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Good State Gone Bad? Explaining Denmark's Delinquent Scandinavism

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Abstract

Denmark is a Nordic and a European country with domestic policy and foreign relations embedded in Nordic as well as European institutions and policy traditions. However, at the same time Denmark has seemed surprisingly out of sync with Nordic as well as European policies for the past decades. This is particularly true in Danish foreign and security policy, which seems to be far from the traditional Nordic model of peacebuilding in international relations and at the same time on the margins of European foreign policy-making. This paper identifies how and to which extent Denmark is an outlier in Nordic and European foreign relations and explores the causes of Danish foreign policy over the past decades.

Introduction

By any definition Denmark is a Nordic country. Geographically located north of Germany (i.e. the term 'Norden'), Denmark shares a long political history with the other Nordic countries. It was the Danish Queen Margaret I, who united Denmark-Norway and Sweden in the Kalmar Union in 1397

in the process incorporating Finland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the Shetland Islands and the Orkney Islands in a North European empire. Even though the Union was demolished in 1524, Norway remained united in a personal union under the Danish Crown until 1814. Danish (and Swedish) university students played a decisive role in cultural pan-Scandinavism in the mid-nineteenth century and leading Danish intellectuals such as the priest N.F.S. Grundtvig and the poet Adam Oehlenschläger provided important parts of the ideational foundation for this movement. Denmark was a founding member of the the Nordic Association of Civil Associations ('Foreningen Norden') in 1919, of the Nordic Council in 1952, and of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1971. Domestically, Denmark was – in 1933 - the first Nordic country to lay the foundation for a welfare state by a societal compromise between the political and societal elites agreeing to the use of extensive social programmes, public works and subsidies to combat poverty and unemployment. The values of the Scandinavian welfare state have been mirrored in Danish foreign policy, most notably by activist foreign aid, human rights, climate and peacekeeping policies contributing to an identifiable Nordic bloc or even 'model' in international affairs.

Despite the historical, cultural and institutional embeddedness of Danish domestic and foreign policy in 'Norden', Denmark's international role seems increasingly out of sync with traditional Nordic priorities. Denmark has participated actively in wars without UN mandate, tacitly accepted human rights violations by allies in these wars, reduced its foreign aid and lowered its profile in environmental and climate politics.¹ One might be forgiven for thinking that Denmark is running away screaming from what was once a common Nordic platform for internationalist activism based on the values of the welfare state.

The aim of this article is to unpack how Denmark's international role has changed from the early Cold War until today and to explain why this change has occurred. The main argument is that Denmark – in contrast to most popular and scholarly analyses of Danish foreign policy – has continued an adaptive policy over the years, but that the lode star for adaptation has changed from Sweden to the United States. I use the concept of 'good international citizenship' as an analytical

¹ This has not gone unnoticed in the literature on Danish foreign policy. Peter Lawler refers to Denmark's internationalism as 'Janus-faced' (Lawler 2007) Rynning 'strategic actor' (Rynning 2003)

prism to identify Danish foreign policy beliefs and explore how the fit between Danish state identity and Swedish and US leadership structured the action space for Danish foreign policy.

Taking good international citizenship seriously

Most foreign policy-makers today frame their policy choices in terms of doing good, i.e. defensively protecting the values of international society against the violations of others or offensively promoting human rights, freedom and development. However, in the discipline of international relations, deliberations over the good state or what it means to be a good international citizen continue to be marginal. Focusing on the 'recurrence and repetition' of power politics and military conflict allegedly following from the logic of anarchy, realists have tended to view the international realm as exempt from political progress and discussions of the good state and how it might further the good international life as epiphenomenal at best and dangerous at worst (Wight 1960: 26; cf. Waltz 1979 and Mearsheimer 2001). In contrast, prominent liberal analyses of international relations unselfconsciously present us with a conception of the good state as liberal democratic and capitalist. Liberal democracies tend to have peaceful relations with other liberal democracies as their domestic institutions facilitate transparency and accountability (Lipson 2003), and free markets facilitates interdependencies across borders thereby increasing the cost of war (Bliss and Russett 1998). However, others have pointed to an inherent dilemma between a liberalism of restraint - emphasizing restraint, non-intervention and respect for the choices of other states - and a liberalism of imposition seeking to promote, what liberals consider to be universal values with any means necessary (Sørensen 2006). For liberals identifying this dilemma, the good state is the one finding the right balance between the two extremes. Constructivists have analysed the construction of national interests and narratives shaping foreign policy (Hansen 2006; Weldes 1996). In doing so, they have implicitly touched upon the issue by exploring how the norm diffusion from international organizations creates particular understanding of what constitutes the 'right' policies of states if they are to be taken seriously as citizens in international society (Barnett and Finnemore 1999). Still, like in the other two 'grand' theories concern with the good state remains marginal at most. Thus, whereas aspirations of good international citizenship are reduced to little more than hypocritical masking of national power interests when viewed through the realist lens, and it is unproblematically merged with Western liberal democracies when viewed through the liberal lens, it remains as a potential but understudied construction among others questioning a

rationalist functionalist understanding of international relations, when viewed through the constructivist lens.

Even though the concepts of the good state and good international citizenship sit uncomfortably with IR grand theories, a small literature on the good state and good international citizenship has developed at the nexus between policy analysis and policy practice. Middle powers such as Canada and Australia have pioneered ‘good international citizenship’, a concept coined by Australia’s foreign minister from 1988 to 1996 Gareth Evans, which has also occasionally been introduced to discussions on British foreign policy discourse (Lawler 2013; Wheeler and Dunne 1998). To Evans, ‘[g]ood international citizenship is the area of foreign policy in which community values most influence the pursuit of national interests’ (Evans 1990: 1). It is not freed from objective national interests, but it entails elements that we cannot deduce from the calculations of the national interest. As noted by Lawler, a good state is ‘a state committed to moral purposes beyond itself’ (Lawler 2005: 441), which comes very close to Evans definition of good international citizenship: ‘a state being willing to engage in cooperative international action to advance global public goods, or – putting it another way – to help resolve what Kofi Annan used to describe as “problems without passports”’: those which are by their nature beyond the capacity of any one state, however great and powerful, to individually solve.’ (Evans 2015). The good state is intentionally internationalist, i.e. ‘construed around an ethical obligation [...] actively to pursue authentically other-regarding values and interests’ (Lawler 2005: 441). Community values are not to be thought of as disposable add-ons to the core foreign policy business. ‘Instead of thinking of national interests in just the two bundles of security and prosperity, we need to think in terms of every country having a third national interest, viz. that in *being, and being seen to be, a good international citizen.*’ (Evans 2015, italics in original).

Assuming that foreign policy decision-makers aspire to be ‘good international citizens’, how will they know, what ‘good’ is? Great powers typically have a tradition for discussing visions of order and which grand strategies to pursue within these visions. In the aftermath of a war, the winning great powers are typically in a position to set up a standard for rules of engagement in the new order that is to replace the one destroyed by the war. They may do so in concert as they did at the Vienna

Congress following the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 or by presenting a vision for order based on their own values and interests as President Wilson did in his 14 points after the First World War in 1918 and President George H.W. Bush did in his 'New World Order' speech in the aftermath of the Cold War in 1990. Rival (potential) great powers are likely to present alternative visions and grand strategies as Russia and China is doing in the present world order.

For a small state like Denmark, identifying what constitutes 'good' has an external and an internal dimension. Externally, great powers are likely to provide a reward structure for small state foreign policy: certain types of action are punished (e.g. hosting terrorists or acquiring weapons mass destruction), whereas other types of actions are rewarded (e.g. providing troops for peace operations or the promotion of the values championed by the great power). Reward structures delineate an action space for the small state's foreign policy: a space for political action at acceptable cost (Mouritzen 2006: 116). Action spaces are likely to vary over time and space. They change over time reflecting the interests and values of the dominant great powers. For instance, the great powers' expectations of how small states should behave have changed significantly over the years. In the nineteenth century, the Congress of Vienna recognized the special role of the United Kingdom, Prussia, Austria, France and Russia for defining the norms and rules of engagement by meeting 'in concert on a regular basis in order to discuss questions of concern, and to draw up agreements and treaties' (Neumann and Gstöhl, 2006: 5). Small states were rewarded for quietly conducting their own affairs and following the rules of the game, while hoping not to become entangled in the quarrels of the great powers. In contrast, today small states are expected to contribute actively to the maintenance of international society, e.g. by supplying troops to UN peace operations and actively contributing to meeting the challenges following from migration or global warming. Also, great power expectations and the reward structures that follow vary over space and with institutional affiliations. For instance, small member states of the EU's Economic and Monetary Union must live up to a combination of expectations about good economic governance and a set of specific rules if they are not to be punished by the EU great powers. And small states in the Caucasus need to accept that they are located within the Russian sphere of interest or risk punishment if they challenge the existence of this sphere or their own place within it. As experienced by Georgia and Ukraine, this may create tensions between being a good state in the global order dominated by one set of expectations, and being a good state in the region where it is located dominated by an alternative set

of expectations with rivalling reward structures complicating foreign policy decision-making (Wivel 2016).

In sum, the external dimension is very much about what Evan's terms 'being seen to be a good citizen'. Small states achieve security and status by acting as good citizens and thereby demonstrating their usefulness to great powers. As noted by Neumann and Cavalho, 'Great power status is about being a state to be reckoned with: small-power status is about being noticed or seen', and the most effective route to this is to signal willingness to take '(an admittedly small part of) responsibility for matters of international peace and security' (Neumann and Cavalho 2015: 2). In term this may create a privileged platform for voice and influence if the small state manages to build a reputation as forerunner within selected issue areas (cf. Björkdahl 2008; Jakobsen 2009).

However, as noted above, being a good state goes beyond mere instrumentalism; it involves intentionalism. Being seen as a good state may be valuable for defensive as well as offensive purposes, but it makes little sense to be a forerunner of a cause that is of no importance or even in contrast with your deepest beliefs. Internally, ideas about when, how and why a state has a right, or even an obligation, to engage actively in international affairs is closely related to the 'belief system' of decision-makers and more generally 'regime identity', i.e. 'publicly declared value-systems' associated with the governance of the state and serving as the legitimate base for law-making and political activism (Mouritzen 1988: 39; cf. Gvalia et al. 2013: 108 on belief systems). The distinction between decision makers' belief systems and regime identity is important as they constitute two different levels of value identification. Most basic is regime identity, which in addition to control over territory and material assets of the state (e.g. natural resources) and the welfare of the population also comprises a set of 'identity values' describing 'the regime's peculiarities that chiefly distinguishes it from conceivable counter regimes' and are typically 'ideological, religious or broadly humanistic' (Mouritzen 1988: 44). Thus, regime identity can be understood as an ideational structure constraining the actions of decision-makers, i.e. a domestic action space of normatively acceptable behaviour. Like in the case of the external action space we will expect this action space to be guarded by the strongest actors as this action space will typically reflect basic societal compromises and balances of power between these actors, i.e. regime identity

reflects not only the beliefs but also the vested interests of strong societal actors. Regime identity is about the identity of the state: ‘who are we?’. However, there is a second and less deeply embedded set of ideas that influence foreign policy regarding the purpose of the state closer related to the concrete conduct of foreign policy, i.e. the purpose of the state: ‘what should we do?’² Thus, if regime identity provides foreign policy makers with an overall roadmap for what they should do in foreign policy, the belief system is their GPS suggesting how exactly how to get from A to B. Still, a GPS is an instrument for navigation, not for changing the landscape. Thus, it provides foreign policy decision-makers with advice on how to drive over or around mountains and cross lakes and rivers, but not on how to move or destroy the mountains or empty the lakes and rivers.

I now explore this argument by applying it to Danish foreign policy. The analysis focuses on how Danish regime identity and the belief systems of the policy-makers interact with external orders to produce a specific combination of continuity and change in Danish foreign policy in interaction. The argument proceeds in four steps. First, I discuss how Danish good international citizenship during the Swedish order followed by a short interlude as a good European state and finally as a good state in the American world order. After these three analyses of Danish good citizenship since 1945, I discuss why Denmark throughout the period remained a follower rather than seeking to take the lead or pursue a more independent policy. Finally, I conclude the analysis and discuss the prospects for the future.

The golden age of the Scandinavian good state: Denmark as Sweden’s pragmatic sidekick³

Denmark saw its external action space reduced significantly as a result of a series of military defeats over the centuries. In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, Denmark resided over the Baltic Sea empire of the Kalmar Union. After its dissolution, Denmark continued as a dominant Nordic power and European middle power until the seventeenth century until the military defeat in 1864 to Prussia and Austria effectively relegated Denmark to a small state by losing the duchies of

² For a distinction between this distinction between the identity of the state and the purpose of the state, see Gvalia et al. (2013: 107-110).

³ Please note that the present version of this section and the two subsequent sections on Danish foreign policy in European and US orders are partly based on Wivel (2013) and Wivel (2014), although here reorganized through the prisms of good citizenship and external orders.

Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg and a third of its territory. From Germany's unification in 1870 and until the end of the Second World War, German power limited Danish action space although with some variation allowing a wider scope for an independent Danish foreign policy in 1920s than before or after (Mouritzen 2006). In essence, over six hundred years Denmark gradually saw its external action space reduced from a position where it was defining what constituted good international citizenship in Northern Europe to being at the receiving end culminating in the occupation of its territory by Germany 1940-45.

Paradoxically, the Cold War conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union increased the Danish external action space. Denmark carved out two distinct policy niches allowing it to enjoy a privileged position in the Cold War. First, Denmark (and Norway) argued to their NATO allies that only if Denmark and Norway were allowed a relatively large action space within NATO, would it be possible to maintain a so-called 'Nordic balance' between Nordic NATO members Denmark and Norway on the one side and neutrals Sweden and Finland on the other (Brundtland 1966; Noreen 1983). The logic of this alleged balance was that if the United States stationed nuclear weapons or US troops in Denmark (or Norway) and did not allow them considerable degrees of freedom in their foreign and security policies, e.g. when they signalled their reluctance towards NATO exercises in the Baltic Sea, this would provoke a reaction from the Soviet Union, which had allowed Finland a larger action space than other frontline states by the Soviet Union and refrained from invoking the Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and thereby from demanding military cooperation between the two countries or stationing nuclear weapons on Finnish territory. Thus, only by giving Denmark and Norway military protection and allowing them to pursue a non-provocation policy towards the Soviet Union that strayed from official NATO policy could the United States and NATO keep the Nordic region an area of low tension.

Whereas this policy position served mainly defensive purposes of carving out a space for action for Danish policy-makers, a second position served as a platform for offensively taking advantage of this space. Viewing their shared societal characteristics typically summarized as 'the welfare state' or 'the Nordic model' as being both different from the rest of Europe and better than the rest of Europe (Wæver 1992), Denmark and the other Nordic countries promoted a special Scandinavian

internationalism characterized by a combination of political liberalism in the form of democratically accountable foreign policies and active support for human rights, egalitarianism at home and abroad (at home as model for other societies, abroad as solidarity with the Third World in the form of development aid and political support), environmentalism, and a strong commitment to multilateral conflict resolution (Ingebritsen 2002; Mouritzen 1995; Schouenborg 2013). While this approach was typically viewed from the outside as a Nordic bloc or platform for foreign policy action or even as a ‘model’ for internationalism, there was a clear hierarchy among the Nordic states with Sweden taking the lead as the *föregångsland* (model country) aiming to ‘stand up and “teach” the rest of the world what is forwards and backwards when it comes to societal development’ (Mouritzen 1995: 9). Thus, in contrast to the other more inward-looking Nordic countries, Sweden self-consciously presented an alternative to both superpowers’ visions of what constituted good international citizenship. It was neither ‘the free world’, nor its Communist alternative, but a ‘Third Way’ of good international citizenship based on a combination of social democratic welfare state values and cosmopolitan duty (Bergman 2007). In essence, Scandinavian internationalism was a Swedish order. Sweden acted as the teacher of good international citizenship ‘with the other Nordic countries as the keenest students’ (Mouritzen 1995: 9).

The Danish ‘student’, however, seemed less keen and less able than the rest. On the one hand identity values and the belief system of the political elite corresponded well to the demands for good citizenship in the Swedish order. On the other hand, Danish policy-makers seemed unconvinced that they were in the right class at all. To be sure, the defensive and offensive Danish policy positions were closely coupled as both were seen as integral to what in the process developed as the regime identity of the welfare state. Taking its point of departure in ideas originating in the nineteenth century peasants’ movement and the twentieth century labour movement and the cooperative organizational structures typical of both these movements, the ideological starting point was a particular ‘libertarian ideology of solidarity’ fusing classical liberal values, most importantly civil liberty and free trade, with strong notions of egalitarianism infusing business models (cooperatives) as well as organizational structures (Østergaard, 2000: 161). One important value coming out of this movement was peaceful conflict resolution (Schouenborg 2013). Peaceful conflict resolution has characterized the protests leading to a democratic constitution in 1849 and - after a stand-off involving the governance of provisional laws issued by the conservative

government 1877-1894 in order to exclude the liberal and social-democratic opposition from influence – parliamentary democracy was accepted by all parties from 1901. Moreover, peaceful conflict resolution formed the basis of the welfare state itself in the form of the so-called ‘Kanslergade-compromise’ (named after the home address of the prime minister) bringing together Social-Democrats, Liberals and Social Liberals in an effort to meet the challenge of the 1930s economic crisis by social reforms and public investments. This way of solving problems through seeming antagonists by negotiation and compromise simultaneously developed as an integral part of foreign policy, most prominently with the Danish foreign minister P. Munch elected president of the committee responsible for the League of Nations disarmament conference in April 1931 and Denmark co-sponsoring a number of ambitious propositions in this context, although with little success (Lidegaard 2003: 266-267).

Thus, it is not surprising that Cold War Danish foreign policy took its point of departure in a perception of the Nordic area as a ‘zone of peace’ (cf. Archer, 1996) and used it to send a message of cooperation and non-provocation, i.e. an exception to the hard military logic of superpower postures on the European continent. Anti-militarism was integral to this approach to international peace, a characteristic which was particularly strong in Denmark (Rasmussen 2005). Détente policy was conditioned on the geopolitical location of the Nordic region between East and West, but the particular geopolitical location of Denmark was different from neutral Sweden and Finland and fellow NATO member Norway, which shared a long border with the Soviet Union. To Denmark, promoting peace through détente was not so much a question of national security as it was a question of promoting liberal-egalitarian welfare state values grounded in Danish identity values. In that sense, Denmark was not the delinquent Scandinavian, but the arch-Scandinavian seemingly promoting identity values even in the security sphere.

At the same time, détente policy was closely related development policy, which became a central tenet of Danish foreign policy from the 1960s: détente policy and development aid to the Third World both served as aspects of Danish foreign policy signalling Denmark’s willingness to act as a good state and contribute to the creation of an international society concomitant with liberal-egalitarian welfare state identity values. Contributing to UN peace operations was an integrated part

of this policy and in general the demand for peace operations fitted nicely with the norms of good citizenship in the Swedish order. The UN conducted 14 peacekeeping operations during the Cold War. All of these missions were related to decolonisation and all of them were based on bipartisanship, acceptance from all involved parties, and limited use of force (usually limited to self-defence). Peacekeepers were expected to remain impartial and negotiation skills rather than combat skills were viewed as key for crisis solving (Jakobsen 1998: 107). A second part of Denmark's Third World policy was economic aid, which typically focused on the poorest parts of the Third World and was seen as the international expression of domestic humanism and egalitarianism (Olsen 1993: 244). Denmark was a relative latecomer compared to Sweden, the first country in the world to reach a one percent threshold of foreign aid relative to GDP. The same was true of international environmentalism with Sweden taking the lead from the 1960s and being a main actor behind the first UN environmental conference in 1972 (Mouritzen 1995), although Denmark within the EU built a forerunner reputation, e.g. in regard to environmental standards in the implementation of the Single European Act (Lieverink and Andersen 1998).

The belief system of the Danish political elite corresponded well to the Swedish order. After all Danish policy-makers were in the midst of building a welfare state on virtually the same identity values as this order. Internationalizing welfare state policies allowed the Danes to project an image of Denmark as a Social Democratic (i.e. a 'third way' between US liberal capitalism and Soviet communism), peace loving, well-intentioned nation promoting peaceful solutions through negotiations rather than war (Petersen 1983: 76; Browning 2007: 35-36). However, the Danish political elite did not believe that the Swedish order could deliver on its most basic values: military and economic survival. Although Denmark took part in negotiations over a Scandinavian Defence Union in 1948-49 and the Nordic Economic Cooperation in 1968, military defence and economic growth were viewed as largely separated from the 'value politics' of the Swedish order and Denmark based its 'market policies' on integration with Europe and its defence on NATO (Wivel 2013). Thus, to the Danish policy elite the Swedish order was most often connected to the policy of choice – being a good international citizen - whereas integration into the US-dominated Euro-Atlantic order was connected to the politics of necessity: taking care of military and economic security. Moreover, even though Danish policy-makers did not share the same extensive ideational base with the United States as it did with the Nordic states, Danish and US policy elites

shared a view of Communism as potentially lethal for their societies and a strong commitment to classical liberal values, i.e. free speech and free trade. Thus, the Danish political elite (including the Social Democratic drivers of the welfare state) viewed the external (the Soviet Union) and internal (Communist parties) challenge from Communism as an existential threat to Danish society (Kaspersen 2006: 120-127).

In search of leadership: Europe as a failed ‘candidate solution’?

The Swedish order during the Cold War was conditioned on being different from Europe and better than Europe (Wæver, 1992). It had been marketed as a unique cooperative alternative to the Cold War policies of the superpowers and the old great powers of Europe, but with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ‘Third Way’ seemed irrelevant. Moreover, attempts to export ‘the Danish model’ of the welfare state to the newly democratizing states of Central and Eastern Europe were unsuccessful. For Danish policy makers, the EU provided a viable alternative to the now defunct Swedish order. The institutionalization of great power relations in the European Union seemed to replace ‘a Europe of many centres with a Europe of a single centre’ (Wæver, 1998: 54) thereby providing a bulwark against the instability and conflict characteristic of European great power relations prior to the Cold War. Moreover, the EU created incentives for non-violence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts in most parts of the European region. Prospective member states were likely to observe norms of human rights, protection of minorities and peaceful resolution of conflicts with other states, because this was a requirement for membership. In the UN, the Nordic bloc was integrated into a more influential European coalition. This made the specific Nordic contribution less visible but probably more effective, because traditional Nordic priorities such as peace, human rights, the rule of law and sustainable development were now pursued by the EU (Laatikainen, 2003).

The match between EU policies and Danish identity values was matched by the enthusiasm of Danish policy-makers. Rather than being strained between the policies of choice matching their identity values and the policies of necessity matching their fundamental values, the EU seemed to offer the fusion of both: largely concomitant with Danish identity values and in possession of exactly the soft capabilities necessary to develop a new security order. According to a government

white paper on the ‘principles and perspectives in Danish foreign policy’ in 1993, the EU and the EPS had become the most important platforms for Danish foreign policy influence (Danish Government 1993). The soft, i.e. non-military, nature of the EU allowed Denmark to avoid marginalisation and allowed Denmark to continue its good citizenship, now under the auspices of the European order. Moreover, a new explicitly ‘activist’ policy was initiated by the end of the Cold War with a successful Danish attempt to help the three Baltic countries to rebuild their states and become integrated in European and transatlantic institutional structures, and a new foreign policy doctrine making common security and the spread of democracy and human rights the foundation of Danish foreign policy from 1993 and onwards was formulated. This policy seemed to provide an almost ideal fit with Danish identity values as well as the priorities of the EU. On the civilian aspects of the CFSP in particular, Denmark successfully influenced policy content, even in the face of big member state opposition (Jakobsen 2009). Viewing EU enlargement as an important instrument, for some time even *the* most important foreign policy objective, the Danish government played an active and successful role in the Eastern enlargement finally decided at the Copenhagen summit in 2002. Danish commitment to the EU as the central institutional framework for Danish foreign policy seemed robust even in the wake of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, and in the aftermath of the so-called Cartoon Crisis in January-March 2006. The fight against terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction were (predictably) moved to a more prominent place on the foreign policy agenda and explicitly mentioned as specific foreign policy priorities in the new foreign policy agenda published by the Danish government in 2003. However, the mentioning was relatively brief and official statements continued to emphasize the importance of the EU, which was seen as the central forum for fighting terrorism (in close cooperation with the UN and the United States), and the United Nations was as the key instrument in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons (Danish Government 2003: 20-21). In 2004 this was followed up by a government white paper on terrorism underlining the continued importance of the UN, EU and NATO (Danish Government, 2004), and in globalization strategy of the Danish government stating that ‘the EU is and will increasingly be the most important international framework for Denmark in the management of the challenges of globalisation’ (Danish Government 2006: 11).

Despite this seemingly strong commitment to the EU, there were important limitations to Denmark's integration into the European order. After initially rejecting the Maastricht Treaty in a referendum in 1992, Denmark was granted the right to stay outside EU cooperation on defence policy, Economic and Monetary Union and Justice and Home Affairs at the European Council meeting in Edinburgh in December 1992 and the exemptions were ratified in a Danish referendum in May 1993. The result of the referendum was widely interpreted as the Danish electorate's rejection of the EU's development towards taking on state-like characteristics and possibly becoming a military great power, thereby challenging Danish identity values. However, at the same time exclusion from EU defence policy left Denmark vulnerable to criticisms for not living up to the expectations to a good international citizenship as defined in the European order. In particular by excluding itself from contributing to an increasing number of military missions and by reserving the right to avoid common European solutions to challenges following from increased migration as a consequence of the exemption from Justice and Home Affairs bruised Denmark's reputation as a good European citizen. Most surprisingly, these were issue areas where the EU was developing policies that seemed to fit nicely with the Swedish order of the Cold War still championed in Danish identity values. Thus Denmark seemed to be a delinquent Scandinavian as well as a bad European.

Coming home? Denmark as a liberal activist

Denmark's integration into the European order was gradually superseded by Danish integration into the more general liberal world in which the European order was embedded. In contrast to the 'politics of necessity' position that had characterized Danish Atlanticism during the Cold War and after, this new foreign policy was characterized by a close political and military partnership with the United States as underlined by the Danish contribution to the Iraq war, Denmark's active diplomatic effort to 'reinvigorate Atlantic relations, both in NATO and the EU-US framework' and Danish policy to promote democracy in the Middle East (Mouritzen 2007: 157). For Denmark, this meant taking sides in a struggle over the future world order (Rynning 2003). As summed up by Mouritzen, 'Denmark [seemed] to specialize in anticipating palatable US policy initiatives and subsequently enter as close cooperation partner in the further development and implementation' (Mouritzen 2007: 161).

Prime minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen saw the military action by the coalition of the willing in Iraq as a natural modern implementation of Wilsonianism: ‘When people are granted the real freedom of choice’, he noted in a speech shortly after the invasion in spring 2003, ‘they choose democracy over every other form of government’ (Rasmussen, 2003). In Rasmussen’s view, it was only now that Denmark lived up to its long time pretensions of good international citizenship and present policies was explicitly contrasted with previous practices seen as pragmatic and opportunistic in the Second World War, when the Danish government decided not to fight against German occupation and in the Cold War, when Denmark was only a reluctant NATO ally out of necessity as well as to the present ‘forces of darkness’, who ‘try to block the road towards democracy, with all means. Because they fear freedom, enlightenment and democracy’ (Rasmussen 2006). Even though good international citizenship as liberal military activism was closely coupled to the particular neoconservative belief system of Fogh Rasmussen and to the US policies concomitant with this view in the Middle East, Denmark worked hard to contribute with good citizenship to the US world order more generally. This was the case in regard to free trade, conflict resolution more broadly and even in Third World policy.

One puzzle remains: Why is Denmark a follower state?

The analysis so far has explained the initial puzzle of the paper: How do we explain the change in Denmark’s foreign policy apparently leading it astray from its Nordic regime identity. The analysis has shown that in contrast to the conventional story of an activist and strategic break with a past of pragmatically adapting the idealist welfare state’s policies to external demands and changes, this was a gradual development co-constituted by external and domestic developments.

However, at the same time as solving the initial puzzle, another one has been disclosed: Why is Denmark a follower state seeking first pragmatic adaptation to the Swedish lead and then, following the end of the Cold War, taking on the role as a junior partner first in the EU and later in the efforts of the United States to promote its vision of a unipolar world order? We would expect that Denmark following the expansion of its action space after Cold War would have taking the opportunity play a

more independent role internationally, but ‘independent action’ seemed largely concomitant with US expectations and wishes. Even more puzzling, if we look beyond the recent decades and go back to the first half of the twentieth century, Denmark seemed to be largely adaptive to Germany. The Danish government stayed in power until 1943 and only resigned when faced by German demands to enforce the death penalty for sabotage and accommodated to the German policies during the first years of the Second World War occupation with the Danish parliament and the Danish army also functioning until 1943 and the Danish police until 1944. Thus, followership precedes welfare state values, which by definition originated in the societal compromise between political parties representing employers, agriculture and labour and the people in the countryside as well as the educated elites of the larger cities, which served as the point of departure for subsequent social reforms.

Returning to our explanatory framework for the sources of good international citizenship in small state foreign policy, we may point to two factors explaining this apparent impulse to follow rather than to lead. First, one might argue that there is really not much of a puzzle here as Germany, Sweden and the United States are all bigger and stronger than Denmark. Pre-1945 Germany and post-1945 United States were the military powers of greatest consequence for Danish security (Germany because of its ability to attack Denmark, the United States for its importance for defending Denmark) and Sweden was up until the 1960s economically more prosperous than Denmark and had during the Cold War period stronger military and its own defence industry making it the obvious candidate for Nordic leadership. Realist international relations literature will tell us that it is hardly a surprise that strong states are in a position to exercise hegemony over weaker states.

This is an important point and the ability of these three states to influence Denmark is no doubt related to their ability to project power in a way affecting the Danish action space. It would have been a surprise if Denmark followed Belgium or Ireland, not that it followed Germany, Sweden or the United States. But why did Denmark follow at all? Danish followership goes beyond pragmatic adaptation and it has occasionally defied and even contrasted it as during the 1960s and 1970s when Danish civil servants were routinely summoned to NATO headquarters to be told off for Denmark’s

defence spending well below NATO expectations (Ringsmose 2009) or in the 1980s when a majority in security policy passed 23 resolutions requiring the Danish government to pursue reservations and objections to a number of NATO initiatives and policies, including NATO's nuclear strategy and the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) thereby notably sharpening Danish anti-Cold War rhetoric and ultimately leading the United States to warn the Danish foreign minister that Denmark's full NATO-membership may be at risk if this policy was further pursued (Holbraad 1991: 123-124; Ellemann-Jensen 2004). At the same time Denmark has gone well beyond the actions of most small state peers as well as the demands of the superpower in its rhetorical and military support for US-led interventions after the Cold War. Thus, while Danish policy may be affected by states able to project power into its territory and affect its security and international standing, it is not driven by demands or threats of repercussions.

Rather than seeking independence or taking on leadership, Denmark seems to 'desire to follow' (Cooper, Higgott and Nossal 1991: 396), i.e. intentionally contributing to 'the pursuit of "higher" moral goals articulated by the leader', which is in turn granted the legitimacy to define these ideals and the behaviour that should follow from them (Cooper, Higgott and Nossal 1991: 397-398). If we are to understand why we need to move from the regime identity of the Danish welfare state and the belief system of particular leaders or elites and to the *raison d'être* of the Danish state itself. As argued in studies of the history of the Danish state and public administration this *raison d'être* was very much the result of a combination of the liberal egalitarianism growing out of the protestant peasants' movement in the mid-nineteenth century and the defeat to Prussia and Austria in 1864 creating a fusion between state and nation with the state assigned the role of not only defending the nation, but continuously and consistently proving its worth in doing so (Knudsen 2006; Østergaard 2000). The defeat resulted in 'a complete overhaul of Danish policy', which was from then onwards based on the premise that Denmark was a small state and needed to act accordingly (Branner 2013: 140). However, the effect was not only on policy but also on the principles and beliefs guiding this policy, one important lesson of 1864 being that a small state would rarely benefit from military conflict and therefore should aim for diplomatic solutions to international conflict and a second lesson of 1864 being that the Danish state needed to prove its worth as a security provider to the Danish people, a task that it had failed in 1864 (Knudsen 2006: 128). Together these two lessons embodied a third and a fourth lesson. By recklessly engaging the country in a war that could not be

won, the political elite had endangered the security of the population as well as the future survival of the state. Accordingly, confidence in the elite could only be re-established through a pragmatic foreign policy taking into account the interests of the population at large (Olesen and Wivel 2013; Knudsen 2006). Thus, from 1864 and onwards the political and administrative elites in Denmark were viewed – by the population at large and by themselves - as the defensive servants of the people, rather than the visionary leaders showing the way to the future.

Between choice and necessity: Reconsidering Denmark's delinquent Scandinavism

‘If there is one piece of conventional wisdom about how best to explain small state behavior, it is that the answer lies at the system level of analysis’, writes Hey in one of the most often quoted surveys on small state literature (Hey, 2003: 6). The above analysis confirms this finding but only with the strong qualification that system here does not refer to the international anarchic system as it conventionally does in international relations but rather to the international and domestic orders. It is at the meeting point between these orders that foreign policy is made and good international citizenship is defined.

This does not mean that power politics is without importance. Great powers are more likely to define an order than small states, but how a small state react to a given order depends on its regime identity and the belief systems of its political and administrative elites. Ideological distance is important for whether or not the small state will successfully integrate as a good state in a given order. The closer the regime identity to the core values of the order, the easier it is for the small state is to become a good state within this order. However, the Danish case illustrated two qualifications to this general point. First, as illustrated in the Danish integration into the Swedish order, the pursuit of identity values may clash with survival values such as economic and military security. Second, as illustrated by the Danish integration into the European order, the belief system of the elite may be at odds with identity values cherished by the population at large. Ideological intensity is of importance too. i.e. the extent to which the small state base policy choice on identity values rather than survival values. The intensity may vary from a minimalist position ascribing little or no value to ideology as a guide for foreign policy to a maximalist position arguing that ideology should form the basis of policy choices. There is an external and a domestic dimension tied to this

problematic. Externally, '[t]he less action space, the more 'normalized' states become, and the more they can be reasonably blackboxed in the realist sense' (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2012: 191).

Domestically, preferences for ideational leadership or incrementalist pragmatism are closely tied to identity values as their basis in the *raison d'être* of the state.

Past orders cast a shadow over present and future orders. Typically, good international citizenship is not just a policy choice but also an institutional choice. Denmark's demolition of territorial defence may be seen as a consequence of good international citizenship allowing Denmark to contribute to the development of a liberal world order, but it is not easily rebuilt in the face of a rising challenge from Russia in the Baltic Sea. Moreover, practicing the day-to-day tasks of good citizenship in one order may involve aspects of 'mission creep' undermining those identity values the order was originally seen to protect. Danish acceptance of human rights abuses in the Iraq War is a case in point. Moreover, there might be a spill-back from practising good citizenship in a given order and the future practice of identity values. Thus, whereas Danish international environmentalism was an integral part of Denmark being a good state in the Swedish and European order, the current government discourse of 'green realism' seems much closer to a traditional US business based approach to environmentalism with Denmark recently creating quite a stir by seeking to renegotiate its National Emissions Ceiling in the EU in order to ease the economic burdens on the Danish agricultural industry. In sum, Denmark is unlikely to relinquish its role as the delinquent Scandinavian.

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