerning their ties to the US and the NATO alliance commitments during the Cold War, there was never much doubt that Denmark and Norway remained fixed on maintaining the relationship, since this offered security within a system of bipolar tension. As the system went from bipolar to unipolar with the end of the Cold War, Denmark has pursued a bandwagoning strategy aimed at strengthening its US ties by contributing forcefully to international operations, even though these have, at times, been controversial.²⁶⁶ Norway has done the same, although to a lesser degree, and has instead invested in national military capabilities that contribute to the overall collective defence of NATO, while striving to draw the US and the Alliance closer to its own territories.²⁶⁷ This level of explanation does not offer many tools that can help explain why the two comparable 'small states' have differed in approach, but it does provide some insight to why the two states have followed a path of bandwagoning. As small states with low relative power resources, there is not much incentive to do otherwise, and from a perspective of security and power maximisation, it seems reasonable that the countries have followed the unipolar power and the NATO commitment, since this has offered some influence on regional politics coupled with more safety from external uncertainties, both in the Arctic and elsewhere.

It has also become apparent that Russia has affected both Norway and Denmark throughout the period examined. During the bipolar period of the Cold War both states continuously sought to avoid stepping across the toes of Moscow by keeping its allies at an arms length.²⁶⁸ This cautiousness was coupled with a balancing strategy towards the Soviet Union, where both states contributed to the US and NATO's overall strategy, first and foremost in a geostrategic manor. Post-Cold War both countries seemed to tighten their relationship with the US and NATO as the Russian threat dwindled. However, in recent times Russia has started to take a more forward-leaning approach both politically and militarily.²⁶⁹ It would seem that Denmark and Norway has reacted differently to this trend, especially in the attitudes towards drawing NATO closer to its territories. As this theoretical level is most concerned with the international system and

²⁶⁶ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 48-50.

²⁶⁷ Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security", 100-101.

²⁶⁸ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 650; Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 100.

²⁶⁹ Svein Efstestad, "Norway and the North Atlantic: Defence of the Northern Flank", in *NATO and the North Atlantic. Revitalising Collective Defence* ed. John Andreas Olsen (Abingdon: RUSI Whitehall Paper, 2017), 64.

the position of states determined by their relative capabilities, it cannot account for these dissimilarities either. Both states hold roughly the same position within the international system and are comparably small states in relation to Russia. It can however point to that both countries have an incentive to follow Russia's policy closely due to the difference in relative power, which makes up a potential threat in an uncertain international system.²⁷⁰

Though not being able to account for the dissimilarities of Denmark and Norway, this theoretical level has nonetheless offered a clarification on the premises on which the two countries' strategies lie. Both are small states that has traditionally relied on NATO and on bandwagoning the US for security and influence. Both countries have also kept an eye out for Russia throughout the period, whose relative power has outweighed the two. Therefore one can say, that both states have been under similar constraints within the international system. But in their bandwagoning strategies, they have come to differ. While Denmark has invested in expeditionary capabilities in order to contribute to NATO and US-led far-away operations, Norway has kept some form of orientation towards national defence capabilities throughout the period. To explain why Denmark and Norway, two otherwise comparable countries in terms of capabilities, have differed in their ways of manoeuvring inside this constraining international system, we must therefore take a step down the explanatory ladder to the interstate level.

The interstate explanatory level: Geopolitics and self-interests

Now, as geography becomes an important factor for explaining the policies of the two countries, it is important to note that the US is a faraway great power located overseas, while Russia, a relatively strong regional player, is in far greater proximity to both Norway and Denmark. In a geopolitical analysis, this specific point carries much weight for understanding a country's foreign policy, since it is held that the challenges a state faces are likely to originate from its proximate environment and the strong states that project power in the area.²⁷¹ It has already been established that Norway and Denmark are small powers compared to Russia, and that the two have not seen eye-to-eye with the Russia historically. This tendency has to some extent reappeared following the increasingly self-assertive stance taken by Russia in the recent years coupled with its

²⁷⁰ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 30.

²⁷¹ Mouritzen and Wivel, *Explaining Foreign Policy*, 34-36.

general military build-up. Also, both states have followed a bandwagoning strategy towards the US, and are aligned members of NATO. With this in mind, it is now the aim to explain how the different geopolitical realities have affected the Danish and Norwegian foreign and security policies, and how this has formed their actions and attitudes regarding the issue of NATO in the Arctic.

Denmark: A new geopolitical outlook

Throughout the Cold War, Denmark found itself in a critical geopolitical situation. As part of the NATO security structure and an ally to the US, Denmark was located at the outer rim of the Alliance territory, and was a frontline state bordering close to the Soviet Union.²⁷² As an opposing great power, the Soviet Union consequently constituted a proximate threat to Denmark in the Cold War period.²⁷³ Denmark therefore followed a balancing strategy by its allegiance to the NATO alliance and its relationship to the US, but it did so with a cautious approach, and sought to promote reassurance and cooperation with the opposing Soviet power.²⁷⁴ In this period, Greenland was of great importance due to its geostrategic position, and Denmark allowed the US to maintain bases as part of its overall warning system, affectively awarding Denmark more advantages in its relationship with the US and in NATO.²⁷⁵

As the Cold War came to an end, so did the Soviet threat to Danish security, and in strategic terms Denmark was moved from the frontline.²⁷⁶ Through a gradual process in the 1990s, Denmark soon came to be surrounded by allies or friendly neighbours.²⁷⁷ This meant that Denmark was now free from any immediate territorial threat in its proximate environment, and that the country could now focus its attention and security policy elsewhere. Denmark came to utilize its military as a foreign policy tool in order to strengthen its ties to the newly reformed NATO, and with the US in particular.²⁷⁸ This can partly explain the gradual, yet quickly instigated reform of the Danish military to focus on expeditionary operations far away from Danish territory, which started in

²⁷² Heurlin, "denationalisation of armed forces", 118.

²⁷³ Saxi, "So similar", 263.

²⁷⁴ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 648.

²⁷⁵ For more on this issue, see: Henriksen and Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Grønlandskortet".

²⁷⁶ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches*, 92.

²⁷⁷ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 45.

²⁷⁸ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 63

the early 1990s and has largely continued.²⁷⁹ The continuous shift also indicates that this sense of safety and security has largely continued throughout the period examined. This point can also be emphasised by looking to geography. Denmark only shares a land-based border with Germany, a friendly-minded NATO ally, and until recently no large issues have existed in proximity to the territory of Denmark proper. One could argue that the recent military build-up by Russia is a cause of concerns for Denmark, and the country has in some ways reacted to this, for instance by contributing with troops to operation Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltics.²⁸⁰ But from the above comparison it seems safe to say, that the focus of Danish security policy has largely remained elsewhere than its near environment in the period examined. The same can be said for the Arctic areas of the Kingdom of Denmark. As the Cold war came to an end the threat to Greenland diminished, and this has largely remained the case. Greenland is located in a sea with allied states around it, and though relations between NATO and Russia have deteriorated in recent years, Greenland remains located far away from Russia, across an icy and inhospitable sea. Overall, Denmark has therefore not experienced any pressing or acute territorial threats since the end of the Cold War, though some unwanted tendencies have occurred.

This Danish security outlook has largely affected both the Arctic policy and the attitude towards NATO in the region. As already noted, Russia can be perceived as a regional great power in the Arctic who is not aligned with Denmark. Following the above, Russia therefore potentially constitutes a threat to Danish interests in the region, and Denmark has also sought to face these potential challenges in various ways.

First of all, Denmark has followed a strategy of binding. The Ilulissat declaration was largely initiated as a reaction to the Russian flag-planting incident in 2007 to commit the Arctic coastal states to a code of conduct in the region, namely that of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.²⁸¹ The states hereby came to formally agree that they would cooperate in the region, and the Danish initiative was, amongst other things, an attempt to eliminate the conflict potential in the region resulting from unsettled maritime disputes.²⁸² The initiative can be seen as an attempt of

²⁷⁹ Rasmussen et. al., "Ukraine-krisen og forandringerne af dansk forsvars- og sikkerhedspolitik", 36-41.

²⁸⁰ Danish Ministry of Defence, "Fremskrudt tilstedeværelse/Enhanced forward Presence", Juli 2016.

²⁸¹ Petersen, "The Arctic Challenge", 154.

²⁸² Nikolaj Petersen, "Arktisk Politik og Regimedannelse i 2010'erne", *Nordlit* vol 29 (2012): 152.

binding Russia to an international commitment, thus making future self-assertive or otherwise unwanted actions unreasonable in the Arctic maritime domain. In general, it is preferred to promote cooperation in the Arctic, since a conflict-based environment would catch small states like Denmark between the conflicts of great powers.²⁸³ A potential conflict could hereby risk bringing the Danish Arctic territories back in precarious geostrategic position. Therefore, if Russia were to take a more forceful and unilateral stance in the Arctic this would be much to the disadvantage of Denmark, which is also why Denmark have sought to balance unwanted Russian actions in the region.

The balancing strategy has to some extent both been followed internally and externally. Internally Denmark has directed increased attention of the DAF to its Arctic areas, and the two latest defence agreements have upped the presence and capabilities in the Danish Arctic territories.²⁸⁴ Also, Denmark has moved to deter Russian aggression, exemplified by the 2014 F-16 exercise in Greenland, which, among other things, “was a clear demonstration of Danish military prowess”.²⁸⁵ However, the meaning of this internal balancing is not to be overstated, and the Danish Arctic capabilities are mostly of a non-offensive nature fulfilling tasks such as the exercise of sovereignty and coast guard functions, which are increasingly important undertakings as the ice continues to melt.²⁸⁶ Externally, the membership of NATO has acted as a deterring factor from outside risks, not only in Denmark proper, but also in the Arctic areas. Denmark has however not taken a strong stance on the need for a direct deterring and balancing effect of the Alliance in the Arctic, but has instead relied on the defensive security guarantee provided through NATO’s article 5.²⁸⁷ Though having counteracted Russia by itself or indirectly through the NATO membership, it would not be an understatement to say that Denmark has refrained from leading a forceful balancing act in the Arctic region. This has not been done, because it has not been in the country’s interests.

²⁸³ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arctic-vism”, 4.

²⁸⁴ Danish Parliament, “Forsvarsforlig 2010-2014”, 10-11; Danish Parliament, “Forsvarsforlig 2013-2017”, 10-11; Wezeman, ”Military Capabilities in the Arctic”, 7.

²⁸⁵ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arctic-Vism”, 6.

²⁸⁶ Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”An Arctic Great power? Recent Developments in Danish Arctic Policy”, in *Arctic Yearbook 2016* (2016): 392.

²⁸⁷ Government of Denmark, Government of Greenland, and Government of the Faroe Islands, “Strategy for the Arctic 2011– 2020”, 20.

As already noted, including NATO in the Arctic could be seen as a provocation by Russia, which would potentially have a negative effect on the cooperation in the Arctic.²⁸⁸ Generally, it is in the interest of Denmark to avoid a military escalation in the Arctic, which an enhanced NATO presence therefore might facilitate. As put by a Danish civil servant “one of our primary causes for holding back is, that it is not in our interests that this will spin out of control”.²⁸⁹ Following a geopolitical argument, it is simply not in the interest of Denmark to avoid a possible deterioration in the Arctic by including NATO, since Russia does not constitute an immediate and direct threat to the Kingdom or its interests in the region. As noted earlier, Danish Arctic territories are located far away from Russia, and as power and incentive wanes with distance,²⁹⁰ this would arguably entail that at present, there is no great threat to Danish territory, and therefore no acute need for upping the balancing of Russia in the region - especially if this risks leading to a conflict, which would worsen the safety and overall interests of Denmark. This remains especially true, as long as it is expected that the regional developments will remain orientated on “cooperation and competition, rather than confrontation and conflict”.²⁹¹ In this regard it can be said, that Danish interests are currently best off by a small or light NATO-footprint in the region.²⁹²

Norway: Still a northern flank

Like Denmark, Norway held a precarious geostrategic position during the Cold War, and was a frontline state sharing a border with the Soviet Union, located in close proximity to the Soviet military bases in the Murmansk region.²⁹³ Needless to say, the Soviet Union was a proximate threat to Norway.²⁹⁴ As a small state with a non-aligned powerful neighbour, Norway sought to direct the attention of the US and NATO to its northernmost territories, hereby seeking to make the defence of the Alliance’s ‘Northern flank’ more credible.²⁹⁵ These attempts were largely successful, and can be seen as a balancing act directed at the Soviet Union, that safeguarded Norwegian security.

²⁸⁸ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arktis og Ukraine Krisen”, 23.

²⁸⁹ Interview with Danish civil servant.

²⁹⁰ Mouritzen, *Theory and Reality of International Politics*, 1.

²⁹¹ Danish Ministry of Defence, ”Forsvarsministeriets fremtidige opgaveløsning i Arktis”, 9.

²⁹² interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen, 25/04-17

²⁹³ Tamnes, ”Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy”, 50.

²⁹⁴ Saxi, ”So similar”, 263.

²⁹⁵ Tamnes, ”Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy”, 50.

However, Norway seemingly did not want to overstate this balancing effect and while keeping its allies at an arms length, the country also sought to cooperate with Russia throughout the Cold War in order to decrease tension in the area, and hereby to minimize the possibility of Russian counteractions.²⁹⁶

As the Cold War came to an end the bipolar tension disappeared, but the new reality did not change the fact that Norway continued to share a land-based and sea-based border with Russia, and was the country was therefore still a neighbour to an unaligned regional power. The downturn of Russia's position as a bipolar power did not deprive it of its massive amount of military capabilities located close to the Norwegian border. Coupled with this, the Russian democracy was seen as unstable, and Norway still had an unresolved maritime dispute with its neighbour.²⁹⁷ In other words, Norway still found itself in a strained geopolitical situation. This also meant that Norway continued to keep a watchful eye on its neighbour throughout the 1990s, where it was held that a conventional military threat was still present.²⁹⁸ One consequence of this geostrategic reality was that Norway remained partly fixed on national defence through most of the decade, while still contributing, to some degree, to the international operations of NATO. Another and equally important consequence was, that due to the security concerns in the High North, Norway persistently sought to emphasise the importance of the traditional tasks of collective self-defence in NATO forums.²⁹⁹ This would indicate that while other NATO-members like Denmark was preoccupied with operations outside Alliance territory, Norway remained oriented on in-area issues, namely that of the proximate threat of Russia. Norway therefore continued to follow a 'double-strategy' throughout the 90s, where it sought to cooperate with Russia, while still emphasising the need of national and allied defence of the northern parts of Norway.³⁰⁰

Around the turn of the century, Norway experienced some change in its security outlook, and while preserving some nationally oriented capabilities, Norway also came to direct an increased focus on participating in NATO operations far from Alliance territory. This short-lived change was partly facilitated by the erosion of the Russian conventional forces, which allowed the Norwegians to focus its military capabilities

²⁹⁶ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 100.

²⁹⁷ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 64.

²⁹⁸ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 30.

²⁹⁹ Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 202.

³⁰⁰ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 134-135.

elsewhere.³⁰¹ But as the power and self-assertiveness of Russia grew, so did the potential threat of the country. Norway therefore came to direct its focus back to its own territories, while still seeking to promote NATO-attention to the issues within Alliance territory.³⁰² This has largely remained the case since the core area initiative was put forward in 2008. Following the theoretical perspective applied here, Russia has continued to constitute a potential threat to Norway and its interests due to its relative power and proximity, coupled with its assertive attitude in recent years. The foreign and security policy of Norway has therefore generally been heavily affected by its proximity to Russia, and the same can be said for the country's Arctic strategy.

Both the sea-based and land-based Norwegian-Russian border is located in the Arctic, and the Arctic policy is therefore largely reflective of the overall Norwegian security policy and outlook. This is rather clearly apparent by pointing to that the relative low-point in the Norwegian Arctic focus followed the sense of a diminished Russian threat at the turn of the century, and that the attentiveness was first revoked in full by 2007, where the new Russian assertiveness and power had attracted international attention.³⁰³ From a geopolitical standpoint one could hereby argue, that it is in the Norwegian Arctic areas where the potential threat of Russia is most acutely felt.

As was the case with Denmark, Norway has followed several strategies in the Arctic to safeguard its interest and to minimize the potential threat of Russia. First of all Norway has followed a strategy of binding, where it has sought to commit Russia to international organisations and agreements, rendering unwanted actions less likely. A notable example is found in the 2010 Barents Sea agreement, where Russia and Norway agreed on a long-time maritime delimitation issue, while clearing out the future regulations for resource extraction in the area.³⁰⁴ While safeguarding Norwegian economic interests, the agreement has also committed Russia to international regulations. Following the basic assumptions of realism, this is also much in the interest of Norway as a small state facing a much stronger neighbour. An earlier example of this binding approach is, that Norway started a regional cooperative initiative in 1993 called the Barents Euro-Arctic region, where Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway agreed to

³⁰¹ Saxi, "So Similar", 269-270.

³⁰² Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 205.

³⁰³ Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 200-205; Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security", 198.

³⁰⁴ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Ukraine crisis moves north", 6.

work together at regional and national levels. The initiative sought, amongst other things, to reduce military tension and to promote stability and prosperity in the area.³⁰⁵ It can therefore very much be seen as an attempt of binding its Russian neighbour along the lines of cooperation and commitments.

Beyond seeking to bind Russia, Norway has also sought to balance its neighbour internally. As previously outlined, Norway has retained a focus on the need for national defence in its northern territories throughout the period, but due to uncertainties that the recent Russian assertiveness and overall general military build-up have created, Norway has upped its military investments as a means of safeguarding its interests and territories in the High North.³⁰⁶ In the words of a Norwegian civilian servant, Norway has generally increased its presence in the North by “tracking the Russian increase”,³⁰⁷ which underlines the importance that Russian actions and attitudes are awarded in Norwegian foreign and security policy. The increase in military presence is however nowhere near the levels of its Russian neighbour, and the primary means of balancing must therefore be seen in an NATO context.

Externally, Norway has sought to balance Russia in several ways and through different initiatives, but they are somewhat combined and can be explained with the same reasoning. As already established, Norway has rather consistently called for more NATO attentiveness and presence in the Arctic. However, it is important to note that though Norway has sought to direct attention to the developments in the Arctic in general, it has for the most part called for Alliance presence in its own Arctic areas. Coupled with the potential threats borne out of the proximity to Russia, this does to some degree indicate that the Norwegian promotion of an increased NATO presence in the Arctic is first and foremost born out of national concerns and interests rather than of regional considerations and objectives. Further backing this argument is, that the core-area initiative from 2008 can be interpreted along the same lines. In spite of the initiatives focus on directing NATO-attention back to its core functions and in-area issues in general, it was arguably instigated out of Norwegian concerns about the change in Russian foreign policy from around 2007.³⁰⁸ In other words, “it is Russia that

³⁰⁵ Jensen, *International Relations in the Arctic*, 44-45.

³⁰⁶ Wezeman, “Military Capabilities in the Arctic”, 10.

³⁰⁷ Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

³⁰⁸ Gade and Hilde, “Nordområdenes sikkerhetspolitiske betydning for NATO”, 107.

is the central driving force in Norwegian security policy – and hereby also in Norwegian NATO-policy”.³⁰⁹ Both the general core initiative and the more specific calls for NATO presence in the Arctic can therefore be seen as Norwegian attempts of balancing and hereby deterring Russia, which by its proximity and increasingly self-assertive policy has constituted a potential risk to Norwegian security and interests. In other words, Norway has found that the country’s security is best safeguarded by a clear and noticeable Alliance presence in the region.³¹⁰

The geopolitical explanation

When seeking to explain why Norway and Denmark has held different attitudes regarding the issue of NATO in the Arctic, it would seem that the difference in geopolitical outlook is a big part of the picture. After the Cold War, the geopolitical situation of Norway and Denmark came to differ quite markedly. While Norway continued to share borders with the Russian regional great power, Denmark came to be surrounded by friend and allies. Despite changes in the security outlook throughout a period ranging from the beginning of the 1990s to 2016, this has largely remained the case.

The general geopolitical outlook has had a significant effect on the Arctic policies of the two countries. While both have followed strategies of binding and balancing in their relations with Russia, it seems that Norway has sought to take a stronger balancing stand by emphasising the importance of NATO presence in the Arctic, more specifically in the Norwegian parts of the region. This has been done through broad proposals and narrow initiatives in NATO forums, and can be explained by the Norwegian proximity to Russia, which size, attitudes and actions in it self constitutes a threat to Norway from a theoretical perspective. More specifically, Norway is worried that a hypothetical conflict between Russia and the West might put the country in an unwanted and isolated situation, which is why the country has sought to draw its allies closer to its territories,³¹¹ exemplified by the recent stationing of US rotational forces in Varnæs. It is regarded as unlikely that a confrontation between NATO and Russia will originate in the Arctic, but that a confrontation elsewhere would lead to negative consequences for

³⁰⁹ Gade and Hilde, ”Nordområdene sikkerhetspolitiske betydning for NATO”, 107 [own translation].

³¹⁰ Interview with Kristian Sjøby Kristensen.

³¹¹ Interview with Kristian Sjøby Kristensen.

the ‘northern flank’ of NATO, located close to a concentration of Russian military capabilities.³¹² Furthermore, Norway has considerable economic interests in its Arctic areas, especially in terms of oil and gas in the Barents Sea, which could be exposed to Russian encroachments or obstruction in case the developments in the Arctic deteriorate.³¹³ The Norwegian economic interests also extend to the waters and seabed surrounding Svalbard, where Russia and Norway has struggled to find common ground on the rights for exploiting the natural resources of the area.³¹⁴ Generally, Norway needs stability to exploit the commercial opportunities the region has to offer,³¹⁵ and it has been stated several times that Norway sees NATO presence as a stabilizing factor in the Arctic.³¹⁶ Therefore, from this perspective, Norway has good reasons for pushing the Arctic agenda in NATO and for promoting a more active and hereby deterring role of the Alliance in its own territory, because the country finds itself in a strained geopolitical situation.

Denmark’s geopolitical outlook has been somewhat different. Allies encircle Denmark proper, and the Greenlandic Arctic territories are located with allies and icy seas surrounding it. There is therefore no strong incitement to forcefully balance Russia through NATO in the Arctic region, since there is no acute threat to Danish territory from a geopolitical standpoint. In this context it is relevant to point out that Denmark is nevertheless vulnerable to systematic Russian harassment to Greenlandic territory, where the DAF is stretched thin. If Arctic developments were to deteriorate, and Russia were to take up such practise, this could cause a constitutional crisis between Denmark and Greenland, and the potential increase of American presence in the Danish Arctic areas might give the Greenlandic government “an alternative patron upon which it could an independent state”.³¹⁷ Denmark therefore has an interest in keeping status quo in the Arctic so that the cooperative development is continued, which can explain why the Kingdom has focused on promoting regional cooperation through accommodation and diplomacy.³¹⁸ Basically, Denmark worries that the inclusion of NATO in the Arctic

³¹² Efstad, “Norway and the North Atlantic: Defence of the Northern Flank”, 65-66.

³¹³ Rahbek-Clemmensen, “The Ukraine crisis moves north”, 6.

³¹⁴ Perry and Anderson, *New Strategic Dynamics*, 42-44.

³¹⁵ Rahbek-Clemmensen, “Arktiske Usikkerheder”, 16.

³¹⁶ Norwegian Government, “New Building Blocks in the North”, 52; Norwegian; Government, “nordkloden”, 16.

³¹⁷ Rahbek-Clemmensen, “The Ukraine crisis moves north”, 6.

³¹⁸ Rahbek-Clemmensen, “The Arctic Turn”, [Forthcoming].

might lead to a militarisation in the region that leaves the Kingdom in an unfavourable position. Since there is no immediate or acute threat to Danish territory and interests in the Arctic, it is therefore not worth taking the risk of ‘prematurely’ including the Alliance in the region, since this might act counterproductively to Danish interests.³¹⁹

This argument is strikingly simple, but nevertheless offers a very central explanation as to why Denmark and Norway seemingly hold different positions regarding the issue. However, it has some shortcomings. If a military escalation were to find place in the Arctic, this would likely have negative consequences for both countries, since they would be caught in a conflict between strong states, where small states have less influence. Furthermore, the two states need stability in the region if they are to exploit the commercial possibilities it offers.³²⁰ An enhanced balancing act through NATO might lead to an increased militarisation, since Russia has stated several times that it does not want the organisation included in Arctic developments.³²¹ Yet, the two countries have seemingly held different positions on the desirability of including NATO in the Arctic. To exemplify, a Danish civil servant has stated that including NATO in the Arctic might lead to a Russian counteraction in the form of a military build up, and that this trend is a difficult tree to “climb down from again”.³²² In contrast, a Norwegian civil servant stated, that they do not see the potential for military escalation by enhancing NATO’s role in the Arctic, and that it is possible to have “a credible deterrence and a credible collective defence without contributing to escalation”.³²³ The previous outlined actions and attitudes of the two countries speak for themselves on this matter, and it would seem that the two have held different perceptions on the need and usefulness for an enhanced NATO presence in the Arctic region. From this theoretical standpoint one could point out, that the Norwegian position is largely affected by its proximity to Russia, and that the potential positive consequences of a more active role of NATO in the Arctic would exceed the downfalls and the lack of security that the absence of the Alliance would have for the country. In contrast, Denmark does not feel the same proximate pressure to its security, and the potential downfalls of engaging NATO in the Arctic would therefore be counterproductive to Danish interests.

³¹⁹ Interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen.

³²⁰ Rahbek-Clemmensen, ”Arktiske Usikkerheder”, 16.

³²¹ Nilsson, ”Revanche – Russere – Retfædighed”, 32.

³²² Interview with Danish civil servant.

³²³ Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

However, this is only part of the overall explanation. Though the perspective of geopolitics can offer an explanation on why Norway has a stronger incitement than Denmark to balance Russia in the Arctic through NATO, it seems to have certain shortcomings. For instance, one could ask why the two countries have, seemingly, held different perceptions of the desirability and usefulness of including NATO in the Arctic?

The intrastate explanatory level: Strategic culture

We now turn the focus to how national differences can contribute to explain why Denmark and Norway has held different attitudes towards NATO in the Arctic. This will be done utilizing the concept of strategic culture. The Danish and Norwegian attitudes towards the issue should be seen in the respective strategic cultures, because it is in the differing history and geography that a substantial explanation on the intrastate level is found. The following section will therefore seek to outline the general patterns in the strategic cultures of Norway and Denmark with a special focus on what this has meant for the use and objectives of the respective armed forces. Hereafter, attention will be directed to how the different strategic cultures have affected their Arctic policies in general, and attitudes towards an enhanced role for NATO in the region more specifically. This will be done by looking to existing literature on the subject coupled with official documents and state practise.

Denmark: Abroad and about

According to the Danish scholar Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, a ‘what’s the use of it?’-attitude had existed regarding the DAF since the late 1900th century in Denmark, which only came to diminish in the years following the end of the Cold War. It had arisen with the Prussian defeat in 1864, and had doubted the usefulness of the DAF as a means for achieving safety and security.³²⁴

The Second World War and the invasion by Nazi-Germany led Denmark to move away from its pre-war neutrality stance, and the country joined the NATO alliance in 1949 as part of a deterring position aimed at the Soviet Union.³²⁵ However, as previously shown this Danish deterring approach was somewhat softer than the official

³²⁴ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?", 67.

³²⁵ Rasmussen, "What's is the Use of It?", 74.

line of NATO, and the country held several reservations regarding NATO policy throughout the period.³²⁶ Also, as previously mentioned, Denmark was not able to muster anywhere near the number of military reserves that Norway could mobilize. Apart from differences in geography, this can also be explained by strategic culture. In contrast to Norway, Denmark held little confidence in the ability of its armed forces to hold back an attack before NATO reinforcements could arrive.³²⁷ It would therefore seem that, in relative terms, Denmark had little faith in the use of its military force, at least in terms of territorial defence. Overall, the Danish strategic culture during the Cold War was marked by ambiguity. Some sought to promote a stronger integration in NATO, while others regarded NATO as a necessary evil for deterring the Soviet Union. These two positions clashed throughout the period, most notably marked in the footnote policy, but most seemed to favour NATO membership.³²⁸

The end of the Cold War acted as an external shock, which enabled a reorientation in Danish strategic culture. Russia was no longer regarded as a threat, and Denmark came to pursue an expanded idea of security.³²⁹ The resulting activism, or militarization of foreign policy, marked a break with the previous strategic culture, and the utility or usefulness of the DAF came to be widely recognised, as Denmark had several successful experiences in the Balkans that would manifest itself in Danish strategic thinking.³³⁰ The threat was no longer perceived as near and explicit, but as distant and indirect. This new outlook is also apparent in some of the central defence documents from the 1990s. The 1993-1994 defence agreement prompted a shift away from territorial defence towards in the absence of a defined military threat,³³¹ and the 1997 defence commission held that Denmark would remain safe from conventional military threats in the near future.³³² Along with a shift in geostrategic circumstances and a dismantlement of the Soviet threat, this new strategic culture was also facilitated by leading politicians throughout the 90s, who came to favour and promote a more impactful Danish stance in the post Cold War-era.³³³

³²⁶ Petersen, *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, 648-650.

³²⁷ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 25-27.

³²⁸ Rasmussen, "What's is the Use of It?", 74-75.

³²⁹ Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 31.

³³⁰ Rasmussen, "What's is the Use of It?", 76-77.

³³¹ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 31.

³³² Rasmussen, "Mod skiftende fjender", 12.

³³³ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches*, 93.

The turn of the century and the 2000s marked a continuation of the path that was laid out in the 1990s, where activism and expeditionary missions seemed to dominate the Danish strategic culture and the use of the country's armed forces. The 2000-2004 defence agreement sought to shift the emphasis of the DAF even further away from territorially based defence, and the 2005-2008 agreement took the final step in this regard,³³⁴ the latter based on the Bruun-report from 2003, which officially buried the notion of a potential threat from Russia in the near future.³³⁵ Furthermore, the 2005-2008 defence agreement established a large number of deployable troops that could participate in varying international operations, while the 2010-2014 defence agreement confirmed this level of ambition, and underscored the global playing field for the DAF. In the words of Danish scholar Sten Rynning, "Activism [had] become part and parcel of Danish policy and indeed Danish strategic culture".³³⁶

The merits of prioritising activism and expeditionary capabilities over stationary territorially based armed forces continued to be widely agreed upon in the Danish parliament. It is quite telling that all parties in the Danish parliament voted in favour of contributing to the 2011 Libya intervention.³³⁷ Though it was held that no direct threats existed in the Danish near environment, the 2008 defence commission was aware of the reappearing international stance of Russia, but it was held that this constituted a risk that should not be met by military means. The 2013-2017 defence agreement came to reflect this outlook and remained fixed on the capability of the DAF to contribute to international missions.³³⁸ The strategic culture has therefore continued to be somewhat outward looking, where the Danish willingness to use its armed forces abroad to ensure security and other interests has become somewhat characteristic, contrasted by a lower willingness to show force by presence of the DAF in Danish territories.

However, as Russia has taken a more forward-leaning stance internationally, Denmark has come to direct its attention back to the regional great power. Recently, the previously mentioned Taksøe report stated that although there is no territorial threat, the near environment of Denmark has become less secure because of, amongst other things,

³³⁴ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 41; 52.

³³⁵ Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "Rusland er lige gyldig – fuld fart frem", in *Helt Forsvarligt? Danmarks Militære Udfordringer i en Usikker Fremtid*, ed. Hans Mortensen (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2008), 41.

³³⁶ Sten Rynning, "Denmark" in *Strategic Cultures in Europe*, ed. Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich and Alexandra Jones (Potsdam: Springer VS, 2013), 87.

³³⁷ Rynning, "Denmark", 86.

³³⁸ Rasmussen et. al., "Ukraine-krisen og forandringerne af dansk forsvars- og sikkerhedspolitik", 39-40.

recent Russian actions.³³⁹ Whether this will facilitate a shift in strategic culture, however, remains to be seen.

Now, what has this strategic culture meant for the Danish stance in the Arctic? During the Cold War the Greenlandic defence was maintained in conjunction with the US, and the Danish military presence was somewhat limited throughout the period, maintaining tasks such as the exercise of sovereignty and fishery inspections.³⁴⁰ With the end of the Cold War both Danish and American military presence and interest diminished in Greenland. As previously stated, Greenland was mostly seen as an area where the DAF had to be present to maintain tasks of low importance.³⁴¹ It would seem that the military presence and show of force in Greenland has continuously been somewhat limited, and that the 1990s and early 2000s marked a period where even less attention was given to the Danish Arctic territories, as the use of the DAF was directed elsewhere.

However, in the later 2000s Denmark has come to direct some focus to its Arctic areas, and the two latest defence agreements has directed more attention to Greenland through new investments.³⁴² Nevertheless, this trend is of relatively recent origin, and the 2013-2017 defence agreement reflect strategic goals of seeking to handle the new challenges that follow from climate change, of supporting interstate regional cooperation and of minimizing tension between Denmark and Greenland.³⁴³ Seemingly, the presence in the Arctic is therefore not used with the primary aim of showing force in the area, though it does maintain tasks exercising sovereignty. Furthermore, in two recent official reports from 2016, it was suggested that Denmark should allocate more funds to the Arctic within the DAF. Though this potentially would increase the Danish capabilities in the region, the suggested increase of DKK 120 million amounts to little more than a half percent of Danish defence spending.³⁴⁴ It would therefore seem fair to state, that although Denmark has directed more attention to its Arctic areas as of recent, the main focus of the DAF is still on expeditionary operations outside Danish territory.

³³⁹ Taksøe-Jensen, "Dansk diplomati og forsvar i en brydningstid", VIII.

³⁴⁰ Petersen, "Arktis – Den nye dimension", 306.

³⁴¹ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "The Arctic Turn", [forthcoming].

³⁴² Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arctic-vism", 7-8.

³⁴³ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Arctic-vism", 8.

³⁴⁴ Rahbek-Clemmensen, "An Arctic Great power?", 349.

The above indicates that there is no habit for being forcefully or heavily military present in the Danish Arctic areas. This is partly driven by the perception of threat, but also by how Denmark has perceived the need and usefulness of national defence. As the potential threat from the Soviet Union diminished, Denmark started to reorient itself to distant threats.³⁴⁵ Coupled with this, there seem to be less of a tradition to rely on the DAF for territorial defence, which during the Cold War was most of all a symbolic, and was quickly disbanded through the 90s.³⁴⁶ Though a recent focus has been directed to Greenland, it would still seem that this trend has been followed, and that the use and indeed show of force has not been utilised to a large degree in Danish Arctic areas, but more extensively elsewhere as part of international operations.

Following this argument, the inclusion of NATO in the region, and therefore also in the Danish Arctic areas, would seem to conflict with Danish strategic culture, where there has been no habit of forcefully deterring Russia through a strong Danish military presence in Greenland, at least not since the end of the Cold War. Instead, Denmark has directed its military presence and use of its armed forces elsewhere, which indicates that Denmark has seen no need for showing forceful presence in its Arctic areas. This can be seen as having originated from a historical axiom, where the use and need of a forceful stance in Danish territories have been somewhat marginalised in favour of the recent perceived utility for using the DAF abroad. Also, this is very much tied to the perception of threat or the absence hereof. In line with a strategic culture-reasoning, one can therefore argue that Denmark is less inclined to seek a strong and deterring NATO presence in its Arctic territories, because it would seem that there is no precedence, or habit, for seeing the usefulness of a strong military presence in the area.

Norway: At home and abroad

When we look to Norway, we see a different strategic culture with a different emphasis on the utility and usefulness of its armed forces. Norway has rather consistently found use of its armed forces in its own territories, while initially showing less willingness to engage forcefully in international operations compared to Denmark.

After being attacked and invaded in 1940 by Nazi Germany, a '9 April never again'-attitude had manifested itself in Norwegian strategic culture, where the importance and

³⁴⁵ Heurlin, "Denationalisation of Danish Armed Forces", 113.

³⁴⁶ Sævi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 99.

indeed need for a strong national defence was restated through the Cold War.³⁴⁷ Both the Nazi invasion and the new Soviet Threat had acted as external shocks, and the Norwegian strategic culture came to focus on deterrence through NATO membership, and abandoned the traditional neutrality policy.³⁴⁸ However, it was not only the NATO membership that provided security for Norway. The country had a firm belief that a strong national defence would be able to hold possible invaders back before potential NATO reinforcements could arrive.³⁴⁹ Norway therefore had a strong belief in the capability and value of its armed forces, at least when it came to national defence. This also indicates the primacy of NATO presence and closeness in Norwegian strategic culture, and throughout the Cold War, Norway made continuous calls for the Alliance to engage in its northernmost territories.³⁵⁰ Norway thought of itself as a state with her back to Europe while facing the Atlantic – this was not just a geographic description, “it also captured a state of mind”.³⁵¹ This being the case, Norway, much like Denmark, also sought to keep its NATO allies at an arms length while seeking to cooperate with Russia to some extent.³⁵²

As the Cold War came to an end, the following decade illustrated that the defensively orientated strategic culture persisted in Norway. Norway still remained weary of its Russian neighbour through most of the 1990s, and therefore saw it fit to maintain national defence capabilities, while being reluctant to change its military to rely primarily on expeditionary forces like many European countries.³⁵³ This military ‘foot-dragging’ can partly be explained with the previously mentioned mantra of ‘9 April never again’ where the need for retaining armed force in Norwegian territories in case of an attack was still seen as important.³⁵⁴ The defence agreements of the time did however cut down on military spending, but retained the ability to remain forcefully present mostly in its northern territories in order to meet limited conflict scenarios with Russia, while also modernising the NAF to a more professional and flexible force.³⁵⁵

³⁴⁷ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches to Peace Operations*, 156.

³⁴⁸ Nina Græger and Halvard Leira, “Norwegian Strategic Culture after World War II. From a Local to a Global Perspective”, *Cooperation and Conflict* vol. 40:1 (2005): 47.

³⁴⁹ Saxi, “Norwegian and Danish defence policy”, 25-27.

³⁵⁰ Tamnes, “Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy”, 52.

³⁵¹ Græger and Leira, “Norwegian Strategic Culture after World War II”, 47.

³⁵² Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 100.

³⁵³ Græger and Leira, “Norwegian Strategic Culture after World War II”, 52-54.

³⁵⁴ Jakobsen, *Nordic Approaches to Peace Operations*, 156.

³⁵⁵ Saxi, “So Similar”, 265.

While Norway did come to contribute to the international operations of the 90s, it did so comparatively less forcefully than Denmark. The Norwegian strategic culture was founded on a discourse, or a Norwegian self-image, of a peaceful people, and engagements in international operations had to be portrayed as inherently humanitarian in order for them to be widely accepted.³⁵⁶ Furthermore, there was a tradition for awarding primacy and more prestige to national defence, while international operations was seen as a secondary function for the NAF.³⁵⁷ Not many leading politicians came forward to challenge this idea or fundamental notion, as it had happened in Denmark.³⁵⁸ Throughout the 1990s Norway largely focused on the need and importance of territorial defence, and remained militarily present in its northern areas. The Norwegian strategic culture was therefore somehow fixed on the need for a forceful presence in its own territory, while being more cautious about utilising its armed forces away from home. In other words, one could say that Norway has distinguished between a national level, where force is a legitimate defensive instrument, and the international, where it is preferred that conflict should be resolved peacefully.³⁵⁹

At the turn of the century a reduced Russian threat facilitated a stronger focus on international operations in Norway. Also, the new out-of-area focus of NATO throughout the 1990s somewhat demanded a change in Norwegian armed forces to meet the new demands of the organisation.³⁶⁰ This did not mean that the country came to radically alter its focus on territorial defence, which importance continued to be emphasised in the defence agreements of the 00s, especially in regards to safeguarding Norwegian interests in its northern territories.³⁶¹ Though the use of Norwegian armed forces was now also seen in international context for promoting and safeguarding Norwegian interests, this was followed by a parallel track with the more traditional and continuous focus on the need for a forceful presence in the country's home territories to show integrity and enforce sovereignty.³⁶² Thus, while the 2005-2008 defence agreement had more focus on engaging the NAF in operations abroad, the primary task

³⁵⁶ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence policy", 95.

³⁵⁷ Græger and Leira, "Norwegian Strategic Culture after World War II", 50.

³⁵⁸ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish Defence policy", 94.

³⁵⁹ Jan Angstrom and Jan Willem Honig, "Regaining strategy: Small Powers, Strategic Culture, and Escalation in Afghanistan", *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35:5 (2012): 678-679.

³⁶⁰ Hilde and Widelberg, "Norway and NATO", 201.

³⁶¹ Saxi, "So Similar", 269-270.

³⁶² Heurlin, "Forsvar og sikkerhed i Norden", 46.

of the Norwegian navy remained national.³⁶³ Furthermore, the 2008 defence agreement came to reinforce a focus on national tasks, especially in the northern territories of Norway, since Russia had begun re-emerging as an assertive military power, and it was held that the NAF needed to continue upholding the ability to defend the area in the events of a conflict, before NATO reinforcements could arrive.³⁶⁴

As earlier noted, Norway has increasingly directed Allied attention and its own focus back to Norwegian territories, and has seemingly continued on the same track in the 2010s. In a 2012 long-term plan for the NAF it is stated that its primary goal is to “defend Norway against external threats and attacks”, while also being able to contribute valuably to other situations of crisis, and that there is a need for a ‘war-preventing’ threshold for the NAF to prevent potential aggressors from using force against the country.³⁶⁵ Furthermore a 2016 report from a group of Norwegian experts has stated that Russia has become the central factor in Norwegian defence planning, and that there is a need for increased presence of the NAF and its allies in the northern territories of Norway, where more war-preventing efforts are needed.³⁶⁶

It would seem fair to state that Russia and the perceived need and use of showing force in Norwegian territories have been central for the continuity of the Norwegian strategic culture. This arguably dates back to lessons from the World War II about the use and need for a strong territorial defence, coupled with the perceived potential threats around its periphery.

As a rather large portion of Norwegian territory is located inside the Arctic region where the country borders with Russia, this development and continuity in strategic culture has therefore affected the Norwegian Arctic stance quite markedly. Also, as shown above, the NAF undertaking of national defence and the safeguarding of the Norwegian society and interests have often been centred on its northernmost, Arctic areas. The relatively broad presence of the NAF has been a constant throughout the period examined, which would also indicate that the utility of the armed forces for meeting potential and varying challenges in the Norwegian territories have remained

³⁶³ Saxi, “Norwegian and Danish defence policy”, 54-55.

³⁶⁴ Saxi, *So Similar*, 270.

³⁶⁵ Norwegian Ministry of Defence, “Prop. 73 S. Et forsvar for vår tid”, 12; 48.

³⁶⁶ Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge, “Et felles løft”, 94-95.

intact. This also entails that Norway has felt the need for staying present in the region, and that this need has more often than not originated out of concerns for the Russian neighbour. In other words, the ‘Russian factor’ has figured quite prominently in the Norwegian Arctic stance.³⁶⁷ The belief in the value and need of territorial defence has thus come to affect how Norway has acted in the Arctic, and also to some degree on how the Norwegian attitudes towards NATO in the region have formed.

The calls for NATO presence in Norway, especially in its Arctic areas, have also been a constant in the period examined. This was the case during the cold war,³⁶⁸ the 1990s,³⁶⁹ and also in the new millennium, as shown earlier. Seeking to engage NATO in the Norwegian northernmost territories as a deterring factor can therefore be seen as a continuous endeavour. Following the concept of strategic culture, one could therefore point out, that the willingness and perceived desirability of showing force in the Norwegian Arctic areas has become a pattern of ‘habitual behaviour’,³⁷⁰ both through presence of allies and the NAF. Therefore, the promotion of a more enhanced NATO presence in the region would not seem controversial, but rather in line with Norwegian strategic culture, which has shown some continuity regarding the need for a show of force in the areas. This is partly born out of lessons, experiences and axioms from history, but also from geography and the resulting threat perception, where Norway has found a continuous need and value in preserving a relatively strong national defence, at least when compared to Denmark.

The explanation of strategic culture

It has become apparent, that it has seemingly not been a part of Danish strategic culture to prioritise a strong military presence in its own areas as a means of promoting security, and Denmark has come to utilise its armed forces elsewhere. A seemingly stronger tendency to prioritise national defence can be observed in the Norwegian strategic culture, where it has found a use of its armed forces as a way of safeguarding security in its own home environment. Though Norway has contributed to various international operations, it has become apparent that it has done so somewhat more reluctantly than

³⁶⁷ Haftendorn, “NATO and the Arctic”, 346.

³⁶⁸ Tamnes, “Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy”, 52.

³⁶⁹ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 137.

³⁷⁰ Jack Snyder quoted in Gray, “Out of the Wilderness”, 6.

Denmark, and that the country has remained more oriented on the need for a more forceful national defence. In other words, one can observe a difference in the willingness to use or show force nationally and internationally. Where Norway was initially more reluctant to engage forcefully in international operations while finding it necessary and indeed useful to remain fixed on territorial defence, Denmark engaged quickly in international operations, while gradually dismantling its national defence capabilities.³⁷¹ These two different strategic cultures, which have proved somewhat consistent, have come to affect their Arctic policies, and also, to some degree, their attitudes regarding a stronger NATO presence in the Arctic.

The Norwegian strategic culture would in this example indicate, that Norway is more inclined to seek a stronger presence of NATO in the Arctic, since it has continuously followed a path where territorial defence and the presence of NATO allies has been awarded much value for the security of the country. In contrast, Denmark has not found much value or need for being forcefully present in Greenland, and has looked elsewhere for safeguarding its security, which therefore makes the country somewhat less inclined to seek NATO presence in its Arctic areas. The two cultures can, in this regard, to some extent explain why Norway has held one position, while Denmark has held a differing one.

It is in this context important to note that strategic culture cannot be said to have been entirely defining for which paths Norway and Denmark have chosen. However, it enables one to highlight and explain which paths they have followed and are likely to pursue due to previous patterns of behaviour, historical axioms, the perceived utility of their armed forces, and the perception of threat. In the period examined Norway has held more onto a focus on challenges emanating from Russia, which has resulted in a relatively stronger focus on territorial defence. In contrast, Denmark has come to look away from its own shores, and has directed its use and show of force elsewhere. One could in this context argue, that new threats would possibly alter these positions. What, then, is the explanatory value of strategic culture, if it is potentially altered so easily? Strategic culture is not a static phenomenon, and change can happen, for instance through external or internal shocks. However, one of the main features of the theoretical

³⁷¹ Saxi, "Norwegian and Danish defence policy", 99-100.

tool is that it helps bring forward patterns of ideas, responses and habitual behaviour,³⁷² which are seen as indicative of a country's probability to choose one path over another, because it has done so consistently over a longer period of time. In the specific case of a potentially more active role for NATO in the Arctic, the Norwegian and Danish attitudes have been somewhat constant, while seemingly appearing largely internally undisputed or un-debated publically,³⁷³ and this is why an overarching theoretical concept like strategic culture helps examine why these differences have occurred and have largely remained in place.

That being said, culture is an ambiguous term, and even though this analysis has set up premises for analysing the strategic culture of Norway and Denmark, it remains based on overarching patterns not easily measured or weighted. One should therefore be wary of pushing a conclusion too far based on this concept. However, the above analysis has shown rather clear differences in the perceived utility and willingness to use force nationally and internationally, and that these differences can to some degree point to why Norway and Denmark have been inclined to take different positions on the issue of NATO in the Arctic. It thus offers an explanation, but an explanation that is partly founded on differing history and geographical positions. That geography and the resulting challenges that a state might face, or have faced, is part of the explanation, awards even further explanatory value to the geopolitical analysis. This does not mean that the cultural and historical aspects of this analytical tool should be rendered obsolete. It still shows a rather clear inclination of preferences and path-dependency of the two countries, and therefore offers clarification as to how one can explain the different attitudes of Norway and Denmark regarding an enhanced presence of NATO in the Arctic from an intrastate perspective.

The explanatory levels combined

The three previous levels of analysis have offered different, yet valuable insight needed to explain why Norway and Denmark has taken different positions regarding the issue of an enhanced NATO role in the Arctic. The systemic level clarified that both countries

³⁷² Jack Snyder quoted in Gray, "Out of the Wilderness", 6.

³⁷³ This statement finds backing in several of the interviews conducted as part of this thesis; Interview with Interview with Kristian Soby Kristensen; Interview with Paal Sigurd Hilde; Norwegian civil servant, 19/05-17.

are small states in relative terms when compared to the US and Russia, and that their foreign and security policies have been greatly affected by the two states throughout the period examined. It offered less explanation as to why the two have differed on this particular issue, but nevertheless highlighted the basic premises of the Danish and Norwegian foreign policies and strategies, where different forms of US bandwagoning have been preferred. The interstate analysis pointed to that the difference in geography had a great explanatory value, and that Denmark and Norway have been affected by a different proximity to Russia, a regional and Arctic great power. This also affected their outlook and interests, which can reasonably be expected to have had a rather large influence on their respective attitudes regarding the issue. Lastly, it has been argued that the different strategic cultures, which has been shaped by historical experiences and axioms coupled with geography and the resulting threat perceptions, has had an influence as well. The two countries have rather consistently held different perceptions of the need or use for showing force in their home territories, and this has arguably had an effect on their attitudes towards including NATO more forcefully in the area.

These different factors are all pieces of the overall explanatory puzzle, but it can be said that one have makes up a bigger part than the others, namely the one of geopolitics. First of all, several important differences have surfaced in the wake of the Cold War. Denmark came to be safe and secure surrounded by friends and allies, and started pursuing security and other self-interests far from its home territory, turning the focus away from Russia. Meanwhile, the geopolitical situation of Norway did not seem to change markedly, and the country remained fixed on possible Russian threats, while continuously trying to draw NATO allies closer to its territory in order to ensure security and to safeguard Norwegian interests. Secondly, Norway has primarily called for NATO presence on its own territory, whilst promoting NATO awareness about in-area issues, especially those in the High North. Denmark, on the other hand, has experienced no acute proximate pressure, and has instead sought to keep a cooperative status quo in region, hereby ensuring and safeguarding its own interests. Further interesting to note is, that as the forward-leaning stance of Russia increased with the 2014 Ukraine crisis, so has the Danish focus on its near environment, especially so in the Baltics. Lastly, the civil servants and experts interviewed in relation to the research surrounding this thesis have all pointed to geography or geopolitics as a fundamental

part of the explanation of why Norway and Denmark has held different positions regarding this issue.³⁷⁴ It therefore seems that there is a strong geopolitical dimension to explaining the difference.

However, there has also been consistency in the paths taken dating back before the Cold War, where Norway has valued territorial defence highly, whilst Denmark has held less focus on the need or indeed use of a strong territorial defence. Then again, strategic culture is partly tied to geography, which must there also have been expected to influence these different patterns. On the other hand, though, the decisions on how to act on geopolitical realities is very much up to different states following differing traditions, and they can therefore be acted on in different ways. The interstate variable of strategic culture can in this regard to some extent explain the different attitudes of Norway and Denmark, especially if it is coupled with the notion of geopolitics and the different perception of threats, interests and outlooks this bears with it. A particular and indeed necessary point to make in extension to this argument is, that the two countries have rather consistently followed the respective paths, and that there has been very little public debate concerning the issue in Denmark and Norway. There is undoubtedly various reasons for this, but following the above arguments, it would seem that the stance on this issue is uncontroversial in both countries, and that both states are hereby following previous patterns of behaviour, that does not seem to break with previously led practise.

Following the above analysis, the Danish and Norwegian practises have partly been affected by the relative position in the international system, the different geopolitical outlooks and the different historical lessons and axioms of the past, and the various explanatory levels have therefore contributed to understanding this otherwise multifaceted puzzle. However, in this particular combination, geopolitics has a prominent role to play for explaining the different positions regarding this particular issue, and though it cannot account for the full picture, it does seem to constitute a large part of it.

The above explanation is of course very much affected by the choice and use of theories. That is to be expected. After all, answers are more often than not affected by the questions posed, and a different approach might have led to different findings.

³⁷⁴ Interview with Kristian Soby Kristensen; Interview with Danish civil servant; Interview with Paal Sigurd Hilde; Interview with Norwegian civil servant.

However, it has never been the ambition to offer the full explanation on the puzzle, but rather to point to, what has been regarded as the most significant factors that has had an impact on the different paths taken by the two countries, in which, it would seem, there has been little wavering. Both the approach of neoclassical realism and the framework by Mouritzen and Wivel have facilitated a comparative analysis that has taken its starting point from different angles in the pursuit of explaining the puzzle put forward by this thesis. The approaches have therefore been beneficial for bringing forward different important aspects and points that might otherwise have been overlooked. This has been much to the benefit of the overall conclusion, because it is found that the strength of the explanation lies in the complementarity of the different parts, that all contribute to bring forward the bigger picture. The theoretical framework and concepts employed were thus useful for explaining why the two countries have remained on their respective paths, and though not being able account for the full picture, they have been able to explain how steadfast patterns and interests have affected the Danish and Norwegian position on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic region.

Part IV. The final chapter

Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate *how Denmark and Norway have differed on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic, and why have they have taken different positions regarding this issue.*

As this particular topic cannot be separated from the overall foreign, defence and security policies of the two countries, the first part of the analysis set out to compare these from a historical perspective, both in general and more specifically in the Arctic. It was found that Norway and Denmark held quite a few similarities, but as the Cold War came to an end, the two came to follow somewhat different paths, both in the Arctic and elsewhere. Both paths were reflected in the respective attitudes of the two countries regarding this issue, and while Norway has actively tried to engage and promote NATO presence and awareness in the region, it was found that Denmark has proved somewhat reluctant and unenthusiastic about enhancing the Alliance's role in the Arctic areas. This had largely remained the case in the period examined ranging from 2007 to 2016.

With the comparative historical analysis as a backdrop, attention was turned to explain why the two countries have differed on the issue. It was found that Norway and Denmark has held similar positions in the international system, where both countries have followed the US, while also seeking to balance Russia, though by varying approaches. It was also found that there is good reason for Norway to take a stronger balancing posture and to seek greater NATO presence and commitment in its Arctic areas, due to the proximity to Russia and the threats to Norwegian interests that this has brought with it. This can also be seen as part of a continuous effort to uphold a strong national defence in the area. The same cannot be said about Denmark, which, beyond having few incitements to seek increased Alliance presence in the region due to its relatively safe geopolitical position and its interest in desisting possible changes that can

lead to a less cooperative environment, have no resilient precedence of seeking to maintain a strong defence posture in its Arctic areas.

Following the framework and focus as put forward in this thesis, the difference in geography and history therefore came to constitute a large part of the explanation for the puzzle. Simply put, Denmark and Norway has drawn different experiences from their respective history and geopolitical outlooks, and while sharing many similarities, the two countries have come to take different positions on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic. In this respect it is important to note that, although clear differences have been underlined, one should not overstate or overdramatize these differing attitudes. While many Norwegian calls and initiatives have been put forward that advances their position on the matter, seemingly no visible attempts have been made on Danish behalf to directly block NATO's role in the region. Not publicly, at least. It has also become apparent that Denmark is not opposed to directing NATO attention to in-area issues, particular those in the Baltics. Norway and Denmark does therefore not necessarily disagree on the overall direction and current initiatives of NATO, but it can be stated that the two countries are not like-minded when it comes to the prospect of enhancing the role of the Alliance in the Arctic.

Returning to the matter at hand, one can state that Denmark and Norway has differed on the issue of enhancing NATO's role in the Arctic, and that their positions in the international system, the difference in geopolitical outlooks and the respective strategic cultures can explain which positions they have taken on the issue. They can therefore also contribute to explain why they have differed, which they have done rather continuously in the period examined. One is therefore also left with the conclusion that the different attitudes seems to be established positions in the respective countries, and that this is not a big matter of internal dispute, but to a larger degree one of a somewhat established strategic choice founded in geopolitics, self-interests and in history.

Present and future

As the scope of the above comparative analysis found its contemporary limit at the end of 2016, it indeed seems relevant to examine the newest developments related to this issue, and to present a short outlook to what the future might bring.

First, one could ask whether NATO has come to direct more attention to the Arctic region. It would seem that the latest NATO summit in Brussels did little to address the possible challenges in the icy region, and instead focused on traditional issues of terrorism and equality in terms of burden sharing.³⁷⁵ Worth noticing is, that this was also the first NATO meeting in which US Donald Trump participated. The new president has not taken too much of an interest in the Arctic as of yet, and beyond seeking to expand oil-drilling activities,³⁷⁶ it would seem that the attention has been focused elsewhere.

There has seemingly been no change in the Russian stance in the Arctic, but the regional great power has however recently held a conference in Arkhangelsk focusing on Arctic cooperation, where both the Norwegian and Danish foreign ministers participated. This can indeed be interpreted as an attempt to increase cooperation and dialogue in the Arctic, which has been strained after the Ukraine crisis in 2014.³⁷⁷ However, this does not mean that Russia has taken a new and more pragmatic approach towards including NATO in the region. Prior to a recently held NATO parliamentary Assembly meeting in Longyearbyen, Svalbard on May 8-10 addressing security issues in the Arctic, Russia referred to the upcoming meeting as a provocative policy. It was stated that Russia “strongly believes that there are no problems in the Arctic that require NATO participation to solve, let alone militarily”, and that the escalation of tension would not be in the interests of the countries of Northern Europe, because it would weaken rather than strengthens their security.³⁷⁸

That the NATO assembly should take place on Svalbard was allegedly a Norwegian initiative,³⁷⁹ and can therefore be interpreted as a continuation of the Norwegian attempts to direct the attention of the organization to the Arctic. In this respect, some have argued that Norway has shifted its focus away from drawing the Alliance closer to its Arctic areas in specific, but has instead directed its attention to enhancing NATO’s

³⁷⁵ NATO, “NATO leaders agree to do more to fight terrorism and ensure fairer burden sharing”, last updated May 26, 2017.

³⁷⁶ Juliet Elperin and Brady Dennis, “Trump, reversing Obama, will push to expand drilling in the Arctic and the Atlantic”, *The Washington Post*, April 27, 2017.

³⁷⁷ Martin Breum, “Nordic countries reboot cooperation with Russia”, *EUobserver*, March 29, 2017.

³⁷⁸ Hege Eilertsen, “Russia views NATO plans to hold meeting on Svalbard as a ”provocative policy””, *High North News*, April 20, 2017.

³⁷⁹ Christopher Engås, “”Foolish and improper propeganda stunt””, *Svalbardposten*, May 4, 2017.

presence and awareness in the maritime domain of the North Atlantic.³⁸⁰ Though Norway may have directed increased attention to this issue, it would still seem that the country has continued to seek and promote alliance presence in its Arctic territories. A new foreign- and security policy white paper from April 2017 states that NATO remains central for the stability in the north, that the presence of allies remain important, and that the Norwegian government will continue to update its allies on the developments in the region.³⁸¹ Coupled with this, the previously mentioned meeting activity in Svalbard seems to confirm, that a sense of continuity has persisted in the Norwegian position.

When attention is turned to Denmark, the same thing can largely be concluded. Not much has been said about the issue, though the Danish foreign minister emphasized at the aforementioned conference in Russia, that every Arctic state should strive to avoid committing any act that can be understood as ‘conflict or confrontation’.³⁸² The new foreign- and security strategy paper published in June 2017 by the Danish government seems to continue the silent treatment trend regarding NATO in the Arctic. Though a chapter is dedicated to the region, which in itself underscores the importance of the Arctic for Denmark, the role of NATO in the area is not addressed, and the country remains fixed on the importance of cooperation through the Arctic Council.³⁸³ We have yet to see whether the upcoming defence agreement in 2017 might bring a change of policy regarding the issue, but not much has insinuated a change in approach.

There is thus not much to indicate that major change is on the way. Denmark and Norway seemingly remain on the same well-trodden paths regarding this issue, and these paths have yet to meet in a common way forward. As the NATO organization seemingly has other things on its plate, it also seems unlikely that a change of policy is imminent. How climate change, new national attitudes and the international development might affect this, remains to be seen. There is however no doubt that with lesser ice comes greater accessibility, and the Arctic region will therefore continue to be on the national and international agendas for many years to come.

³⁸⁰ Andreas Østhagen and Paal Sigurd Hilde, ”Canada og Norge i nordområdene og NATO”, *IFS Insights* 3/2016 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2016), 6.

³⁸¹ Norwegian Government, ”Meld. St. 36. Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk” (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017), 29.

³⁸² Thomas Heine, ”Anders Samuelsen advarer Rusland mod oprustning i Arktis”, *Politiken*, March 29, 2017.

³⁸³ Danish Government, ”Udenrigs- og sikkerhedspolitisk strategi 2017-2018” (Copenhagen: Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017), 24-26.

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Illustrations

Picture on front page via at: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/places/arctic>.

Illustration 2 via Winfred K. Dallmann, Norwegian Polar Institute, via. <http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/learn-more/maps>.

Illustration 3 via Map via Dan Sullivan, US Senator in Alaska. Article and map available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/25/heres-what-russias-military-build-up-in-the-arctic-looks-like-trump-oil-military-high-north-infographic-map/>.

Appendix 1. Interview guide

Questions

How would you describe the development in the Arctic?

How would you describe the Danish policy in the Arctic? The Norwegian?

How did the flag-planting incident affect the Arctic strategies of Norway? Denmark?

How has the Russian assertive actions around its periphery and in Syria affected the Danish and Norwegian security policy in the Arctic?

Shortly after flag-planting: Norway pushed for a renewed and reinforced role of NATO presence in the Arctic during Reykjavik conference, 2009. How do you interpret this initiative?

Søren Gade, then-Danish Defence Minister, spoke positively, but a bit vague about the potential role of NATO at the conference, but since the meeting, Denmark has not officially addressed the issue.

How can this be?

How would you describe the Danish attitude towards a potentially enhanced role of NATO in the Arctic? Norway?

Is there any prominent proponents or opponents regarding this issue in the two countries?

Why does Denmark not seek to include NATO in the region, even though it is one of the pillars of Danish foreign and defence policy? And why does Norway, who share the same alliance affiances?

What keeps Denmark from promoting an increased NATO engagement and presence in the Arctic? And what makes Norway promote the same? Why is there a difference?

Closing question: Anything you want to add to the interview?

Appendix 2. Interview with Danish civil servant, 27/04-17

... marks a longer pause in the conversation.

() marks an addition to a sentence by the author in order to add meaning and/or context to the content

E is short for Emil Sloth Christensen, while C is short for civil servant.

E: Sådan der, yes, så er vi i gang. Som sagt, et lidt bredere spørgsmål... Generelt så synes der at have været en tiltro til, at udviklingen i Arktis har været mere baseret på samarbejde frem for konflikt. Hvordan vil du beskrive den hidtidige udvikling i regionen, eller området?

C: Jamen jeg vil faktisk sige, at det er en rigtig udlægning, at udviklingen i Arktis går på samarbejde på tværs af de 5 kyststater, som er de primære aktører og også de 8, hvis man tager de 8 primære medlemmer af Arktis Råd. De senere år er det faktisk det eneste sted, efter Ukraine krisen, hvor vi har et samarbejde med Rusland. Det er også i vid udstrækning lykkedes at holde Ukraine krisen ude af Arktis. Det vil sige, man kan godt sige det er lidt kunstigt at sætte det sådan op, men det har mange nationer været enige i; 'en ting er, hvad der sker i Ukraine, men lad os forsøge at undgå, at det smitter af på, hvordan vi agerer, når vi taler Arktis' - fordi Arktis er så stort, fordi Arktis er så særegent i sin måde at være på, fordi vi alle sammen har ufatteligt få ressourcer deroppe i forhold til det ansvar vi har – her tænker jeg for eksempel på eftersøgning og redning. Der er ikke nogen af os, der har uanede mængder af kapacitet, så derfor er vi faktisk lidt afhængige af, at vi kan hjælpe og støtte hinanden. Senest som et eksempel på beviset på, at udviklingen går i den samarbejdstænkende retning, er, at man for 2 år siden etablerede Arctic Coast Guard Forum, som rent faktisk var et russisk forslag... det er etableret under Arktisk Råd i den periode, hvor amerikanerne har siddet som formand, de sidder på formandsskabet en månedstid endnu, før de giver stafetten videre til Finland, men der har de faktisk optaget ideen om Arctic Coast Guard Forum og drevet den – spørger du en amerikaner, så ville han ikke vide, at det var et russisk forslag... det er i hvert fald i deres opfattelse et fælles forslag, der er drevet af amerikanerne – men, Arctic Coast Guard Forum, det er alle de fem arktiske kyststater, der mødes... det er måske et af de samarbejdsfora, hvor man virkelig har set, at det har bevist sit værd og har rykket noget... man har fundet ud af, hvordan man skal kommunikere med hinanden - der er faktisk valgt et russisk system til, hvordan man skal samle kommunikationen op, hvordan kommunikerer vi med hinanden, og hvordan styrer vi tingene, altså command and control, C-2 system – der har man valgt et russisk system... der er samarbejde på netop eftersøgning og redning, og man er enig om øvelser og lignende. Vi ser også, at alle deltager i hinandens øvelser, så når man holder øvelser - vi har holdt en øvelse i foråret '16 i Grønland med deltagelse af de andre nationer – det kan godt være, at det kun bliver som observatør, der deltager, men der er repræsentation, og alle får en invitation – så man kan sige, at der er ikke rigtig noget, der indikerer, at man ikke samarbejder. Så ser man jo så, hvis man kigger på det, at der sker en opbygning af kapaciteter, og det er jo den fortælling, russerne bygger op i det Høje Nord, hvor de udvikler og genindtager baser, som man mere eller mindre havde forladt, for at få dem støvet af og gjort brugbare. Er det bekymrende? (retorisk spørgsmål) Det er sådan set bare en opdatering, når man ser, hvad det er, de egentlig gør. Og så kan man vende mønten om og kigge på sig selv, og vi gør jo det samme. Vi har fået nye

skibsklasser deroppe, vi har fået Knud-Rasmussen klassen - der får vi skib nummer 3 nu her i år. Hvis jeg var russer og kiggede på det, ville jeg sige, at 'så har I også styrket', for de kan meget mere end de små (skibe), de afløste. Vi har fået Arktisk kommando, vi har øget antallet af dage, vi er deroppe, altså antallet af timer, vi effektivt har ting der oppe. Vi ser på baggrund af den Arktiske analyse, som jeg håber, du har kendskab til, at vi også øger antallet af flytimer deroppe, og alle de her ting... og ser man på det udefra, så er det også en styrkelse. Så man er nok nødt til at grave et spadestik dybere og sige 'okay, det ser ud til, at alle bygger op, Canadierne gør det også, Amerikanerne gør det også, nordmændene bygger også noget nyt - hvorfor?' jamen det er jo fordi, der er en øget tilgængelighed deroppe, det vil sige, at der er mere trafik, og når der er mere trafik, så er der også behov for mere overvågning - dels for at vide, hvad der foregår, dels for at man som suveræn stat kan hævde sin suverænitet og identificere, hvis der sker systematiske krænkelse i (vores område), det skal man kunne, ellers er man ikke en suveræn stat, og så taber man det. Den anden er helt lavpraktisk sikkerhed i forhold til skibstrafikken, det vil sige eftersøgning og redning, og hvis der sker et sammenstød med noget, som kan lave et oliespild eller andet, så er der også tale om forureningsbekæmpelse... og man kan sige, at de ressourcer, vi har deroppe, er for de fleste af kyststaternes vedkommende enten kystvagt, eller flåde for vores vedkommende, så derfor er det naturligt, at det er noget, der ser militært ud det, der foregår deroppe. Vores er flåde, fordi vi ikke har en kystvagt, som en af de få i Verden, for de andres vedkommende vil det oftest være kystvagt... russerne gør lidt det samme, så det er flåden, de opbygger, fordi det er flådebaser, man har. Så man tager egentlig det, man har tilgængeligt, og så er det det, man bygger ud - i stedet for at skulle tage noget helt andet og starte fra nul, så er det lidt nemmere at starte med, 'hvad har vi i værktøjskassen, og kan vi udbygge det?' Så samarbejde, det er stadig et godt billede, det vil jeg sige...

E: Så har vi også været inde på nogen af de ting, som jeg ville spørge om, det med om Ukraine konflikten og Georgien osv. har påvirket samarbejdet, men det lyder til, at du mener, at samarbejdet stadig fungerer?

C: Samarbejdet er ikke som før Ukraine, det er klart... Det er det ikke, men det er der. Man har jo valgt fra verdenssamfundet side at sige, at det nytter jo ikke, at vi lukker alt ned og isolerer Rusland... det er bare ikke en smart måde at agere på, hvis man skal have et fredeligt verdenssamfund til at fungere. Man er nødt til at have nogen kanaler og nogen områder, hvor der kan være en dialog... man kan lidt populært sige, at det er pisk og gulerod. Så kan vi piske dem på Ukraine, og (sige) at (de) er nogen banditter, men vi kan også give gulerod og sige 'her samarbejder vi, her taler vi sammen'. Det er jo også vigtigt at tale sammen. Under den Kolde Krig, hvis vi skal (kigge) tilbage, der var grænserne trukket ret skarpt op... hvem der var ven, og hvem der var fjende, og faktisk der har der været langt større kommunikation, end vi tænker over. Når man gjorde noget, så foretog man faktisk et telefonopkald til dem på den modsatte side: 'nu gør vi det her, lad vær at lade jeg stresse af det, det er fordi sådan og sådan'.. man var enige om at fortælle hinanden, hvad det var man gjorde for at få en forståelse for de handlinger, man gjorde: 'vi gør nu det her, det er ikke noget mod jer, det er måske et indenrigspolitiske signal, jeg har behov for at sende... så lad vær med at stresse over det'... Så man holdt balance i tingene, og det er lidt det, vi også forsøger nu ved at sige 'vi er nødt til at have nogen kanaler, hvor vi har noget dialog, for hvis man ikke har dialogen, så kan man kun se udefra på forskellige handlinger, og de handlinger kan altså misforstås. Der skal ingen ting til, for at man vælter den balance.

E: Det er interessant, at du siger det, for i forbindelse med den russiske flag-plantning i 2007, som vi har snakket om... der var der et initiativ forholdsvis kort efter, fra både Norge og Danmark, hvor Danmark endte med at komme til at definere Ilulissaterklæringen i 2008. Hvordan fortolker du det tiltag i forhold til samarbejdet? Er det for at forøge samarbejdet, eller hvad var det et udtryk for?

C: Det var et udtryk for flere ting. Dels for at bekræfte, at på trods af den her flag-plantning, så var det dybest set bare en rigmand, som bare ville bevise at 'det kan jeg'. Og det er jo klart... man skal forstå nationer, man skal forstå stater... så var det jo, for Ruslands vedkommende, en kærkommen mulighed for at lave både en udenrigspolitisk pointe, men så sandelig også en indenrigspolitisk... mange af de ting Rusland gør, er jo også indenrigspolitiske signaler, og det skal vi huske på, når vi ser, hvad de gør. Vi skal have en fornemmelse af hvorfra, fra hvilken side i regeringen, hvem er det, der taler, er det Putin, er det samarbejderne, eller er det mere de hardcore, er der noget indenrigsmæssig signalgivning - og det bruger han jo rigtig meget... han skal holde styr på et ret stort land derovre, så det er meget det, han gør. Altså, for at bevise den her stormagt, så det er egentlig mere et indenrigspolitisk signal end det er et signal til os. Så for at vende tilbage til Ilulissat, det er jo dels for at sige 'vi samarbejder', men også egentlig at understrege, at de arktiske 5 kyststater har en særegen position i forhold til dem som kaldes Arktiske stater, som ikke er kyststater. Og det var egentlig et russisk argument i Arktisk råd igennem flere år, at de mente 'at det kan godt være, Finland og Sverige gerne vil være med, og Island, men, I har ikke en kyst deroppe, så I har ikke de samme forpligtelser, som Kyststater har'. Så det var lige så meget for at give en mulighed for at sige, at kyststaterne vil samarbejde, kyststaterne har nogen forpligtelser, og dermed også nogen udfordringer, som ingen af de andre har 'så lad os lave en deklARATION på det og sige, at de 5 kyststater står sammen og få håndteret de her problemer, som man ikke kan tale med de andre om, for de kan ikke sætte sig ind i det.' De har givetvis holdninger til det - de har ret mange holdninger til det - EU har holdninger til Arktis og vil gerne være med i Arktis råd... franskmændene, tyskerne englænderne, alle mulige har holdninger til Arktis... Kineserne... Men for ligesom at understrege 'det er fint nok, at I har en masse budskaber til, hvordan man bør gøre det her, men når det kommer til stykket, så er de 5, der har udfordringerne. Punktum.' Det var ligesom det, der var budskabet i Ilulissaterklæringen, plus at det var et stærkt budskab at stå sammen. Alle var enige om, at det er den fredelige linje, vi går efter, og at det skulle være et lavspændingsområde. Og faktisk jo også indirekte deri jo også for at trække tilbage til Ukraine-krisen, så kunne vi jo ikke trække den med op i Arktis, for så ville man jo være gået imod den erklæring, som vi havde skrevet under på. Så det var vi alle enige om, at det, skal vi prøve at udelade... hvad der sker i andre dele af verden, må ikke påvirke den del af verden. Så det er lidt for at forstå mekanismerne i Ilulissat.

E: Okay. Noget som man også ser som efterfølger til 2007, er den konference, der var i Reykjavik i 2009 hvor både Norge og Island går sammen om at have fokus på det Høje Nord, som de jo kalder det... hvordan fortolker du det initiativ? At man prøver aktivt at få Arktis tilbage på dagsordenen i NATO.

C: Det ved jeg ikke, hvordan jeg skal tolke, andet at det nok er en naturlig reaktion, når man geostrategisk ligger, hvor Island og Norge gør. Og man kan sige, at på det tidspunkt trak man mange, og det gør man jo faktisk i højere og højere grad i dag, rundt omkring i medierne, at man trækker paralleller til den Kolde Krig. Og hvis vi skal trække de paralleller, jamen så er der jo det her geo-gap, altså området mellem Island, Norge og Storbritannien, hvor man... det er jo der, man kan sejle fra og til Murmansk.

Så det bliver lige pludselig et strategisk område, hvis man vil fryse russerne ude, nede eller inde, så bliver den passage dybt interessant, og der er det jo klart, at de to nationer tænker... de skal jo heller ikke langt tilbage i den Kolde Krig, før de tænker, at slaget kommer til at stå om ørene på dem, og er man interesseret i det, hvis man ikke er sikker på, at ens alliance er med på det... Og at man måske føler, at ens alliance er mere optaget af, hvad der foregår alle mulige andre steder i verden? (retorisk spørgsmål) Fokus fra NATO har jo været meget rettet mod syd og øst... så jeg tænker, at det er naturligt for dem at sige 'husk lige på det her (Arktis)', særligt hvad nu hvis, at det er den tanke, der er begyndt at komme, for ingen har noget konkret på, (noget med) at Rusland kommer farende i morgen eller i overmorgen. Men det er klart, at der sker nogen udviklinger, og den bekymring, hvis man skal være et nogenlunde fornuftigt tænkende menneske, der bliver man nødt til at tage bekymringen op og (kigge på), hvordan vi kan håndtere det for at sikre os vores egen sikkerhed. Og det gør man jo kun ved at bringe emnet til torvs og få sat det i tale og sige 'vi ser den her udvikling, hvordan kan vi håndtere det?' (retorisk spørgsmål) Det kan vi kun, hvis NATO kommer, for vi kan ikke selv, og vi er jo et NATOland, så selvfølgelig bør NATO have en forpligtelse den vej'. Så jeg kan godt forstå, at man valgte at bringe det i spil.

E: Ja, ligesom at række fingeren op...

C: Ja, lige præcis. For at række fingeren op: vi er her stadigvæk, og vi har faktisk en gang talt lidt om det her med NATO og Arktis – skulle vi ikke til at få det på banen igen?'. Så det er en naturlig reaktion.

E: Det der er også er spændende her er, at Søren Gade var med til den konference og udtalte sig, hvis ikke positivt, så måske lidt tilbageholdende... men udtrykte sig positivt overfor initiativet og overfor NATO i den potentielle rolle, (organisationen) kunne have i Arktis. Man har ikke hørt offentligt, hvad jeg ved, nogen positiv tilkendegivelser fra det offentlige Danmark siden i forhold til NATOs rolle i Arktis... Hvordan kan det være? Det kan jo selvfølgelig også være, at du kan afkræfte den påstand jeg har, men det er i hvert fald ikke noget, man diskuterer.

C: Holdningen fra huset her er, at naturligvis skal NATO følge med i, hvad der sker i Arktis, det ville være åndsvagt andet, når man er en alliance. Naturligvis vil det være interessant for NATO at følge udviklingerne og monitere det, så selvfølgelig har NATO en form for rolle her. Men den er jo ikke så fremtrædende nu, også igen hvis man skal trække Ilulissatdeklarationen frem, så ville det jo klinge lidt hult at trække en 100% militær organisation ind i Arktis, når vi nu alle 5 har skrevet under på Ilulissat om ikke at gøre det. Og det er derfor, at man oplever den tilbageholdenhed. Vi anerkender, at selvfølgelig bør NATO følge udviklingen og se, hvad der sker, men en stor aktiv rolle ser vi ikke NATO have. Man kan også sige (i forhold til Ilulissat)... det kan klinge lidt skævt, at der er 4 NATO lande og en, der ikke er, som de fem Arktiske kyststater, og den mølle behøver man jo ikke at hælde mere vand på for at give russerne... hvordan skal jeg forklare det... I min optik; vi behøver jo ikke spille gode kort i hånden på Rusland for at sige: 'I begynder nu at køre NATO op i Arktis, så er vi nødt til som modreaktion at trække op', og så kan du jo se en oprustning, som vi ikke har en interesse i. Så vi behøver jo ikke at spille de argumenter over på Ruslands bord, hvis man kan sige det så skarpt. Så det er i hvert fald en af vores bekymringer, en af vores primære årsager til at være tilbageholdende, det er, at vi ikke har en interesse i, at det her spinder ud af hænderne på os, ved at man trækker noget, som er rent militært op, og så ville det nemmeste for russerne være at komme med Ilulissat og (sige) 'Hey... Når I nu gør, så må vi jo reagere. Så er det ikke os, der er bad Guys, men jer der er bad Guys, fordi I

startede'. Det er svært at komme ned af det træ igen, så derfor er vi måske lidt mere tilbageholdende... Som den ene del af det her. Den anden del af det her, er det med Rigsfællesskabets sammenhængskraft, som også spiller ind. Og der har grønlænderne jo også en holdning, som vi også må tage og favne. Og især nu, som jeg nævnte før, så har det grønlandske Selvstyre lige netop i den her uge proklameret et skift på posterne rundt omkring, og skifter nogen folk nu. Blandt andet Vittus Q. Stopper, og han har jo haft en meget skarp retorisk holdning til, at Grønland skal håndtere sin udenrigspolitik selv, og han havde jo en klar holdning til, at Grønland var i sin gode ret til at have en udenrigspolitisk profil. Det kan skabe grus i maskineriet, fordi det kan komme til at fremstå som om, at kongeriget ikke har en fælles forståelse for udenrigspolitik. Hvad det nu kommer til at blive, det er svært at spå om, for vi har ikke set de nye folk endnu, de har kun været på banen i et par dage.

E: Ja, de skal lige have en chance.

C: Vi skal lige have en chance for at se, hvem de er, men det er klart, at den konstellation, selvstyret har stået med på det seneste, har også været med til at spille ind på, at vi skal fare med lempe... På trods af, at udenrigsanliggender er Udenrigsministeriets område, punktum. Og det er dem, der håndtere det, og kan træffe de beslutninger, de vil, men... man kan sige, (for at opretholde) sammenhængskraften i kongeriget, så er man nødt til at lytte til alle dele af Riget, herunder selvfølgelig den grønlandske stemme og såvel den færøske... det er mere den grønlandske der har været fremtrædende.

E: Er der i den forstand nogen uenigheder indenfor Danmarks rigsfællesskab om, hvordan man skal spille sin rolle i Arktis?

C: Nej, det tror jeg egentlig ikke. Jeg tror mest,, det har gået på, hvem der skal have lov til at sige noget, og hvem der skal have lov til at bestemme, hvad der sker... Hvilken stemme er det, der taler. Jeg tror egentlig dybest set, at vi på flere områder er meget enige, og selvfølgelig på nogen områder er vi meget uenige. Grønland er ikke med i EU, fordi Grønland har en tvist omkring sæler og noget fisk osv. Og det er dybt forståeligt, at Grønland siger, at man ikke kan være en dl af EU, for det ødelægger jo deres økonomi og eksportmuligheder,, hvis de er med, for så skal man jo leve op til regler om fiskekvoter og sælfangst osv. Så det er klart, at vi har nogen store udfordringer i kongeriget på den måde, at der er mange interesser, der skal varetages, og interesser som, hvis man går ned på gaden og spørger 'sæler i Grønland?', jamen det er nok ikke lige noget, de fleste danskere tænker som et problem, men for Grønland er det et kæmpe problem, hvis man ikke kan få lov til at eksportere og have den handel. Så der skal man huske, at have rigsdelen med sig, og så kan det være, at man sidder og tænker: 'hvorfor er de så emsige?', og vi vil måske her i Danmark sidde og tænke, at det er noget besynderligt noget at gå op i, men vi er bare nødt til at have det med. Så det bliver lidt et kludetæppe og et puslespil at få alle interessenter (med). Og nogle gange er det jo som alle os andre, så gør vi noget i et felt for at adressere noget helt andet, så man kan sige, at der ikke nødvendigvis er en direkte sammenhæng, med mindre man er helt nede og forstå materien, 'hvorfor gør vi det her, er det (en) udenrigspolitiske signalgivning? (eller er det) egentlig mere et indenrigspolitisk anliggende i den her retning, for at tilgodese det her område'... så man kan sige, at vi ikke har gjort det nemt for os selv, at vi har et kongerige, for der er rigtig mange interessenter og holdninger til, hvordan tingene bør være... Og grønlænderne har lidt en skarp holdning til NATO, men de har lidt skarpe holdninger til de institutioner, som i deres optik måske kan ende med at begrænse noget for dem... tror jeg godt man kan sige på den måde, uden at jeg har

noget officielt på det her, og kan sige, at der er fire grønlandere der har sagt det til mig, men det er, når jeg kigger på det, så er de lidt tilbageholdende for de her organisationer, som vil kunne begrænse (deres) handlemuligheder.

E: Ja, man kan jo også kan kigge historisk på begrundelser (for det) osv... Hvis vi springer lidt over til... Nu ved jeg ikke, hvor meget du ved om Norges holdning til NATO i Arktis, men de har snakket en del for en forstærket rolle af NATO i Arktis. Det vil sige flere militærøvelser, bedre grundlag for at samordne initiativer deroppe i forhold til kommandocentraler, som både kan være for NATO og for Norge osv. Hvilken rolle tror du, Norge mener, at NATO skal spille i Arktis? Har du nogen indsigt i det?

C: Ikke mere, end hvad man kan få ud af at læse kilder... Jeg har ikke nogen smoking gun fra en norsk kollega, hvor jeg kan sige at 'det er det, der sker'. Så jeg har kun, hvad jeg kan tolke og analysere ud fra, hvad der sker, når man læser og ser, hvordan de handler. Men jeg tror klart, at de har et behov for at føle, at NATO er der, og at den opgave at vise tilstedeværelse i regionen, føler de sikkert, er for stor til, at kun Norge skulle håndtere det, men de kunne godt tænke sig... at Alliancens bidrag der oppe, sådan at man kan sige, det der populært bliver kaldt flag-waving, hvor man viser sin tilstedeværelse, som jo sker mange steder, som jo også amerikanerne laver ved Korea osv... der var det måske rarere for nordmændene at sige, at det ikke kun er det norske flag, der er bag på skibe (deroppe), der er mange nationer, 'så vi er mange, der mener det'. Så jeg tror måske, man kan se det som en form for at sige, at det ikke kun er Norge der stikker ud, 'så I skal ikke kun være sure på os, I skal være sure på en hel gruppe'.. måske. Men det er bare et bud, det ville man måske også gerne selv... hvis man bliver helt personlig, kan man jo sige, er det altid dig, der skal række fingeren op og sige, 'jeg vil gerne lige påpege, at du laver det her forkert'. Der er det lidt rart at sige, i stedet for at det bare er Emil, der siger det, så at sige 'jeg taler på vegne af de her ti kollegaer, og vi mener alle sammen, at du burde gøre noget andet, fordi din opførsel er ikke i orden'. Der kan jo være sådan en mekanisme i det. Og også fordi at det er et stærkt signal, hvis Norge kan overbevise NATO om at være i området og kan begynde at lave øvelser deroppe. Det ville jo være et enormt stærkt signal mod Rusland at sige 'vi står sammen, vi mener det'. Hvordan de har det med, at det kan tolkes som en oprustning og en eskalering, det ved jeg ikke.

E: Det vil jeg helt sikkert også prøve.

C: Hvis det er muligt for dig at finde nogen, der kan sige, hvad deres holdning er til det, for når jeg har forsøgt at spørge, så glider de meget af på dem, så det er ikke lige... for dem. Vi, som danskere, vil gerne passe på, at vi ikke laver en eskalering, som giver en uhensigtsmæssighed.

E: For at blive ved Norge, så har de et dobbeltspor, hvor man samarbejder meget med Rusland, men hvor man egentlig også opbygger militære kapabiliteter i forhold til, at der er rigtig store russiske kapabiliteter på Kolahalvøen og i Murmanskregionen i det hele taget... jeg tror, det har meget med trusselvurdering at gøre, også at man har gledet af på det. Rigtig ofte når man spørger...

C: Præcis, de er nødt til at matche den. Men der vil du faktisk se den mekanisme, som man også så under den Kolde Krig, hvor du opruster, du tager din trusselvurdering alvorligt og agerer på trusselvurdering, men samtidig holder du dine linjer åbne, så du har kommunikation, du har samarbejde... den nemmeste måde at finde ud, hvad den anden vil, er jo at tale sammen, så det er en naturlig måde at gøre det på.

E: Det, der også runger hele tiden, når jeg sidder med analysen, det er begrebet 'trusselvurdering', hvor det virker som om, at Danmark har et andet begreb,

eller en anden vurdering, end Norge har.

C: Det har vi også. Det tror jeg... Nu har jeg jo ikke set den norske trusselvurdering, men hvis man skal se ud fra hvordan de handler og analyserer ud fra det og tolker på handlingerne, når man ikke har adgang til trusselvurderingen... Der har vi forskellige opfattelser, men vi ligger også geografisk forskelligt. Vi har ikke en grænse, der rykker lige op til Rusland, og vi har ikke den daglige kontakt med russerne på samme måde, som Norge har. Jeg tænker, at hvis du spørger Finland og spørger Estland, Letland og Litauen, Polen nok også, så er jeg ret sikker på, at der vil du finde noget, der minder meget om den norske overbevisning om en trusselvurdering. Jeg tror, de minder meget mere om hinanden, men de har dem jo også lige i deres baghave, hvor vi så føler, at vi måske ligger lidt væk der fra...

E: Vi er jo inddæmmet af allierede på begge sider

C: Ja, lige præcis. Vi sidder jo lidt mere... Jeg ved ikke om folk har opfattelsen af det, men som blommen i et æg - den fornemmelse kan man godt få en gang imellem. Desuagtet af, at så forfærdeligt langt er der heller ikke til Rusland... Det gør bare, at vores trusselvurdering ser forskellig ud... Den strategiske betydning af, hvor man er positioneret.

E: Vi har været inde på rigtig meget af det, som jeg gerne ville snakke om, så det er jo positivt... Det, jeg også godt kunne tænke mig, som sidste spørgsmål, det er at stille dig et af de centrale spørgsmål i min opgave for at høre, hvad du tror. Ville det være okay?

C: Ja.

E: Meget basalt, hvad holder Danmark fra at tale for et øget NATO engagement og tilstedevær i Arktis?

C: Jeg har jo indirekte besvaret på det, men for at skære den helt klart, så er det, at NATO er en ren militær organisation, og hvis vi skal være tro mod, hvad vi har aftalt på et internationalt plan i Arktis Råd og med Ilulissat, med lavspænding og fredelig udvikling, så nytter det ikke noget, at vi bringer en militær organisation i spil og giver det en fuld, aktiv rolle i regionen... for det kan skabe en uhensigtsmæssig spill-over effekt, hvor vi får den her oprustning, som nok ikke er ønskelig, i hvert fald ikke, når man taler med folk; 'det, synes jeg, ville være fedt', ej, det synes man faktisk ikke. Så er det måske ikke en smart måde at gøre det på. Så det, tænker jeg, er den primære årsag til, at vi er tilbageholdende. Man kan sige... jeg tror egentlig også, at vi føler et ansvar, altså, nu var det jo os der skabte Ilulissat, og den blev underskrevet i Grønland... det kan godt være, at vi føler os en lille smule mere forpligtet af den, fordi det et eller andet sted er vores initiativ, der er blevet til Ilulissat. Så er der lidt det der med walk the talk. Hvis man skal være en pålidelig samarbejdspartner, også i russisk optik, så tænker jeg, at vi er nødt til at gøre det, for Rusland synes i forvejen, at vi måske er lidt nogen mærkelige nogen, fordi de ikke... igen 'I siger det her, men vi ser jo, at I gør de andre ting. Hvad er det egentlig I vil?'. Det er jo ikke altid, de synes, at vi er lige fede samarbejdspartnere. Det er jo så like-wise, kan man sige... Men det er jo så, fordi vi ikke forstår hinanden, og fordi vi måske nogen gange er nødt til at tage et indenrigshensyn, som gør, at man laver en uhensigtsmæssighed, og hvis man ikke får det forklaret... et super banalt eksempel, som jeg i hvert fald har håndteret meget, var, da man etablerede Arktisk Kommando i 2012. Arktisk kommando er en sammenlægning af Grønlands kommando og Færøernes kommando, og var egentlig... dels synes vi, at det var smart at sammentænke de to, og så var det egentlig også et spørgsmål om at få sparet nogen penge og nogen resurser ved at man kunne sammentænke de to, så man ikke havde dubletter rundt omkring, men samlede det hele i

Nuuk. Og placeringen i Nuuk var også for at komme tættere på Selvstyret og tættere på politiret, som er de to tætteste samarbejdspartnere, vi har, når vi agerer i området omkring Grønland. Så det var egentlig ren logik, 'vi kan spare nogen penge, vi kan gøre det mere effektivt, vi kan gøre det mere smart'. Når vi ikke kunne kalde det Grønlands kommando eller grønlandsk/færøsk kommando, det lød åndssvagt, så kaldte man det Arktisk kommando. Signalværdien i det, Arctic Command, var, at vi ruster op. Vi havde lige lavet Ilulissatdeklarationen, alle spurgte, og det var ikke kun russerne, (men også) amerikanerne, canadierne, der var flere, der spurgte 'hvad filan har I gang i? Vi har lige underskrevet Ilulissat, den her fantastiske... og nu ruster i op'. Og vi var sådan 'det gør vi jo ikke, vi skærer faktisk ned'. Og den fortælling var enorm svær at komme igennem med, fordi du har Arctic Command, det lyder bare meget mere... end grønlandsk kommando. Så signalværdien i, at vi flyttede det til hovedstaden i Grønland... vi har brugt ret meget energi i at forklare vores kolleger i Arktis hvad det gik ud på... Og parallelt med det, så skiftede vi ud til Knud-klassen fra den lille... som var tre små kuttere, vi har en tilbage, som ikke kan så meget og som sejler meget langsomt, til et skib, der næsten er på størrelse med thetis-klassen, som har kanon på, det har den, fordi det er et flådeskib, og det insisterede vi på, at det er sådan, vi er deroppe... så derfor var det vigtigt, at det havde en kanon på, fordi vi er ikke en kystvat, vi er en flåde, og vi bruger jo også de skibe i andre sammenhænge, eller kan gøre det. Så for at være fleksibel, så har vi selvfølgelig kanon på. Men den kan meget mere end de gamle, det er klart, nu når de er opdateret. Det er det samme med din gamle Opel Escort, den kan ikke så meget, som hvis du går ned og får en ny en i dag. Og det er bare det, der er sket, tid er gået, og man kan få mere grej for de sammen penge. Så man kan sige, at der skal ingenting til, før det giver en signalværdi. Hans Ø er et fantastisk eksempel, som vi nu er enige med canadierne om at være uenige om, og det er jo egentlig forholdsvist fredeligt. Men de blussede jo op for nogle år tilbage, hvor canadierne lige pludselig begyndte med... altså vi har jo det med, at vi tog derop og hejste et dansk flag og satte en flaske snaps, og når så canadierne kom forbi, hejste de det canadiske flag og satte en flaske Canadian Goose... selvfølgelig, hvad ellers... Men det har vi kørt i mange år flåderne imellem, men lige pludselig fik den politisk vægt, og den historie, at vi gjorde det her, og der var en canadisk officiel, som faktisk fløj ud med en helikopter, tog vores flag ned, gik ned på den danske ambassade, og sagde 'I har vist glemt noget ude på Hans Ø'.

E: Hold da op.

C: Og det er jo virkelig bare, hvor man tænker 'hvad f... har i gang i, vi er lige blevet enige om at være uenige, og så ligger i den her'. Men det var et indenrigspolitisk signal, fordi... premierministeren deroppe var på spanden og hælene i forhold til at holde sammen på butikken, så han var nødt til at udvise handlekraft. Og hvis vi ikke forstod den sammenhæng, så kunne vi jo have et kæmpe palaver om en lille tåbelig... stykke knold, som er en kvadratkilometer stor, og som er en klippe. Men igen for at vise, at stater ageren skal man se meget nøje på og prøve at se i et større perspektiv end blot lige at se handlingen i sig selv. Man kan ikke i Arktis se handlinger isoleret. Det tror jeg, er min erfaring efter at have arbejdet med Arktis i mange år. Man kan ikke se en stats enkelte lille handling helt isoleret, man er nødt til at få et fugleperspektiv på det, op i en helikopter og se 'hvorfor kan det være, kan der være andre forklaringer, end at de bare har tænkt sig at genere os, eller være hårde udenrigspolitiske?' (retorisk spørgsmål), og på samme måde med Rusland, vi ser ret mange ting, der går ud ad til, men som har mere indenrigspolitiske adressater og måske ikke så meget udenrigspolitiske adressater.

Nøjagtig det samme som Canada på det tidspunkt, det var ikke så meget udenrigspolitisk, det var for at holde styr på noget indenrigsmæssigt. Så det er bare for at sige, at vi jo alle sammen gør det...

E: Ja, det hænger jo sammen...

C: Det hænger sammen, og vi gør alle sammen nogen ting, hvor vi tænker 'det er bare mega indlysende, Arktisk kommando (eksempelvis), der var ikke så mange, der havde set, at det lige pludselig kunne blive et problem'. Det var jo bare logik for os at gøre det, vi skulle spare nogen penge, og vi kunne optimere, og det var faktisk meget lækkert alt sammen, og så kommer den lige pludselig tilbage med... på halen i form af 'hvad fanden har I gang i, I er jo ved at opruste, har vi ikke lige aftalt...? det forstår vi ikke, kan I forklare mere om det? Hvorfor ruster I op? Hvad har I set, som vi ikke har set?' det var jo også sådan, (de) tænkte, fordi det kom i kølvandet på Island og... Timingen kunne nok ikke har været mere ringe, men sådan er det jo. Det er hvad der sker (grin).

E: Det sidste (spørgsmål) går så på, hvorfor taler Norge for? Vi har været inde på det, men det er en af de fundamentale ting i opgaven.

C: Ja, det må man sige, det er key. Jamen, de taler for, for ikke at stå alene med en udfordring, og at stå alene med, i deres optik, en fjende mod øst, som har ret meget grej og udstyr, så jeg tror simpelthen, det er deres ønske for at være sikker på, at Alliancen er en alliance og for at være sikker på, at de ikke står helt alene med budskabet om, at vi skal være opmærksom på det her. Og det sammen gælder i Island for den sags skyld. Og for at minde NATO om, at det er kollektivt forsvar, så det gælder alle, og derfor bør... NATO også være forberedt på en indsats i et klima som det Arktiske, lige såvel som man træner i Middelhavet og andre steder, hvor det er varmt, så det er også et spørgsmål om, tror jeg, at være forberedt. Det, tænker jeg, kunne være en af deres argumenter. NATO bør være forberedt på en indsættelse i sådan et miljø, som jo er meget anderledes end Middelhavet... Stillehavet, eller hvor man nu har indsats... Særligt når man tænker på det begreb om 'train as you fight' eller 'fight as you train'... Så det er jo klart, at hvis man ønsker at træne i et sådant miljø, så kan du også kæmpe i sådan et miljø. Men hvis du ikke træner i miljøet, så får du måske svært ved at kæmpe i miljøet.

E: Nu har vi jo været inde på emnet om retorik og signalværdi. Allerede den signalværdi, (der er i) 'fight as you train', kan jo godt virke eskalerende i forhold til Rusland?

C: Præcis. Jeg har heller ikke hørt den nogen steder, men det er i hvert fald et begreb, vi bruger i forsvaret, når vi skal forklare, hvorfor vores hærpersonale skal have den udrustning, de skal have. Det er det, de bruger, når der er ude, så de er også nødt til at have det her hjemme, så de ikke står der nede og tænker 'hvordan virker den her dims, som jeg ikke har set der hjemme?'. Så det er derfor vi har den der 'train as you fight'. Det skal ikke forstås mere skarpt end, at det bare er en opfattelse af, at den udrustning, du træner med, vil også være den, du har det bedst med at kæmpe i. Det svarer til, at du kører en Puch Maxi for at træne op til at køre motorcykel. Ja, de har to hjul, og du skal have en hjelm også, men derefter er sammenligningen ret fjern. Så det er jo klart, at du ikke kan træne til at blive god til at køre på motorcykel ved at køre på en Puch Maxi, så bliver du bare skide god til at køre Puch Maxi. Det er lidt den forståelse, jeg tænker, og den tænkning jeg kunne forestille mig, at Norge vil bringe i spil, og sige 'i er nødt til at træne i miljøet, for miljøet er anerledes'. Og det er det jo.

E: Jeg tænker også på det russiske perspektiv i det. Når nogen begynder at lave øvelser et sted...

C: Ja, men de øver jo også selv deroppe. De har selv øvelser, og det plejer de da også at fortælle om. Vi plejer at fortælle, når vi har vores øvelser der oppe, og hvad formålet er med dem... Deres militærøvelser bliver vi sjovt nok ikke inviteret til, men de plejer at orientere. Men de fredelige øvelser bliver man gensidigt inviteret til... enten at være med eller overvære, det styrer man selv. Området deroppe er så stort, så en sejlads fra Rusland til den grønlandske østkyst for at deltage i en øvelse ville være omsonst.

E: Noget af en tur.

C: Ja, og likewise. Vi vil heller ikke sejle hele vejen over til dem, når de holder (øvelser). Så faktisk har vi delt det lidt op i Arktis, så den fysiske deltagelse, når vi holder øvelser, så er det Danmark, Island, Canada og USA, og når de andre træner, så er det Norge, Rusland, Finland og Sverige. Af praktiske årsager kører man to øvelser i hver sin side af Arktis, og det er med dem, som er der. Det ville også være naturligt at træne med dem... Hvis jeg ringede i morgen, hvem ville så kunne stå her? (retorisk spørgsmål), det ville jo være de tætteste. Man ville ikke vente 14 dage på, at der kommer et russisk skib. Så skal det virkelig være seriøst. Så skal det være noget olie-spild... Men (ved) en redningsoperation giver det mening. Så er det jo bare fint, at man har observatører, der ser 'hvordan gør I? I gør sådan, vi gør sådan, kan vi lære af hinanden', og det er så derfor, vi har Arctic Coast Guard Forum, hvor vi uddeler de her ting... for lige at binde en lille sløjfe på det sidste, og for at vende tilbage til det... Det er jo der, hvor den slags ting foregår, hvor man lærer af hinanden og bliver bedre, men at der er nogen fysiske begrænsninger i, hvordan man rent praktisk kan gøre det. Det er jo naturligt.

E: Det er indlysende, når man hører det.

C: Ja, man tænker ikke over det til dagligt. Man kan sige, at hvis vi ligger nede i Vadehavet og laver en øvelse, så laver vi den jo med os selv, Tyskland og Holland. Det ville være mærkeligt at invitere Polen med, andet end for at de skulle lære noget. Men man ville ikke forvente, det var dem, der kom med noget grej. Omvendt sidder vi ovre i Østersøen, så vil det være med dem, man samarbejder. Så der er jo praktiske og fysiske begrænsninger, og det skal man også huske på, når man ser... for man kan sagtens se beviser på, at 'der deltog vi (Danmark) kun med en observatør, hvorfor tog vi ikke et skib med?' (retorisk spørgsmål). Der er simpelthen... Fysisk giver det ikke mening... De økonomiske udgifter, der vil være ved transporten, ville ikke stå mål med, hvad man ville få ud af (en bestemt øvelse). Så der er tænkt mere smart... i nærområderne.

E: Fornuftigt.

C: Ja, lige præcis, og det er jo skatteydernes penge...

E: Ja, man skal jo passe på... Helt afsluttende skal jeg spørge, om der er mere, du gerne vil tilføje til interviewet, eller synes du, vi har været nogenlunde rundt om emnet?

C: Jeg synes faktisk, at vi har været meget godt rundt om emnet. Det virker også til, at du har meget godt fat i de mekanismer, der ligger... og er bevisdt om, at tingene måske skal ses fra flere vinkler, end bare lige... up front. Det tror jeg er vigtigt at holde sig for øje. Tingene kan se så lige til ud, men oftest er de langt mere komplekse, og bevæggrundene for at gøre forskellige ting er oftest meget mere kompleks, end hvad man lige ser. Og jeg tror, det er vigtigt, at man har det fokus, at man lige giver sig selv tid til at tage et spadestik dybere og kigger på, om der kunne være noget dybereliggende årsag til, at man handler på den måde, som man gør. Det, tror jeg, er ret vigtigt, også her. Også i Arktis.

E: Også i Arktis...

Appendix 3. Interview with Kristian Søby Kristensen, 25/04-2017

... marks a longer pause in the conversation.

() marks an addition to a sentence by the author in order to add meaning and/or context to the content

E is short for Emil Sloth Christensen, while K is short for Kristian Søby Kristensen.

E: Og.. Sådan, så skulle vi gerne være klar til at gå i gang.

K: På dem begge to? Det er godt.

E: Ja. Som sagt, emnet, introduktionsmæssigt, det handler, om hvorfor der er forskelle, og hvad forskellene er, først og fremmest selvfølgelig hvorfor der er forskel på Norge og Danmark historisk også. Jeg prøver at gå tilbage og kigge og se, hvordan de har ageret i Arktis i det hele taget - også forsvarspolitisk, og hvilke sikkerhedspolitiske interesser de har haft generelt tilbage i historien og se hvordan, det influerer på det nuværende.

K: Okay.

E: Og for at starte bredt... så kan jeg jo spørge dig, hvordan anser du den hidtidige udvikling i Arktis... altså beskriver man den som samarbejde eller konflikt, eller hvilke linjer vil du beskrive det som?

K: Altså, helt overordnet så vil jeg beskrive det, altså hvis jeg skal vælge mellem de to ting, så vil jeg vælge samarbejde. Det er min klare analyse, at regionen er præget, og sandsynligvis også fortsat vil være præget, af en høj grad af samarbejde, lav spænding, eller lavere spænding end andre steder i hvert fald og en interesse blandt alle regionens stater i at styrke samarbejdsrelationerne på de områder, de nu kan blive enige om at gøre det... Min analyse af, hvorfor situationen er sådan, knytter sig i høj grad til, hvordan Rusland forstår deres prima-nationale interesser i Arktis, som for det første ser regionen i en geopolitisk og sikkerhedspolitisk perspektiv som skrøbeligt, og der kan godt ske noget, men i første omgang er deres hovedinteresse økonomisk og økonomisk udvikling, og deraf følger en interesse i stabilitet, og for den interesse i stabilitet følger en diplomatisk hovedlinje, som lægger an til at prøve på at institutionalisere samarbejdet, og i et omfang også praktisk samarbejde, som er forudsætningen, i hvert fald i den nuværende russiske analyse og forudsætninger for, at Rusland kan realisere det økonomiske potentiale, som regionen har, i særdeleshed for Rusland.

E: Hvordan vil du så beskrive... (Arktis) hvordan har Danmark manøvreret indenfor det her billede i perioden 2007 til nu i forbindelse med, at Rusland plantede et flag på bunden af Nordpolen osv?

K: Det er jo et ret stort spørgsmål... Nu skal jeg prøve at se, om jeg kan koncentrere mig om hovedpointerne. I forhold til de andre Arktiske lande, så går det lidt senere op for Danmark, at den her region ikke er komplet ligegyldig, som den var i 90'erne. Der var jo ikke nogen, der overhovedet interesserede sig for, hvad der foregik i Arktis før man begynder at tænke over de sikkerhedspolitiske og geopolitiske implikationer af af-isningen, så man kan sige, at i endnu højere grad for Danmark end for andre Arktiske lande og for resten af verden, kommer de her begyndende analyser og fremtidsvisioner om et meget konfliktfyldt Arktis... kommer som en overraskelse og i særdeleshed den Russiske flagplantning i 2007, tror jeg, er afgørende i forhold til, at det også kommer højere på dagsordenen i Danmark... Og en af grundene til, at det er sådan er på grund af Rigsfællesskabskonstruktionen. Grønland er en del af Rigsfællesskabet, men de er ikke

helt en del af Danmark på samme måde... Folketinget er ligesom primært et dansk beslutningsorgan. Og der adskiller Danmark sig fra de andre Arktiske stater i forhold til, at der ikke er dansk-dansk territorier i Arktis, så man har måske været en lille smule mere fokuseret på den bilaterale relation indenfor Rigsfællesskabet end på den internationale politiske udvikling. Men der får man, så vidt jeg er orienteret, i relativ skarp konkurrence med Norge, får Danmark iscenesat sig selv sammen med Grønland som initiativtager til Ilulissat deklARATIONEN, som i høj grad er et svar på de her konfliktfremtidsvisioner fra landene, fra Kyststater: ”nej nej nej, det behøver I slet ikke at bekymre jer om, vi har styr på det, og i øvrigt er det os der bestemmer”. Så der er en dobbeltsignal i IlulissatdeklARATIONEN; for det første, at regionen er stabil, ”vi vil arbejde sammen for fortsat at være stabil, det er i alles interesse, og nu giver vi hinanden en håndfæstning på, at vi faktisk mener det”, og samtidig er det også et dokument, hvor landene bekræfter deres egen suverænitet i regionen. Og så følger der heraf, at det danske udenrigsministerium og dansk udenrigspolitik bliver trukket lidt mere ind i Arktis, og det bliver mere end bare ’Grønland’. Grønland bliver en del af Arktis, og Arktis bliver en del af Grønland, og Arktis bliver en del af dansk udenrigspolitik fra 2007-2008... Men igen er vi sent på den i forhold til de andre, i forhold til hvornår der kommer et strategi-papir, det er først i 2010...

E: Ja, 2010 eller 2011, der omkring.

K: Ja. Som jo er en årrække senere end de andre, og det tror jeg i et vidt omfang er på grund af geografi og på grund af Rigsfællesskabskonstruktionen... Og så tror jeg, at så kommer det højere på dagsordenen, og så er det mit indtryk, at det stabiliserer sig... Og Arktis stabiliserer sig, som er en væsentlig og vigtig del af dansk udenrigspolitik... både noget, som politikere kan sige: ”det vil vi gøre noget mere ved,” eller man kan blive enige om at, ”vi bliver også nødt til” eller ”vi synes, vi skal gøre noget mere” osv. Og det er eksempelvis Taksøudregningen et godt eksempel på... han mener både, at Arktis er (et) vigtig redskab i dansk udenrigspolitik, men også noget, vi skal blive bedre til at udnytte. Og det, at han i sin redegørelse kan lægge så relativt meget vægt på Arktis, er i sig selv et udtryk for, at det er højt på dagsordenen i forvejen... Jeg ved ikke helt, om det svarer på det spørgsmål.

E: Det gør det. Det er jo Danmarks hidtidige ageren i Arktis, og det gør det helt sikkert. Nu nævner du selv Ilulissat erklæringen. Jeg ved ikke, om jeg udtaler det helt korrekt.

K: Jeg tror, vi begge udtaler det forkert.

E: (Grin) højst sandsynligt, ja. Kan man også se det som en reaktion på, at Rusland planter et flag... en måde, at binde Rusland, og at sætte sin underskrift på at overholde lov og ret i området (Arktis)?

K: Ja. Det er i høj grad det, det er et forsøg på. De to ting, at binde de Arktiske kyststater sammen i en håndfæstning på, at man ikke vil komme op og slå om det her, og at der er nogen regler, som regulerer, hvordan det her territorium, og det her havområde i det hele taget skal forvaltes, og de regler anerkender man, og har tænkt sig at følge... Så det er sådan en slags håndfæstning, kan man kalde det.

E: Og det er også interessant, at du nævner, at der har været et parløb i forhold til Danmark og Norge, hvem skulle have lov til at tage det initiativ, og det var så Danmark, der vandt den konkurrence...

K: (det) har jeg hørt

E: Det har jeg også hørt... Så kan vi gå lidt over til Norge og i den forbindelse sige, at en anden ting, som Norge har gjort efter den begivenhed, hvis vi ser rent kronologisk på det, det var, at man i 2009 var en af de initiativtagere, der stod bag en konference i

Reykjavik, hvor man snakkede om NATOs potentielle rolle, hvor man har været en af de fremmeste fortalere for NATO i Arktis, at man ligesom (skulle) organisere Alliancen i området. Igen et lidt bredt spørgsmål, men hvordan ser du det i led med Norges Arktispolitik? Nu ved jeg ikke, hvor stor indsigt du har i Norge specifikt, og hvad de har gjort, men...

K: Sådan nogenlunde. Der er nogen afgørende forskelle mellem Danmark og Norge, og der er nogen afgørende forskelle i Danmark og Norges arktispolitik, men også i Danmarks og Norges sikkerhedspolitik, så det er lidt et spørgsmål om, det er en forskel i Arktispolitik eller en forskel i sikkerhedspolitik, som så har konsekvenser for Arktispolitikken. Og jeg tror nok, at det mest er det sidste. Hvis vi nu starter med Arktispolitikken, så har Norge i langt højere grad end Danmark været i stand til at blive enige med sig selv om, at Arktis, eller det Høje Nord som det hedder i Norge, skulle være et kernefokusområde, ikke bare udenrigspolitik, men i det hele taget være en politisk prioritet at styrke de nordlige områder i Norge. Så der er en meget mere stringent, grundlæggende flerdimensionelt og økonomisk velfinansieret norsk fokus på Arktis, og det er der god grund til, fordi den norske del af Arktis er også en del af Norge, så der er også lokalpolitik i det. En statsministerbeslutning tilbage i 2005 (vedtog) at det Høje Nord skal være en høj prioritet, og det har det været siden i Norge... på rigtige mange dimensioner, socialt, økonomisk, ressourcer osv., men også politisk og udenrigspolitik... et udenrigspolitik slagord har været 'High North, low tension', altså 'Høje Nord, lav spænding' og har i særdeleshed været fremstillet fra norsk side, som at især det russisk-norske bilaterale forhold var specielt, altså at der var et 'special relationship' der på grund af historie, på grund af grænser... og det er i vidt omfang også lokalt drevet på at fremstille grænseregionen som en speciel grænseregion, hvor man kan samarbejde og krydsegrænser osv. Parallelt med det, så har Norge, og den politik kommer lidt senere til, anlægger Norge en politisk linje i NATO, som er markant anderledes end den danske. Hvor Danmark er transatlantisk, eller globalt orienteret i sin forståelse af NATO, altså NATO handler om at lave ting ude i verden, så er Norge mere skeptisk i forhold til om det er NATOs kerneopgave... og Norge, i samarbejde med de Østeuropæiske lande kører en politisk kampagne for at prøve på at trække NATO tilbage, 'bring NATO home' og for at huske på også at fokusere på de traditionelle kerneopgaver, altså artikel 5. I vidt omfang så er det dét, NATO har gjort efter 2014, som Polen, Norge og de Baltiske lande i særdeleshed har argumenteret for, at NATO også skulle gøre inden, altså at fokusere på artikel 5, kollektivt forsvar, afskrækkelse af Rusland. Så der er en dobbelttydighed, eller en tvetydighed, eller et paradoks i Norges politik i forhold til Rusland i det hele taget, som handler om norsk sikkerhedspolitik, men som også har konsekvenser for norsk Arktispolitik, fordi Norge ligger i Arktis, og det samme gør Rusland, og det er en vigtig grænse. Ikke så meget den på land, men den maritime grænse er afgørende både for Norge og Rusland. Det har ført til en dobbelttydighed, fordi på den ene side samarbejder man på mange områder og har udmærkede forhold, både lokalt, som jeg sagde tidligere, men også i forhold til kystvagtsamarbejde og i forhold til økonomiske projekter, og bevarer et relativt intenst samarbejde mellem norske og russiske offshore firmaer i forhold til at udvikle især russiske dele af det arktiske ocean. På den anden side, et fokus på at trække NATO hjem, og, set fra Norge, trække NATO hjem betyder også NATO mere ud i Atlanten og mod Arktis, hvilket så kan risikere at provokere Rusland... det er i hvert fald et paradoks, at man på den ene side har et fantastisk godt forhold, men på den anden side arbejder for, at ens fundamentale alliance skal fokusere mere på at afskrække militært i

ens nærområde. Og der adskiller Norge sig fundamentalt fra Danmark, som jo har haft den holdning, at der var ikke nogen grund til, at NATO skulle beskæftige sig yderligere med Arktis, dels fordi at indtil 2014 var der ikke nogen i Danmark, eller i hvert fald danske beslutningstagere, der mente, at Rusland var vanvittigt farlig, og de var i hvert fald i særdeleshed ikke farlige i Arktis, og der var i særdeleshed ikke nogen grund til at provokere dem i Arktis af flere grunde... og samtidig var det vist også amerikanernes holdning, at der ikke var nogen grund til at fokusere på det militære, det var virkelig langt nede af listen over amerikanske prioriteter, især sikkerhedspolitik og militært, og samtidig kunne man gemme sig bag ved Canada, som havde den samme holdning som Danmark, af nogen lidt andre grunde. Så man kan sige, at i visionen, eller ideen om NATOs rolle i Arktis, der var, i hvert fald indtil 2014, Norge og Danmark fundamentalt uenige, og havde fundamentalt modsatrettede ideer. Norge: 'mere NATO', Danmark: 'virkelig dårlig ide, lad os lade vær med det'.

E: Vil det så sige, at du mener, at der har været et skift efter 2014? Jeg tænker, at du tænker på Ukraine-krisen som skel?

K: Der har været et skift i, eller delvist et skifte, i dansk politik, som flytter sig primært til et... spørgsmålet er, om det er et skifte, eller om det er en kursjustering i USA, som på den ene side i kraft af deres formandskab for Arktis råd i perioden efter, og, tror jeg, en personlig interesse i Obama-administrationen - både Kerry og Obama syntes at Arktis var spændende, fordi der foregik klimaforandringer - så er Arktis kommet en lille smule højere på den amerikanske dagsorden... og samtidig har bekymringen i forhold til Rusland helt generelt været stigende i USA. Derfor har det amerikanske forsvar og det amerikanske forsvarsministerium fokuseret lidt mere på Nordatlanten, eller Arktis, end tidligere, så man kan sige, at amerikanerne til en vis grad har accepteret nogen af de norske argumenter. I og med at Danmark i vores NATO-politik, hvis man skal sige noget om det, så er det, at vi synes det samme som amerikanerne - så når amerikanerne synes, at kollektivt forsvar i Europa er en afgørende ting for NATO at gøre, så synes vi det også i Danmark. Så derfor synes vi også lidt, at det er okay, eller det er nødvendigt, eller det er ikke så stort et problem, som det har været tidligere med øget militær tilstedeværelse i Arktis. Et eksempel er, at amerikanerne er tilbage på Keflavikbasen, hvor de jo trak sig ud, som er et godt eksempel på, hvor ufarligt amerikanerne syntes, at Arktis var... nu er de så tilbage igen, ikke ligesom de var i gamle dage med faststationerede tropper, men der er fly, der opererer fra Keflavik... hvilket nordmændene synes, er dejligt, for nu er amerikanerne tilbage i Nordatlanten, og tilbage i norsk nærområde, som er det afgørende skridt i at overbevise sig selv om, at artikel 5 virker, det er at knytte amerikanerne så tæt på norsk territorium som muligt, og det er også derfor de 300 amerikanske marineinfanterister, som der skal gå og hælde olie på alt det amerikanske militærudstyr, der står i Norge, skal ses som bilateral tripwire, som Norge har overbevist amerikanerne om, var væsentligt at gøre, fordi Norge er bekymret for Rusland, og ikke mindst for, hvad der ville ske i Norge, hvis der kommer en konflikt. Norge ligger rigtig tæt på Rusland, og er bange for at blive dekoblet fra resten af Alliancen, så derfor prøver man at drage amerikanerne så tæt på som muligt. Og der er også geografiske eller geopolitiske grunde til, hvorfor der er den forskel, fordi det også er to forskellige Arktis'er, Norge og Danmark befinder sig i. Hvis man kigger på, hvor der er is i Arktis, hvor isen ikke for alvor er begyndt at smelte, (eller i hvert fald hvor) havisen ikke rigtigt er vanvittigt begyndt at smelte, så er det den canadiske skærgård og langs Grønlands kyster... i modsætning til Norske havet og Barentshavet, som traditionelt har været isfrit, mere isfrit, og nu er endnu mere isfrit end tidligere, så hvor

er det, at en eventuel konfrontation vil udfolde sig? Ja, det er i det havområde, og det er også derfor, fordi det er isfrit, det er derfor Russerne har deres strategiske atomubåde i Murmansk på Kola halvøen, og det er et vidt omfang eksistensen af den militære infrastruktur, der, tæt på den norske grænse, som er Norges problem, fordi at det er det vigtigste for Rusland at forsvare i en potentiel konflikt, og dermed bliver det også vigtigt at imødegå det, så derfor ser Norge sit territorium automatisk værende væsentligt i en konflikt mellem NATO og Rusland. Så deraf den norske linje... det er i hvert fald begge dele i den norske linje, der har været relativt konsistente, altså både den brede politiske fokus på Arktis og på den Arktiske region, og på udvikling af den norske del af Arktis og på at udvikle det regionale diplomatiske samarbejde osv., men også det her mere sikkerhedspolitiske eller alliancepolitiske fokus på at bringe NATO hjem til Norge og bringe NATO tilbage til de klassiske kerneopgaver, før Ukraine-krisen. Man kan sige, at det så er blevet ”nemmere” for Norge efter Ukraine-krisen og... det store spørgsmål er så, eller et spørgsmål er så, i hvor høj grad at Norskehavet eller Barentshavet også vil blive et hotspot, som Østersøen er det i øjeblikket. Nordmændene er i hvert fald ret bekymrede, og det tror jeg omvendt også, at russerne er, for hvis der er noget, man er bange for i Rusland, så er det amerikansk tilstedeværelse tæt på ens grænser. Men man kan se en tendens i NATO til, at der er mere politisk og militær interesse i, hvad NATO gør med Nordatlanten. Hver gang jeg har snakket med nordmændene i mange år, så har jeg prøvet på at overbevise dem om, at de skal lade vær med at sige ’NATO i Arktis’, men sige ’NATO i Nordatlanten,’ fordi det sender to forskellige politiske signaler til Rusland. Det er svært at være imod, at en alliance, der hedder den ’Nordatlantiske traktat organisation,’ er tilstede i Nordatlanten. Men der er øget fokus på det, og man er begyndt at genbruge nogen af de gamle begreber fra den kolde krig, ’geo-gap’ osv., og et lille dansk bidrag forsvarsministeriets redegørelse i forhold til sine egne arbejdsopgaver i Arktis i fremtiden og de initiativer, de foreslår, så er et af forslagene at deployere de danske fregatter til Færøerne i sommermånederne, sådan så man kan frigive et af de isforstærkede skibe, som så kan sejle, der hvor der er is, i stedet for at sejle rundt omkring Færøerne. Det giver jo god nok mening, kan man sige, med face-value, men der, hvor det yderligere giver mening, er, at det er i det område, at amerikanere og englændere og nordmænd vil sejle rundt og overveje, hvordan man skal håndtere en eller anden konflikt i Rusland, hvor der så i sommerhalvåret er en dansk fregat, der kan være med i det der. Så man kan sige, på den måde så er den fregat med til både at frigøre nogen andre ressourcer, som traditionel Arktisk kystvagt, samfundssikkerhedsressourcer, men også at vise, først og fremmest amerikanerne, at vi også fokuserer på mere traditionel militærpolitisk, men dog med meget små midler. E: Det er sjovt, du nævner det, for en af de ting, jeg også har tænkt meget over, det er netop, at man i de seneste forsvarsforlig er begyndt at fokusere noget nationalt forsvar i højere grad på Grønland og i de arktiske områder, og hvis man kigger på dansk forsvarspolitik rent historisk, så har NATO været en enorm stor del af den forsvarspolitik, så det er også derfor, det kan undre lidt, at man ikke vælger at satse mere på NATO i den sammenhæng.

K: Jeg tror du skal... i vidt omfang... forklaringen på det, skal ses i sammenhæng med Afghanistan, og slutningen på Afghanistanoperationen og en bekymring i forhold til ’hvad så?’ i forsvaret, så det der fokus, der lige pludselig kom på Arktis i 2012 og 2013-14, så skulle F-16 flyverne lige pludselig vise, at de kunne flyve på Grønland, og der var alle mulige dele af hæren, der også skulle flyves til Grønland, var også lidt et bureaucratic politics på militær i forhold til at vise, at man stadigvæk havde en rolle, når

nu man ikke skulle (sende) bataljonskampgrupper til Afghanistan, hvis jeg skal sige det en lille smule hårdt... Så jeg tror mere, det var en national bureaukrati, 'vi skal kæmpe for stadig at have en meningsfuld rolle', hvor nu, efter 2014, der er logikken helt anderledes, fordi NATO nu gør noget helt andet. Nu er der mere sammenhæng, nu kan man i højere grad, hvis man lyst, det er jeg ikke sikker på, man har, fordi jeg tror stadig, at en væsentlig del af det danske politiske system synes, at der ikke er nogen grund til at eskalere eller provokere yderligere i Arktis, men man kunne godt skruet et argument sammen omkring, at øget militær tilstedeværelse er vigtig der som konsekvens af, hvordan Rusland har opført sig siden 2014. Jeg tror ikke, at det kommer til at ske. Det er bare logikken og argumenterne, der kan sættes i spil på en anden måde siden 2014 i forhold til, hvordan man anvender og indretter forsvaret.

E: Noget, der også er interessant, er det der med, at Norge virkelig taler meget for det (NATO i Arktis), og at Danmark ikke gør det. Hvorfor er der den forskel? Er det en forskel i trusselvurdering, eller er det geopolitik... eller hvordan vil du anse det?

K: Der er flere... Det kan skrues sammen på flere måder, den forklaring, eller en forståelse i hvert fald, for, hvorfor der er de forskelle. En del af forklaringen handler om de geografiske forskelle, og så handler det i vidt omfang også om historie. Hvis vi starter med geografien og de trusler, der følger af geografien, så er Norge på godt og ondt en frontlinjestat til Rusland, som Grønland ikke er. Så kan man sige, at det ligger tæt på nogen af de sibiriske øer, men det er lige meget. Grønland er ikke en frontlinjestat, det ville være virkelig langt nede på den russiske liste over ting, man ville invadere. Det ville Norge sandsynligvis ikke være i det her fantasiscenarie om en konventionel konflikt, som det jo stadigvæk er, det er stadig her, bekymringen ligger. Så der er en geografisk forskel i forhold til, at Norge bare ligger tættere på. Så er der en anden forskel, som er historisk og alliancepolitisk... at Danmark jo i højere grad end Norge har udliciteret forsvaret af sine Arktiske dele til amerikanerne. Vi har lidt en dobbeltallianceforpligtelse overfor amerikanerne – både NATO og den bilaterale forsvarsaftale omkring Grønland. Så amerikanerne har et ekstra ansvar, hvis man kan sige det på den måde, i forhold til forsvaret af Grønland... og Grønland ligger så tæt på USA, så det ville være fuldstændig utænkeligt, at Grønland kunne blive afkoblet, ligesom jeg nævnte, at Norge frygter at de vil blive. Man skal huske på, at Grønland er et arktisk territorium, men det er også et nordamerikansk territorium. Det ligger for tæt på det amerikanske fastland til, at det ikke vil være en del af en amerikansk forsvarsplanlægning og en amerikansk militær operation. Det gør en forskel... det er en lille smule mere lige meget for Danmark, for amerikanerne skal sgu nok fikse det... på en anden måde end det er for Norge. Og så er der den sidste del af forklaringen, som jeg også tror er væsentlig, som ikke nødvendigvis knytter sig til Arktis, men knytter sig til, hvordan de to lande ser forskelligt på nytten og brugen af militær magt, og der skal vi tilbage til anden verdenskrig. Danmark og danske politikere – og en væsentlig del danskere også, tror jeg – fik før anden verdenskrig overbevist sig om, at et militært forsvar af Danmark nok var svært, og det fik man så bevist 9. april, at det gav ingen mening. Det var ligesom lektion, eller det var i hvert fald en af lektierne, man kunne drage der fra, at Danmark er uforsvarligt. Den lektie nordmændene drager af anden verdenskrig... de fører en meningsfuld militær kampagne og får evakueret regeringen og får etableret en eksilregering, og englænderne når at sende forstærkninger, der er kampe i Norge – der er et meningsfuld militært forsvar af Norge. De to forskellige lektier er også centrale for, hvordan landene ser på sig selv under den kolde krig, hvor nordmændene i videre omfang tager det en lille smule mere alvorligt, og det gør man

altså ikke i Danmark. Måden man forsvare Danmark på, det er ved politisk at være med i en alliance, så det vil sige, at ens militære evne er først og fremmest symbolsk politisk i forhold til at overbevise vores alliancepartnere om, at vi gør nok til, at de skal forsvare os, eller at vi er vigtige nok til, at vi skal forsvares. Og det er også, hvis man kigger ned i nogen af NATO forsvarsplanerne, så er det også virkelig et problem for NATO, at overbevise Danmark om, at det faktisk giver mening, fordi at... hvis man kigger på nogen af de kapabiliteter, som Polen og Sovjet Unionen havde i området, så er det også virkelig en dårlig ide at forsvare Sjælland. Men det betyder, at der er et fundamentalt forskelligt blik på nytten af militær magt i Danmark og i Norge... og det har også betydning for, hvordan man i dag forstår, hvad det er, man skal gøre i forhold til Rusland. I Norge har de en levende diskussion nu omkring, hvad det egentlig er for en konflikt, de skal forberede sig på, og hvor meget hæren kan forsvare af Norges territorium, og hvor den skal placeres henne i forhold til bedst at kunne modstå et russisk angreb, så der kan nå at komme amerikanske forstærkningsstyrker... og hvor deres flyvepladser skal være henne, og hvor mange penge, man skal bruge på at sikre dem i forhold til russiske krydsermissiler, sådan så de stadig kan flyve... den diskussion har vi slet ikke i Danmark.

E: Nej, overhovedet ikke.

K: Fordi det er enten eller. Enten virker alliancemedlemsskabet, og så afskrækker amerikanerne, eller også er det lige meget. Norge tænker krigen som noget, der kan udkæmpes... Så de tre ting, geografi, alliancerelationen, eller tæthed til USA, som kom ud af geografien, og så de her historiske erfaringer, som de to lande har draget, der også knytter sig til deres geografi. Fjeldene er nemmere at forsvare end Sjællandske marker.

E: Ja, helt enig. Det, der også har været gennemgående i det, jeg har siddet og kigget på, er, at man ikke kommer nemt frem til den danske holdning til NATO i Arktis. Man kommer frem til, indirekte, at der bliver sagt absolut ingenting i NATO-regi. I 2009 under Reykjavik konferencen der udtalte Søren Gade mere eller mindre positivt tilbageholdende, men positivt overfor det hele, men ellers har man faktisk ikke hørt den danske regering offentligt snakke om (emnet). Har du noget indblik i, hvad Danmark mener, NATO skal spille af rolle i Arktis, eller ikke skal?

K: Ikke noget.

E: ikke noget, simpelthen?

K: Nej, det vil stadigvæk være mit bud... at det ville være præmaturligt eller kontraproduktivt, tror jeg, at man vil kunne lokke en diplomat til at sige uden for citat, på nuværende tidspunkt. Der er ikke nogen... Jeg vil stadigvæk tro, at den danske holdning er (at) begynde at NATO-ificere området ville være kontraproduktivt i forhold til, at det ville risikere at eskalere konflikten med Rusland og ville kunne føre til, at Rusland ville genoverveje validiteten af sin prioritering af sine interesser, som jeg snakkede om i starten... altså, hvis det militære pres på Rusland i Arktis stiger, så kan det være, at de tænker: 'nå okay, så kan vi alligevel ikke samarbejde med dem derovre om et stabilt Arktis. Så må vi også ud og sejle mere med vores skibe' – så det kunne føre til et sikkerhedsdilemma i Arktis... så det vil blive en negativ spiral i stedet for, i hvert fald potentielt.

E: Og dermed... Undskyld jeg (afbryder)... og dermed også en risiko for, at den grænsedragning, man er i gang med at få afklaret igennem CLCS, så vidt jeg husker, det hedder, sammen med Rusland, at det ville lide skade, hele den proces, eller hvordan tænker du?

K: Ja, jo surere russerne bliver i Arktis, jo dårligere bliver det dansk-russiske bilaterale forhold, men også hvordan regional politik og governance er konstitueret. Altså, hvis russerne bliver sure er det svært at lave små praktiske fornuftige aftaler om en lang række af ting... Jeg tror, at det er den primære grund, så derfor skal man helst ikke snakke om det, og man skal ikke snakke om det, for hvis man siger det, så bliver man uvenner med nordmændene, og (det) kan også måske ud fra dele af den amerikanske establishment udtrykke svaghed, så derfor er det bedre ikke at sige noget. Og så er det muligt, at den canadiske modstand mod NATOs tilstedeværelse i området bygger delvis på det samme argument, som jeg lige har fremført, men det bygger også på en canadisk modsat mod at multilateralisere Arktis i det hele taget. Det kan også være, at der er et dansk snusfornuftigt argument i forhold til, (at) hvis vi for alvor først begynder at fokusere på Arktis, så kan det være, at amerikanerne kommer i tanke om, at Grønland faktisk ikke er amerikansk territorium, så de kan få den ide, at Danmark skal påtage sig et større ansvar for et militært forsvar af Grønland. Det kan godt være, at det er sådan en købmandslogik, (der) er en del af det.

E: Ja... Så er der jo så Norges holdning til, hvad NATO's rolle skal være i Arktis. Hvad anser du den som... hvad har de, i dine øjne, prøvet at få frem af NATO?

K: NATOs primære rolle, fra Norges perspektiv, det er kollektivt forsvar. Den primære bekymring er, at Norge ligger så tæt på væsentlige russiske militære installationer, som NATO ikke vil være i stand til, eller have vilje til at forsvare norsk territorie, så jo mere man får NATO tæt på Norge, desto bedre.

E: Okay. Så det er simpelthen... jo mere desto federe?

K: Ja. Så det handler om dels at gøre NATO opmærksom på området, altså det der på militærprog hedder situational awareness, finde ud af hvad der egentlig er, og hvad der er på spil, og hvad er der for militære udfordringer og muligheder og... fokuserer NATO på, hvad russerne egentlig gør i Arktis, fokuserer NATO på, hvad der er for nogen russiske militære kapaciteter, der er, hvad er meningen, hvad er logikken, hvad skal vi være bange for. Måske også få NATO til at planlægge en lille smule – og igen, huske, at når vi snakker Arktis fra norsk perspektiv, så er det Norskehavet og Barentshavet. Det er ikke Nordpolen og Grønland. Og det handler om maritim, først og fremmest, det er flåde tilstedeværelse... og gerne måske også at begynde at planlægge og træne... genforstærkning af norsk forsvar. Og det er i vidt omfang også afspejlet i norske politiske talepunkter og det afspejler sig også i, hvordan Norge fokuserer sin øvelseaktivitet, at man meget gerne vil stille sig til rådighed i forhold til at gennemføre nogen relativt store (øvelser)... blandt andet en luftøvelse med stort allieret bidrag, fordi det sender et signal til russerne om, at amerikanerne træner og sender rigtig mange flyvere til Nordnorge – det er nok fordi, de har tænkt sig at gøre det

E:... eller er forberedt på det

K: Ja, forberedt på det. Så det vil sige, at den norske ide med NATO i Arktis handler ikke om Arktis, det handler om Norge. Det handler om at trække NATO hjem. Bring NATO home. Og det Norge er... bekymret for, er de vigtige russiske militære installationer som er tæt på norsk territorium, som russerne bruger rigtig meget energi på at udvikle og på at forsvare. Og der er Norge bekymret for, at dele af Norge kommer til at ligge ind under det forsvar... et forsvar der gør, at USA og resten af alliancen ikke kan operere der. Når man er militærstrategisk i øjeblikket, så er en af de mest hotte begreber A2-AD.

E: ja, Access denial osv.

K: Ja. Og det er det, nordmændene er bange for. Og du kan se det illustreret her (Kristian viser kort fra en bog) – det handler om den russiske bastion. Jeg ville nok have tegnet den en lille smule anderledes, fordi det er primært der, bastionen ligger... Men Ruslands grundlæggende militærstrategiske førsteprioritet kan du både se i, hvad er det, de prioriterer, når de skal investere, og hvor er det, de prioriterer deres forsvar, og hvad er det, de prøver på faktisk at være i stand til at flytte rundt med – så er de ubådsbaserede strategiske afskrækkelsesmidler, altså atomubåde, de fleste af dem er ved Kolahalvøen, og de skal så ud af deres base, og deres base skal kunne forsvares, og så skal de deployere, fordi så er Rusland garanteret afskrækkelse. Og det er så omvendt det, man fra NATOs side, igen i den her fantasikonflikt, vil prøve på at forhindre. Og derfor så bygger Rusland luftforsvar og maritime kapaciteter, som kan afvise muligheden for, at NATO, og Norge for den sags skyld, kan operere i området både med skibe og fly. Det er det, Norge er bekymret for. Derfor vil de gerne have, at amerikanerne i særdeleshed, og NATO i almindelighed, forbereder sig på at fokusere på at prioritere og kunne agere kæmpe i det her område. Det billede (der refereres til et kort i en bog, som vi sidder og kigger på) er taget fra en norsk hvid-bog som hedder 'Et fælles løft'

E: Det er der i hvert fald en, der hedder

K: Ja, det er fra den. Der udfolder de ligesom det argument.

E: Ja okay, det er jo meget sigende. Mere internt politisk, er det dit indtryk, at der er nogen, der er mere klare fortalere for det ene eller det andet? Både i Norge og i Danmark. Politiske figurer, eller...

K: Så godt kender jeg ikke norsk politik, at jeg lige kan sige det. Men det er mit indtryk at... mit fra-hofthen-skud er, at der er ganske stor konsensus omkring det her. Både den arktiske politik, som har været en hovedsatsning siden 2005, et statsministerielt initiativ, og det har været fortsat henover regeringsskifter, både centrum-venstre og centrum-højre regeringer. Det er også mit indtryk at grundlinjen i sikkerheds- og alliancepolitikken er der enighed om i Norge på tværs af det politiske system. Men det.. det er ikke noget, jeg følger så tæt, men det ville være mit bud, fordi det har været en konstant norsk position igennem de sidste ti år.

E: Ja, det har det.

K: Og jeg tror sådan set, det samme gør sig gældende, mere eller mindre, i Danmark. Der er også en relativ høj grad af konsensus omkring dansk arktispolitik, også fordi, hvor vigtigt er det? Det er vigtigt i Norge, der er de enige, men i Danmark er det ikke noget, man kommer meget op og skændes over politisk. Det er ikke noget, man bliver valgt på. Så derfor er det også delvist overladt til embedsværket både at drive og konceptualisere politikken. Det er nemt at lade sig overbevise af de argumenter. Den eneste der – hvis der er nogen der har sagt noget – er Søren Espersen, som nogen gange har været ude og sige nogen ting som ligger udenfor konsensus.

E: Sådan generelt også rettet mod Rusland, som jeg forstår Søren Espersens udtalelser i det hele taget...

K: Der er Søren Espersen nogen gange ikke helt enige med Maria Krarup, i forhold til hvordan man skal se på Rusland. Det her var mere i forhold til Grønland og Arktis politik. Men jeg vil faktisk sige, Norge har det dilemma, eller det her paradoks, i deres Ruslands-politik, at de på den ene side mener, at der i det Høje Nord er lav spænding, og at 'vi har et fantastisk bilateralt forhold til Rusland, og på et lokalt plan har vi samarbejde med dem på alle mulige områder', men fokuserer enormt på et skarpt militært kollektivt forsvar. Så det er paradokset i Norge... og paradokset i Danmark er så anderledes, at vi er rimelig hardlinere i Østersøen og bakker meget op om NATOs

afskrækkelse og genforsikringsinitiativ i Baltikum, og retorisk ligger vi også relativt hårdt i forhold til beskrivelsen af truslen fra Rusland, men det er noget helt andet i Arktis. Så der er to forskellige paradokser i de to landes politik.

E: Ja. Jamen vi er sådan set ved at være ved enden. Jeg har ikke stillet så mange spørgsmål, men du har kontinuerligt svaret på det, som jeg ville spørge ind til. Vi har været inde på det, men det er sådan set bare for at runde af med de sidste spørgsmål, som også er en af de spørgsmål, jeg stiller i min opgave, så det er en mulighed for at kunne høre dit svar på det, hvis det er okay med dig? (Kristian bekræfter)... Hvad holder Danmark fra at tale for et øget NATOengagement og tilstedeværelse i Arktis, og hvad får Norge til at tale for?

K: Jamen det er så de to forskellige visioner i forhold til både regionen og territoriet. Norge ser sin sikkerhed bedst sikret igennem en klar og markant alliance tilstedeværelse, og Danmark ser sin sikkerhed og politik bedst opfyldt ved en diffus, hvis man kan bruge det ord, eller en meget let, eller så lidt som muligt, i øjeblikket i hvert fald, NATO fodaftryk i regionen. Så man kan sige, at det er to forskellige tilgange til regional og national sikkerhed.

E: Okay. Afslutningsvis, er der noget du gerne vil tilføje i det hele taget?

K: Nej, jeg tror vi har været omkring det hele.

Appendix 4. Interview with Norwegian civil servant, 19/05-17

... marks a longer pause in the conversation.

() marks an addition to a sentence by the author in order to add meaning and/or context to the content

E is short for Emil Sloth Christensen, while C is short for civil servant.

E: I guess you have read my email, but as a short introduction, my thesis is about the different perceptions of whether or not NATO should have a more active, or enhanced role in the Arctic. From reading both official documents and from reading academic literature, there seems to be quite a significant difference Denmark and Norway, that I did not expect to find... So basically, my thesis sets out to investigate what the difference is, and why there are these differences.

C: Yes, sounds like an interesting thesis.

E: Absolutely. I am in the end-phase now, so I have an idea of where I am going, but I am really looking forward to hearing your perspective on (the issue). The process of this is that I am going to ask some broad questions (first), and then I am going to narrow down the questions afterwards... First of all there seems to be a believe that the general development in the Arctic has been proven to be more oriented on cooperation rather than conflict. How would you describe the development in the Arctic?

C: Well, I would absolutely agree. Our position is that the Arctic is a region of stability and peaceful cooperation based on the law of the sea... and we would like to keep it that way. That is really our starting point.

E: That kind of leads me to the next question. How would you describe the Norwegian Arctic policy so far? In a historical perspective from (around) 2005-2007.

C: I should point out right away that the Arctic as a general topic actually belongs to another section, so I am not an expert on the Arctic. I am working on security policy in the Arctic, so the Arctic in the broader sense is... what I just described; we have been working towards deepened and strengthened national cooperation in the Arctic in general. Obviously the Arctic Council is a very important forum in that regard. And there has been a (technical difficulties...) very strong cooperation... even though the relationship with Russia has changed since 2014.

E: Again, that leads me to the next questions. You could say that, obviously, no doubt, Russia is a big player in the Arctic and has been so for quite some time now, which is also why the flag-planting incident came as a shock back in 2007. Did the flag-planting incident affect the Arctic strategy of Norway in any way?

C: I am sorry, you broke up there (still technical difficulties...). I head incident?

E: We have some issues with the line right now, but I am going to speak a bit slower, so if you would do the same...

C: I am going to close some of the apps, maybe that will help... I should have decent bandwidth... okay, so please repeat.

E: Sure. It is about Russia as a big player in the Arctic, and that the flag-planting incident in 2007 came as a shock to most observers. Did the incident affect the Arctic strategy of Norway in any way?

C: I would not say so. It was from our perspective a symbolic act without any real implications. So it did not really change our position or approach in any way. It did create a stir, of course, it was not something that changed our policy, and it has not

really affected cooperation in the north in general. But I have to say that, more general Arctic policy is not my domain, and back in 2007 I did not work on these issues at all.

E: Okay, I will try to direct the questions more in your way then.

C: No worries. I am just saying that I cannot really comment beyond generalities.

E: Yeah okay, which is perfectly reasonable. More in the security domain... you could say that the Russian assertive actions around its periphery has also kind of surprised many observers. Has this affected the security policy of Norway in the Arctic, for instance after 2014, where the Ukraine crisis occurred?

C: ... No, again, we see the Arctic as a region with stability and predictability, and that remains largely unchanged. At the same time we have to realise that if there were to be a crisis somewhere else, just speaking generally, it could very easily spill over to the Arctic. So the general change in Russian behaviour, not only (dating) back to 2014, but also (dating) back to 2008 of course makes us more conscious of the bigger strategic picture also in the High North. You can say that it is a bit of a balancing act. We see it as a peaceful and stable region, and we want to keep it that way, but at the same time we have to look at scenarios. As you very well know, it is a fact that Russia is increasing its presence in the north through constructing new bases, (and by) more frequent and more complex exercises and so forth. So there is a bigger Russian footprint. That is also leading us to increase our presence somewhat.

E: As far as I have seen, Norway has rather continuously upped its presence since, lets say, around 2006 or 2007, and I have also seen that, what I interpret as a Norwegian promotion of NATO in the Arctic. Would you agree on that assessment, or what would your take be on it?

C: Yes, I would say both are true. First of all there has been an increase in our presence in the North, (which has) sort of been tracking the Russian increase, obviously we are not increasing anywhere near the levels that the Russians are increasing, but it is basically a matter of good situational awareness and that is important not only to us, but also to NATO. So that is the actual consequence of the increased Russian presence and activity in the north. And when it comes to your second point, namely Norwegian positions on NATOs policy in the High North, it is also true that we are very keen for NATO to keep good situational awareness of the developments in the High North... as a consequence of NATOs increased, or renewed I should say, focus on collective security. We underscore the importance of the North Atlantic in general. Its strategic importance back to the Cold War, but awareness has dissipated somewhat for the last 20 years, and so we are basically pointing out the importance of the North Atlantic in terms of Allies reinforcement to Europe in case of a crisis or war. So it is really a reminder of the basics of NATO.

E: I should also tell you that my thesis is also very much about looking back in history to see what both Norway and Denmark has done previously relevant for this subject. One of the things I have looked a lot into is the Norwegian proposal of the core initiative. Should this attempt to promote an enhanced NATO role in its own territories also be seen in line with the Norwegian attempt to direct NATO attention to its northern territories?

C: (technical difficulties...) I am not quite sure... I think I heard 'initiative'?

E: Yeah, the core area initiative...

C: That has not been on the agenda lately, but in general terms we have worked quite intensively... we have been trying to get this issue higher on the agenda, and it is not so much about creating a bigger NATO footprint in the North. As I said before, renewing

that situational awareness or keeping situational awareness of the developments in the North, and also that strategic conscious or awareness of the importance of the North Atlantic in terms of reinforcements. That goes for intelligence, it goes for planning, it goes for exercises and also of course for capabilities. Our focus on the maritime dimension goes hand in hand with our focus on the North Atlantic.

E: Okay... But to (understand) it, is Norway promoting a presence of NATO more permanently in the North Atlantic and in the Arctic, or is it only through exercises or training ?

C: No, we have... You probably have heard about the self-imposed restrictions? (E: I have, yes)... Permanent bases are out of the questions. The ongoing debate, as you know, is concerning the US marine corps training activities based in Varnæs, and that is on a strictly rotational basis, first of all, and it is also in the county of Trøndelag, so it is very far from our border with Russia. Also, it is a small number of troops.

E: Yeah, 300 as I recall...

C: Yes, it is a little bit more these days, but it is still a very small number. So permanent bases are not on the table at all. Like I said, it is an across-the-board concerning planning, concerning intel, concerning exercises, as you know we have a big exercise, Trident Juncture 18 coming up next year, which will take place in the middle of Norway... and also, as I said before, a renewed focus on capabilities. I do not know if you have read the book, but there is a reasonably recent book that came out published by RUSI...

E: Yes, 'NATO and the North Atlantic' isn't it?

C: Yes, you have read it.

E: Yes, I am sitting with it right now.

C: Okay. As you know, the editor is Norwegian and sort of the grand old man of the Norwegian MoD, and Efstad has written an article there, which really encapsulates all the main Norwegian arguments and the approach to the issue. So that is a really good summing up of the Norwegian position.

E: Which chapter was it, sorry?

C: Let me see. It is the fourth chapter.

E: Okay, Svein Efstad, yeah. I will have a further look into that.

C: That is a really good summing up of the arguments... also, we do not want a big and strong NATO (presence?) in the North. We are very keen to renew deterrence and collective defence, but at the same time Norwegian security policy has also tried to balance this with reassurance, and not reassurance in the current NATO-meaning of the word, because nowadays with the enhanced forward presence and so forth, reassurance is (directed) to the allies in the east. But in the traditional meaning of reassurance in Norwegian policy, has been reassurance towards the Soviet Union and Russia. So it is a balancing act. It is very important for us... that our defence and security policy is purely defensive, and we have gone to great lengths to demonstrate that to the other side... (problems with sound quality)...

E: The thing is that when I read Danish official documents or reasoning, they are afraid of a military escalation, or a security dilemma or something like that, by upping military presence in the Arctic through NATO. How does Norway see that issue?

C: We certainly do not want militarisation of the Arctic. Again, we see the Arctic as a region marked by peaceful cooperation based on the law of the sea, so that is number one for us. That being said though, we do not really see the security dilemma, because we think that you can have credible deterrence and a credible collective defence without

contributing to an escalation. So we think that you can have... basically, show that we have credible national defence and a credible NATO defence, but basically do that in a transparent and predictable way so it is not to increase tensions. I have obviously heard that argument many times, but we just do not see it that way. Take enhanced forward presence in the Baltics and Poland. Some people, generally I should say, among NATO countries are concerned about possible escalatory effects of that, but when you look at it, there is no way that 4000 troops in the Baltics and Poland can be seen as a threat by Russia in any way what so ever. We have made clear for decades that our defence is purely defensive, and that it is basically about credible deterrence coupled with openness and predictability. We do not see the security dilemma there. I also think it should be pointed out that Norway has gone through decades of Cold War, directly facing the Soviet Russians, and are used to handling incidents in a way that very few allies are. Now that you have a certain increase in incidents over especially the last three years, that makes some allies nervous, and you can say that that is understandable, but for us it is still nowhere near what we used to handle during the height of the Cold War. So it does not really make us nervous the same way it makes other countries nervous.

E: That is a good point. Also what I have seen is that Norway is starting to reinvest in more national capabilities, for instance in the early 2000s Norway kind of shifted away in its defence to be more focused on operations abroad ... I have interpreted a shift back to the more status-quo of Norwegian defence, also in the North. Is that true, or what would you say?

C: I would say that that is certainly true. It is true for us, but also true for most other allies. After 20 years of focus on international operations there is now a renewed emphasis on collective security and territorial defence, and of course capabilities have to be relevant to that new strategic thinking. So it is certainly true that our investments in F-35s and P-8s and new submarines and so forth underscore this renewed emphasis on territorial defence. They are not really that relevant to expeditionary operations.

E: Okay, that makes sense. Well, actually you have been quite efficient, so we have covered a lot of the questions already.

C: I am glad.

E: That is a positive thing. Another thing is more (focused on) domestically, internal politics... Would you say that there are any prominent proponents or opponents in Norway regarding the issue of NATO in the Arctic, or a general refocus on the northern territories?

C: I have to say that I do not see a lot of controversy on the main lines. Like I said, our main focus is on keeping the Arctic an area of cooperation and predictability, we do not want a militarisation of the Arctic. I think that there is a lot of hype surrounding this (supposedly) militarisation of the Arctic. I do not think it is true, although we see a Russian build up and presence in the north. I think that a generally cautious approach is a very strong consensus-based approach, you see that in the debates in the parliament. I think that there is a very broad consensus on the main lines concerning Norwegian security and defence policy. If you read the Norwegian papers there is a debate and discussion on the presence of the US marine troops at Varnæs, (and) I think that is also a reflection of the fact that we have not really been thinking that much about collective defence for the last 20 years, so there is a bit of insecurity as to what the Norwegian defence concept is, and what principles Norwegian policy are... but generally speaking, I would say that Norwegian security and defence policy is very consensus based.

E: That confirms what I have seen. There is very little controversy on the line in general.

Another thing is... in terms of Russia, let us go back to that subject, there has been continuous statements about them not wanting NATO in the Arctic, and many observers have interpreted including NATO as a, not a provocation, a perceived provocation, you could say, from the Russian perspective. How do you see that, is it just talk from the Russians, or do they see it as a provocation?

C: Frankly, I think you have to make a distinction on what the Russians say they are concerned for, and what they are concerned for. I do not think they are that concerned, and they certainly do not have reason to be. There has been quite a bit of discussion in Norway following several statements from the Russian embassy... of course we have to take Russian concerns seriously, but also we should not take everything they say as face-value. I think that that is basically yes.

E: Yeah, okay, that makes sense. Do you know a lot about the Danish position regarding this issue, that is not really your area, I know, but...

C: I cannot say that I am an expert, but until last summer I was posted to our delegation to NATO, so I did certainly follow discussions there. It is true that there are some nuances between our positions. I think it is safe to say that Denmark has gone further in reforming its armed forces to an almost exclusively expeditionary force, and also you are spending a lot less on defence than we do. The implication of that is that we have somewhat different perceptions of... how should I say it... We have some different departures to territorial defence. We have gone much further than Denmark in refocusing on territorial defence and investing in capabilities. Of course also our geopolitical position makes us much more focused on the North, so I think it is sort of natural that there are some nuances to our positions, but I do not perceive a big disagreements in terms of the two last (NATO) summit declarations. I do not think Denmark and Norway are very far apart on these issues. I really cannot say that I remember that we have a really big difference on that, so I think both countries have whole-hartedly supported both declarations, so I do not think I would exaggerate the difference.

E: Okay. What I have seen is that Denmark has really taken a silent approach to the whole issue. Did you perceive a difference in policy after the Ukraine crisis, not just in terms of Denmark, but from all of NATO in terms of what NATO's role should be in the Arctic? It is a broad question, I know...

C: Yeah, it is a broad question. I will try to respond... I think the reorientation of security policy after 2014 was and is still a difficult problem for the Alliance. First of all there are very different threat perceptions. 28 allies with very different histories and geopolitical positions naturally have different perceptions, so the discussion of the implications for NATO obviously had to be challenging. So it is no secret that there has been and still are difficult discussions on how to... the posture in general, how to relate to Russia, how to conduct dialogue with Russia in the NATO-Russia Council, what our military posture should be etc. I would not only be lying, but I would undermine my own credibility if I were to say that there were no challenges in those discussions.

E: As I have done with the other interview persons, I have concluded the interview by asking the same questions that I ask in my assignment, would that be okay for you to answer?

C: Sure.

E: Okay. Basically, what keeps Denmark from promoting an increased NATO engagement and presence in the Arctic, and what makes Norway promote the same? Why is there a difference?

C: It is a bit delicate on other allies' positions, so I hesitate to do that, but I think that I would point two factors that I mentioned earlier. First, geographical position, we are much, much closer to Russia, and we have a much stronger national presence in the North, so that is one obvious difference. I think the second difference is your national military posture. Denmark has gone much in restructuring its forces to expeditionary operations. That makes for a difference as well. That of course also sort of explains the Norwegian position. If I really focus on Norway, which I prefer to do, the main point is really that the Norwegian defence concept is based on reinforcement. We realise that we have never been able to, nor will we ever be able to, defend Norway totally on our own, so we are dependant on allied reinforcements, and of course especially from the US. If the North Atlantic were to be blocked somehow by Russian capabilities in the event of a crisis or war, that would undermine our defence concept, and so that has really the basis for our renewed importance on the North Atlantic. Freedom of navigation (and) allied reinforcements is absolutely crucial, not only to Norway but to the Alliance in general. And so a renewed focus on how to keep open passage through the North Atlantic in the event of crisis or war is absolutely crucial. It is really back to basics.

E: Yes, I have heard that. The Balancing act is kind of repapering as I have heard some people say it. Is there anything more that you would like to add to this interview?

C: No, I think we have covered a lot of ground. So again, I would like to emphasise that we think that really you can have your cake and eat it too – you can both have credible defence and maintain a peaceful cooperation and predictability. There does not have to be a trade-off as long as we act in a responsible, predictable and transparent matter.

E: That was a good concluding remark.

Appendix 5. Interview with Paal Sigurd Hilde, 04/05-17

... marks a longer pause in the conversation.

() marks an addition to a sentence by the author in order to add meaning and/or context to the content

E is short for Emil Sloth Christensen, and P is short for Paal Sigurd Hilde.

E: The overall development in the Arctic... would you describe in terms of cooperation or conflict?

P: Cooperation, really. But I have to say that the perception of the problems in the Arctic have changed quite dramatically over time, because in the mid-2000's from 2006-7 - and 2007 is a bit of a dramatic year ... this notion of conflict in the Arctic emerges for real... and there are several events in 2007 that trigger this, and the Arctic... first of all there is a general picture, which is Russia is re-emerging. In 2007 you have Putin going to the Munich security conference and delivering a forceful message, saying 'Russia is back, and we are sick of being ignored' etc. And in the spring you have the cyber attack on Estonia, with, suspected at least, Russian involvement ... (bad sound, but gives example of Russia petrol agreement)... and a general coldening of the international climate (in relations to) Russian and western countries. And in the Arctic you also see an escalation of Russian rhetoric, and the physical expression is the resumption of the flights of the strategic bombers through the Arctic and into the North Atlantic, but also towards North America and Alaska. And finally then, in early August, a planting of this little flag, which you have probably already read about...

E: Yeah, on the Seabed...

P: Yes. This all triggers the perception of 'uuh, there is a great game going on for the Arctic.... There is an arms race, or a sort of scramble for the resources in the Arctic' and one of the (prominent) examples of this perception is Scott Borgeson's article in August 2008 in Foreign Affairs, where he claims that there is an armed dash for Arctic resources. And this triggers in Norway, or it helps trigger at least, a re-focus on the Arctic and on the European Arctic... because, for Norway, they had gradually, though not by any means as far as Denmark, reoriented towards Afghanistan. And herein lies the key explanation, at least in the initial period, why there is a difference... because Norway sees this challenge that 'ooh, Russia', whereas Denmark does not. That Denmark is in the Southern Afghanistan taking losses, is part of the Regional Command South Group... and part of the group that tries to keep NATO focus on Afghanistan, while Norway then becomes part of this 'Article 5'-group...

(Here the Skype connection was cut off, but was re-established again soon afterwards).

E: Can you hear me?

P: Sorry, I did not realise, I just kept talking. When did I lose you?

E: You were talking about that Denmark had oriented itself towards Afghanistan, whereas Norway is close to Russia...

P: Yeah. I do not remember what I said and did not say, and what you heard and did not hear, but anyway, to start somewhat anew. In Norwegian security policy you see a change that comes in 2007-2008, where Norway tries to engage NATO, and tries to

bring NATO back home, and the Russian intervention in Georgia 2008 serves as a catalyst for this. You also see the Baltic States and Poland pushing really hard for NATO to pay more attention to affairs at home, as in the Russian threat. In this period Norway also highlights the Arctic in NATO, and presents it as a sort of looming challenge, and that things might go wrong in the Arctic... but to answer your first question concerning cooperation or conflict, over time this view of conflict that conflict might loom in the Arctic calms down, because of a number of developments. One, the argument of shelf-gas and shelf-oil, which takes the Arctic off the international petroleum market, as it is no longer as interesting to extract petroleum in the Arctic, because it is no longer profitable... and also you see that countries in the region, notably Norway and Russia, were actually able to agree on border issues, as in Norway settles its maritime border with Russia in 2010. So today I think that there is a general – despite a lot of writings about ‘uuh, conflict looms in the Arctic’ – generally, there is a consensus that, although there are points of contention and a potential for conflict... that at least long term there, in general, that the Arctic region is a calm one, where you are unlikely to see any conflict emerge.

E: Okay, Well, you have touched on a lot of the subject that I was going to ask you about in terms of Russia, and we are kind of getting into the whole in area-out of area debate that has been going on in NATO... You could say that shortly after the flag-planting incident in 2007, Norway promoted a reinforced role of NATO’s presence in the Arctic during the Reykjavik NATO conference in 2009. Should that be seen as part of the whole debate, or as a reaction to the Russian flag-planting, or how would you interpret that?

P: Actually, the Reykjavik seminar was not really a Norwegian thing. The arrangements of that was actually in NATO itself... I have actually written an article about this, where I have described some of this, that I could send to you... because you saw also a tension in the NATO command structure and in NATO headquarters towards these developments in the North... And Norway was obviously part of promoting that and pushing the agenda, but the seminar in Reykjavik was organised by Iceland and the NATO defence college, so Norway was only part of that. But the Reykjavik seminar sort of signifies the end of NATO’s own involvement in this, because soon after in Strasbourg—Kehl (NATO) summit, in April, as you probably know, Canada said ‘uh-huh, no Arctic policy’... you know about the Canadian reasons why this is not a topic that (they want to discuss), but basically Canada does not see the Arctic as a NATO-thing, as in... for Canada, NATO is about Europe, and Canada’s problems in the Arctic are with the United States, and not really with Russia despite rhetoric; The Northwest Passage, and they have an unsettled border in the Beaufort Sea between us, the US and Canada – so there is no reason... from a Canadian perspective, there is nothing to gain from bringing Arctic issues into NATO... and Canada has never opposed as seeing Arctic in an Article 5 context, i.e. that if a NATO country is attacked in the Arctic, then Article 5 applies, but Canada does not see that NATO can have a role in terms of the softer security challenges such as search and rescue and these things, which were the issues that were promoted at the Reykjavik summit, because no one really had an answer to what NATO should do in the Arctic. So when Jaap de Hoop Scheffer held his speech, you see him talking about search and rescue and situational awareness and these things... and these are the things where Canada says ‘no, no, no, NATO should not do this’. So that effectively puts a block on Norwegian and Icelandic attempts to highlight

the Arctic in NATO, because Canada blocks language in official documents saying that 'the Arctic is important, and NATO has to do something'.

E: Yeah okay... Because, at the same conference the Danish Defence Minister actually spoke in vague terms, but rather positively about NATO's potential role in the Arctic, and he has not done so since. Part of an explanation for that could be, that it is not discussed much in NATO forums, or how would you interpret that?

P: You need to ask Kristian Fischer about the Danish development, why Denmark chose to... but my interpretation of what Denmark was doing, was... Denmark could pay tribute to the Arctic, but it was not really important... it was not on people's mind in Denmark. It was only later in 2010-11, or even later, when Denmark... the engagement in Afghanistan slowly goes toward an end... that attention goes to the Arctic... that is really the only explanation I can see, but there might be others, but in my mind that should be the main one... that Denmark wanted NATO to remain focused on Afghanistan and not put too much resource and time into dealing with other things... Just to... I am actually kind of critical of Norway's promotion of the Arctic in NATO, because... the Norwegian Foreign Minister goes to NATO three times to inform the Council about the Arctic, and sort of enlighten the Allies, but on all those three occasions, and generally Norway is talking about 'the ice is melting, and there is a lot of oil and gas, and there might be new transport routes' etc, but never really says 'what should NATO do about this?', and that is a problem, because other NATO countries... we can see here with the embassies in Oslo, that 'okay fine, you want us to pay attention to the Arctic, but what do you want us to do?' – and Norway did not have an answer to that. A key reason was that there were different views in Norway. Where the Ministry of Defence, which sort of drove some of this, what they were really concerned about was Russia, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would not let them talk about Russia, because 'Russia is not our enemy, we are cooperating, we have really good relationship'... and the diplomatic line overruled the more concerned line, if you want to call it that, as is in the threat perception line, until 2007-2008. Then, slowly, it becomes more okay to talk about Russia as a potential threat, but only gradually, and it is only in 2014 with Ukraine that it becomes fully okay in Norway to say that 'Russia is threatening us, or at least threatening the European order' etc., so albeit Norway is promoting NATO in the Arctic, it is not doing it in a very clever way, because it is just trying to get attention without providing any concrete suggestions, for what NATO should do.

E: Okay. That very much touches on the next question, because I have been wondering the same thing that you are talking about. What does Norway, or Denmark for that matter, actually want NATO to do, or not to do, in the Arctic?

P: Now Norway has an answer to that, which is, 'we do not really want you to focus on the Arctic, we want you to focus on Russian maritime and naval forces, and on protecting the sea lines of communication, and protecting the ocean outside Norway'. From 2014 that is the main development in the Norwegian security policy. The attention has shifted south from the Arctic. You do not hear the Norwegian Foreign Minister or Defence Minister talk much about that the Arctic is changing, and that is partly due to the realization I mentioned earlier, that things are moving slowly in the Arctic, and there is no... (?) in terms of gas and oil, there is no massive increase in transportation through the region, so... yes, things are happening, but very, very slowly... and on the other side that, it is now okay to talk about Russia, which was really the concern, at least in the Defence circles, from the very beginning... But Denmark, I suspect that if you go to

the Danish Ministry of Defence and talk about the Arctic and NATO, I do not think they would have many concrete ideas as to what NATO should do, and while they can share situational awareness, as in share radio pictures or other information, well that is fine, you can do that, but that is not really a very active role.

E: No, absolutely not, and you are correct, I have already talked to a person in the Ministry of Defence, and they do not talk much about the potential role of NATO, they actually avoid talking about it, so that kind of confirms what you are saying... I was also wondering in terms of opponents and proponents inside Norway on the NATO-line in general in the Arctic – is it only a disagreement between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of foreign Affairs, or is there any prominent political proponents of one line or the other?

P: There is always the Socialist left party, Socialistisk Venstra Parti, here in Norway, which is opposed to NATO in general, and they are also of course sceptical about any NATO involvement in the North. But generally the Norwegian security and defence policy... there is very little debate. There is now because of budgets, but it is more concerned with how big the army should be, but there is very little about the overall line of ‘we should be members of NATO, NATO is important to us. Generally we just need to stay close to the United States’ etc. There is not much debate like that, it is more concerned with how should we approach Russia, and how should the balance be between our engagement in NATO and our relations with Russia. Traditionally, Norwegian security policy has been a balancing-act, where Norway has always tried... Well, it has been in Denmark as well, there are a lot of similarities, you have always tried to integrate into NATO, and make sure that NATO and Big Uncle Sam is always there if you need him, but on the other side you have also set limits on NATO engagement and NATO presence, so that you should not trigger, or sort of annoy, the Soviet Union, and now Russia. You have these self-imposed restriction that both Norway and Denmark had during the Cold War, ‘you should not have nuclear weapons in peace time, that ships that came into Norway and Denmark should not have nuclear weapons aboard’ etc. The motivations might have been slightly different in Denmark from in Norway, but the policies where somewhat similar.

E: Yes, and that is basically what (my) historical analysis also shows, and interestingly that Norway has been talking for an in-area role in most of the period that I am analysing, which is also why I have come to the conclusion that it is much about the in area/out of area debate.

P: It is definitely.

E: The thing that I also want to ask you about, in terms of Russia, do you think that there is a different threat perception from Norway to Denmark? There seems to be a difference, what do you think?

P: Yes, definitely, and I think that it is less evident today than it was 10 years ago, or 5-6-7 years ago, before Ukraine, that goes back 3-4 years, I think the difference was much bigger. And it is tied into... well it is partly geography, because Norway, as you know, has a Norway border with Russia and a very long maritime border, and is bordered with an area of Russia that is highly militarised... the Kola peninsula, has been, since the 1960’s, one of the biggest military bases in the Soviet Union and Russia... Whereas Denmark, after the end of the Cold War, and particular in periods of really good relations, as you partly saw in the mid 2000s, Denmark is shielded... What threatens Denmark? (rhetorical question) Russia cannot even think about invading Denmark, even if they wanted to. So, for Denmark, and you see this in Danish defence and security

policy as well, there is very quickly a shift towards emphasising the use of military power in international operations and the political capital you can gain by participating there... In the Balkans first, and later in Iraq and Afghanistan, where Denmark went further than Norway in taking risks and being, even in controversial conflict like in Iraq, you were much more in the frontline. Norway's involvement into taking that role has been A) much slower, and B) partly more limited than the Danish one. You see for instance in Libya, Denmark and Norway being some of the countries to drop the most bombs, so there they are similar... in general Denmark is more directed towards international operations, and also you have made a few choices in the defence sector, such as getting writ of Submarines, such as getting writ of ground-based air defence, and putting the money into the army and organisation the army towards expeditionary operations. This you do not see in Norway, and the main reason is because of a residual concern about Russia, and what Russia could do in the North.

E: As I have read, around the 2000s there was a little shift in the Norwegian defence policy, where they aimed to be able to be a bigger part of international operations... has this shift been followed, or has the interest gone towards 'home' again, or what would you say?

P: It has shifted back, but Norway, like Denmark, are very concerned... both countries understand that you have to do both, where the home-thing is more important for Norway for the reasons we have talked about, geography, the neighbourhood with Russia etc., but also, Norway sees that in order to... it needs to be part of the (??) efforts. Norway has fighter planes like Denmark, but it sends Special Forces to Jordan to train Syrian opposition. In Norway, and in Denmark to some extent, you see the need to play both, but in Denmark the at home-thing, obviously being the deployment to Estonia for the enhanced forward presence... Which Norway is also doing by going to Lithuania. But whereas for Norway, I would still argue that this at home-part is because of the neighbourhood with Russia. For Denmark it is more about solidarity in NATO, being part of NATO, and sort of gaining political capital, albeit things that happen in the Baltic Sea is a great concern to Denmark, than things that happen in Afghanistan in terms of direct consequences.

E: Well, we have covered most of my questions, so that is a very positive thing.

P: Yes it is. I still have time, so we can keep on for 5-10 minutes.

E: Sure, let us do that. I am looking into... you could say that there is geostrategic or geopolitical reasons for Denmark and Norway to differ in attitude, and that is some of the main reasons. I am also looking to domestic reasons, where I am looking strategic culture. Do you see a difference in strategic culture in Norway as opposed to Denmark?

P: A colleague of mine... have you seen the comparative study of Danish and Norwegian security policy? Yeah, Håkon, you know Håkon.

E: Yes, I have talked to him.

P: He has written something about that. But the challenge with putting too much in strategic culture is that, how different are we really? (rhetorical question) you see differences developing, and you see a political willingness in Denmark to going in to more controversial operations, to do more risky things leading to the loss of more soldiers... But in the Norwegian case it is actually more about domestic political realities than strategic culture. I think that, in the beginning in Afghanistan in 2001-2002, there was not really much difference between Norway and Denmark, not really... both Denmark and Norway had fighterplanes, F-16s, in Tajikistan... I think both of them had special forces operation Enduring Freedom etc.. and generally they are both

part of ISAF in the beginning in Kabul. But what happens in 2005 in Norway is that you get the Socialist Left party into the government, which basically puts a lid on the Norwegian engagement, because that party does not want Norway to engage in the war in the South in Afghanistan. So staying in the North and doing Peacekeeping - which it was not, but that is what they called it – was okay, but not going to the South. I think Norway would have been in the South of Afghanistan, had the government been different from 2005, and then it would have been difficult to talk about difference in strategic culture. Political versus strategic positions obviously has an impact here, but even if Norway had been in the South in Afghanistan, I think that the attention would have been drawn back home with events in 2007.

E: That is very interesting, because I would say that the other thing I am looking to domestically is domestic politics – how that affects the line that Norway and Denmark is taking towards this issue... So you are saying that the Socialist Left Party... or what was the name of the party?

P: Socialist Left Party, in Norwegian its Socialistisk venstre parti

E: Okay. And they are generally more promoting of a at-home role for the Norwegian military, or what would you say?

P: Yes... First of all they are anti-NATO as part of their political program, and they are also in a sense pacifist, but they do not call for the abolishment of the Norwegian armed forces, they just want defensive armed forces, that stay at home and protect Norwegian interests... ‘Defend Norway’, that is sort of their defence policy. So they do not want Norway too... Peacekeeping is fine, going to Africa with the blue helmets as part of a UN operation, that is fine, but they oppose any kind stability operations, and the things you have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, and now in Syria, they oppose that.

E: Yes, okay, I have to look into that.

P: When you use strategic culture, you have to define what it means, because, as you can see when you go back to the Cold War, Norway and Denmark are very similar, as in Denmark is the ‘footnote nation’, you take things even further than Norway when it comes to putting a lid on things. But then things change very rapidly, where Danish forces, already in the Balkans in 1995, isn’t it? Operation Bøllebank... Denmark moves much quicker, because Norway is still at that time ‘hmm, aah, sending combat forces, not sure... we need to keep those at home...’, so I do not know that it is strategic culture more than politics. And those are obviously very interlinked... at least you should be clear what you mean when you use the term.

E: Yes, it is a fluffy term. I think that one of the things I have noticed, is that during the Cold War Norway has generally been more focused on national defence than Denmark has, and also there is a point in saying that Norway has had the attitude that the Norwegian defence should be able to hold back any possible invasion, if that happened...

P: Yes, for some time... that has also been the line.

E: yes, until NATO forces could arrive, and that has not existed in Denmark what so ever in the period. That is a thing in the strategic culture-argument that I am putting forward

P: I buy that one, because then, again, we are back to things double situation, where Denmark, small country next to Germany, not very fun in the old days on the main front in Central Europe, whereas Norway has always been the flank. And for Norway, the ocean was as important, if not more important than land. Because Norway can always lose... you can defend Norwegian land-territory, but you can lose control of the ocean

outside... you could not defend it, because then you could have landing operations along the coast... basically Norway looked towards the United States and the US navy and Royal Navy for protecting the Ocean areas outside Norway, and this is what Norway took on now as well, the maritime domain and raising the North Atlantic as an issue in NATO... And Denmark is not part of that. Albeit, there are many reasons why, because Greenland and the Faroe Islands... there are many good reasons why... the Danish perspective could very well be to focus on the North Atlantic and on the developments there, but you do not see that from Denmark, as far as I know, at least no to the same degree as Norway and the UK.

E: Absolutely not, Denmark is much reliant on the international operations for making a contribution to the NATO alliance in general, so that also means a smaller navy, than for instance Norway. It is interesting to see whether there will be a shift in that arrangement in the 2017 defence agreement, that is about to come out... so we will have to see. I may suspect a bit of a shift... I am thinking that - I have done this with the other participants that I have interviewed, where the last question is basically the question I put forward in my assignment as the main question, is that okay for you to answer?

P: Sure.

E: What keeps Denmark from promoting and increased NATO engagement and presence in the Arctic, and what makes Norway promote the same? Why is there a difference?

P: First of all I would say that, now the premise of your question is not a 100 percent accurate, because Norway is not really pushing an increased role for NATO in the Arctic anymore... but the reason why Denmark does not do it... I think we have touched on it, but basically Denmark sees it as politically more important to engage elsewhere, and that includes both international operations, but also in the Baltics. The Baltic Sea region has been, for various reasons, much more important for Denmark than for Norway for a long time. The reason for this is that Norway is not really connected to the Baltic Sea, so Norway is not really interested in a cooperation with the Baltic Sea-countries... even in a Nordic context you see a very strong difference between the Norwegian focus on the North and the West and the Danish, and partly the Swedish and Finnish, focus on the Baltic Sea. There is a strategic miss-match there that impedes Nordic cooperation. But Denmark has been politically engaged in the Baltic Sea region for decades, wasn't it Uffe Elleman Jensen that was really engaged in Baltic cooperation?... So there is a different strategic vision, to call it that, there has been there for a long time between Denmark and Norway. In the Norwegian, to put it into perspective, the North including the Arctic and the Ocean areas to the West are more important, and for Denmark it is the Baltic Sea.

E: Okay, that is a good explanation. It is actually the first time I have heard it, but it is very interesting.

P: (laughter) that is either a very good sign or a really bad one.

E: (laughter) you could say that, but it is a good perspective.

P: What are the other explanations you have then?

E: Much of the explanations lie with geopolitical reasons, also the things that you are saying, basically... but that there is a proximity from Norway to Russia, and you cannot say the same thing about Denmark. And then there is a thing about that Denmark in general wants to push the meaning of the Ilulissat declaration further, and it says in the declaration that they (the coastal states) want to handle the problems amongst

themselves and not include anything else in that cooperation, and by including NATO you would actually kind of step over what you have already agreed upon, in what is seen in Denmark as a Danish agreement which includes other countries. So that is also kind of a political and diplomatic game... but there is a variety of reasons.

P: If you asked someone in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, if they saw NATO as an impediment or a competitor to, first of all the Arctic Council, but also the Arctic five, as the Ilulissat Group, they would say 'definitely not'. Because Norway does not... and this is back to the problems that Norway has had... Norway has not been clear on what they want NATO to do, but they have not wanted NATO to come in and in any way decide things in the Arctic. This is something that Norway is very clear to signal, saying 'no, it is the Arctic countries that are the main ones to decide, and yes, for instance in the Arctic Council, allowing them some (??), but we are the ones, we are the Arctic countries', and even the Arctic 5, as in the Coastal States, Norway is clear that those countries have special rights that go beyond Iceland, Sweden and Finland has, because they do not have a coastline in the Arctic, so those countries do not get a say when it comes to maritime border issues and continental shelf issues in the Arctic.

E: That kind of leads me to two questions, the first being that there is in general... well, not in general, but there is some that would say that including NATO in the Arctic would possibly lead to an escalation or a deterioration in the relationship between the West and Russia. In Norway, is that not interpreted in that way, or why would you then include NATO?

P: My position has always been that I do not see any reason what so ever to why you should involve NATO in non-article 5 tasks, or sort of non-pure military traditional NATO tasks in the Arctic, because if you want information sharing, if you want search and rescue cooperation, if you want oil spill prevention, you need to include Russia, and Russia is not going to agree with cooperating with NATO. There is no way. So even attempting is a bad idea. For many, it has been really given up on for a long time now, but for a period that were people here in Norway that talked about 'let us have the NATO-Russian council talk about Arctic issues and have that as a forum for discussing the Arctic with Russia', and I think that was a really bad idea, because why would Russia want to do that? And in my eyes, why would Norway want to do that? And Denmark? Why should Portugal and Spain have a say in Arctic issues?. It has no logic. I think people have realised this, generally, here in Norway, and Norway has never really pushed those kind of ideas really hard. But what they have done, what I have been seeing is, that they have been talking very unclearly, and have been saying that 'NATO should have an increased role', but without actually saying *what*. And that is a domestic Norwegian problem that it was not okay to talk about Russia as a threat, but this is what people really thought. We wanted NATO there because of Russia, but Norway did not want to say it, or at least the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not want to say it. They would say 'Russia is not a threat, we have a good relationship, but things are changing in the Arctic, and there are potential challenges, without naming anyone, and this is why we want NATO there'.

E: that is kind of what I thought to be honest, but it is good to get someone to say it, because obviously that is not clear in the literature... not that I am going to quote you on it, but it is nice to get it confirmed somehow.

P: but as I say that, I will send you an article or 2-3 that I have written, where some of these arguments are given in written form

E: I would be very interested in that.