

Chapter 3

Pioneering Nation: New Narratives About Greenland and Greenlanders Launched Through Arts and Branding

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Abstract Throughout the Arctic, identities are currently being renegotiated on a foundation that is undergoing radical changes. Global warming has led to an increased focus on arctic and subarctic areas, and thus it is not only the physical conditions for peoples' livelihood that are changing but the way in which they identify and create new subject positions for themselves in the interaction with the rest of the world. As such, there is nothing new in the importance of the Arctic in international politics. What is fundamentally different today is the status of the indigenous peoples of the far North. No longer can these peoples be governed and treated as voiceless creatures on equal footing with the marine mammals, birds and fish of the area. Today, the indigenous peoples have their own political voices, and various forms of self-rule are the norm rather than the exception. While the Arctic has for generations been described and represented by people living in the South, the peoples of the Arctic are now to a much larger degree representing themselves, both on the political stage and in the media, art, literature and film. The article demonstrates how this creates completely different images from the ones we have grown accustomed to over so many years. The new Arctic is framed by a new context where people are digitally fluent and active members of the global community in a way that makes the future development completely different from previous ages – and thus also completely unpredictable.

Keywords Greenland • Self-Government • (Self)representation • (Issues of) indigeneity • Globalization

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Throughout the Arctic, identities are currently being renegotiated on a foundation that is undergoing radical changes. Global warming has led to an increased focus on arctic and subarctic areas, and thus it is not only the physical conditions for peoples' livelihood that are changing but the way in which they identify and create new subject positions for themselves in the interaction with the rest of the world. Suddenly, the Arctic Council is courted by the biggest and most powerful nations. Nations that might be situated a good deal south of what is usually considered "the Arctic" reinvent themselves as arctic nations – or are busy digging into their history to unearth their arctic knowledge and competences. In the Scandinavian North Atlantic, Iceland and the Faroe Islands are redefining themselves as arctic nations or "gateways" to the Arctic, and the only reason that Denmark has a seat in the Arctic Council is of course the fact that Greenland is still part of the Danish Realm.

Greenland and the Faroe Islands are the only overseas territories left from the once far-reaching Danish empire. Greenland was colonized by the Danish-Norwegian state in 1721. In 1953, Danish colonialism officially ended when Greenland became an equal part of Denmark as the northernmost county. In 1979 Home Rule was implemented, followed in 2009 by Self Government, an expansion of Home Rule. Greenland has a very small population, around 56,500 people, dispersed over a large number of settlements in a huge area. With Home Rule, *kalaallisut*, the Inuit language of the (West) Greenlanders, became the country's official language. Eighty-five percent of the population live in an urban environment, with around 16,000, more than a quarter of the population, living in Nuuk, the capital of Greenland (Sejersen et al. 2009).

As such, there is nothing new in the importance of the Arctic in international politics. Through the centuries, the Arctic has often played a crucial role – not the least during the Cold War. However, what is fundamentally different today is the status of the indigenous peoples of the far North. No longer can these peoples be governed and treated as voiceless creatures on equal footing with the marine mammals, birds and fish of the area. Today, the indigenous peoples have their own political voices, and various forms of self-rule are the norm rather than the exception. While the Arctic has for generations been described and represented by people living in the South, the peoples of the Arctic are now to a much larger degree representing themselves, both on the political stage and in the media, art, literature and film. This creates completely different images from the ones we have grown accustomed to over so many years.

For an excellent example of the kind of representation that is now being confronted and challenged by the Inuit themselves, you can carry out a YouTube

search for “OnThinIceTrailer”.¹ The trailer introduces the documentary “On Thin Ice”, made by Andreas Rydbacken for Greenpeace in 2006. The documentary is 29:46 min, while the trailer lasts 1:10 min. The trailer opens with images from Ilulissat Ice Fiord, which in 2004 was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Shown repeatedly in the media and visited by an endless number of the world’s major political and religious leaders, the Ilulissat Ice Fiord has become a key symbol of global warming (Bjørst 2011). We hear a dramatic sound, which could be the ice moving. The following captions are superimposed on the images: “Imagine the world’s largest island/covered by ice/Now imagine all that ice moving/Faster than ever/Bad news for the world!” The score switches to very dramatic, action-oriented music as we watch a helicopter landing and a group of scientists disembarking on the ice with all their instruments. A moment later, we are back in the helicopter, watching a ship in the midst of the ice-filled sea, and then again, a second later, we are on board the ship, listening to the scientists discussing their results. Male scientist: “13.8 km per year!” Female scientist: “That’s bad!” In the next clip, the male scientist is back on the ice. He says, “Once the icebergs come off the end of the glacier that’s their contribution to sea level rising.” We see images of a calving glacier and pictures of flooded southern cities embedded in the images of the ice. Then a new caption reads: “A documentary about Greenland/an island in climate crisis.” Now we see a seal, a musk ox, a young girl, a man, another man, an old woman, yet another man, all distinctly Inuit in appearance. Superimposed on these images, a caption reads, “Watching their country melt.” Like the seal, each of the five individuals is turning his or her head as we watch them, seemingly in deep sorrow, but without uttering a sound. The next picture is a settlement with low, modern houses, built of wood. The storm-like sky has an ominous look, and superimposed on the image is the following caption in flaming letters: “their entire culture is at stake.” The trailer concludes with some very fast clips of a musk ox skull, as a silent monument to the dead nature and the dead lifestyle, and a large apartment block, a vision of the future dystopia, when the Inuit have become “climate refugees” in the big cities, severed from their previous lifestyle in harmony with nature.

There are two obvious problems with the way this is framed. (1) The silencing of the Inuit, who are turned into passive objects of others’ actions: first the rampant consumption down south, which is supposed to have triggered the climate change, then the scientists, on a quest to set the record straight. The Inuit themselves are relegated exclusively to the roles of victims and witnesses. (2) The idea that modern cities are a foreign and alienating environment for the Inuit, since their true nature belongs in the wild where they are supposed to live in peace and harmony. This is an ingrained myth stemming from the Romantic notion of the “noble savage” – a myth that the Inuit themselves have made extensive use of since the 1970s, by the way. The term “indigenous peoples” with all the connotations in terms of nature and

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WbXxHVWtD0&noredirect=1>; last accessed April 2014.

authenticity that adhere to it, was an important argument in political fora such as the UN, and the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples still maintains traditions and “culture” as the focal point for the assignment of such rights (Kleist 2011; Thisted 2013). However, the truth is that many Greenlanders, especially young Greenlanders, regard that kind of narrative as a straitjacket, which locks them into identities that have become out of touch with their actual lives. The recent years, after the implementation of self-government in 2009, have been characterized by this ongoing negotiation of what it means to be “Greenlandic” in the age of globalization and climate change.

3.1 Processes of Cultural Translation

In Mary Louise Pratt’s words, Greenland could be considered a “contact zone”: a space “where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (Pratt 1992:12). First the whalers came, then the missionaries, the traders, the administrators, the scientists. The Inuit interacted with all of them, and over the years, they changed to a point where it no longer makes sense to talk about Inuit/Greenlandic or Danish/European as two distinct cultures, which meet in Greenland. Scandinavia and Europe have long since become part of the present Greenlanders’ own heritage, for better or worse. Thus, Greenland’s historical experience can be described as a long series of transformations as the Greenlandic Inuit have mixed with other people and integrated new cultural elements into their own culture. “Cultural translation” is a term used by some theorists in the field of cultural and post-colonial studies, including Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, Robert J.C. Young and others, to characterize such a translocation of cultural forms into new contexts and regimes of power. Not just knowledge, ideas or world-views but also people and their identities are translated: as when the Europeans translated the Inuit into “wild” and “primitive” people or “heathens”, and the Greenlanders decided to translate themselves into Christians – and later into “modern” people. A similar process of translation or transformation took place after the Second World War, when the status of the Greenlanders changed from colonized people to Danish citizens, and the Greenlanders needed to renegotiate their identity and find a way to become *both* Danish *and* Greenlandic. The Greenlanders had been brought up with Danish nationalism, based upon ethnicity and the idea of a close connection between the land, the people, the language and the territory; an idea the Danes had adopted from German philosophy. At the time when Greenland became part of Denmark, this kind of thinking was deeply rooted in the Greenlanders, especially the Greenlandic elite, and their aspiration was never to become entirely Danish but to somehow put the two identities on equal footing. From a Danish point of view, the Greenlanders were a distinct ethnic minority, and they continued ruling Greenland based on a politics of difference. From a Greenlandic point of view, this was experienced as discrimination, which led to the requirement for home rule, implemented in 1979. One of the buzzwords in this period was “Greenlandization”: the strengthening of Greenlandic language and

culture. As Tove Søvndahl Petersen, the present head of the Greenland Representation in Denmark, noted in 1996, home rule paradoxically had the opposite of the intended effect – at least if “culture” is read as “traditional” culture:

Home Rule also means taking responsibility for one’s own decisions, increased economic self-management, requirements of efficiency and rationalization, the ability to enter into beneficial agreements with foreign fisheries nations and foreign banks, [and] promoting the tourism trade by appearing exotic and exciting in a way that appeals to tourists. (Petersen 1996:23, my translation)

When the term “indigenous peoples” was first introduced in Greenland in the 1970s, not everybody was equally enthusiastic. It sounded too much of the old notions of wild and primitive savages. However, as time went by, the term became generally accepted, not least because it was institutionalized by powerful international organizations. The political process concerning the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples became a very important inspiration for the Act on Greenland Self-Government, even though the term “indigenous people” – or even “Inuit” – is never mentioned in the Act itself. The reason for this is that the Act goes far beyond the UN Declaration, which is an attempt to regulate the relationship between the ethnic minority and the State. With the Self-Government Act, in many respects Greenland *is* the state, and thus, in the Greenland case, the language of indigeneity shifts from a language of subordination and resistance into a language of governance. The Greenlanders have not yet reached a conclusion whether they want to detach themselves from the term “indigenous people” or whether they want to hold on to it, showing the world that indigenous peoples do not have to stay subordinated and poor. No matter what, they are right now in the process of translating themselves out of the minority and into a majority position.

3.2 Visualizing Hybridity

Not surprisingly, ethno-symbolism became an important part of the home rule process. Earlier, the Greenlanders’ strategy had been to prove that they were “ready” for modernity and able to adapt to Danish culture, but now it became important to highlight all the factors that would indicate how the Greenlanders were in fact a people in their own right. The myths and stories predating Christianity were revitalized through literature, theatre and rock lyrics, and homage was paid to the hunting culture by flashing its symbols: the kayak, the harpoon, the ulu (the crescent-shaped women’s knife) etc. These symbols are still in use, but a new generation has used them reflectively rather than taking them for granted. Several artists have pointed to the hybrid nature of modern Greenlandic culture, including Miki Jacobsen (born 1965), Inuk Silis Høeg (born 1972), Julie Edel Hardenberg (born 1971), to mention just a few. One of Miki Jacobsen’s best-known works is the photo collage “The red Snow Mobile” from the photo series “Culture Fusion” (2003). In the foreground of this collage, a team of sledge dogs are rushing through the picture from right to left. In the background, an Air Greenland aircraft is landing, heading down the runway in our direction. In the space between the two, the artist himself, naked from the



Fig. 3.1 Miki Jacobsen: “The red Snowmobile”, 2005, digital photo collage

waist up, is driving his red snow mobile full speed through the picture from left to right. In the left corner, nearest to the viewer, a snow bunting is silently, ironically watching it all (Fig. 3.1).

Likewise, Inuk Silis Høeg explores Greenlandic ideas and ideals of masculinity in his small sculptures named “Angutit” (Men, 2003). The figures relate to old potent male figurines known from ethnographic collections, mixed with limbs borrowed from male action figures from “Top Toy”, creating a clash between old and new materials and an ironic comment on the similarity between two seemingly very different cultures. Taking the super masculine ideal to a grotesque level questions and de-naturalizes it (Fig. 3.2).

While intersectionality between sex, class and ethnicity seems to be at play in the works of Jacobsen and Høeg, Julie Edel Hardenberg appears to focus mostly on ethnicity. In a series of portrait photos with titles such as “Parents and child”, “Siblings”, “A part of me” and “Non-stereotypes”, Hardenberg has explored contemporary Greenlanders’ genetic and cultural makeup. Children of the same parents may come out very differently, so that some look typically “Danish”, while others look typically “Greenlandic”, and in addition, families often include children from previous relationships, adopted children etc. Spaces, cultures and identities mix. “Savalimmiunik aamma siuliaqarpugut” (We also have Faroese ancestors) is the caption for a photo of two Greenlandic girls with dolls in Faroese national dress, and in another, a young woman holds a sign reading “Français – c’est aussi ma langue” (French is my language too). Another photo, with the apposite title “Non-stereotypes”, show three smiling children, obviously of black heritage, dressed in Greenlandic national costume (Fig. 3.3).

Fig. 3.2 Inuk Silis Høeg:
“Angutit” or “Bodies I and
II” 2003, Wood, Plastic, Bone
27×20 cm



Fig. 3.3 Julie Edel
Hardenberg: “Non-
Stereotypes”, 2004, photo



The photos have been exhibited and reproduced in many different contexts, including the book *Nipaatsumik assigiinngisitaarneq/The quiet diversity*, 2005.

Central to the interest of the book is how we produce identifications through our looks and the symbols we wear in the form of jewelry and clothing, and the objects with which we surround ourselves. In one series of photos the artist herself dresses up in different “ethnic styles” and seems to test what it is like to move into and out of different (stereotyped) identities that match her physical features: being a Native American woman, an Indian Woman, a Chinese woman etc. In another series of six photos she portrays two young men, one of whom would be identified as Greenlandic in a Greenlandic context, while the other has features that are less clearly Greenlandic and looks more Danish or Scandinavian/European. In each picture they wear a piece of jewellery: a polar bear claw on a leather string, a Thor’s hammer, which might be made of lead, worn on a chain that also seems to be lead, and a silver crucifix on a silver chain. What happens when these pieces of jewellery are placed around the necks of these two young men? What identities are implied by the different pieces, and are we more willing to accept the presumed identities created by some of these combinations between person and object than others? Another series shows photos of living rooms. We do not see the inhabitants, but we cannot help make assumptions about who lives there: How old might these people be? What do they do for a living? Common to all the homes, however, is the hybridity: Objects from all corners of the world have found their way to these interiors, which are all “European” in the sense that they are furnished with a dinner table, a coffee table, chairs, sofas etc. Yet, in each and every room there is something that makes the room distinctly “Greenlandic”: bead embroidery, an ulu hanging on the wall, seal or reindeer skin in the furniture or on the floor, an East Greenlandic mask, a piece of modern Greenlandic art. This creates an impression both cosmopolitan and national, and the pictures compel the spectator to consider how people signal identity with the way they organize and decorate their space, and to rethink the preconceived ideas of “authenticity”/“in-authenticity” that characterize the debate about “identity” and “ethnicity”.

A similar staging of Greenlandic identity as hybrid and elusive can be studied in Greenlandic literature, music and film (Pedersen 2008; Otte 2013; Thisted 2012a, b).

3.3 Branding the Nation

The time around the transition from home rule to self-government was marked by an intense debate regarding the outside view, in particular the Danish view, on Greenland. In Denmark, the representations of Greenland have for decades been split between two very different pictures. In the “Sunday version”, which comes out on festive or solemn occasions and in official contexts, Greenland is lauded for its proud traditions, its beautiful landscape, and the harmonious relations within the Danish realm. In the weekday version, Greenlanders are stereotyped as losers, dependent on Danish subsidies, alcoholics and “lost in translation” in the modern world. Nuuk in particular has a reputation in the Danish public as a sort of “spoiled

space”, which stems in part from a number of documentaries that set out to look “beyond the scenic idyll” and draw out “the aspects that don’t fit into the postcard image”, as one of these documentaries phrased it. The most exceptional aspect of this documentary, *Flugten fra Greenland (Escape from Greenland)* (Heilbut 2007), is that when it was first broadcast on the national Danish TV channel DR1, it sparked the first widespread outcry against this kind of representation both from the Greenlandic community in Denmark and from Greenlandic politicians (Gant 2009; Thisted 2012b). Actually, the criticism had an impact, and there have been several initiatives to offer a more nuanced insight into Greenlandic society and to incorporate Greenland into Danish mainstream programs. For instance, the post-colonial relationship between Denmark and Greenland was the theme of one episode of the popular television series *Borgen (The Castle)*, metonym for the Danish Parliament, DR 2010. Likewise, the TV3+ documentary series *Politistationen (The Police Station)* went to Nuuk in 2011. This programme also portrayed social problems but focused on the competent young Greenlanders who deal with these problems. Most importantly, however, especially from a Greenlandic point of view, was the Greenlandic participation in the popular music competition *AllStars* on Danish TV2 in 2010. The programme was a kind of talent show where four established musicians, each representing a Danish city, formed four choirs that competed against each other. One of them was the Greenlandic singer Julie Berthelsen’s choir, representing Nuuk. The members of the choir succeeded in painting a very positive picture of well-adjusted, goal-oriented and competent Greenlanders, and the choir actually won the competition. In the programme, Greenlandic identity was depicted as hybrid and fluid – very much like the depiction in Julie Edel Hardenberg’s photos. Some of the members of the choir had close ties to Greenland, others less so. Some were ethnically Greenlandic but had been raised in Denmark, while others had lived in Greenland all their life, even though their parents came from somewhere else. Thus, the programme sought to illustrate that cultural heritage is defined by the things we choose to identify with, and where we place our loyalty. The choir came to symbolize an ideal society, where cooperation across differences serves to strengthen internal cohesion. All of Greenland celebrated when the Greenlandic choir won, and in view of the previously very negative media coverage of Greenland, some even went so far as to call the victory “a new start for Greenland” (Thisted 2012b).

A similar attempt to manage the perception of Greenland has been made by Greenlandic business organizations in a concerted effort to create a strong brand for Greenland. A branding platform was launched in 2005, but it was not until after the introduction of self-government that there was a noticeable shift in the agenda. Greenland’s national tourist board Visit Greenland has been particularly involved in this process with the aim of creating a brand that would not only appeal to tourists, telling them about all the adventures awaiting them in Greenland, but which would also put the country on the map as something that offers much more than polar bears and icebergs. Visit Greenland came up with the slogan “Pioneering Nation”. This slogan draws mainly on the many narratives about adventure, exploration and discovery that already characterize Greenland. Of course, this applies first of all to the Inuit, who arrived on their dog sledges after travelling all the way from the Bering

Strait to Thule in the north-western corner of Greenland and subsequently spreading along the full length of the coast. This founding myth in the national Greenlandic narrative achieved international fame with the Danish Arctic explorer Knud Rasmussen's journey in the opposite direction in the Fifth Thule Expedition (Thisted 2010). Another narrative revolves around the Norsemen, the similarly widely travelled and adventurous Vikings, who immigrated from the south in the late 900s, around the same time as the Inuit were arriving from the north. From Greenland the Norsemen made excursions and "discovered" North America, several centuries before Christopher Columbus. Next, there are all the famous explorers, Fridtjof Nansen, Knud Rasmussen, Ludvig Mylius Eriksen and many more. Greenland still attracts people who wish to follow in the footsteps of these heroes of yore or who try to break new boundaries. All these narrative strands echo in *Pioneering Nation*, which of course also has room for the story about the small, young nation: the first case in history where an indigenous people is well on its way to full independence. Visit Greenland developed this concept into a complete "toolkit" with lots of pictures, slogans and buzzwords – freely available to all the players on the Greenlandic business market.

A central initiative in the branding of Greenland was the production of five TV programmes, each of 52 min' duration, titled "A Taste of Greenland" (Ace and Ace/Visit Greenland 2009–2013). The concept is well-known from similar campaigns. The idea is to send a chef who already has a name in the target community to travel around the country one wants to brand. The resulting film is something in between a "documentary" about the country (where, of course, one only focusses on desirable aspects) and a cooking show. In this case, the chef cooks with Greenlandic ingredients in improvised outdoor "kitchens", interspersed with scenes where we see how the food is collected and produced and get to meet the people involved and a number of other people selected to represent the community. Stills and footage from the first of these programmes were reused to create a series of short promotion videos, placed on Visit Greenland's homepage and on YouTube. One of these films in particular, the 2011 version with the title "*Be a pioneer*" received considerable publicity, not only outside Greenland but within Greenland as well. Mixed with all the images of beautiful landscapes, good food and tourism activities are five brief sequences inspired by Julie Edel Hardenberg's "Parents and child" and "Siblings" series, here reproduced in moving pictures. "Come and visit our pioneering nation" reads the caption that scrolls across the first sequence, "A mixed population – one nation" reads the next, while the last three read "Upholding traditions – forward looking", "Warm – welcoming", "Colorful – cool". In a Greenlandic context, anyone watching the film will be reminded of Hardenberg's photos and their underlying idea, and in the final sequence, Hardenberg actually poses with her own children. The film was shown regularly on the national television KNR during the fall of 2011 and spring of 2012, and thus, what served as nation branding to the outside world promoted nation building internally, in the early years of self-government.

Obviously, these images clash with the images of the victimized Inuit that have been dominant in the climate debate. The branding initiatives supported by Greenland's Self-Government all promote a picture of a population that is so much



Fig. 3.4 From the “Pioneering Nation” campaign 2012, Visit Greenland, photo David Trood

more than the frozen image of a dying hunting culture. The *Be a Pioneer* video and the *Taste of Greenland* programmes of course do mention the hunting culture – but they also focus on the new possibilities created by the warmer climate: healthy, juicy vegetables being pulled from the fertile soil in the Nuuk Fiord; the thriving sheep industry in South Greenland etc. The campaigns have resulted in the spread of pictures designed to present positive images of young Greenlanders taking active part in modern culture – while at the same time respectfully upholding traditions. It seems that a bridge is being built over the gap between ideology and reality: the idealized portrait of the free hunter vis-à-vis the demonized urban life. In a new campaign featuring the “Big Artic Five”, the mixed population of Greenland is one of the five most important things to be discovered in Greenland, and in the *Colourful Nuuk* campaign, which is right now in the making, multi-culturalism, innovation and flexibility are among the key words. Greenland is preparing for a new era where mining and industry based on non-renewable resources account for a larger share of the income, hopefully finding a place alongside the well-established fishing and tourism industry (Figs. 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6).

3.4 Conclusion

Much has happened since 2006, and a similar representation to the Greenpeace video which I address in the opening sections of this article would not be possible in 2014. The implementation of the Act on Greenland Self-Government has radically changed the relations between Denmark and Greenland, and even though the first years following the new act did see a few incidents where politicians and journalists seemed to forget the new division of power, new and far more respectful

Fig. 3.5 From the “Colorful Nuuk” campaign 2014, Visit Greenland, photo Mads Pihl



Fig. 3.6 From the “Colorful Nuuk” campaign 2014, Visit Greenland, photo Mads Pihl

ways of communication and representation have become the norm. This is evident in all official statements from the Danish government. The new Arctic strategy: *Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020*, signed by the Government of Denmark, The Government of the Faroe Islands and the Government of Greenland,² is an interesting example of how the new circumstances require a new vocabulary, consistent with the equality expressed by the partnership metaphor (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). In the Danish version, the expression “The Kingdom of Denmark” has replaced “Denmark” or “the Danish Realm” as the signifier for the unity of Denmark, The Faroe Islands and Greenland, while the term “rigsdelene” (parts of the Realm) is used for the three individual entities. In Danish, this expression sounds a bit odd, but the word makes it possible to avoid more problematic terms such as “countries” or “nations”. It could be discussed whether this new language in fact reintroduces the idea of an empire - which of course is an interesting thought, considering the development in the Arctic. On the cover of the strategy paper, the Greenlandic, the Faroese and the Danish coats of arms are represented side by side, underlining the equality of the three entities. However, the Danish coat of arms is placed on a red background in contrast to the white background of the other two, which blend in with the white background of the title and the white and blue of the Arctic landscape into which the coats of armor are inserted. Furthermore, the red of the Danish coat of arms is reinforced by a stripe of the same red color running down the left side of the picture. In this way, Denmark’s continued supremacy position is discreetly indicated and upheld. In 2013, The Faroe Islands published the report *The Faroe Islands – A nation in the Arctic. Opportunities and Challenges*. One observes the use of the word *nation* – no mention of “rigsdele” here! In this way, the balance of power is constantly being negotiated within the Realm.³

Current scientific reports also bear witness to the new awareness concerning the equal representation of Greenland. Scientists have understood that the people actually living in the Arctic need to be included in the research, not only as objects of the study but as participants and stakeholders in the research activity. Therefore, great efforts were made to include the Greenlandic flag on the official photo of the international LOMROG III Expedition⁴ that visited the North Pole in August 2012. Unfortunately, the flag does not show on the photo but is hidden behind the American Stars and Stripes (Breum 2013: 110–11; 112–115). Likewise, scientists of Greenlandic heritage are much in demand in new projects and expeditions, which opens great opportunities for young Greenlandic academics.

Thus, a key new development in relation to “the new Arctic” is that while the area was previously viewed as pristine – a blank area on the map – it has taken on a new

²PDF available: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/raw-materials/files/docs/mss-denmark_en.pdf

³The Faroe Islands got home rule in 1948, supplemented by the so-called “Take Over Act” or “Self-Government Arrangement” from 2005. http://www.stm.dk/_a_2956.html

⁴<http://polar.se/en/forskarrapport/lomrog-iii-slutlig-datainsamling-i-omradet-norr-om-gronland/>
The expedition was part of the Danish Continental Shelf Project which aims at identifying potential claim areas in the polar regions in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). http://a76.dk/lng_uk/main.html.

status that requires actors within all fields, including politics, economics and science, to include the population which now speaks with their own voices.

Another key aspect is the gap between outsiders' notions of the life that is lived in the Arctic and actual daily life, for example in Greenland, where the hunting culture only represents a small percentage of the country's revenue (Rasmussen 2005). In fact, the peoples of the Arctic often share these ideals themselves. In Greenland, hunting is a high-priority occupation, and everything related to this activity represents valuable cultural capital. On the other hand, few people actually wish for their sons to live as hunters, and hardly anyone wants for their daughters to live the life of a hunter's wife. In a sense, therefore, many Greenlanders have adopted the outside world's romantic notion of the "free" life of the hunter, who is his own master. A life that everyone agrees is ideal – as long as they do not have to live it themselves.

In Greenland, the debate over mining, the end to the zero-tolerance policy to uranium extraction and the so-called "Large-Scale Projects Act" have set a new agenda, not least in terms of visions and concerns for the future. The Large-Scale Projects Act allows foreign companies to contract foreign workers on collective (time-limited) agreements negotiated with trade unions outside Greenland. This will allow large numbers of foreign workers in, including Chinese labour. The law was passed by the Greenlandic parliament on December 7, 2012 after intense debate. Many Greenlanders fear that this spells the end of the Greenlandic welfare society. They also fear that Greenlanders will once again be by-standers to development. The Greenlanders have considerable experience with exactly that situation, since this was largely what happened in the 1950s and 60s when Greenland was opened up to foreign (then mainly Danish) investments and labour. At least in the public administration, this system survived long after the introduction of Home Rule, and in many industries Danes are still heavily over-represented, especially in top management positions. If the Greenlandic Self-Government wants to avoid a similar development, Greenland clearly needs well-educated people who can play an active part.

Greenland's biggest problem, however, is a lag in terms of highly educated and qualified labour. In many parts of the country, the current generation is the first aiming for high-school and university. Greenlanders often argue that Greenland's long-standing relationship with Denmark as a "model nation" has led to a lack of self-esteem and, to some extent, a lack of independence and willingness to take on responsibility. Thus, new, positive self-images are a fundamental necessity for building a population where people are able to see themselves as key actors in a society based on a combination of renewable and non-renewable resources. In that situation, initiatives such as the Pioneering Nation brand are of obvious importance.

Young Greenlanders are striving to become educated to be able to act as competent citizens in a globalized world. It is, however, no secret that many fall short and have trouble meeting the demands. Many Greenlanders find it obvious that Greenland should aim to become an independent nation. That is also the vision that most politicians hold up. However, political independence requires economic

independence. As long as Greenland continues to be dependent on large subsidies from Denmark, it must remain a part of the Realm. The consequences of leaving the Realm may seem daunting, and while Greenland is actively seeking new partners and breaking off old ties to Denmark, Denmark and the Nordic region still offers a lifeline that few are willing to abandon. The dream of political independence is therefore carefully weighed against all the risks that are associated with the large-scale projects.

This is a complex scenario, but for now, some of the optimism that emerged with the Self-Government Act in 2009 still persists. And the Greenlanders were quick to join in when everybody suddenly began to record “Happy videos”: videos of people dancing to Pharrell Williams’s song “Happy”.⁵ The video is an excellent example of the contemporary mix of old and new: young people wearing national costumes and modern ski clothes, drum dancing and hip-hop, all of it with a heavy dose of mirth and irony. The video also illustrates that the new Arctic is framed by a new context where people are digitally fluent and active members of the global community in a way that makes the future development completely different from previous ages – and thus also completely unpredictable.

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⁵ Online: <http://www.knr.gl/da/nyheder/gr%C3%B8nl%C3%A6ndere-ogs%C3%A5-happy>. This first, “official” Greenlandic video was initiated by Visit Greenland. It was soon followed by other, local initiatives.

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