

Denmark's new Brand: after the Cartoon Crisis

Starting after the cold war, countries have now developed comprehensive strategies in an attempt to compete with other countries in the pursuit of tourists, foreign direct investment, highly educated workers and export markets.

This paper will examine how Denmark's political brand has changed from the end of the cold war to the cartoon crisis in 2006.

In early 2006, the Cartoon Crisis had escalated to a point where it was considered to be Denmark's worst foreign policy crisis since the Second World War. By the time it ended, the prime minister of Denmark presented the plans for making a branding program of Denmark. "We shall utilize the situation the best way possible. At least now, people know that there is something called Denmark."¹ The prime minister of Denmark hoped that even though there were problems with the Danish reputation in some countries, the time was right to launch a campaign benefitting Denmark and Danish companies.

This article consists of two parts. The first part looks into the theory of Nation Branding, especially the relationship between identity and image. The second part is a historical analysis of Denmark's foreign policy immigration policies since the end of the Cold War. It is a study of how Denmark's brand image has changed.

Part one: Why nation branding, what is it and how to do it?

Why branding the nation?

All countries face competition from other countries, and nation branding is generally presented as means to do so successfully. Globalization makes it easier to travel and to change residence (whether as an individual or as a company); it therefore intensifies the competition between nations all over the world. Nation branding is a way to try to get foreign direct investment, tourists and skilled labor to the country and to help national industries export their goods. This discourse about globalization has been effective in convincing politicians of all nations to develop nation branding programs and use substantial amounts of money to try to communicate a more positive picture of the nation.

What is nation branding?

Nation branding as a concept is fairly new. It was first used by Simon Anholt in 1998 and despite its short

¹ Henriksen, Thomas Bernt and Krab-johansen, Anders. "Fogh vil rette op på Danmarks ry. Børsen march 31 2006, p. 20. In Danish: "Vi skal udnytte situationen bedst muligt. Nu ved folk i hvert fald at der er noget, der hedder Danmark."

history the number of countries that have actively initiated comprehensive nation branding programs has exploded within the last couple of years.

Branding a nation is not like branding a product or a service. A nation's brand cannot be created or changed by producing a clever advertising campaign, although this approach has in fact been tried. Campaigns like Cool Britannia have not been successful, however (Andreasen 2007, p. 94). Nations often have a long and rich history, which has already shaped a certain collective consciousness in people. At the same time, through their economic power, political system, religious affiliation, military strength, cultural development, or simply location, nations are already located in an international hierarchy which is also reflected in their current brand.

According to Simon Anholt, to change a nation's brand requires that the country changes its behavior. "It is the past and current behavior of the nation, region or city - or its lack of behavior - that creates its reputation: almost every place on Earth gets the image it deserves, and imagining that one can change the image of the place without changing the way one behaves is simply naive" (Anholt 2007, p. 35). A nation may have changed though the world has not discovered it - this is called an information gap. In this case it may be appropriate to make the world aware that the nation has changed (Anholt 2007, p. 65).

Image or identity - to live the brand

In branding theory, this is understood as a gap between brand image and brand identity. Brand identity "refers to what something truly is, its essence, whereas the image refers to how something is perceived" (Dinnie 2008, p. 42).

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 made the U.S. put forward the question, "Why do they hate us?" One frequently used response was that the U.S. had not managed to communicate well enough. "They don't understand us," it was said. "We have been misunderstood." Branding guru Wally Olins therefore believed that the problem was that the U.S. had not made a serious and prolonged, consistent campaign to win friends and influence people (Olins 2003, p. 151). The U.S. needed to create a national branding campaign, he argued. "If the U.S. had tried harder, earlier and for longer to explain itself, would it have been so maligned and attacked?" (Ollins 2003, p. 152) For the author of the book *No Logo*, Naomi Klein, a branding campaign would hardly have changed it. After the September 11, the U.S. government launched a branding campaign to improve the US image. In an article on 11 March 2002, Naomi Klein explained why the effort had to fail because the dissatisfaction with the US was not about the United States' proclaimed values, but about its unilateralism in international law, the increased difference between rich and poor, hard attacks on immigrants and human rights abuses seen par example at Guantanamo Bay. "The anger comes not only from

the facts of each case but also from a clear perception of false advertising. In other words, America's problem is not with its brand which could scarcely be stronger-but with its product" (Klein 2002). For Olins the lack of communication was the problem, but for Klein the problem was not lack of communication. It was that the United States was perceived as precisely as it was.

This criticism which has also been raised by others (see Fan 2005), has made the inventor of the nation brand concept, Simon Anholt, develop the concept (he has relabeled it "competitive identity"). He now points out that communication alone will not suffice, but that a country must change actions to change its brand (Anholt 2007). This responds to some of the criticism, pointing to: 1) that one cannot communicate an image of a country or place, which is not in accordance with one's identity, and 2) the idea of communicating a consistent image of a country is problematic because a country doesn't have a consistent identity. So the image of a country that is promoted must also be consistent with what is actually happening there - it has to live its brand. This means that the values and messages, the state communicates out also are values you can retrieve (and recreate) in the country's identity:

The basic theory behind Competitive Identity is that when governments have a good clear, believable and positive idea of what their country really is, what it stands for and where it's going, and manage to coordinate actions, Investments, policies and communications (...) so that they reinforce this idea, then they stand a good chance of building and Maintaining a competitive national identity both internally and externally. (Anholt 2007, p. 26)²

It is not enough for a country to declare itself "green". It should also be clear from the state's policies in the area, that it is environmentally friendly, hence nation branding must also have a clear political and identity creating-dimension. Otherwise you risk a situation in which the state tries to draw a certain picture of the nation which is contrary to the picture other key players are drawing, such as major representatives of the internationalized business and key non-governmental organizations. In the event that Denmark's policy does not conform to the brand, the government cannot just change the image, it has to align its policy.

Nation Branding, propaganda and Public Diplomacy

There are a number of approaches to managing a nation's reputation or image. Most approaches look primarily at the state's role and tries as a starting point to ensure the state's legitimacy in the international hierarchy. According to Joseph Nye's thesis that a country possesses soft power, there are political reasons

² One can rightly attack branding theory of having an essentialist approach to the material it works with. In this article I will not go into this discussion, but simply state that I agree with the part of the theory that states that actions arising from, for example a country's government, could affect the way the world perceives the country, without buying the underlying premise that a nation has an essential core.

for countries to defend their reputations. In his book *Soft Power* he defines his title concept as a way a country can "obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries - admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness - want to follow it" (Nye 2004, p. 5). Before a country's values can be admired and be an example to be followed, it requires that the values and good examples will be communicated to the rest of the world. Propaganda campaigns where content does not conform to reality, is not enough. "Political values like democracy and human rights can be powerful sources of attraction, but it is not enough just to proclaim them" (Nye 2004, p. 55). As with nation branding, the country needs to honor its own values - it must live the brand. So there is a clear bond between theories of soft power. One might, for example, use public diplomacy to secure the state's interests, and here the theory of nation branding, though it is much more focused on the economic benefits of having a good nation brand, might come in useful. But significantly for both approaches is that it is essential to safeguard the nation's reputation, and it must be done by communicating messages across the country, which is consistent with what is happening in the country. Where tools such as public diplomacy are primarily outward looking, nation branding also has an internal dimension. It also means that people should and must be involved in work to brand the country. "If traditional diplomacy is government-to-government (G2G) and public diplomacy is government-to-people (G2P), then effective nation-branding also includes an element of [people-to-people] P2P" (Anholt 2007, p. 105).

Not only do people help to live the brand, but people should also help to promote the country around the world. At its best, nation branding involves the entire population, as also reflected in the Marketing Panel latest recommendations for the marketing of Denmark. Of the 10 recommendations number 4 reads as follows:

"Marketing efforts must be widely rooted. All 5.5 million Danes should be ambassadors to Denmark" (Markedsføringspanelet Branding Denmark 2010 p.7).

Despite the desire to have 5.5 million Danish ambassadors of Denmark, it nevertheless clear that not everything is getting the same attention outside the country. Not least if there is considerable disagreement about which Denmark to market. In this perspective, the debate about immigration policy and Danish activist foreign policy is central - there has been far from consensus on these. As shown in part two of this article, foreigners also has a mixed picture of Denmark in those areas.

Part 2 - Denmark's new brand (identity and image)

The political dimension of Denmark's brand

Denmark's brand has changed over time. Changes in the political or economic system affect the brand identity, and according to theory, it will therefore also affect the brand image. Similarly, changes in Danish society and values can also put its mark on Denmark's image. I will in this article only look at two areas where Danish politics has changed, areas which the opposition has indicated has had affect on Denmark's reputation. I will look, first, at the Danish activist foreign policy, particularly the alliance with the United States, and, second, Denmark's immigration policy.

I want to assess whether these policies have actually been changed in recent years. And then I will try to examine whether those changes have been noticed by the outside world. An important point, however, concerns whether the changes in the Danish brand identity only really became visible to the outside world with the cartoon crisis. I will argue that this is the case. Until then, there has been an information gap, i.e., a difference between Danish brand identity and brand image.

Denmark's brand during the cold war

During the cold war, Denmark joined the NATO alliance, but not without reservations (Villaume 1995). Throughout the 1980s, for example, there existed an alternative security political majority outside the government, which in some areas opposed NATO's decisions. Therefore the Danish government was forced by the majority in the opposition, to declare in NATO that Denmark had some different positions than most NATO members. The result was that Denmark influence on NATO policy was seen primarily in a series of footnotes to NATO documents, which indicated the Danish minority view. When the cold war ended, the so-called "footnote policy" also stopped. The United States became the world's sole superpower.

In terms of trade, Denmark and Danish companies benefited from this non-confrontational course during the Cold War. Denmark had no trouble dealing with less democratic states. For example, the Iranian Shah visited Denmark in 1959. Here he told why it was a small country like Denmark, who benefited from the fact that Iran had "a need for technical assistance and advice from outside." As he explained in his official speech: "Denmark would be well suited to participate in this task, partly because we know that Danes makes goal oriented work without political ulterior motives and partly because we already know the Danish technical skill" (Larsen and Larsen, p. 150). An important prerequisite for choosing Denmark was the Danish foreign policy position. While Denmark became a member of NATO at the beginning of the Cold War, and was thus allied with the U.S., the Danish trade policy was not particularly influenced by moral considerations. Even with NATO's enemies in the Soviet Union, Denmark had good business relations within certain areas, especially the Danish construction industry, which had a good working relationship with the Soviets and several Eastern European countries (Larsen and Larsen, p. 88). Although Denmark was clearly located in the NATO alliance, Denmark's overall brand was more nuanced. Denmark was not so aggressive in its

appearance as the United States, and in the area of trade policy, Denmark was ready to conclude a series of agreements with Soviet Union and other states who for their part benefited from the fact that Denmark wasn't especially politically condemnatory. Thus Denmark's foreign-policy-identity and trade-policy-identity and Denmark's brand image in those areas were consistent. Denmark was part of a military alliance of countries, who to a greater or lesser extent shared the Danish political value perception. Denmark rarely had disputes with other countries, and the state often helped companies trying to do business with countries that did not share the same values as Denmark. The example of the construction industry illustrates well how the Danish government actively made bilateral agreements with the Soviets (Larsen and Larsen, p. 88) for Danish businesses.

There are exceptions to this general policy of trying not to alienate anyone, however. In 1973, Denmark experienced a partial oil boycott by Arab countries after then Prime Minister Anker Jørgensen had declared that he far down the road could defend the Israeli aggression during the October War (the war between Egypt and Syria on the one hand and Israel on the other), because Israel's neighbors really wanted to move Israel into the Mediterranean Sea. The very one-sided pro-Israeli position that Denmark had at that time - and which hitherto had not been particularly highly profiled - was, however, gradually more balanced, partly because of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) Denmark started to participate in (Pedersen 2006 p. 82 and 97). This drastic response to a Danish foreign policy positions was unique at that time. All in all, Denmark's foreign policy profile until the end of the Cold War was much more subdued and less adversarial than today, where Denmark is pursuing an activist foreign policy.

The activist foreign policy and alliance with the U.S.

These changes have been under way for a long time, but the cartoon crisis showed how changes in Denmark's brand identity had penetrated Danish policy. During the cartoon crisis the Liberal Party's political spokesman, Jens Rohde, criticized the Danish-Swedish dairy company Arla in harsh terms for an advertising campaign they undertook in the Middle East. Arla had tried to redress the damage caused by the boycott to Danish products in the Middle East. In the peak of the boycott Arla lost EUR 4 million in daily revenues (Mordhorst 2008, p. 360). In the advertising campaign Arla tried to distance themselves from the cartoons: "With a 40-year history of the Middle East as an active and integral part of society, we understand that you feel violated. Our presence in the region has given us an understanding of your culture, values and your religion Islam."³ After this, Jens Rohde declared that "if Arla is so dissatisfied with Denmark, let it move to Teheran" (Mordhorst 2008, p. 361.). Moreover he stated that Arla "genuflects too deeply for some regimes,

³ The complete Danish translation of the ad is to be found in Poulsen, Alan. Islamdebat – om terrorisme, blasfemi og ytringsfrihed. Systime 2008, p. 71. The Danish version reads: " Med en 40 år lang historie i Mellemøsten som en aktiv og integreret del af samfundet, forstår vi, at I føler jer krænket. Vores tilstedeværelse i regionen har givet os en viden om jeres kultur, værdier og om jeres religion islam."

who do not themselves respect other cultures.”⁴ It is more than unusual that a Liberal-Conservative government so harshly attacks a large Danish company, which is doing business much the same way it always has. It clearly shows that there has been a change in Denmark – a change in the Danish brand-identity. Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen later explained that he wasn’t worried about how Denmark’s reputation in authoritarian societies were: “if there should be an authoritarian society somewhere, where our reputation is bad, I would say: Yes, but that’s life, when you stand up for values of freedom and human rights then you cannot be friends with everyone and it is difficult to be friends with those who do not have the same understanding of freedom and liberties.”⁵ The problem with such an attitude is of course when Danish companies lose revenue when Denmark’s brand is perceived badly by countries that do not share Danish values, or when Denmark is seen, like the U.S., as hypocritical because the war on terror also have led to violations of human rights.

But before we take a closer look at Denmark’s brand image, it is important to notice that Denmark’s brand identity has changed. From being a reluctant participant in the NATO alliance during the Cold War, today, Denmark is a major activist foreign policy. Already in the 1980s under the conservative-liberal government, when Uffe Ellemann-Jensen was foreign minister, he felt that the footnote policy led to a Danish prestige among NATO countries, not least the United States. When the opportunity arose, with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Uffe Elleman-Jensen therefore seized the moment to show Denmark’s strong support for American led action against Iraq. In a radio interview on 26 August 1990, Uffe Elleman-Jensen said that Denmark should participate in the military action against Iraq, with a naval vessel. In his memoirs Uffe Ellemann-Jensen describes why he chose to make this announcement before he had talked with the rest of the government: “After the way Denmark had behaved in previous years under ‘the time of the footnotes’, we needed to mark us as willing to take an active part in the efforts to defend common interests” (Elleman-Jensen 2007, p. 214)⁶. Denmark’s reputation was at stake. The Social Democrats spokesman for defense, later minister of defense Hans Hækkerup, also backed the Danish efforts against Iraq. In his memoirs from 2002, he also used the relations with the U.S. as an argument for supporting the war against Iraq: “it was probably not so bad if we supported the United States in this question” (Hækkerup 2002, p. 94).⁷

⁴ Politiken 22. marts 2006. The Danish version reads: “de bøjer sig for dybt over for nogle regimer, der ikke selv respekterer andre kulturer, ytringsfrihed og menneskerettigheder.”

⁵ Remark made in the Danish parliament June 1th 2006 (F 39 – 401 - Om den indenrigs- og udenrigspolitiske situation.). In Danish: “skulle der være et autoritært samfund her eller der, hvor vores renommé ikke er så godt, vil jeg gerne sige: jo, men det er livets vilkår, at når man står for frihedsværdier og menneskerettigheder, kan man ikke være ven med alle, og det er svært at være ven med dem, der ikke har det samme syn på frihed og frihedsrettigheder.”

⁶ The danish version reads: “Efter den måde Danmark havde opført sig på i de foregående år under “fodnotetiden”, havde vi brug for at markere os som villige til at tage aktivt del i indsatsen for at forsvare fælles interesser.”

⁷ The Danish version reads: “det var nok ikke så skidt, hvis vi støttede USA i det her spørgsmål.”

The first Gulf War thus launched the Danish activist foreign policy, which would continue in the years to come. Since the Tamil-case in January 1993 had forced the liberal-conservative government headed by Poul Schlüter to resign, the Social Democrats took over and developed Denmark's activist foreign policy. Efforts to strengthen the alliance with the United States were also multiplied. For Denmark's new minister of defence, Hans Hækkerup, it was important that Denmark should strengthen its relations with the United States. As he explained in his autobiography: "Luckily the U.S. won the cold war, and although I do not always agree with the 'benign' superpower, we basically share the same values. It does not mean that one should be naive - the U.S. safeguards American interests, just as Denmark safeguards the Danish. But in Denmark it is important to have good relations with "the sole super power", and I have no doubt that the policy I have stood for, has helped to ensure this" (Hækkerup 2002, p. 31).⁸ The activist foreign policy, then, was also a tool to strengthen Denmark's ties with the United States.

For a small country like Denmark, there are many good reasons to develop a close alliance with the United States. The State Department's 2006-report about present to relationship with U.S. as a way to manage globalization.

“For Denmark, the relationship to the United States will remain central in the coming years. U.S. will in most areas be a crucial actor in relation to handle the challenges of globalization. With an active effort Denmark has opportunities to maintain the current good access to U.S. policymakers. U.S. will continue to pose a significant economic trading partner and not least an inspiration and focal point in research and innovation. Globalization means that Denmark's ability to establish networks in all relevant settings in the U.S. will be of increasing importance to the safeguarding of Danish interests. (Udenrigsministeriet 2006, p. 9)”⁹

⁸ The Danish version reads: "Heldigvis var det USA, der vandt den kolde krig, og selvom jeg ikke altid er enig med den "godartede" supermagt, deler vi grundlæggende de samme værdier. Det betyder selvfølgelig ikke, at man skal være naiv – USA varetager amerikanske interesser, ligesom Danmark varetager danske. Men for Danmark er det vigtigt at have et godt forhold til "the sole superpower", og jeg er ikke i tvivl om, at den politik, jeg har stået for, har medvirket til at sikre dette."

⁹ The Danish version reads: "For Danmark vil forholdet til USA fortsat stå centralt i årene fremover. USA vil på de fleste områder være en afgørende aktør i forhold til at håndtere globaliseringens udfordringer. Med en aktiv indsats har Danmark muligheder for at fastholde den aktuelt gode adgang til amerikanske beslutningstagere. USA vil fortsat udgøre en betydelig økonomisk samhandelspartner og ikke mindst inspirator og omdrejningspunkt indenfor forskning og innovation. Globaliseringen indebærer, at Danmarks evne til at etablere netværk i alle relevante miljøer i USA vil være af stigende betydning for varetagelsen af danske interesser."

The report identifies key reasons for Denmark's close cooperation with the U.S. where the economy plays a significant role. The economic benefit has been substantial in the past 15 years. Denmark was thus favored with a special status as partner on defense in May 2005. It meant that Danish companies had easier access to U.S. defense industry. Even before then there was an increase in the Danish defense-related turnover of EUR 56 million in 2000 to EUR 148 million in 2004. And the number of Danish defense companies that had signed contracts with the U.S. defense, went from five in 1995 to 28 in 2004. Head of the Ministry of Defense, Christian Arildsen, explained the special partnership to the press in this terms: "We told the Americans that we should have a little meat on the table, that we were one of America's closest allies in Afghanistan and Iraq - and then they said 'yes, of course you shall have a DOP agreement' [Declaration of Principles, which gives Denmark a special status as partner on defense]" (Information 2005a, Information2005b)¹⁰.

It is not just the defense industry that has benefited from the increased cooperation with the United States. Support for the war against Afghanistan also gave access to the oil-rich Caspian Sea. In 2002, the Danish company Maersk was given the rights to extract oil in the Turkmen part of the Caspian Sea (U.S. State Department in 2006 and 2008). The close alliance with the United States turned into a trading profit for Denmark in the late 1990's. In 1997, Denmark thus had a trade deficit against the U.S. at EUR 270 million - two years later the deficit was turned into a surplus of EUR 200 million and in 2006 the trade surplus had grown to more than EUR 2 billion. The cooperation with the U.S. has been economic beneficial for Denmark, but there has of course been other motives for Denmark's deeper alliance with the U.S. Greater opportunities to hold international positions in NATO and the United Nations has been one possible motive (Mouritzen 2001, p. 131). Both Ellemann-Jensen and Hækkerup have been mentioned as possible NATO Secretaries General, but only in 2009 former Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen succeeded in becoming Secretary General of NATO. All in all Danish brand's image had changed in the U.S. From being a relatively secondary political ally, Denmark has gradually become an important strategic ally. This is reflected in the economy, in the form of a preferential treatment in connection to the defense industry. It has also led positive imagine of Denmark as an investment opportunity in the U.S. (See, for example, U.S. State Department's annual Investment Climate Statement for Denmark.)

Denmark's increasingly important role as allied to United States is also reflected in the increased military cooperation. Denmark had since Ellemann-Jensen in 1990 issued a declaration to support Lithuania's desire for autonomy worked consistently to increase the Danish influence in the Baltic States - it has also led to military cooperation between Denmark and the Baltic countries. This cooperation has included everything

¹⁰ The Danish version reads: "Vi sagde til amerikanerne, at vi skulle have lidt kød på, at vi var en af USA's nærmeste allierede i Afghanistan og Irak – og så sagde de: 'jamen, selvfølgelig skal I have en DoP-aftale'"

from training the Baltic armies, to supplying equipment, to participating in joint UN and NATO missions in the former Yugoslavia (Hækkerup 2002, p. 64-70).

It was not only the Baltic States, where Danish interest was increased. Also the Central Asian states near the Caspian Sea had priority. Thus Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan created a joint battalion after the Baltic model and with Danish help. Denmark's growing influence in the former Soviet could not happen without the acceptance of United States. Up through the 1990s the political and security cooperation with the United States had grown considerably. It was the Danish Defense Minister Hans Hækkerup, who on September 15th 1997 received a team of 500 U.S. paratroopers who had taken the entire trip from North Carolina in the United States to southern Kazakhstan. It was part of a NATO exercise, but as an American general who came with the paratroopers explained: "There is no nation on earth that we cannot reach" (Dragsdahl 2005, p. 194-195).

The alliance between United States and Denmark was cemented with president Bill Clinton's visit to Denmark on 11 June 1997. As Bill Clinton writes on his visit in his autobiography: "On a bright sunny day in Copenhagen, the crowds size and enthusiasm expressed a confirmation of our alliance and an appreciation of the fact that I was the first sitting president ever to visit Denmark" (Clinton 2005, p. 811-812).¹¹

Denmark's brand identity was changed throughout the 1990s and this was also reflected in Denmark's brand image in the American state apparatus. Already during the government of the social democrat Poul Nyrup Rasmussen in the 1990s, Denmark's foreign policy brand identity changed. Since then the alliance between United States and Denmark has been elaborated further. When the United States under Bill Clinton was close to going to war with Iraq in 1998, and when United States next year bombed Yugoslavia, Denmark supported the U.S. line. Denmark even followed the U.S. decisions so closely that when the U.S. ruled out using ground troops against Yugoslavia in the event that the bombing of Yugoslavia did not give the wished result, Denmark did the same. And when the United States reconsidered Denmark did too. Initially United States didn't accept refugees because they thought refugees had to stay in the nearby area and in this way put pressure on the Yugoslav leader Milosevic. This line followed Denmark until the U.S. began to signal willingness to receive refugees - then Denmark also signaled willingness to receive refugees from Yugoslavia. This very dense close following of the U.S. has raised speculation about Denmark being a puppet of United States. (Mauritzen 2001, p. 131)

Collaboration with the U.S. continued even after the inauguration of George W. Bush. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, the Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen made it clear that Denmark

¹¹ The Danish version reads: "På en strålende solskinsdag i København var mængdens størrelse og begejstring udtryk for en bekræftelse af vores alliance og en værdsættelse af, at jeg var den første siddende præsident, der nogensinde aflagde besøg i Danmark."

stood by United States.¹² Denmark's change of government in November 2001 didn't lead to any changes in Denmark's policy towards United States. Cooperation with the U.S. expanded, and especially up to the Iraq war, Denmark was an active and important ally of the United States, trying to put pressure on EU and NATO, getting them to accept and support the war against Iraq. This was mainly reflected in the letter Anders Fogh Rasmussen (and other European leaders) signed on 30 January 2003 - the letter was intended to press France and Germany to abandon opposition to the planned invasion of Iraq. Besides support for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, also Denmark's support for Americans attempts to build a missile defense influenced the alliance. The missile defense required U.S. presence on Danish territory (Greenland), which also affects Denmark's relationship with the United States (Talbot 2003, p. 390).

Ultimately, Denmark's close alliance with the United States was crowned with the appointment of Anders Fogh Rasmussen as new Secretary General of NATO in 2009. This appointment no depended crucially on US support.

Denmark's foreign policy has changed and so has Denmark's brand identity. Although Denmark has formally been allied with the U.S since the membership of NATO in 1949, Danish politicians throughout the Cold War moved towards detente. Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union did close cooperation with the United States begin to be cultivated in earnest. Denmark's new brand identity has also been reflected in a changed brand image. But the new brand image has primarily been spread to Denmark's allies and not among the leaders and populations in the rest of the world. Denmark's support for the US-led war against Iraq in 2003, however, attracted attention and has also been reflected in the Danish business leaders' assessment of Denmark's ability to attract foreign investment. Shortly after the Iraq war in 2003, the weekly newsletter *Monday Morning* carried out an investigation into what Danish business leaders with international contacts felt had a negative impact on Denmark's ability to attract foreign investment. Denmark's participation in the war against Iraq was cited as number two among the negative factors. High taxes were number one. But it was only with the Cartoon crisis, the alliance with the U.S. and the activist foreign policy was put in the context of Denmark's treatment of Muslims, and the changes in Denmark's brand image were widely spread - see more in the section on the Cartoon Crisis and Denmark's new brand below.

Denmark's immigration policy

In 1983 Denmark got a new immigration law. According to Ellemann-Jensen, the act proposed "easy access for asylum seekers" (Elleman-Jensen 2007, p. 197).¹³ Before that, the law on "foreigners" of 1973 had been in force, which had covered the law about immigrants. In 1977, following criticism of this law, a committee was set up to make a proposal for a new legislation. However it wasn't until 1982 that the work of the committee was completed. The committee was divided into a minority and a majority. The majority wanted

¹² Kristeligt Dagblad 14.09.2001

¹³ The Danish version reads: "let adgang for asylansøgere."

to protect the state interests and limit the number of refugees while the minority were more concerned about individual rights and legal security in refugee matters. The minority-government, consisting of Conservatives, Liberals, Center Democrats and Christian Democrats wanted to make the recommendations of the majority into law. However due to the opposition, consisting of the Radicals, Social Democrats and the Socialist People's Party, the reports minority-viewpoints and their recommendations was included - making it a more liberal Immigration Law - and accepted by a broad political majority (Petersen 2006, p. 435 – 440).

After the act was imposed, an increasing number of spontaneous asylum seekers were coming to Denmark. In the mid-1980s, it was mainly Tamils and stateless Palestinians who sought asylum in Denmark. At the same time the debate intensified, and in years to come the government tightening the law and a number of "loopholes" in the law was closed. It was not just asylum seekers who had more difficulties in getting into Denmark. There were also introduced constraints in relation to family reunification, mainly in an attempt to put a stop to the Sri Lankan Tamils family reunification. This was done administratively under minister of Justice Erik Ninn Hansen, but was in contradiction to the law and in 1989 Erik Ninn Hansen was forced to resign. In the spring of 1990, partly on the basis of a documentary showed on Danish national television, there was established a judicial inquiry of the government and its role in connection to the Tamil family reunification. As a result of this Supreme Court Justice Mogens Hornslet in 1993 presented a report that was so damaging to the government that it resigned. In 1995, Erik Ninn Hansen was sentenced to four months' of imprisonment for having stopped the reunification of Tamils without the consent of the parliament.

The Immigration Act of 1983 was thus an opening of Denmark. The law was not popular all over and quickly there grew a tough debate about refugees and immigrants in Denmark. It even led to a remark in the Queen's New Year speech at the turn of the year in 1984/85 - criticizing the harsh tone of the immigration debate. Constraints of the law began in the mid-1980s. They continued through the 1990s and with the change of government in 2001 when Danish People's Party became the liberal-conservatives governments supporting party, further constraints was put into action. In 2002, for example a 24-year rule was introduced, which increased the age requirement from 18 to 24 years for reunification of spouses. At the same time the government raised the level of attachment people should have to Denmark before being reunified. The many constraints have now made it very difficult for people outside the European Union (especially from third world countries) to obtain a visa to Denmark. And it is something which also creates an image of Denmark as a closed country. "The Danish Visa policy makes it very complicated for Indian tourists to visit Denmark," explained Indian Nazir Rah working in the tourism industry (Red Associates 2006, p. 42). But also having international meetings in Denmark can be problematic (Red Associates 2006). Also Danes abroad have experienced that Denmark's image in this area has changed. Steen Pedersen recounts an experience about an incident trying to renew a visa in Kenya:

I was sent into another authoritative and competent lady higher up the system and was asked why I complained. I replied gently that it's usually only took half a day, and I was only in Nairobi to get a visa and had costs of stay, etc. She, a lady of my age, looked sharply at me and said: 'Where is it you are coming from? Denmark right?' "I couldn't deny that, and then she said: 'Even if you married me, I would not be allowed to come with you to Denmark even for a year, so what are you complaining about?'" ("When it is the Dane who is a foreigner", Politiken 21.10.2008.)¹⁴

The strict Danish immigration policy thus also affects people's relationships abroad. Not only in the third world countries, but also people from EU increasingly perceives Denmark as a closed country. The Swedish musician Michael Wiehe explains that the perception of the open Denmark has changed in Sweden. "The perception of Denmark as the free, bohemian and open society is being spoiled by the way immigrants are treated. Swedes are worried about this development "(Red Associates 2006). However, there are Swedes who suggests that the Danish immigrant policy is also coming to Sweden (Dahllöf 2008).

The very rigid rules (and the administration of them) have also created problems in relation to the European Unions' rules about freedom of movement. In spring 2009, there was a big debate about witch consequences an EU ruling - known as the Metock judgment – had for family reunification in Denmark. The Court had ruled that foreigners from countries outside the EU could settle in any EU country with a spouse of an EU country, even if the alien resided illegally in the country. Families can then use the rules of EU citizenship to exercise free movement within the EU.

The heated debate also had implications for the government's official policy. According to Minister of Integration Birthe Ronn Hornbech the government is currently working to change the EU residence directive (Borg 2009). Morten Messerschmidt from the Danish People's Party even demanded that Denmark got an extra exception from the European Union in immigration matters (Nielsen 2009).

¹⁴ The Danish version reads: *Jeg blev sendt ind til en anden myndig og kompetent dame højere oppe i systemet og blev spurgt, hvorfor jeg brokkede mig. Jeg svarede forsigtigt, at det jo normalt kun tog en halv dag, og jeg var kun i Nairobi for at få visum og havde udgifter til ophold etc. Hun, en dame på min egen alder, så hvast på mig og sagde: »Hvor er det du kommer fra? Danmark ikke?« Det kunne jeg jo ikke benægte, hvorefter hun sagde: »Selv om du giftede dig med mig, ville jeg jo ikke engang få lov til at komme med dig til Danmark i et år, så hvad er det du beklager dig over?«*

- Steen Pedersen, om en oplevelse da han skulle have fornyet et visum i Kenya. Citatet stammer fra kronikken "Når det er danskeren, der er udlænding", *Politiken* 21.10.2008.

The Cartoon crisis and Denmark's new brand (image)

Only few studies of Denmark's brand image have been conducted. There are two major studies on Denmark's brand and one minor, which I will use in trying to investigate if Danish brand identity also have affected the outside world's view of Denmark. One is a qualitative perception analysis developed by ReD Associates in September and October 2006 based on 150 interviews in 10 countries. The second is a continuous quantitative analysis (questionnaire), which underlies the Danish position on the Simon Anholt Nation Brand Index. In the preparation of the index in 2006 there were 25,000 respondents in 35 countries. These two studies were also the cornerstones of the analytical framework that were used in the Danish nation branding strategy - Action Plan for aggressive global marketing of Denmark (Økonomi- og Erhvervsministeriet 2007, p. 75). In 2007 the Danish Chamber of Commerce also made a little analysis that specifically looked at the link between Denmark's brand and the Danish industry - a series of findings from the study are published in the booklet "Danmarks internationale omdømme" - Denmark's international reputation (Dansk Erhverv 2007).

In relation to its size, Denmark has a very strong Brand. Compared to other countries, Denmark has generally a good image, especially when Denmark is assessed on the political system. In the fourth quarter of 2005, Denmark was placed number 14 out of 35 countries at the Simon Anholt Nation Brand Index, but within governance Denmark aggregate placed on a fourth place (Anholt 2008). There is no doubt that Muhammad crisis had a negative impact on Denmark's fire. Although overall, Denmark remained positioned as number 14 out of 35 in the first quarter of 2006, Denmark's ranking had worsened in all parameters measured at the Anholt brand index excluding exports. Thus, Denmark was dropped to number six in Governance. Especially the only two countries in the index with large Muslim populations - Egypt and Turkey – ranked Denmark purely in 2006. Among Turkish respondents Denmark fell from a position as number 19 to number 26 and in the eyes of the Egyptians Denmark went from position as number 15 to a position in the bottom at the list as number 35 (Anholt 2007, p. 50 and Anholt 2008). Danes are still placed in the bottom of the list (No. 50 of 50) among Egyptians on the Anholt Brand Index.

That the Cartoon crisis was bad for Denmark's brand is also illustrated by the study conducted by Danish Chamber of Commerce. In the study international business representatives actually evaluated the Cartoon crisis as more harmful to Denmark's brand than Danish companies did. This also applies to Iraqi war, but this is not weighted equally harmful to the Danish Brand as the Cartoon crisis (Dansk Erhverv 2007, p. 14-15). It is clear that the cartoon crisis has had a negative impact on Denmark's brand, but the analysis from the Danish Chamber of Commerce does not tell why the Cartoon crisis was damaging the Danish Brand. According to Simon Anholt, the Cartoon Crisis became a story in itself: "From being a country that few people knew anything about, you [Denmark] are now 'the country with the cartoons' in much of the Muslim

world" (Balslev et al. 2008). But except that the handling of the case might have been better, I would point out that one of the main effects of the Cartoon crisis was, that it narrowed the information gap between the Danish brand identity and brand image. Not least about immigration issues, but also about Denmark's activist foreign policy. One of the major problems in the measurements of the Danish Brand was that knowledge of Denmark was generally low, but the Cartoon crisis helped to raise awareness of Denmark - not least in the political sphere. The average knowledge of Danish politics and society were also reasonably high among those interviewed in Red Associates analysis (Red Associates 2006 pp 14-15), which was conducted in September-October 2006 – when the cartoon crisis was still fresh in the memories of the interviewed.¹⁵ The analysis is highlighting 16 bullet points indicating how Denmark is perceived outside Denmark. One of those points is that Denmark is seen as a closed society. According to the study a number of respondents perceived Denmark as a closed country. Four reasons are mentioned - the first two being Denmark's strict visa rules and the Danish immigration policy.¹⁶ Although very few respondents directly mentioned the Cartoon Crisis, there were several people pointing to the "general restrictions on immigration as decisive for perceiving Denmark as a closed country" (Red Associates, p. 43).¹⁷ The cartoon crisis, made it clear that Denmark had changed policy in key areas, and these changes made Denmark seem as a closed country. Denmark's brand identity and brand image was all in all more in line with each other. Perception of Danes as open and welcoming does however exist alongside with the view that the Danish society is closed. Agnieszka Duiana working in research & education in Poland, explains that the Danish society "is closed, but people are friendly and nice and open" (Red Associates p. 44).

That Denmark is seen as more closed because of the immigration policy is really not that strange. In a debate in parliament in connection with Denmark's cohesiveness and the cartoon crisis, the then Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen made it clear that the purpose of "the significant transformation of immigration and integration policy, as we did when we formed the government back in November 2001," was too "Restrict immigration policy so that the influx to Denmark was reduced to an manageable extent to Danish society," and to strengthen integration. According to the analysis from Red Associates it is mostly Denmark's nearest neighbors, who increasingly perceives Denmark as a closed country – it is the countries having the latest and most detailed information about Denmark (Red Associates, p. 74).

¹⁵ The average knowledge about Denmark's politic and society was 3.9 out of 5, where 5 are most and 1 is least. A average knowledge at 4 means that the interviewed "has a deep understanding of Denmark in connection to his profession. The interviewed can answer question connecting to themes outside his profession – but not necessarily all questions. The interviewed can differentiate between Denmark and other countries." (ReD Associates 2006, p. 15).

¹⁶ The other two reasons why Denmark is perceived as closed is because of lack of information about the country, and that danish people is perceived as closed.

¹⁷ §-20- spørgsmål 2849, folketingssamlingen 2005-2006. The Danish version reads: "generelle stramninger på udlændinggeområdet som udslagsvindinge for at opfatte Danmark som et lukket land."

But it was not only the Danish immigration policy that was noted in the light of the Cartoon crisis. It was also Denmark's activist foreign policy and the alliance with the U.S. American and Danish flags were suddenly burned together. The discovery of Denmark's close alliance with the United States was not only negative. In the United States there it raised sympathy seeing the Danish flag burned together with the American stars and stripes (Red Associates 2006, p. 73). But for a large part of the Muslim population it was not a good thing to be closely associated with the United States, which at that time had a slipping brand image, which was only reversed after the election of President Barack Obama. Denmark's activist foreign policy was not popular with everybody; this was indicated in the Simon Anholt Nation Brands Index in 2008. The question about whether Denmark behaved responsibly in relation to international peace and security, Denmark only occupies a 10th place out of 25 nations - the worst Danish result in the category about governance. Denmark's ranking in governance in 2008 was a shared seventh-place with Norway. Since 2005, Denmark is therefore dropped three places in this area. Sweden was placed better in all areas.¹⁸

Conclusion

A review of Denmark's foreign policy and immigration policy clearly shows that Denmark after the end of the Cold War has changed position. Denmark has tightened immigration policy, and Denmark today has an activist foreign policy in close cooperation with United States. Denmark has, according to the theory changed brand identity. To some extent, Denmark's new brand identity has been perceived by the outside world, but the reaction in connection with the Cartoon Crisis suggests that it was only at this time that the world really saw that Denmark had changed positions. Until then, there had been an information gap.

The Cartoon crisis led to a convergence of the Danish brand identity and brand image. As this analysis shows, Denmark has changed policy in a number of areas since the end of the Cold War. Although the Danish image has mostly has changed in a negative way after the Cartoon Crisis, the theory suggests that it was not the Cartoon crisis in itself that has left lasting marks on Denmark's Brand. This is confirmed by the few studies that have been made about Denmark's brand image. The outside world has simply been given a more accurate picture of Danish immigration policy and Danish activist foreign policy, including Denmark's alliance with America.

The sparse studies done in this area, gives no clear indication about Denmark's new brand has been a political or economic advantage for Denmark and Danish companies. It should be noted that Denmark now

¹⁸ The 25 nations is: USA, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Swiss, Russia, Poland, Turkey, Japan, South Korea, China, India, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Brazil.

has a relatively inferior brand image than before the Cartoon Crisis - especially in countries with large Muslim populations - but it is difficult to assess whether the benefits of Denmark's new position in the political scene outweigh the disadvantages. In the short term, the alliance with the U.S. had both economic and political benefits for Denmark. Politically, the most significant change in Denmark's position is that former Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen today is NATO Secretary General, suggesting that Denmark's cooperation with the U.S. has led to greater international influence. But eventually, the negative associations that are currently attached to the U.S., such as human rights abuses and double standards, may one day be transferred to Denmark. Denmark's close association with the United States may thus be a double-edged sword. And while the alliance in the future remains political and economic benefits for Denmark, the close cooperation with the U.S., also has possible negative consequences for Denmark's Brand. The change in Denmark's relations to United States has created economic benefits for some companies, while the Danish-Swedish dairy company Arla could easily talk about problems in connection to Denmark's Brand in Muslim countries.

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