

University of Akureyri,

Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Department of Law

Master's Program in Polar Law

Consistencies and Inconsistencies in the National Strategies of the Arctic Littoral States

Harry Borlase

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Harry Borlase

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Harry Borlase

Kt: 080383-5760

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Lassi Heininen:

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Department of Law

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Abstract

This thesis is a comparative analysis of the Arctic strategies of the five Arctic Ocean states. Beginning with the release of Norway's High North Strategy in 2006, there has been a series of national directives released from each of the coastal states, the most recent coming from Canada in July of 2009. Though these strategies are tailored to national considerations, there are a number of commonalities in priorities and objectives that are consistent throughout each. This study examines these commonalities and considers the differences in respect to four concepts of foreign policy: security, cooperation, energy, and the environment. It also evaluates the symbolic importance that these strategies have within the current geopolitical realities of the Arctic, and considers whether these strategies may have deeper meanings on the political future of the region.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction.....	3
Chapters Overview.....	8
1. Methodology and Literature Survey	11
1.1 Methodology	11
1.2 Literature Survey	15
2. Theoretical Considerations in Arctic Politics.....	18
2.1 Chapter Overview	18
2.2 Identifying the Principle Actors.....	21
2.3 Indigenous Strategies and Policy Directives	29
2.4 Foundations of Realism and Neorealism Thought.....	34
2.5 Structure in Neorealism.....	38
2.6 Criticism and Contemplations of Systems Theory.....	41
2.7 A Note on Strategies.....	44
2.8 A Theoretical Path for Understanding Arctic Relations	47
3. Geopolitical Theory and Application in the Arctic.....	49
3.1 Chapter Overview	49
3.2 Geopolitical Theories and Spatial Relationships.....	50
3.3 Classical, Critical and New Geopolitics	53
3.3.1 Classical Geopolitics.....	53
3.3.2 Critical and New Geopolitics.....	55
3.4 Eras of Arctic Geopolitics.....	58
3.4.1 Discussion on Circumpolar Conflict and Security	62
3.4.2 Discussion on Circumpolar Cooperation.....	70
3.5 Towards a New in Arctic Geopolitics?	78
4. Geopolitical Considerations of the Arctic Littoral States and their Arctic Strategies	82
4.1 Chapter Overview	82
4.2 Canada	83
4.2.1 Canada's Northern Strategy.....	92
4.3 Denmark/Greenland	95
4.3.1 The Arctic at a Time of Transition: Proposed Strategy for Arctic in the Arctic Region.....	100
4.4 Norway	102
4.4.1 The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy	106
4.5 The Russian Federation	109
4.5.1 Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond	118
4.6 The United States of America	122
4.6.1 Arctic Region Policy.....	128
4.7 Concluding Observations	132

5. Analysis of the Arctic Strategies	135
5.1 Security.....	135
5.2 Energy	139
5.3 Environment	143
5.4 Cooperation	145
5.5 Concluding Observations	149
Conclusions	151
Bibliography	154

Introduction

It could be said that if Russia's Polar flag-planting expedition in August 2007 succeeded in anything, it was to offer Arctic politics to the world. Since then, much has been made in international media about the redefining character of the region's geopolitics. Perhaps most notoriously put by Borgerson in the March 2008 edition of *Foreign Affairs*, the "Arctic meltdown" has ignited a race for resources among the Arctic states (Borgerson, 2008). Similar images were conveyed in Time Magazine's October 2007 cover titled 'Who Owns the Arctic' in which flags of the five Arctic Ocean states had assumed ownership of a single piece of stranded ice (Time Magazine, 2007). Though facts and figures like these are often misconstrued based on speculation and falsified information, the Arctic has nevertheless gained an unprecedented amount of interest from outside of the region. This interest goes beyond the continental shelf disputes among the Arctic coastal states. New transport routes via the Arctic Ocean and its seaways, the vast potential for resource development including oil and gas, as well as the natural implications of the Arctic melt as a consequence of global warming are other predictable points of departure through which Arctic politics have gone global. Though these events have been successful in capturing the Arctic's distinct natural environment as having great importance globally, they illustrate a narrow understanding of the geopolitical reality of the region. Despite the cold attitude from some states and statesmen over seabed disputes, it is an exaggeration for media and academics to revert back to Cold War comparisons. What has seemingly been forgotten in this new age of Arctic exposure is the cornerstone of the region's political foundation- the rich history of peaceful cooperation among the Arctic states. Unfortunately, framing the Arctic in terms of a conflict zone or a national security threat seems more commonplace than recognizing the innovative design of cooperation that has kept the region stable since the end of the Cold War.

However, there is reason to believe that the past trends in Arctic geopolitics are changing, and in a way that has yet to be fully realized. While the possibilities for trying to explain

changes seem endless,¹ the dominance that Arctic policies and strategies have had in the last ten years within the national governments of the Arctic states should be at the top of the list. In my opinion, these national directives are symbolic of a new level of interest from the Arctic states, in which national priorities and objectives are becoming increasingly influential to the region's development as a whole. Though different on many levels, these directives each embody the virtues and interests of states in respect to the Arctic and signify a deepening awareness and responsibility of central governments towards the region's political, economical and societal development. As the high-profile attendance from the 2009 Arctic Council ministerial meeting in Tromsø might suggest, increased attention from the central governments of the Arctic states is increasingly becoming the destination for unprecedented political attention. If sustained, this would have great impact on the region's unique cooperative framework and would presuppose a review of the current mandates and implementation policies by which political institutions operate. At the same time however, each strategy outwardly defends the need to maintain the current cooperative structure, and in particular the preserved mandate of the Arctic Council. This represents a concerted effort by the governments to safeguard the architectural framework through which Arctic governance will continue to operate in the future. As the text of the directives would suggest, the Arctic states clearly support the preservation of the governance system, and thus have confidence in its ability to maintain their interests, despite the obvious attention and global importance it has recently draw. This would, however, present a fairly obvious inconsistency- how is it possible for the current structure of institutional cooperation to maintain the status quo given their limited mandates in a region that is increasingly becoming more politicized and strategic?

It is these types of discussions that prompted my interest in the topic. Beginning as early as 2001, there has been a succession of strategies developed by the Arctic states, concerning their northern areas. Though these strategies take on different forms, with

¹ Some common examples that often get to referred to as being major indicators for geopolitical change are: increased pressure from state and nonstate actors outside of the Arctic region to participate in the internal political framework of the region, technological advancements and the increased opportunity for natural resource development, and the consequently effects of climate change on the political, economic and social environment in the Arctic.

different names, there are clear associations to be drawn between each of them. They present state interests and obligations on domestic and international issues by framing the Arctic as a priority area for future action. In many ways, they are visions that represent how states view the circumpolar region around them and their place within. Looking at them as symbols of government interests, it is also possible to draw conclusions on larger considerations of Arctic cooperation and governance. For example, how is the role of international law defined within the strategies and how is it reflective of the country's legal standing within the region, as with the case of territorial and continental shelf claims? From this perspective it is impossible to get answers directly from the documents themselves. What is also needed is to examine the features of the individual states that have been taken into consideration when creating the documents; influences that would surely consider the country's geographic positioning, the wealth of its resource base, the capacity for acting unilaterally vs. multilaterally, as well as the economic, political and social weight of multiple domestic considerations. With these added variables in mind, the simple task of drawing conclusions from the documents themselves becomes increasingly more complex. Therefore, a comparison of the strategies becomes more than a surface level analysis, it becomes a study of the geopolitical landscape of the Arctic and state interest within.

The following thesis explores the interplay between national strategy and Arctic geopolitics. It pays particular attention to the main priorities as defined within the strategies, the themes involved, as well as the instruments for implementation. Though the strategies speak volumes on how the Arctic states see themselves within the region's political discourse and the intentions it has towards its domestic and international policies, there is also another level of analysis that provides intrigue; what are the main reoccurring themes found in each, and what kind of indication do these themes give of a geopolitical change in Arctic political discourse. Furthermore, the thesis takes a distinctly theoretical approach in exploring dimensions of political realist and geopolitical thought within the confines of Arctic cooperation. With these considerations in mind, they form the basis of the study's three research questions:

1. *How are the indicators of security, cooperation, energy and environment presented in the Arctic Ocean strategies?*
2. *What are the similarities and differences of these indicators between strategies?*
3. *And, do these strategies and the indicators symbolize the emergence of a new geopolitical trend in the region?*

Although these documents present interesting objects of study for students of international relations and political science, there has been little done to compare and contrast them. Increasingly, the documents are being taken into consideration to justify a certain country's stance on an issue, though these have been mainly limited to domestic examples. To my knowledge, no study has yet been published which takes all of the strategies into consideration and presents an overview of their commonalities, or striking differences.² Given the newness of the documents, this has made the research both exciting and daunting. Examining the strategies presents some compelling arguments into the nature of geopolitics in the Arctic, as well as the potential for change. It is also been an intimidating process for a student at the graduate level to understand the extent to which they represent real motivation on behalf of states, and the ability to grasp the underlying themes (not just surface-level topics) that indicate their interests in the region. For this, I am indebted to the work of the scholars of Arctic geopolitics that I have relied heavily on to form the basis for contextualizing the documents.

If there is one event in particular that prompted my interest in this subject, it was drawing parallels between the timing of when the strategies were released and that of the Arctic Ocean Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland in May 2008; the fact that four of the five Arctic coastal states released their directives following that meeting provided enough reason to consider this topic further. Certain questions started to develop: what is the connection between the exclusive participation to the meeting, the pledge towards further cooperation in the Arctic Council, and the need for national policy directives? The

² However, this work was influenced by research conducted by Heininen, and the types of cross-analysis between state policies and geopolitical changes that defines his work. Recently, Heininen has presented cross-analysis of the strategies for policy-makers, as well as students.

announcement from the Canadian Government of a March 2010 meeting in Chelsea, Quebec only furthers these speculations and presents new points of discussion and the need for such research to be continued in the future. It was based on these events that I decided to investigate the policies of the five Arctic Ocean states further.

Comparing and contrasting the strategies of each of the eight Arctic states³ would be an arduous task for any type of study. In fact, given the current circumstances in the circumpolar world, it would be impossible; though strategies have become important diplomatic tools for a number of years, they have not been adopted by every Arctic state. For example, to my knowledge, Sweden has yet to construct a policy document solely related to the Arctic.⁴ Finland is currently in the process of establishing a type of directive, in which the national parliament and a seminar series of Finnish experts have been involved in the procedure thus far. An indication of the types of priorities which may possibly be found in the document is from a December 2009 Finnish Parliament document, which identified the need to support a strengthened Arctic Council, promote the EU's observer status within the Council, extend and deepen cooperative Nordic defence, and further Arctic industrial competence and shipbuilding capabilities (Parliament of Finland, 2010). Although the process has begun, it is unclear as to what type of document the Government of Finland will produce, and for what purpose.

Despite these advancements made by non-ocean state actors, it makes sense to limit the study to the strategies of the 'Arctic Five': first, their geographic similarities bind them to common political and economic interests. The geopolitical nature of the Arctic is changing and the old principles that supported regional cooperation in the Arctic are now confronted with new opportunities. Globalization and climate change are two of the most

³ This study uses the Arctic Human Development Report's Arctic map as its geographic base for drawing a boundary of the Arctic region. Thus the eight are defined as: Canada, Denmark including Faroe Islands and Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Russian Federation and U.S.A.

⁴ In its 2009 *Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs* one reference to the Arctic is made, and it is in relation to security policy: "Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. In our country there exists a broad political will to further develop Nordic cooperation on defence policy. Cooperation of this kind may complement the security policy choices each of the Nordic countries has made. In the longer perspective, better opportunities will also be created to meet new challenges both in defence economics and developments in, for example, the Baltic Sea region and the Arctic." (Bildt, 2009; 10).

influential processes taking place within the Arctic today and though their positive and negative effects can be felt throughout the entire circumpolar north, the Arctic Ocean has become a hotspot of debate and potential. The possibilities for large-scale resource development, new transcontinental shipping lanes, and emerging opportunities for renewable marine resources are but three examples highlighting the growing global interest in the Arctic Ocean. Such unprecedented interest requires regional cooperation. Given the current lack of infrastructure capabilities within the northern territories of the states, the absence of an ocean-wide emergency preparedness/ search and rescue service, and the technological advancement needed for resource development, there are clear advantages for the ocean states to collaborate with each other. It was hardest to omit Iceland from this research, particularly given the country's proximity to the Arctic Ocean and likely outcome of becoming an economic and transport hub for future polar transport routes. It is however worth mentioning briefly its 2009 strategy, which emphasizes international cooperation in the Arctic region through the Arctic Council, security through maritime safety, resource development and transportation (Heininen, 2010). Despite Iceland's clear linkages with the Arctic Ocean, the political exclusivity of the Arctic as it stands right now, in this period of time, did not justify taking on new actors and dimensions.

Chapters Overview

Chapter 1 explains the methodology of the research. It explores the advantages and strengths in taking a comparative analysis approach to government policies. In doing so, it considers the rationale behind understanding Arctic strategies as important instruments within the region's political discourse. It also explains the reasons for limiting the research to the five littoral states, rather than taking on the more popular Arctic eight approach. Furthermore, a brief literature survey is offered, which pays attention to some of the more influential authors, texts and arguments used within the field of Arctic geopolitics. However, a thorough survey of these texts and theories takes a central role in the chapters to follow. The intention of the literature survey is thus to provide only a short description of the types of texts used.

Although divided under two separate headings, chapters 2 and 3 work together to establish a theoretical framework through which the remainder of the thesis can be conceptualized. Chapter 2 explores some of the major philosophies of international relations theory, with an emphasis towards neorealist thought and its relevancy within Arctic political discourse. The systematic features of neorealism are considered in detail, which argues that the structure of world politics and international cooperation has fundamental influence in how states view their position within the world, and the strategies and policies that follow as a consequence. Furthermore, the chapter defines the primary actors within circumpolar cooperation; it emphasizes the role of the state within regional discourse but also gives examples of how nonstate actors have challenged this assumption and developed their own strategies with similar objectives. Thus, a short discussion on what defines ‘strategy’ and its relationship with policy and implementation is offered to help distinguish the many ways it has been used.

Chapter 3 continues on the same path, but with a geopolitical focus. First, geopolitical theory and three of its primary schools of thought (classical, critical and new geopolitics) are presented. Secondly, the chapter continues by applying the basics of geopolitical theory within an Arctic context; close observation is given to the historical trends in the region, as well as some of the geographical considerations that influence geopolitical decisions from states. This chapter also takes a closer look at the cooperative model that has defined regional political discourse, particularly in relation to the Arctic Council, and more recently the changing dynamics among the Arctic states. As a whole, this chapter is concerned with constructing the geopolitical landscape that helps define national interests; particularly important in this regard is the historical discourse of the region and the indicators for potential change.

A national view of geopolitical change is the area of focus for Chapter 4. The research presents different cases from the five littoral states, illustrating how states base their national interests on a number of internal considerations. This chapter offers a theme-based perspective for understanding the connection between national geopolitical standing and how it is reflected in strategy development. The case of Canada considers the varying geopolitical interests between governments, in respect to their Arctic

strategies. The example from Denmark illustrates how a change in geopolitical positioning may influence how a state perceives a region, and its role therein. The Norwegian example shows how geopolitical interests and policy documents may be structured around geographical borders, and within sub-regional institutions. The case from the Russian Federation demonstrates the dualistic nature of geopolitics, as the promotion of regional cooperation can be paralleled with military interests. Finally, that of the United States considers how power politics remains a dominant narrative in how states construct their policies and the motivations of their priorities. Each of these cases illustrates national perspectives on how internal decisions affect how states view the circumpolar world and define their interests accordingly.

Chapter 5 provides analysis of the strategies' reference to the foreign policy aspects of security, environment, energy and cooperation. It first considers each indicator by itself, focussing on the similarities and differences between priority areas. Secondly, it contrasts the indicators between each other, exploring their interrelations and juxtapositions. Based on this analysis, a number of consistencies and inconsistencies between strategies and indicators become apparent. A short discussion considers how these strategies and results may affect the future of Arctic geopolitics is offered in the conclusions.

Chapter 1: Methodology and literature survey

1.1 Methodology

This is a multi-country comparative policy analysis that uses the Arctic littoral states' northern strategies as its primary object of study, and compares and contrasts the key foreign policy aspects of these documents. As such, this cross-analysis looks at the details of the strategies and considers the underlying priorities from within. It then investigates the inter-linkages between the priority areas, and considers the consistencies and inconsistencies in their composition and policy direction. However, it also considers the role of these strategies within the larger political discourse, as symbolic tools of a changing geopolitical landscape within the Arctic.

Its empirical method can be seen as a meta-policy approach to political science, which focuses on the contextual circumstances of Arctic politics as a whole, and considers the strategies as important national instruments within the region's political framework. Therefore, rather than taking a case-study approach in identifying the reasons that determine the Arctic strategy of one national government, which would inevitably be limited to explanations of domestic behaviour, a comparative analysis considers the major themes consistent throughout each of the texts, and helps identify future changes within the region's political structure. The idea of 'structure' is prevalent throughout this research, from its theoretical conceptions within neorealist thought to the discussion on the political structure of Arctic cooperation. This thesis assumes that the structural framework of interstate cooperation provides insight into the opportunities and limits for political gain of the Arctic states, and thus explanations into the *what* and *why* of Arctic strategies. Thus a major consideration is the level of institutional change within the Arctic and how these strategies identify such transitions. As stated by Blondel (Blondel, 1995; 11):

The study of institutional change is therefore naturally a key aspect of the study of comparative government. It has to be conducted in combination with the study of changes in behavioural patterns within these institutions, and of changes in the values on which the institutions are based. The study of the

dynamics of political systems is typically referred to, perhaps optimistically, as being the study of *political development*.

Putting Blondel's quote into this thesis' research objectives, the study of changes in behavioural patterns of these institutions requires national level observations of the Arctic states. It is only by looking at the circumstances surrounding each individual state that sufficient information into the causes and priorities of each individual strategy can be found. Thus, it places equal weight on comparing the policies, as it does on providing contextual background into the reasons for their priorities and interests, as seen in Chapter 4. The attention paid to political and international relations theory in this study is another cornerstone to understanding the contextual design of Arctic politics. Thus there is a clear emphasis towards providing theoretical observations to explain the influence of the political structure, the dominance of certain actors within the structure and the trends of geopolitical change. Further explanations on the methodological approach are offered in Chapter 2 in which Keohane's research program of neorealism thought provides the foundations for how this research interprets systems theory approaches to international relations research.

It is the hope of the author that the result of this study will help in identifying changes to the geopolitical landscape of the Arctic and may provide new insight into geopolitical hypothesis of the region. As stated by Mahoney in *Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics*, this is a natural product of the comparative analysis approach (Mahoney, 2007; 5):

Qualitative analysts juxtapose multiple features of cases with one another, including features that they discover in the course of their analysis. Indeed, almost inevitably as a by-product of contextualized comparisons, new concepts and explanatory hypotheses are developed in qualitative analysis... qualitative research is a leading site of hypothesis creation in comparative politics because it facilitates the study of over-time data and a concern with temporal processes. Especially in the field of comparative historical analysis, researchers take seriously the unfolding of events over time, and they often formulate new hypotheses that stress how the temporal intersection or duration of variables is decisive for outcomes.

Granted, there are some limitations to the research. For example, the extent to which these strategies are comparable is a question of consideration, since they are all unique in

styles, policy relevancy, language, and composition. There is also the question of what these strategies actually mean, and therefore question's the political weight that they carry domestically as well as internationally. This thesis however works with the assumption that the symbolic value that these documents represent offers significant insight into the intentions of states, and thus roadmaps for which direction individual states are expected to follow. Thus, whereas the capacity to act within the stated timeline may change, and the extent to which the priorities will become implemented into policy may also change, the interests as a whole will remain and endure.

As a point of terminology, the use of the word 'strategy' within this body of research is intended to cover the broad spectrum of documents released from national governments dealing with their Arctic regions. Therefore, 'strategy' is used to define any sort of policy directive or plan of action that has a clear and exclusively mandate dealing with the Arctic region. Even in circumstances where the official name contains 'policy' (for example, *U.S. Policy on the Arctic Region*, 2008), or 'dimension' (for example, *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy*, 2006), it is the opinion of the author that they share fundamental parallels. Therefore, for clarity, the use of 'strategy' is used consistently in the text to describe all of these types of directives. A general explanation on what these strategies mean and how they can be defined is found in Chapter 2. As a point of defence, the same approach is currently being used by the Norwegian Institute of Defence Studies' Geopolitics in the High North Research Programme, in which one component of their work involves comparisons of the same documents- though no results have yet been made public.

The process of reading and analyzing the documents happened through multiple stages. Initial readings involved looking for prominent themes, reoccurring phrases and key words.⁵ Subsequent readings considered the meaning of the documents within the geopolitical context of the state. Secondary research materials supported the procedure of

⁵ The author was particularly focused on finding words related to security (ex. military, sovereignty, defence, weapons, policing), cooperation (ex. Arctic Council, international law, littoral collaboration, multilateral/bilateral/ unilateral), energy (resource development, oil and gas, mineral extraction, energy security), transportation (ex. shipping routes, marine infrastructure, Northwest Passage, Northern Sea Route) and environment (ex. climate change, degradation, EIA)

identifying the themes and priorities within the documents. Within the documents themselves there includes a breadth of research topics ready to be researched, both in relation to the internal and external policies of states. However, this particular research focuses on the foreign policy aspects of the documents, in relation to four indicators. Based on these four, a number of questions arise relevant to the investigation:

1. **Security and Sovereignty:** what are the major differences between sovereignty and security? How are their discourses mentioned in the text? What types of security are emphasized? How are matters of security and sovereignty differentiated within the text and between policy goals?
2. **Cooperation:** what type of importance is place on the current framework of cooperation? Are there perceived changes within this pattern? What sorts of cooperative organizations do states identify? Are there parallels between certain countries and not others?
3. **Energy and transportation:** how do factors of economic development feature in the strategies? What kind of links can be found between economy and resource development? How is transportation supportive of this process? Considered together, do economy, energy and transportation fulfil an underlying objective?
4. **Environment:** what sort of considerations do states place on their natural environments? Are these connected to priorities of climate change policy? How are environmental responsibilities framed within security and energy interests?

These have been chosen based on their consistency as important policy areas throughout each of the five strategies, as well as in consideration of their geopolitical importance to the future of the region. Furthermore, these topics symbolize key themes that are relevant to coastal states, and which may not be pursued in the mandates of the region's political institutions, like that of the Arctic Council. These themes are labelled as 'indicators', for the possibility that they indicate geopolitical change. This approach has been used by Heininen in *Changing Geopolitics of the North*, who identifies precise factors and dynamics that are indicative of Arctic geopolitical change. Heininen's work is also distinguished by his observations of the geopolitical factors and dynamics contributing to the Arctic's changes. A similar style is used here, in which broad perspectives are taken in determining the overall possibility of circumpolar change, and the scenarios associated with these changes. In order to understand the priority that states have placed on these indicators, a certain level of discretion was taken by the author in determining their

prominence and relevance. Such an analysis requires the freedom of interpretation, for without any additional observation it would be difficult to determine the meaning behind policy priorities. However, this process was done objectively, with the intention of analysing without prejudgements or ulterior considerations. Finally, an analytical concern for such a multi-country study is the difficulty in language. While the Canadian, American and Norwegian strategies were all published in English, the Russian and Danish/Greenlandic directives were translations offered by acquaintances and academic references. In order to remain consistent, any analysis in the type of language used is limited to those texts published in English or with official translations.

1.2 Literature survey

The nature of this thesis places state policies as its basic object of study. As such, policy documents are the primary sources used in Chapter 4 as well as Chapter 5. In addition to the strategies, also referenced were other government documents and publications from states related to its Arctic affairs. A variety of texts were used to expand the understanding and application of these policies, and as a way to give broader perspectives on geopolitical landscapes. Within the research, a number of arguments are made based on extensive use of secondary sources within Arctic literature. In general, these resources may be regarded as being either national or regional in scope, or then highly theoretical. It makes sense to quickly identify the most prominent sources used in the body of the research based on these categories.

Sources used in Chapters 2 and 3 draw on classic texts of international relations theory. Perhaps the most prevalent is the work of Kenneth Waltz and his *Theory of International Relations* (1979), which provided the initial foundations for the field of neorealism thought. In particular, Waltz's emphasis on systems theory develops an intriguing theoretical framework for conceptualizing Arctic politics, and the role of states therein. Given neorealism's often-criticized narrow view of influence on the international system, as well as the predominance of state actors, a more balanced understanding of global politics is employed by the work of Robert Keohane. Keohane uses a hybrid method of institutionalism and realism thought, thus placing greater consideration on the forces

impacting the international political structure from outside the system, while still maintaining the state as the primary actor. Within the field of geopolitical theory certain names again prevail. The work of Mackinder was particularly influential at the beginning of the 20th century for his philosophies concerning the conceptualization of space and state interests. Sections of the classical geopolitical theory of this research also benefited from the work of Agnew, whose spatiality of power and state hegemony provided the basis for conceiving of state interests. In the field of critical and new geopolitics, the influential work of Tuathail goes beyond the normative practice of seeing geopolitics in terms of rudimentary maps and geographic space. Instead, Tuathail's emphasis on the influence of exterior actors and processes, like economics and indigenous groups, helps illustrate a more complete picture relevant to the Arctic, in which states are both influenced by a variety of external/internal factors and variant actors.

Focusing on the literature pertaining to the Arctic region, Oran Young's 1992 *Arctic Politics: Conflict and Cooperation in the Circumpolar North* provided the initial background for beginning the research. Particularly fascinating is Young's ability to foresee future events with accuracy in the initial post-Cold War era. Subsequent work by Young was also used including *Whither the Arctic? Conflict or cooperation in the circumpolar north* which provided a critical analysis of the region's current political framework. Numerous works by Heininen provided details for how to conceptualize Arctic geopolitical trends within geopolitical theory. Heininen's scholarship in the diverse field of security also helped address fundamental questions for viewing geopolitical change in the Arctic. His chapter in the *Arctic Human Development Report*⁶ clearly identified the main trends of the region and presented the possibility that the region is experiencing a new transformation. Zellen presents a more sceptical approach to Arctic geopolitics than does Heininen or Young, emphasizing the prevalence of military capabilities in the region and the ambiguity over maritime claims. Lastly, multiple works found from the Northern Research Forum (NRF)'s proceedings greatly contributed to providing concise, theme based texts related to the topic. Publications by Nicol, Östreng, Koivurova each provided interesting perspectives from topics ranging from the

⁶ Chapter 12: Circumpolar International Relations and Geopolitics.

marginalization of political discourse, to the Heartland theory's application in the Arctic, to deficiencies of the Arctic Council. The NRF provided a useful base for exploring alternative theories and arguments related to Arctic politics.

Finally, on a regional level, a large portion of the literature comes from Canadian academics. Interestingly, the work of these authors has taken on regional proportions, as shown through Griffiths' writings on the principles and avenues for Arctic stewardship. Lackenbaur's critique of the Government of Canada's reactionary policies provided insight into geopolitical change at Canada's national level but his theories on 3-D (defence, diplomacy and development) are relevant for all Arctic middle powers. Reflections on the nature of security by Huebert gave details on the military capabilities of each of the five states. In contrast, Byers' legal approach to presenting Canadian sovereignty claims in the Arctic gave an additional angle for conceptualizing geopolitics and the strength of international law. Furthermore, works by Stokke, Rowe, Loukacheva, and Zysk provided useful national perspectives to the remaining littoral states. The literature pertaining to Russia illustrated the breadth of research and opinions within the field. A great deal of focus of Russian literature offered differentiating views on military capabilities, the government's adherence to international law, as well as its position towards economic/resource development and environmental protection. Particularly useful were works by Vasiliev, Zysk and Lomagin. Russia's Senior Arctic Official Vasiliev's 2008 presentation at the NRF helped identify the major themes of the Russian strategy; his presentation has been incorporated into Russia's strategy summary. Lomagin, who questions Russia's intentions for cooperating multilaterally in the face of ambitious economic goals, provided a more critical analysis of Russian policies since 2001. Similarly, the work of Zysk was useful in showing the politics of rhetoric in Russia, describing the apparent differences between what is said, and what actually takes place. Many other authors also complicated this research, their arguments are found within.

2. Theoretical Considerations in Arctic Politics

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter marks the beginning of the theory component of the thesis. Its primary concern is outlining a theoretical procedure within international relations theory that best defines the Arctic region, within the context of the thesis' focus. As a result, this chapter is mainly theory based, in which a variety of philosophical approaches are considered and then contrasted. In order to gain a broader understanding of how this relates to the Arctic region specifically, the next chapter takes a more direct approach by applying theoretical thought within the realm of Arctic geopolitics; it therefore pays more attention to details of Arctic political discourse, including changes to the geopolitical trends of the region. Rather than considering these two chapters as distinct from one another, they should be taken as one, where the principles of theory constructed here gain meaning and relevancy within the geopolitical narrative explored in the next chapter. This is logical, since the traditions of geopolitical thought are inherently connected with international relations theory.

As the name would suggest, the field of international relations theory uses the world of global politics as its playground. Within this global community emerge a number of fundamental questions through which theoretical discourses are born: who are the main actors at play? What are their primary objectives? What are the influences at play that shape their intentions and eventual outcomes? For international political theorists, the very basis for many hypotheses and arguments come from these questions. How theorists understand the answer to these questions help to separate and distinguish theories from one another, and thus gives multiple explanations for *how* the world operates and *why* it operates in that way. Needless to say, these rather large deliberations are not conducive to producing consensus among scholars and students of international relations. Instead, it is through their differences in viewing and interpreting world events, that theorists come to formulate, and then apply philosophies to global phenomenon. Central to these differences come the fundamental contradictions of the discipline, or “the great debates” of international relations theory: those between the *realists* and *ideolists*, *traditionalists* and

behaviouralists, and recently among *realists*, *pluralists*, *liberals* and *Marxists* (Levy, 2007; 177). Though these theories take different approaches in their conceptualization of world events, they are each indicative of global political discourse and reflective of world events at a specific period of time. Theories emerge, thrive and expire within the world in which they operate, and in which they strive to explain. Nonetheless, there is a certain perennial character to many of these theories that have lasting relevance and explanation, no matter the global political circumstances. For example, despite the nature of peace and conflict in the 20th century, two theories remained highly applicable through its turbulence; firstly, idealism's positivist approach to international organizations and state behaviour thrived during the inter-war years of peace and stability but lost its foundations during the conflict of World War II. Rather than losing its relevancy, idealism found its roots in neoliberal thought, which cast states as multi-centric political entities in an international cooperative environment that was seen as advantageous to national priorities. Secondly, realist thought, founded on its principles that the international system was synonymous to human nature and its desire for power and control, blossomed in its rationalization of World War I and II. However, realism had difficulty explaining how peace was maintained during the Cold War, despite the potential for conflict and power gains between the world's two superpowers. Certain characteristics of the Cold War era found relevancy within realism thought, however, and as such it sparked neorealist thinking and its philosophies that the international system had regulating effects on the capabilities of states, though it was defined by anarchy (Hay, 2002; 7-23). As a consequence both theories, neorealism and neoliberalism, continue to be prominent schools of thought to this day, despite the unpredictability of world politics.

Though the Arctic often gets characterized as a global periphery, it is by no means alienated from international relations theory. Indeed many of the major drivers of international political theory (among them are war, weapons and economics) are equally as prominent in the Arctic as they are in more southern regions. As will be explained in greater detail next chapter, the Arctic has meant many different things at many different times, for a variety of actors. For this reason, it is not possible to merely look at the Arctic as a stagnant region confined by its absence in global events, but instead as a fluid region where global events are not easily separated from the region's environmental,

economic and political discourse. The 'great debates' of international theory, therefore, are equally relevant and applicable to the Arctic as they are to any other region. What this picture forgets to mention, of course, are the plentiful geographic, social, and cultural characteristics that make the region precisely like no other part of the world, including its southern counterpart- Antarctica. Thus any study on the Arctic must work to balance both theoretical formulas based on global observations within the context of the region's particularities. For students of international relations, therefore, the Arctic as a political region provides an interesting microcosm through which theories can be explored and applied.

Indeed, there are numerous theoretical avenues that a study of this type could follow. Rather than explore all of these and run the risk of exhausting the topic, I have used neorealism for my theoretical framework. As has already been described in previous paragraphs and will be shown in more detail later, the strength of using neorealism is in its systems approach to state interaction. In this tradition, the behaviour of states and the constraints of its actions can be explained by the structure of the international institutions to which it participates. Furthermore, states are conceived as rational actors whose interests are viewed in relation to its national priorities, and thus even periods of peace or conflict can be conceived as being a calculation derived from these priorities. However, it is the anarchical environment of global politics that ultimately outline the limits for state priorities, and the relative gains associated with their actions. Neorealism concepts like balance of power, which define the stability of a system by the degree of power between its actors, remain relevant theories within global politics today (Hay, 2002; 20). The emphasis next chapter on geopolitics follows a similar analytical pattern, in which spatial politics are characterized by the varying degree of influence on a geographic region by its actors. Though geopolitics also takes on many forms, the recurrent themes of influence and interaction are closely connected with those of neorealism thought. Both of these concepts are relevant to the Arctic, in terms of its historical and modern political discourses. Whereas neorealism thought continues to provide interesting explanations for why states behave as they do, as well as what defines their interests, geopolitics on the other hand works to rationalize patterns in the political evolution of the Arctic region. Personally, I see the two concepts as inseparable for this type of research; whereas

neorealism argues that it would be highly uncharacteristic of a modern state to not consider the security of its borders and the sovereignty within those borders, it would be equally uncharacteristic for a study on geopolitics to not consider those national interests in relation to their positioning within the spatial confines of a geographic region. This is particularly true of a region like the Arctic where the limits of state boundaries remain ambiguous, and where energy and resource wealth is predicted to be astronomical. Indeed national interests within the region are based on consideration of these opportunities, defined by the limits imposed by the international system and in consideration of the Arctic as a distinguished area of interest.

Before going into this further, however, it is first important to look at the primary actors in the global political community. There exist a number of categories that classify actors based on their natural characteristics, and the level of responsibility that they carry. The political interests of actors are highly related to the amount of influence each actor has within the system. This influence is a defining feature for how actors construct their interests and pursue them within political forum. The Arctic provides a good case study for this type of investigation, where the amount of influence exercised between different types of actors provides a multiple perspectives. Secondly, this chapter will consider some definitions of ‘strategy’ as an instrument of statecraft. Important to this discussion is the changing nature of the definition and the applicability of its use within an Arctic context. Lastly, a longer description of neorealist thought will be offered, with emphasis on the key assumptions of the tradition, the basis for its structural analysis, criticisms of its limitations and thoughts on its applicability to the remainder of this research.

2.2 Identifying the Principle Actors

As demonstrated earlier, the breadth of study in international relations opens up several paths of opportunity for theoretical constructs. Despite these possibilities, the objects of study within the discipline largely remain the same: be it territorial states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, or multinational corporations, there are a variety of actors whose influence transcends domestic borders and whose activity feeds

the study of international relations (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999; 1). Though these actors may share the fundamental characteristics of being political agents with certain degrees of authority within the processes to which they participate, the strength of their position within these institutions is highly dependant on their level of political influence on the process. Thus while each may have important roles to play within regional, national and international political institutions, they are highly distinguishable by the amount of power and persuasion they have as political entities. This may be a generalization that fails to take into account the individual characteristics of each institution, but looking from a macro-perspective on the international system, a defining feature of the global political process is that actors are characterized by their level of influence in relation to one another. Even in instances where actors operate horizontally between one another, history tells us that there is a natural imbalance within these structures depending on the actors involved and their political weight therein.

In saying that, it is difficult to contend against state dominance within international political forum. Particularly in relation to intergovernmental institutions, states remain the principal political agents and thus the principal objects of study within international theory. The foundation of statehood is often traced back to 1648 and the Treaty of Westphalia, in which territorial delineations (boundaries) were drawn and central authorities (governments) were established to exercise sovereignty over geographical space. This model has been maintained over the centuries, as states have grown and taken on new responsibilities, including as principal actors in the international realm. The sovereign state model is a system of political authority based on territory, autonomy mutual recognition, and control: where as *territoriality* refers to the geographic space that authority is exercised, states have *autonomous* sovereign *control* over the internal activities of that space and who are *mutually recognized* within the international system as equal actors and partners (Cox & Booth, 2002; 18). Agnew's work on state hegemony and the spatiality of power compliments these four pillars. According to Agnew's hypothesis of the 'territorial trap', three analytically distinct but consistently related concepts define the 'trap', in which the interaction of states exercising power generates world politics. Firstly, modern state sovereignty is defined by a state's borders and it is the protection and security of its borders that is the absolute interest and priority of the

state. Secondly, there is a clear distinction between the ‘domestic’ and ‘foreign’ politics of the state because different rules apply according to each setting. This distinction creates fundamental oppositions between these responsibilities in the modern world, whereas domestic politics make civic and political debate possible, the foreign affairs of states is uncompromising in the pursuit of its interests. Finally, Agnew contends that the territorial state acts as the geographical ‘container’ of modern society. Therefore, international political organizations are always framed in consideration of its principal actors (states) because these actors are the main determinants for international stability. Taken together, Agnew presents three arguments for “a timeless conception of statehood as the unique font of power in the modern world” (Agnew, 1998; 49).

If in fact boundaries do represent the geographic areas in which states have sovereign authority, it is worth entering into a short discussion on the differences between boundaries and frontiers. Perhaps the greatest reason why modern states have maintained their supremacy in the international system is the tradition of viewing the world as carved into state boundaries. Though it is often argued that globalization and its many faceted influences have impacted the way global space is constructed, the basic unit in the contemporary political system of the world remains the state because of its jurisdictional authority over space (Anderson, 1999; 125). Boundaries hold key political, social and economic significance in how states define their interests; protecting boundaries through security means constitute the greatest interest for state survival because it is how states preserve their existence. On the other hand, frontiers can be understood as the remaining areas in the world to which no boundaries apply. Naturally, in a world where state territories have grown progressively larger over land and seas, few examples of frontiers remain unchallenged. Conceptualizing the Arctic as a ‘final frontier’ has often been done before, no less through popular literature and national policies.⁷ Historically, the Arctic was associated with the ‘unknown’, in which southern peripheries extended their jurisdiction northward through symbolic acts of ownership but without much defining

⁷ See: Berton, Pierre (1988). The Arctic Grail: The Quest for the Northwest Passage and the North Pole. New York; USA.

interest beyond economic considerations.⁸ The Arctic of today is much different. As a modern frontier⁹, the Arctic is perhaps better viewed in terms of the unidentified limitations of coastal jurisdiction in its northern waters. Clearly economic interest in the ‘Arctic frontier’ remains a primary consideration, however there are several other motivating factors for states to settle the extent of their claims, including matters of environmental and military security. Though it would be an exaggeration to apply former British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon’s famous quote of frontiers as being the “razor’s edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war and peace, or life or death to nations”, they nonetheless present important contests (including legal) that motivate state interests (Anderson, 1999; 127). As defined by Anderson, the outcome of boundary disputes is likely to hinge on five factors: the geographical importance of the region to the states involved; the extent of the benefits within the frontier; the strengths of the states involved; the current political make-up of world politics, and the strength of its controls; and finally, the strengths of the arguments of each individual state (Anderson, 1999; 134). If indeed Anderson’s criterion were correct, it would seem likely that the process of defining the jurisdictional limits in the Arctic would amount to conflict or crises. However, as will be identified later, there are more considerations to be added to Anderson’s five factors.

It is not my intention to go into further detail surrounding the Arctic and state interest therein, for that is an objective of the next chapter. What is important however is making connections between states as primary actors and their ultimate interests. Clearly, states have a vested interest in not only exercising authority over their borders, but also exercising power (political and military) beyond their borders into the international

⁸ See ‘core-periphery’ relations in the next chapter for more information.

⁹ Though using different terminology Oran Young provides a type of frontier analysis on the Arctic. In his work, Young explores the Arctic through the case studies of cockpits and arenas. Cockpits are seen as zones in which conflict within a region has the capability of triggering international response (like the Middle East), and through which codes of conduct are fundamental to minimizing disputes. Arenas (like Antarctica and the oceans), on the other hand, are characterized by international actors viewing these spaces as attractive stages through which to pursue their own interests. Important to arenas are international arrangements to limit their use and regulate their interplay. Young concludes that the Arctic falls under neither category, but instead can be defined as a ‘shared resource’ area in which consideration for human and environmental is not taken into proper consideration in either cockpits or arenas. The difficulty, however, is constructing the region for policy-makers in a way that does not confine the region to either case (Young 1992; 7-11).

system. In saying that, it is important to clarify that power can never be understood as being permanently fixed or rigid. In fact, power grows and declines in relation to a state's ability to exercise influence within its own borders, and within the international community as a whole. If power is highly dependable on the status of states, then it is only logical that states have a vested interest in improving their rank within the system (Agnew, 1998; 70). This logic clearly presents state actions within international affairs as being absolutely autonomous and free of constraint, apart from considerations of its own survival. However, theorists like Stephen Krasner contend that the international system is a regulator for state power, in which international norms and treaties limit the powers granted to states through the Westphalian system. Krasner instead argues that state participation at the international level compromises their sovereignty in four ways; through conventions in which state behaviour is not contingent on what others do; through contracting, whereby states violate their own sovereignty in order to comply with international norms; through coercion, where the power distribution between states in the international arena forces states into behaving one way or another; and finally through imposition, whereby the weakness of a state becomes so obvious that it is forced to act and react based on the preferences of its stronger counterparts (Krasner, 2001; 18). Such an assessment indicates the varying degree to which states obtain and lose power over time. This, however, does not dismiss the fact that states hold the greatest amount of influence within the international system and that the international system itself is a construct based on the participation and willingness of states to maintain global order.

The basic nature of this type of study supports these assumptions. As such, this thesis studies the interaction between states based on their own individual interests and strategies in relation to their primary responsibility- foreign policy. Foreign policy itself is multi-faceted which comprise a number of responsibilities. These include, but are not limited to, security, energy, international affairs and law, as well as economic prosperity. Simply defined, foreign policy is a set of goals outlining how states interact politically, militarily, economic and socially with other governments, and to lesser degree nonstate actors (Roseneau, 1969; 167). Clearly the intention of this research in outlining the foreign policy priorities of the Arctic states is applicable to all states, beyond regional considerations. As such, states in general continue to be the integral piece of the puzzle

through which global theories are founded on. As stated by Waltz, theories of political realism, and perhaps international relations theory in general, are mental constructions bounded within a domain of activity. The organization of the domain and its interconnected parts become the base of the theory, through which infinite materials may be organized in endless ways. It is up to the theorist, therefore, to indicate those factors that are of most importance to the domain (Waltz, 1979; 8). As such, when perceiving the Arctic region as constituting a distinct domain, it is natural to place states at the centre.

This thesis has already explored the role of unified states and identified their predominant interests within the international system. There, are of course, many other categories of actors whose influence extends into that same system. The Arctic presents an interesting case study of these, since nonstate actors occupy important roles within the region's most prominent political forums. The categories of circumpolar actors have been defined as follows (Heininen, 2004; 209):

- Unified states: roles occupied by the eight Arctic countries. States also include all governmental organs (such as the army and foreign national departments);
- Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs): such as the Arctic Council, Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers, as well as the Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. These actors are heavily influenced through the participation of states, but which may also have nonstate actors as subsidiary participants;
- International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs): such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the International Arctic Science Committee, the Northern Forum, and Greenpeace International. These actors operate independent of the national governments, though in some circumstances they may still have a peripheral role (as with IASC and their council membership). It is more common that regional authorities and sub-regional governments become stakeholders at this level (as with the Northern Forum). A distinct feature of IGOs in the Arctic is the role that indigenous groups play, in which there are several organizations who operate internationally but through shared ethnicity (as in the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the Athabaskan Council, and the Saami Council);
- Sub-national governments: governments and organizations within states that have a vested geographic relevance to northern political discourse, like the Canadian Territories, Alaska, and national indigenous groups (the Inuit Taparit Kanatami and RAIPON). Though constrained from making legislative policy related to international affairs, participation within INGOs improves their positioning;

- Trans-national Corporations (TNCs): primarily resource based corporations whose relationship with government is limited to development projects and contracts, but which may have influence throughout the decision-making process. As noted by Heininen however, the influence from TNCs may be decreasing, as state owned companies and state monopolies are becoming stronger and taking increasing ownership in resource reserves (Heininen, 2010; 5).

Though categorizations help identify the groupings that define the different actors, what it does not show is the level of interplay between actors and across the region's political institutions; institutions that have been recognized internationally for their unique and inclusive frameworks.¹⁰ As expressed by Young on the creation and value of these institutions (Young, 1992; 11):

The Arctic has also emerged as a region that is increasingly characterized by interactions that cut across or transcend the boundaries of sovereign states and that involve actors other than national governments. Partly, this is a matter of the growing role of organizations representing the concerns of indigenous peoples for whom national boundaries have little cultural, economic, or political meaning. In part, it is attributable to the growth of transnational interactions on the part of subnational governments... that national governments are unlikely to pursue. Under the circumstances, it seems probable that the Far North will play a role of considerable importance during the foreseeable future as a setting for innovative initiatives involving international activities on the part of a variety of nonstate actors... and for new patterns of interaction that circumvent or simply pass the traditional dominance of the state in international society. It follows that a tension between the forces of state sovereignty and the growing desire of nonstate actors to operate independently is almost certain to constitute an important theme of Arctic politics during the near future.

Young's quote takes added significance within a geopolitical perspective, a topic that will be discussed later. However, for now, it is important to stress two important points made: that of the emergence of the Arctic as regional construct, and the role of indigenous peoples. The Arctic as a distinct region, or regime, has been the focus of several studies, which draw numerous conclusions as to the significance, and contributions of the political and social constructs of the region. Recently, Stokke and Honneland argue that "regionality", as defined by the "interactive and discursive distinctiveness of more or less clearly defined geographic areas", provides multiple actors in the Arctic (ranging from

¹⁰ See: Keskitalo, Carina (2002). Constructing 'The Arctic': Discourses of International Region-Building. Lapin Yliopisto. Rovaniemi; Finland.

individuals, to groups to corporations) with a common identity through which interplay can occur. As a result, the Arctic as a distinct regime has resulted in the emergence of new actors, whose presence has influenced the patterns of interaction and thus Arctic affairs in general. Furthermore, the emergence of new pan-Arctic institutions has provided the venue through which these actors can become increasingly mobilized at the larger international level (Stokke & Honneland, 2007; 37). The authors explain that the functional approach within these interactions not only encourages the cooperation of actors on a number of initial discussions, but that the process sets the foundations through which greater and more pressing dialogues may occur (Stokke & Honneland, 2007; 20). Similarly, literature on region-building draws parallel conclusions; research by Heininen writes of the added opportunities for actors in identifying the Arctic as its own distinct region in which not only are issues of environmental protection and sustainable development promoted, but the process of trust-building between actors becomes possible. Furthermore, Heininen writes that “the endeavour [the process of region-building] provides new platforms and channels for dialogue between the unified states and has the potential to secure a stronger voice for Arctic interests in a global context” (Heininen 2004; 212). Finally, research by Keskitalo adds of the important role which indigenous peoples have had in setting the agenda for new Arctic institutions, a result of the processes of region-building (Keskitalo, 2002; 163). Clearly, these examples show the relative perspective that power and influence have in the Arctic region; there is no clear hierarchy through which either is distributed. Though states maintain a distinct role within international systems, there are a variety of actors whose influence transcends into global politics. In terms of regional discourses, Arctic indigenous peoples have demonstrated innovative methods for becoming increasingly involved in political procedures, no less through the construction of their own strategies.

2.3 Indigenous Strategies and Policy Directives

With this last point in mind, it is important to look at the role indigenous peoples have had framing their interests through policy documents.¹¹ Though the remainder of this research takes state strategies as its central focus, a complete picture must take into account how other actors have used similar tactics, including the Arctic's indigenous peoples. The following examples look at cases from among the Inuit population, a group that is often associated as carrying the voice of the Arctic peoples internationally (Young, 1992; 34). From them it is possible to identify certain themes that are often characterized as falling under state responsibility, including areas related to foreign policy like international law and national security; this would assume to reflect what Young called 'a tension between the forces of state sovereignty and the growing desire of nonstate actors to operate independently'.¹²

Both on a national and international level, the Inuit have been progressive in their lobbying towards political devolution and participatory independence. Although their successes are largely dependant on the national jurisdiction of the state in which they reside, there have been unique instances where Inuit have been granted increased political, social and economic autonomy. Such examples come from Canada, where the northern landscape has changed considerable over the last twenty years as a result of Inuit land-claim settlements and the development of self-government regimes, as well as the construction of Nunavut. A further example comes from Greenland, where the introduction of Greenlandic Home Rule in 1979 eventually led to the formation of the Government of Greenland in June of 2009.¹³ In each instance, the trend shows devolution both the part of the national governments of Canada and Denmark as well as the

¹¹ An important consideration is that the following examples are limited to indigenous peoples. A larger explanation into nonstate actors would take into account strategies and policy directives that have been constructed by sub-national or regional governments. A recent example of one of these is the September 2009 Northern Premier's Forum Communiqué, delivered by the Premiers of the three Canadian Territories. The communiqué has distinct foreign policy elements, and includes recommendations on environmental protection, the Arctic Council and energy. The document contains a number of initiatives to improve partnerships between the territories, including renewed commitment to the Northern Co-operation Accord (see Government of Nunavut, 2008).

¹² See previous quote by Young.

¹³ See Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for more details. Or see: Loukacheva, Natalia (2007). The Arctic Promise: Legal and Political Autonomy of Greenland and Nunavut. University of Toronto Press. Toronto; Canada.

politicization of Inuit organizations themselves in the form of increased recognition and autonomy. Internationally, the beginnings of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (now Council) in the mid-1970s have had significant effects on Inuit from all four regions.¹⁴ Recognition as Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council since its conception in 1996 has meant a reliable form of participation for ICC representatives within the meetings of the region's highest intergovernmental forum, and full consultation in the Council's six Working Groups. The 2005 petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights "seeking relief from violations of the human rights of the Inuit resulting from global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions from the United States of America" provides a legal example of ICC using global political forums to further their cause (Watt-Cloutier, 2005). Thirdly, the ICC's establishment of the Advisory Committee on United Nations Issues demonstrates the Council's value in utilizing the world's largest international organization- the United Nations (ICC, November 2009). These are but a few of the most prominent examples from a lengthy list of initiatives the Inuit have created. The success of these accomplishments can be linked to a variety of factors including the political strength demonstrated by the executive leadership and the ability for the Inuit's national and international groups to act as a unified voice.

Though other forces have been at work, the creation of strategies has played a part in the political success of the Inuit. Tennberg notes that the ICC created an Arctic policy in the mid-1980s that worked to identify Inuit as experts on Arctic issues. Outlined in the policy were matters regarding economic, social, cultural and political concern with an objective of to "ensure the survival of Inuit and to integrate Inuit values and concerns in all aspects of Arctic policy." According to Mary Simon, former Chair of the ICC, in 1987 (Tennberg, 1998; 192):

An articulated policy could help promote international understanding and cooperation. It could be used to encourage coordination of policy-making and decision-making in the international community, particularly among the countries with Arctic jurisdictions and interests... National and regional

¹⁴ By region, this text refers to the Inuit Nunaat in Canada, the occupied region of Inupiat on the North Slope of Alaska, the Inuit of Greenland and the Inuit of the Russian Far East.

initiatives alone are not adequate to protect Inuit communities. There must be a significantly expanded role for Inuit and the international level.

Simon's comments have an added effect when considering that, at the time, Arctic states had not produced official national policies of their own and thus suggests that the Inuit initiative may have provided a catalyst for the creation of future directives. Though the policy had no binding legacy, the Government of Canada recognized the document and proposed to adopt future policies in accordance with the Inuit's stipulations, as well as to consider the Inuit's involvement in future national and international political forum (Tennberg, 1998; 192). Tennberg also notes the ICC's objectives of forwardly articulating the organization's fundamental aims, creating an 'environmental identity' for the organization, and improving capacity through which to act and be heard in political programs have been consistent approaches used by the Inuit during the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (1991) and Arctic Council (1996) processes (Tennberg, 1998; 193).

Another highlight from the ICC relevant to this discussion is the April 28, 2008 release of its *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*.¹⁵ In it, the ICC contests that the normalized definition of 'sovereignty' fails to have relevancy beyond its traditional state use. Instead, the ICC defends that sovereignty must be conceived on the individual and group level in relation to basic human rights, as guaranteed through a number of international conventions and protocols; "issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights must be examined and assessed in the context of our long history of struggle to gain recognition and respect as an Arctic indigenous people having the right to exercise self-determination over our lives, territories, cultures and languages." (Cochran, 2009) Furthermore, the document questions the state-centric view towards international cooperation and defends the rights of indigenous peoples as equal partners in its processes (Cochran, 2009):

The conduct of international relations in the Arctic and the resolution of international disputes in the Arctic are not the sole preserve of Arctic states or other states; they are also within the purview of the Arctic's indigenous

¹⁵ The document was initiated at an ICC meeting held in Kuujuaq, Nunavik Quebec, Canada in November, 2008.

peoples. The development of international institutions in the Arctic, such as multi-level governance systems and indigenous peoples' organizations, must transcend Arctic states' agendas on sovereignty and sovereign rights and the traditional monopoly claimed by states in the area of foreign affairs.

In its release, Tatiana Achirgina, ICC Vice Chair for Chukotka stated that, "we [the ICC] believe that this declaration will form a solid foundation for us to continue our self-government processes here in Chukotka in partnership with the Chukotka Administration and the Russian Federation", thus serving as an important entry point for increased cooperation between ICC Russia and the Russian Federation. ICC Vice Chair for Greenland, Aqqaluk Lynge, clarified the intentions of the document by adding that, "this is not an Inuit Nunaat declaration of independence, but rather a statement of who we are, what we stand for, and on what terms we are prepared to work together with others" (ICC, April 2009). The Declaration clearly serves the purpose of drawing attention to Inuit discontent with their involvement in political partnerships and thus functions similar to that of a strategy for identifying important priorities for future considerations.

The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's (ITK) January 2008 release of its *Integrated Arctic Strategy* follows a similar suit as that of the ICC. The ITK, Canada's national Inuit organization, submitted the document to the federal government identifying six main priorities for Inuit involvement. The document begins by outlining the principles for Inuit involvement in Arctic decision-making procedures, the key characteristics of the Inuit population and the outside pressures felt on communities and traditional lifestyles. The six priorities reflect considerations of critical importance for the Inuit, as well as sets of 'priority policy initiatives' for immediate action to be undertaken by the federal government (ITK, 2008; *passim*). Naturally, the Strategy's predominant focus is on domestic issues, however the objective of a "Peaceful and Stable International Arctic, Contributing to International Cooperation/Security" outlines a number of foreign policy action items for the federal government to follow up on, including (ITK, 2008; 13-14):

- The "delivery on the package of multi-year Arctic oriented military initiatives set out in the October 2007 Speech from the Throne", a commitment made by the Federal Governments towards increased military and surveillance presence of its northern region;
- "Canadian leadership in the exploration of a more permanent footing to the Arctic Council and a more rigorous mandate for the Council";

- And “Canadian receptiveness to a discussion among circumpolar States as to the feasibility of an Arctic oriented approach for the sorting out of disputes regarding issues of jurisdiction over marine areas”.

Clearly, the Arctic Integrated Strategy is intended to provoke federal initiative on state sovereignty obligations and renewed vigour in broadening the mandate of the Arctic Council. The document concludes with a list of delivery mechanisms and a timeline for policy implementation.

The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC) has used similar techniques in order to promote their own policy goals. First in 2007 the AAC released *Improving the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Arctic Council: A Discussion Paper* that faulted the Arctic Council for not having grown from its original skeleton and for failing to execute its mandate efficiently and effectively (AAC, 2007; 5):

Adjusting the structure and operation of the Council would improve its ability to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction among member states, and would increase the Council’s ability to interact both with northerners and international agencies. In short, improving efficiency and effectiveness will help the council achieve its goals as outlined in the 1996 Ottawa Declaration.

The AAC further outlined a number of reforms including a reassessment of the Council’s current mandate to incorporate ‘region-wide’ issues, improved synergies within the Council’s internal operations, and the need for the Council to be less ‘top-down’ oriented (AAC, 2007; 6). The following year, the AAC produced a second discussion paper titled *Europe and the Arctic: A View From the Arctic Athabaskan Council* which stressed hesitation on behalf of the Europe Union’s intention of obtaining Observed Status within the Council.¹⁶ The paper continued by calling for the Arctic Council to become a

¹⁶ The AAC’s positioning was based on a pre-meeting briefing that defined the possibility of the EU becoming the “the main interpreter of Arctic concerns” in relation to the Council’s working on environmental protection. The AAC responded by saying that: “This statement is quite correct when it claims that the EU’s efforts on climate change mitigation both nationally and internationally are of considerable importance to the Arctic, but we strike a real note of caution about who is best positioned to be the ‘main interpreter of Arctic concerns’ to the broader international community. This is not to defend the undeniably weak positions on climate change mitigation taken, in particular, by the governments of Canada and the United States. Rather than assuming the burden of interpreting Arctic concerns we suggest that Europe continue to engage Arctic countries on a broad suite of climate change issues and engage with those who live in the region, particularly its Indigenous peoples, and help them interpret and convey Arctic concerns to the world.” (AAC, 2008; 6)

legally-binding entity, and finished by presenting seven key policy priorities for the Council to take into consideration, including: strengthened standing of the Member State Status and Permanent Participant status to allow for integration of Observers; and increased devotion to global climate change processes (UNFCCC) and delivery for Permanent Participants to become members of UNEP's Governing Council (AAC, 2008; 8).

Clearly, the discussion on Indigenous strategies and policy positions is important for several reasons. These directives illustrate not only the usage of strategies within the Arctic but also their relevance between the region's political actors. They also demonstrate the dynamic and unique relationship granted to indigenous organizations as nonstate actors within intergovernmental political forum, and the interesting implications this association has on the structure as a whole. This has considerable impact on the following section, which provides a theoretical framework for visualizing state hegemony in the region through realist thought and the preconditions to state 'strategy-making' in the region. As will be clarified in the following section, despite the emergence of nonstate factors, the strength of states within the international system remains convincing.

2.4 Foundations of Realism and Neorealism Thought

Realism is a necessary component in a coherent analysis of world politics because its focus on power, interests, and rationality is crucial to any understanding of the subject. Thus any approach to international relations has to incorporate, or at least come to grips with key elements of realist thinking... Since realism builds on fundamental insights about world politics and state action, progress in the study of international relations requires that we seek to build on this core.

-Keohane, 1983; 154

Though an outspoken critic of realist theory, Robert Keohane sketches the fundamentals of the theory quite effectively, outlining a number of key characteristics and influences that shape its historical and modern perspectives. Perhaps more significant however is Keohane's reflection on the importance of the school of thought to the discipline of international relations as a whole. As Keohane would suggest, realism provides us with a

basis through which world politics not only perpetuates but in which it is also conceived. As a result of this, its outlook is imperative to the progress of international theory and is innately influential on the discipline's theoretical schools of thought. Such an assumption may be supported based on the historical usage of the theory among prominent political theorists; the origins of the principles of realism have been connected to Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and epitomising the work of Machiavelli's *The Prince* and Hobbes' *Leviathan*. More recently the modern proponents of realism can be found in the work of Morgenthau and Carr, as well as the notable American statesman Henry Kissinger. Despite (or perhaps because of) its ubiquitous character there is debate about realism's classification as a specific theory. As found in work by Donnelly, among contemporary thinkers realism has been called "a philosophical disposition" (Gilpin in 1986), a "loose framework" (Rosenthal in 1991), and a "set of normative emphases which shape theory" (Ferguson and Mansbach in 1988) [Donnelly, 2000; 94]. Though this question of classification may be founded, Donnelly argues that what is most important for the purposes of using realism is its commitment to the tradition of the practice and the theoretical foundations it supports. Realism's key assumptions are based on four principles (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999; 6):

1. States are the principal and most important actors in international politics. By virtue of this, they represent the key unit of analysis. The study of international relations is therefore the study of the relations between these units;
2. States are unitary actors and therefore approach the world as an integrated unit. This results in the state acting as a single voice on matters related to their sovereignty, despite constitutional differences within. Viotti and Kauppi offer a relevant explanation of this circumstance through the following example "Even in those exceptional cases in which, for example, a foreign ministry expresses policies different from the policy statements of the same country's defence ministry, corrective action is taken in an attempt to bring these alternative views to a common and authoritative statement of policy";
3. The state is an essentially rational actor, whose foreign policy choices are based on meticulous calculations of the state's global positioning.¹⁷ Foreign policies are therefore understood to be rational constructs of the state, based on considerations of feasible objectives, alternatives and capabilities in which benefit and cost factors are deliberated on;

¹⁷ This assumption is also known as the 'rationality assumption' and will be referred to as that here on in.

4. State decisions are hierarchical, with security issues at the top of the list. The potential for conflict between states and the posturing of use of force are of primary concern to theorists of realism because it reflects the highest priority of the primary units- or 'high politics'. Equally important is the potential for maintaining international stability and the prevention of war through intra-state analysis. This point identifies a cornerstone of the realist tradition, the belief in 'balance-of-power' in which the construction of order is dependant on the interests of states vis-à-vis their military and/or financial capabilities.

As these four points would reflect, realists believe that power is the dominant currency of international relations (Mearsheimer, 2007; 72). There are, of course, other factors that derive from these four assumptions: for example, it is generally expected that all states possess military capabilities and it is the difference in those capabilities that differentiates states; it also presumed that states can never be completely certain of the intentions of other states, which leads to inferiority and a lack of trust between them. Putting all of these considerations into perspective, it can be understood that it is those powers with the greatest influence ('major' or 'great' powers) whose actions have the most resounding impact on international order. Realists therefore consider the relations between great powers to have the greatest value on the international structure since the consequences of their actions have absolute costs on order as a whole, thus impacting all states in the international system. Put promptly by Waltz (Waltz, 1979; 72):

Great powers of an era write international politics theory. The units with the greatest capacity set the 'scene of action' for other states as well as themselves... the fate of all the states are affected much more by the acts and the interactions of the major ones than the minor ones... to focus on great powers is not to lose sight of lesser ones. Concern with the latter's fate requires paying most attention to the former.

Similarly, former Secretary of State for the United States Government Henry Kissinger concluded that: "once the system is reduced to its interacting parts, the fate of the system can be determined only by the characteristics of its major units" (Keohane, 1986; 45).

In light of that last point, it would make perfect sense to conclude that great powers provide the highest level of analysis for realists. This is, however not necessarily the case. As will be seen shortly, a subsidiary group of realists defend that it is the structure through which states operate that provides the best indication for analysing international

relations. A similar point of debate among realist thinkers is that of- why do states want power? Again, there exists a divide within the discipline between those who attribute state behaviour as being related to human nature, and those who defend that the answers lie in the anarchical environment through which international affairs are conducted. A third divide among realist thinkers is seen in how theorists perceive the influence of domestic politics on international relations. Once again, there is a general division between those who understand domestic variables as being consequential on international political, and those who contend that the strength of the international structure predetermines domestic outcomes (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999; 66). Though ideological disagreements existed prior to 1979, it was Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* that initiated neorealism¹⁸ thought. Waltz's influential work brought new perspectives to old-fashioned realism thinking, providing insight into the balance-of-power theory through his classification of the bipolar and multi-polar alliance systems. Waltz questions realism's, and particularly Morgenthau's, presumption that human nature explains a state's pursuit of power. Instead Waltz considers the architectural design of the international structure as being the primary determinant for state behaviour, in which ideological differences between states and domestic responses within states have little effect on the foundations of international politics since the structure lacks any higher authority to control state action. To Waltz, the international system is anarchic because it lacks a central authority that restrains states.

Though many have argued that the world in which realists operate in has advanced beyond the field's ideological realm,¹⁹ realism remains an influential ideology today through the work of a new group of theorists. Among them, John Mearsheimer provides an interesting dichotomy in neorealism between offensive and defensive realists.

¹⁸ Neorealism is often referred to as structural realism.

¹⁹ In the course of the research conducted for the thesis, several authors researched questioned whether the influence of nonstate actors, reliance on the free-market system, and the emergence of international law had caused an alteration in state hegemony within the international system. From my own perspective, these critics have often used the post-Cold War period as examples to illustrate the progression such indicators have made. However, perhaps more convincing are the larger number of post-September 11 theorists who have relied upon present-day scenarios to show the relevancy of realism in explaining the rise in global warfare, the division among 'great powers' and the continued dependency on military capabilities as symbolic of state power. It is therefore the opinion of the author that although the foundations of realism are so straight forward that they seem almost simplistic, they are nonetheless relevant to the world today and thus within the Arctic region, where the positioning for power and influence in the region among its state actors continues to be a primary concern (see Chapter 3).

According to Mearsheimer, Waltz and his followers maintain that it is unwise for states to maximise their power within an international structure, because the structure will punish them for trying to do so- Mearsheimer referred to this as defensive realism (Mearsheimer, 2007; 4). According to Waltz, the number of great powers operating within the structure defines the 'polarity' of the system. Waltz predicted that in the circumstance where two great powers ('bi-polar') jockeyed for positioning, the structure (and thus international order) was more vulnerable than in the circumstance where there were several great powers (multi-polar) in play (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999; 69-71). Waltz justification was based on the assumption that a bi-polar system would run the risk of escalating to the point where one power would become insurmountable to the other, thus causing an imbalance and the potential for conflict. Waltz favoured the multi-polar approach since the opportunity of forming allegiances would provide deterrence against a single state's domination.

Mearsheimer's own perspective is radically different. Taking the opposite view, Mearsheimer argues that it makes strategic sense for states to maximise power, and when possible, pursue hegemony. This is not founded on the assumption that overwhelming power and absolute hegemony are good characteristics, but instead, it is the only possible way for states to ensure their survival. Offensive structuralists are therefore more connected to the ideology of traditional realists who pronounce absolute power as being the method and the mean to survival; the difference between the two is clarified by Mearsheimer: "for classical realists, power is an end in itself; for structural realists, power is a means to an end and the ultimate end is survival" (Mearsheimer, 2007; 2).

2.5 Structure in Neorealism

As has already been demonstrated in the assumptions of realism and neorealism, many of the themes surrounding realism deal with what is often called 'high politics'. For example, the subjects of war and weapons (particularly nuclear) are reoccurring themes that are frequently used to explain state behaviour within international politics, and define the stability of international order itself. Realism is often criticised for its inapplicability

to 'lesser' scenarios, considering the popular models used by the ideology is often limited to those circumstances that deal with high politics (like war). For example, applying these examples literally to the Arctic would not only be inaccurate, it would perpetuate many of the theatrical misconceptions referred to in the introduction to this thesis, like conflict. Therefore, when applying realism theory in the Arctic it is important to distinguish the theoretical foundations from the way it has been applied to recent events and more often, recent conflicts. When doing so, the approaches of neorealism's systems theory becomes intriguing for conceptualizing the intentions of the Arctic strategies and understanding national interests.

Systems theory derives from the argument that it is impossible to completely understand world politics simply by looking within individual states and analysing their actions. Such an approach is characteristic of 'reductionist theories' that concentrate on causes at the national or domestic level. When doing this, the structure of international relations is determined by knowing the attributes within units (states) and their interactions. Reductionists explain outcomes through elements determined at the national or sub-national level. International order is therefore a product of this outcome, and is defined by the state's domestic priorities. Reductionists are firstly concerned with the internal behaviour of units and secondly, the product that the sum of all their parts has in creating and defining an international system (Waltz; 60). According to Waltz, the effort to understand international politics by studying national bureaucracies provides an easy, albeit limited, avenue to understanding international politics. Rather, Waltz refutes the reductionist approach on the grounds that explanations at the unit level offer infinite possible outcomes, in which only large and subjective assumptions can be derived (Waltz, 1979; 65):

It is not possible to understand world politics simply by looking inside of states. If the aims, policies, and actions of states become matters of exclusive attention or even of central concern, then we are forced back to the descriptive level; and from simple descriptions no valid generalizations can logically be drawn. We can say that we see, but we cannot know what it may mean.

Waltz goes so far as to attack traditional realists like Morgenthau, Kissinger and Levy by arguing that it is inconceivable that there are no important causes that intervene between

the aims of states and the results that their actions produce (Waltz, 1979; 66).

According to systems theorists, reductionists fail to consider the extent to which the framework, or system, has on the individual decisions of states. Defending his argument Waltz predicts that in the history of international relations seldom do state objectives materialize into the results that they foresee. Instead, it is the outcomes of the interactions and presence of other states that define state decisions. Systems theory is therefore concerned with the interacting units (states) within the sphere of international relations (structure). The two levels (states and structure) comprise the system, and the objective of systems theorists is to show how the two levels operate and co-exists. According to Waltz a simple explanation showing systems theory at play can be found in situations where a variety of actors and the variations of their actions does not correlate with the actual outcomes derived (Waltz, 1979; 68). Using a systemic approach allows practitioners of international political theory to better understand the constraining forces on the abilities of states, as well as predict the continuity of the system as a whole. To this end, also significant are the roles of structures, which define the arrangements and ordering of the system and its units. Structures are therefore not comprised of a single political institution, but instead a collection of forces that represent the framework through which states operate vis-à-vis each other. Equally important to identifying how states relate to one another is also exploring how they stand in relation to one another. In this case, observing the balance among states is equally revealing as observing their interactions.

As a quick comparison between reductionist and systemic shows, the two theories are interested in the interactions between different levels, from the sub-national to the international. Where they differ is therefore not according to their units, but according to how these units perceive influence. There is also the fundamental difference in the ordering principles between domestic and international; whereas national politics are constructed hierarchical, as was previous mentioned, international politics survive in an anarchical environment. Waltz defended systems theory because of its ability to offer predictable outcomes on international politics. He conceived that a systemic approach could estimate the strength of different international systems by indicating their durability and peacefulness. Secondly, he supposed that the theory could illustrate how the structure

affected the interaction among states, and in turn, how they affect the structure. Though Waltz's theories could predict patterns of how systems encourage certain behaviour and discourage others, unintended consequences have surprising results when power is constrained (Keohane, 1983; 159). However, the rationality principal of realism defends these situations by arguing that states, given that situation, would make calculated responses based on their capabilities within the system. Systems theory, therefore, is concerned with the big picture, in which individual parts are subsidiary to the combination derived the two levels of units and structures. As pointed out by Hobson in *State & International Relations*, "...a structural explanation does not try to explain the details of each country's foreign policies. It merely tries to tell us 'a small number of big and important thing' and the general tendencies and characteristics of international politics" (Hobson, 2000; 23)

2.6 Criticisms and Contemplations of Systems Theory

The use of Hobson's quote might seem odd when considering what this research attempts to accomplish. In fact, it is perfectly contradictory. However, Waltz and Hobson present a stiff method through which the game of international relations is played. By omitting the importance of foreign affairs policy from individual states, Waltz and Hobson are essentially assuming that the policy has no outstanding effect on international order. This would appear to suggest that foreign policies are created in vain of their actual purpose, which is to establish a direction by which states approach and participate in the international system. This seems more than a bit constraining for states, particularly in systems where defining 'polarity' or 'high politics', like the Arctic is not so easily calculated. Furthermore, Waltz's criticism of reductionism for failing to consider the level of influence from the system on the unit ignores the possibility that foreign bureaus create their policies with those influences in mind. Nevertheless, the systems theory presents a necessary consideration when conducting analysis in this type of research; the possibility of restricting the research to basic analytical comparisons of the individual strategies is flawed unless consideration is given in balance with the systemic forces at work. Indeed, it is a two-part process.

Many political theorists share a similar hesitancy towards using Waltz's systems theory as an obligatory rule to studying international relations. In *Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond*, Keohane argues for the use of certain aspects of systemic theory in establishing a context for state action. However, Keohane equally values domestic policy and state behaviour for determining 'internal-external' interactions, as well as the state's ability to influence international structures (institutions). Though the quote used earlier (Section 2.4) defends the value of realism to international political theory, Keohane himself speculates on the discipline's accuracy to predict change (Keohane, 1983; 154):

Yet...realism does not provide a satisfactory theory of world politics, if we require an adequate theory that provides a set of plausible and testable answers to questions about state behaviour under specified conditions. Realism is particularly weak in accounting for change, especially where the sources of that change lie in the world economy or in the domestic structures of states.

Realism's focus on interests and power provides a logically coherent introduction for contextualizing state action; as Keohane points out, the rationality assumption constructs conclusions drawn from knowledge on the structure of the system and not its individual parts. However, the actual act of measuring the concept of power is an imperfect procedure, which may lead to over-exaggerations of the importance of power on the system as a whole. As a result, Keohane has created his own analytical framework for understanding international relations by incorporating realism's foundations, within a multi-dimensional approach. Keohane's research program is a mix between realism, neorealism and reductionist theories; in essence, his program "[is] a modified version which relaxes some of the assumptions of structural realism but retains enough of the 'hard core' to generate a priori predictions on the basis of information about the international environment. Finally, we need better theories of domestic politics, decision-making, and information processing, so that the gap between the external and internal environments can be bridged in a systematic way (Keohane, 1983; 174)." According to this approach, Keohane conceives of an analytical framework based on (Keohane, 1983; 175):

- States remaining the principle actors in the international system, however with

more-emphasis placed on nonstate actors and intergovernmental and transnational institutions;

- The rationality assumption remaining an important theory for predicting state behaviour. For without rationality, the possibility of creating accurate scenarios based on state behaviour is hugely subjective to the intentions of the author. However, the limit of the rationality assumption within a certain set of structural principles must be identified. Therefore, it must be understood that the rationality assumption does not provide flawless information or include consideration of all possible alternative;
- Finally, the notion by realists that states seeking to maximize power and influence at all costs cannot be understood as being absolute. Although power and influence remain significant considerations on the actions of states, the conclusion that these factors are the overriding force for states is inaccurate. Based on different circumstances, it must be acknowledged that states will behave with different intentions, and are completely reflective of the capabilities of states to use their power. As Keohane puts it, “where survival is at stake efforts to maintain autonomy may take precedence over all other activities, but where the environment is relatively benign energies will also be directed to fulfilling other goals”.

A conclusion based on these three research criteria would suggest that Keohane views the world as being more dynamic than traditional realist assume. Rather than contextualizing state behaviour through the constraints and demands of ‘the power motivator’, these three points understand international relations as being dependant on several different factors, with national policies being one of them. Although Keohane clearly subscribes to realist principles, domestic and systemic considerations must work in parallel since neither provides a complete or comprehensive picture by itself.

2.7 A Note on Strategies

Before going into a larger discussion next chapter on the geopolitical considerations of national policies within Arctic regional discourse, it is important to try and clarify what exactly ‘strategies’ represent. As what might already have been shown from the indigenous examples, strategies take on a variety of forms, with multiple meanings, and which are composed of varied objectives. Simply put, strategy is how something is done- it is a plan of action, based on a series of concerns, needs and interests. As Deibel puts it,

it is the relationship between thought and action, and between means and ends (Deibel, 2007; 3). Of course, it is also a consideration of the necessary tools for implementing the means, and the way those tools are used. Because they are representative of an actor's interests, they are highly individualistic; strategies are usually confined to a single state, or businesses, in which the central purpose is to establish a coherent plan of action on a topic, or a region. They are thus each defined by internal circumstances, at a particular point in time. Despite this, they do share some similar characteristics, particularly in terms of their appeal for demonstrations affirmative interest from top leadership. Put in a regional setting, like that of the Arctic, strategies have become tangible examples for actors in demonstrating the level of commitment to a set of issues and objectives.

They are also useful indicators for drawing assumptions on the current political atmosphere of a region; at a glance, analysing the interests of a region's primary actors provides explanations for the region's political circumstances. There is of course a potential that strategies only describe surface level explanations, as they deal with public information. As can be assumed from national governments, there are a number of tacit interests that only get shared through confidential briefings and closed-door meetings, among senior or executive leadership. Although, access to such information would greatly enhance the ability to construct accurate scenarios based on calculations of these interests, a comparative analysis of strategies would be impossible, without some of the generic priorities that are evident in each of the documents.

What is clear is that Arctic strategies do not comply with normative or historical definitions of 'strategy' in international relations theory. Though Arctic strategies may be able to define gains and losses in terms of a number of primary indicators, their ultimate objective is not calculating these equations in terms of the use of force. Nor is a secondary objective the technological and geographical military capability of an actor, or its offensive/defensive techniques. Clearly, this association is deeply rooted in traditional realist thought, in which the unpredictability of world events and the laws of nature

governing state behaviour are framed within a power complex.²⁰ Historical uses of ‘strategy’ in periods of war or conflict, fail to broaden the definition to its practical uses in peacetime as well; Edwin Meade Earle explains, “strategy is not merely a concept of wartime but is an inherent element of statecraft at all times” (Deibel, 2007; 6).

If there is one parallel from the traditional approach of strategy that can be used within an Arctic context, it is the practice of targeting strategies to a limited geographic region; for example Mackinder’s 1890 supposition that “the extent to which geographical opportunities will be exploited depends on strategy” has obvious associations to key components of Arctic strategies, despite the fact his reference is to the deployment of armed forces (Gray & Sloan, 1999; 2). Despite his concentration of military examples, the work of Gray does hold some interesting parallels between strategy and policy that may be applicable to the Arctic. What Gray explains is the hierarchical order of policy, strategy and tactics, in which policy must always be seen as more important than strategy, though strategy must be superior to tactics. Within this chain of command, it becomes impossible to separate strategy from geography, since policy and tactics originate from the domestic and fail to gather meaning outside of national borders. Put into practice, Gray’s research shows a reliance on strategic thinking, as well as an important consideration on the interchange between how policy is defined based on strategic calculations. So what then defines policy? Within the context of strategies, policy becomes the statements of action of governments; whereas strategies may be thought of as the ‘input’ in a particular government process, policy becomes the ‘output’ (Deibel, 2007; 12). As Gregory Foster defines it, strategy “is the grand design, the overall mosaic into which the pieces of specific policy fit. It provides the key ingredients of clarity, coherence and consistency over time” (Foster, 1985; 14). Certainly Foster takes a broader approach to defining strategy, and makes important parallels that the documents have in promoting cohesion within a government. While this is surely true once the directive is complete, it also applies during the development process, in which often a number of

²⁰ During the research phase of this thesis, multiple definitions of strategy were found, with most relating to military capabilities. A few examples found were: “Strategy (is) the use of engagements for the object of war”, Carl Von Clausewitz (1832); “Strategy is the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfil the ends of policy”, Basil Liddell Hart (1941); and “Strategy is ultimately about effectively exercising power”. Quotes found in Deibel, 2007.

state departments are consulted and involved during the drafting. That being said, the fact that they are foreign policy documents means that they are most often initiated at the executive level, in which top leadership sets the overall framework of discussion, issues, and language.

However, it is difficult to consider whether or not Arctic strategies are much different from other strategies, related to other regions. There are obvious fundamental differences to those strategies in which military operations play a central role;²¹ Arctic strategies provide roadmaps for actors based on a number of priorities, in which military concerns are not necessarily the most immediate. The one possible exception to this could be found from within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).²² This assumption is based in consideration of the organization's primary security objectives, its strategic military interests in the region, as well as the history of operations the organization has had within the Arctic region. For purposes of brevity, a further discussion into what kind of strategy this might involve is not explored in depth. However, it is worth mentioning that although NATO has enjoyed somewhat of an Arctic resurgence in recent years, as demonstrated by its January 2009 Seminar on Security Prospects in the High North held in Reykjavik as well as several academic publications from within its NATO Defence College Research Division, there has yet to be a formal strategy document released- at least in public. This has not stopped its academics from within its College from offering strong suggestions to states on possibly strategy priorities and directions. For example, according to Holtsmark's in his *Towards cooperation or confrontation? Security in the High North* paper "the aim [of Arctic policies] should be to find ways to handle already existing and potential conflicts of interests and other threats to High North security and stability. This implies political and military strategies that will minimise the risk of armed conflict in the region, but that will also provide effective means of crisis management should prevention

²¹ See for example, the US's "A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan" or "Canada in Afghanistan: Report on the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs and International Development".

²² While NATO is obviously not a state, nor does it have any sort of participatory role in the Arctic like governments have, based on the fact that 4 of the 5 Arctic coastal states are active members, it is important to consider their positioning. The same would be true of the European Union and the number of Arctic type strategies it has produced over the last number of years, if this research was taking into consideration all eight Arctic states, in which three are members. A good introduction into the EU interests and strategies in the Arctic can be found from Bailes' "How the EU could help cool tempers over the Arctic" (Bailes, 2009).

fail” (Holtsmark, 2009; 1).

Rather, this thesis takes the approach offered in the *Northern Dimensions- Expanding Circumpolar Cooperation Report*, from a June 2004 symposium held in Brussels and co-hosted by the Northern Research Forum, the Canadian Embassy in Finland and the Canadian Mission to the EU. Though the symposium was primarily interested in exploring the nature of Canada’s *Northern Dimension of Canada’s Foreign Policy* (2000) as well as the European Union’s *2nd EU Northern Dimension Action Plan* (2003), the symposium offered some interesting perspectives on the role of Arctic strategies; mentioning that “the forward-looking move to identify a ‘Northern Dimension’ in government policies indicates the value governments and institutions place on their Northern territories... By singling out a Northern Dimension, these policies reflect the growing awareness of the unique opportunities and challenges in the North” (Symposium Report, 2004; 2). The report further cited that although each of the Arctic countries has their own distinct features, there were a number of underlying issues between borders that present opportunities for improved cooperation, and that this could be expanded through the development of like-minded strategies from the remaining Arctic Ocean states. Whether or not they took the recommendation offered at the symposium will be further discussed later.

2.8 A Theoretical Path for Understanding Arctic Relations

This chapter has created a theoretical framework through which the primary actors in the Arctic, as well as their interests, can be conceptualized. As shown, applying realist and neorealist thought alone to the Arctic fails to properly explain the division of power between its actors, and their relationships. For example, the examples used in section 2.3 to show the strength of the indigenous position through the publication of strategies may challenge the neorealist assumption that domestic politics are not influential at the international structural level. Realism might also fall short on explaining how the region continues to be characterized by peace and stability, despite the fact that states operate within an anarchic environment which such great global strategic importance and natural

resource wealth. At the surface level, it would at least appear that the realist notion of states maximizing absolute power would seem exaggerated within the Arctic reality. Though the argument can be made that Arctic states lack the financial and technological resources to achieve absolute power or hegemony within the region, there are equal number of reasons to believe that the unique characteristics of the region itself are influential to the region's stability and order.

Nonetheless, a neorealist structural approach to understanding Arctic geopolitics is relevant, and has already been shown, cannot be ignored. Applying Waltz's system theory to the North not only brings new considerations for why strategies have been developed, but also the constraints and motivational factors of the individual Arctic states for implementing these strategies. Though Waltz may argue that the strategies themselves do not hold influential power in redefining Arctic relations, it is the opinion of this research that the strategies illustrate a change in national priorities for states and are thus important factors on the progress of international relations in the region. Whether the strategies are products of states based on the structural constraints of the Arctic region, or whether they predict the probability for geopolitical change in the region has yet to be decided. What has been concluded about strategies is the importance of their development for states, as promoting cohesion and clarity between all levels of government, as well as promoting a defined Arctic agenda for international use. Modern strategies also challenge the traditional design, in which military capabilities are not necessarily the most defining elements of consideration. This idea of deviating from the traditional approach is comparable to Keohane's research framework; respect for the fundamentals of the realist traditions but with considerations for new actors and ulterior state motives. The following chapter will discuss trends in Arctic geopolitics, by giving examples for how these theoretical considerations have been institutionalized within the region.

Chapter 3: Geopolitical theory and application in the Arctic

3.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter two provided a detailed description into the theoretical backgrounds of neorealism thought and created a framework that emphasized on the one hand the role of states within world politics, as well as the systemic forces that influence their behaviour. On the other hand, neorealism's emphasis on state rationality, its use of the balance of power theory as building equilibrium within the international system, and the assumption that state interests are highly associated with power and influence provide intriguing explanations into world politics. The chapter also showed some of the fundamental flaws of neorealism thought, as explained by theorists like Keohane who argue against the simplicity and stagnation of neorealism's application to modern world events. This opinion found association with the discussion on circumpolar actors, in which examples from within the indigenous community illustrate how nonstate actors have transcended their categorical limitations and become increasingly more prominent within patterns of foreign policy discourse. The examples highlighting the indigenous strategies are one such tool that demonstrates the growing dissatisfaction from these actors in having a peripheral role in foreign policy development. In consideration of this point, it is clear that policies have taken on multiple meanings. Nonstate actors have found use for strategies as important lobbying documents, in which the interests of the actors are clearly defined and vocalized. However, their ability to transcend into the realm of policy development is unclear. State strategies, therefore, can be understood as reflections of the interests of Arctic national governments, in which the creation of policy and initiatives should be products of its major goals. However, as also indicated in the previous chapter, strategies can no longer only be conceptualized in terms of military capability and the use of force; instead modern strategies are better understood as 'the grand design' through which states pursue comprehensive interests.

Equally important to the theoretical perspectives on state actions is the discussion on the geopolitical environment in the Arctic and the number of changes the region has

undergone. As explained the last chapter, a theoretical framework based on a systems approach and the geopolitical discourse in the Arctic are inseparable discussions in which both topics provide supportive perspectives and interpretations for understanding state motives. Such a combination provides perspectives for understanding not only state behaviour, but also the composition of Arctic politics as a whole. The main aim of this chapter is to continue with these discussions, by first providing an outline of geopolitical theory, including a brief examination of some of the diverging philosophies among its theorists. The chapter will then focus itself on the Arctic, by framing the region as a conceptual space within geopolitical theory. It will then proceed to identify the geopolitical trends that have defined the Arctic region from the 20th century history until now, with special reference to issues dealing with security and international cooperation. Given the changing character of the region's most prominent 'high-level' forum, the Arctic Council, and the emergence of the 'Arctic 5' also provide necessary considerations for thinking of new geopolitical changes within the region. The intention is to provide the reader with a broad understanding of the geopolitical landscape in the Arctic, through which national considerations can be better-understood next chapter. It is also necessary to pay close attention to the geopolitical trends in the Arctic in order to envision how future change might occur and the types of scenarios that might be experienced.

3.2 Geopolitical Theories and Spatial Relationships

As a philosophy within international relations theory, geopolitics was born towards the end of the 20th century. The work of Halford Mackinder (1865- 1947) often gets cited for sparking the geopolitical movement, which became increasingly popularized within academic and political communities during the 21st century. Mackinder's quote from 1890 identifies four central themes of geopolitics that remain principles of the field today, that of geography, history, economic needs and interest (Gray & Sloan, 1999; 2):

The course of politics is the product of two sets of forces, impelling and guiding. The impetus is from the past, in the history embedded in a people's character and tradition. The present guides the movement of economic wants and geographical opportunities. Statesmen and diplomats succeed and fail pretty much as they recognize the irresistible power of these forces.

As a philosophy, geopolitics has taken on a range of meanings and definitions within academia. Similarly, the term is often used within political analysis and by policy-makers themselves for defining the geographical relationship to politics. Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger did no help in defining the term when answering that, “by geopolitical I mean an approach that pays attention to the requirements of equilibrium” (Gray & Sloan, 1999; 2). Despite its common references within media, there is little consensus as to what the term actually means. No less, there is little consensus on the philosophy’s relevancy in today’s world; Hartshorne in 1954 referred to the discipline as academic ‘poison’ for its association to the Hitler regime, later sceptics questioned if it held any value in the post Cold War world period, when walls (both metaphorically and literally) fell and the rise of globalization opened up borders (Dodds, 2007; 22). Nonetheless, geopolitics as a discipline remains a relevant theoretical construct that has progressed by taking on new meanings and relevancy within a changing world. Like realist thought, it has emerged and found purpose because of the strength of its foundations and principles, that have been able to adapt despite criticism and an ever changing political world.

That begs the question- what are these principles? At its most basic, geopolitics is an effort to explain political history through certain geographical considerations (Gray & Sloan, 1999; 1). It is drawing the connections between the spatial world and historical causation. Rather than viewing power solely through human and material resources, geopolitics approaches the geographic context in which power is exercised. It is therefore a certain set of political principles from an actor, on a geographically confined space or region. These are not limited to states, as any political actor can be seen to have vested interests within a space and whose political constructs are reflected in and by that space. However, for those reasons mentioned last chapter, the degree to which these interests impact the geopolitical environment of a region is highly dependant on the amount of influence from each actor. Given the degree to which geopolitics concern space, and therefore borders and resources, states once again emerge as the primary geopolitical actors. Such a heavy consideration towards states can be found in the different ways of understanding nature within geopolitical theory: first, a dynamic nature, in which geopolitics is in the constant process of change, which can be attributable to many things,

including transportation, and technological advancements; secondly, geopolitics plays an interpretative role, in relation to how states view their geographic surroundings and consider policy decisions based on those views; thirdly, geopolitics can be an instrument in political warfare, whereby states use their geographical positioning as political leverage within the international system (Gray & Sloan, 1999; 10).

When taking a broader approach to these geopolitical characteristics, certain themes prevail about how states view and use geography. Certainly it becomes an object of policy, in which the pursuit of and defence of a territory requires states to think of their geographies in terms of power. A second theme would be the connection between geopolitics and physical geography, in which the natural characteristics (including resources) and climatic characteristics influence how states consider the value within nature. Thirdly, geography can be thought of as a military theatre, in which the physical environment becomes a central calculation for military responses. Sloan theorizes that when viewing geography as an arena in which military warfare has the potential to take place, geography becomes more abstract and simplified. The health of the natural environment takes a subordinate role to security issues, in which military action justifies any harm to nature (Sloan, 1999; 16). In this view, state behaviour in the name of geopolitics takes on a rational quality, whereby certain actions can be validated (including those harmful to the national environment) in the name of geopolitical interests. As such, geography becomes a strategic variable in how states determine action and view their surroundings. According to Agnew (Agnew, 1998; 3), “the activities [of states] also rest on more specific geographical assumptions about *where* best to act *why* this makes sense. The world is actively ‘spatialized’, divided up, labelled, sorted out into a hierarchy of places of greater or lesser ‘importance’”. These are obviously highly applicable to realist perceptions of the world, in which power and influence fuel state behaviour; Tuathail makes this connection through a logical observation (Tuathail, 1999; 107):

Its [geopolitics] dominant modes of narration that are declarative (‘this is how the world is’) and then imperative (‘this is what we must do’)... its enduring ‘plot’ is the global balance of power and the future of strategic advantage in an anarchic world. Geopolitics is of the same ilk as political realism, distinguishing itself by its proclivity to find ‘geography’ as a singularly

important element in foreign policy conceptualization and practice.

Tuathail's quote fits well with Colin Gray's principles in *Inescapable Geography*, in which the author argues that all politics is inherently geopolitics because geography can never be separated from how states approach their domestic and international interests. Gray works on another, similar key assumption: that all strategy is geostrategic. Therefore, "geography cannot be an optional extra for consideration by the strategic theorist or planner, because it drives the character and the potential contemporary reach of tactical, hence operational, prowess" (Gray, 1999; 164). Gray's notions of geopolitics are representative of one influential viewpoint in geopolitical theory, traditional or classical geopolitics. However, as will be discussed next, the emphasis of physical space in terms of state control and power politics is not so simple; the way in which geographic space is perceived lies at the heart of the geopolitical debate, in which there are multiple schools of thought.

3.3 Classical, Critical and New Geopolitics

Within an Arctic political context, three major geopolitical theories provide convincing arguments for relevancy: classical geopolitics, critical geopolitics, and new geopolitics. It is worth explaining the theoretical foundations of each of these three separately, and then discussing their application within the Arctic as a whole at the end.

3.3.1 Classical geopolitics²³

Geopolitics as a discipline is most often associated with the theoretical principles of classic geopolitical thought, which stresses the use of geography as a physical space for control and occupation (Heininen, 2010; 6). The predominance of classic thought within geopolitics can be related to its late 20th century beginnings, and the interwar period of

²³ Point of terminology: classical geopolitics is often referred to as 'geopolitical tradition' and 'formal geopolitical thought', however for purposes of clarification, the use of classical geopolitics includes all references of the term.

the early 21st century, when theorists like Ratzel, Mahan, and Mackinder constructed convincing arguments based on the historical military acts of those eras. Another appeal of classic geopolitics, however, is its ability to take on ‘mythic’ qualities, and straightforward associations between space and politics; Tuathail refers to this mythic persona as providing “...uncanny clarity and insight in a complex world...the plurality is reduced to certain ‘transcendent truths’ about strategy” (Tuathail, 1999; 113). What Tuathail fails to mention are two important reoccurring models within classical geopolitics: that of resources and technology (Heininen, 2010; 6). As Grygiel points out in *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change*, this kind of geopolitics emphasizes the dependency on centres of resources and the lines of communication, which determine the resource and strategic value of a geographic location. Therefore, any activity by a state that alters the natural environment of a location, most often for economic or military reasons, is an act of geopolitics. Thus technological advancements that provide new capabilities for a state to utilize the natural geography is a geopolitical advantage for states; as Grygiel puts it, classic “geopolitics therefore is not a constant but a variable that describes the changing geographic distribution of routes and of economic and natural resources” (Grygiel, 2006; 41). This idea of a changing variable follows closely the neorealist theory of balance of power, in which the actions of states are determined by a natural instinct to gain power and influence. As a result, classical geopolitics emphasises the role of geography in this pursuit, in which natural resources and technology are all important factors for balance of power foundations.

Perhaps no theoretical example summarizes this connection between technology and resource better than Mackinder’s Heartland Theory. Mackinder’s theory had significant influence on the discipline of geopolitical thought at the time it was established (1904),²⁴ in which a large portion Eastern Europe (the Heartland) held key military and economic strategic importance for whichever state could control its vast geographical landscape. According to Mackinder, "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island controls the

²⁴ The Heartland Theory was first exposed in Mackinder’s influential “The Geographical Pivot of History” article, which he published in 1904, although the theory would be a work in progress for the remainder of Mackinder’s career.

world" (Mackinder, 1904). There is of course little debate today over the territorial ownership of Mackinder's Heartland,²⁵ however certain elements of the Heartland theory remain relevant. Sloan in *Sir Halford Mackinder J Mackinder: The Heartland Theory Then and Now* (Sloan, 1999; 16-35) makes the case that three assertions have come to define Mackinder's work as timeless. This is, the value Mackinder placed on the interplay between geography and military power, as well as the consequences of this interplay on politics and military strategies- cornerstones of classical geopolitics that have previously been discussed. Second, his evaluation on the natural geographic configurations and locations through which state power was exercised. In particular, Mackinder highlighted the association between transportation and weapons technology as fundamental demonstrations of power from states. Lastly, that the balance of power within world politics depended on the one hand geographical conditions in terms of economics and military strategy, and on the other, the "relative number, virility, equipment, and organization of the competing principles" (Sloan, 1999; 23). From this last point, Mackinder illustrates how geographic considerations are relative to state behaviour and interests. As such, a precursor to understanding the geopolitical environment of world politics involves not only constructing a geopolitical landscape based on geographic attributes, but also on the political environment in which state interact.

3.3.2 Critical and New Geopolitics

Much of the aforementioned objections towards geopolitical theory are actually criticisms of the classical school of thought, in which examples of world politics have been difficult to rationalize through a 'geography as the occupation of physical space' approach. In defence of the discipline, geopolitical theory has evolved and found new philosophical directions, which take on a variety of forms. The above cited quote from Tuathail in reference to political realism in geopolitics might seem out of place, since the author

²⁵ Expanding throughout most of present day Russia, through Mongolia, and Northern China to the Himalayans.

represents one the greatest opponents to normative approaches of geopolitical thinking.²⁶ In fact, Tuathail is better associated to critical geopolitics, an organ of geopolitical thought that challenges the traditional approach of viewing world politics with fixed lenses; critical geopolitics exceeds the ‘either-or’ reasoning characteristic of classical thought, and challenges the narrowness of defining geopolitical models as between ‘us/them’, ‘inside/outside’, ‘foreign/domestic’ and ‘near/far’. As defined by Tuathail (Tuathail, 1999; 107):

Critical geopolitics is a problematizing theoretical enterprise that places the existing structures of power and knowledge in question... critical geopolitics seek to recover the complexities of global political life and expose the power relationships that characterize knowledge about geopolitics concealed by orthodox [classical] geopolitics... geopolitics, critical geopoliticians argue, operates with a view from nowhere, a seeing that refuses to see itself and the power relationships that make it possible.

Critical geopolitics operates beyond the normative practice of seeing the world through a globe or a map, since those tools of classical theorists fail to show the dynamisms of world events; factors like globalization and the flows of knowledge and information (‘informationalization’) that transcend state border without control or authority are equally important in today’s world of multiplicity and globality. As such, rather than viewing power as being concentrated to military capability and under the execution of state governments, critical geopolitics looks at much broader understandings of the concept and includes power relationships between transnational communities and national governments. It is highly critical of the classical approach for its inability to explain the spatialization of identity and nationhood, practices of politicization that have been influential forces in geopolitical history (Dalby and Tuathail, 1998; 4). Similarly, critical geopolitics defends the cultural and social attributes of geography, identifying the shortcomings of viewing geography solely in terms of territoriality, without consideration for ethnography and the power of imagery.

²⁶ Tuathail is also one of the most outspoken critics of geopolitics for its tendency to be inclusive and layered in stereotypes, as he notes in *Understanding Critical Geopolitics: Geopolitics and Risk Society*: “marked only be racial and imperialist discourses, geopolitics is also uncritically patriarchal in its assumptions, reasoning and heroic style. Geopolitics is deeply masculinist practice that appeals to heroic public subjectivities” (Tuathail, 1999; 123).

With these considerations in mind, it would seem that critical politics resembles less geopolitical theory than its own distinct field of postmodern political research in which the distinctions between classical approaches are too wide to be conceived in terms of critical analysis. However, Tuathail defends its application within geopolitical theory by perhaps bridging the greatest conceptual divide- that of security (Tuathail, 1999; 119):

Globalization, informalization and proliferating techno-scientific risks have transformed the dimensionality and territoriality of geopolitics at the end of the 20th century. Some have even suggested this marks 'the end of geopolitics' but such arguments have a narrow Cold War conception of geopolitics. What can be said is that the problematic of 'national security' has itself become globalized, informationalized and, I would argue, is itself a threat to us if conceptualized in countermodern rather than reflexive ways... the first argument is that the problematic of 'national security' in the contemporary era is now global. While regional and state- centred threats are still significant concerns, the most pressing security challenges... are now 'deterritorialized' and global. Most within the Western security community now recognize this and have a strong appreciation of the value of coordinated international diplomatic efforts through diplomacy, international assistance, arms control, and non-proliferation initiatives to shape the international geopolitical environment.

Tuathail's reference shows support for the classical geopolitical notion of security as exercised through state power, where it detaches itself is over the stagnant view of states operating independent of each other, and instead applies geopolitics towards the multilateral nature of international relations.

Lastly, new geopolitics emphasizes the role of nonstate actors within the global system. Rather than looking primarily through the lens of state occupation over geographic space, new geopolitics considers the role of subnational political actors within the political process in relation to their geographic positioning and interests. Another important element in new geopolitics is that of economics, in which the geographical features of a region are specialized in terms of their economic opportunity. As a result, the interest of states on geography is determined by the economic value the area has; the quantity of natural resource deposits, the potential for extraction, and the possibility of trade routes thus become important factors in determining state geo-economic interest (Heininen, 2010; 6).

Clearly, the three types of geopolitical theory mentioned above have parallels that can be drawn within regional contexts; for, geopolitics needs geography. However, rather than seeing them as completely separate, in which their influences are specific to a period of time or location, they are better characterized as working on different levels with different objects of study, but whose relevancy is global. They may also find associations within the same geography at the same period of time, and therefore serve to influence each other, rather than compete. For example, it would be a mistake to say that the role of globalization has taken over state interest in the region following the end of the Cold War; this is simply not true, since national governments continue to see geographical space in terms of opportunities for economic and political gains.²⁷ With this in mind, it is time to focus on the Arctic and consider how these theories apply within its political discourse. The field of Arctic geopolitics has presented many opportunities for theorists, but has been surprisingly pioneered by a limited number of authors; as such, this text relies heavily on the work of Young, Heininen, Griffiths, and Östreng but with supplementary research from a number of Arctic experts whose work finds association with the themes. The following sections will thus look at eras of geopolitical history in Arctic geopolitical discourse, trends associated with these eras as well as a discussion on possible indicators for geopolitical change. Furthermore, the remainder of this chapter will also consider the Arctic's primary international institutions of cooperation, new building blocks for its members, as well as the ever-changing nature of Arctic security.

3.4 Eras of Arctic Geopolitics

When looking at the Arctic as a spatial region there are defining eras and trends that stand out, despite the vastness of its geography and the complexity of its actors. Rather than taking a historical perspective to each individual state, when conceptualizing geopolitics in the Arctic from a broad, holistic approach it is possible to observe a number of common elements and themes that transcend national politics and whose scope

²⁷ The argument is often made in connection to the American interest in the Iraq War (2001-present), the on-going feud between Israel and Palestine, as well as the Russian-Georgia War (South Ossetia) the Summer of 2008.

is truly circumpolar. This approach is also crucial in understanding the level of interconnectivity between states and how influences from outside national boundaries impact domestic discourse; state decisions are therefore never taken in isolation to the geopolitical reality of the region. As much as individual decisions by states impacts the political discourse of the region, these decisions are reflections of how states see themselves within the region, as well as how their interests are defined by politics, law, economics, society, military and technological capability. Arctic geopolitics is therefore hard to define by looking at one state alone, or one particular era, and is perhaps better distinguished as a process through which many forces at work have impacted regional discourse.

A good starting point for observing these eras is to acknowledge the south-north relationship that defined Arctic politics for much of recent history. It is commonly agreed within academia, that prior to the 20th century, the Arctic was characterized by a sense of abandonment from national governments. Young outlines four clusters that when taken together illustrate this attitude of “benign neglect” towards the Arctic from southern state capitals (Young, 1992; 6):

- The Arctic as an empty stage: given the small human populations in the Arctic, Young argues that it has been easy for policy-makers to intentionally forget their public responsibilities towards the region. As a result, political activity within the region is highly linked to the state’s interest not jurisdictional responsibility;
- Arctic exceptionalism, in which the exotic and unique features of the Arctic are accentuated, thus fuelling general misunderstandings and stereotypes of the region;
- core/periphery relations, which propagates this idea of north as ‘hinterland’ and the paternal viewpoint of southern policy-makers towards the Arctic. Young’s use of ‘internal colonialism’ for describing this relationship is defended by the author for the economic and political dependency of the North on the South, despite the lack of knowledge from southern policy-makers on the distinct needs of northern peoples;
- Finally, Cold War Paralysis, an inherent antagonism to view the Arctic as an unpromising region for international cooperation because of Cold War divides.²⁸

²⁸ Young’s last cluster is representative of the year in which it was published, 1992, when international cooperation following the Cold War was at its beginning stages. Although it might capture the situation at that period in time, as will be discussed, the strength of international cooperation is one of the most obvious characteristics in Arctic geopolitics.

Young's discussion presents a strict divide between North and South, which emphasizes the alienation of the region from national and global influence. The Arctic has of course changed dramatically from the time when Young's *Arctic Politics: Conflict and Cooperation in the Circumpolar North* was published in 1992. Rather than viewing the region strictly separated from the rest of the world, the Arctic now features prominently in global discussions related to the environment, security and economy. Heininen in 2006 gives five examples to demonstrate how the North has evolved from its peripheral tradition and emerged as a distinct area of interest for the world. The author first sites the geopolitical perspective, in which large oil reserves, transportation opportunities, and military deployments (in particular for strategic submarines) have fundamental security interests for states in the Arctic. Secondly, Heininen also highlights the activity of the scientific community for demonstrating the interconnectivity of the Arctic environment with that of global change. Thirdly, the diversity of the region's geographic and cultural life has entered into the global psyche. The region has also been considered as a model for peaceful negotiations, that promotes problem-solving before conflict can occur; and finally, as an innovate centre for experimenting with new political ideas that break the mould of conventional political structures- both domestically (with, for example, indigenous self-governments), and internationally (the Arctic Council and the involvement from its Permanent Participants) (Heininen, 2006; 2). Heininen's examples showcase an increase in global interest in the Arctic. These of course are also based on the perceptions from actors who are not immediate stakeholders in the region (i.e. non-Arctic state actors). Their interests and level of activity is highly dependant on a political environment that is established by the Arctic states, both through domestic legislation but also through regional cooperation. Thus, the ability for non-Arctic states to utilize Arctic resources within the maritime boundaries of Arctic states is dependant on the willingness of these states to permit activity; the same is true for transportation routes that cut through the internal waters of coastal states.

So what exactly defines this political environment in the Arctic? There are two basic points of discussion that are most often referenced within Arctic geopolitics: that of

conflict and *cooperation*.²⁹ Though fundamentally contradictory, these two themes better describe Arctic geopolitics than any other; it is from these themes that we can further understand the debates on security and military, or multilateralism and stability. These themes are directly related to the defining events (or eras) within twentieth century Arctic geopolitical discourse. For example, conflict was easily present in the Arctic during World War II though the impacts of militarization on the geographical, political and sociological landscape of the Arctic. No more noticeable were these transformations than in the Barents region, where German occupancy of Norway, Swedish and Finnish neutrality, and Russian alignment with the Allies meant that the European Arctic became a centre for land and sea warfare. So too is it present during the Cold War, in which the Arctic emerged as a military theatre and key geo-strategic arena for both the United States and the former Soviet Union. However, the region as a whole was greatly divided at this time by the membership of all Arctic States within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact. Post-Cold War institution building gave way to a new era of cooperation, which took environmental protection as the grounds for creating discussion. The foundations of the 1991 Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy and its conception of the Arctic Council in 1996 are perhaps the most definitive examples of a period in time defined by peace and stability. The foundations of cooperation are also to be found in the strength of the international legal framework to which all Arctic states subscribe and promote.

It is from this brief assessment that the two themes of conflict and cooperation can be seen as recurring. It is important to look at them in greater detail to see whether or not their prominence can be related to national strategies and state priorities. By defining the history of their impact within Arctic geopolitics, it is possible to make assessments as to whether or not aspects of either are expressed at the national level. And if so, what are the primary indicators of cooperation and conflict in the region? How are they connected to state interests? And what force does the international system have on defining these

²⁹ The use of 'conflict' and 'cooperation' has been extensively used within Arctic political literature in recent years. See Young's "Whither the Arctic: Conflict or Cooperation in the Circumpolar Arctic", the World Wildlife Federation's (WWF)'s No.1 2009 The Circle publication "Cooperation or Conflict: The way forward for Arctic Governance", and Canadian International Council Fellow Whitney Lauckenbauer's 2009 lecture series "Arctic Front, Arctic Homeland: Conflict and Cooperation in the Circumpolar North".

interests? These questions become important when debating how states view opportunities within the Arctic, as for example, presented with the development of natural resources, the possibility of new transportation routes, and emphasis towards sovereignty and security. For example, does the opening of the Northwest Passage or the Northern Sea Route present challenges to state sovereignty, thus becoming a source of conflict, or are states approaching the ambiguity of maritime jurisdiction and the possibility for transport as a possibility for increased cooperation? The following two sections take a closer look at the defining characteristics of both conflict and cooperation in the North.

3.4.1 Discussion on Circumpolar Conflict and Security

No event characterized Arctic conflict in the last century quite like the Cold War (1945-1991).³⁰ Though the war never amounted to physical violence, the dividing effect that the standoff had on the Arctic was significant for many reasons. A surface level analysis would reference the large-scale proliferation of armaments within Arctic waters and the technological advancements in defensive capabilities that drastically changed the physical environment in the North. A second obvious shift would be the unprecedented concentration of geo-strategic planning in the Arctic by military commanders and policy-makers. What these two factors illustrate is a deepening awareness and attention on the Arctic region from the littoral states and the emergence of the region from a global periphery to the world stage. However, there are several underlying factors of the Cold War that transcend military consideration, which demonstrate the values and priorities of Arctic states during the Cold War; Östreng references three intertwined and overlapping processes that characterized this behaviour (Östreng, 2008; 16):

1. Militarization: National security became synonymous with military security. Thus

³⁰ This thesis does not go into the military expertise used during the Cold War, in which a lengthy discussion on technological capability, the arms race, geographical positioning and political alignment would require a significant discussion on the specifics of the primary states involved, Russia and the United States. Rather, it takes a broader approach and considers some of the major political trends of the era, and their place within geopolitical theory. For information regarding military specifics of that time, see further work by Rob Huebert and Barry Scott Zellen.

decisions pertaining to the military had absolute priority within the Arctic states;

2. Centralization: As Östreng explains, “to retain authority and to avoid civil activities interfering– directly and/or indirectly - with military-strategic interests, central governments assumed control of the national decision-making process, and made Arctic affairs the prerogative of the executive branch” (Östreng, 2008; 16). As a result, interests in high politics (those dealing with matters of utmost importance to their survival) were the major policy consideration for littoral states;
3. Marginalization of civil issue areas: Since areas of security took the upper hand in national political discourse, civil issues may be seen as secondary. Even in the event of when civil liberties conflicted with military interests, priority was always given to the defence of the state.

Östreng's points give reference to the Arctic as a military theatre, in which military dominance held superiority in how the Arctic region was utilized and governed. Thus the commitment behind the Cold War arms race, and the deployment of weapons and defence capabilities along Arctic borders and in its waters, was clearly defined within the use of military strategies; strategies that were framed with the Arctic's key geographic opportunities in mind. The classical geopolitical map of seeing the world as a flat, two dimensional surface, was literally turned on its head to show the strategic avenue of the North Pole for bridging the 'East-West' divide. Despite this change of geographical perception for Cold War policy-makers, the priority of viewing the space in terms of its strategic value remained- as it does today. For example, when looking at the map of the Arctic certain geographic features stand out that continue to have strategic value in the region's internal and external political discourse: the immensity of Russia's ocean rim and the resources found therein, the Canadian archipelago and navigational opportunities, the border umbrella of the Barents Region and the Barents Sea, the 91 kilometre crossing between Western Alaska and the Russian Far East, the similar proximity between Ellesmere Island and north-western Greenland are but a few examples (Young, 1992; 190-203). Certainly, these geographical features become more prominent when attaching an economic value on the natural resources found within. Assessments like the one conducted by the US Geological Survey (USGS) in 2008 give indications on the value of Arctic resources: USGS results from surveys conducted in 33 geological provinces throughout the Arctic estimated the region to hold 90 billion barrels of oil, 1,660 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 44 billion barrels of natural gas liquids, of which

approximately 84 percent were found in offshore areas. Given that these resources account for roughly 22 percent of the undiscovered, technically recoverable resources in the world, the Arctic as a strategic geopolitical region has global implications and importance (Bird et al, 2008; 4).³¹

This discussion, however, is clearly linked to viewing the Arctic region in terms of its geostrategic and economic exploits. Such a way of thinking about Arctic spatiality is rooted in classical geopolitical thought. Heininen gives life to this argument by drawing on certain parallels and bringing new elements into the picture (Heininen, 2010; 10):

From the point of view of classical geopolitics the militarization of the Arctic is based on an application of technology models of geopolitics, which claim that if technology allows man to introduce the military into any geographical region, it will occur.

Heininen's reference to technology is particularly crucial, in consideration of Mackinder's Heartland theory, which defined state power through its technological advancements and weapons transport capabilities. It also reinforces the theory's explanation for state interest in targeting key geographic areas, and the ways in which geography influences power.³² When viewing the Arctic in terms of its military capabilities and strategic geographic positioning, the region becomes a spatial construct for governments, in which decisions are viewed in terms of gains and losses, and actions in terms of reactions. Zellen takes a similar disposition by identifying the complexity of interests for states in viewing the Arctic as a spatial construct, particularly in light of the North/South divide that dominates military decision-making processes in the Arctic (Zellen, 2009; 29):

³¹ A longer discussion on the economic value of the Arctic geography would also consider the region's many possible transportation routes, and the price tag attached to the opportunity of those opening. The intent of the discussion was, however, to give a brief overview of how classical geopolitics would conceive of the Arctic as a strategic region of military and economic importance.

³² An interesting article looking at Mackinder's 'Heartland Theory' and Spykman's 'Rimland Theory' within an Arctic context was prepared by Heininen and Nicol. The authors make a strong case that despite the historical context of both Mackinder and Spykman's theories, and the changing nature of geopolitics, that there are still important considerations for the importance of the geographic area in the way cooperation is conducted, as seen by Canada's prioritization of the region within its strategy development. See: Heininen, Lassi & Nicol, Heather (2008). "Canada and the New Geopolitics of the North Pacific Rim". Proceedings from Seeking Balance in a Changing North. 5th Northern Research Forum Open Assembly. Alaska; United States. September 2008.

The geopolitics of the Arctic are thus not unidimensional or unidirectional, but more accurately define a strategic theatre of competition where outwardly expanding powers have collided along their northern frontiers, as experienced in wartime between the US and Japan, and during the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union. Be it for defence, deterrence, compellence, to display intention and commitment, or otherwise to gather information for early warning and detection, the strategic value of the Arctic has been driven to a large extent by geostrategic calculations of the region as determined by those living far outside of the region.

Zellen's quote brings to light the many considerations states must make in deciding their course of action. Though Zellen's quote is dominated by a North that is decided by use of force, it shows the difficulty for states in defining and balancing priorities. One such calculation must be made in terms of framing security and sovereignty interests. Though these two terms are not inherently conflictual and do not predetermine aggressive behaviour on the part of states, they have become defining elements of an Arctic region since its emergence as a strategic theatre. The concepts of security and sovereignty are often used interchangeably within popular media and among some political analysts to describe inconsistencies within Arctic political events.³³ It is, however, important to briefly distinguish these terms for purposes of clarity, but also to consider how narrow definitions may promote aggressive behaviour and possible conflict among Arctic states.

As one might assume, sovereignty as a term references a state's ability to occupy and administer the area within its own borders. Based on a legal context, sovereignty is the entire fabric of a number of exclusive jurisdictions exercised by states within their own boundaries; as such, it is closely related with statehood and in particular the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, which required that states: a) have a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) a government; and d) the capacity to enter into bilateral or multilateral relationships with other states (Byers, 5; 2009). Stewardship has become an increasingly common term also used in connection to sovereignty, particularly in the work of Griffiths, as a means of showing a more human

³³ Examples illustrating this grouping of sovereignty and security issues under the same umbrella were particularly prevalent following Russia's 2007 flag planting expedition (see: Borgerson's "An Ice Cold War" in the August 8, 2007 edition of the New York Times) and Canadian Prime Minister's famous July 2007 "use it or lose it" speech, in which he unveiled plans for the construction of new patrol vessels in the name of protecting Canadian sovereignty concerns (see: McRae's "Moving beyond Arctic sovereignty" in the November 19, 2008 the Globe and Mail).

based approach to Arctic governance. As Griffiths defines it (Griffiths, 2009; 3), “stewardship is defined here as locally informed governance that not only polices but also shows respect and care for the natural environment and living things in it. Stewardship enhances national sovereignty in the conditions of natural and human interdependence that prevail in the Arctic”. As will be seen in more detail during an evaluation of Canada’s position towards northern policies next chapter, Griffiths makes a strong case that the use of sovereignty has taken on a general definition for a state’s ability to enforce authority, rather than its broader constitutional responsibilities towards its citizenry and environment. As a result, the use of ‘stewardship’ offers a better orientation for governmental responsibility beyond policing, patrolling and defending state borders. However, as McRae acknowledges, sovereignty takes on several meanings, with implications that go beyond the political realm (McRae, 2007; 4):

The word ‘sovereignty’ however, can mean different things to different people. It has political, legal, economic and social dimensions. The sovereignty of a state is often seen to be synonymous with independence. A sovereign state is an independent state, one that is not subject to the authority of any other state. Independence, while easily stated, has different connotations in a globalized world. While as a matter of law all states are sovereign and independent, the degree of actual independence might vary whether one is looking at the matter from a political or economic perspective. So, too, one’s appreciation of the ‘threat’ to Arctic sovereignty might vary according to the particular meaning one places on the term sovereignty.

Among McRae’s points, he mentions that there are certain connections to be made between ‘threat’ and ‘sovereignty’ within the Arctic, and that these may go beyond traditional military conceptions of threats. Therefore, there are numerous factors that may explain insecurity on the part of governments towards their sovereignty claims. The core/periphery relationship that defined state activity within the circumpolar region for so long is an obvious association to be made with this insecurity, in which the historical failure of governments to properly administer their northern regions can be taken as a sign of political indifference. This assumption works in connection with Young’s ‘Arctic as an empty stage’ argument, which acknowledges that the costs of exercising sovereignty have traditionally outweighed the benefits attached to the region, and has thus contributed to this sense of sovereign neglect. Although these may seem like exaggerated points considering there is little doubt over the territorial ‘ownership’ of the

Arctic region, they nonetheless show how the changing nature of interests within the region, from military to economical, have had significant effects on how states invest in northern sovereignty. Clearly these are once again framed in terms of cost/benefits and losses/gains. An example that will be explored further next chapter is that of Canada, in which exercises of northern sovereignty are linked with the federal government's commitment to demonstrating authority in a changing Arctic, but which has suffered from a lack of consistency. A second example dealing with sovereignty that includes discussions on security is the complexity of claims over the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean. Though there may be no outstanding questions of state ownership on Arctic boundaries on land, the extent to which jurisdiction is exercised in the maritime zones of the Arctic littoral states presents some uncertainties for how states proceed with sovereign duties, be it through patrolling and surveillance duties, or search and rescue services.

Security, on the other hand, is most often associated with military capability. Within the Arctic, security has often been defined in connection with the military strength of individual states, in which the technological advancements of nuclear submarines, the construction of icebreakers and the presence of specialized ground troops are common indicators of security capability; Huebert, illustrates the connection between the use of force and state positioning, thus illustrating the motivational factors of state security (Huebert, 2009; 3):

Historically, security was framed in a context that focussed on the military ability of a state to either defend itself against the military actions of other states or to enforce its will on another state. If a state was powerful enough it acted alone. Or if it was not it would develop alliances with other states. The critical element of security was the ability of states to utilize their economic capabilities to build militaries that could both enforce and protect their will. Thus the use of deadly force was the ultimate means of providing for the security of the state. Security depended on victory in war.

Huebert's research has largely focussed on the role of security and the use of force for individual states and their ability to impact the Arctic political environment. Such a conceptualization of the Arctic region is founded on the unpredictable nature of Arctic politics- a product of what Waltz theorized as the 'anarchic' international system. In such

a case, security is defined as the means of a state's ability to attack, defend, intimidate and coerce with the use of military force. Elements of territoriality like natural resources and geographic boundaries play crucial roles in the way states define their interests and act accordingly.

With these conceptions of security and sovereignty in mind, it is possible to envision the two operating on different levels. Zellen in *Arctic Doom, Arctic Boom: The Geopolitics of Climate Change in the Arctic* (2009) writes of the dichotomy separating what he calls internal (sovereignty) and external (security) dimensions. Zellen argues that although a synthesis between sovereignty and security is crucial to the development of a region, there lacks an understanding of how the levels interact. According to the author, the external impacts the internal when the international system forces it to do so; when ignorance no longer becomes an option at the internal because the external has obliged the internal to do so. The reality of the political environment is the ultimate variable that decides state actions and reactions. As put by Zellen (Zellen, 2009; 10):

The bottom line is that both theorizing the Arctic and implementing policy in the Arctic have historically succumbed to the very same levels-of-analysis problem that casts its long shadow over the entire field of international relations theory... northern policy thus shifts from a systemic to a sub-systemic level and back again, in response to the dynamic flux of external and internal political realities... The swing follows trends in international affairs, suggesting the ultimate causality of systemic forces over northern policy.

The real dichotomy thus exists between how states balance their internal responsibilities with their security obligations. The problem with such a balance is that it frames decisions based on 'either/or', rather than the concepts being mutually connected. Huebert presents a case study of this in *Renaissance in Arctic Security?* based on historical decisions made by the Government of Canada, in which the two concepts have been held mutually exclusive to one another. As Huebert points out, it is assumed that the decisions based on protecting Canadian security have come at the cost of developing its sovereignty, and vice-versa. Huebert explains this position through Canada's Cold War position, in which sovereignty was surrendered to the United States by allowing military bases to be stationed on Canadian soil. Such action, of course, was awarded through an alliance with the United States that protected Canadian security from Soviet aggression.

However, as Huebert points out, the two terms are both connected by the same fundamental requirement- that of regional control. As pointed by out Huebert, and control as defined as, “the ability of a state to be able to make and enforce laws and regulations within a given geographic area” (Huebert, 2005; 21). Such an opinion would support Zellen’s assertion that from a perspective of seeing security and sovereignty on different levels, regional control must be asserted at both the systemic and sub-systemic levels with consideration for both the domestic and international obligations of a state (Zellen, 2009; 12-15).

This presentation of security is clearly linked to its use of force understandings. The term, however, has taken on a much broader application since the end of the Cold War. Traditional notions of security that dominated 20th century Arctic discourse which conceptualized the region as a military front, or theatre, represent only one way of interpreting the term; on the other hand, security has also been used in relation to issues concerning human development, energy, environment, health and food. The move towards broadening the scope of security in the post-war era was based on the need to apply the concept to issues dealing with sustainable development. Forums such as the Brandt Commission branded the human dimension to traditional areas of security as a way of bringing attention to other important areas of security concern, which had taken on secondary importance. As a result, the impacts of military security could not be held in isolation to the effects on the environment and climate; nor could security ignore its obligation towards societal problems like freedom of expression and cultural survival. Beyond comprehensive security’s ability to promote government responsibility within its own borders, it also brought new considerations for how states interact, since it required greater international cooperation and demilitarization (Heininen & Nicol, 2008; 10). Within an Arctic context, this presented a strict move away from popularized definitions of security and has been labelled by Heininen as one of four stages of security in the circumpolar North (Heininen, 2010; 9). The broadening of ‘northern security’ helps define Heininen’s third stage, “the transition stage”, which is characterized as the move away from traditional notions of security and military policy towards the growing

importance of regional development and geo-economics.³⁴ Such a move would also symbolize a change in geopolitics, in which classical definitions gave way to critical and new geopolitical approaches- thus ending a state-centric approach to regional dominance and offering considerable more emphasis on the role of international institutions and nonstate actors as stakeholders. The following section considers the role of these institutions and actors in more detail.

3.4.2 Discussion on Circumpolar Cooperation

If the Cold War helped define the extent of conflict in the Arctic region, the end of the standoff marked the beginning of an era of opportunities. Former General Secretary of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev's 1987 speech has often been cited as the catalyst for change in the Arctic region, in which he called for cooperation in the fields of resource management, scientific exploration, and environmental protection. As important as Gorbachev's commitments, the language of peace and security the leader used was also significant (Gorbachev, 1987; 4):

Therefore, while in Murmansk, and standing on the threshold of the Arctic and the North Atlantic, I would like to invite, first of all, the countries of the region to a discussion on the burning security issues. How do we visualize this? It is possible to take simultaneously the roads of bilateral and multilateral cooperation...The potential of contemporary civilization could permit us to make the Arctic habitable for the benefit of the national economies and other human interests of the near-Arctic states, for Europe and the entire international community. To achieve this, security problems that have accumulated in the area should be resolved above all... The Soviet Union is in favour of a radical lowering of the level of military confrontation in the region. Let the North of the globe, the Arctic, become a zone of peace. Let the North Pole be a pole of peace. We suggest that all interested states start talks on the limitation and scaling down of military activity in the North as a whole, in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

³⁴ Up to this point the first two of Heininen's four stages have been incorporated into the general discussion of conflict: militarization of the Arctic, and the Arctic as a military theatre. The third, the transition period, is included in the following discussion on cooperation and fourth, the present-day Arctic situation, is included in the concluding remarks of the chapter. See: Heininen, Lassi. "Module 10: Geopolitics, Security and International Society". BCS 100: Introduction to the Circumpolar North. University of the Arctic Online Course. January, 2010.

As the above quote would suggest, Gorbachev's reference to 'human interests' and northern security provides indication of the importance placed on a comprehensive security approach at the beginnings of circumpolar cooperation. As Östreng notes, this distinction between military and civil security created an "extended security" approach towards international cooperation, which favoured human approaches to security rather than military agendas. By creating a distinction between approaches to security, Östreng argues that a "re-conceptualisation of national security" initiated three countering effects to Cold War processes (Östreng, 2008; 18-20): civilization, in which the fostering of international cooperation led to the construction of multiple civil issue areas (including the Northern Forum and the International Arctic Science Committee); regionalization, which promoted the participation of lower-levels of government in the decision-making process; and mobilization, which allowed for the inclusion of non-governmental organizations, like indigenous groups, in the broader participatory dimension of politics. These three processes combined offer insight into the cooperative framework that emerged following 1987, in which state-to-state historical differences were put aside, in favour of low political cooperation and civil involvement. Similar connections have been made by Heininen, who identifies three themes that have been crucial in the emergence of a new Arctic regional identity (Heininen, 2004; 207-221): firstly, the increasing presence of indigenous organizations and sub-national governments in circumpolar cooperation, in which the interconnectivity of these nonstate actors has promoted peace and dialogue, as well as a sustainable development and a human agenda to regional cooperation; secondly, the process of region-building which prompted new platforms for dialogue in intergovernmental, sub-regional and academic cooperation, thus acknowledging the desire for new approaches to Arctic geopolitics; and finally, the theme of the Arctic and the outside world, which highlighted the deepening influence of global flows, including globalization, on the Arctic and the possibility for bridging the North-South divide through non-military means.

Both Östreng and Heininen identify the dynamic nature of Arctic geopolitics in the post-Cold War era, in which the crucial elements of classical geopolitical theory fail to give an accurate portrayal of the region's cooperative tradition. Among these, new geopolitics and the surfacing of intergovernmental organizations and the involvement of indigenous

peoples groups has special relevancy in the name of institutional cooperation. As Heininen and Nicol point out, these actors have found prominent roles in the discursive environmental protection agenda, in which changes to state sovereignty and globalization have also been important factors (Heininen & Nicol, 2007; 134):

In considering globalisation and the changing function of state sovereignty, we argue that the new geopolitical discourse of the circumpolar North includes new levels of regional and international cooperation between state governments and northern indigenous peoples' organisations. This new round of regionalisation is a product of a recent, more globalised discourse, which has its origins in environmental challenges of the late twentieth century. It is a geopolitical structure which rather than highlight the many competing claims and discursive understandings of "northernness", reflects a compelling concern with broad issues of protecting global environment, promoting civil society and encouraging sustainable development.

There are several institutions that could offer an example showing the success this cooperative framework has had in creating interplay between civil, environment and sustainable development in the Arctic.³⁵ However, the Arctic Council stands alone in its distinguished membership and its broad mandate. The Arctic Council³⁶ was born from the Finnish led Rovaniemi Process and Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) of 1991. Though the AEPS provided the foundations through which the eight Arctic states cooperated on environmental protection in the Arctic region, the Government of Canada led Arctic Council initiative was formed in 1996 as its replacement. As a result, the five Working Groups of the AEPS were transferred under the auspices of the Arctic Council, which also broadened its mandate to include the issue of sustainable development and soon after the construction of the Sustainable Development Working

³⁵For example, the Northern Forum offers an interesting analysis into the role of sub-national governments convening on issues of common interest. The Barents Euro- Arctic Region (BEAR), the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council, and the Nordic Council of Ministers each provide examples of regional institutions with limited participation providing policy functions. Furthermore, the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), the Northern Research Forum, and the Calotte Academy are examples of primarily academic institutions whose participation and influence cuts into the realm of government and policy. See section 2.2 for a list of attributes of Arctic actors. Heininen in the Arctic Human Development Report (see: Heininen, 2004) provides an extensive list of the function of these institutions.

³⁶For purposes of brevity, rather than going into detail concerning the Arctic Council this research continues with the expectation that the reader is familiar with the basic work of the Council and therefore places emphasis on the legal and policy implications of the Council. For more information on the Arctic Council and the development see: Tennberg, Monica. The Arctic Council: A Study in Governmentality. University of Lapland Press. Rovaniemi; Finland. 1998.

Group.³⁷ As has been recognized in the previous chapter, the Arctic Council's unique feature of being a high-level intergovernmental forum with permanent participation and consultation from six indigenous organizations has been instrumental in creating a region-wide Arctic identity. Put best by Young, a major strength of the Council has been its ability to present a unified voice within international political forum (Young, 2004; 15):

Where, then, does the comparative advantage of the Arctic Council lie? It may come as a surprise to some to realize that the council's most important role is probably generative in nature. Through its very existence, the council has become a symbol of the emergence of the Arctic as a distinct region in international society.

In addition to the role it serves in promoting dialogue between states and government officials in its biannual ministerial meetings, the Arctic Council has developed other favourable functions, including publications of a number of internationally recognized reports and guidelines in reference to climatic and environmental conditions in the Arctic, including the *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* (2004), the *Arctic Human Development Report* (2004), and most recently the *Arctic Marine and Shipping Assessment* (2004-Present) by its Working Groups (Arctic Council, 2010). As these reports might suggest, the Council's utilization of scientific resources and expertise has promoted a unique working environment and improved dialogue between policy-makers and the scientific community. Equally important has been the presence of the Permanent Participants, who provide the important function of offering a northern voice within the Council's operations (Griffiths, 2009; 23).³⁸

³⁷ Koivurova adds that besides the title of Permanent Participants for indigenous groups, there are few differences between the AEPS and the Arctic Council, despite the Council's ability to take on all issues within the Arctic besides matters dealing with security. See: Koivurova, Timo. "Limits and possibilities of the Arctic Council in a rapidly changing scene of Arctic governance". Polar Record Journal. Cambridge University Press. 2009.

³⁸ Griffiths has been a champion of promoting indigenous and nonstate actor involvement in the Arctic Council. The author argues that these groups serve multi-functions, including their ability to broaden the scope of the Arctic Council's limited objectives (Griffiths, 2009; 23): "Although they will certainly vary in this, non-Arctic states and intergovernmental entities are in a position to bring substantial benefits to a regional practice of cooperative stewardship. Approaching the Arctic from the outside, they are likely not only to bring a stronger regional perspective to the work of the Council, but also to prompt greater

However, the Arctic Council has come under increased scrutiny in recent years for several notable reasons, including: organizational problems based on the absence of a permanent secretariat; the continual flux in priorities of the rotating chairmanship; limited financial resources inferred to the Working Groups, and the financially dependant Permanent Participants; as well as the level to which it has fulfilled its sustainable development mandate (Young, 2004). However, there are other concerns that take on broader implications for Arctic governance as a whole. Koivurova & Vanderzwaag in their 2006 publication “The Arctic Council at 10 Years: Retrospect and Prospect” offer two shortcomings likely to effect the work of the Arctic Council in the recent future (Koivurova & Vanderzwaag, 2006; 161-162):

There are, however, two future realities that the Arctic Council will face. The first is that the Council is likely, at least in the near term, to move ahead through soft sleddings as a discussion and catalytic forum rather than a regulatory or decision-making entity. The second is that the Council and its constituents will increasingly face hard questions to which answers must be sought. Topics confronting the Council include whether a treaty framework is needed to solidify and strengthen regional cooperation, as well as the type of arrangements and provisions that would be most appropriate for the Arctic, if it is determined such a framework should be adopted.

This first problem that the authors point to is in reference to the Council’s inability to enact legally binding policy, which as a result questions the Council’s relevancy within national legislative processes. Despite the positive steps the Council has taken in publishing reports, guidelines, and ministerial level declarations there is little incentive for Arctic States to implement at a national level. This is a fundamental criticism of the Arctic Council, and indeed Arctic governance in general, that has been a constant target of debate among academics and policy-makers alike. The Arctic Council’s soft-law status has had hindering effects on the ability for Arctic states to generate discussions outside of topics related environmental protection and sustainable development. This status has led the Council to be called “a relatively toothless arrangement” by Young, who argues that a lack of authority and resources has impeded the region from taking on comprehensive dialogue (Young, 2009; 79). The absence of a platform through which the Arctic states

awareness of the regional as distinct from the sub-regional and local in the approaches of the Eight themselves.”

have been able to discuss matters related to security has had consequences on the region's ability to grow beyond its cooperative beginnings. Instead what has progressed has been a system of organizations founded on ministerial declarations and founding article, rather than legally binding treaties or conventions. Young calls the nature of these organizations as "generative" and "representational" rather "regulatory" and "procedural", using such organizations as the Arctic Council, the Northern Forum, the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and the International Arctic Science Committee as examples. The end result of these can be seen as an "institutional complex", a system with many organs, but without a central core; as such the region lacks an institutional form of governance like of the Antarctic Treaty System. Though Young admits that these processes have contributed to some innovative designs for cooperation, the possibility of stretching resources too far, the danger of organizations having overlapping mandates, and the possibility that these organizations may become "vehicles" to promote politically ambitious goals by some actors and individuals are all potential concerns the region could face (Young, 2002; 5). Similarly, Griffiths has labelled the sub-regional cooperative processes, like those found in the Barents region, a form of "fragmented incrementalism". Though Griffiths argues that though this fragmentation favours opportunistic projects at the subregional level, it fails to have cumulative effects and an integrated approach at the circumpolar level (Griffiths, 2009; 4).

The second question Koivurova and Vanderzwaag propose is in relation to the previous discussion- it is that of an Arctic Treaty, which although garnering support from a number of academics, lobby-groups and governmental actors,³⁹ it has consistently been rejected by the Arctic states as being unnecessary. Despite the fact that the idea of applying an Arctic Treaty similar to that of the Antarctic Treaty System is effectively dead, there remain many outstanding questions which involve the Arctic Council's political framework that deserve mention. Young in his 2008 article *Whither the Arctic?*

³⁹ Support for an Arctic Treaty was found from a variety of academics operating within and outside of the Arctic region. Most prominently from outside of the region, the European Union Parliament in a October 2008 resolution called for the establishment of an Arctic 'Charter'. See: European Union. "European Parliament resolution on the opening of international negotiations with a view to adopting an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic". Motion for resolution, document B6-0163/2009. October 8, 2008. <<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=B6-2009-0163&language=EN>>

Conflict or cooperation in the circumpolar north, points to a number of problems related to the Council's effectiveness, advocating that in order to become a more relevant body, it must make clearer associations and progress on the impacts of environmental changes to Arctic residents and communities. Young also presents the lingering problem of Observer status within the Council's operational framework. Not only are the roles of current non-Arctic observer states⁴⁰ ambiguous at best, but also the question of how to incorporate a growing number of observer applicants is an on-going debate. Young presents an interesting argument in favour of increased representation (Young, 2008; 8):

Given the profound links between the Arctic and the outside world, it makes no sense to relegate outsiders (for example Britain, China, France, Germany, the European Union) to the status of observers who seldom ever get to speak at council sessions. Since the actions of these states are critical to efforts to regulate global processes (for example climate change, globalisation) that will affect the Arctic profoundly, any procedure that leaves these actors increasingly frustrated and unhappy in their dealings with the council will be counterproductive.

Though Young's point does not outwardly support the need for a binding agreement, which would have global representation it does allude to the fact that a more inclusive system of governance is necessary. A relevant legal forum that contributes to the Arctic's cooperative framework but which is global in scope is that of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). UNCLOS' contribution to the region's peace and stability can be found within the convention's legal obligations, to which all Arctic states except the United States are party. On an international level, UNCLOS has served the important function of binding states to a regulated process through which overlapping claims to the Arctic Ocean's seabed floor can be administered. Furthermore, the convention holds considerable weight in providing clarity for Arctic Ocean governance, including: its provisions related to the freedom of navigation, Article 234 on extended jurisdiction of ice-covered waters, and the opportunities for resource development within Exclusive Economic Zones (Håkon Hoel, 2009; 81). To this point, UNCLOS has provided somewhat of a backbone for Arctic regional governance; it is a process that often gets relied on by Arctic states for demonstrating the stability of the

⁴⁰ These are: Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Poland.

region through the application of international law. In connection with UNCLOS, the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) 2002 Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic Ice-covered Waters provides further examples of the strength of an Arctic Ocean governance regime.

The basis for this regime, however, has the obvious limitation of being restricted to oceans and seas, and thus only truly applies to the Arctic coastal states.⁴¹ It is these concerns over the common interest of the Arctic Ocean that has provoked the emergence of a new level of Arctic cooperation, this time between the littoral states. By breaking from the traditional model of cooperation created in the post-1987 era, the exclusive nature of the Arctic Five finds its roots in the regime's inability to recognize concerns that deal directly with the group's common interests- that of the Arctic Ocean and its seas. As a result, the Arctic Ocean states have taken on a persona of their own, in which participation within is exclusive. Although the idea of creating a link between the littoral states goes as far back as Gorbachev's speech,⁴² the May 2008 Ilulissat meeting in Greenland represents a new level of convening. It is questionably to say whether the meeting was intended to produce policy level results, or if instead it was used as a publicity stunt to demonstrate partnership between states, in the wake of a growing sensationalism within the media. Nonetheless, the meeting did succeed in producing an eight-paragraph document with convincing arguments towards the group's general interest in preserving the current framework of cooperation. The true strength of the document is to be found in its respect for the "solid foundations" of Arctic governance; including UNCLOS, which the states emphasize the "orderly settlement of any overlapping claims"; the commitment towards international law in the field of Arctic marine environment and biodiversity, including the cooperation with the IMO concerning navigational safety; extending commitments related to data sharing, risk management as well as search and rescue capability; as well as a renewed commitment to the work of the Arctic Council, "The five coastal states of the Arctic Ocean will continue to contribute

⁴¹ This would of course include Iceland.

⁴² Earliest reference found was from Former Canadian Government Secretary of States for External Affairs Joe Clark who immediately lobbied for littoral cooperation in 1987.

actively to the work of the Arctic Council and other relevant international fora” (Ilulissat, 2008).

Such dispositions were clearly motivated by a need to counteract the growing interest surrounding an Arctic Treaty. It also proved a useful venue for the littoral states to promote their own sovereign authority over the area; according to Yeager, the central message was a “pre-emptive one”, in which such a statement was an exercise in strategic statehood, to deter any possibility from non-Arctic actors in assuming the ocean *terra nullius* (Yeager, 2008; 4). The document, however, was also successful in creating a backlash from the remaining Arctic three, as well as the Permanent Participants, who expressed concerns that the group’s agenda would overlap with that of the Arctic Council. According to Urdur Gunnarsdottir of the Foreign Affairs Department in Iceland, “We are hoping that we are not creating many forums to discuss some of the same issues, that we'd focus within the forum that already exists — the Arctic Council... we have discussed this meeting in Ilulissat with some of the countries that are to be present there, and we have received assurances that the meeting will be a one-off, that it is not an attempt to create an alternative forum to the Arctic Council” (CBC, 2008). As we know now, the event was not a “one-off”. The 2010 meeting in Chelsea, Quebec seems poised to be once again be limited to Arctic Five participation.

3.6 Towards a New Era in Arctic Geopolitics?

A general conclusion based on the previous discussions could be that neither trends in conflict nor cooperation fall easily within a single category. In fact, there have been elements of both themes throughout the geopolitical history of the Arctic that have impacted the political discourse of the region. These forces, therefore, cannot be seen as occupying a particular era in history, but instead a product of the multidimensional nature of Arctic geopolitics that is constantly changing and evolving. As noted by Holtsmark, within the interplay between conflict and cooperation, there are opportunities that may prevail; Holtsmark uses the example of living resource management and the handling of climate change implications provides a platform through which the Arctic Ocean states

may find common ground, rather than difference. A similar point of collaboration may be found in the opening of sea routes (SLOCs) if the littoral states are willing to exercise diplomacy and compromise to agree on common guidelines and shared resources (Holtmark, 2009; 4).

There are however many questions to be asked about the direction which Arctic geopolitics is now taking. Though there are multiple processes whose influence has bearing on this direction, the flows of globalization and climate change cannot be underestimated. In fact, it may be argued that many of the underlying trends within current geopolitical discourse have been provoked either by the effects/opportunities offered by climate change and globalization: the international dependency on the Arctic's vast resources, the implications of the Arctic melt on global sea level, the possibilities for more time efficient intercontinental trade, the rise of international terrorist crime, the Arctic as a possible geographic region for environmental refugees are all discussions revolving around the Arctic, but taking place at the global level. Such examples easily point to a new trend in Arctic geopolitics, one that places emphasis back on the Arctic states and their ability to exercise sovereignty and security. Though these emphases may no longer be in relation to one another, as was characterized by the geopolitical era of the Cold War, the current mandate requires national policies to frame their interests on a much broader level. In addition to this, many of interregional conflicts remain unresolved; the overlapping claims to the Arctic seabed, the ongoing dispute over the legality of the Canadian Northwest Passage,⁴³ and the ambiguous maritime delineation in the Barents and Beaufort Seas are three outstanding issues that have remained contentious issues between the Arctic states. The changing nature of Arctic geopolitics can be seen as a result of all of these processes, both global and regional. Yet, the political framework of the Arctic remains surprisingly unaltered; the Arctic Council continues to be the highest political forum, despite the fact that its mandate has not evolved since its 1996 beginnings, with an 'institutional complex' of other regional and sub-regional organizations with platforms based on case-specific dialogues. Such an

⁴³ The Canadian Parliament passed the official name change from the 'Northwest Passage' to the 'Canadian Northwest Passage' on December 3, 2009.

analysis has prompted scholars of Arctic geopolitics to consider the development of a new trend, in which national interests may hinder international cooperation. Though it would be premature to suggest that a relapse to Cold War mentalities is occurring, the re-emergence of security interests (primarily that of military, energy and transportation) has provoked scepticism over the predominance of interests framed in terms traditional security. As expressed by Skogrand (Skogrand, 2007; 7):

When the Cold War ended almost two decades ago, the Arctic quickly lost much of its former status as an area of high geo-strategic significance in a military sense... Still, some of the traits from distant times are relevant. The Kola Peninsula has remained an important base area for Russian forces, including its nuclear deterrence. The region has also remained the operating area of nuclear submarines from other countries. They may be fewer, they may be primarily of symbolic value and we may not see them, but they are still there... There seems to be a growing interest among the Arctic nations to underscore their strategic interests in the region through military presence. One reason is that military presence still serves as a symbol of sovereignty or jurisdiction.

What Skogrand suggests is the move towards a trend in which displays of military security are used to fulfil national obligations. Though it might be argued that such action supports a fundamental right and responsibility of the state, the counter argument shows of the volatility such processes can have on the health of the Arctic system as a whole. A revert back to a classical geopolitical viewing of space, which utilizes geography in terms of strategic calculations, would support the neorealist assumption that the primary and dominating interests of states are determined based on power and survival. While the possibility that Arctic geopolitics would proceed in that direction seems unlikely, it nevertheless necessitates the discussion on how Arctic geopolitics should proceed from here and from now. Heininen reflects on a number of fundamental processes essential to the region maturing beyond the vulnerability of classical geopolitical thought (Heininen, 2009; 5):

At the beginning of the 21st century it is needed to work hard to re-think of, and re-learn from, traditional ways to do politics in order to find an alternative way out from a barbarian world of armed conflicts and wars, poverty and environmental degradation... First, what is needed is an atmosphere of peace and willingness toward cooperation across national and other borders, which does not necessarily mean total harmony, but agreement

based on dialogue and debate... To say this out loud and act for peace and cooperation both requires and indicates real leadership, and correspondingly, an implementation of these ultimate aims needs highly qualified knowledge and expertise, as well as a tolerant and open-minded attitude...Second, what is needed is to have on one hand, the interplay between science and politics, and on the other, general dialogue both between peoples, societies and cultures in the world, and between different stakeholders across sectoral borders in a society. Further, more and new global and regional stages and platforms are needed as discussion spaces for more and deeper open discussions and innovative dialogues.

From this quote, a key question remains- how do these processes and priorities feature within the Arctic strategies of the littoral states? Are the priorities reflective of an interest towards classical geopolitics, in which security interests eclipse sovereignty and stewardship responsibilities? Or are the strategies framed in terms of their international obligations, with emphasises on the importance of the region's political structure? The following chapter takes into consideration the key priorities of the documents, as well as relevant background information concerning the states' position in the Arctic, and elements that may have influence on how states view their position within.

Chapter 4: Geopolitical considerations of the Arctic littoral states and their Arctic strategies

4.1 Chapter introduction

Last chapter gave an overview of the political landscape of the Arctic. It emphasized the main trends of the Arctic, identified the fundamental opportunities and challenges within the region, and provided a lens for viewing the changing nature of Arctic geopolitics. What became apparent was that certain themes have proven to be inseparable; it was difficult, for example, to strictly distinguish the eras of cooperation and conflict from one another, in much the same way as it was challenging to divide the concepts of security and sovereignty. This is testimony to the Arctic's dynamic character in which global flows and state interests are in a constant period of flux and interaction. Perhaps this is where the strength of the region lies- in its ability to change, adapt and to take on new dimensions. If so, it would seem that a logical explanation for these changes would come from within the primary actors of the region, and the way in which their national interests impact and redefine the region's political discourse.

National priorities may be seen as reflections of a state's geopolitical positioning. A government's ability to identify and secure its territorial and marine boundaries, exercise sovereignty within these jurisdictions, and develop the natural resources therein provide three examples for how states view their own internal policies and proceed to act and react accordingly. State priorities might also focus on the advantages of cooperation, in which bilateral, multilateral and regional partnerships fulfil certain unilateral obligations. Like that of regional trends, internal processes are also in constant motion and redefinition. A characteristic of national policies is that they grow, alter and/or expire according to a government's domestic standing, as well as its international influences. It can be argued, therefore, that by looking at the internal documents of governments (its policies and strategies) it is possible to understand not only the priorities of the state but the forces of the international system as a whole. Conversely, it is also possible to see how the international system transcends national borders and creates parameters for how

states view their positioning within the world. This would support Waltz's notion of system theory, where state decision-making is ultimately a reflection of the international structure within which it operates in.

The following chapter looks at geopolitical considerations of the five littoral states. Given that each country is different from its neighbour, the five countries are divided in cases, each containing different focuses and directions. Rather than embarking on the overwhelming task of trying to explain each feature that influences a country's status in the Arctic, it instead concentrates on the central issues prominent within the national discourse of the country. Therefore, each case presents a different angle, in which geopolitical changes are compared with the interests stated in the strategies. Despite these difference perspectives, certain themes prevail between cases; the reoccurring attention placed on *governmental change* as well as issues related to *sovereignty* and *security* are particularly noticeable between documents. Such key themes are consistent with geopolitical thought, in which concepts of spatiality are influential in national perceptions of change, as well as a state's ability to exercise control and authority. Whether or not these themes demonstrate macro-level geopolitical changes will be the subject of the analysis next chapter, in which indicators are employed to make such observations. For now it is important to consider what the littoral states define as their primary interests, and how these reflect their geopolitical positioning. Finally, following each country review and notes on its strategy, parallels are drawn to see if there is an accurate connection between the two processes.

4.2 Canada

Perhaps no other country demonstrates the complexity of current geopolitical change in the Arctic as well as Canada. Since the early 1990s the federal government of Canada has been a central promoter of circumpolar cooperation, as represented through its leadership in the creation of the Arctic Council. However, it may be argued that the federal government has taken a new approach to how it conducts its Arctic foreign policy. In recent years there have been a series of events both perpetrated within and outside of

Canada that may be linked to a change in attitude towards the Canadian north, and thus a shift in policy obligations. This assessment has been made by made several academics that have linked the change in state behaviour to a feeling of insecurity in Canada's ability to demonstrate stewardship and exercise sovereignty.⁴⁴ Consequently, the Canadian Government has become increasingly active in the way it engages with the North and its northern partners. A central component to this has been its *Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future* (2009), which forms the foundation for the types of projects pursued and northern policies implemented. At the same time, the manner in which executive leadership speaks of the North, and its circumpolar neighbours has enhanced certain elements of the Northern Strategy. The following discussion illustrates the connection between government policy and geopolitical change in the Canadian North, and provides an overview of the current strategy, its priorities and its intentions, as well as those expressed by its statesman.

Byers' *Who Owns the Arctic: Understanding Sovereignty Disputes in the North* gives a detailed assessment of Canada's outstanding legal claims. Byers pays attention to the central issues that have provoked the greatest reaction to Canada's ability to exercise sovereignty and security in the North: the on-going diplomatic dispute with Denmark surrounding jurisdiction over Hans Island, the legal claim of the Northwest Passage, the extent to which Canada has authority over parts of the Arctic Ocean seabed and the continual disagreement with the US over the delimitation of the Beaufort Sea have become central issues that continue to redefine how the Canadian government views, plans, and operates in its north (Byers, 2009; *passim*). The question of whether or not these issues constitute real threats to Canadian sovereignty has often been debated, both within legislative levels of power and among academics. As Byers admits, although these misunderstandings over Arctic territory do not challenge Canada's internal security, they present dilemmas for how the government exercises sovereignty over its territory. Rather than expressing the need for military action within the region, Byers favours the use of international law and the history of institutional cooperation among Arctic neighbours as

⁴⁴ Much has been made in Canadian academia about the Arctic in recent years. Works by Griffiths, Ford, Morrison, Huebert, Byers, Lackenbaur, Coates, and McRae have showcased Canada's evolving domestic priorities and the changing nature of its disposition within circumpolar cooperation.

hallmarks to the region's continued peace and stability. As a consequence, questions surrounding Canadian sovereignty have no direct impact on the security and stability of Canada's Arctic and thus pose no real military threat to alter Canada's position. Huebert, on the other hand, sees these challenges of Canadian sovereignty directly in connection to security concerns. As presented in *Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security in a Transforming Circumpolar World* (Huebert, 2009; 3):

Given the transformation of the Arctic, and the consequent challenges to Canadian Arctic sovereignty, the protection of Canadian Arctic sovereignty is essential to the provision of Canadian Arctic security, and vice versa. Sovereignty and security are not mutually exclusive concepts; they are interdependent.

Huebert therefore emphasizes the need for state sovereignty to be demonstrative of authority and control, as a way of preventing security lapses. However, Huebert's opinion is based on a 'zero-sum' approach to international relations and has negative impacts for how states view cooperation and their place within regional discourse. While both authors present differentiating arguments about how Canadian sovereignty and security may be interconnected, greater detail to how the Government of Canada has framed its disputes terms of security or sovereignty offers additional insight.⁴⁵

On such example is the on-going legal dispute of the Northwest Passage, which presents an interesting example of the changing nature of Canadian politics, priorities and the

⁴⁵ Within Canadian academia, there remains a strict divide between how academics have interpreted the loose framework of cooperation in the Arctic with the geopolitical changes in the region. Perhaps the best assessment comes from Lackenbaur, who illustrates the extremes of the picture through the work of Canadian scholars Huebert and Griffith, in terms of the probability of different scenarios (Lackenbaur, 2009; 45): "Huebert sees the Arctic as a potential battleground. Since the late 1990s, he has forecast a 'perfect storm' brewing over climate change, newly accessible Arctic resources, shortened transportation routes, and competing national claims to Arctic waters, the seabed and islands. Canada is at a 'crossroads' and must choose between 'scaling back or abandoning some of their unilateral objectives and developing a multilateral framework for new governance.' By extension, in this hostile world where only the strong will survive, Canada must take unilateral action to assert control and defend its sovereignty or its claims will be overwhelmed by rival powers. By contrast, Griffiths has emphasized that Canadian sovereignty is 'well in hand' and the government should focus on stewardship – 'the enactment of sovereignty' – in light of uncertainty related to climate and geopolitical change. By downplaying the immediacy or probability of the Northern military and commercial threats emphasized by Huebert, Griffiths emphasizes the need for ongoing dialogue between southern stakeholders and northern residents on agenda- and priority-setting... In short, by asserting the improbability of an existential threat to Canada's possession of its Arctic waters, Griffiths provides the conceptual space to envision schemes for constructive international engagement and cooperative management."

range of possible solutions.⁴⁶ As a navigational maritime route, the passage has been the topic of international debate since the Canadian government first asserted unanimous control over the waterway in 1907.⁴⁷ Though its tactics have changed, the Government of Canada continues to hold the position that the passage constitutes internal waters, and is therefore under full and legal control of federal authorities.⁴⁸ In contrast to this presumption, the United States has been the greatest opponent of this view, advocating that the passage's attributes are clearly demonstrative of an international strait and thus open for unregulated global transit. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the two states have continuously disagreed about its status, prompting several policy changes from the Government of Canada. The passing of American vessels *SS Manhattan* (1969) and *Polar Sea* (1985) incited the government to change the legal status of its 'sector theory' (1907) to 'straight baselines' in 1986. Legislative policies like the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (1970) and the Arctic Cooperation Agreement (1988) can be seen as government interventions to support Canada's claim to the Northwest Passage through strategic initiatives. Further, Canada's lobbying of Article 234 in 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea is demonstrative of its concern for recognition internationally (Coates et al., 2009; 80-136).

However, the dispute to this day remains unsettled and under constant attention from media sources. Though the 20th century saw isolated incidents of disagreement between the United States and Canada, continual effects of climate change on sea-ice in the Northwest Passage have spurred new opportunities. Today, active transit through the

⁴⁶ This example was chosen as a way of illustrating the types of disputes involving the Government of Canada in its Arctic territory. It demonstrates the changing nature of Canada's political position towards the waterway, its connection to sovereignty, and the ongoing debate within international forum. Other examples present similar scenarios, though Hans Island is the only claim involving land that remains outstanding and thus involves different legislation, international law, and diplomacy.

⁴⁷ Senator Pascal Poirier was the first to employ the sector theory in 1907 which extended Canadian ownership of its Arctic Archipelago from its eastern and western edges, straight to the North Pole. However, symbolic sovereignty came in 1909 when Canadian explorer J.E. Bernier fixed a plaque on Ellesmere Island reading: "This memorial is erected today to commemorate the taking possession for the DOMINION OF CANADA of the whole ARCTIC ARCHIPELAGO lying to the north of America from longitude 60°W. to 141°W. up to 90°N." (Byers, 2009; 43)

⁴⁸ A comparison by Suzanne Lalonde demonstrating Canada's presumed control over its Arctic waters suggests that "Canada has as much legal authority over its internal waters as it does over downtown Toronto". See: Lalonde, Suzanne. "Arctic Waters: Cooperation or Conflict?" Behind the Headlines: Canada's Arctic Interests and Responsibilities. Canadian International Council, Vol. 65 No.4. 2008.

passage is surprisingly unknown, despite commitments from the government in 2006 to improve surveillance; however, there is speculation that the passage has been used for other purposes beyond the small number of annual transits made by Canadian Coast Guards, ice-capable tour boats, and experimental passage of transport vessels (Byers, 2009; 44). Nonetheless, the political debate continues. Most recently, the passing of the October 2009 parliamentary bill to officially change the name to the 'Canadian Northwest Passage' is again indicative of the on-going insecurity of the Government of Canada towards its positioning. This comes despite the innumerable efforts by leading Canadian academics towards taking a new approach towards settling the dispute; publications by Griffiths⁴⁹, Lauckebaur,⁵⁰ and Lalonde⁵¹ all support the notion that the 'agree to disagree' history through which both governments have followed should not be compromised and that the Government of Canada should work towards American engagement on a bilateral settlement, rather than diplomatic standoffs. Despite these calls for concern within academia, the Canadian Government remains committed to its unanimous status as internal waters- and thus a fundamental sovereignty concern, if not a security threat.

What examples like the Northwest Passage within domestic and international politics fail to acknowledge is the constructive history of circumpolar cooperation, and the central role that the Government of Canada has played during these processes. In the past, the Canadian contribution to circumpolar region building has been well document and celebrated; in particular the Government of Canada has been commended for its noticeable presence in both developing and mediating regional institutions (Northern Dimension, 2004). It goes without saying, however, that the Canadian North has meant many different things to many different governments. Therefore, it is difficult to conceptualize Canada's Arctic disposition without considering some of the approaches of

⁴⁹ See: Griffiths, Franklyn (2009). "Canadian Arctic Sovereignty: Time to Take Yes for an Answer on the Northwest Passage 2009." Northern Exposure: Peoples, Powers and Prospects for Canada's North. Frances Abele et al (Eds). Institute for Research on Public Policy; Ottawa.

⁵⁰ See: Lackebaur, Whitney P (2009). "From Polar Race to Polar Saga: An Integrated Strategy for Canada and the Circumpolar World" Canadian International Council: Foreign Policy for Canada's Tomorrow No. 4, May 2009.

⁵¹ See: Lalonde, Suzanne (2008). "Arctic Waters: Cooperation or Conflict?" Behind the Headlines: Canada's Arctic Interests and Responsibilities. Canadian International Council, Vol. 65 No.4. 2008.

political paths taken by certain governments. Whereas the Canadian government of the 1990s was characterized by having a strong mandate towards institution building, in recent years it has deviated from its central role as promoter of cooperative forum to address more domestic commitments. This is equally obvious not only from policy and project initiatives, but also from the way the national government has engaged in political rhetoric. For example, under the former Liberal Government (1993 to 2006), it was clear that Canada's domestic northern policy was very much linked with its international ambitions. Case in point is their 2000 strategy *Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy*, which provides a framework to promote Canadian interests through a renewed commitment to both international and national cooperation. As highlighted in the strategy's opening paragraph (DFAIT, 2000; 2):

A clearly defined Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy will establish a framework to promote the extension of Canadian interests and values, and will renew the government's commitment to cooperation with our own northern peoples and with out circumpolar neighbours to address shared issues and responsibilities...A proactive approach in strengthening Arctic circumpolar relations, drawing on Canada's experiences, traditions and capabilities, in both the domestic international context, will help to shape the nature and thrust of circumpolar affairs, and Canada's central place therein.

In it, the Government outlines five key areas of support: strengthening the Arctic Council; establishing a University of the Arctic and a circumpolar policy research network; working with Russia to address northern challenges; promoting sustainable economic opportunities and trade in the North; and increasing northern cooperation with the European Union and circumpolar countries (Lackenbaur, 2009; 10).

With a focus on diplomacy, the Liberal Government emphasized the importance of developing comprehensive security as a way of finding collaboration with its circumpolar partners. This was further emphasized in the 1999 Speech from the Throne: "To advance Canada's leadership in the Arctic region, the Government will outline a foreign policy for the North that enhances cooperation, helps protect the environment, promotes trade and investment and supports the *security* of the region's peoples" (Privy Council, 1999). Once again in 2005 former Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Pierre Pettigrew stressed the relationship between Canada's domestic politics and its commitment to circumpolar

cooperation. This time the focal message was on the need to maintain state interests for the betterment of the entire region, emphasizing that (Pettigrew, 2005):

...sovereignty in the 21st century must increasingly be a matter of engagement for common good, not an exercise in seeking exclusion. I intend to focus my energies on developing Canada's bilateral relationships with members of the Arctic Council to promote more habitual circumpolar cooperation. With the Northern Strategy and other government initiatives coming in line, we are presented with an opportunity to establish very clear goals and specific interests in the circumpolar arena linked to specific domestic priorities.

Beyond establishing a clear connection between regional discourse and domestic priorities, Pettigrew's first sentence epitomizes the complexity of circumpolar foreign policy. On the one hand, states may focus their priorities on improving circumpolar relations through shared understandings, despite national differences. Such a theory assumes that "difference through connection, rather than separation" commits states to mutual objectives by virtue of sharing certain commonalities and interests (Wilson; 132).

A different approach has been taken by the current Conservative Government of Canada (2006-present), which has favoured a more national perspective to the way it conducts northern affairs. The government has placed much greater exposure on the north through a number of programs and projects, including support towards economic and social development, housing and infrastructure (INAC, 2010).⁵² Equally apparent is its emphasis towards traditional concepts of security. In its 2007 Speech from the Throne, the government made specific reference to Arctic sovereignty through traditional means: "defending our sovereignty in the North also demands that we maintain the capacity to act. New Arctic patrol ships and expanded aerial surveillance will guard Canada's Far North and the Northwest Passage... ensuring our capacity to defend Canada's sovereignty is at the heart of the government's efforts to rebuild the Canadian Forces". Moreover, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's comments in February 2007 give added accent to its government's military motivations (Coates et al., 2009; 175):

⁵² Highlights include a 50 Million CAD Economic Development Agency for the North, a 42 Million CAD fisheries harbour in Pangnirtung, and over 200 Million CAD in northern housing developments.

We believe that Canadians are excited about the government asserting Canada's control and sovereignty in the Arctic. We believe that's one of the big reasons why Canadians are excited and support our plan to rebuild the Canadian Forces... I am hoping that years from now, Canada's Arctic sovereignty, military or otherwise, will be, frankly, a major legacy of this government.

A similar position was taken by Foreign Affairs Minister Cannon, who confirmed that "Canada is an Arctic power"- a message that has obvious weight for scholars of international politics (Cannon, 2009). Similar incidents of strong rhetoric have been used towards individual governments, no less during the February 2009 confrontation caused by Russian bombers flying over Canadian airspace during American President Obama's first international visit. The situation prompted Prime Minister Harper to declare that, "I have expressed at various times the deep concern our government has with increasingly aggressive Russian actions around the globe and Russian intrusions into our airspace" (CBC, 2009).

To date, the Conservative Government has translated these verbal commitments to applied projects. The government's 2008 legislative move to amend the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act⁵³ and its mandatory reporting through NORDREG⁵⁴, Canada's Arctic waters have become incorporated into the government's sovereign strategy. Beyond that, the investment in a new icebreaker, the procurement of patrol ships, the establishment of a new Canadian Forces Army Training Centre in Resolute Bay and the launching of the RADARSAT II satellite are on the ground and in the seas examples of resources allocated to defence capabilities (INAC, 2009). The release of these national initiatives an indication of an abrupt change between the Liberal and Conservative approach to northern policy. Such a change is demonstrative of two things: a changing geopolitical landscape in the Arctic and/or a change in government, and thus political ideology. The Canadian International Council's (CIC) Arctic Sovereignty and Security Working Group has made similar assessments, expressing scepticism surrounding the Conservative Party's pragmatic approach to hard-line statesmanship. As defined by Lackenbaur, there are clear messages within the current Government of Canada's

⁵³ Extending the original application of the Act from 100 miles to 200 miles.

⁵⁴ Vessel Traffic Reporting Arctic Canada Traffic Zone (NORDREG).

intentions that are inconsistent with the nature of circumpolar cooperation created through past governments (Lackenbaur, 2009; 13):

Since coming to office in early 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 'use it or lose it' refrain has become the dominant political message. The logic of 'defending sovereignty' from foreign challenges has also brought a shift from past governments that favoured recognition – persuading others to accept our claims without demonstrating a capacity to enforce them – to a Harper government that favours enactment. Its instrument of choice is the Canadian Forces, which fits within the 'Canada First' vision that pledges to defend 'our vast territory and three ocean areas' through increased defence spending and more Regular and Reserve forces.

Similar principles are defended by Griffiths's work through the CIC who encourages that the Government of Canada should strive for a national strategy "that mutes conflict and enables all to exercise due care in the exploitation and enjoyment of a shared natural environment. Its twin watchwords will be stewardship and sovereignty". Griffiths continues by framing the strategy in three objectives: the elevation of the Arctic to the highest political level; the enlargement of Canada's positioning with the United State and Russia Federation in cooperative stewardship; and finally, the invigoration of regional governance, and thus the Arctic Council (Griffiths, 2009; 4).⁵⁵

These, of course, are rather striking objections to the Government of Canada's application of traditional concepts of security, and are perhaps more aligned with the Liberal notion of Canadian sovereignty. One conclusion from this discussion would be that the very application of sovereignty in Canada is changing, and taking on a more security perspective. Clearly Canadian sovereignty in the Liberal era was framed within an international perspective. As a result it was believed that the Canadian government could fulfil its sovereignty obligations by promoting regional peace and stability. This, of

⁵⁵ The Canadian International Council's Arctic Sovereignty and Security Working Group was an initiative launched in 2008, in which research fellows developed papers for CIC's *Foreign Policy for Canada's Tomorrow* series. Each of the papers from Griffiths, Lackenbaur, and Huebert, offers a series of recommendations for the Canadian government to consider when drafting their Northern Strategy. The three papers was released in the summer of 2009, the same month that the national government launched its own strategy.

course, would fit with Byers' notion that there is a clear separation between sovereignty and security since none of Canada's outstanding claims in the Arctic are perceived to have military implications. On the other hand, the Conservative approach to linking sovereignty with actions customarily associated with traditional security, there appears to be a merger of the two concepts. As such, it would appear that the present government is more closely aligned with the work of Huebert, in that given the uncertainty surrounding Canada's sovereign claims in the Arctic, coupled with the heightened degree of interest in the region's resource and transportation potential, these represent security concerns which as a result necessitate military reactions. This of course only presents part of the story. In order to gain a broader understanding of the government's commitment towards sovereignty obligations, it is necessary to look at the guiding document that frames the government's priorities- *Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future* (2009). By doing so, an interpretation of sovereignty and security concerns can be contrasted in terms of the fundamental policy goals and obligations as stated in their Strategy.

4.2.1 Canada's Northern Strategy

The Canadian Government launched its July 2009 Northern Strategy in Gatineau, Quebec.⁵⁶ In its preamble Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Northern Affairs, speaks of the newfound interest taken by the federal government towards its Arctic territory:

Canada is a Northern nation. The North is a fundamental part of our heritage and our national identity, and it is vital to our future. The North is home to many Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples, as well as those drawn there from around the world. Our government recognizes the tremendous opportunities – as well as the many challenges – that exist in the North today. That is why we are allocating more resources and attention to Northern issues than at any time in our country's history

⁵⁶ The actual release of the strategy was met with surprise. Not only was it launched from a southern location, but the event happened on a Sunday, with little prior consultation from northern communities or indigenous groups. The summary offered below is a condensed version of the original. Unless otherwise quoted, the text has been taken based on themes and adapted for this summary. For original work, see: Government of Canada (2009).

In its introduction, the strategy explains of the need to exercise effective government leadership in order to meet domestic and international challenges. The vision of the document is to foster healthy individuals and communities with political independence, greater respect for the environment through sustainable development practices, strengthened northern governments, and enhanced military presence. As a policy document, the strategy is focused on four priority areas (pillars), which outline the basis for several government commitments:

- Exercising Arctic sovereignty: by strengthening the military presence, enhancing stewardship by protecting Arctic waters, and defining a domain of knowledge for the region. In addition to proposing a number of security and sovereignty initiatives, the strategy defends the stability of the region despite disagreements over Hans Island, the Northwest Passage, and in the Beaufort Sea: “these disagreements are well-managed and pose no sovereignty or defence challenges for Canada. In fact, they have no impact on Canada’s ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with the United States, Denmark or other Arctic neighbours on issues of real significance or importance. Canada will continue to manage these discrete disputes and may seek to resolve them in the future, in accordance with international law”;
- Promoting social and economic development: by supporting economic initiatives, promoting development and environmental protection, establishing clear and transparent rules, addressing infrastructure needs, and supporting Northerner’s well being. This section takes a tripartite approach to development, promoting projects focussed on sponsoring economic development, with environmental considerations and modernizing the infrastructure supporting these operations.
- Protecting environmental heritage: by becoming a global leader in Arctic science, thus better influencing policy decisions, and protecting northern lands and waters through a comprehensive approach to environmental protection.
- And improving and devolving northern governance: by improving devolution practices between the federal government and the territories, and continuing to implement past and new agreements in accordance to regional needs.

Furthermore, the strategy also includes an ‘international dimension’, which supports components of all four pillars through engagement with international partners and promoting Canadian interests, bilaterally, multilaterally and through the Arctic Council. As presented by the strategy, “cooperation, diplomacy and international law have always been Canada’s preferred approach in the Arctic”. The strategy further outlines the importance of engaging with the United States government, promoting a Memorandum of

Understanding with Russia on cooperative projects involving indigenous peoples, and other bilateral trading relationships, and transportation routes. The strategy also identifies the need to promote the *Northern Dialogue* with Norway over issues pertaining to climate change, oil and gas development and ocean management, as well as the necessity to engage non-Arctic states, using the United Kingdom and polar research projects as an example. Finally, the strategy mentions Canada's forthcoming (2013) chairmanship of the Arctic Council, ensuring that the strength, resources and influence to respond to new challenges will lead Canada towards that leadership role. The strategy also mentions the need for continued Canadian engagement with the International Marine Organization (IMO), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the International Polar Year (IPY).

In contrasting the discussion on the changing approach to security and sovereignty within the Canadian government in its 2009 strategy, there are some obvious consistencies. Clearly, the priority of exercising sovereignty through a greater military presence is identified in the strategy; because of this, a general conclusion would be that the concept of sovereignty and traditional security have in fact taken on similar meanings. However, the strategy does clarify that none of the outstanding claims in the Arctic constitute threats or hinder regional cooperation. As such, it would seem that neither do they constitute military activity in the region. Furthermore, references to the hallmarks (cooperation, diplomacy and international law) of Canada's approach to its Arctic foreign policy suggest that there is no major change in how the country approaches regional political discourse from that of the Liberal Government. Neither does the strategy make any reference to its positioning toward the Northwest Passage, or the overlapping claims with Russia over the Arctic Ocean seabed. Instead, the strategy identifies the valuable relationship the Government of Canada has with, principally, the United States. Therefore, it is difficult to assume firsthand whether there is an immediate connection between exercises in Canadian sovereignty and fundamental changes in the way Canada conducts its Arctic foreign policy. Because of this, it is difficult to read the objectives of the government based purely on either strategy analysis or government reactions. Although a greater analysis into the specific priorities of the strategy will be offered next chapter, a concluding remark would be that Canada's position in the Arctic is more

accurately portrayed within the strategy than it is by the day-to-day deliberations of government officials because the strategy reflects a more realistic version of Canada's geopolitical positioning. This is evident in the way the strategy proposes engagement over difference in terms of its outstanding legal disputes. As a result, it is more characteristic of middle-power conflict resolution, and thus more in line with Canada's historic Arctic political identity.

4.3 Denmark/Greenland

In terms of geopolitical changes in the Arctic, Denmark⁵⁷ provides a good example of how the internal politics of a nation can greatly influence a country's regional positioning. To say the least, a major characteristic of the geopolitical change in Denmark since the 1970s has been the redefining relationship between it and its colony of Greenland.⁵⁸ Most recently, the proclamation of Self-Rule for Greenland in June of 2009 has culminated in a number of changes in how Denmark views the Arctic and its place within. This discussion thus identifies the present process through which Denmark and Greenland participate in Arctic political forum, priorities of the government as seen through acts of regional leadership, and the extent to which the geopolitical identity and responsibilities of Denmark may change in the future.

As is often stated, it is through Greenland that Denmark is an Arctic actor. Thus, the movement towards greater autonomy for Greenland may seem to infer a loss of 'Arcticness' for Denmark. This, of course, is not so easily the case; taken into consideration must be jurisdictional responsibilities that remain under the complete authority of the Government of Denmark, and a number of shared responsibilities with that of the Government of Greenland. Loukacheva in *The Arctic Promise: Legal and Political Autonomy of Greenland and Nunavut* offers clarification over the legal status of

⁵⁷ Unless stated otherwise, the use Denmark refers to the Kingdom of Denmark, and thus Greenland.

⁵⁸ For a detailed account of the Greenlandic process to Home Rule and self-governance, see: Loukacheva, Natalia (2007). The Arctic Promise: Legal and Political Autonomy of Greenland and Nunavut. University of Toronto Press Incorporated. Toronto; Canada. 2007.

Greenland and its Canadian counterpart, Nunavut, to operate as independent actors within international affairs (Loukacheva, 2007; 105):

Greenland and Nunavut cannot be independent members of international organizations that are composed of sovereign states; these territories are not allowed to conclude unilateral agreements with foreign countries and cannot have their own diplomatic missions. All this means is that Greenland and Nunavut do not have international legal capacity or an international legal personality and cannot be classified as subjects of international law.

As noted by Loukacheva, the situation for Greenland however has become more favourable in recent years. The 2003 *Itilleq Declaration* granted participation for Greenland in international negotiations to which they have a vested interest. The Declaration also stipulates consultation with the Government of Greenland⁵⁹ over matters related to their interests. The 2005 Authorization Act grants further privileges to Greenland, allowing its government to “negotiate and conclude agreements under international law with foreign states and international organizations, including administrative agreements, which relate entirely to subject matters where legislative and administrative powers have been transferred to the Authorities of Greenland”. There are a number of limitations to this freedom, however, which prohibits Greenland’s participation over matters affecting defence and security policy, and/or over agreements that have bearing on Denmark or to which are negotiated within an international organization to which the Kingdom of Denmark has membership. Despite the obvious advantages that the Act affords to Greenland in the way of increased international representation, there remains barriers for how this participation can happen free of Danish supervision (Loukacheva, 2007; 106-107).

The greatest legislative stronghold for preserving Denmark’s responsibility over its entire territory is section 19 (1) of the Danish Constitution, which allocates responsibility over international affairs to the king, as well stipulates that: “the principle of national unity [which] presumes that foreign affairs are part of the indivisible sovereignty of Denmark” (Loukacheva, 2007; 106). Such a view is stated within the Commission on Home Rule as

⁵⁹ Formerly the Greenland home-rule government. Herein referred to as the Government of Greenland, as a point of clarity.

an “absolute jurisdiction” held by Danish authorities (Loukacheva, 2007; 107). As a result, it would seem that although steps have been made towards sharing and allocating responsibilities to Greenland from Denmark, there remains a clear division of power. This position is concluded by Loukacheva, who writes that: “despite increasing jurisdiction in some areas of foreign affairs, the Authorization Act did not amount to an actual transfer of power from Denmark to Greenland to act independently in international affairs, as the Danish kingdom is one subject in international law” (Loukacheva, 2007; 109). The shift to Self-Rule in June 2009 does not seem to have changed the fundamental relationship for how the country conducts its foreign policy; this despite the fact that under Greenland’s Self-Rule constitution, Greenlanders are recognized as a nation under international law. Thus, while the responsibility to the Government of Greenland over several matters including those related to resource development, has grown, “defence, foreign policy, sovereignty control and other authority tasks... remain a formal Danish prerogative” (Petersen, 2009; 38).

This division of power is particularly apparent in matters related to national security. In the past, the use of Greenland by NATO as a strategic location for Arctic military operations was conducted through negotiation with the Danish government.⁶⁰ Though Cold War conflict has subsided and Greenland is no longer the hub of NATO activity it once was, new security threats, including those related to illegal fishing and international terrorism, within the region still demand a need for enforcement and patrolling capabilities. Greenland, of course, also holds vast resource wealth. The impact of global warming is now starting to expose the true extent of the island’s hydrocarbon reserves. Finally, Denmark, by virtue of Greenland, has claim to the Arctic Ocean’s continental shelf and has been in the process of submitting its claim to the International Seabed Authority. As such, there appears to be multiple reasons for an increase in Danish security activities within Greenland; this view is supported by Petersen in *The Arctic as a New Arena for Danish Foreign Policy: The Ilulissat Initiative and its Implications*, who states that “Danish diplomacy and physical resources are certain to be more heavily

⁶⁰ Loukacheva’s example of the Thule Military Base in North-Eastern Greenland is a good example illustrating how Inuit voices and values were absent during Denmark’s negotiation of the radar facility. See: Loukacheva, 2009; 129-136.

tasked by Arctic problems in the future than they are today” (Petersen, 2009; 35). Petersen’s argument is supported by the Danish Defence Commission of 2008, which in its 2008 report, supported a strengthened presence in the Arctic: “The Danish Armed Forces must continue to be capable of upholding sovereignty and enforcing jurisdiction, including possessing sufficient Armed Forces with the capability to meet the anticipated increase in activity in the Arctic region” (Danish Defence Committee, 2009; 11). Furthermore, the Commission goes so far as to request an “Arctic Command” in Greenland, a more robust and enlarged replacement to its current Islands Command Greenland (ICG), which has responsibility over territorial and maritime defence, as well as search and rescue services.⁶¹

What this discussion reveals is the level of responsibility and interest that Denmark has in providing security obligations to Greenland. However, this is not to say that military security is the predominant priority of the Danish government. In fact, the opposite may be true; as put by Peterson “as a minor player Denmark’s fundamental interest is to promote cooperation and prevent tension in the Arctic. That was the main aim of the Ilulissat Initiative” (Peterson, 2009; 36). The Arctic Ocean Conference in May of 2008 was significant for many reasons: firstly, it symbolized the first real effort by the littoral states to engage in an exclusionary platform; secondly, it helped dispel the growing fears among the global public that disputes in the Arctic Ocean would resort to armed conflict. In hindsight, the meeting was also a successful act of diplomacy that prompted the signing of a declaration, which in effect ended the possibility of the littoral states entering into a binding Arctic treaty, and instead showcased the tradition of cooperation characteristic of the region. It was also successful in elevating Denmark’s status as an Arctic nation, with a middle power gesture of engaging the region’s major stakeholders in peaceful collaboration. Whether or not the hosting of the Conference was in fact an expression of intent to remain relevant to the region’s political discourse is unknown; however, Petersen’s article does propose, that “the single most outstanding feature of the Danish initiative was its ambition of a high-level political conference and the adoption of a solemn political declaration” (Peterson, 2009; 56).

⁶¹ It is not known whether or not this recommendation has been implemented.

A second example showing Denmark's relevant status within the Arctic is its current Chairmanship of the Arctic Council for the period 2009-2011. Given the Chair's responsibility for setting the agenda for the duration of its term, there are important elements within the platform that provide indications of Denmark's interests in the Arctic. Predictable priority areas include enhanced cooperation on climate change monitoring and species assessment, as well the promotion of data sharing among scientific communities of the Arctic states. Unconventional is the chairmanship's consideration of new ways to improve the operations of the Arctic Council, as stated: "During the chairmanship, work will therefore continue to consolidate the structure of the Arctic Council in order to enable it to respond to new challenges". The text further supports the involvement of the Permanent Participants in this process. What is also rather surprising is the acknowledgement of the growing global demand on Arctic resources and the pressure it places on the Council, as well as support for the controversial move to better incorporate observers as represented stakeholders (Arctic Council, 2010):

The policy challenges in regards to the Arctic calls, in the view of many, for regional and international cooperation. At the same time, as more international focus and attention is directed towards the Arctic and the possibilities it present, it is of major importance for the Arctic Council to safeguard the inherent cultural, economic and political rights of the Arctic States and of the Peoples of the Arctic...The increased international focus on Arctic issues has also inspired many other non-Arctic states and organisations to seek closer ties with the Council. Observers and ad hoc observers are assets, and the Arctic Council should look for ways to further involve those that are ready to cooperate under the premise that the primary role of the Arctic Council is to promote sustainable development for the Peoples of the Arctic and the Arctic States.

What the previous discussion has attempted to do is provide a backdrop for understanding Denmark's continued relevancy as a regional actor in the Arctic. As shown, its legislative responsibilities in Greenland include offering security services. However, the Ilulissat meeting and the current Arctic Council chairmanship may provide concrete examples for how Denmark is using regional political discourses to retain its status as an active and relevant player. The next section will consider whether or not

these arguments are prevalent within the country's 2008 *The Arctic at a Time of Transition: Proposed Strategy for Activities in the Arctic Region*.

4.3.2 Denmark/Greenland's *The Arctic at a Time of Transition: Proposed Strategy for Activities in the Arctic Region*

The strategy begins by introducing two basic goals: the supporting and strengthening of Greenland's development towards autonomy; and to maintain the commonwealth's (Denmark's) position as a major player in the Arctic. The introduction continues by insisting that the foreign and security policy issues in the Arctic must be handled in accordance with international legal principles and treaties currently in force. In reference to its own intentions, the strategy refers to Denmark's need to 'position itself centrally in the wider political processes' in order to have an impact in the direction of the development of legal principles. The introduction concludes with a statement on the need for the Danish kingdom to promote its Arctic agenda through bilateral cooperation and through the existing regional cooperative regime.

Section 2.1 is entirely devoted to the Arctic Ocean Conference in Ilulissat. The release of Denmark's strategy in May of 2008 may be seen as a way of supporting the Ilulissat Declaration, which had been convened only a few weeks prior to the strategy's release. This is evident in the preamble, where the strategy confirms the importance of the Declaration for binding Arctic states to UNCLOS, as well as the support granted towards sustainable development practices. Immediately following, the strategy identifies how the hosting of the meeting is favourable to Denmark's regional positioning:

The chairmanship [hosting of the meeting] will contribute to the marketing of the Greenland and Denmark as active international actors both in relation to peaceful international conflict as well as strengthening international law and practice in relation to the challenges of the Arctic.

Section 3.4 refers to the organization of foreign affairs responsibilities between Denmark and Greenland. The strategy notes the importance of the *Ililleq Declaration* (2003) to the cooperative structure, and stresses the joint involvement of both parties through negotiation processes. Similarly Section 5 and 5.1 is in regard to the Arctic Council and

the positive accomplishments its work has had on the region. The strategy calls for more synergies between the work of the Council, and that of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic Council, and the Council of Baltic Sea States, based on overlapping interests and actors. The strategy identifies three main aims directing its commitments to regional forum: the strengthening of the Arctic Council's role and structure; a results-based approach to its chairmanship between 2009-2011; and the effective division of labour between the different cooperative institutions in the Arctic.

The role of Danish security is identified in Section 4.1, a theme promptly called "Sovereignty Assertiveness", in which the primary aims are to increase the visible presence of defence within Greenland through their Island Command Greenland forces, and increasing the Greenland's capability for participating in surveillance and monitoring functions. The strategy also identifies a number of potential security threats, ranging from illegal fishing to immigration. Also mentioned is the basic sovereign necessity of patrolling the internal waters at all times. An increase in monitoring exercises of the territorial waters surrounding Greenland by ship and air are considered important steps in sovereignty demonstrations.

In terms of economic considerations, including energy, a great deal of the text talks about the potential for extraction; the possibility to develop large-scale hydrocarbon, hydrogen, and raw material projects are supported for their ability to contribute to the growth of other sectors. Resource development is therefore seen as imperative to the overall growth of Greenland. Further mentioned, is the necessity for Greenland to manage its own resources, and address the technological capacity for extraction. Many examples illustrating the success of existing projects are mentioned, as well as their emphasis on environmental protection.

Despite these examples showing issues related to foreign policy, a primary aim of the document is to provide a domestic direction for Arctic policy which both Denmark and Greenland may pursue; as stated by Petersen: "the Danish Arctic policy is deeply influenced by relations between metropolitan Denmark and Greenland" (Petersen, 2009; 53). Indeed this is made clear through one of the aims of the strategy. As a result, a priority of the document is to clarify the individual roles of Denmark and Greenland

within the Arctic region. As such, the strategy has a distinctly domestic flavour, in which the use of ‘sovereignty’ is often employed to describe the internal process of transferring responsibilities from Denmark to Greenland. One such area that nevertheless remains under Danish authority is that of military security. Rather than taking on a lesser role in the advent of greater autonomy to Greenland, the Strategy implies a need for improved capabilities. Finally, one of the underlying themes of the document is the thrust away from discussions related to sustainable development and protection of the environment, and instead towards an increase in economic development through resource exploitation; this is indicative of a “shift from a defensive, protective attitude to climate and other changes to a more offensive, exploitative approach” (Petersen, 2009; 54). This is referenced in the strategy by the statement that Denmark and Greenland “have a clear foreign and security policy interest, that the new challenges and possibilities, which...climate changes may create in the Arctic, are handled in accordance with international legal principles and existing treaties, that is, by dialogue, cooperation and negotiation” (Petersen, 2009; 54). This would at least seem to indicate a lesser emphasis placed on environmental protection, granting greater justification for large-scale resource extraction. Whether or not this is the case will be analysed further next chapter.

4.4 Norway

Norway’s geographical positioning offers interesting perspectives on discussions related to geopolitics. Positioned next to Russia on its North-Western tip, with a shared maritime border in the profitable Barents Sea, has led Norway to construct a foreign policy plan based on maximising regional security, for the betterment of its national interests.⁶² Rather than disengage with its northern periphery, Norway has been proactive in the way it has incorporated its north into the national psyche. As will be discussed in the next section, it has been through a robust strategy pursued by the government and its agencies that the country has taken on an Arctic ‘persona’. As a result, Norway has grown into an

⁶² Östreng identified four areas known as the ‘Barents Quadrangle’ which has been the most influential on Norwegian policy in the Arctic, these are: the Kola Peninsula, the Barents Sea, Northern Norway and the Spitsbergen Archipelago. See: Östreng, 1999. 137.

Arctic leader in knowledge generation, Arctic infrastructure, shipping, technological resource development and diplomacy. It has also been a supporter of regional political forum, as a way of addressing its security concerns. This discussion will consider quickly the changing nature of geopolitics in Norway, its regional approach to matters related to security, as well as the importance that environmental security has played in its national security interests.

According to Östreng, immediately following World War II Norwegian security policy was characterized by being founded on military conditions and development. This changed slightly during the Cold War, in which considerations were very much focused on Russia and the concepts of ‘war’ and ‘peace’, like the entire circumpolar world at that time. The Barents region became a military theatre during the war, in which sparks from the East-West divide were thought to have devastating consequences on the region. Rather than develop into a source of conflict, the Barents region emerged from the Cold War with hesitancy towards cross-boundary cooperation (Östreng, 1999; 98). Yet, the post-Cold War era has seen significant changes in attitude towards the Norwegian positioning. Due to the relative stability in the region, opportunities for cross-border and regional cooperation have emerged; rather than viewing the region divided by military pacts, the idea of a ‘Barents zone’ of peace has emerged. Champion to this cause was the Government of Norway, whose recognition of regional cooperation initiated a number of cross-border initiatives that impacted the interconnectivity and dialogue between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Known as the Barents Initiative, Norway sought to improve intergovernmental relations as a way of fulfilling partial sovereignty obligations. As stated by Eriksson, “Norwegian policy-makers have stated security is a prime motive behind the Barents initiative. Moreover, it has been claimed that the Barents scheme is based on a new cooperative rather than confrontational security strategy” (Eriksson, 1995; 1).

From Eriksson’s point, it is clear that the move away from military mobilization towards strategic cooperation was done with concern for Russia. Though Norway and Russia have never been at war, the political uncertainty of the twentieth century demanded Norway to seek NATO membership (Nybakk, 2008; 4). Despite moving on from the Cold War

divide, Norway maintained a strong sense of uncertainty over Russian domestic politics. Epitomized by Former Secretary of State of Norway, Siri Bjerke, in 1994: “We do not know how Russian politics will look like in ten years, hardly in ten months, if not to say ten days” (Eriksson, 1995; 6). Bjerke’s quote epitomizes the motivational factor for Norway’s efforts in institutional building. Though the end of the Cold War no longer required a military alertness that plagued the Barents region for decades, there remained a number of outstanding questions related to forms of security from across the border. Identified by Eriksson as matters of “common security”, these included environmental hazards, ethnic conflicts, and economic disparities (Eriksson, 1995; 7).⁶³ Such threats culminated in a Norwegian political discourse founded on three assumptions (Eriksson, 1995; 12):

1. Normalization: In which the move by the government was to build on the foundations of Barents traditions that were present pre-Soviet era. Such a tactic was rooted in the belief that a hostile environment, could be changed back to normal and cooperative bonds that characterized the region for centuries prior;
2. Stabilization: Through the progress of ‘low-tension’ cooperative projects that directly or indirectly ‘threatened survival’. Rather than engaging in high-politics, stabilization engaged governments where conflicts of interests were absent;
3. Regionalization: In which the government believed that by engaging regional actors, the government could eventually broaden its cooperative mandate to deal with traditional security issues.

It is this last point of regionalization that provides the innovative design for one such initiative, the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR).⁶⁴ The Barents Cooperation was created in 1993 under the leadership of former Foreign Minister of Norway, Thorvald Stoltenberg, with the primary motivating factor addressing matters of security, without

⁶³ Eriksson writes of the difference in viewing security as a dimension, rather than issue. According to the author, issue based security required military reaction based on a single threat. Dimension security on the other hand was based on lower forms of threats, which nonetheless questioned state security. However, rather than requiring a military stance, the ‘dimension’ facilitate conflict resolution through cooperation and dialogue. In Eriksson’s theories, the author suggests that by approaching security as a dimension, the traditional lines between borders get distorted: “If the concept of security is widened to include such components as environmental security, social security (understood broadly) and economic security, one can see that the national/international character of security is blurred, and room is made for *transnational* considerations, where regional actors together with non-state actors emerge as potent and prominent agents within the security area” (Eriksson, 1995; 8).

⁶⁴ Herein also referred to as ‘Barents Council’.

depending on traditional sources for doing so. Put by Rune Rafaelsen in *The Barents Cooperation- region building and security challenges*: “With the formal establishment of the Barents Cooperation, the involved countries signalled an important shift from hard security priorities to an alternative and diversified security approach, which included emphasis on regional political cooperation, cross-border human contacts and the formation of common regional identities” (Rafaelsen, 2005). However, the basis for initiating discussion on security was through offering operative roles to minor actors, while the central governments were responsible for setting-up the general framework and financing projects (Eriksson, 1995; 7). The initial Terms of Reference for BEAR focussed on the following priorities: to develop peace and stability; cultural links between the peoples in the region; to promote the establishment of new, and the development of existing, bilateral and multilateral relations in the region; to lay the foundation for social and economic development within the region; and, to contribute to a development that considers the interests of the indigenous peoples and supports their active participation.

The Barents Cooperation region today comprises 13 administrative entities throughout the four countries, and covers a landmass of 1, 755, 800 squared kilometres. Despite its 17-year existence, the Cooperation remains strictly divided by social and economic inequalities across the ‘East-West’ border. The Cooperation has been successful in promoting a cross-border cultural movement, as well as improved dialogue for a number of non-state actors, however, the ability for the Cooperation to engage in security discussions is limited. Progress has been made in recent years to help facilitate dialogue between joint resource development projects (Rafaelsen, 2005). Due to Norway’s efforts, the Barents region has changed in the Post- Cold War era. Put by Nybakk, “fifteen years of Barents cooperation has created a community of interests and opportunities for creating growth... the 196 kilometer land border between Norway and Russia is a very peaceful one” (Nybakk, 2008; 2). This, despite the fact, that Norway remains a NATO member. Symbolic of this peaceful reality is Norwegian Foreign Minister Støre’s phrase, “High North- Low Politics”, based on a security policy of “cooperation, transparency, and stability” (Bø, 2009).

Nationally, the government has taken a holistic approach to the way in which it not only perceives, but also how it governs its Arctic region. Since 2000, the Government of Norway has made it a concerted effort to bring the region to the forefront of political life, including in respect to its foreign policy. As stated by Norwegian Parliamentarian Nybakk, there are several “strategic, geopolitical, security and environmental reasons” for doing so, including (Nybakk, 2008; 1): the discovery of huge energy reserves; the technological development which makes it possible to produce them; the prospects of booming business development in the northern parts of Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia; melting ice and consequently new shipping routes opening up as a result of climate change; and some of the world’s largest fishing resources. If driven by geopolitical interests, Nybakk’s assessment of Norway’s foreign policy priorities in the region are based on classical notions of the thought, in which the possession of space for government is seen as an act to gain power and influence; Perhaps a further study into Norway’s Arctic strategy itself reveals a better picture for interpretation.

4.4.2 The Norwegian Government’s High North Strategy

Though Canada’s Liberal Government released its Northern strategy in 2000, it is Norway’s High North Strategy that most often gets referred as the first policy directive for the Arctic.⁶⁵ It is, at the very least, the first in a wave of similar directives that have been released since 2006. The document itself is a comprehensive, ten-part roadmap for making the High North the main area of focus for the government. In order to accomplish this objective, all governmental departments and agencies are called on to embrace the strategy and pursue its policies. The text identifies seven main priorities for its High North, including:

- Exercising authority in a “credible, consistent and predictable way”, through the presence of Armed Forces, police and prosecuting authorities. These are seen as crucial for Norway to meet its security needs and crisis management capabilities. The text also states the importance of exercising this type of sovereignty in order to meet national and international obligations;

⁶⁵ The summary below is paraphrased from the original version. Unless otherwise quoted, the text is a condensed version of the themes. See: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006).

- Becoming the High North's 'best steward' of the environment and natural resources by promoting the exploitation of natural resources while maintaining natural ecosystems. This is done through the use of strict environmental standards and a management scheme based on the rights and duties set out in the Law of the Sea;
- Providing a "suitable framework" for petroleum activities, as a way of improving regional business activity and local competence;
- And, strengthening cooperation with Russia, "based on pragmatism, interests and cooperation".

In its entirety, the document addresses a full range of priority areas, each with their own statements on policies and projects. These areas include business development, issues related to indigenous peoples, and knowledge generation and competence building. However, Part 1 of the strategy, "A new dimension of Norwegian foreign policy", contains a number of provisions directly related to security, sovereignty, energy and the environment, and is thus particularly applicable to this research. The focus of the foreign policy dimension is on predictability and long-term perspectives, in which consistent action is believed to increase stability within the region. Firmness in exercising control over sovereignty and the responsibility over natural resource are also regarded as important characteristics in progressing the future of Norway's foreign policy. Several references are made towards increasing activity and placing a stronger strategic focus on issues pertaining to security. However, developing cooperation (particularly with Russia), protecting the natural environment, and addressing climate change are also identified within Norway's national interests. The strategy admits that there is an interconnectivity of these issues, as well as a degree to which they are addressed in international and regional political forum. Most prevalent is the connection between energy and security, in which a clear link between the two is drawn, and a recognition that energy security is having impacts on security policy globally. Similarly, climate change is linked with security, as the strategy admits that environmental changes are expected to bring new demands on foreign and development policy. In relation to both energy and the environment, the strategy adds that developments in the High North are becoming increasingly more dynamic, with a greater need to identify new areas and forms of cooperation.

Another section of the foreign policy dimension deals with conflicts of interests. The text identifies Norway's interest in the Barents Sea, "the sea of cooperation", in maintaining peace and order, despite the rise in fishing and petroleum activities. The text refers to resource management through a combination of regulation authority with enforcement legislation and international cooperation, as well as a "systematic" and "methodical" approach to petroleum activities. In reference to its extended seabed claim, the strategy expresses the need to finalize the limits of its jurisdiction for economic and stability reasons:

The delimitation of the continental shelf and the 200-mile zones in the Barents Sea is an essential basis for the exploration and exploitation of petroleum deposits in the area of overlapping claims, which covers an area of 175 000 square kilometres... Agreement on a delimitation line will thus make it possible to establish the predictable framework that is necessary for economic and other actors, and also for cross-border cooperation schemes in the petroleum sector.

Perhaps the most progressive part of the text is Norway's focus on Russia. At several points in the strategy are references on how it plans on building and engaging its Russian partners. By focussing on Russia, Norway is clearly defining the importance it places on regional security, regional economic growth and cross-border environmental management. The text is aggressive at times in the way that it directs its focus on Russia. One such example mentions Norway's support for Russia's introduction to global and European bodies and welcomes the developments it has made since the Cold War. Yet, the strategy reveals that there remains uncertainty for how Russia will develop and on what principles of governance it will choose to follow:

This applies particularly to key issues such as the rule of law, freedom of expression and human rights. The changes that are taking place in the country's economy, society and politics do not affect the objectives of Norway's policy, but developments will be followed closely and measures adapted accordingly. We will maintain a candid dialogue with Russia and will be clear about Norway's views on human rights, the principles of the rule of law and political rights.

The text goes on to describe Norway's willingness to cooperate with Russia on joint projects related to offshore petroleum, as well as bilateral cooperation in search and rescue operations and improved regulations in maritime safety. A final section in its

foreign policy plan regards the presence of its Armed Forces. According to the text, climatic and economic impacts in the North are changing the role of the Norwegian Armed Forces. Improved capacity building has made it possible for more time at air and sea. In terms of Norway's role of Armed Forces offering security and protection, the text refers to the importance of maintaining a presence as a way of exercising sovereignty and authority, but also in its role to safeguard resource management. The text goes on to say that, "the presence of the armed forces increases predictability and stability, and is decisive for our ability to respond to emergencies in the High North." Interestingly, Norway does leave possibilities for security cooperation, mentioning the need for joint training exercises as a way of strengthening operations and ally coordination, admitting that, "we [the Government of Norway] will make active efforts to intensify our defence-related dialogue with Russia." Such a proposal for bilateral and multilateral cooperation on security reflects an advanced level of engagement with its neighbours and goes beyond the current limitations of circumpolar cooperation.

It is worth noting that in March 2009 the Government of Norway released an updated follow-up to the strategy (*New Building Blocks in the North*) which outlines a new set of measures for priority areas related to: the development of knowledge about climate change and environment; the strengthening of maritime surveillance; encouragement of sustainable development of resources; economic development; infrastructure development; the assertion of sovereignty and cross-border cooperation; and, security of indigenous livelihoods. The Build Blocks Strategy also takes a broader view of the High North, to be more inclusive of the entire circumpolar Arctic, and thus expands its focus on cooperation beyond Russia.

4.5 The Russian Federation

To fully understand the regional discourse of Arctic politics it is necessary to consider the great transformations that have occurred within the internal discourse of Russia; as put by Rowe, "Russian engagement in the North, both domestically and internationally, plays out against a regional background of change" (Rowe, 2009: 1). However, such an

assessment would require a detailed analysis of the internal politics of a complex and shifting state. Attention would need to be drawn on the diversity of leadership from within the federal government, the traditional values that have been historical present within Russian politics, the immense geographical and diverse population of the state itself, and the interplay between politics, society and economics. Rather than focussing on specifics, this discussion examines the overarching trends that have been prominent within Russia's recent Arctic discourse, and considers the predominate themes that guide the government's current interests. It takes a broader perspective to understanding the recent behaviour relevant to an Arctic perspective, and provides a basis for conceptualizing how government policies may be framed in connection to the government's Arctic goals.

Much has been made about the Russian Federation's paramount changes since the end of the Cold War. Rowe in *Russia and the North* presents the dualistic tensions between 'open' and 'closed' that have dominated how Russia views the Arctic and its northern spaces. According to Rowe, the question between open and closed was unanimous during the Soviet era- the North was without a doubt a closed nationalized space (Rowe, 2009; 2). The Soviet position, much like that of its American counterpart, was framed in terms of its strategic military positioning, and thus priorities within the region were overwhelming viewed from a traditional security standpoint. The end of the Cold War era, however, brought new perspectives on the region- albeit slowly. The transitional phase from the Soviet Union to the Russian Federation severely impeded the government's ability to take a strong stance in the Arctic region. As a result, Russia's Northern policy during the 1990s can be described as 'haphazard', with a focus on addressing emergency measures to respond to economic and social crises in the region. As a result, the handling of Northern affairs was frequently changed between state departments and national committees. It was under former President Putin's direction that a comprehensive strategy for the North was addressed. Putin's initial approach to the North was based on the principles of market economics, in which the Russian North was identified for its potential of becoming a profitable region for the national economy. As a result, the Yamal-Nents and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrugs became the focus of

intense resource development.⁶⁶ Simultaneously, the Russian North was characterized politically through a recentralization of state power. Whereas the immediate post-Soviet era saw increased power devolution from the central authorities to regional governments, and thus increased regional responsibility over natural resource development, the early 2000s were marked by a reaffirmation of central authority in the North. As such, resource based economics became a primary focus of the state government, in which responsibility over sub-surface energy and mineral development was assumed by the federal government because of the important value the resources had for the entire country (Rowe, 2009; 3-7).

Throughout this period shifts in Russia's positioning started to be seen at the international level. As work by Lomagin in *Russia's Perception of the Arctic* has shown, following the brief down period following the Cold War, the Arctic once again reemerged as a priority area for Russian politicians. This process began in earnest with the 2001 *Russian Maritime Doctrine*, in which four pivotal points were identified as related to economic and military interests (Lomagin, 2008; 1-2): the first centred on free access of navigation for the Russian commercial fleet in the Atlantic; the second was to open up the resource base within Russia's exclusive economic zone, and beyond its continental shelf; thirdly the Doctrine prioritized the strategic role of the Russian Northern Fleet in providing national security; and finally, the idea of the Northern Sea Route improving sustainable development in the region. Lomagin notes that at the time, the 2001 Doctrine was ignored due to Russia's financial deficit incurred during the late 1990s. However, over the course of the next six years, Russia would expand its presence in the region and become a larger player globally. Thus the 2007 flag planting expedition culminated in Russia re-entering the Arctic as a major player, beyond simple symbolic value. As stated in Lomagin's article, terms referencing Russia's power became commonplace, like "Russia exerts substantial influence on the formation of the new architecture of international relations" and "the new Russia, standing on the firm ground of national interests, has taken a valid place in global affairs" (Lomagin, 4; 2008). Russia's fundamental interests in the

⁶⁶ In her book, Rowe discerns how attention was placed on certain regions and not others, thus creating a divide between the 'profitable North' and the 'unprofitable North' (Rowe, 2009: 3-4).

region's resources have guided this process, in which much of its political leverage is founded on the country's resource rich wealth.

At the same time, Russia has been a central piece of the puzzle in the internalization of the Arctic region. The embrace of the Government of Russia in the post-1987 period to forums like the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and the Council of Baltic Sea States has been crucial for the existence of these organizations; it may be argued that Russian participation within these institutions has been the biggest factor in their creation and continued activity. As put by Stokke & Honneland, subsequent institution-based region building initiatives derived from Gorbachev's speech were all driven by the goal of incorporating Russia into a firm cooperative structure (Stokke & Honneland, 2007; 6). As such the government, along with its preconditions for participation, became a basic requirement for circumpolar collaboration; indeed, the excitement surrounding post-Cold War cooperation was conditional on Russia's willingness to participate. However, as a consequence of this fundamental interest for the Arctic states to engage with Russia, an interesting complex between states appears to have developed. As explained by Laine in *B/ordering North: Russia and the Balance of Northern Co-operation* (Laine, 2008; 5):

Already its mere physical size makes Russia a noteworthy player and its actions, or lack thereof, likely affect other countries as well. Accordingly, it is in the interest of these countries to try and influence the course of Russian development. The problem has been that in many of these policies and instruments Russia has been regarded as an object rather than a partner. Such an approach has harmed the potential of 'others' to actually influence Russia through international cooperation.

One such example showing the objectification of Russia as a partner can be seen in Holtsmark's *Towards cooperation or confrontation? Security in the High North*, in which the author offers an opinion for the way in which the NATO allied states of the Arctic⁶⁷ should engage in future region cooperation:

All decisions must be guided by a firm intent to avoid a return to the chess-board reasoning of the Cold War, which presupposed that only one winner would be left on the field. This will involve multiple balancing acts between demonstrations of Allied solidarity and preparedness and the danger that they

⁶⁷ In which there are five: Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and the United States.

may provoke destabilizing Russian counter-measures. The approach should be analytical rather than emotional. All steps should be calculated in terms of their long-term effect on High North security and stability, and they should be predictable and legitimate in terms of the Western countries' declared policy aims.

Perhaps as a result of these preconceived judgements of the Russian Federation, the level of participation from the government has been rather sporadic. As mentioned by Rowe, the economic downturn of the 1990s corresponded to inconsistent participation in the Arctic Council. Over time the level of commitment from the Government of Russia has grown; a connection that may be linked with the political development of the country, as well as the growing economic importance being placed on the North. However, as Rowe points out, Russia has not been an active agenda setter in pan-Arctic forums, instead promoting 'low politics' cooperation. As she describes, the absence of issues relating to 'high politics' has meant the 'safest zone' of cooperation has been pursued. Rowe presents two interesting arguments; the first on the problematic position of environmental cooperation transcending its original 'low politics' classification, and the second on the possible reason for a detached Russian engagement (Rowe, 2009; 6-7):

Russian representatives to these forums abstemiously avoid issues that may seem to be of greater strategic (security, foreign policy, economic) importance. Problematically for Arctic cooperation, it seems that environmental problems, once the mainstay of much of this cooperation, are now being reclassified as strategic and are therefore less open for cross-border cooperation now than in the 1990s. Other reasons for the rather low-key Russian engagement overall may be that these Arctic multilateral settings are not seen as prestigious forums in which Russian national interest should be pursued.

Whether or not Russia's actions in Arctic regional forum are based on the integrity of the institutions themselves does not present a counter-argument to the government having vested interests within the region. In fact, the focus on the region has increasingly been a part of Russian domestic and foreign policy discourse since Putin's second presidential term (Zysk, 2009; 7). Zysk recognizes a range of different approaches that have characterized Russia's position within the Arctic, identifying the first as a 'confrontational and phobic' mentality that inhibits regional trust towards its Arctic neighbours. Such mistrust can be linked to the old patterns of Cold War politics, in which

security was the dominant narrative. As Zysk points out, the view of the United States and NATO being a real threat to Russian hegemony is still felt within certain factions of Russian leadership; on such example comes from Secretary of the Russian Security Council Nikolai Patrushev, who in reference to an Arctic ‘race for resources’, proclaimed in 2008 that, “if we do not take action now, we will lose precious time, and later in the future it will be simply too late- they will drive us away from here” (Zysk, 2009; 8). Russia holds similar scepticism over the intentions of the Svalbard archipelago. According to Zysk in *Russian Military Power and the Arctic*, reaction from within the government on Norway’s Svalbard policy has been seen exclusionary to Russia; as such, it has prompted certain members of Russian leadership, including the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma’s Committee on Foreign Affairs Yulii Kvitsinskii, to draw parallels between Norway’s position and its membership to NATO. Clearly the examples shown by Laine and Zysk show an institutional distrust between Russia and its Arctic neighbours. As a consequence of this, there are obvious limitations and hurdles for how regional discourse is pursued in the Arctic. Due to this precaution, it seems that the institutional strength of these partnerships will, for the time being, remain impaired.

Taking this into account, it appears logical that Russia’s strategy for cooperation would be fixated on the international legal regime. This would mean a favouring towards binding law and treaties over the loose framework of institutional cooperation characteristic of the Arctic region building. One such argument against ‘soft’ political engagement is that it does not provide the diplomatic security, and the predictability for state actions, which international law demands. As a result, Moscow has been more eager to establish its cooperative interests through the pragmatic promotion of the international legal regime. Such an assessment can be found within several policies and statements released by the government, in which the honouring of Russia’s international commitments are clearly linked its obligations under international law. One example comes from the *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* (2008) which states (Medvedev, 2008; 10): “Russia consistently supports the strengthening of the legal basis of international relations and complies with its international legal obligations in good faith...the rule of law is intended to ensure a peaceful and fruitful cooperation among States while maintaining the balance of their often conflicting interests as well as

safeguarding the interests of the world community as a whole”. Within an Arctic context, a continual reference and regard to the Law of the Sea has been used as a way of calming an increasing cynicism towards Russia’s actions in the Arctic Ocean. The Ilulissat Declaration’s mention of the coastal states’ commitment towards the legal framework had extra meaning for Russia.

As can be summarized up to this point, the Arctic has long held a special place for the Government of Russia, though this ‘place’ has changed over the course of the Soviet era until now. What can also be assumed is that rather than remaining a military bastion, the ensuing period of peace and cooperation in the post- Cold War Arctic era has meant less emphasis towards nuclear proliferation, and more energy towards new initiatives, like international cooperation. Such a brief analysis would seem to say that in this new period of peace and stability, the need for military security has been replaced with international cooperation. However, as demonstrated in the previous discussion, there are rather large limitations to the extent in which international cooperation has engaged Russia. Furthermore, what have yet to be explored are the guiding interests that motivate the Government of Russia’s activity in the North. Penkova defines three reasons for Russia’s resurgent interest in the Arctic (Penkova; Source):

- Energy: The Russian North is believed to be the resource engine for the future of the country, and thus a primary economic and political priority for Moscow. According to US Geological Survey’s 2008 results, 60% of the natural gas reserves in the Arctic were found within Russia. Further, the country’s Ministry of Natural Resources estimates that the Russian North holds up to 25% of the world’s remaining hydrocarbon resources.⁶⁸ Despite the obvious economic value the region holds, the extent to which these resources can be exploited remains to be seen. A lack of infrastructure, industrial equipment and technological capacity within Russia may severely impede the ability for the national government to develop the resources independently, while it remains to be seen to what extent the government will rely on private sector and international collaboration;
- Northern Sea Route: the route between the North Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean along the Russian Siberian coast holds immense potential to become a global transport corridor. In addition to greatly reducing the distance travelled for commercial vessels, the route may also serve national interests by increasing

⁶⁸ It should be mentioned that these figures represent rough estimates, as the extent of the resources remains unknown.

international trade and economic development. In order to become a feasible option, the surface infrastructure along the coast, environmental safeguards for ships, and a transport tax system needs to be developed. The February 2009 bill from the State Duma permitting national inspectors to have the authority to board and expel ships that do not meet Russian standards is a recent example of the government filling these jurisdictional gaps;⁶⁹

- Strategic location: Finally, the Arctic Ocean as a strategic location for national security remains a predominate interest for the Russian Federation. Penkova argues that its interests in maximizing the extent of navigation for its Northern Fleet and nuclear submarines motivates Russia's claim to the International Seabed Authority. The delimitation of the ocean floor has carried special value in Russia. Though its original claim was submitted to the International Seabed Authority in 2001, and the revised version is due in 2011, it remains to be seen what kind of reaction an unfavourable outcome will produce.

The first point on energy is particularly crucial on understandings the extent of Russia's investment in the Arctic region. As much as 90% of natural gas, 90% of nickel, and 60% of copper within Russia comes from the Arctic. Region-wide, its numbers are also disproportionately higher than their other circumpolar countries.⁷⁰ As pointed out by Vasiliev, the 'key task' of the government is to turn the Arctic into Russia's resource base for the twenty-first century, as a source of reliable protection for its national interests. In order to do so, he points to three "concrete tasks" (Vasiliev, 1; 2008): the establishment of a legal, regulatory framework for Russian activities in the Arctic by finalizing and adopting federal laws on the Russian Arctic zone's border; secondly, reducing the gap in development between Russia and the Nordic regions; and three, resolving the region's environmental problems, including the implementation of agreements at international forums. Vasiliev's three-step process identifies the need to follow international norms on environmental protection, rather than pursuing development independent of any restraints; a perspective that follows in line with Russia's continued support for its international legal commitments.

⁶⁹ The bill has been met with criticism internationally for its violation of the principle of freedom of the seas.

⁷⁰ Duhaime, Gerard (2004). "Economic Systems". Arctic Human Development Report. Stefansson Arctic Institute. Akureyri; Iceland.

However it is Penkova's final point which provides a bridge for a discussion that is often made in association with Russia- that of security. Research by Heininen has found that in the immediate post-Cold War period, northern armed forces remained large in number, despite a substantially reduced role. A considerable amount of nuclear naval and aircraft assets were also overlooked, creating an environmental hazard in areas where they were left to decay. Combined with the neglect of large-scale infrastructure projects like military bases, distant warning radar stations, and the large-scale toxic dumping which occurred throughout the Cold War in the Barents Sea, the natural environment suffered from this period of demilitarization, prompting major international concern (Heininen, 2010; 235-242). It appears, however, that militarization is once again on the rise in Russia. With the resurgence of the economy, and in consideration of the opportunities brought about by climate change, the Government of Russia is now rebuilding its northern military capabilities. The executive leadership in Russia has placed the rebuilding of Russia's military forces in the North as a top national priority. This is demonstrated by the commencement in 2008 to bring surface operations in northern waters. Likewise, the Russian Air Force has also resumed its Arctic patrols, through exercises by TU 95 Bear and TU 160 bombers. The government has also stated its intention to rebuild the navy, and have already invested in a new large-scale nuclear icebreaker to support this claim (Huebert, 2008; 10-11). As a result, the Kola Peninsula and its adjacent waters continue to have strategic importance on the military security of Russia, in which large reserves of nuclear submarines remain operative, thus concluding that nuclear weaponry is once again an important investment for the Government of Russia. As put by Zysk (Zysk, 2008; 80):

The nuclear deterrent remains not only a key element of Russian security policy and its military strategy, but serves also as a symbol and guarantee of Russia's great power status. Maintaining nuclear capabilities has, therefore, been given the highest priority in modernising Russian defence.

There are two final points which need to be made concerning this topic: the first is that unlike the period of the 1990s, the Government of Russia now has the financial capability to invest in its military capabilities. The fact that they are doing so is reflective of the political will from the government to bolster its capabilities; it would seem, therefore that the benefits clearly outweigh the costs. Secondly, military security is no longer only

justified as a means of creating or deterring armed conflict with another state. Instead, there are economic interests that are also validating military capacity. That is, the remilitarisation of the Russian Arctic has coincided with the increased regional and international attention being placed on energy resources in the region. One conclusion would be that the outstanding jurisdictional claims in the Arctic and the resource wealth that they hold would indicate a level of instability in the region that necessitates military intervention. This of course, might present an exaggerated scenario, in which the obvious ‘opponents’ to the Russian Federation would be its littoral neighbours, with whom they share a stable post-Cold War history. The case does, however, illustrate the synergies between energy and security; as such, it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate elements of traditional security with that of energy- thus provoking the concept of energy security.⁷¹

The degree to which traditional security, energy and the environment are interconnected may be further explained by looking at the September 2008 *Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond*. In doing so, it is possible to see the main interests of the Government of Russia in the Arctic, as well as consider the emphasis placed on both security and international cooperation.

4.5.1 Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond

A number of publications released by the State Duma leading up to the September 18 2008 release of *Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond* offer important considerations to how and why Russia’s Arctic Policy was developed.⁷² The first is the *Russian Maritime Doctrine of*

⁷¹ Lomagin points out the newness of the term ‘energy resources’ within Russia, mentioning that eight years ago, “the use of energy for leverage to resolve foreign policy problems was not mentioned at all”. Despite its newness, it has been linked to matters of military security as early as 2001 (Lomagin, 2008; 4).

⁷² The summarized strategy below has been paraphrased to from its original version. For the original see: Medvedev, Dmitry (2008).

2001 which had four broad objectives: first, guaranteeing free access to the Atlantic for Russian commercial fleets; second, access to natural resources within the EEZ; thirdly, the strategic importance of security for Russia's Northern Fleet; fourthly, the importance of the Northern Sea Route for the sustainable economic development of the State. A second document is the *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, which was approved in July 2008 and re-introduces Russia as an energy superpower. The concept carries more than just symbolic weight since it also stipulates the exact importance of the Arctic and its resources to fulfilling Russia's future economic plans, as well as the need for linking energy security with traditional forms of security. Though released following the September 2008, a third document also carries weight in understanding alternative perspectives to Russia's Arctic Policy, *Russia's National Security Strategy to 2020*. The strategy, which was released on May 2009, has a much stronger conciliatory tone when compared to its previous versions. It also greatly expands the traditional concepts of security to include aspects of human and environmental security, and reaches into new ground by emphasizing Russia's continued commitment towards international law.

That being said, Russia's 2008 Arctic Strategy can be seen as a culmination of each of these documents, in which the North provides a local example of the types of priorities that are promoted by Russia globally. The text itself begins by clarifying the geographical scope of the Arctic region as defined by the government. Russia's Arctic is therefore limited to Russia, Norway, the United States, Canada and Denmark by virtue of Greenland. The document then outlines the basic interests (Part 2) of the Russian Federation in the Arctic as being:

- Use of the Arctic as a strategic resource base providing solutions to problems related to social and economic development;
- Maintaining the region's peace and cooperation;
- Preserving the unique ecological system;
- Use of the Northern Sea Route as a means for increased transportation and communication.

The document further clarifies that the implementation for the basic interests will be carried out through "institutions of the state power together with institutions of the civil

society in strict conformity with the legislation of the Russian Federation and its international treaties”. The basic objectives (Part 3) of its Arctic territories are defined in congruence to its interests, including:⁷³

- Expansion of the resource base to meet the requirements of Russia’s hydrocarbon resources, biological resources and strategic raw material to improve the social and economic development of the country;
- Maintenance of a favourable military, security, and defence regime for security purposes including the potential for military mobilization of Armed Forces in the region;
- Preservation and maintenance of the Arctic environment and aim for minimal impact on ecological surroundings in region’s with economic activity;
- Continued participation in bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Arctic states on the basis of international treaties and agreements to which Russia is a party.

Also relevant to these objectives are some of the stated strategic priorities of the policy, including:

- Legal enlargement of Russia’s outer maritime areas through active interaction with the Arctic States on the delimitation of the Arctic Ocean using international law and mutual arrangements on the basis for its claims;
- Strengthening of bilateral relationships within the framework of regional organizations, including the Arctic Council and Barents/Euro Arctic Regional Council, maximizing the potential for economic, scientific and cultural interactions as well as improved cooperation in the fields of natural resource management and environmental preservation;
- Assistance in the organization, management and effective use of new transportation routes in the Arctic, including the Northern Sea Route for international navigation, according to international treaties;
- Active contributions to international Arctic forums, including the inter-parliamentary initiatives through the Russia-EU partnerships;
- Delimitation of maritime spaces in the Arctic Ocean and maintenance of a mutually advantageous presence of Russia in the Spitsbergen archipelago.

⁷³ It should be noted that the ‘basic objectives’ and ‘strategic priorities’ identified are not representative of the entire list, only if those in connection to the indicators used in this study. Other objectives and priorities highlighted in the document are in reference to technology, indigenous peoples, and modernization of infrastructure.

Part 4 of the document contains the actual procedures for fulfilling the above listed objectives and priorities.

- In relation to social and economic development, the policy calls for improved technological capabilities for resource extraction projects, as well as improved transportation, coast guard services, and a strengthened military fleet capable of the Arctic Ocean environment;
- In terms of its concentration on military, security and defence, the policy prescribes the creation of a special division of Armed Forces capable of Arctic conditions, in the case of various political and military situations. It also optimizes its level of control over the Arctic through advanced boundary control, improvements to surveillance techniques of its maritime areas and greater patrolling of trade;
- The text also notes environmental security as requiring governmental legislation towards the preservation of the biological diversity of the Arctic flora and fauna, in consideration of economic activity and the influences of global climate change. Furthermore, the text indicates new wildlife management regimes, improving the monitoring of pollution, and the restoration of the natural environment.

Parts 5 and 6 refer to the basic mechanisms for implementation and the timeline for the policy's realization. In terms of implementation, the text addresses the need to engage all levels of government, civil society, as well as the private sector in order to achieve the stated goals. The timeline is broken down into three phases, occurring from 2008 to 2020, in which the realization of the goals begins with basic priorities (such as technological and infrastructure advancements) and concludes with project implementation (such as full exploration and exploitation of onshore and offshore resource activity). The concluding sentence offers insight into the fundamental aim of the entire strategy, solidifying Russia's position with the region, and indeed globally:

As a whole, in the intermediate term, the realization of the state policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic will allow Russia to maintain the role of a leading Arctic power. Further, it is necessary, to carry out a complex construction of competitive advantages of the Arctic region in the Russian Federation with a view of strengthening the position of Russia in the Arctic, the consolidation of international security, and the maintenance of the peace and stability in the Arctic region.

Clearly, the Russian strategy not only contains many diverging elements, but also strong intentions. For example, the emphasis towards military security, through the increase of Armed Forces and a resurgent navy, indicates a strong relevance towards traditional

security; this example is accentuated when considering the need that the text places on maritime delimitation and resource development. Such a strategic objective would lead the reader to assume that unilateral activity had been prioritized over multilateral engagement. However, equally prevalent is the adherence to the principles of international law and the maintenance of the region's peace and stability; this commitment remains true through the text's reference to the 'legal enlargement' of the state. Furthermore, the application of the concept of security to priorities like energy and the environment indicate attention beyond its basic military notions. In conclusion, it would seem that there is tension between hard-line policy priorities and a genuine interest towards collaborative regional discourse. Such an assessment would be representative of the government's recent political history within the Arctic, in which the prioritization of the military has been met step-by-step with the government's continual reference and recognition of international law and regional cooperation. This presents a muddy picture for analysing Russia's intentions; though contrasting and comparing its priorities with those of its neighbours may provide some added insight.

4.6 The United States of America

Framing the geopolitical motivations of the United States of America is an arduous task simply because of the complex geographical makeup of the country itself. The United States is a global power, and is thus by virtue of being an Arctic state, a definite Arctic power.⁷⁴ However, the United States is also only an Arctic country through Alaska, a state geographically separated from the remainder of the union. As a consequence, it is difficult to conceive of American interests in the Arctic without framing them in terms of Alaska, or in relation to Alaska's relatively recent 'state'hood (1867). Indeed, when conceptualizing the United States as a whole, there are certain geographic, environmental, historical and cultural considerations that make Alaska stand out. That being said, when considering Alaska as an Arctic region it holds significant value; for

⁷⁴ This is confirmed, despite the fact that Young in *Arctic Politics: Conflict and Cooperation in the Circumpolar North* mentions that the US has never 'considered' itself an Arctic power.

example, in terms of population (est. 650,000), Gross Domestic Product (28,581 Millions of \$US-PPP in 2002), and geographic size (1516, 000 square kilometres) (Duhaime, 2004; 69-77). Alaska also shares similar characteristics to other Arctic regions, particularly in the value that its natural resources have at the national and international stage,⁷⁵ the dominance of the tertiary sector of the economy within the state, the high degrees of migration experienced throughout its history, and the continued presence and active participation of indigenous communities within the region (Bogoyavlensky & Siggner, 2004; 27-31).

Despite Alaska's rather apparent differences between other American states, the US Federal Government has retained a high level of control and influence over its political discourse. This is identified by Nicol who comments that, "the USA... treats its northern territories as an extension of the south, arguing that no state has the right to make policy, especially foreign policy, independent of the federal government context and in a sense there are limitations to the foreign policy cooperation interventions that Alaska can make as a state" (Nicol, 2006; 129). As a result Washington remains a major actor in Arctic agenda setting, in spite of the fact that the federal government remains geographically and politically alienated from the region. Further to this, rather than having a central department or agency oversee Arctic affairs, the decision-making process within the federal government is relegated to the State Department's Arctic Policy Group, comprised of agencies with Arctic interests and programs.⁷⁶ The Policy Group meets once a month to develop and implement policy related to the Arctic and coordinates the government's position on international Arctic issues (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

⁷⁵ Primarily resources found with the North Slope- Prudhoe Bay Area, which has the most extensive oil reserve in the United States at 213,543 acres or 25 billion barrels. The Prudhoe Bay oil reserve has been in use since 1977.

⁷⁶ Agencies identified as contributors to the daily operations of the United States' commitments to the Arctic Council are identified as being: Department of State. Many other agencies, including the Departments of Interior, Energy, Commerce (NOAA), Transportation (FAA), and Homeland Security (Coast Guard), the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, and the Arctic Research Commission.

Clearly certain geopolitical trends in the Arctic are reflective of American antagonism towards the region. As has already been identified, the inability for the Arctic to take on matters concerning security within the Arctic Council was at the request of the United States government. It may also be argued that the limited extent to which the sustainable development mandate of the Council has been fulfilled is a result of American indifference towards its objectives. Such a position might be indicative of a government that lacks the political will for politicizing the Arctic region; as Nicol notes (Nicol, 2006; 131):

At the state level, American policy-makers are less inclined to make policies that promote a formal relationship with the Arctic Circle. The US approach to participating in the Arctic Council, for example, is driven by a number of specific issues, rather than by a sense of geographical regionalism... According to the official political rhetoric a true US Arctic policy 'emphasizes environmental protection, sustainable development, human health, and the role of indigenous people' but this emphasis is specific to US peoples and places, not Pan-Arctic indigenous organizations nor transnational issues above and beyond environment. Consequently, it would be fair to say that theoretically, the US position towards the circumpolar region remains traditional, in the sense that it is based upon a state-centred agenda in which security and national interests are emphasized, although with recognition of the broader context of globalization.

Nicol's comments are in relation to the common critique that the American government has failed to properly engage its sub-national and indigenous actors beyond state borders. Moreover, the author continues by adding that outside of environmental protection, as demonstrated through the United State's support of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (1991) and the establishment of the Arctic Council (1996), the two other greatest components to the federal government's Arctic policy have come from its commitments to scientific research and health. Such a position is defended by Griffiths, who notes that: "even back in the Clinton [Former President Bill Clinton] years, when the Arctic Council was being established, Washington stood out in its effort to circumscribe the mandate and capabilities of the new regional forum. One reason is that outside of the scientific community and the state of Alaska, there has really been no coalition for national, much less international, action in the Arctic" (Griffiths, 2009; 44). In relation to this point, Nicol concludes that the geographic perspective of the Arctic within American policy is neither regional nor Arctic, but instead limited to commitments within its own borders

and is thus lacking any sort of northern dimension towards its foreign policy (Nicol, 2006; 132).

As a result, it may be understood that the institutional participation from the Alaskan government in Arctic policy is also limited by its ability to transcend beyond traditional state governmental responsibilities. However, US Senator for Alaska Mark Begich's August 2009 legislative package offers some indication of Alaska becoming more involved in the political process. Begich's *Inuvikput Package* identifies seven different pieces of legislation, "designed to help Alaska and the nation adapt to new challenges and opportunities due to the diminishing polar ice pack".⁷⁷ The package is a political response to the possibility of an ice-free Arctic, with broad diplomatic, scientific and national security priorities, including (Begich, 2010):

- S. 1561 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Implementation Act: designed to ensure safe and reliable transportation in the Arctic, as well as to protect its waters. It requires boosting investment in marine infrastructure, and replacing outdated icebreaker capabilities and new operating bases for the national Coast Guard;
- S. 1563 Arctic Ambassador Act: enhanced diplomatic presence in regional Arctic forums, like the Arctic Council, through the creation of an Arctic ambassador position. The bill is intended to strengthen the United States' position with these forums and provide better advice to national service agencies;
- S. 1566 Arctic Climate Change Adaption Act: increased responsibility granted to the State of Alaska, the Alaska Native organizations, communities and the private sector to deal with climate change adaption and assistance in infrastructure restoration, renewable resource development and other economic opportunities.

Furthermore, Begich has been a major proponent of the movement for the United States to ratify the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea. As argued by the senator at the 3rd Symposium on the Impacts of an Ice-Diminishing Arctic on Naval and Maritime Operations in June 2009 (Begich, 2009; 4):

The most important single step we can take with the broadest implications for the future of the Arctic is ratification of the United Nations' Convention on

⁷⁷ It is to the knowledge of the author that the pieces of legislation (as of February 2010) are still being referred separately within Senate committees. No date on when the legislation will be reviewed in Congress has been identified.

the Law of the Sea... I recognize that some oppose the Law of the Sea treaty on philosophical grounds. But I do not agree with their fears that ratification represents a threat to national sovereignty. I think the greater threat is for our nation to be on the outside when other nations exert their sovereign authority in the Arctic. And since the Arctic is a maritime region and Freedom of the Seas is a top national priority, the United States must be able to assert a more active and influential presence to protect our Arctic interests.

Begich's recognition of the value in ratifying the Law of the Sea has been supported in several different ways. The Arctic Climate Change and Security Policy Conference, held at Dartmouth College in December 2008, prioritized the ratification of the Treaty for the United States and also concluded that the government should support and promote a stronger Arctic Council. The group identified that the United States should play a leading role in advocating for a permanent secretariat, and increased participation from non-Arctic state actors like China, the EU, and Japan (Yalowitz, et al., 2008; 1-5). Though not going as far, US Ambassador to Norway, Barry White, in his January 2010 speech at the Arctic Frontiers Conference in Norway, spoke of the United State's government intention to become more politically engaged within the Arctic Council. White's address clarified the government's priority to use all existing mechanisms to address current and future needs in the Arctic. The Ambassador referred to the American co-chairmanship of two recent task forces of the Arctic Council: a circumpolar search and rescue instrument for the Arctic Ocean, and an examination of the mitigation options for short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs) (White, 2010). Finally, a strengthening of the Arctic Council was also proposed by Secretary of State Clinton, who used the platform of the Antarctic Treaty-Arctic Council Joint Meeting held in Washing in April 2009, to promote a number of policy priorities for the Obama administration, including ratification of the Law of the Sea (Clinton, 2009; 1):

We need to increase our attention not only to the Antarctic but to the Arctic as well... this too provides an opportunity for nations to come together in the 21st century, as we did 50 years ago in the 20th century. We should be looking to strengthen peace and security, and support sustainable economic development, and protect the environment... the changes underway in the Arctic will have long-term impacts on our economic future, our energy future, and indeed, again, the future of our planet. So it is crucial that we work together. Here in Washington, the State Department coordinates Arctic policy for the United States, and I am committed to maintaining a high level engagement with out partners on

this. That starts with the Law of the Sea Convention, which President Obama and I are committed to ratifying, to give the United States and our partners the clarity we need to work together smoothly and effectively in the Arctic region.

The previous discussion provides an interesting argument for a number of priorities the government of the United States intends to pursue, including those associated with peace and security. However, what it fails to mention is the dominating narrative of traditional security that the government has historically prioritized in the Arctic region. As identified in the previous chapter, the United States has conceptualized physical space in the Arctic in terms of its strategic capability during the Cold War. Actions and reactions by the government were framed against those of the former Soviet Union, as the two superpowers jockeyed for technological advancements and the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Arctic Ocean. The construction of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line in the Canadian Arctic and invested constructions in NATO military bases in Iceland and Greenland provide added examples of utilizing the Arctic for classical geopolitical purposes. However, this preoccupation with military security in the North remains an important consideration today; military presence in the form of 26,000 troops are permanently stationed in the region, as well as three wings of fighter jets (approximately 22 aircrafts) and a number of surveillance aircrafts (Huebert, 2008; 10). Further, the government has been deliberating on investing in a new Arctic fleet. Such a position has been reinforced by the US Navy's Arctic Roadmap from October 2009, which conditions the need for a military strategy in recognition of the Arctic's environmental changes due to climate change. In it, the Roadmap admits "while the United States has stable relationships with other Arctic nations, the changing environment and competition for resources may contribute to increasing tension, or, conversely, provide opportunities for cooperative solutions" (Department of the Navy, 2009; 8). The Roadmap then calls on a number of processes to be implemented in order to give more recognition to the Navy to employ security services and strategic techniques. Such a position would support the notion that a fundamental priority of the United States, which remains relevant today, is the ability to navigate in international waters. As presented by Young, the United States: (Young, 1992; 235) "[who] exercises direct control over a relatively small segment of the Arctic, exhibits the interests of a superpower in maintaining freedom of access to all parts

of the region and in opposing Arctic developments that could prove detrimental to American interests in other parts of the world”.

In order to fully evaluate the emphasis placed on priorities concerning traditional concepts of security, with those intended on the United States becoming greater participatory partners in Arctic cooperation, it is necessary to analyse the primary themes as indicated in their 2009 *Arctic Region Policy*.

4.6.1 *Arctic Region Policy*

At the time, the release of the United State’s January 9, 2009 *Arctic Region Policy* seemed odd considering outgoing President Bush was only weeks away from finishing his terms.⁷⁸ This would appear extra peculiar since the Policy was a National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD)⁷⁹, an executive order issued by the President based on advice granted by the National Security Council. As a national security instrument, the policy carries ‘full force and terms of law’ only throughout a President’s terms, and is thus susceptible to change from administration to administration. However, as pointed out by Ambassador White, among other people, the interagency discussion that the document received over its two-year drafting period is regarded as bi-partisan and therefore universally accepted with the new administration and its agencies (White, 2010; 2).

The background of the text begins by reaffirming the United States’ presence within the region, by proclaiming “the United States is an Arctic nation”. The text continues with

⁷⁸ The summarized strategy below is paraphrased from the original document. Unless stated in quotes, the text has been condensed, though themes remain the same. See: Bush, George W. (2009).

⁷⁹ Over the course of the Bush Administration’s two terms, the President issued 54 such NSPDs.

Part A, which identifies eight themes⁸⁰ to guide policy development, in accordance with the United States' objectives to:

- Meet national security and homeland security needs relevant to the Arctic region;
- Protect the Arctic environment and conserve its biological resources;
- Ensure that natural resource management and economic development in the region are environmentally sustainable;
- Strengthen institutions for cooperation among the eight Arctic nations.

Part B⁸¹ of the policy prioritizes national defence, by confirming that the United States is “willing to cooperate or act unilaterally to safeguard its interests in the region”. These interests are defined as: the need for missile defence and an early warning system, as well as a strategic deterrence through increased maritime presence and security operations. The policy continues by reaffirming the government's position on the Northwest Passage and its recognition of the waterway as an international strait; in doing so, the policy also clarifies the government's stance on international navigation:

Freedom of the seas is a top national priority. The Northwest Passage is a strait used for international navigation, and the Northern Sea Route includes straits used for international navigation; the regime of transit passage applies to passage through those straits. Preserving the rights and duties relating to navigation and overflight in the Arctic region supports our ability to exercise these rights throughout the world, including through strategic straights.

Predictably, implementation of its security policy is carried out through the development of capabilities and capacity for protecting the United States' air, land, and sea borders in the Arctic, as well as the preservation of global mobility of military and civilian vessels throughout the Arctic. The implementation plan also stipulates the projection of a sovereign maritime presence in the Arctic, and the support for the peaceful resolution of disputes in the Arctic region.

⁸⁰ Again, only those in connection with foreign policy are included. As a point of reference, the other objective areas deal with indigenous groups, scientific knowledge and local economies.

⁸¹ National Security and Homeland Security Interests in the Arctic

Part C⁸² lists the involvement of the United States' government in international Arctic political forum. It recognizes the accomplishments of the Arctic Council in working within its limited mandate of environmental protection and sustainable development and goes so far as to promote a revived Council through the updating of its structure.⁸³ This section also promotes the ratification of the Law of the Sea by listing the advantageous of participation in fulfilling the United States' maritime interests, including the securing of its extended continental. In its implementation of these policies, the text identifies that the United States should continue to cooperate on Arctic issues through the United Nations and its agencies, including the UNFCCC. It also supports the development of "new or enhanced international arrangements for the Arctic to address issues likely to arise from expected increases in human activity in the region".

Part D⁸⁴ identifies that the most effective method for the United States to safeguard its offshore resources is through the ratification of the Law of the Sea. The text continues by again proclaiming its position in regard to a Canadian dispute, this time the Beaufort Sea: "The United States and Canada have an unresolved boundary in the Beaufort Sea. The United States policy recognizes a boundary in this area based on equidistance. The United States recognizes that the boundary area may contain oil, natural gas, and other resources". Thirdly, the text also encourages the ratification of the boundary treaty with Russia, concluded in 1990. Part F⁸⁵ prioritizes transportation in the region to facilitate safe, secure and reliable navigation, as well as to protect maritime commerce and protect the environment. The text stipulates the importance of a comprehensive infrastructure system to support shipping activities and standards, as well as search and rescue capabilities. The policy mentions the work of the International Maritime Organization as being an important strengthening body for measures related to safety and security, as well

⁸² International Governance

⁸³ The text affirms that: "It is the position of the United States that the Arctic Council should remain a high-level forum devoted to issues within its current mandate and not be transformed into a formal international organization, particularly one with assessed contributions. The United States is nevertheless open to updating the structure of the Council, including consolidation of, or making operational changes to, its subsidiary bodies, to the extent such changes can clearly improve the Council's work and are consistent with the general mandate of the Council".

⁸⁴ Extended Continental Shelf and Boundary Issues

⁸⁵ Maritime Transportation in the Arctic Region

as environmental protection. The policy notes the need to develop cooperative and regional measures to address increases in shipping in the Arctic region, as well as develop a waterways management scheme with international standards.

Parts G⁸⁶ and H⁸⁷ refer to the role of energy and environment in the Arctic region as having global consequences. In terms of energy, the policy regards the role of the Arctic region in meeting global demands. The policy stresses the United States' intention to make sure that resource development is conducted with best practices principles and through responsible stewardship. The policy refers to the role of the Arctic Council as providing sound advice on the climatic and environmental conditions for areas of economic activity. Though the text also refers to the need to consult and cooperate with Arctic neighbours on issues related to exploration and production, the policy writes of the need to "protect [the] United States' interests with respect to hydrocarbon reservoirs that may overlap boundaries". In terms of environmental protection, the policy stresses the importance of scientific data in providing advice for policy decisions. The policy calls for the support and application of the international fisheries management agreement (1995),⁸⁸ as well as a region-wide cooperation to respond to increased pollutants and environmental challenges.

Based on this assessment, it is clear that the United States has used a direct approach to convey its interests. After first making the primary objective of the policy to meet the national and homeland security needs of the Arctic, the willingness to operate independently to meet these needs demonstrates the military potential the government has to fulfil its objectives. Such an expression of military strength is reaffirmed in the text's reference to the top priority being the freedom of the seas. Further to this, the personal negation of Canada's position towards the Northwest Passage and the Beaufort Sea also demonstrates the United State's unwillingness to side step its fundamental issues of interest. Nonetheless, there are cooperative elements to the text that are surprising. The

⁸⁶ Economic Issues, Including Energy

⁸⁷ Environmental Protection and Conservation of Natural Resources

⁸⁸ The 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of December 10, 1982

proposal to reconsider the structure of the Arctic Council, albeit under the same mandate, demonstrates unprecedented interest in the organization. Secondly, the possibility of establishing cooperation based on increased human activity in the region supports the assembly for a parallel level of collaboration within the region, and may be in reference to the emergence of the Arctic Five. Though not necessarily surprising, the urgency for ratifying UNCLOS demonstrates an institutional approach in gaining support for the treaty. The balance drawn between unilateral and multilateral is perhaps best representative of the government's historic position in the Arctic; while there are elements dealing exclusively with improved cooperation, the underlying theme of military capability and national defence are indicative of power politics, and superpower behaviour. As a result, the policy would reinforce Washington's authority over Arctic affairs, as noted by Nicol. What remains to be seen is the extent to which American interests compare to the other coast states, and the degree to which its priorities are in congruence with those of its neighbours.

4.7 Concluding observations

Based on the previous cases, it is clear that each of the littoral states' strategies are dominated by national considerations, with elements of international obligation. This may seem obvious, granted that the reason for invoking a strategy is to create a framework to guide national governments in respect to their Arctic regions. However, there remains one relevant question to this discussion- what is the symbolic versus practical application of each? As shown, the states themselves have a vested interest in creating these documents as demonstrations of their sovereign duties. However, the extent to which these documents reveal real and honest intentions, rather than hollow promises, is debatable. The cases of Norway and Denmark suggest that their strategies provide foundations for significant changes. Norway, in particular, articulates a comprehensive set of priorities, with the ultimate objective of bringing the Arctic into its forefront. Such an objective not only requires government motivation as well as economic capital and human resources, but a robust strategy for implementation that targets a broad selection of issues and themes. That of Denmark's is similar in scope, but founded more on

clarifying internal responsibilities, rather than provoking considerable change. The division and devolution of responsibilities to the Government of Greenland is stated accurately in the preamble, and the ensuing text promotes these procedures.

The case of Canada presents some interesting findings. The strategy itself is less of a clear policy statement than it is a communication from the federal government on a renewed level of interest for the North. While the strategy does include provisions for projects and initiatives, the structure resembles more of a declaration of intent, than a policy roadmap. Furthermore, there appears to be a disconnect between how the government projects its interests internally and regionally, compared to how they are defined within the strategy. Needless to say, the reference to ‘Canada as an Arctic power’ is more prominent within rhetoric, than it is a feature of the directive. Russia’s strategy is illusive in the way in which it supports an expanded Arctic military and border security on the one hand, and in the other defends the rule of international law and the Arctic as a of peace and stability. These rather contradictory themes make it difficult to determine the underlying intentions of the strategy, and thus the government. However, at least for the time being, there is no reason to believe otherwise about Russia’s respect for its international obligations; within an Arctic context, this can be seen through its utilization of UNCLOS for determining the extent of its continental shelf legally. Finally, the United States’ strategy is predictable in the way in which it emphasizes the need to maintain American interests internationally. The document is realistic and clear in the attention that it places the Arctic region as a strategic energy source. It also does not hide the importance placed on the military objectives of the region. Neither does the document provide any real progressive policy for bringing the Arctic more into the American psyche; maintaining Washington’s dominant role within the region is its underlying objective.

Judging from this assessment, it is difficult to conceive of each of the strategies as being connected, or comparable- there are simply so many independent variables between the strategies that indicate more differences than similarities. As a result, it might be assumed that the only binding commonality is that of geography, rather than shared policy priorities or interests. However, up to this point, this analysis has only looked at the

strategies from above and not compared them from within. The following chapter will analyse how four aspects of foreign policy placed prominently within the strategies. The analysis will consider the conceptions within the theoretical framework and consider their applicability within the theories discussed. This assessment is based on the interconnectivity of the themes, the regional scope of their application and how they may illustrate potential for geopolitical change.

5. Analysis of the Arctic Strategies

Up to this point, this thesis has taken on several different directions. The theoretical base in Chapters 2 and 3 provided a framework that defended the role of states within the international system, presented how the system impacts the internal decisions of states, and provided introductions into geopolitical thought. At the same time, these chapters have also described the nature of Arctic politics, including the dynamic variation of actors and the trends/themes most prominent in the region's political history. It has also questioned the processes and influences of factors from outside of the region in presenting new challenges on circumpolar cooperation, as well as the unique positions and common concerns of the littoral states to engage in new forms of regional collaboration. Chapter 4 showed examples from within the states themselves on how interests are defined and expressed within the strategies. It concluded by suggesting a disconnect between policies, as indicated by the level of disparities between priorities and objectives.

What has yet to be conducted is an analysis of the dependant variables from across the strategies, thus showing commonalities of issues and differences in approaches. As seen from the strategy descriptions, a number of themes prevailed in relation to the focus towards foreign policy. It is the aim of this chapter to explore how elements of security, energy, environment and cooperation are addressed in the texts. As was shown earlier, it is these four elements that provide evidence and indications of geopolitical change in the Arctic because they represent the most pressing issues for states beyond their borders. Connections between analysis of the indicators will be drawn in the theoretical framework, as explored in earlier chapters. Thus the philosophies of neorealism, conceptual definitions of security, and schools of geopolitics are revisited and applied to these discussions.

5.1 Security

Based on the strategy summaries provided last chapter, the use of security was fairly obvious and frequent. This is particularly true when expanding the concept to include

issues related to sovereignty. In the cases of Denmark, Canada and Norway, sovereignty has taken on similar meanings traditionally associated with security. Such is evidenced through Canada's exercising sovereignty through maintaining a strong presence in the region by using the slogan, "putting [the government is] more boots on the Arctic tundra, more ships in the icy water, and a better eye in the sky" (Government of Canada, 2009). Norway uses a similar technique for describing its sovereign intentions, in which maintaining a strong presence and exercising sovereignty is accompanied by an enlargement of and greater exposure to the Armed Forces, national police and prosecuting authority operating in the region. Secondly, the usage of sovereignty is present in the Norwegian strategy's forward, where it is incorporated with exercises in cooperation and resource development (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006):

This is more than just foreign policy, and more than just domestic policy. It is a question of our ability to continue our tradition of responsible management of resources, predictable exercise of sovereignty and close cooperation with our neighbours, partners and allies. But it is also a question of a broad, long-term mobilisation of our own strengths and resources in the development of the entire northern part of our country.

Much has already been discussed in previous chapters about the conceptual merging between sovereignty and security. Texts by Huebert (2009) have drawn parallels between sovereign challenges and security threats, in which enforcement of the former is necessary for avoiding the latter. Based on the examples used from the strategies, it would seem that Huebert has over exaggerated this claim. The Norwegian quote's employment of sovereignty in connection with 'close cooperation' is one such example. A second is from Canada where reference to sovereignty is connected to text downplaying the severity of its territorial and maritime disputes; "all of these disagreements are well-managed and pose no sovereignty or defence challenges for Canada. In fact, they have no ability to impact on Canada's ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively" (Government of Canada, 2009). The danger in viewing Huebert's 'Arctic as battleground' perspective is that it promotes unilateral action, and thus political disengagement from states. In such a scenario, political disengagement has the affect of undermining institutional cooperation. As such, if sovereignty challenges necessitated military reaction in the Arctic Ocean, the region

would be in a constant state of confrontation and stand-offs, with political engagement severely restricted. Instead, sovereignty as a concept has become increasingly associated with security, but in a way that does not *command* traditional security's 'hard-line' approach. It therefore symbolizes strength but in a way that is better related to defence, rather than military aggression. Sovereignty in the case of Denmark is holistic in its application. In fact, the use of sovereignty involves more than just policing, it epitomizes the relationship and agreements between the Kingdom of Denmark and Greenland. The sharing of sovereignty, thus jurisdictional responsibilities, between the governments does not exclude military connotations but it does use sovereignty at its most basic concept—the exercise of governance over a region. Therefore, devolution practices from Denmark to Greenland are seen as fundamental acts of sovereignty, and recognition from the Kingdom of Denmark on Greenland's right to self-determination.

In contrast, strategies from the United States and Russia describe more traditional forms of security, with greater emphasis placed on capability and utilization. This is perhaps most evident within the *US Arctic Policy* that identifies its first policy objective as: “[to] meet national security and homeland security needs relevant to the Arctic region”(Bush, 2009). Furthermore, the identification of military techniques such as missile defence, strategic deterrence and early warning systems suggests capabilities that go beyond normative practices of policing and patrolling. The US's interest in preserving freedom of the seas is also linked to its security objective, in which global mobility of US military vessels is an important measure for strategic deployment. Across the pole, the Russian strategy identifies similar objectives related to maintaining military security for defensive and border control purposes. The establishment of an Arctic military flank, “capable to provide military security under various conditions of military-political situations”, and references to future threats and challenges in seas and on land for the Russian Federation in the Arctic casts a shadow of insecurity on the government, in which military mobilization is a possible outcome.

The usage of security from the United States and Russia is aligned with theories of realist and neorealist thought. In applying Waltz's (1979) philosophies, state behaviour can be explained through the international system, in which the power of pressure from

international competition limits and constrains their action. The international system, defined as an anarchical environment lacking a central ‘enforcer’, is seen as the primary determinant impacting the domestic decision of states. Thus, internal policies of states are held at less value than considerations of the state’s positioning within the international structure. State behaviour may also be explained by opportunity, in which the possibility for states to gain and exercise power within the structure motivates domestic decision-making and strategy formation. Applying Waltz’s arguments within the context of current Arctic security seems rather old-fashioned, given the author’s examples for explaining his theories through ‘high-politics’ scenarios. However, there remains relevancy in the way in which it describes how states view their military capabilities in terms of security and sovereignty. The capacity for Russia and the United States to frame their strategic priorities based on military capability is a reflection of their dominance within the region’s political system. Furthermore, their references to conditional unilateral action would also support this claim; the ability to act independently and to safeguard national interests is a reflection of the extent of their military capabilities. On the other hand, the use of sovereignty from the ‘middle-power’ states showcases the relative influence these states have as players within the same system. Their military positioning is constrained to domestic considerations, and as a result, are each invested in region-building as a way of providing peace and stability.

In terms of Arctic geopolitics, the reliance on traditional security illustrates the continued relevancy of classical geopolitics in the region. As shown during the Cold War, the dominant narrative in the Arctic for much of the twentieth century was on traditional concepts of security. Despite the trend of cooperation that emerged in the post-Cold War era, states continue to have a vested interest in using the region as a space for military activity- examples from each of the strategies prove this. As a result, the elements of classical geopolitical foundations are still relevant: the spatiality of geography, technological advancements and the deployment of weaponry and military troops may be less prominent today than they were thirty years ago, but are nonetheless important priority points for the littoral states. One example used in Chapter 3 was Mackinder’s Heartland theory, which identified the importance of the natural environment on classical geopolitics. Put in a modern Arctic context, economic value in the region’s vast natural

resources has increased outside attention on the region, and provoked tensions from the coastal states. This is evident by the increasing association and interplay between security activities and resource development. As demonstrated by the strategies of Norway, Denmark, the United States and Russia, governments are justifying the need for increased military presence to safeguard resource development projects, thus showing the connection between energy and security. A further discussion of this can be found below.

At this point in the analysis it would seem that from the example of security/sovereignty, the strategies seem to reflect a theoretical framework based on aspects of realist thinking and classical geopolitics. As such, the priority placed on increasing military presence and, in some cases, enlarging existing capabilities, highlights a growing period of regional fragmentation, based on national security. This action may be rationalized by Waltz's neorealist argument that the anarchic international environment demands states to prioritize its security needs over other obligations. The increasing pressures from influences outside of the region, primarily that of globalization and climate change, have increased the tension within this environment, forcing states to recalculate their interests based on needs and demands. However, it would be a limitation of the research to begin to draw conclusions of geopolitical change based on a discussion of this one indicator. What is equally important is to consider the ways in which other factors either serve to defend this argument, or present news perspectives.

5.2 Energy

From a practical point of view, it is difficult to think of energy as a policy priority without also taking into consideration its association to transportation; an increase in energy development in the Arctic will surely put added stress and importance on a transportation sector as a reliable and safe part of the development's infrastructure. As a foreign policy concept, transportation does carry its own principles, particularly in the Arctic where the opening of new transportation routes is predicted to have a global impact on transcontinental shipping. However, even in this case, these potential routes are expected to provide the major lines of connection between Arctic resource

development projects and the international trade of these resources. Therefore, rather than seeing them as two independent variables, the following discussion considers both as serving the main end goal- that of resource development.

As was shown in Chapter 3, the Arctic is a resource rich region that holds vast quantities of the world's remaining oil and natural gas reserves. Despite the lingering geographic and climatic dangers involved, access to these deposits has become increasingly possible due to technological developments in the industry. Climate change and reductions in sea ice have also played important roles in how states and private companies invest in the region. The global scarcity of resources is a third process contributing to international interest in the Arctic. As put by Heininen (2010), resource scarcity has the potential to be either a source of conflict for states, or a platform for interstate cooperation. In terms of conflict, competition over the unaccounted resources has already begun driving the industry northward, where jurisdictional lines have yet to be resolved. There is potential that the combination of jurisdictional ambiguity coupled with rising oil and gas prices could escalate to confrontation between actors (state and non-state) both from within and outside of the Arctic region. Economic interests, likely escalated from global pressure to feed a hungry market, would drive such a scenario. Alternatively, the scarcity of resources may also have the opposite effect of bringing states together. Though technological advancements have made it progressively more realistic for actors to pursue projects independently, the overhead costs and lack of capacity may have the desired effect of promoting partnerships, as what seems to be the case with Russia's Shtokman field.

Whether confrontational or cooperative, energy security will remain an important element to the Arctic's resource development. The need to protect resources from possible outside hostility is one justification for attaching security capabilities to energy development. Similarly, the capacity to deal with possible environmental catastrophes is another important element for military intervention in Northern economic development. Finally, the opening of new transportation routes demands a greater policing presence to regulate activity, as well as enforce maritime codes and safe practices. How then is energy mentioned in the strategies and how are these related to geopolitical theories?

Russia is the greatest stakeholder in energy development in the Arctic simply because of the resource wealth within its boundaries (Duhaime, 2004; 44). As such, its strategy articulates the government's basic interest of using its Arctic zone as a strategic resource base. The importance placed on its hydrocarbon development is linked with the country's social and economic development. In terms of its emphasis on cooperation, the strategy identifies a policy priority on the strengthening of bilateral relationships to facilitate effective natural resource management, but not necessarily joint project development. Norway, the natural partner to Russia for projects in the Barents Sea, also identifies petroleum development as a main priority for the future of economic growth in its northern region. The Norwegian approach is based on a framework of 'systematic' and 'methodological' development with strict environmental standards and licensing guidelines. The text itself identifies a desire to partner with Russia on resource development projects in the Barents, and recommends that an economic and industrial zone of cooperation be established to "promote onshore cooperation relating to offshore petroleum activity" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

The United States takes a more pragmatic approach to its energy policy, in which the ability for it to exercise its rights over offshore resources requires that it can legally claim an extension of its continental shelf. Energy security is referenced as being critical to its national interests.⁸⁹ Denmark, on the other hand, also relates its expectations for increased resource activity to the growth of other governmental sectors. The text goes on to describe that: "resource extraction is therefore imperative to a sustainable economy through which Greenland will grow" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008). From a Greenlandic perspective, the responsibility over natural resources becomes a fundamental priority for regional economic development; while Denmark too has a vested interest in this development through their 2009 Self-Rule Agreement (Petersen, 2009).

In terms of how the strategies address questions related to transportation, both the United States and Norway reference the responsibility of the state to ensure high standards are

⁸⁹ This could be taken as a possible reference to the importance of the Prudhoe Bay gas fields on its national energy supply.

met for maritime safety; Norway emphasizes search and rescue services and oil spill response, while the United States acknowledges the need for environmental considerations in improved maritime commerce. Conversely, Russia and Canada share similar opportunities and challenges in relation to being key stakeholders in the future of Arctic maritime navigation. Russia outwardly expresses its intention of making the Northern Sea Route a national line of transport communication, and proposes that by 2020 the development of sufficient infrastructure will facilitate the opening up of major Euro-Asian trade. Rather than engaging its strategy in the legal dispute over the Northwest Passage, the Canadian government limits its priorities to the NordREG reporting scheme.

Based on this assessment of the strategies, there is surprisingly little reference to matters dealing with energy security within the documents themselves. Instead, it is necessary for the reader to make connections between maritime military policies and that of resource development. Though the strategies work on the assumption that resource development will be a major cornerstone of future Arctic activity, there is little evidence that this development would either facilitate greater cooperation or then lead to possible confrontations, even when calculating the military policies defined last section. In terms of collaboration, Norway is the only state that uses its strategy as a platform for engaging in regional development of energy projects. Russia's intention of using its resources is clear, so too is its target of having its resource base and Northern Sea Route become foundations for national economic prosperity. Yet, there is no statement that suggests that a 'race for resources' in the Arctic is imminent, nor that disputes in the Arctic Ocean would sacrifice the regional cooperative framework. In fact, the views of the United States and Norway on the need for regional shipping guidelines, followed by the Arctic Council's Arctic Marine and Shipping Assessment released in 2009, seems to suggest that the security element is based more on Norway's view of "predictability and stability" than it is on resource protection. As a result, it is quite difficult to attribute the littoral states' position to either realist thought or classical geopolitics. A realist argumentation on energy in the Arctic would be founded on the aggressive instinct of states to maximise their claims to resources; classical geopolitics would follow a similar path, based on Grygiel's (2006) theory that geopolitics is a variable that explains changes in geographic

distribution routes and economic/natural resources. According to this statement, the coastal states' behaviour would be predictably confrontational since these resources symbolize power and influence.

Yet, these strategies demonstrate constraint, both in language and policy priorities. One explanation for this comes from the natural environment itself. The unique characteristics of the Arctic make it inherently difficult, costly and dangerous to exploit offshore oil resources. Greater dependency is therefore placed on technology, in which the ability to access deposits requires technological advancements that remain under development. Taking these factors into consideration, the opportunity to act independently remains slim. What is instead more demonstrative from these policies is a mutual benefit scenario, where the capacity to act multilaterally is the only feasible alternative for states to develop its resources- at least at this time.

5.3 Environment

Like that of energy, the environment is also increasingly being connected to concepts of security. A key component of Heininen's work (2004, 2008, 2010) on comprehensive security is the important consideration the author places on the environment. Environmental security emerged in the post-Cold War era in response to questions surrounding nuclear safety. Rather than viewing nuclear weapons purely in terms of products of traditional security, the concept of environmental security was employed as a way to draw parallels between warfare, environmental protection, as well as human health. In its beginnings, northern citizens, regional authorities, and non-governmental organizations championed environmental security as a way of entering into dialogues related to traditional security (Heininen, 2010; 230). In this way, environmental security might be seen as an opposing reaction towards military security for failing to take into consideration the impacts on natural ecosystems. On a broader level, environmental security is also linked to global climate change. Global warming in the Arctic has brought about increased challenges for human communities living within a changing natural environment. Nationally, changes in Arctic Ocean sea-ice create opportunities in

economic and transport development, as well as security demands on the part of governments for exercising increased authority. Changes on land in the Arctic, in the form of melting permafrost, have impaired infrastructure and construction projects, particularly in Northern Canada and Russia. Uncharacteristic climatic shifts have also impacted maritime transportation and the ability to forecast predictable weather flows. Taking these factors in consideration, the state of the environment can longer be seen as separate to that of traditional forms of security because environmental considerations are imminent within how security strategies are formed.

What makes environmental security particularly unique, however, is its transnational character. Environmental impacts from one country have effects that go beyond borders, and thus necessitate interstate relations (Broms, 1994; 9). What this emphasizes is that environmental security is inherently cooperative. The case of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, as well as the Arctic Council, provides case studies illustrating past efforts in the Arctic to deal with environmental security at the circumpolar level. The Barents Euro-Arctic Region highlights a similar regional initiative towards promoting a security discourse based on environmental considerations. Taking this into account, it would make sense that states would promote this interdependency through their Arctic strategies- and, for the most part, they do. Norway offers the most robust foreign policy in relation to environmental cooperation, through its political priority of becoming “the best steward” of the environment and natural resources in the High North (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). The Norwegian strategy takes on an ambitious agenda for environmental engagement, by promoting the sustainable use of resources, strict environmental standards and strengthening international cooperation to limit the effects of climate change. Bilaterally, Norway “considers it important to take an international approach to nuclear safety problems in Northwest Russia” (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). Russia and the United States also favour this cooperative positioning. Russia supports a strengthened multilateral basis within the framework of regional organizations to effectively administer its natural resource management while the United States claims that international cooperation is needed to handle environmental challenges. These types of promises demonstrate critical and new geopolitics, in which global flows and the prominence of non-state actors within environmental cooperative

regimes have effectively challenged the ability and interest for states to properly address questions related to environmental protection and human health; the pursuit of power and influence simply does not factor in environmental considerations. What the strategies also indicate is the strength of the environmental cooperative regime in the Arctic, in which discussions of environment may promote more comprehensive dialogue in other areas.

5.4 Cooperation

Like that of security, the concept of cooperation is broad and may be applied in many different ways. Rather than being a singular objective of a state, it is better viewed as a fundamental principle for state behaviour. It finds application through membership in bilateral, multilateral, regional and international organizations, as well as adherence to international laws, principles, and norms. As was has already been shown in Chapter 3, cooperation in the Arctic has been a defining political feature in the post-Cold War era. Institutions like the Arctic Council have not only provided a high-level forum for collaboration, but they have been instrumental in promoting stability through region-building practices. Nonetheless, the present framework is not without its limitations, particularly in reference for its inability to engage states in security dialogue. Cooperation can also be divisional as well; the exclusivity of the ‘Arctic five’ to the ‘remaining three’ represents this well. However, bilateral cooperation over political lines also runs the risk of alienating pivotal actors, and stimulating regional tension.⁹⁰ Yet, Arctic cooperation as a whole since 1987 has continued to operate on a multitude of levels, with a variety of actors. Even in situations where states have been geographically removed, as in the EU’s *Northern Dimension*, effort was placed on incorporating Canada and American as observer status representatives. Although not extensively discussed in this research, international law has also had served a cooperative function for states in the Arctic. Beyond UNCLOS, the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears (1972), and the Spitsbergen Treaty (1920) have served as important steppingstones to improved

⁹⁰ The example of the Cold War and its state-to-state partnerships illustrate this well. Canada, through its joint agreement with the United States in the DEW line, further accelerated the already existing tension between US-Soviet relations (Coates, et al., 2009; 43).

confidence-building in the Arctic, and binding commitments as opposed to ‘soft-law’ engagements (Koivurova, 2008; 14).

As shown, the way in which these forms of cooperation are addressed in the strategies varies according to state. Rather than looking at it from a country-by-country basis, it is possible to divide this discussion by categories based on region-wide institutions, bilateral engagements and adherence to international law. Regionally, the Arctic Council is the most widely used platform the strategies refer to. In the case of Canada and Norway, the Arctic Council is mentioned, however the texts do not go beyond offering basic recognition and support. Denmark, on the other hand, goes as far as to mention the Council’s current limitations, supporting a strengthened Council and offering that greater synergies between it and the Nordic Council of Ministers, Nordic Council and the Baltic Council of Sea States would improve efficiency region-wide. Surprisingly, the United States strategy has the most progressive text on the Arctic Council. Although the US calls for the work of the Council to continue within its limited mandate, and that the Council should not be turned into a formal organization, it does propose updating the structure by making operational changes to the Working Groups in order to facilitate more active participation. Russia does not offer any significant reference to the Arctic Council, however it does state its second highest priority (Priority B) as maintaining the Arctic as a zone of peace and cooperation. By doing so, it commits building a circumpolar search and rescue system, as well as active participation in EU partnerships.

On a bilateral scale, it is interesting to note how certain strategies are tactical in the way they engage a specific state. Predictably, the Government of Canada clarifies its willingness to ‘engage’ with the US Government to settle its outstanding legal disputes, calling the Americans an “exceptionally valuable partner”. In a similar position, Norway uses its foreign policy section of the strategy to express its intention of building its relationship with Russia; going so far as to propose an economic and industrial cooperation zone in the Barents Sea, strengthen cooperation over illegal fishing, and to facilitate border crossings with Russia. The United States takes a broader approach, by considering new or enhanced international arrangements to address human activity but also specifying an engagement with Russia over academic research sharing. International

law features prominently in each of the strategies. The United State's use of its strategy as a way of promoting the ratification of the Law of the Sea is less supportive of its cooperative function, than its ability to "serve national security interests...including its maritime mobility of the Armed Forces worldwide". Norway refers to the favourable position that international law allows for binding states to instruments of performance-based resource management; in a similar fashion, Canada affirms its commitment to international law in managing its territorial and maritime disputes. Russia makes several references to its intentions for respecting and promoting its legal commitments; most notably as a way of promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation with its Arctic neighbours. Whereas, the Danish strategy confirms its support for the principles agreed to within the Ilulissat Declaration, and thus its provision related to the Law of the Sea.

Based on the analysis of these three categories, it would seem fair to make the assessment that cooperation on a regional scale functions in much the same way as it has for over a decade. That is, despite minor objections, all of the littoral states demonstrate their continued support for the Arctic Council. Absent from the strategies is an exact policy towards promoting the Council beyond its current limited status. Secondly, there is no sense given from within the text that a binding, 'Arctic treaty' style form of regional governance is wanted, nor necessary. From a bilateral perspective, it is interesting to observe how states engage certain actors. It might be said that the promotion of the United States by Canada 'as an exceptionally valuable' partner is in reference to their neighbourly relationship; the 'big-brother' syndrome would support such a notion, in which Canada has historically relied on the American economy for trade and military security and it is in their best interests for preserving this bond. Similarly, the Norwegian engagement of Russia in its strategy symbolizes the peculiar geopolitical position that Norway occupies. While not founded on a history of trade or security *per se*, the interests of the Norwegian government for proposing bilateral initiatives is a strategic act of confidence building between the two states. Interestingly, neither the United States nor Russian strategies reference the valuable relationships with their immediate neighbours. The presence that international law plays in the strategy is also significant. One angle for considering this is by looking at the example of the Ilulissat Declaration, in which the act of defending the Law of the Sea proved as important as the strength of the law itself.

However, another angle might consider if whether or not this support for international law is representative of a weakness in the regional cooperative framework. Whereas international law provokes stability through binding commitments with punitive functions, the ‘fragmented incrementalism’ characteristic of the regional structure operates based on trust and good intentions of the states involved (Griffiths, 2009; 4). Thus, a lack of strength in its policies may be correlated to a lack of trust on the part of states. As demonstrated in the discussion on Russia’s geopolitical positioning, it could be argued that regional cooperation has been hindered by its ability to involve Russia as a partner beyond its symbolic obligation, thus explaining the Government of Russia’s fundamental interest in preserving its international legal commitments.

This discussion begs one final question- how (or) does cooperation function as an indicator of regional geopolitical change? Despite the emphasis placed on promoting cooperation regionally, there remains an obvious contradiction. As demonstrated by the three previous indicators, the Arctic states are demonstrating an unprecedented amount of interest in the North; this is particularly true in relation to security and energy policies. Yet, the littoral states remain dedicated to the same architectural framework that the region was originally founded on; the case of the Arctic Council provides the best example. How then is it possible to retain this framework without the institutional flexibility to discuss matters related to traditional security, or even energy security? A great success of the Arctic Council has been in its ability to engage all of the region’s state actors, and indeed many of its non-state actors. The Council’s mandate of discussing issues related to environmental protection and sustainable development was an important step towards region building. This remains true today. However, without the ability to incorporate new geopolitical realities, the Council may become a symbolic body, rather than a platform for regional commitments. This would lead even more towards an emphasis on bilateral engagement and commitments towards international law- for better or for worse. However, it could also be demonstrative of the emergence of a new regional body, that of the Arctic Five.⁹¹

⁹¹ This will be discussed in the conclusions

Chapter 5.5 Concluding observations

Based on the previous analysis, it is clear that there are many consistencies in the priorities states take towards security, energy, environment and cooperation. This may be representative of the common challenges and opportunities that the states share by virtue of sharing the same geography. This might also be representative of how states view their position within the Arctic's geopolitical landscape. There is no one particular state that commands the ability to act unilaterally or independent of others, and it therefore makes political sense to frame strategies in a way that supports this reality. The case of energy presents an interesting example of how national interests may provoke a 'race for resources' scenario, though the strategies downplay this assumption by advancing multilateral intentions. Similarly, environment and its transnational effects find consistent themes between strategies, based on cooperation and management.

Despite this, however, there are inconsistencies between the texts. This is most noticeable in security policy, where the divide between exercises of sovereignty on the behalf of Canada, Denmark and Norway are noticeably different from exercises of military security, prevalent in the Russian and US strategy. This would lead to the conclusion that security policy is most reflective of a classical geopolitical reality, in which the demonstration of military capabilities is still rooted in how states perceive power and authority. Secondly, bilateral cooperation in the Arctic reflective of state positioning vis-à-vis its geographic location, and is therefore individualistic in the types of priorities that defines a particular state. Finally, the discussion on international law showed consistencies in how states approach its legal commitments, but projected differences reasons for why they do so. There remains one outstanding discussion left to explore- the way in which the strategies themselves might be redefining the geopolitical trends in the Arctic.

However, before going into conclusions, it makes sense to first quickly summarize how it is possible to conceive of these indicators within the theoretical framework provided. In fact, there are elements of both realist thought and geopolitics that are still prevalent within these discussions. It is clear that classical geopolitics has not been shadowed by movements of critical or new geopolitics. Indeed, states continue to view themselves

based on their natural environment and the extent to which they can use the space to find profit, power and control. That is not to downplay the impact of non-state actors, or the influence of globalization, but simply that the strategies reflect, on the one hand, commitments towards improved military capabilities, and on the other, increased resource development. Indeed, at a circumpolar level, the processes of critical and new geopolitics have found success within human communities that have been able to impact 'high-politics' because of the accountability placed on governments. The Arctic Ocean, however, is a different stage that plays by different rules. As a result, classical forms of geopolitics are able to thrive. In a similar vain, realist thinking is still applicable. The simplicity to understand and rationalize circumpolar politics by a dualist thinking of 'either/or' or 'us/them' is characteristic of realist thinkers. Focusing entirely on this type of rationality would simply explain why there is obvious distance within the strategies of the United States and Russia. No particular reference from either concerning the other would have realists reconstructing Cold War divides. However, this is not entirely true either. Like the discussions on the environment and cooperation explain, there are more forces at work which require broader theoretical applications. Neorealist thinking and the systems approach provides a useful avenue for predicting the way states behave and why they behave that way. Though neorealists would dismiss the strategies as irrelevant for their inability to influence the international system, if anything these documents defend their predictions about the way middle-powers understand their constraints. Norway and Canada are clear examples of states whose geopolitical standing and the limitations therein have transcended into their internal strategies. Therefore, like the strategies themselves, there is no clear and correct theoretical explanation for the direction of Arctic geopolitics is now taking, only indications that point to all different directions.

6. Conclusions

Using a policy-analysis methodology, this research has taken a macro-level perspective in contrasting the main themes and interests in the Arctic coastal states' strategies. It has limited its investigation to four aspects of foreign policy: security, energy, environment, and cooperation. In doing so, it discovered that there are indeed similarities and differences between the documents. Looking from a geopolitical lens, the similarities can be seen through a renewed interest in priorities related to security and sovereignty. Each strategy, for example, contains provisions related to the engagement of national authorities and/or Armed Forces in the Arctic. Rather than jumping to speculative conclusions as to the meanings behind these demonstrations of security, there were also a number of differences in how these units are applied and for what purpose they are used. For example, clear distinctions were found between those strategies promoting policies related to sovereignty (presence) and those related to security (defence). Equally apparent were similarities and differences with how cooperation was identified and prioritized. In terms of similarities, it was found that each of the five states supports the Arctic Council in its current operative framework. Primary differences were observed when looking at emphasis placed on bilateral engagements. It was found that geographic positioning combined with national status held fundamental influence on the way strategies approached bilateral cooperation, and thus necessitated different responses.

Yet, more complex comparisons were drawn between indicators. Contrasting energy policy with that of security and cooperation found surprising results. Though energy was identified as being a fundamental priority to the state, multilateral measures were also identified. Thus, energy policy both reflected in a need for states to safeguard natural resource deposits, within a cooperative framework of maritime safety, and strict regional guidelines. The promotion of environmental policy through multilateral cooperation was supported by all states, though interestingly enough, not through international law. Instead, adherence to international formed another central component of the documents. However, it is questionable to think that adherence to international law had somehow submitted the need for greater regional cooperation.

There remains one point waiting to be discussed- what do the strategies themselves symbolise? Given the newness of the documents, it is difficult to consider what kind of political weight they carry. On a national level, these documents have important functions for clarifying policy priorities and provide a useful roadmap for departmental use. Internationally, strategies are important tools for predicting state behaviour, and determining responses. Put in a geopolitical context, there is the possibility that these documents symbolise a movement towards unilateral action, and thus towards a new geopolitical trend. Though it would be an exaggeration to suggest that their meanings are indicative of a Cold War divide, there is the possibility that they represent a movement away from the regional cooperative framework characteristic of the Arctic over the past twenty years. However, it is difficult to determine what kind of change this could be. Examples from within the strategies indicate a vested interest for regional cooperation. Problematic is the fact that there is currently no platform available to discuss issues outside of limited 'low-politic' themes. Neither is there support for establishing a new kind of regional system, particularly one founded on binding commitments. This might suggest one of two things. Firstly, that within current geopolitical discourse there may be a polarity between how states participate in institutionalized cooperation, and that of their underlying, fundamental interests. This would suggest that either the cooperative system is not capable of facilitating such discussions, or that these national interests might challenge the foundations of the Arctic's regional cooperation. Secondly, it could be that the strategies themselves symbolize a movement towards a new regional forum- one that is exclusive to the Arctic Ocean coastal states. Evidence of such an interest was first conceived during the Ilulissat meeting in July 2008, in which the littoral states gathered for a 'one-shot' conference to dispel myths of inter-regional confrontation. The March 2010 meeting of the same club in Chelsea, Quebec suggests that this type of association might become more permanent. Whether or not either is indicative of geopolitical change remains to be seen. However, what is clear is that despite the strategies' outward intention of maintaining the current regional framework for cooperation, increases in security capabilities and energy development do not serve to strengthen this capacity.

Future research in this field may continue along this same discussion. At this point in time, it is difficult to understand the true meaning behind the strategies. Taking the

strategies as fact, like this research has done, they indicate a complex system of intentions from states, which at times seems both contradictory and trite. This of course is problematic considering that within the political domain, public policy does not always mean project follow through. The fact that such policy directives are needed may indicate the type of relationship characteristic of a history defined by governmental neglect towards the North. The fact that the release of the 2006 Norwegian strategy sparked a succession of policy responses from states seems suspicious. Yet, the basic principals within the strategies' foreign policy priorities are ones that seemingly can not be ignored or avoided. Global dependency on the Arctic's abundant resource wealth is but one factor illustrating how Arctic states must take a vested and genuine interest in the region. There is reason to believe that they are doing so, though the question remains for what purpose. Strategies provide a good basis for beginning to understand this process; however policy implementation is the primary criterion for judging their effectiveness. Indeed, only time will tell whether or these documents were used for political posturing or symbolized real change. What is evident is that the Arctic is on the cusp of major geopolitical change, both from within the region and from beyond. It has been the intention of this research to provide a new lens for viewing Arctic geopolitics, and providing a new layer to help predict its future.

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