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**POSTCOLONISING DANISH FOREIGN
POLICY ACTIVISM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH:
CASES OF GHANA, INDIA AND THE US VIRGIN
ISLANDS**

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ABSTRACT

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There is a growing corpus of academic literature, which is aimed to analyse Danish activism as a new trend of the kingdom's foreign policy. Different approaches, both positivist and post-positivist ones, study specific features of activism, as well the reasons of why this kind of foreign policy has emerged in post-Cold War Denmark. Nevertheless, little has been said on the role of Danish colonial past in the formation of strategies and political courses towards other states and regions. The heterogeneous character of Danish colonialism has also been overlooked by scholars: while Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands are thoroughly examined in Danish postcolonial studies, so-called 'tropical colonies' (the Danish West Indies, the Danish Gold Coast and Danish India) are almost 'forgotten'. The aim of the thesis is to investigate how the Danish colonial past (or rather the interpretations of the past by the Danish authorities) in the Global South influences modern Danish foreign policy in Ghana, India and US Virgin Islands (the USVI) (on the present-day territories of which Danish colonies were once situated). An authored theoretical and methodological framework of the research is a compilation of discourse theory by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and several approaches within postcolonialism, including Orientalism by Said (1978) and hybridity theory by Bhabha (1994). Postcolonial activism is coined as an overarching term for the discourse of Danish foreign policy in the Global South with specific variations in each of the studied contexts. It is found out that the Danish colonial past is interpreted as an ambiguous part of Danish presence in other countries' histories, consisting of both "bright" and "dark" elements. While "dark" elements (slavery, brutality and power inequality) are 'othered' and marginalised, "bright" elements (shared cultural heritage) are used to legitimise further cooperation under Danish conditions. By splitting its colonial experience into pieces, the Danish 'Self' liberates itself from the nightmares of the past, whereas the burden of dealing with them is laid on 'Exceptional Others' – the USVI, Ghana and India.

Keywords: postcolonialism, discourse theory, foreign policy activism, Denmark, US Virgin Islands, Ghana, India

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INTRODUCTION

Denmark's foreign policy is often studied in broader contexts of Nordic affairs. In most papers, the kingdom's external affairs are mentioned *en passant*. However, this literature fails to take into account specific features and long-term trends of foreign policy in the Nordic region, where there is a sound tradition of considering Denmark as an 'odd man out', since the country has never really fitted the image of a coherent Nordic state (Forsberg, 2013; Pedersen, 2012). This 'oddness' has become even more evident since the end of the Cold War, when such concepts as Danish 'engaged internationalism' or 'international activism' emerged (Larsen, 2018). Generally speaking, 'Danish activism' stands for a new trend in the post-Cold War Danish foreign policy, which implies Denmark's enhanced engagement in world politics since 1989 contrary to its regional (Nordic and European) focus and passivity on a global scale in the 19th – 20th centuries (Pedersen, 2012). The radical difference of Danish activism compared to other Nordic activist policies is a substantial military component (i.e. participation in joint military operations with other states as well as in the UN forces) (Pedersen, 2012).

Much attention has been drawn to the essence and features of 'Danish activism' since then within different paradigms of international relations theory (IRT). Nevertheless, the postcolonial approach is absent in the discussion of Danish foreign policy, even though it could be fruitfully used to attain new knowledge about Denmark's external affairs due to a specific character of Danish colonialism. On the one hand, the Danish colonial experience is relatively limited compared to the imperial pasts of Western European states. Indeed, Denmark only possessed three islands in the Caribbean Sea (the Danish West Indies – the present-day US Virgin Island), several forts and settlements in present-day southeast Ghana (the Danish Gold Coast), several trading posts in India (Tranquebar and Serampore being the biggest ones), the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean, Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland (Brimnes et al., 2017). On the other hand, it was the biggest overseas colonial empire among other Nordic countries. Moreover, the colonial heritage is measured in terms of the scope of influence on further development of the colonised territories, not in terms of square meters or number of territories. Finally, contrary to the UK or France, for example, where colonialism is an integral part of national histories as well as of postcolonial states and territories, Denmark views its colonial presence as only a part of the respective countries' histories, not as a part of its own national history (to a greater extent in case of southern or 'tropical' colonies) (Jensen, 2008). To my mind, this specific feature should definitely affect Danish foreign policy.

It should be mentioned, however, that nowadays the postcolonial approach is becoming increasingly popular in Denmark, but not in international relations (IR) and IRT. The interrelations of the colonial past and the postcolonial present are scrutinised in art studies, political science (Denmark's policies in its autonomies – Greenland and the Faroe islands), and history. Lars Jensen's call to come 'beyond the rot of colonialism' and to apply the postcolonial approach in IR and foreign policy analysis (FPA) (Jensen, 2015) keeps being mostly ignored. As the 400th anniversary since the beginning of Denmark's colonial presence in Tranquebar, India, was not explicitly articulated in the Danish political discourse in 2020 (the only exception is the project "400 Years - 400 Stories", which was still more business- and culture-oriented), contrary to much ado about the centenary of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the USA in 2017, it inspires an insistent continuation of examining the topic. The 300th anniversary of Danish priest Hans Egede's arrival in Greenland, a benchmark for Danish-Greenlandic colonial history, in 2021 will be another opportunity for the Social Democratic government to express its stance on Danish colonialism. Nevertheless, it is a great opportunity for the academic community, including me, to revisit the postcolonial factor of 'Danish activism'. One of the novelties of my thesis would be to marry IR and postcolonial studies in the Danish context.

Another novelty of this thesis is overcoming a 'northern' bias of the postcolonial research in Denmark, which limits the number of dimension of the problem being studied. Most of research is devoted to the North – Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland, as well as the Danish medieval colonial experience in Europe, while the Danish presence in the Global South (dependent territories in the Caribbean region, in West Africa, in South Asia) is overlooked or poorly studied. This paper will contribute to bringing the Danish 'tropical' colonies "back" to the postcolonial studies.

Thus, my research question appears, "How does the Danish colonial past (or rather the interpretations of the past by the Danish authorities) in the Global South influence modern Danish foreign policy in Ghana, India and US Virgin Islands?" I hypothesise that the postcolonial discourse on Denmark's colonial past constructs Danish activism foreign policy towards Ghana, India and US Virgin Islands as a reconsideration of Denmark's Self vis-à-vis its Exceptional Others in the Global South. In other words, the Danish colonial presence in the Global South will be 'othered' and detached from Denmark's Self while completely or partly attributing it to identities of the exceptional Others.

The study will cover the foreign policy of the Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet (2016-2019). The period was chosen due to the highly intensive re-introduction of the colonial past into political discourse, including foreign policy. 2017 was the centennial year of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the USA, which, firstly, impeded yet another wave of interest to the

Danish colonial past in the academic and artistic circles, and, for the first time, led to an open articulation of the issue by the Danish political establishment. 2017 was also a year of the first state visit of Queen Margrethe II to Ghana, marked by an overwhelming attention to two countries' shared past. Finally, the 70th anniversary of Danish-Indian diplomatic relations in 2019 drew some heed to the history of bilateral interactions. All these events have given a strong impetus to rethinking of the common past.

The theoretical framework of the thesis is the postcolonial approach to IR. The study will be heavily based on *Orientalism* by Said (1978). Nevertheless, other seminal works and theories of postcolonialism will be brought into discussion. Since the sources of foreign policy will be searched for inside Denmark (its past and articulations of this past), it should be stated that the analysis is conducted within the analytical approach to IR and foreign policy in particular. While it is difficult to draw a line between endogenous and exogenous factors of foreign policy, for the purposes of this thesis it is believed that a bottom-up scheme of inquiry with abductive reasoning is the most appropriate one. Another main theoretical and methodological framework of the research is discourse theory by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). The nature of Danish postcolonialism is seen as discursive and developing according to laws and principles of discursive practices. The corresponding chapter discusses it in more detail.

The thesis has an Introduction, four analytical chapters, a Conclusion and a Reference list. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the background for the research, discussing the existing literature on 'Danish activism' foreign policy and Danish colonialism, pointing out the lack of research on both issues in relation to each other. Moreover, foreign policy of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet is overviewed and critically assessed. Chapter 3 outlines operationalisation of theories and methods used throughout the thesis. Chapter 4 presents the results and discussion of them in three studied cases: Danish foreign policy in Ghana, India and the US Virgin Islands. Chapter 5 is a critical evaluation of the conducted research, as well as a description of prospects for future inquiries. In Conclusion the main findings are summarised and the theoretical and practical value of the thesis is restated.

CHAPTER 2

DANISH ACTIVISM AND DANISH COLONIALISM

Danish activism as a new trend of Denmark's foreign policy

Considerable academic interest has been attracted to the post-Cold War Danish foreign policy in the recent decades, but there are disagreements on how to elucidate it, whether it appears for a path-breaking change or continuity in Denmark's external affairs (Pedersen, 2018). Holm (2002), as cited in Pedersen (2012), defines foreign policy activism as “a policy or strategy aimed at creating, preserving or changing a given international order according to the interests and values of the policy-maker”. Even though succeeding post-1989 governments coined different names for their “activist policy” and presented them as different from the previous ones, I agree with Pedersen (2012) that all of them “should be seen as a difference of degree rather than a difference of kind”, since all the types are variations of the strategy formulated in 1989 by the then Foreign Minister Ellemann-Jensen. Thus, Danish foreign policy activism will be seen in this thesis as both a change and continuity in Danish foreign policy.

The complexity of the phenomenon can be proven by the variety of opinions on the essence of it. Larsen (2018), for example, claims that there are seven major approaches to the post-Cold War Danish foreign policy in general: the adaptation approach, constellation theory, the competition state approach, the EU influence approach, the small/smart state approach, the lessons and traditions approach, discourse foreign policy analysis. Observing Larsen's analysis of these seven approaches (2018), one comes up with the following conclusions about the contemporary Danish academic FPA literature:

1. much of the discourse is positivist (out of seven approaches five are positivist);
 - a. two approaches (the adaptation approach and constellation theory) are neorealist, two approaches (the competition state approach and EU influence approach) are neoliberal, the small/smart state approach is applied by both neorealist and neoliberal scholars;
 - b. the lessons and traditions approach can be categorised as constructivist, and discourse FPA as post-positivist;
2. despite some disagreement, all approaches unanimously claim that the end of the Cold War has had positive consequences for Danish foreign policy while giving new opportunities and strengthening the kingdom's position;
3. paying a different degree of heed to the ‘outer’ circumstances and features, all approaches conclude that ‘inner’ Danish developments are specific (even unique) and have to be studied thoroughly, which is a common feature of most FPA approaches.

Nevertheless, it is worth remarking that Larsen has mostly focused on the Danish academic discourse, which reduces the universality of his classification. This ‘bias’ can be partly explained by the fact that Denmark as a primary subject of inquiry remains a specific feature of articles and books written by Danish scholars, whereas in most other countries the kingdom is studied in the broader contexts mentioned beforehand. However, Danish scholars themselves do not only specialise on Denmark’s foreign policy or Danish foreign policy activism, but examine wider issues of IRT. The list of prominent contemporary Danish FPA scholars, studying Danish activism from different perspectives, includes Hans Branner (2013), Henrik Larsen (2017), Hans Mouritzen (2006; 2020), Rasmus Brun Pedersen (2017), Nikolaj Petersen (2013), Anders Wivel (2014) and Ole Wæver (2016). Using and introducing different approaches, all these authors investigate unique features of Danish foreign policy, as well as contextualise Denmark in bigger structures.

Pedersen (2018) suggests another classification of contemporary research on Danish foreign policy activism proper. He introduces two dichotomies or ‘conceptual pairs’ in his terms that determine the academic Danish FPA field: *determinism* versus *internationalism* and *adaptation* versus *activism*. While the former pair points to whether Denmark is seen as approaching its position in the world changeable for the better or not, which determines its passivity or activity in foreign policy, the latter pair focuses on the character of Danish foreign policy strategies, whether they are reactive or proactive (Pedersen, 2018, pp.453-56). Based on these pairs, Pedersen constructs three frames of analysing Danish foreign policy activism: “*activism as the continuation of the traditional adaptation politics*”, “*activism as a path-breaking small state security approach*” and “*activism as a new form of internationalism*” (Pedersen, 2018, pp.457-61). While it is a useful and fascinating way of viewing the Danish academia, since it is especially designed for the issue of Danish foreign policy activism, I would like to make four comments. Firstly, I believe that the third conceptual pair is missing, which is *continuity* versus *change*, since it more or less frames two other pairs (paradoxically, Pedersen writes much about this, but does not elaborate further in his model). Secondly, the whole classification is done within the small state theoretical framework, which limits the scope of its applicability. It is true that notions of ‘smallness’ or ‘tininess’ are important for Danish foreign policy discourses, but as has been already mentioned, the size does not always matter or is not the only thing that matters. Thirdly, it is not analytically clear why there are three frames if there are four concepts. No matter whether the frame represents one concept or a pair (e.g. determinism + adaptation), at least one more frame is definitely missing. Finally, the analytical difference between two pairs, as well as between ‘activism’ as a concept and as a name of the policy is unclear and needs to be explained in more detail. Nevertheless, Pedersen’s analysis

proves once again the complexity of the post-Cold War Danish foreign policy and a strong rationale to investigate it further.

The Soviet and post-Soviet FPA research written in Russian makes an exception among all non-Danish academic traditions, as it has also developed an autonomous FPA corpus. Due to several reasons, the Soviet and post-Soviet “Danish and Nordic studies” are either historical (without applying IRT) or realist/neorealist by its character. Thus, one could categorise the Russian-language academic literature into two groups: history-focused or IR-focused.

The first group includes works of Alexander S. Kan (1967), Yulia V. Kudrina (1975; 1998), Vadim V. Roginskiy (1998), and Lizaveta O. Dubinka-Hushcha (2014). The latter is a contemporary Belorussian scholar, who after moving for the post-doctorate programme in Denmark, has more focused on IR rather than on history, which allows one to include her in both groups. History-focused studies depict foreign policy as embedded in Danish history and caused by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include the transition of power from the king to the government and parliament (see, e.g., Kudrina & Roginsky, 1998), party struggle, industrialisation and modernisation of Danish economy as well as foreign policy doctrines of prominent ministers for foreign affairs (e.g., Dubinka-Hushcha, 2014). External factors are comprised by the small-state status of Denmark after 1864 (Kudrina & Roginsky, 1998), great power politics in Europe (Kan, 1967) and ideas of Scandinavism. It is also noteworthy that Soviet and Russian historians pay much attention to the role of particular historical events for foreign policy, be it the Danish defeat in the Second Schleswig War in 1864 (Kudrina & Roginsky, 1998), the Nazi occupation of Denmark (Kan, 1967) or the 1973 Landslide Election (*Jordskredsvalget*), when five new parties entered the Danish parliament for the first time and the composition of the parliament was renewed by 50% (Dubinka-Hushcha, 2014). This paradoxically approximates Soviet and Russian history-focused studies with the lessons and traditions approach of Danish FPA, even though the lessons and traditions approach is a constructivist one, whereas all mentioned historian researches are positivist and created within traditional historicism.

Among Russian IR scholars specialising in Danish and Nordic studies, Lev S. Voronkov (1980), Konstantin V. Voronov (2021) and Dmitri S. Tulupov (2018) are worth mentioning. Central issues of studies are security and European integration policies of modern Denmark. Voronov (2021), for instance, focuses on relations between the Nordic countries and NATO after 2014. Not only has he examined the fuelled cooperation between NATO and Denmark, Norway and Iceland as member states, but also “transatlantisation” of Nordic security cooperation and enhanced partnership between NATO, Sweden and Finland. It is concluded that Denmark follows the strategy of the Alliance in its policy towards Russia and is dependent on the position

of the USA. Therefore, in order to improve the Russian-Danish relations, the improvement of the US-Russian relations is necessary, since these two great powers define the features of the world system structure, which is decisive for Denmark as a small country. Voronkov (1980), writing about the role of Nordic countries in international politics of the 1970s, also attributed the key role to NATO and the USSR, whose positions and strategies are substantial for Nordic countries. Therefore, it should be stated that reasoning of both authors is framed within neorealist theory of IR. Tulupov (2018) investigates how party politics and party struggles influence Denmark's European policy. It represents a classical FPA study when external affairs are explained with the help of inner factors, including the political debates and controversies.

Finally, Maksim A. Isaev (2002), Anatoli N. Chekanskiy (2003) and Maria A. Mogunova (2001), while being specialists in law or political science, have become some of the most prominent researchers of Denmark and the Nordic region, touching upon different aspects of the kingdom's foreign policy in their studies. Isaev (2002) devoted his work to the political and legal system of Denmark, in which foreign policy, among other public issues, is framed and conducted. Chekanskiy (2003) studied the role of the Danish parliament in home affairs and foreign policy, whereas Mogunova (2001) authored a comprehensive examination of Scandinavian parliamentarism, its development throughout the years and influence on modern affairs.

As it has been shown above, the general framework of studying Danish foreign policy in the USSR and Russia is the kingdom's NATO membership and the role of historical events for modern strategies, whereas Danish activism is not widely used as an analytical concept. Finally, there is a sound tendency to study Denmark along with other Nordic countries, following the global academic trends outside Denmark.

To conclude, Danish foreign policy activism is a complex phenomenon in modern Danish history. I argue in this thesis that it represents both a change and continuity in Danish foreign policy. However, I would like to discuss this matter from a postcolonial point of view, since the presence of the colonial past undoubtedly contributes to the continuity of foreign policy, as Denmark uses similar instruments of dealing with this past throughout 20th – 21st centuries. On the other hand, active articulations of this past within a more liberal and emancipative activism policy are also a change, since postcolonial rethinking seldom enters the public domain. Debates on Danish colonialism in political and academic discourses will be presented in the following section.

Danish colonial past in the Global South and its rethinking in modern Denmark

Denmark does not indeed occupy a prominent place among European imperialisms, being overshadowed by British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and other colonial experiences. Nevertheless, it does not erase colonialism from the Danish history; nor does it excuse all inequalities, traumas and brutality created in dependent territories by years under the *Dannebrog*. Paradoxically, Denmark has been very successful in excluding its imperial past from its national history and public image both inside and outside of the country. Lars Jensen (2019) claims these “amnesia/repression/nostalgia/ benevolence/exceptionalism and blindness discourses” continue to prevail in dominant narrations of the past and present of the kingdom.

The widely accepted timeline for Danish colonialism is from 1618 (the first Danish expedition to Ceylon) to 1953 (Greenland was incorporated as a Danish county represented in the Danish Parliament by the Constitutional Act of Denmark) (Brimnes et al., 2017). Traditionally, Danish colonies have been divided into the Arctic (Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands) and ‘tropical’ (the West Indies, the Gold Coast and territories in India) ones (Jensen, 2008), which created grounds to treat them differently, if anyhow. While colonialism in the Arctic can be characterised as ‘tutelary’ with traditional ‘civilising mission’ and ‘White Men’s burden’ discourses, ‘tropical’ colonies were mostly exoticised, romanticised and glamourised, turning them into semi-fictional heavenly places somewhere in the South (Brimnes et al., 2017). The latter explains why ‘tropical’ colonies occupied such an important place in Danish literature, inspiring many authors to ‘explore’ remote imperial possessions and fantasise about them (Hauge, 2001). This generalisation of ‘tropical’ colonies led to blurring of the differences in their nature. The West Indies were a classical slave sugar plantation economy of the Caribbean; the Danish Gold Coast was comprised by forts where Danes traded with local tribe chiefs, bought slaves and transported them to the Caribbean islands; Tranquebar and Serampore were Danish trading posts in India, whereas the Nicobar Islands were meant to be a trading post in South East Asia, but were mostly abandoned due to severe epidemics (Brimnes et al., 2017). Thus, Danish colonialism had both material and ideational aspects of European imperialism with brutal and milder forms.

In recent decades, however, these hegemonic discourses have been challenged from different angles. As the primary focus of this thesis is Danish postcolonial policies in the Global South, only debates and events connected with the Danish presence in the present day USVI, Ghana and India will be covered in the following overview. It should be stated once again that it is done due to the northern ‘bias’ of Danish postcolonial studies: rethinking of Denmark’s

relations with its Arctic colonies has been taking place for quite a long time and has mature and sound debates, whereas public political discussion of ‘tropical’ colonies in Danish history is indeed no more than some twenty years old.

1998 became the first benchmark of increased attention to the Southern colonial past in the political discourse due to the 150th anniversary of the abolition of enslavement in the Danish West Indies (Jensen, 2019). There were intense debates, including the debates in the Danish Parliament, on whether Denmark should apologise for its participation in slave trade activities. The then Minister for Foreign Affairs Niels Helveg-Petersen, while condemning slave trade, said he did not think it was “reasonable for the people who have not been personally involved in the slave trade to apologise to the people who have not been personally exposed to it [*my translation from Danish*]” (Folketing, 1998). Queen Margaret II declined the invitation to participate in the commemorative events organised by the US Virgin Islands (USVI) (Jensen, 2019). In 2008 the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller admitted slave trade was a part of history shared by Denmark and the USVI, but added that history could not be changed and the injustices of the past could not be rectified (Villadsen, 2017). In 2013 the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Nick Hækkerup once again accepted Denmark’s colonial past, but noted that “there is no practice [...] of the Danish government apologising for the past days or policies of the previous governments [*my translation from Danish*]” (Folketing, 2013). 2017 has indeed become a turning point for acceptance and re-consideration of Danish colonialism in the Global South: active participation of the then Prime-Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen in events devoted to the centenary of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the USA and the state visit of Queen Margrethe II to Ghana. It is evident, however, that there is some kind of a ‘West-Indies bias’ in these discussions, whereas two other regions of Danish southern imperialism are not as much articulated. This is also true for cultural and academic debates, which will be covered hereafter.

The academic tradition of investigating Danish imperialism is much older than the political one. Nevertheless, it should be admitted with regret that the ‘northern bias’ is also a specific feature of Danish colonial and postcolonial research. Moreover, colonial studies have for a long time been monopolised by historians; research in political science and international relations is a very recent development. The most prominent historical works dedicated to the Danish colonial presence in the South include publications by Sophie Petersen (1946), Johannes Brøndsted et al. (1952-53, 1966-68), Thorkild Hansen (1967, 1968, 1970), Ove Hornby (1980), Ole Feldbæk & Ole Justesen (1980), and Niels Brimnes et al. (2017). It is vivid that this research occurs in the form of waves of interest rather than being a continuous and permanently developing field of study. The latest five-volume *Danmark og Kolonierne [Denmark and the Colonies]* (Brimnes et al., 2017) is indeed a new opus magnum on the Danish imperial past by

29 academics specialising in the field. While some praise the collection for overcoming a heroic and glorifying narration of the previous historiography and offering a critical postcolonial examination of Danish imperialism (Weiss, 2019), others believe the currents of these enterprises of great pith and moment, as in Hamlet's soliloquy, turn awry, and lose the name of action, since the volumes still follow the trapping customary of spatiotemporal othering of colonies and misplacement of the colonial past to the periphery of national history and selfhood (Jensen, 2018a). As for critical political studies, the colossal figure on the Danish postcolonial academic scene is undoubtedly Lars Jensen who authored many works on Danish postcoloniality and normalised 'tropical colonies' as a subject of investigation (Jensen, 2008; Jensen, 2012; Jensen, 2015; Jensen, 2018a; Jensen, 2018b; Jensen, 2019). Jensen contextualises Danish coloniality and postcoloniality within transnational contexts of Eurocentrism, as well as examines the role of coloniality for the modern Danish selfhood and identity. There is a much broader academic agenda on Nordic/Scandinavian colonialisms, which offers a greater abundance of texts and research, and is indeed important for Danish postcolonial studies (for an overview of the field, see Höglund & Andersson Burnett, 2019). Still, none of these studies bring Danish postcoloniality to FPA of modern Denmark, which is one of the tasks of this thesis. Nevertheless, findings on the interrelations between colonialism and Danish selfhood, between colonial historiography and modern politics and between academic and public debates are crucial for my study and should not be underestimated.

Some words should be finally said about cultural rethinking of Danish imperialism. The role of Danish colonies for the literature has already been mentioned, and critical studies in this field occupy one of the biggest places in Danish postcolonial research (Hauge, 2001). The National Museum of Denmark has become one of the key players in bringing the colonial past 'back' to public memory. Apart from dozens of thematic exhibitions, the Museum launched and successfully realised the Tranquebar (2004-2016), Ghana (2004-2010) and Serampore (2009-2020) Initiatives, which included scientific and cultural collaboration, joint projects, foundation of Frederiksgave Plantation Museum near Accra, Ghana, and full-scale restoration of several sights in Tharangampadi (modern name of Tranquebar) and Serampore (National Museum, 2010; National Museum, 2016; National Museum, 2020). Another landmark cultural event was the unveiling of the monument "I Am Queen Mary" in Copenhagen on 31st March, 2018 (I Am Queen Mary, 2018). The statue was created by two artists from the USVI and Denmark – La Vaughn Belle and Jeannette Ehlers and depicts Queen Mary (Mary Thomas) – one of the leaders of the 1878 uprising in St. Croix, also known as the "Fireburn" (I Am Queen Mary, 2018). The monument is said to be "a hybrid of bodies, nations and narratives"; it has become a strong urge

to remember the brutality of Danish colonialism and inescapable hybrid character of identities of both the coloniser and colonised.

To conclude, there is a rising interest to Danish colonial past in different social realms, but it should be admitted that it is still novel for the public domain and remains underarticulated by the Danish authorities. Nor is much done in understanding of how modern Danish foreign policy is framed by the colonial past and to what extent it is indeed ‘postcolonial’. The merge of findings by both foreign policy analysts and postcolonial scholars enables to shed new light on Danish foreign policy activism in the Global South, especially in countries and territories, which once were possessions of the Danish crown.

Foreign policy of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet (2016-2019): An overview

This thesis examines foreign policy of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet (2016-2019). It was a right (“blue”) coalition minority government comprised by Venstre (the Danish Liberal Party), the Liberal Alliance and the Conservative People’s Party supported by the Danish People’s Party in the parliament (Regeringen, 2016). It succeeded minority one-party Lars Løkke Rasmussen Second Cabinet (2015-2016) due to the latter’s unstable position in the Danish Parliament (Regeringen, 2015).

Anders Samuelsen, the then leader of the Liberal Alliance, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs (Regeringen, 2016). Similarly to the UK, Minister for Foreign Affairs is the second most important politician in the Danish government after Minister for Finance. For the observers, there was a clear shift from activist foreign policy to “greater caution” in foreign policy of Rasmussen and Samuelsen (Larsen, 2018). Holstein (2018) wrote that the government’s foreign policy was “more of diplomacy than of policy”. Departing from activism and following a more traditional small-state policy with a limited-in-scope list of priorities, Danish foreign policy under Lars Løkke Rasmussen and Anders Samuelsen was structured and guided by two Foreign and Security Strategies, for 2017-2018 and 2019-2020. This plan-of-action type of documents is very untraditional and atypical for Danish foreign policy, with vision papers or opinion articles being more common. Despite the fact that Samuelsen wrote three opinion articles for three yearbooks of the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), all of these papers more or less retell the above mentioned Strategies. It is important, however, to overview both the Strategies and articles to see the context and discursive field, in which postcolonial foreign policy takes place.

Foreign and Security Strategy for 2017-2018 was presented by the Government on 14th June 2017 (Regeringen, 2017). The Preface of the Strategy starts with the following sentence, “The government wants Denmark to maintain a strong international engagement” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017a). Nevertheless, determinism and adaptation, using Pedersen’s terms, describe the essence of the planned foreign policy course. Indeed, much attention is paid to the world system structure and how it influences Denmark as a small state with limited capacities, and the aim of Danish foreign policy is seen as reactive to these conditions, “With this foreign and security policy strategy [...] the government presents answers to the most important external challenges facing Denmark today” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017a). Thus, this “strong international engagement” should be approached as adaptation to existing “external challenges”. The most plausible way to do so is said to be realised in five prioritised focus areas, namely, Migration, instability and terrorism; Security in the neighbourhood region; Brexit and the future of the EU; Globalisation – economic and technological diplomacy; and The Arctic (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017a). As it can already be seen from these priorities, the world around is seen as unstable, fluid, insecure and challenging, which forces Denmark to carefully navigate in the sea of troubles. Each and every topic starts with a discussion of existing crises and turmoil with a potential to negatively influence the kingdom, be it North Africa and the Middle East as a source of illegal migration and terrorism or the EU torn apart by Brexit. The wisest response to these challenges, according to the Strategy, is seeking support and protection from the international organisations or great powers (the USA), which can be described by the bandwagoning pattern of behaviour. Economic and technological diplomacy as well as The Arctic are the only focus areas where Denmark can play a leading part, even though a multilateral approach is still seen as preferable and most effective.

The ideational roots for such a vision and approach can be already seen in Samuelsen’s opinion article for DIIS Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2017 (Samuelsen, 2017). 2016 is emphatically called “the year of disruption” (Samuelsen, 2017: 11). The world is seen as full of challenges and deep crises in all spheres; anti-globalism, anti-establishment movements and protectionism are portrayed as defining trends of modern times (Samuelsen, 2017). There is no surprise that even “new opportunities come with new challenges” according to this vision (Samuelsen, 2017: 17). The sovereign remedy for this “problematic” universe is free trade and multilateralism, which Denmark “[a]s a small, open and advanced economy”, has to fully support and rely on (Samuelsen, 2017: 21). “It is in times of crisis and change that we find out who we are”, as Samuelsen writes (Samuelsen, 2017: 21). Judging by his opinion article and by the 2017-2018 Strategy, Denmark is a small state, whose advancement of democracy and economy are highly linked to globalisation and cooperation with the USA and international

organisations. Denmark should be reactive to challenges surrounding it and bandwagon stronger actors in order to prosper. Foreign policy activism is possible only in spheres, where there is an already established Danish leadership (namely, the Arctic, aid and development, economic diplomacy), but only if it does not contradict joint multilateral plans and strategies of great and middle powers.

As any foreign policy course, Samuelsen's or Rasmussen-Samuelsen's foreign policy course has evolved and has been adjusted to changing circumstances. Nevertheless, the essential philosophy underlying this course was more or less the same: the world is in critical transition which brings trouble and challenges; Denmark has to be reactive to these challenges and oppose them by supporting multilateralism and bandwagoning stronger international actors. In the opinion article in DIIS Danish Foreign Policy Review 2018 "challenges" as the central term is replaced by "change", so there is a slight shift from determinism to internationalism, using Pedersen's dichotomy. 2017 is portrayed as a better year than "disruptive 2016" and than "many had forecast" (Samuelsen, 2018: 14). The rest of the article is an enthusiastic retelling of Foreign and Security Strategy for 2017-2018. The world is still described as "turbulent", "full of tension" and "posing challenges" and Denmark is argued to be "a small nation, dependent on an international rules-based order" (so Danish success is defined externally, not internally) (Samuelsen, 2018: 30). A very pragmatic conclusion is then made, "Denmark cannot – indeed, we should not – do the heavy lifting on all fronts" (ibid).

The possibility of "change for the better" is eventually manifested in Foreign and Security Strategy for 2019-2020, "The world today is in a much better place than ever before" (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018a: 5). It is, nevertheless, swiftly added that "we face many challenges along the way" (ibid). The world is described as "unpredictable" and "changing". As in the previous Strategy, it is stated (almost in identical wordings) that "[t]he Government wants Denmark to maintain its European and global engagement" (ibid). However, disappointment in the course of Denmark's stronger partners (namely, of Trump administration) as well as in international organisations (turbulence in the EU and the UN) is also felt throughout the text as the rhetoric is changed. While multilateralism and international cooperation are seen as basic pillars of Danish foreign policy, such formulations as "We must lead the fight against man-made climate change" or "We must fight for our liberal values and protect principles of freedom" are often used and represent a shift from the previous strategy (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018a: 5).

Still, continuity is underlined by stating that the new Strategy "does not propose a change of course but instead comprises a series of concrete initiatives and focus areas that align with the guiding principles and aims" of the previous Strategy (ibid). These focus areas include Rule-based international order; Security; Europe – a strong, streamlined and effective EU; Refugees,

migration and development; Economic diplomacy, strategic partnership and the new digital world order; and The Arctic (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018a). Each topic starts with a balanced overview of the state of affairs and existing challenges, and then concrete initiatives and further steps are outlined and discussed. Thus, the new Strategy is more proactive than reactive, but there is an abundance of references to smallness of Denmark and limitations of its position.

Danish foreign policy activism in 2019-2020 strategy should be understood as “agenda-setting” and guidance of other international actors; Denmark’s role is constructed in terms of a “wise man” of the world order. The kingdom cannot change or define it, but it can advise how to do it.

This is more explicitly stated in Samuelsen’s opinion article in DIIS Danish Foreign Policy Review 2019. While the article is mostly devoted to retelling and exalting the 2019-2020 Strategy, there is a very important passage at the beginning of the article. Samuelsen poses a question of how Denmark should behave in the changing world full of uncertainty. The short version of the answer is “we must step up” (Samuelsen, 2019: 14). The long one reads, “When Denmark has strong interests at stake, we must be more prepared to stand up and take the lead internationally in fighting for what we believe in – and accept the enhanced risk that comes with assuming greater responsibility” (ibid). This can be seen as a return to the classical formula of Venstre foreign policy activism.

It is hard to say whether it was a response to criticism for too cautious foreign policy from within the coalition and from the opposition or a potential trump card in the coming 2019 parliamentary election. What can be said for sure is that this shift happened too late to become a game changer and did not help the blue coalition to win the election (to the contrary, Samuelsen’s Liberal Alliance experienced its worst election results in the party’s history forcing its founder and leader to resign). Rasmussen-Samuelsen’s foreign policy was still remembered as indecisive and “more of diplomacy than of policy”.

Development cooperation is seen as among those spheres where Denmark “must step up”. Such cooperation is said to be “an important foreign policy instrument” since “[w]e are taking care of Denmark when we take care of the world” (Regeringen, 2017: 7). Thus, right from the beginning Danish aid to developing countries is formulated in paternalistic terms and is constructed as possessing a universal value for all countries. The leading role of the kingdom is explicitly stated in the Strategy for 2019-2020, “Denmark is a significant player in the field of international development cooperation” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018a: 7). Therefore, there is a room for manoeuvre within the sphere where Denmark is confident in its strong position. The issue of the postcolonial dimension of cooperation with countries in the Global South is, thus,

seen as solvable by the government. At the same time, rethinking of colonial past was definitely approached in a cautious manner, as everything else.

To conclude, foreign policy of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet should be described as cautious, structured and planned in minute detail, situated in the focus areas and priorities model. Nevertheless, a definite breakthrough in rethinking relations with Danish former colonies under the Cabinet stands apart. The traditionally prioritised development and aid policy as well as relations with the Global South left room for the Cabinet to step up. The reasons and consequences of that will be studied in this thesis.

CHAPTER 3 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Postcolonialism as a thriving theory of critical studies

Postcolonialism can indeed be labelled a thriving theory of critical studies. However, much of the approach is still highly debatable in the academia. To begin with, there have been intense debates on the definition and contextualisation of the term ‘postcolonial’ both among postcolonial scholars and critics of the approach (Prakash, 1995; Gandhi, 1998; Loomba, 1998; Harper, 2001; Young, 2001). Much of the literature problematises the ‘post-‘ prefix in ‘postcolonial’; however, ‘colonial’ can also be questioned. Pointing to a wrongful reduction of ‘postcolonial’ to just ‘after colonial’, Ella Shohat (1992) sarcastically demands, “When exactly, then, does the ‘postcolonial’ begin?” Indeed, it is a widespread mistake to equate postcolonialism with decolonisation, which stretches from the declaration of independence of the USA in 1776 to civil wars in Angola and Mozambique in the 1970s. This way there is a danger of excluding countries which have never been colonies, but are still in the position of colonised in the modern postcolonial hierarchy. Moreover, for those at the bottom of the social structure coloniality never ended, so there is no ‘post’ for them (Loomba, 1998).

For the purposes of the research, Stuart Hall’s nuanced interpretation of postcoloniality is chosen as it best suits the aim and tasks of the thesis. Postcoloniality is seen as the maintenance of “gross inequalities of power” between the coloniser and the colonised, which results in stereotyping and dominance of binary opposites like ‘us’/‘Other’ or ‘civilised’/‘barbarian’.(Hall, 1997). Nevertheless, understanding of the postcolonial as ‘what comes after colonialism’ (Young, 2001) would also be applied regarding the choices made about the material and time period being studied. It should be stressed once again that postcolonial cannot be reduced to a certain moment of history, but it can be used to describe a specific temporal existential state “after”.

One of the central binaries in postcolonial theory is the colonizer/colonized. It was firstly thoroughly discussed in *The Colonizer and the Colonized* by Albert Memmi (1965). Both terms are discussed by Memmi from two points of view: a general and specific one. Specific definitions imply that the colonizer is any European in the colony, whereas the colonized are inhabitants of the territory occupied by Europeans (Memmi, 1965). These definitions are reductionist and reflect Memmi’s experience of French colonialism in Tunisia, which is actually one of many (European and non-European) colonialisms. More general definitions of the terms are of greater interest and importance for postcolonial studies. The colonizer as an identity and psychological Self is defined by three factors: profit, privilege and usurpation (Memmi, 1965).

Revenues the colonizer can get in the colony are incomparably higher than those which could be earned in Europe; the colonizer is the one who gets all profits whereas the colonized is only a tool to get these profits. The position of the colonizer is always a privileged one based on higher living conditions and standards of living, ideology of racism and supremacy and political power. As the colonizer understands his privilege is illegitimate, he becomes an usurper and tyrant for the colonized (Memmi, 1965). However, in order to mitigate the injustices of colonial crimes, the colonizer constructs its identity as a saviour and protector of the colonized. The colonized, on the other hand, is defined through constant oppression and deficiencies in pride and understanding of its Self. The colonized is deprived of its own history and “divorced from reality” (Memmi, 1965: 109). It creates the feeling that the colonized is “impossible” and does not exist without the colonizer (Memmi, 1965). Memmi (1965) has definitely contributed to categorisation of the central binary opposites of postcolonial studies and paid attention to psychological aspects of the relations between the colonizer and the colonized as well as the role of social construction, which were further examined by other scholars.

The binary opposites lie at the heart of the “postcolonial”, and it enables to move to understanding of “colonial” as a discourse. The seminal work that proclaimed discursivity of the “colonial” was *Orientalism* by Edward Said (1978). Said inaugurated a new way of studying relationships between the ‘metropolis’ and the ‘colony’. He introduced the term *Orientalism*, which is defined in three ways: an academic tradition or field of inquiry, “style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’ (Said, 1978, p.2), and a political instrument of domination. Said was heavily influenced by cultural hegemony theory by Gramsci’s and discourse theory and genealogy approach with its “knowledge/power” concept by Foucault (Said, 1978). Discourse of Orientalism creates two opposing camps – the Orient (the ‘Other’) and the Occident (‘We’). The Orient is always depicted as ‘barbaric’, ‘brown’, ‘backward’, ‘undeveloped’, ‘irrational’, ‘female’ and ‘strange’. The Occident, the ‘white man’, on the other hand, is ‘rational’, ‘civilised’, ‘masculine’ and ‘normal’. The “Other” is seen as needed to be taken care of and with no knowledge of what is best for them, which constructs objectivity of the Occident’s dominance and civilizing mission. This worldview has been developed by the “White man” while traveling to see other places, especially Asia and Middle East, and then writing about it as a strange place where the natives are weird, mysterious and delirious compared to “the European standard” (Said, 1978, p. 116). Said re-claimed the idea, which was firstly pronounced by another prominent postcolonial scholar, Frantz Fanon, in his seminal work *The Wretched of the Earth*, that Europe “is literally the creation of the Third World” (Fanon, 1967, p.76). However, while Fanon applied Marxism and focused on the role of colonies as wealth and labour suppliers for

European capitalism, Said drew attention to the Orient as a significant Other for Europe: the Occident is not the Orient, and this negative definition gives birth to the identity of 'We' (Said, 1978).

Orientalism evoked fundamental changes in postcolonial studies or to some extent even created postcolonialism (Young, 2001). Notwithstanding the significance of Said's work, the book has a few drawbacks, whose avoidance became critical for future research. To begin with, Potter (1983) argues that Said presented a nuanced and complex history of humankind as a fixed binary opposition of the East and the West, leaving out permanent dynamic negotiation between the Orient and the Occident. Moreover, this vision creates a biased image of colonialism as a mere imposition of European power upon the colonised, whereas processes of learning by the colonised and resistance are overlooked (Bhabha, 1983). Then, Ahmed (1992) criticises Said for homogenising the West and denying materiality of colonialism. Indeed, the colonial experiences of each and every European country were unique and cannot be just substituted by the British and French ones, as Said very often does. Thirdly, simplification of the East/West relations that takes place in Said's book has led to wrong assumptions that the Orient's revolt against the Occident in the form of returning to pre-colonial times is capable of breaking the existing inequalities of power. *Orientalism in reverse* suggested by Syrian thinker Al-Azm (1981) reveals this strategy of the Orient. Nevertheless, Spivak (1988) and Bhabha (1994) persuasively prove that there is no pre-colonial other than that reworked and interwoven in the history of colonialism.

It would be totally unfair, however, to deprive *Orientalism* of its watershed role in the history of (post)colonial studies. Said offered a model that enabled scholars to study the inequalities of power and binaries up to today. The universality of this model allows scientists to extrapolate the Orient/Occident logic to countries, which were never colonised, but are still absorbed in binaries of colonisation. Additionally, *Orientalism* remains the main approach that helps to study the coloniser and the strategies of establishing colonial dominance. Further research mostly returns to the pre-*Orientalism* emancipatory strand of Césaire (1950) and Fanon (1967), which focused on the colonised and the strategies of resisting colonial dominance. This thesis would, thus, be heavily based on Said's *Orientalism*, as the Danish strategies of coping with its history of coloniality are studied, whereas responses of the colonised are mostly not focused upon and left for further elaboration of the topic in future works. Nevertheless, some other approaches within postcolonialism should be mentioned as they will be helpful for the analysis.

Homi K. Bhabha is one of the most prominent postcolonial scholars; despite his primary focus on the colonised, not on the coloniser, his concepts do contribute to the understanding of

the topic in this thesis. Firstly, Bhabha (1994) was among pioneers to suggest that colonialism is not locked in the past, but rather constantly intrudes on the present, which is a basic analytical framework of this thesis. Secondly, such important concepts as hybridity, ambivalence, mimicry and the Third Space are among the core ones for understanding of complex relations between the coloniser and the colonised. The colonised other, Bhabha argues (1994), always exists between its own cultural identity and the coloniser's cultural identity becoming an ambivalent and unstable hybrid open to re-formation. This hybridity and ambivalence of the colonised comes from its strategies of mimicry, which are supported by the coloniser. The colonised tries to imitate and take on the culture of the coloniser in order to adapt and then overtake the existing power hierarchy, whereas the coloniser has a "desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is *almost the same, but not quite*" (Bhabha, 1994, p.122). This very creation of hybrid identity of the colonised takes place in the Third Space, which is a cross-cultural meeting point of two or more identities (Bhabha, 1994). Thus, complementation of *Orientalism* by Bhabha's concepts allows me to bring dynamics of postcolonial relations, seeing the constant and agonising negotiation between the coloniser and the colonised, which seems to be the case in the studied cases.

Some words have to be said about temporality as one of the central issues of postcolonial theory. The Western narratives of history have a two-fold aim, from a postcolonial point of view. Firstly, history seeks to establish that "the present is not the past" (Eze, 2008, p. 26). Othering of the past and attempts to lock colonialism in the history is one of the most common strategies applied by former colonisers to overcome a 'colonial guilt' (Eze, 2008). Secondly, the Western narratives' core is Hegelian concept of modernity as a specific mode of historic existence connected with progress, civilisation and the Enlightenment, i.e. with the "European way" (Ganguly, 2004, p. 163-65). Othering of time is made with the same logic as othering of "barbaric", "Orient" and "wild" (Ganguly, 2004, p. 162). The belief in progress implies there is an unavoidable path from barbarity to civilisation as the highest stage of development, possessed by Europe, which can teach others how to reach this stage (Ganguly, 2004, pp. 163-65).

It is noteworthy that postcolonialism emerged as a flourishing theory within sociology, history, literary and cultural studies (Loomba, 1998), but not within IR. Said's *Orientalism*, for example, is based on the analysis of canonical literary texts of the British and French origins (Said, 1978). When Darby and Paolini (1994) argue for bridging IR and postcolonialism, they assume a pre-supposition that these two are autonomously developing disciplines. Writing her chapter on postcolonialism in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity* more than twenty years later, Biswas (2016) admits there are *postcolonial approaches to IR* rather than

a postcolonial theory of IR. Wilkens (2017) centres his article around the issue of what postcolonialism *can contribute to IR*. Acharya's and Buzan's (2019) projects of creating a non-Western global IR theory are also about bringing postcolonialism to IR. Therefore, there is no postcolonial theory of IR, but rather a sound tradition of bridging postcolonialism and IR by applying concepts of postcolonial scholars for fields of inquiry within IR.

To conclude, postcolonialism is a thriving theory of critical studies, which has a high explanatory power for understanding the persisting inequalities of power and social binaries, which are inherited from colonialism. Said's *Orientalism* is central in analysing the coloniser and strategies of rethinking colonialism by the 'metropolis'; however, it should be complemented by other concepts, namely of Bhabha, to overcome its static character and to see the Orient/Occident relations as dynamic, developing and in constant flux. As there is no postcolonial theory of IR in a strict sense, this thesis will follow an established tradition within the discipline to apply approaches of key postcolonial thinkers to problems and issues of IR.

Discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe

Another theoretical and methodological framework of this paper is post-Marxist discourse theory by Laclau and Mouffe presented in their seminal work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985). Discourse theory sees the social as a discursive construction, which implies that the social phenomena can be analysed with the help of discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Laclau and Mouffe define discourse as "[t]he structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice" (1985, p.105). Thus, articulation is seen as the central social practice, since it establishes relations between signs and modifies their identity. As post-structuralist scholars, Laclau and Mouffe broaden many assumptions of Saussure's structuralism, definition by negativity being the central one: a sign exists because it is not another sign (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Nevertheless, contrary to structuralism, post-structuralism views relations between signs as dynamic and changing, not static, and this enables analysts to see the fluidity of meaning (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Different signs occupy different positions within the discursive structure. All signs articulated within the discourse are called *moments*, whereas non-articulated signs or differential positions are defined as *elements* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.105). The 'surplus of meaning', the terrain of the constitution of all social practices is named the *field of discursivity* in the theory (ibid, p. 111). It is further argued that "[a]ny discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct the centre" (ibid, p, 112). In order to construct the centre, discourses create privileged signs around which the other signs are ordered, or *nodal points* (ibid). Nodal points are essential

for understanding of any discourse, as they help to understand how and why particular meanings are fixated. It is important to remember that any closure is partial and never complete due to infinitude of the field of discursivity, which constantly overflows discourses (ibid, p.113). Moreover, there is a permanent struggle between different discourses to invest signs with their particular meanings; for some signs this struggle is fiercer than for others. Signs particularly open to articulation are called *floating signifiers*. All these concepts are aimed at examining articulation practices that constitute and organise social relations.

Two core features of discourse theory have to be mentioned at this point. Firstly, Laclau and Mouffe's conception implies there is no distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices, making the theory the most radical and post-structuralist (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.107). However, it should not lead to false conclusions that discourse theory denies materiality and talks only of ideal abstractions. Laclau and Mouffe explicitly write that discursive structures have the material character and have nothing to do with the realism/idealism opposition (ibid, p. 108-109). It is famously exemplified with floods: they occur regardless of discourse, but they gain meaning and significance only within discursive structures (ibid). Secondly, the denial of totality does not mean everything is disordered; to the contrary, neither absolute fixity nor absolute non-fixity is possible (ibid, p. 111). Partial fixation and objectivation of meanings are key goals of any discourse, so articulation never ends or stops. Nevertheless, discourses are able to arrest the meaning for quite a long time and become seemingly stable, but we should always remember that it is not once and for ever.

Another focus of discourse theory is group and identity formation. Jørgensen and Phillips insist discourse theory is "theoretically strong when it comes to analysis of group formation and collective identity" (2002, p. 146). Denying the Marxist conceptions of society, group formation and identity, Laclau and Mouffe suggest discursive origins of groups and their identities (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.114-122). The 'subject' is de-absolutised and deprived of agency: discourse theory talks of 'subject positions' within discursive structures instead (ibid). The focus is moving from individual identities to collective identities of groups, which are constituted by either *logics of equivalence* or *logics of difference* (ibid, pp.127-134). Logics of equivalence frequently lead to creation of two opposing groups, which are constructed with the help of *chains of equivalence* where signs are sorted and linked together in chains in opposition to other chains. Logics of equivalence erase nuanced differences and homogenise distinctive subject positions into groups. On the other hand, logics of difference extend the complexity of the social by deconstructing the polarity of two groups and pointing to the abundance of social groups (ibid). Laclau and Mouffe argue that the political is based on simplification and polarisation, thus logics of equivalence is the most common in the discursive structures (ibid). Therefore, a social *antagonism* becomes

another very important term of analysis. A social antagonism occurs when there is a mutual exclusion of identities, creating ambiguity: being fragmented and decentred from the beginning, identities start to contradict each other undermining the discourse fixity (ibid, pp.122-127). In order to reconstitute unambiguity the dominating discourse uses *hegemonic interventions* to articulate one of the identities as the only possible one (ibid). It brings the last but not the least concept of the theory – *hegemony*. Abolishing the division between base and superstructure and departing from Gramsci’s cultural hegemony theory, Laclau and Mouffe see hegemony as a discursive domination that sets the definition of the ‘truth’ and exercises power to sustain meanings that it sediments as ‘common sense’ (1985, pp. 134-145). Thus, hegemony positions itself as the only “right” discourse and suppresses all other discourse, even though it is also unable to fully arrest the flow of meaning, leaving the space for a struggle with alternative discourses.

The relevance of discourse theory in the presented research is based on a variety of strengths of Laclau and Mouffe’s approach. Firstly, it provides the researcher not only with concepts and methodological units, but with an overall framework for understanding and studying different social phenomena. Secondly, compared to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) discourse theory is more politically neutral. Despite being created within Marxist ontology, the theory has become broader than a leftist research due to reflexivity and self-awareness inherited from post-structuralism and post-positivism. Thirdly, theory’s acclaimed analytical strength in examining group and identity formation can seriously contribute to the following research. Nevertheless, limitations of discourse theory should be also mentioned. To begin with, Laclau and Mouffe’s theory is not clear how to conduct empirical research using their concepts and framework, so one always has to be imaginative (Jørgensen & Phillips 2000, pp. 24-25). There are no established analysis procedures, so it is up to each and every researcher to interpret the use of this framework in his or her analysis. Then, without such an authored methodological manual there is always a danger of applying the concepts and theoretical stances mechanically. Finally, in spite of the fact that discourse theory was claimed to be more or less politically neutral, this approach still exists within Marxist ontology. Therefore, while using discourse theory, a scholar always has to presuppose that some kind of oppression exists in the society and that there is a struggle against it.

Notwithstanding the limitations of discourse theory, it is still highly valid for the present analysis. Being a post-structuralist and post-positivist theory, Laclau and Mouffe’s approach can be successfully married with postcolonialism, which was highly influenced by discourse theory. Sharing the same basic assumptions about the social, discourse theory and postcolonialism can be successfully applied together. This theoretical merge results in strengthening the explanatory power of interpretations made in the thesis. Moreover, the drawback of a highly individualised

research can be overcome by being more transparent and specific in one's analysis. The operationalization of discourse theory will be described in the methodology section, which is yet to come.

Materials and research design

For the aims and tasks of this paper discourse theory will be complemented with postcolonialism to strengthen the explanatory power of interpretations made in the paper. Sharing the same basic assumptions about the social, discourse theory and postcolonialism can be successfully applied together.

The main concepts of discourse theory used in the thesis are a nodal point, elements and moments, articulation, group formation and construction of identities, social antagonism, hegemonic interventions, objectivity, the political and the field of discursivity defined and discussed above. Firstly, Danish foreign policy discourse and its nodal point in the Global South will be defined. It will be argued that this discourse is heterogeneous and includes different variations in different contexts. As Laclau and Mouffe allow such complexity of discourses and their permanent fluidity but do not have special terms for the variations (such as *narratives* in narrative discourse theory), in each context the name of the discourse will be complemented by the name of the relevant country. The term *narratives* is not introduced as it would mean a merge of two discourse theories, which does not meet the aims and goals of this thesis. Secondly, analysis of articulation of elements into moments around the nodal point is conducted in each and every of the three contexts (the USVI, Ghana, and India). At the beginning, I will formulate a set of elements that will be investigated in all three variations of the foreign policy discourse, but elements specific to a certain context will be introduced if needed. Thirdly, identity construction by either logics of equivalence or logics of difference is observed along with social antagonisms and hegemonic interventions to dissolve them. Finally, relations between objectivity and the political in the field of discursivity are discussed. At all the steps postcolonial commentary will be provided, as well as discussions of the interrelations between terms of discourse theory and postcolonialism. From postcolonialism such units as temporal othering, Occident "Self" and Orient "Other", hybridity, ambivalence, mimicry, power relations between the colonised and the coloniser are used. For example, it will be examined whether construction of identities in the three countries is performed by the mechanisms of Orientalism (whether the 'Other' is orientalised). Moreover, temporal othering is believed to play a crucial role in the articulation of elements into moments. Finally, power relations between the colonised and the coloniser will be studied along with hegemony in Laclau and Mouffe's terms.

The corpus of discourse samples selected for the analysis will be constructed according to the self-authored principles. As the number of texts somehow connected with Danish foreign policy in the USVI, Ghana and India is plenty, I have decided to search for texts devoted to specific “watershed” events in the studied period of 2015-2019. For the USVI it will be the then Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen's visit to the USVI on Transfer Day, 31st March 2017, for the official commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the USA. For Ghana it will be the 2017 state visit by Queen Margrethe II accompanied by the then Ministers for Foreign Affairs (Anders Samuelsen) and for Environment and Food (Esben Lunde Larsen) as well as by representatives of the Danish businesses. For India three smaller events will be picked, as there was no singular event with a magnitude compared to the one of events in the USVI and Ghana: official visits of the then Ministers for Foreign Affairs (Anders Samuelsen) to India in December 2017 and December 2018 and the official visit by the then Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen to India in February 2019.

In each case the corpus will be comprised by “main” and “complementary” texts. “Main” texts are those containing “direct speech” of Danish foreign policy – speeches and comments by the Queen, the Prime Minister or the Minister for Foreign Affairs. “Complementary” texts are those presenting alternative discourses or restating the discourse from the “main” texts. “Main” texts are primary objects of analysis, whereas “complementary” texts are brought in for the purposes of contextualisation. Contextualisation here is seen as understanding of how the discourse in the text is situated vis-à-vis other discourses in the field of discursivity and how it contributes to objectivation, sedimentation and depoliticisation of the particular image of reality. Such references will help to enrich the analysis and make interpretations more transparent for the reader. The list and categorisations of texts devoted to the USVI, Ghana or India will be presented in the relevant sections of Chapter 4. Key sources for the “main” texts include official websites of the Danish government (regeringen.dk), of the Danish Prime Minister (stm.dk), of Ministry for Foreign Affairs (um.dk), of the Danish Royal Family (kongehuset.dk) as well as “national” webpages of Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Denmark in Ghana (ghana.um.dk), Denmark in India (indien.um.dk) and Denmark in the USA (usa.um.dk). Key sources for the “complementary” texts include social media pages of Lars Løkke Rasmussen and Anders Samuelsen as well as websites of biggest Danish newspapers and news agencies.

Finally, in order to increase transparency and self-reflexivity of the research Chapter 5 is a recollection of my thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of conducting research according to the methodological design presented above. The construction of the corpus, as well as its pros and cons, is also addressed. While I strongly believe that the authored methodological and

theoretical apparatus fully delivers against the goals of the thesis, as a responsible and self-aware scholar, I admit that my approach is not flawless like all other scientific approaches.

Results: the corpus of the study

For the purposes of the research 24 texts were selected; the shares of the “main” and “complimentary” texts are equal, i.e. there are 12 “main” and 12 “complimentary” sources. In each of the contexts the amounts of both types of the texts are the same: four “main” and four “complimentary” texts for the USVI, Ghana and India cases respectively. All texts were either in English or Danish. All in all, 14 English and 10 Danish texts comprise the corpus. In case of the USVI, five texts in English and three texts in Danish were examined. In case of Ghana four English and four Danish sources were analysed. In case of India five English and three Danish texts were investigated. All “main” texts are of similar volume – from two to three pages, representing either texts of speeches, comments protocolled by the official sources and the media or official press releases by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Denmark. The only exception is the live tour around Marienborg on Facebook (Rasmussen, 2017c), which is a 25-minute long video. “Complimentary” texts vary in the length from two-three page long newspaper articles to seventeen-twenty page long reports and strategies. Genres of complimentary texts vary as well: there are three press releases, two news articles, four opinion articles, one strategy and two reports. The analysis was performed according to the research design described beforehand. Discussion of the results is presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

GHANA, INDIA AND THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS AS EXCEPTIONAL OTHERS IN DANISH FOREIGN POLICY

For the purposes of this research the discourse of Danish foreign policy in the Global South will be called the discourse of postcolonial activism. This choice was made in order to refer the discourse to two wider discourses – of postcolonialism and of Danish foreign policy activism. Indeed, the Global South has a twofold meaning for Denmark.

On the one hand, it is the prioritised part of the world where the kingdom takes a leading role in development and aid policy and diplomacy, mainly through the programmes of the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) under the auspices of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Established in 1962, DANIDA is one of the biggest modern players of Western bilateral and multilateral donor programmes in South America, Africa and Asia (Udenrigsministeriet, 2020).

On the other hand, the Global South as a storage of colonial brutal legacies and experiences poses challenges to a positive image of the West, and Denmark is no exception. Articulation of this colonial past, explicitly or implicitly, becomes an obligation for former colonisers, especially in their bilateral relations with former colonised. As it has been already mentioned, for Denmark its colonial past is especially problematic as it contradicts the created image of “a Good Samaritan” or “a trustworthy white man” that Denmark transmits in the Global South. Both openness as well as concealment of the colonial past brings ambiguous consequences for the kingdom.

While acknowledgement will be positively received by the USVI, Ghana and India as former Danish possessions, it will erode the overall credibility of the Nordic state, which used to be considered “exceptional” among the Western partners. Thus, we face antagonism as two identities of Denmark mutually exclude each other: the identity of a “good guy” (which makes Denmark “exceptional” among the Western actors in the Global South) and the identity of a former coloniser (which “trivialises” Denmark and makes it an “ordinary” Western actor). The shared experience of Danish colonialism makes the USVI, Ghana and India “exceptional” Others for Denmark, as they have the biggest influence on the Danish Self in the Global Self. Therefore, the evolution and operation of the discourse of postcolonial activism in these states and territories is of particular importance and interest, as it sheds light on the most active articulations within Danish foreign policy discourse.

Postcolonial activism can be used as an overarching term for Danish foreign policy discourse in the Global South, so for the purposes of the thesis different variations of this

discourse will be studied in case of the USVI, Ghana and India, i.e. “postcolonial activism in Ghana”, “postcolonial activism in India” and “postcolonial activism in the USVI” will be studied.

“Danish colonialism” is chosen as a nodal point of the postcolonial activism discourse, specified in each case: “Danish colonialism in Ghana”, “Danish colonialism in India” and “Danish colonialism in the USVI”. To begin with, it is a privileged sign around which other signs will be organised and situated. This part of history and modernity, as well as assumptions about it, will constitute the core of any articulation taking place in Danish foreign policy in the region. Then, “Danish colonialism” lies in the centre of social antagonism and identity formation for the Danish Self and exceptional ‘Others’. This sign is attributed with additional significance as it is believed to have a meaning (to be articulated), which creates a necessity to arrest it in or liberate from “the prison of the past”, to connect or disconnect it from “the future”. Finally, “Danish colonialism” is a highly contested sign (as it was evident from my overview of the debates concerning the issue), which makes it particularly open to re-interpretation. As any discourse is aimed at fixing the meaning, postcolonial activism is aimed at creating a foreign policy discourse in the interests of those establishing hegemony in the discursive field (Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet in our case), to dissolve the antagonism and articulate elements into moments.

For the analysis of articulation processes, seven most important signs are selected as they represent, to my mind, the most significant processes within each variation of the discourse. Five signs are the same for all variations, as they assure the inner coherence of postcolonial activism. These signs include “the future”, “the past”, “foreign policy”, “Danish self (Denmark)” and “exceptional other (Ghana, India or the USVI)”. The sixth sign can be seen as a discursive “base” of the discourse: in cases of Ghana and the USVI it is “slavery”, in case of India – “shared legacy and heritage”. The seventh sign is a discursive “superstructure”: in case of Ghana it is “aid and development”, in case of the USVI it is “apology”, in case of India it is “trade”.

Each of the following “country” sections will discuss in detail how the variations evolve and develop in every national context, whereas the concluding section will present the analysis of common trends and significant differences in the variations. Comparisons will be made, as well as broader conclusions about the relations between objectivity and the political in the field of discursivity in postcolonial activism.

Denmark and the US Virgin Islands: freeing from the nightmares of the past

The history of Danish-USVI relations dates back to 1672, when Saint Thomas, one of the Virgin Islands, was colonised by Danish West India Guinea Company (Olsen, 2017). In 1718 Saint Juan was annexed and in 1733 Saint Croix was purchased from France (ibid). These three islands constituted the Danish West Indies till 1917, when they were sold to the USA. 31st March is an official holiday in the USVI and is called Transfer Day: on 31st March 1917 the islands were officially transferred from Denmark to the USA (ibid). The keystone of the Danish West Indies economy was slave labour used on sugar plantations, slaves were mostly brought from the Danish Gold Coast (ibid). Slavery was officially abolished in 1848, but retaining miserable labour conditions and indignity of former slaves led to many riots, the so-called 1878 Fireburn labour riot being the biggest one in the Caribbean region (ibid). Peter von Scholten, Governor-General of the islands (1827-1848), is the central and most controversial character of Danish colonialism in the USVI, his portrayals vary from a pioneer of the abolishment movement to the symbol of cruelty and brutality of Danish colonisers towards the non-white population (Olsen, 2017).

As it has been discussed earlier, apology for crimes of the colonial times has become one of the central issues in the Danish-USVI relations. Moreover, Danish colonialism in the USVI is, probably, the most articulated colonial experience of the kingdom both in Denmark proper and in the USVI as its former colony. It is no surprise then that among other Danish colonialisms in the Global South the USVI one has become the central part of postcolonial activism of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet.

The “main sources” of the analysis of this variation of postcolonial activism are Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen's address on Transfer Day, St. Croix, 31st March 2017 (Rasmussen, 2017a), Prime Minister's New Year address (Rasmussen, 2017b), live tour around Marienborg on Facebook (Rasmussen, 2017c) and the press release on the establishment of the Danish scholarship for students of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI, 2017). The address was made by Rasmussen in English during the official ceremony commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the sale of the Danish West Indies to the USA. The ceremony took place in Christiansted on St. Croix Island on 31st March 2017. Prime Minister's New Year address is an annual tradition since 1940; in 2017 it was for the first time broadcasted live (Statsministeriet, 2021). Live tour around Marienborg on Facebook was made by Prime Minister himself on 30th January 2017.

“Complimentary” texts include, a commentary by Nikolaj Villumsen, Danish MP (Villumsen, 2017), an opinion article from *Kunstkrønikk* magazine (Danbolt and Wilson, 2018)

and news articles from *The Virgin Islands Daily News* (Blackburn, 2017) and *The Virgin Islands Consortium* (Staff Consortium, 2020).

The articulation of elements into moments around the nodal point can be presented as in Figure 1. Danish colonialism in the USVI has a twofold nature. On the one hand, it is “our common past” saved from time in city names, houses and buildings, “that still bear the marks of Danish presence” (Rasmussen, 2017a). This “common past” is a source of “a special bond of friendship” between two nations and of “common destiny that time cannot erase” (Rasmussen, 2017a). On the other hand, it is a source of disagreement as it is susceptible to different interpretations: “although we share a common past – we have not always shared the same story about that past” (Rasmussen, 2017a). Therefore, Danish colonialism in the USVI is seen as problematic and complex, so it is seen pivotal to reach agreement about it and move on. Thus, “freeing [...] from the nightmares of the past” (Rasmussen, 2017a) or from “untrue” stories is seen as the main goal of the relations.

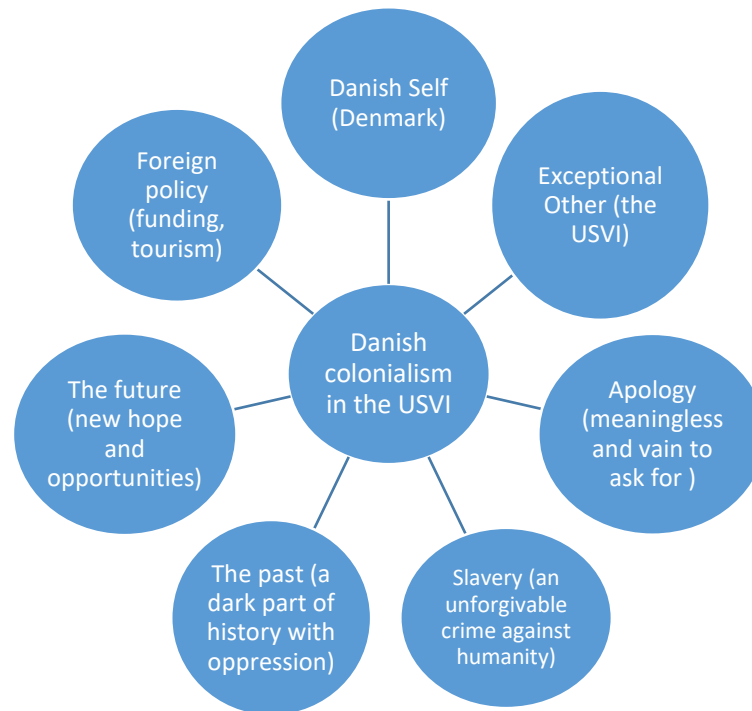


Figure 1. Articulation of signs within postcolonial activism in the USVI

The main reason for the disagreement is seen in different attitudes to slavery as a central feature of Danish colonialism. Highly influenced by the discourse of neoliberalism, postcolonial activism constructs freedom of a human being as the main value and, thus, the process of gaining liberty or of being set free (literally emancipation) is seen as the central subject-matter of history of humankind as a whole and of lives of each and every individual. Thus, open acceptance or silencing of stories about this fight is constructed as measurements of “truth” and “lie” about the past. “Slavery” is, to the contrary, defined as an unforgivable crime against humanity and

freedom. Unacceptability of “slavery” is positioned both in the historical context (i.e. it was a crime when it was used) and in the modern context (i.e. nowadays). Nevertheless, “slavery” is still strongly connected with “the past”, where it should be “arrested” and “left in peace”. “Only by freeing ourselves from the nightmares of the past can we make our dreams of the future come true”, the Prime Ministers says in his address (Rasmussen, 2017a), by which he suggests placing the focus on the future and going on with further cooperation.

The metaphor of moving or going on brings us to the topic of temporal othering, key for the discourse. The constructed distinction between “the past” and “the future” is one of the central in the address. Since occurrence or absence of suppression are placed as a criterion to distinguish between different periods of time and as a sign of progress, the period where exploitation and inequality existed is marked as “past”, a nightmare “we” have to free ourselves from for a brighter future. “The future” with secured “liberty, equality and dignity” is seen as a dream, a new tomorrow with hope and unlimited opportunities. Moreover, while “the past” cannot be changed and should be accepted as it is, the “future” is not to be passively awaited, it is to be actively created (see “We cannot undo the past. What we can do is to improve the future” (Rasmussen, 2017a)). The distinction between “the past” and “the future” is constituted by use of logics of equivalence. The chain of equivalence connected with “the past” is “oppression”, “suppression”, “exploitation”, “appalling conditions”, “slavery”, “a nightmare”; “the past” is generally about the darkness, it is a dark time. The chain of equivalence connected with “the future” is “a dream”, “opportunities” and “further development”; “the future” is generally about the light, it is a bright time.

It is noteworthy that in the timeline constructed in the address “the present” exists and does not exist at the same time. “Today” is about sharing “common historic bonds”, “the same view of history” and “the same heroes”; it does not exist without “the past” and exists only as a basis for “the future”. Thus, “the present” is the end of “the past” and the beginning of the “future”, it is not a self-standing period.

Othering of time is central in how groups and their identities are constructed in the address. The main group is “We”; however, its identity is not fixed in the address and is articulated at least two times. In the beginning, “we” refers to Danes (the Prime Minister and his fellow countrymen), whereas there is the Other – “you” – inhabitants of the USVI. Nevertheless, “We” is then re-articulated to refer to “Danes and people of the USVI” and identity of this group is formed not by othering another group, but rather by othering time, “the past”. The uniting factor for the group is the same history and the same “true story” of it. As freedom is seen as a universal value and history is thus constructed as a continuous fight for that, not as a collection of particular events and facts, both Denmark and the USVI do share “the same history”. There is

also an attempt to include “the true heroes” of the past, “the men and women who stood up to the injustice” (Rasmussen, 2017a) into “We”, as these “brave souls” belong to the modernity, not to the “past”. While “We” are personified by mentioning particular names (General Buddhoe, Queen Mary, Queen Agnes, Queen Mathilda, David Hamilton Jackson, “young people in the Virgin Islands”, “the people of Denmark and the people of the Virgin Islands”), the Other is gradually depersonalised (Rasmussen, 2017a).

“The true heroes of the past” fought and rebelled not against the Danish rule, Denmark, the Danish colonial authorities or simply Danes, but against more abstract “appalling living conditions, healthcare, education and wages”, imprisonment, suppression and exploitation (Rasmussen, 2017a). Reference to “exploitation of men, women and children that took place in these islands under Danish flag” as “a dark and disgraceful part of Danish history” (Rasmussen, 2017a) only indirectly connects Danes and cruelties of the colonial times and disperses the responsibility among unspecified ones. This partial self-excuse was even more explicitly articulated in Prime Minister Rasmussen’s New Year Address on 1st January 2017, where he stated, “Det er ikke en stolt del af Danmarkshistorien. Det er skamfuldt. Og det er heldigvis fortid. I nutiden kæmper danskere mod undertrykkelse. For frihed. Og det kan vi være stolte af.” [“It [*slave trade*] is not a part of Danish history to be proud of. It is disgraceful. And it is, fortunately, in the past. Today Danes fight against oppression. For freedom. We can be proud of it”] (Rasmussen, 2017b). Not only does Rasmussen claim that “*the present is not the past*” and that “*the past is over*”, but also that Danes have atoned for their guilt. In the address on Transfer Day it is articulated more vicariously, but the same meanings are fixated in both cases.

In this regard, the matter of “colonial guilt” and “apology” should be brought in. Memory politics or postcolonial politics of guilt are ones where the struggle to invest signs with meaning is one of the strongest. It is then unsurprising that much debate on the address was devoted to the question whether the Prime Minister gave an official apology for Denmark’s engagement in slave trade and labour as well as colonisation. The debate should be explained by the fact that different discourses invest “guilt” and “apology” with different meanings. For some people, acknowledgement and acceptance of “guilt” is enough for seeing it as an apology, for others this acknowledgement is only a first step and an articulated apology should follow.

The first group can be exemplified with various political activists and journalists from the USVI (see Blackburn, 2017 and Staff Consortium, 2020), the second group is mostly represented by different Danish politicians and journalists (see Danbolt and Wilson, 2018) or by some USVI activists, like Shelley Moorhead, a member of the Centennial Commission (see Blackburn, 2017). None of the views are supported in this thesis. Concerning the acknowledgement interpretation, it should be analysed how this acceptance is constructed, to see that in the reality

constituted in the text an “apology” is neither possible nor necessary. The following passage is central for the analysis, “There is no justification for slavery. It is unforgivable. Unforgivable” (Rasmussen, 2017a).

On the one hand, “unforgivable” is invested with a meaning of “having no justification” and “detesting” as well as “appalling”. On the other hand, the literal meaning of the word being “impossible to be forgiven or excused” is proceeded with the supposition that it is meaningless and vain to ask for an excuse. “The past” is thus to be freed of and left in peace, whereas the focus is to be put on the future. As for the demand of a formal apology, general trends of postcolonial critique should be mentioned. Acknowledgement or awareness of persisting Eurocentrism is indeed a first step of critical understanding of the postcolonial mode of existence, but the next step is not an apology for it, but a reconstruction of all discursive practices, an abolishment of the “Orient-Occident” dichotomy and a start of a dialogue on equal terms.

There is a clear reference to the field of discursivity and a struggle between mainly two discourses, which will be called a dominant and alternative discourse. A dominant discourse of “innocent colonialism” or a “romantic discourse” is portrayed to be about a colonial era with “peaceful coexistence” of Denmark and “exotic islands”, where emancipation and freedom (which are still central in both discourses) were brought by Danish King Christian VII, a “pioneer of humanity”, as early as the end of the 18th century (Rasmussen, 2017a). An alternative discourse or the “true story” is about a continuing oppression despite the ban of slavery on paper, about the fight of “true heroes” – “the men and women of the Virgin Islands who defied suppression” – for freedom (Rasmussen, 2017a).

A challenge posed by the alternative discourse is seen as rightful. Therefore, several hegemonic interventions are made throughout the address to establish “the alternative discourse” as the new objectivity, the only “true story” about the past. The alternative discourse is described as “true” and “right” several times, the dominant discourse is condemned and defied. These hegemonic interventions are also aimed at dissolving a social antagonism between two identities of Danes, which seek to eliminate each other. The identity of brutal and oppressive colonisers is incompatible with the identity of modern champions of democracy, fighters for freedom and good Samaritans. The acceptance of the former identity would mean acknowledgement of hypocrisy in the image of a “good guy” and impossibility of continuing with it. The acceptance of the latter identity would mean a pledge to being consistent and always being “a pioneer of humanity”, which makes a brutal colonial past impossible.

This constructed “consistency” is not stable, which is proved by alternative discourses (not in the sense constructed as such within the address, but with different articulation of

elements). Texts within these discourses criticise Rasmussen and “the official discourse” for incompleteness or inconsistency. For example, Villumsen (2017) from the leftist *Red-Green Alliance* asks for an official apology. Danbolt & Wilson (2018) interpret the monument *I Am Queen Mary* as a stronger and fairer challenge to the “the narrative of ‘innocent colonialism’” than “the sugar-coated soundbites offered by the Danish Prime Minister”. However, both texts do not challenge the privileged position of “freedom” or an emancipative and progressionist view of history. Postcolonial critique can also be seen as an alternative discourse, which, to the contrary, questions the central assumptions of the postcolonial activism discourse presented in the address.

An attempt of a hegemonic intervention is made in order to create a third identity of “We” uniting Danes and people of the USVI, which is based on “the common history”. Inside of “We” the incompatible factors are split between Denmark and the USVI. “The past” with stances of injustices is attributed to the Islands (see “We must acknowledge that what happened in the past has affected where the islands [no *and Denmark* following] are today” (Rasmussen, 2017a). “The future” with new hope and opportunities (for example, giving scholarships to “young people in the Virgin Islands”) is left to Denmark. “Sharing” here is constructed not only as “possessing jointly”, but also as “splitting into portions and giving to one another”.

The possibility of such a merge of identities or rather incorporation of the USVI identity (“you” in the beginning of the address) into the “We” identity is explained by its initial hybridity and ambivalence, to use Bhabha’s terms (Bhabha, 1994). The very existence between own and the coloniser’s cultural identities makes the hybrid unstable and open to re-formation. In addition, the specificity of the USVI identity is that it is situated between its own cultural identity and between two colonisers’ identities – those of Denmark and the USA. Nevertheless, in the address the US influence is mostly eliminated. Apart from the statement that “a hundred years ago – the Stars and Stripes of America replaced the Danish Dannebrog as the official flag for the Virgin Islands”, there is no other reference to the USA. Instead, much focus is put on immaterial bonds between Denmark and the USVI (common history, heroes, the past, the present as discussed above) as well as material elements of “Danishness” in the USVI – city names, colonial style architecture and thousands of Danish tourists to the islands. It should not be interpreted, however, that one nation is created. The “We” identity is about dealing with the “shared” existence, in all other cases there are still Denmark and the US Virgin Islands. This outer formation of the identity of the former colonised by a former coloniser is another example of speaking for the subaltern and exercising dramatic inequalities of power.

Foreign policy within this variation should be studied from two points of view. The first one is Danish foreign policy towards the USVI proper. One core sphere is cooperation in

tourism, characterised by unidirectionality. The Prime Minister only talks about “thousands of my fellow countrymen [*Danes*] visit your beautiful island [*St. Croix*] every year” (Rasmussen, 2017a). As Jensen (2015, p.447) writes, “10,000 Danes or more have annually descended on the islands to enjoy the bonanza of a tropical climate and colonial nostalgia”. The USVI is marketed as an exotic holiday paradise with a Danish fleur, imitating the historiographical and literary traditions of depicting the West Indies, which actually restates the colonial discourse. The USVI is exoticised and indigenised compared to white Nordic Denmark. To the contrary, nothing is said about welcoming the USVI tourists or visitors in the kingdom, even though traces of Danish colonialism in the USVI can be found in Copenhagen, to say nothing of I Am Queen Mary monument. In his live tour around Marienborg, the official residence of Danish prime ministers, Rasmussen devoted quite some time to the connection of the building to Danish colonialism: Marienborg was owned by many generations of families who earned their fortunes in slave trade in the West Indies (Rasmussen, 2017c). Exploitation of the USVI as a tourist magnet and earning fortunes on that proves that “freeing from the past” is not possible, as colonialism and colonial inequalities of power are still present in the minds, as well as material relations.

Another part of Danish foreign policy towards the USVI is funding of different projects, cultural, humanitarian and educational ones. One of the biggest announcements during Rasmussen’s visit to the USVI in 2017 was establishment of the Danish government’s scholarship programme for students of the University of the Virgin Islands (the UVI) (UVI, 2017). Both in his address as well as a small speech at the university Rasmussen stressed that investments in youngsters was equal to investments in the bright future, which both Denmark and the USVI are striving for. We can see how actual bilateral relations are substituted by aid and development assistance, which a solid tradition of Danish foreign policy activism in the Global South. The image of the UVI students as those in need of being helped by grants of a developed Western country follows the Orientalist project, even though the USVI are officially a territory of a core Western country – the USA. This ideological base of the scholarships explains why they should be seen as a part of aid and development, which is constructed in the same logic of “White men’s burden”. Moreover, these scholarships are awarded according to Danish visions of science and education and in spheres defined as priorities by Denmark, not by the UVI or the USVI government. Other projects included funding of restoration initiatives, as well as assistance to voluntary and grassroots organisations (UVI, 2017). Much attention is also drawn to joint projects of national archives, museums and historical societies in order to preserve “the common past”, where Denmark is seen to possess advanced knowledge and experience, which the USVI are in need for (Rasmussen, 2017a).

Another interesting point of view from which postcolonial activism in the USVI should be seen is its portrayal as a starting point or inspiration for Danish foreign policy activism in general. In his New Year address Rasmussen contrasts Danish colonialism and modern active peace-keeping policy (Rasmussen, 2017b). The Global South is chosen as the scene of Danish activist policies in both cases: while in the past it was unforgivable colonialism (which is over!), today there are peace-keeping missions in Iraq and Syria with examples of bravery and courage of Danish soldiers (Rasmussen, 2017b). “Tillid. Respekt. Samarbejde. Det er noget meget dansk (Confidence. Respect. Cooperation. These are something very Danish [*my translation from Danish*]), as Rasmussen pathetically says about Danish military activities all around the world. The “undebatable” value of Danish foreign policy activism seems to atone for the guilt of the past. Moreover, it is manifested that Denmark will not leave the region in any case, no matter how it entered it four hundred years ago.

It is evident that more or less the same ideas are repeated many times in the “main” texts. It should be interpreted as a gradual objectivation, sedimentation and depoliticisation of the particular image of reality created in the activism discourse. Alternative discourses, on the other hand, contribute to a temporal character of closure of identities and of fixations of meanings in the “official” discourse. Postcolonial activism in the USVI admits the central role of colonialism and its brutal practices of slavery for the past, but at the same time defines it as passed away history, which should not impede the cooperation in the present and future. This cooperation, however, is of a unidirectional flow, since Denmark crowns itself as a donor and helper of the USVI (mostly in the form of scholarships, funding and providing advanced assistance to the USVI projects), which are still highly influenced by their past and in need of assistance that the Nordic kingdom once gave to the islands. Even though there is no direct Orientalisation of the USVI in the presented texts, the course of action towards them prove the use of colonial logics of power inequality.

Denmark and Ghana: colonialism overshadowed by modern aid cooperation

The history of the Danish Gold Coast began in 1659 when Danish fort Frederiksborg was established under the treaty with the African state Fetu (Hernæs, 2017). In 1661 fort Christiansborg was built under the treaty with Accra (ibid). During the heydays of Danish expansion in the 1780s there were six forts, but after the Napoleonic Wars only Frederiksborg and Christiansborg remained. Forts traded with African states; goods included gold, palm oil and slaves. By the beginning of the 18th century Danish-Norwegian forts in West Africa were among biggest and most influential centres of transatlantic slave trade (ibid). There were several

attempts to establish plantations, trading harbours and other economic activities, but all of them failed. Due to prohibition of slave trade at the beginning of the 19th century as well as fierce competition with Great Britain and the British Gold Coast, an economic decline began in the Danish Gold Coast, which eventually led to its sale to the UK in 1850 (ibid).

Despite the fact that the British colonialism ended up to be the most influential for modern Ghana (created on the territories of the Gold Coast), the scope and scale of Danish-Norwegian slave trade makes Danish colonialism quite important as well. Former Christiansborg is situated in modern-day Accra, the capital of Ghana, and for a long time used to be the residence of the President of Ghana (Hernæs, 2017). Ghana is also one of the oldest recipients of Danish aid and considered to be one of the most important partners of Denmark in West Africa, so postcolonial activism in Ghana is of great interest.

The “main” texts for analysis are the speech by Queen Margrethe II on the occasion of the state banquet during her official visit to Ghana on 23rd November 2017 (Kongehuset, 2017a), Queen’s speech at the business conference in Accra on 23rd November 2017 (Kongehuset, 2017b), as well as comments and remarks made by the Queen (Buch, 2017) and Anders Samuelsen (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017b) during the official visit. The “complementary” texts are *Denmark-Ghana Partnership Policy 2014-2018* strategy (Udenrigsministeriet, 2014), *Det dansk-ghanesiske partnerskab i forandring: Fra bistand til handel (Denmark-Ghana Partnership in Transition: From Aid to Trade)* report (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017c), opinion articles on *This is Africa* portal (Kiunguyu, 2017) and on Danish TV2 portal (Vestergaard, 2017).

The articulation of elements into moments around the nodal point can be presented as in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Articulation of signs within postcolonial activism in Ghana

Danish colonialism in Ghana is defined in two ways: as “common past” with “shared cultural heritage” (Kongehuset, 2017a) and as “shameful and unforgivable part of Danish history” (Kiunguyu, 2017). The first variation of Danish colonialism is a part “of past as well as contemporary history” (Kongehuset, 2017a). Osu Castle, formerly known as Christiansborg Castle, is constructed as a symbol of continuity in the Danish-Ghanaian relations: headquarters for Danish Governors of the 18th – 19th centuries turned into the seat of the Presidents of Ghana. The connotations with slave trade are omitted, as well as in case of Frederiksgave, which from a plantation with enslaved workers turned into merely “another testimony of our common past” (Kongehuset, 2017a). The second variation is situated in “a more distant shared history” (Kiunguyu, 2017) and only mentioned in remarks or comments, not full-scale speeches. The Queen also said to TV2 journalists that “det var dengang, og det er ikke sådan mere” (“it used to be so, but it is not like that anymore”) (Buch, 2017). Thus, “dark side” of Danish colonialism is locked in the past and is believed to have to stay this way. It represents the othering of time, which is central to postcolonial creation of history. Moreover, the colonizer tries to legitimise its privilege in Memmi’s (1965) terms.

Two timelines of Danish-Ghanaian relations are created in the discourse. The first one dates back to 1961, when “Denmark opened its first Embassy in Ghana” (Kongehuset, 2017a). From this date history of aid and development cooperation is counted, as well as Danish monitoring of “the progress that your [*Ghanaian*] nation has achieved” (ibid). The focus is set on gaining independence from the UK as the central moment of Ghanaian history. Gradual strengthening and growing prosperity of the republic is explained by a pivotal role Denmark has

played in the development of Ghana, “Denmark is proud [...] of having contributed to the foundation on which you stand today” (Kongehuset, 2017a). Modern Danish businesses are depicted as “an important pool of know-how as well as innovative solutions to the challenges that Ghana is facing today and in the years to come” (Kongehuset, 2017b). Danes are, therefore, seen as coming up with ideas and projects and Ghanaians as performers of the work. The second timeline “dates back far longer” (Kongehuset, 2017a) and is “more distant” (Kiunguyu, 2017). Colonialism and slave trade are placed far-far away from today and obsolete for contemporary relations. As Jensen (2015, p.446) notices, “there is a development aid discourse whose gaze is fixed on the present and future, as if colonialism has no role to play in explaining Ghana’s historical under-development”. To the contrary, this colonial past perfectly explains why “Ghana was the first country to enter the recipient list of overseas Danish development aid” (Jensen, 2015, p.446). As for “the future”, its picture concerns only “better Ghana” and Danish contribution to it. “Ghana of the future” is a sustainably developing democracy resilient to challenges; economic and social development is based on innovation, entrepreneurship and local resources. Danish wish to see “better Ghana” is indeed the “desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is *almost the same, but not quite*” (Bhabha, 1994, p.122). Therefore, the coloniser forces the colonised to apply mimicry and reshape its identity. Denmark is one of the most important commercial partners, as well as a political ally and friend of Ghana (i.e. a role model for the ‘Other’). In “the future” aid and development are completely replaced by trade, equal dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation that utilises shared resources. Therefore, “the future” is bright and full of hope, and there is no place for the “dark” past in it. Only the best from “the past” and “the present” are called upon in order to reach the desired results of bilateral relations.

“Slavery” is considered to be only the part of the distant past. It is accepted as a part of Danish presence in the Gold Coast colony by both the Queen and Minister for Foreign Affairs, but in a very special manner. While admitting “slave trade” as a fact, the Queen also adds that “det gjorde de fleste af de europæiske nationer” (“it was done by most European nations”) (Buch, 2017). The Danish experience is trivialised and placed in broader contexts of European colonialism. Moreover, the Queen warns from looking on the history with “modern glasses”, as it gives a skewed picture of the past (Buch, 2017). If it was normal at that time to use slave labour to run colonial empires, we should not judge it from contemporary points of view, i.e. “the present is not the past”. Samuelsen’s remark that “[n]othing can justify the exploitation of men, women and children in which Denmark took part” was positively taken by many as an official apology of the Danish government for brutality and inhumanity of slave trade and colonialism. Nevertheless, it can be seen that Minister for Foreign Affairs used the same wording

as Prime Minister Rasmussen in the USVI. There is no justification for slave trade, so it is meaningless to apologise for that. Kylie Kiunguyu (2017) from *This is Africa* was the first to interpret Samuelsen's words as an official apology, and it later became a mainstream version of what has happened. The Danish press was more interested whether the Queen as an apolitical figure of official Denmark would apologise for slavery (Vestergaard, 2017).

The borderline between 'We' and 'Other' is quite clear in all speeches and statements. Denmark is portrayed as a mature mentor of under-developed Ghana. A necessity of approval is attributed to Ghana, and Denmark generously grants it, "In Denmark we have been especially pleased to follow last year's free and fair elections" (Kongehuset, 2017a) or "Ghana is calling for commercial collaboration, and Danish companies are responding" (it is not stated that Denmark is interested in enhanced cooperation with Ghana as well; everything is presented as if only Ghana is need for advanced and enlightened Denmark with its trade and business capacities) (Kongehuset, 2017b). Advancement of Ghana is said to be the aim of longstanding cooperation, whereas Danish interests are not mentioned or omitted in the discussions. As it was noticed before, cooperation of Danish and Ghanaian businesses is structured using the same model: an idea or know-how from Denmark and realisation of this idea from Ghana (see examples of Fan Milk or Mærsk provided in the Queen's speech (Kongehuset, 2017b)). Additionally, the identity of 'Other' (Ghana) is created with such a chain of equivalence as "future opportunities", "potential", "existing challenges", "development" and "progress", which depicts Ghana as only starting its journey to civilisation or still taking the path that Denmark has already taken a long time ago. The relations can also be described as those of a teacher and a pupil: for good results ("Ghana has recently graduated to the group of lower middle-income countries") and diligence of the pupil ("unambiguous support of the Ghanaian people to democracy") is praised and awarded by the teacher ("Danish development cooperation is gradually being phased out and replaced by cooperation concentrating on trade and investments") (Kongehuset, 2017a). Thus, we face a clear "Orient" – "Occident" dichotomy, even though the supremacy of the "Occident" is claimed in the economic and political, not cultural spheres. The "Orient" and the "Occident" might have common interests ("a broad range of issues to which our two nations attach great importance"), but the leading role still belongs to the Occident as more mature and educated (Kongehuset, 2017a).

As it has already become evident, aid and development occupies a tremendous place in Danish-Ghanaian relations. As Anders Samuelsen noticed, "[s]iden Ghanas uafhængighed i 1957 har der kontinuerligt været tætte og positive relationer mellem Ghana og Danmark, som tidligere primært var centreret om et omfattende udviklingssamarbejde" ("[s]ince Ghana gained independence in 1957, there have been continuous close and positive relations between Ghana

and Denmark, which were previously primarily centered on comprehensive development cooperation”) (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017b). Simultaneously, a gradual shift is traced in postcolonial activism in Ghana, which is summarised by the slogan “from aid to trade”. In order to legitimise it, there are even attempts to rethink the history of relations and depict them as more encompassing, “However, there has always been more to our partnership than development cooperation” (Kongehuset, 2017b). Both the Queen and Minister for Foreign Affairs stress that it is high time Ghana and Denmark moved from aid and development cooperation to a commercial and political dialogue. It is explained by the fact that Ghana has “qualified” for such a transition meeting the criteria set by Denmark: “graduation to the group of lower middle-income countries”, political stability, democratisation and sustainable development.

Det dansk-ghanesiske partnerskab i forandring: Fra bistand til handel (Denmark-Ghana Partnership in Transition: From Aid to Trade) report (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017c) presents various “personal examples” from the private sector that also prove the plausibility of such a transition. The central role is attributed to DANIDA, which continues to be the main representative of Denmark in Ghana. Tove Degnbol, the then Ambassador of Denmark to Ghana, finishes her foreword with a very interesting sentence, “Ghanesere er somme tider i tvivl, når vi siger, at vi er fra Danmark, eller at vi er danskere, men når vi siger Danida, så åbner det døre” (“Ghanaians are sometimes in doubt when we say that we are from Denmark or that we are Danes, but when we say DANIDA, it opens doors”) (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017c). This phrase says more about the Danish-Ghanaian relations than anything else. Indeed, aid and development has more or less overshadowed Danish colonialism as if Denmark had atoned for its guilt by its economic assistance to Ghana. Thus, postcolonial activism in Ghana is aimed at strengthening this substitution in minds of both Danes and Ghana with the help of hegemonic interventions. Danish colonialism in Ghana is not erased, but neutralized (reduced to common cultural heritage) and detached from the “present” and “the future”, where aid, development and gradual transition to mutually beneficial cooperation are put forward.

Denmark-Ghana Partnership Policy 2014-2018 is framed within the same logics of “from aid to trade”. It outlines a new strategic partnership, which meets the requirements of “Ghana in transition” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2014). It is interesting, however, that apart from quite traditional strategic objectives – (1) “strengthened political cooperation based on shared values”; (2) “promotion of inclusive and green growth”; (3) “economic diplomacy and increased commercial cooperation” – the fourth objective is “consolidation of results in development programmes” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2014). Both the Queen and Minister for Foreign Affairs said in their speeches that development cooperation “is gradually being phased out and replaced by cooperation concentrating on trade and investments” (Kongehuset, 2017a) or “vil være ophørt”

(“will be phased out”) (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017b). Thus, aid and development is replaced by foreign policy, and this transition is seen as promotion due to “positive changes”. Foreign policy and cooperation are constructed as “mutually beneficial cooperation” and as an equal dialogue, which makes previously existing “donor-recipient” relations impossible. Nevertheless, it has been already discussed beforehand that no equality is traced and “donor-recipient” relations are replaced by “pupil-teacher” relations.

The enormous contribution of Denmark to prosperity and gradual progress of modern Ghana is especially stressed in both *Partnership Policy* and *Fra bistand til handel* report. As Tove Degnbol states, “vi har bidraget til at styrke den private sektor generelt, ikke mindst ved at støtte et øget pres for reformer” (“we [Danes] have contributed to strengthening of the private sector [of Ghana] in general, not least through supporting an increasing pressure for reforms”) (Udenrigsministeriet, 2014). Denmark is not only portrayed as a mentor, but also as an active participant of the process. Positive influence of Denmark is admitted not only generally, but in specific areas as well, which re-states Denmark’s leadership in areas of specialisation. In Anders Samuelsen’s words, Danish-Ghanaian relations take place in “sektorer, hvor Danmark har særlige styrkepositioner, og hvor der har vist sig stor ghanesisk efterspørgsel efter danske kompetencer” (“sectors, in which Denmark has special strengths and in which there has been strong Ghanaian demand for Danish competencies”) (Udenrigsministeriet, 2017b). The second part is particularly important for legitimacy of this assistance – there was Ghanaian demand that Denmark has responded to, nothing was “imposed” on Ghana.

Aid and development should be seen as The Third Space in Bhabha’s (1994) terms, where Denmark (the coloniser) wants Ghana (the colonised) to rethink its identity and make it more hybrid, i.e. resembling the identity of the Self. The aim of “better” Ghana is believed to become “*almost the same, but not quite*” as Denmark. Therefore, enhanced commercial and political cooperation is connected with mimicry as the main strategy of Ghana to improve its position. While previously the right to take after the coloniser was automatically granted to his colonies, nowadays the ‘Other’ has to qualify for that – to reach a certain level of development as in case of Ghana.

Postcolonial activism in Ghana is coherent, sedimented and depoliticised; no alternative discourses that the dominant one seeks to destroy are found. Foreign policy is substituted by aid and development cooperation, which is, however, due to be phased out and replaced by commercial and political cooperation. Danish colonialism is either turned into “shared cultural heritage” or absent from the discussion, if it is connected with its “dark” side – slave trade.

Denmark and India: forgotten Danish remnants of the British Empire

Despite the fact that Danish colonial experience actually started in India, it is considered the most forgotten one in Danish historiography (Brimnes, 2017). Danish colonisation of India started in 1620 during the expedition of Admiral Ove Gjedde when Danes were granted the village of Tranquebar in Southern India by the Telugu rulers (ibid). Denmark tried to establish other settlements, trading posts and factories in India. In 1755 under the treaty with Bengalese ruler Serampore factory was established in order to secure business and trade in Bengal (ibid). In 1756 the Nicobar Islands were declared the property of Denmark-Norway under the name of the Frederick's Islands (ibid). The second half of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries were the Golden Age of Danish India, the settlements prospered and became important players in Indian economy and politics. After the Napoleonic Wars, however, the Danish possessions went into decline and could not stand against the UK. The remaining settlements were gradually sold to Great Britain: Serampore in 1839, Tranquebar and most settlements in continental India in 1845, the Nicobar Islands in 1868 (Brimnes, 2017).

It would be no exaggeration to say that Danish colonialism in India has dissolved in the British colonialism in India. Much of postcolonial studies started in India, and all of them were about the influence of the British presence on India. Compared even with similarly small Portuguese and Dutch Indias, Danish India is almost invisible. This invisibility of Danish colonialism in India has significant consequences for postcolonial activism in India, which will be further examined.

The “main” sources of analysis are comments and remarks made by Anders Samuelsen during his visits to India in 2017 (Denmark in India, 2017a) and 2018 (Denmark in India, 2018; The Trade Council, 2018) and Lars Løkke Rasmussen’s speech at the inauguration of the Danish Cultural Institute in India (Danish Cultural Institute, 2019). “Complimentary” texts include Joint Press Release from Joint Commission Meeting between India and Denmark (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018b), official announcements of the King Frederik VI Scholarship for Students of Serampore College (later renamed Serampore Scholarship) (Denmark in India, 2017b; Denmark in India, 2019) and official documents of the Serampore Initiative (National Museum, 2020).

The articulation of elements into moments around the nodal point can be presented as in Figure 3.

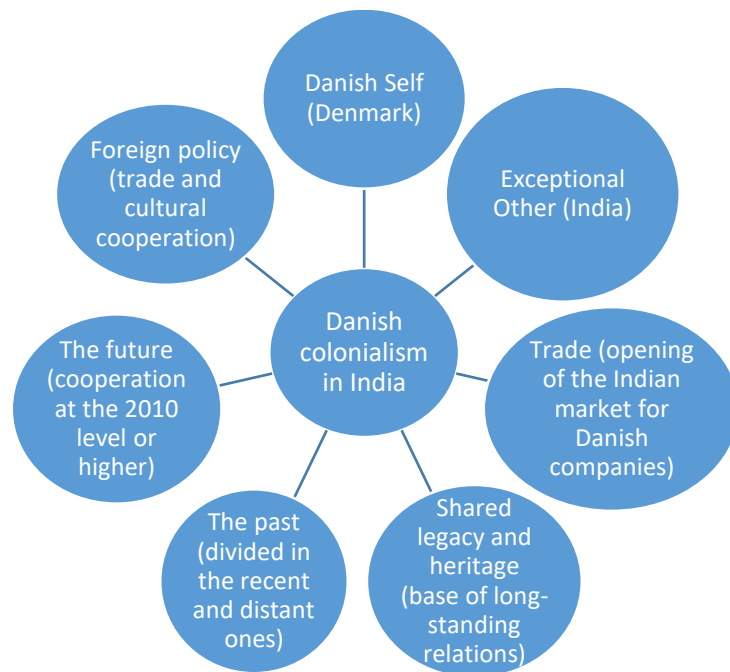


Figure 3. Articulation of signs within postcolonial activism in India

Danish colonialism in India is defined only in terms of “shared cultural heritage” and “common past”. Paradoxically, the Danish colonial period is used in order to present Danish-Indian relations as longstanding, grounded in distant past and continuous. Lars Løkke Rasmussen said in his speech that Danish-Indian relations “går 400 år tilbage” (“date 400 years back”) (Danish Cultural Institute, 2019), i.e. 1620, the year when Tranquebar was established, is picked as a starting point. This “extension” of bilateral relations is aimed at presenting cooperation as sustained due to the discord between Copenhagen and New Delhi due to the 2012 crisis around Purulia arms drop case: “It is no secret that the relationship has been cooler in recent years”, as Samuelsen put it (Denmark in India, 2017a). In December 1995 unauthorised sophisticated arms and ammunition were dropped from an aircraft in Purulia, West Bengal, for use in terror acts, according to the official interpretation (HT Correspondent, 2012). The alleged organiser, Kim Davy, real name Niels Holck, a Danish citizen, was traced by Danish authorities in 2007 and was due to be extradited to India, but Davy challenged the extradition in the city court of Copenhagen (ibid). Extradition was rejected by the court and by the High Court, where Danish authorities tried to challenge the verdict; unexpectedly, Denmark refused to file an appeal in the Supreme Court and declined the extradition (ibid). To signal its great displeasure, in 2012 India scaled down all diplomatic ties with Copenhagen and instructed all its senior officials not to meet or entertain any Danish diplomat (ibid). This downfall of relations is substantial judging by modern diplomatic practices, but it is almost invisible in four centuries of interactions. Moreover, an endless historical timeline includes pre-colonial, colonial and independence periods of Indian history, which is quite unconventional postcolonial historiographies of the

colonised and coloniser. As it was discussed by Memmi (1965), the colonised is often deprived of history and “divorced from reality”. In this case, to the contrary, we see that both Denmark and India are entitled to have history, which includes both “common” and “separate” periods. Nevertheless, history becomes an instrument of the coloniser to legitimise its privilege and profit. Once again, Danish colonialism is to dissipate in the ocean of history, where British-Indian relations are in the limelight of inquiries and consideration.

“The past” is subdivided into “the recent years” and “four hundred years” of history, as was mentioned before. The task for “the future” is to overcome coolness of “the recent years”, whereas “four hundred years” of history are not taken into consideration when talking about the prospects of cooperation. 2010 is taken as the latest benchmark date, since it used to be the year of the last visit by Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs to India and the year when the Indo-Danish Joint Commission was launched (Denmark in India, 2018). The necessity for enhancement of bilateral relations is explained in two ways. On the one hand, the importance of India as an economic and political power is admitted along with inadequate level of Danish exports to India, “Indien er næste år verdens femtestørste økonomi, men under en halv procent af dansk eksport går til Indien” (“India will be next year’s fifth biggest economy, but less than 0.5% of Danish exports go to India”) (The Trade Council, 2018). On the other hand, the importance of Denmark is highlighted, Samuelsen noticed, “We are currently seeing demand from India in areas of Danish expertise” (Denmark in India, 2017a). These areas include “research, water, sustainable energy, city planning and food” (Denmark in India, 2017a), and, interestingly enough, agreed aspects of cooperation are renewable energy, agriculture and food, urban development as well as science and education as if the cooperation is reduced to Denmark’s areas of specialisation. Moreover, a very interesting wording is used in the press release of the Ministry, “Mr. Samuelsen [...] also *found time to meet with [my italics]* the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Modi” because actually “he was in India to attend the Global Entrepreneurship Summit” (Denmark in India, 2017a). Even though it is not enough data to make solid conclusions, but it seems like the Ministry tries to neutralise the importance of India for Denmark and depict India’s demand for Denmark as the central one in the new round of negotiations. The special attention to 2010 can also be used to create an image of coherent Venstre’s (or blue block’s) policy towards India, as in 2010 Lars Løkke Rasmussen First Cabinet (2009-2011) was in office, whereas most years of discord are attributed to the term of the Social Democratic government (2011-2014). Nevertheless, this idea of “reset” in relations is central for both visits of Samuelsen in 2017 and 2018, as well as for Rasmussen’s visit in 2019. The second meeting of the Indo-Danish Joint Commission was held on 17th December 2018, after an eight-year-long break (Denmark in India, 2018). As it is stated in the Joint Press Release, “[t]he

Ministers agreed on increasing the intensity of our bilateral engagement” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018b). Thus, “the future” is seen as both a return to the 2010 level of cooperation as well as reaching higher figures of mutually beneficial collaboration in specific areas (identical to areas of “Danish expertise”). The 2010-2017 time period is substantially ‘othered’ in order to overcome discord in relations and get rid of the negative image of Denmark in India.

As for the “distant past”, i.e. Danish colonial period proper, it does not exist in foreign policy and diplomacy as such, but only in cultural-historical and educational cooperation. This cultural cooperation should be seen as The Third Space of Indo-Danish relations, where Denmark attempts to rethink its Self and Other’s identity (Bhabha, 1994). Paradoxically, coloniality is not seen as only negative, but as a source of shared heritage, which is believed to enrich both Denmark and India. The coloniser makes the colonised to mimicry and duplicate its understanding of the Danish presence in India as the foundation of their close ties, which turn them into a “band of brothers”. The culture of the colonised or, to be specifically, of several regions is constructed as ‘impossible’ without the coloniser.

The cultural-historical cooperation is comprehensively covered by the Tranquebar (2004-2016) and Serampore (2009-2020) Initiatives of the National Museum of Denmark, which included restoration work, exhibitions and joint scientific research. While the Tranquebar Initiative was funded by private Danish funds and several Indian authorities and was almost entirely conducted by the National Museum (National Museum, 2016), the Serampore Initiative was funded by the Danish Ministry of Culture and supported by the Danish Embassy in Delhi and the Danish Cultural Institute in Delhi (National Museum, 2020). The restored Denmark Tavern and Hotel was opened in 2018 by the then Danish Ambassador in India Peter Taksø-Jensen (National Museum, 2020), whereas the Tranquebar Initiative was not so much in the public eye (National Museum, 2016). Therefore, Danish commitment to tailoring memories about Danish colonial presence in India is also present in postcolonial activism in India under Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet. The Initiative was launched under Lars Løkke Rasmussen First Cabinet and was accelerated in 2015-2019 under Lars Løkke Rasmussen Second and Third Cabinets (National Museum, 2020). Overall, these initiatives reduce Danish colonialism to “shared cultural legacy and heritage”. It is no surprise then that references to 400 years of common years were made by the Prime Minister during the inauguration of the Danish Cultural Institute in Delhi on 19th January 2019 (Danish Cultural Institute, 2019). The government is only involved through the Ministry for Culture, not through the Prime Minister or Ministry for Foreign Affairs (as it was the case for the USVI and Ghana).

As for the educational cooperation, Serampore College could be definitely named “the jewel in the Danish crown”, as it is as a significant contribution to the positive image of the

kingdom. Founded by British missionaries in 1818, Serampore College was granted the university status in 1827 by King Frederick VI, which made it “one of the first modern institutions of higher education” (by Western standards) in Asia (National Museum, 2020). Both on the website of the National Museum (National Museum, 2020) and Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Denmark in India, 2017b; Denmark in India, 2019) Serampore College is named as the third Danish university after Copenhagen and Kiel universities. As Brimnes (2017) show, it is quite a recent and emancipating development, as for a long time the Danish history of higher education was locked within the Danish territory with Copenhagen University considered as the first one (1479), Aarhus University as the second one (1928) and University of Southern Denmark as the third one (1966). The inclusion of universities established in Danish possessions around the world in the row of institutions is quite significant, as the history of Danish dependent territories is then seen as a part of Danish history. The great democratic mission of College, which was “set up to provide education to ‘all students irrespective of caste, colour, or creed’” is portrayed as a merit of “enlightened Denmark” as the realisation of such a project by British missionaries was only possible “thanks in great part to the Danes” (Denmark in India, 2019). Democracy and egalitarian education were seeded in the Indian soil by Denmark, not by the UK, as it follows from pathetic publications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In 2017 the King Frederik VI Scholarship was established for students (Denmark in India, 2017b). Denmark’s ambassador to India, Mr. Peter Taksøe-Jensen, said, “The scholarship *celebrates the legacy of Indo-Danish relations* [my italics] and seeks to promote access to quality education and encourage the academic pursuits of the students” (Denmark in India, 2017b). In 2019 the scholarship was renamed to Serampore Scholarship, maybe, to avoid direct references to Danish rule and power inequality that actually existed between Denmark and India in those times. It was stated that the scholarship is meant “to signify the long-lasting relations between Denmark and Serampore” (Denmark in India, 2019). Interestingly enough, a broader term “Indo-Danish relations” was changed to a more specific “relations between Denmark and Serampore”, which manifests a more cautious way of formulating the Danish significance for Indian/Bengalese higher education.

Formation of group identities does not occupy a big place in the analysed texts, but there are clear lines between ‘We’ and ‘Other’, between Danish Self and India, which follow the logic of *Orientalism*. The identity of India is presented as outstanding – “næste år verdens femtestørste økonomi” (“next year’s fifth biggest economy in the world”), but at the same time as generalised and placed among other “Asian” identities (The Trade Council, 2018). Anders Samuelsen said in 2018 that the main desired outcome of enhanced cooperation was a strategic partnership “som dem Danmark har med de andre store asiatiske vækstøkonomier” (“like those

Denmark has with other big Asian growing economies”) (The Trade Council, 2018). India is, therefore, seen as another “Asian”, with which Denmark seeks a beneficial dialogue. Generalisation of Other’s identity is a common feature: while the Occident is seen as heterogeneous, the Orient is always homogeneous and “simple” (Said, 1978). India, eventually, obtains significance along with “other Asians”, not when it stands alone. As it has been mentioned beforehand, the “Danish expertise” is depicted as a demand in developing India, which also places Denmark on another step, from which it offers assistance and help to New Delhi. Once again, the Occident (Denmark) possesses knowledge, wisdom and experience, which the Orient (India) always lacks. It is not a long time ago since aid and development cooperation was phased out in India: in 1998 after the Indian nuclear tests it was decided to wrap up all existing DANIDA programmes in India and not to start any new project afterwards, even though India had been among the first donors of DANIDA since the 1960s (Folke, 2009). Nevertheless, elements of treating India as a receiver of Danish assistance are still present in the discourse.

Economic determinism in Danish foreign policy towards India is evident in the discourse. The benefits of enhancing bilateral relations are counted in economic terms. A clear reference to profit as a defining factor of the coloniser in the colony is traced in this strategy (Memmi, 1965). Explaining the necessity of turning the Danish Trade Office in Bangalore into the Consulate General, Anders Samuelsen said that it would “hjælpe de danske virksomheder i kampen om de indiske markedsandele” (“help Danish companies in the battle for Indian market shares”) and that “[d]er er potentielt milliarder at hente” (“there are potentially billions to earn”) (The Trade Council, 2018). Thus, India is furthestmost defined as another Asian market yet not taken by Danish companies, which is to be corrected by a new “strategic partnership”. Thus, Indian market is constructed as a place to retrieve enormous revenues, which can never be earned in the mother land or in Europe, which reminds us of how the coloniser always treats the colony (Memmi, 1965). *Joint Press Release* states that one of the central topics of discussions was “the scope for expanding trade and investments, facilitation of business-to-business contacts, and intensification of trade promotion and ease-of-doing-business activities” (Udenrigsministeriet, 2018b). Despite using such terms as “multifaceted cooperation” for Indo-Danish relations, the majority of talks and negotiations concern commercial cooperation and increased trade. As it was already mentioned, other spheres of foreign policy include “areas of Danish expertise”: “research, water, sustainable energy, city planning and food” (Denmark in India, 2017a). The following scheme of relations arise: in return for shares in a rapidly developing Indian market Denmark is ready to sell its know-hows to Indian partners. Cultural cooperation can also be

named as a part of foreign policy, but it definitely comes short of trade and commercial cooperation.

Postcolonial activism in India reduces Danish colonialism to “shared cultural heritage”, which gives grounds to talk about 400 years of relations. The colonial period is used to lengthen the history of cooperation and present it as continuous and as possessing sound traditions. Otherwise, foreign policy is substituted by trade. India is seen as a rich market for Danish companies. Denmark is presented as a mentor, who is ready to “enlighten” yet another Asian growing economy in specific areas. Nevertheless, it should be stated that Danish colonialism is almost entirely swept away by British colonial, so indeed only several remnants exist, which moderately influence the Danish foreign policy discourse.

Common trends and significant differences

Having analysed postcolonial activism in the USVI, Ghana and India, I am now able to find out several trends that unite these three variations, as well as significant differences, which make each of the unique and special.

The common features are othering of the “past”, glorification of the “future”, reduction of colonialism to its “brighter” dimensions, identity formation in lines of the Orient-Occident dichotomy, competition with other colonialisms, calls to move on as a motto of relations and specification of foreign policy for every context.

Beginning with othering of the “past”, it should be said that in all variations the image of the “past” is created as a darker counterpart of the brighter “future” that Denmark seeks to build in relations with the USVI, Ghana and India. For the USVI, the “past” is connected with such sighs as “oppression”, “injustice”, “slavery” and “brutality”. For Ghana, the “past” comprises the “unforgivable” history of slave trade, whereas for India it is a quite blurred “Danish rule”, which still meant inequalities of power between Danes and Indians. Simultaneously, there are attempts to find uniting elements in the “past” that can become a base for contemporary and future cooperation. While in case of the USVI it is done by looking for “true” stories of “heroes”, in Ghana and India it is done by dividing the “past” into the distant and recent ones. Recent ones include diplomatic relations full of successful cooperation examples, in which Denmark is depicted as a great helper and supporter of India and Ghana after they gained independence in the middle – second half of the 20th century. “Dark” elements are left to distant “pasts”, which are portrayed as having no influence on the “present”.

As for the “future” in all three cases it is approached in a progressive manner: tomorrow is believed to be better and a bit more perfect than today and yesterday. In all three cases the

image of the “future” includes more enhanced cooperation, closer ties, overcoming of all disagreements and mutually beneficial dialogues. Additionally, in all three contexts the “future” is about new and brighter opportunities for Denmark in the USVI, Ghana and India, which it is eager to realise and with which the US territory and two states will become better and more prosperous (even though nothing is said about the opportunities for actors from the former colonies at home or in Denmark). In all scenarios of brighter future it is stated that it can only be reached if the USVI, Ghana and India admit Danish leadership and assistance under Danish conditions.

Depiction of colonialism as multifaceted is aimed at dividing “good” and “bad” dimensions of the phenomenon. The criteria for such a division are defined by whether these dimensions influence negatively or positively the image of Denmark as a “good guy” in the Global South. In the USVI, Ghana and India there are serious attempts to reduce the colonial experience to “shared cultural heritage and legacy”, “Danish buildings”, “names of cities and streets”. While in India and to some extent Ghana this reduction is depoliticised and sedimented, in the USVI it is contested by “darker” parts of colonialism, which are significant for identity formation of the USVI people. “Bad” or “darker” sides of colonialism are furthestmost connected with slavery and slave trade as they severely damage the Good Samaritan identity and equalise Danes with other Europeans guilty in imperialism and its brutal consequences. Whereas in the USVI and Ghana memories of this “dark” side are still vivid for the public consciousness, in India it has been almost completely erased.

Identity formation of ‘We’ and ‘Other’ does along the lines of the Orient-Occident dichotomy. Indeed, in all of three contexts the ‘Other’ is portrayed as “in demand” for Danish expertise and mentoring. ‘Others’ are seen as developing and only starting to cover the path of progress, whereas the ‘Danish Self’ is said to be a highly developed democracy with innovative economy, which legitimises its role as a “teacher” of the “pupils” in the Global South. The degree of Orientalisation varies from context to context being stronger in the USVI and Ghana and weaker in India, but all three regions are united by the same logics of identity formation. Moreover, in all three cases the identity of the ‘Other’ is constructed by the Self from the outside, which follows the famous formula “the subaltern cannot speak”, because they are spoken by others (Spivak, 1988). However, a more active participation of the USVI nation in its identity formation makes this identity hybrid and heterogeneous, which will be discussed later. Generally speaking, the ‘Others’ are believed to have no idea of what to do and in a strong need of help, which Denmark can generously provide.

Competition with other colonialisms plays a part in all variations of postcolonial activism. While in cases of the USVI and Ghana there is one strong competing colonialism –

American or British respectively, in case of India there is a variety of European colonialisms with British being the strongest ones. The main strategy of dealing with this competition is to dissipate Danish colonialism in the ocean of other colonialisms, especially “dark” sides of colonialism. “Positive” dimensions of Danish legacy are, on the other hand, saved from generalisations and presented as “Danish” elements in the Global South. As for the contemporary state of affairs, in the USVI Danish colonialism is still seen as dominant with both positive and negative dimensions being openly discussed and considered. In Ghana there is a certain overlay of Danish colonialism by British one, which used by Denmark in its interests. In India Danish legacy has completely vanished and been forgotten because of the significance of British rule, so Denmark has to collect the remnants of its presence in order to establish itself in modern India.

Calls to move on, to overcome the past or be freed from the “nightmares of history” are central in all variations of postcolonial activism. These strategies are seen as essential for entering the bright “future”, the image of which is created in each variation. Nevertheless, while in the USVI and Ghana something to be overcome is the “dark” side of Danish colonialism – slavery and slave trade, in India it is the discord of the 2010s that existed in the bilateral relations due to the Purulia case; “common cultural heritage” and “400 years of relations” (including the years of Danish colonial rule) are called upon in order to legitimise and sediment the necessity of the “reset” of cooperation. Still, this rhetoric reflects the progressive vision of history of the European Enlightenment and belief in the possibility of changing for better that underpins the strategies of Danish foreign policy.

Finally, specification of foreign policy for every context should be mentioned as a common trend of all variations of postcolonial activism. By the specification I mean tailoring of the policy in accordance with local features and context of bilateral relations of Denmark and its former colony. Even though constructed inequality of power and knowledge is defining for foreign policy in all contexts, particular spheres are chosen as priorities of interactions, be it funding and tourism in case of the USVI, political and commercial cooperation in case of Ghana or trade and cultural cooperation in case of India. Foreign policy as a dialogue of equals is also often seen as the next step of interactions between Denmark and the territories concerned with aid and assistance being the first one.

Significant differences of postcolonial activism in the USVI include portrayal of the USVI people as an active creator of Danish-USVI relations as well as a more severe antagonism between dominant and alternative discourses. The main significant difference of postcolonial activism in Ghana is the role aid and development has managed to play in minds of both parties

to cooperation. Significant differences of postcolonialism in India are comprised by its high stability and depoliticisation and somewhat successful erasure of colonialism from the discourse.

Group identity formation in the USVI should be considered as the most fluid and open to re-articulations. The reason for that is a more active role that the USVI nation tries to play in the dialogue with Denmark. The identity of the 'Other' can be described as hybrid as it exists between the identities of the coloniser and the colonised. The 'Other' has actively participated in identity formation by mimicry and preservation of its "nativeness", which makes the 'Danish Self' to consider it while creating its vision of the 'Other'. Therefore, rethinking of Danish colonialism is particularly open to re-articulation, which forces the official Denmark to make hegemonic interventions and establish postcolonial activism as the dominant discourse. Different opinions that were present among the USVI representatives prove ambiguity is still not dissolved, so only one visit by the Prime Minister with a prominent speech as well as funding of projects are not enough to arrest the flow of meanings and depoliticise the debate of the Danish postcolonial legacy.

Aid and development has managed to become one of the central signs in postcolonial activism in Ghana. The history of DANIDA presence in the West African republic has almost completely substituted the earlier history of Danish rule in the Gold Coast. Moreover, aid and development is approached as atonement for colonial guilt of Denmark, who is portrayed to successfully turn from a "suspicious partner" to a "close friend" of Ghana. However, the planned phasing out of aid and development cooperation can lead to seismic changes in postcolonial activism; simultaneously, the discourse is quite coherent and stable (as for now), so it is also possible that aid and development will continue to be the "base" of the relations with commercial and political cooperation being the "superstructure". As the "dark" side is still present in the discourse, Denmark has to approach it in a specific manner if the Danish government want to preserve and strengthen its position in Ghana as well as in West Africa in general.

Even the analysis of this thesis has shown that Danish colonialism in India is indeed a "forgotten" one for both sides. The scope and scale of British colonialism have made the Danish legacy too insignificant for a national level and reduced to a regional or even municipal level. This absence of Danish colonialism is fixated and depoliticised, so the aimed of erasing "negative" images of Denmark as a European imperialist is fulfilled in India. At the same time it means that "positive" elements of Danish colonialism (Serampore college, investments in urban development of Danish settlements, missionaries, cultural heritage) are also erased from minds or known only by limited academic communities. Desires to bring these elements back to light to construct Indo-Danish relations as sustained, long-standing and grounded in centuries can shed light on "negative" elements of Danish colonialism as well (participation in slave trade was also

a case for Danish settlements and trading posts in India, for example). Therefore, Danish governments should be cautious in their movements in India, which is definitely a state of another magnitude than Ghana or the USVI, the US territory.

To conclude, the existence of common trends and significant difference proves that there is a coherent and stabilising discourse of postcolonial activism, which has different variations adjusted to different contexts. It is also proved by the fact that there are key signs common for all variations, as well as signs specific only to the USVI, Ghana or India. It all contributes to the fluidity of the discourse, which is never completely closed or open, but rather in constant development. Postcolonialism has enabled me with making critical conclusions about Danish foreign policy activism towards its Exceptional Others in the Global South. Thus, foreign policy should not be seen as homogeneous, but as complex and full of inner contradictions. The introduction of another theoretical model to Danish foreign policy analysis leads to a more nuanced and encompassing image of Denmark's external affairs with other states and territories.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Discussion of the research

Before proceeding with the conclusions, a critical discussion of the analysis and the results has to be presented. Reflexivity and critical self-awareness of limitations are central for producing a high-quality research, which meets the criteria of validity by inviting “discussion and critique of the knowledge produced on its own premises” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 173). The discussion will be two-fold: both limitations of Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory and limitations of merging discourse theory and postcolonialism are discussed as well as their implications for the analysis and its results. To begin with, as Laclau and Mouffe do not provide a clear research design for applying their discourse theory, operationalization of their concepts is highly interpretive and depends on the scholar. This individualisation of research implies that one has to be more transparent and specific in his or her analysis. Then, search for a nodal point and analysis of articulation in this thesis could be criticised for such a mechanical character, even though this part was supported by a thorough discussion using postcolonialism. Finally, Marxist ontology has significantly influenced the research as fight against oppression is central not only to the analysis, but also to the postcolonial commentary. Discourse theory by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) can be seen as both emancipating and limiting both in itself and its application for the analysis of materials. For example, not all concepts of the theory were used in the same amount in all contexts as it was planned, since some materials were more representative and provided evidence for making conclusions. For example, the USVI material enabled me to look into the struggle between different discourses; Ghana materials were more representative of The Third Space and identity formation; finally, India materials were more open about depoliticisation and sedimentation. It, however, opens prospects for future research, which will be discussed in the following section.

As for the limitations of complementing discourse theory with postcolonialism, to begin with, it should be said that postcolonialism itself is a discourse in Laclau and Mouffe’s terms. Thus, the analysis of one discourse is conducted from a point of view of another discourse. Additionally, more in-depth comparison of postcolonialism and discourse theory would point to a dramatic disagreement of these two approaches. Postcolonialism seeks to give a voice to the subaltern, to empower and emancipate the colonised, i.e. to give them agency, whereas discourse theory denies agency and insists that any subject would always have a position within a discourse. Due to this reason the question of subject positions and agency was not covered in detail in this paper. Moreover, inner controversies of discourse theory are multiplied by inner

controversies of postcolonialism, which is still a developing field of inquiry, which creates further difficulties for a scholar to be clear and transparent. Finally, as both theories were originally designed for issues other than IR, their joint application for FPA is also very individualised and open to discussion.

Future research

The main lines of future research are comprised by the following ideas: analysis of the vision of the colonised on relations with Denmark, expansion of the studied time period and corpus of analysis, inclusion of other states and territories in the Global South as actors of Danish postcolonial activism and analysis of the dialogue between different colonialisms in contexts of the USVI, Ghana and India.

As it was stated at the beginning of the thesis, my research focuses on the vision of the coloniser and how Denmark deals with its colonial past in terms of foreign policy. I understand the importance of the vision provided by the colonised as an active participant of postcoloniality, which was remarked by many scholars, including Bhabha. Relations between the coloniser and the colonised are not static, but rather dynamic and take place in constant interaction, be it a dialogue or debate. Thus, in order to ‘postcolonise’ Danish foreign policy activism we should look at both sides of the interaction.

Expansion of time period and corpus of analysis are common prospects of any research. I strongly believe that the time period and set of sources chosen in this thesis are sufficient for the research, but at the same time I understand how the existing inquiry can be enriched. For example, it was evident that re-articulation of Danish colonialism in India under the Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet was much poorer than the one taking place in Ghana and especially in the USVI. However, the inclusion of the 1990s when India was a recipient of DANIDA assistance can bring more interesting conclusions about postcolonial activism in India. Moreover, the comparison of different waves of public interest to Danish colonialism is also a fruitful way to study postcolonial activism as well as comparison of strategies applied by blue block and red block governments.

Inclusion of other states and territories in the Global South as actors of Danish postcolonial activism would also expand the research in spatial terms. It would also enable us to look how Denmark tailors its foreign policy with states and territories that were never its colonies, but are still ‘postcolonial’ in both historical and ideational terms. It should be remembered that postcolonialism does not reduce postcoloniality to merely former metropolises and colonies, but studies a particular power arrangement rooting from a colonial mind-set.

The importance of other colonialisms has already been touched upon within this thesis. Analysis of interrelations between different colonialism (whether they are in conflict, in a dialogue or exist in parallel) would give an even more nuanced image of postcoloniality in the USVI, Ghana and India.

Ideas of future research should not be seen as exhaustive, but they are plausible prospects of further inquiry in the topic, which can be taken for a PhD dissertation.

CONCLUSION

The research question of my thesis is “How does the Danish colonial past (or rather the interpretations of the past by the Danish authorities) in the Global South influence modern Danish foreign policy in Ghana, India and US Virgin Islands?” In order to answer the question I aimed at analysing the Danish foreign policy discourse in the USVI, Ghana and India in official texts created during the term of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet (2016-2019), as this period is seen as containing the most active articulations and re-articulations of Danish colonialism in recent times. The analysis was performed within the authored theoretical framework in which discourse theory and postcolonialism were merged. Despite several limitations discussed earlier, my thesis sought to present a plausible, transparent and valid discourse analysis of “main” and “alternative” sources, which were chosen as representative within all studied contexts.

I hypothesised that the postcolonial discourse on Denmark’s colonial past would construct Danish activism foreign policy towards Ghana, India and US Virgin Islands as a reconsideration of Denmark’s Self vis-à-vis its exceptional Others in the Global South. In other words, the Danish colonial presence in the Global South would be ‘othered’ and detached from Denmark’s Self while completely or partly attributing it to identities of the exceptional Others.

In order to formulate the essence of Danish foreign policy discourse in the Global South I examined Danish activism as a new trend of the kingdom’s post-Cold War foreign policy in different regions, including the Global South. Having analysed different approaches to the phenomenon in the academia, I have concluded that for the purposes of the thesis Danish foreign policy activism would represent both a change and continuity in Danish foreign policy. From a postcolonial perspective, colonialism of the past always accompanies the modernity, i.e. it is present in modern policy, which makes activism a continuity. On the other hand, attempts to reconsider colonialism and invest it with new meanings does represent a change, as discourse are never completely closed or open, so postcolonial activism would be in constant fluidity.

Despite the fact that foreign policy of Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet was cautious, structured and planned in minute detail, re-articulation of the colonial past was seen as an opportunity to step up and re-state Danish leadership in several areas, assistance to developing countries of the Global South being one of them. This activist approach to the region opens up opportunities for establishment of postcolonial activism, which would meet the requirements and interests of Denmark in the region.

The analysis has proved my hypothesis: creation of postcolonial activism as a new foreign policy discourse towards its Exceptional Others is caused by the necessity to dissolve the

social antagonism of different identities of the 'Danish Self'. On the one hand, Denmark pursues an identity of a Good Samaritan who is a trustworthy mentor of developing countries in the Global South. On the other hand, Danish colonial experience in the USVI, Ghana and India trivialises Denmark and places it among other European imperialists, thus, depriving Denmark of its uniqueness and special status in the eyes of postcolonial states. Therefore, articulation of postcolonial activism for these 'Exceptional Others' was be a milestone of Danish foreign policy in the Global South.

Postcolonial activism discourse was taken as an overarching concept for Danish foreign policy in the Global South. While postcolonial activism was found to be quite coherent, it is still heterogeneous with specific variations for every context. I have figured out common features of three studied variations as well as significant differences of every variation. The common features are othering of the "past", glorification of the "future", reduction of colonialism to its "brighter" dimensions, identity formation in lines of the Orient-Occident dichotomy, competition with other colonialisms, calls to move on as a motto of relations and specification of foreign policy for every context. The main differentiating feature of postcolonial activism in the USVI is active participation of the USVI in creation of its identity, which leads to bigger complexity of Danish-USVI relations. The main significant difference of postcolonial activism in Ghana is the tremendous importance of aid and development, which has more or less become the base of the existing relations. Postcolonial activism in India, contrary to other variations, is much more stable and depoliticised, with colonialism being almost completely erased from the discourse.

To conclude, the following answer can be given to the research question. The interpretation of the colonial past by the Danish authorities as an ambiguous part of Danish presence in other countries' histories, possessing both positive or bright and negative or dark elements defines how the Danish government deals with the legacy of Danish colonialism in the USVI, Ghana and India. While dark elements are due to be erased from minds or substituted by more positive modern examples of cooperation, bright elements are used as a legitimate argument of long-standing bilateral relations, which should continue the way Denmark as a more advanced country wants them to continue. Dark elements are othered and attributed to either the distant past that is said to have no influence on the present and future or to 'Exceptional Others' as bearers of coloniality. The temporal othering is done with the same mechanisms as othering of the Orient and is based on a Western belief in progress. As for attribution of colonialism to the Others, the legacy of colonialism is firstly claimed as common and shared. Then, the possessions are split between the Danish Self and the Exceptional Others. Inequalities and controversies created by the coloniality are left to the USVI, Ghana and India, whereas responsibility for a brighter future is monopolised by Denmark.

The theoretical value of the work is creation of a new approach to Danish foreign policy activism, which is postcolonial analysis and critique of activism, especially in the Global South. The thesis also contributes to overcoming of ‘northern bias’ of Danish postcolonial studies and brings ‘tropical colonies’ back to academic inquiries. Danish colonialism in the USVI, Ghana and India is seen as a part of Danish history, not only of histories of respective countries. Moreover, my thesis contributes to bridging of postcolonialism and IR as disciplines of social sciences. Finally, the thesis also presents one of the first comprehensive analyses of foreign policy of the Lars Løkke Rasmussen Third Cabinet (2016-2019) in particular areas.

The practical value of the thesis is that the conclusions can be used by the Danish authorities while planning foreign policy in the Global South and particularly in the USVI, Ghana and India, as it explains the logics of how relations are constructed in the postcolonial world. Therefore, recommendations for embassies and consulates in respective countries can be formulated based on the thesis on how to formulate the objectives of cooperation, as well as what to prioritise and in which areas.

As a concluding remark, I strongly believe that my thesis can have an emancipating effect on the future of Danish foreign policy activism, as self-reflection and self-analysis are first steps in this journey to fairer international relations. I want to believe that an equal dialogue is a plausible model of cooperation, and there is evidence that it is possible in the Danish-USVI, Danish-Ghanaian and Danish-Indian relations. I hope to continue studying the topic and to witness changes in postcolonial activism. “Soft you now!” – with these words, like Hamlet in his soliloquy, I would like to end my thesis.

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