The Danish Way of War – will the activism continue after Afghanistan?

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Oops what happened?
Main points

- DK on Venus 1864-1989
- DK flies to Mars
- Why Mars?
- DK way of war on Mars
- Will DK remain on Mars?
Venus vs Mars

- Europa lives on på Venus and has forgotten how to use force
- USA lives on Mars and uses force to protect itself and Europe
DK on Venus 1864-1993

- DK only shoots in self-defence – and only if it worthwhile
- (÷ 1940)
- Reluctant NATO ally
- Korean War: hospital ship > no to combat troops
1994: DK flies to Mars

- Highest public support for:
  - Kosovo 1999 (77%)
  - Afghanistan 2011 (45%)
  - Libya 2011 (78%)
  - Invasion of Iran 2012 (27%)
  - Iraq 2014 (62%)
1994- DK flies to Mars

- Military force useful and legitimate tool of statecraft
- 50,000 cars with yellow ribbons
- Flagday, memorials, bravery medals, home coming parades, veteran policy
1994- DK flies to Mars

- War heroes: Lars Møller, Anders Storrud, Anders Lassen resurrected
- DK at war has triggered an avalanche of books, movies and TV series
Why Mars?

- USSR collapses
- "no more NATO footnotes"
- Demand from the UN, NATO and the US →
- Gulf war
- Balkans
- Iraq
- Afghanistan
Why Mars?

- Operation Hooligan Buster 1994
- Praise from NATO and allies
- Few fatalities during the 1990s
- Snowballing effect

=> New strategic culture: use of force natural and legitimate instrument
The Danish way of war on Mars

• Since 1989 DK has constructed a narrative explaining why and how we go to war that the Danish public identifies with and takes inspiration from → new national identity / strategic culture

• Clear and consistent communication of this narrative by most political parties backing the use of force

• Iraq War 2003 the only exception to this rule
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**Ends**

- Defend DK security and prosperity
- Promote “DK” liberal values: demokracy, human rights, and the rule of law
- Do our duty as a responsible and civilized nation
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**Ways**

**Support for NATO and the US**
- Plug og play with UK and US without caveats (almost)

**Support for UN**
- UN (or NATO) mandate

**Broad political support;**
- 2/3 majority principle

**Integrated civil-military approach**

**Clean hands**
- no legal problems = no prisoners or private security firms
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Means

- Diplomacy
- Development
- Humanitarian assistance
- Military

→ The integrated approach means that Denmark will always employ civilian and military means together → prerequisite for broad political support
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War popular in DK if
1) It is sold with reference to national security, liberal values and the duty to make a difference as a responsible nation.
2) Fought together with NATO allies, UN (NATO) mandate, broad political support, an integrated approach (civilian + military means) and in accordance with the laws of armed conflict.
Will DK remain on Mars?

- The choice after Afghanistan
- Continuation of the “Mars”-approach or a return to Venus?
Will DK remain on Mars?

The VENUS-argument

- “Militarisation” a mistake – no gains, just dead soldiers and financial costs
- DK should prevent wars not fight them
- Never again Iraq and Afghanistan
- Increased risk of terror attacks
- Conflicts cannot be resolved by force
Will DK remain on Mars?

Mars-argument

- DK foreign policy normalized not militarized
- Military force supports and reinforces civilian instruments
- DK policy successful - more status and influence than before
- Every wants to negotiate, few can and will fight → DK makes an important difference and supports its values and interests
Will DK remain on Mars?

DK makes a difference

- 6 of 28 NATO countries sent troops to Southern Afghanistan
- 8 of 28 NATO countries bombed in Libya
Will DK remain on Mars?

Who wins?

- It will be determined by our allies in the UN and NATO (and our enemies)
- If DK allies continue to call Copenhagen and can provide a just case and a UN/NATO mandate
- Then DK will continue to join the fight
- Form and frequency will be determined by allied requests
Will DK remain on Mars?

Who wins?

- International > national factors
- There is "just" war enough for everyone → DK will remain on Mars
PVJ, Denmark at War: Turning Point or Business as Usual?, in B. Heurlin and H. Mouritzen (eds.) Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2000, Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Affairs: 61-85.


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Questions?

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