YAŞAR UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

MASTER THESIS

POWER DYNAMICS IN THE ARCTIC: A RETURN TO GREAT POWER COMPETITION?

ESPEN KJØNØ

THESIS ADVISOR: ASSIST. PROF. (PHD) ELIF ÇETİN

MA, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PRESENTATION DATE: 01.06.2022

BORNOVA / İZMİR
June 2022

We certify that, as the jury, we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Jury Members:	**Signature:**
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....
Assist./Assoc./Prof.(PhD) Xxx YYY … University	.....

Prof. (PhD) Yucel Ozturkoglu

Director of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

POWER DYNAMICS IN THE ARCTIC: A RETURN TO GREAT POWER COMPETITION?

Kjønø, Espen

MA, International Relations

Advisor: Assist. Prof. (PhD) Elif ÇETİN

May 2022

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Arctic has been a region of cooperation between the Arctic countries. However, the region is now seeing the effects of climate change and the icecaps in the Arctic Ocean are melting more and more every year. This has created an opportunity to get access to a brand-new territory and to its resources. Due to this opportunity, the interest in the Arctic has increased. This thesis will offer an in-depth analysis of how Russia`s and the United States` domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic have changed. Most of the existing research regarding the Arctic focus on either military-security or energy politics in the Arctic. This thesis aims to fill the gap within existing Arctic studies when it comes to combining several different dimensions. This thesis will be focusing on four different dimensions of U.S. and Russian foreign and domestic policies in the Arctic. These are: Military/strategic priorities; energy security; trade routes; and the level of importance of international law, in this case the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

keywords: The United States, Russia, Arctic, domestic policy, foreign policy

ÖZ

ARKTİK'TE GÜÇ DİNAMİKLERİ: BÜYÜK GÜÇLERİN REKABETİNİN DÖNÜŞÜ?

Kjønø, Espen

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Uluslararası İlişkiler

Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Elif ÇETİN

Mayıs 2022

Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından beri Arktik bölgesi, bu bölgedeki ülkelerin dayanışma içinde bulundukları bir alan özelliğindedir. Bununla birlikte, bölgede, iklim değişikliğinin etkileri görülmeye başlanmıştır ve Antarktik Okyanusundaki buzulları her yıl daha da fazla erimektedir. Bu gelişmelerin neticesinde yeni alanlar ve bu alanların barındırdığı kaynaklara erişim için yeni fırsatlar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Oluşan yeni fırsatlar, Arktik bölgesine olan ilginin artmasına yol açmıştır. Bu tez, Arktik bölgesine yönelik olarak Rusya'nın ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin iç ve dış politikalarının nasıl değişiklik gösterdiğine ilişkin detaylı bir analiz sunmaktadır. Antarktika bölgesini ele alan literatürde genelde askeri-güvenlik ya da enerji politikaları boyutlarından birine odaklanılmaktadır. Bu tez çalışması ise farklı boyutlara odaklanarak Arktik çalışmaları literatürüne katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. İlgili tez A.B.D. ve Rusya'nın Antarktik bölgesine ilişkin dış ve iç politikalarını dört boyuta odaklanarak ele almaktadır. Bu dört boyut ise şu şekildedir: (i) Askeri/stratejik öncelikler; (ii) enerji güvenliği; (ii) ticaret yolları; ve (iv) uluslararası hukuka atfedilen önemin seviyesi, ve bu özelde de her iki ülkenin Birleşmiş Milletler Deniz Hukuku Sözleşmesi'ne (UNCLOS) olan yaklaşımlarıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Rusya, Arktik, iç politika, dış politika

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of several people. First, I would like to show my gratitude to my thesis supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif ÇETİN for her guidance and support during the process of writing this thesis. I would also like to thank my jury committee members, Professor Dr. Nazif Mandacı and Associate Professor Dr. Nadim Khoury for their guidance and support. In addition, I would like to thank my friends who have helped me throughout these two years. Lastly, my family deserves my endless gratitude for their support and encouragement, and for giving me the opportunity to go to Izmir for my studies.

Espen Kjønø

İzmir, 2022

TEXT OF OATH

I declare and honestly confirm that my study, titled “POWER DYNAMICS IN THE ARCTIC: A RETURN TO GREAT POWER COMPETITION?” and presented as a Master’s Thesis, has been written without applying to any assistance inconsistent with scientific ethics and traditions. I declare, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that all content and ideas drawn directly or indirectly from external sources are indicated in the text and listed in the list of references.

Full Name: Espen Kjønø

Date: 23.05.2022.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

AK Alaska

AZRF Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation

BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy management

BSSE Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

DOD Department of Defence

DOI Department of the Interior

EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone

EU European Union

FL Florida

FSB Federal Security Bureau

FON freedom of navigation

GLACIER Global Leadership in the Arctic Cooperation, Innovation, Engagement and Resilience

ICBM Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles

IMO International Maritime Organization

INF Intermediate Nuclear Forces

MA Massachusetts

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NSR Northern Sea Route

NWP Northwest Passage

OCS Outer Continental Shelf

SAR Search and Rescue

SOLAS Safety Of Life At Sea

SWIFT Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications

UN United Nations

UNCLOS United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

US United States

USGS U.S. Geological Survey

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Areas inside the Arctic Circle covers roughly 4 percent of the Earth`s surface (Nuttall, 2014). This vast area was for a long time overlooked due to the harsh climate in the area and was deemed inaccessible, and since the dissolution of the Soviet Union the Arctic was seen as a region of cooperation between the actors involved in the region. However, the ice caps in the Arctic Ocean are melting more and more every year. The majority of the world sees this as a potential catastrophe, but it is also a chance for Arctic nations to get access to a brand-new ocean and its resources. Tensions in the Arctic rose in 2001 when Russia officially submitted a proposal to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLS) (United Nations, 2009). Russia`s proposal was to establish new outer limits for the Russian continental shelf, beyond the previously established 200 nautical-mile zone. One of the arguments of the Russian side was that the Lomonosov Ridge is the extension of the Eurasian continent. Denmark and Canada also proposed similar territorial claims that would overlap with Russia's proposed borders (Dodds, 2010). The Ridge attracted international attention yet again after the 2007 expedition called "Arktika 2007" (Sagalevich, 2015). In this expedition Russia performed the first ever crew descent to the ocean bottom at the North Pole, as part of a research, related to Russian territorial claims in the area in 2001. This incident intensified the global interest in the Arctic when Russia planted its flag on the seafloor under the North Pole. Since this incident, five Arctic countries, namely Norway, Denmark with the autonomous country of Greenland, Russia, Canada and the United States have been in dispute over the territories in the Arctic Ocean. This incident started what the geopolitician Klaus Dodds referred to as the "Scramble for the Arctic" (Dodds, 2010). Due to its significance, this thesis takes the planting of the Russian flag on the seafloor under the North Pole in 2007 as its starting point (Sevunts, 2019).

1.1. Research Question

My research question is: How have Russia`s and the United States` policy priorities in the Arctic changed since 2007?

As part of this question, the thesis elaborates on the impact of specific domestic and foreign policy concerns of these countries and the implications of these concerns for shaping these countries' primary policy aims in the Arctic. In addition, the thesis also reflects on the reasons for why these changes have occurred. In order to do so, this thesis will compare and contrast the changes that have been happening in the United States` and Russia`s domestic and foreign policy priorities with regards to the four different dimensions which follow as: (1) military/strategic priorities; (2) energy security; (3) trade routes; and (4) how each of these countries are positioning themselves within the framework of the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The thesis investigates how the United States` and Russia`s domestic and foreign policies have changed on these key dimensions, and especially regarding the UNCLOS, how each of these countries position themselves within the context of this international document. Due to the recent events, this thesis focuses on the time period between 2007-2022, until the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. This research recognises that certain changes in any of these dimensions may occur or might have occurred due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, due to funding and time limits, no detailed analysis of the recent events could be conducted. Future research needs to be carried out in order to examine the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the US-Russia relations in the Arctic.

1.2. Research Aim

A central purpose of this thesis is to offer an in-depth analysis of how Russia`s and the United States` domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic have changed. There has been a lack of research regarding the Artic for a long time, this has however changed with the increased interest in the region. Most of the research regarding the Arctic focus on either military-security or energy politics in the Arctic. This thesis aims to fill the gap within existing Arctic studies when it comes to combining several different dimensions, how they have changed and how intertwined these dimensions are. This thesis aims to analyse how the Russian domestic foreign and domestic policies have changed since 2007, as well as how the U.S.`s domestic and foreign policies have changed during the Obama administration and the Trump administration. This

will be done by analysing the changes in military/strategic priorities, energy security, trade routes as well as and the level of importance of international law, in this case UNCLOS.

1.3. Methodology

In order to answer the research question of this thesis, a comparative case study has been considered as the most adequate methodological approach. Comparative studies intend to outline the differences and similarities between the cases in question. Donatella and Keating discuss the common methodological approaches dominating the social sciences today, which are variable-oriented approach and case-oriented approach. The variable-oriented approach attempts to establish a relationship between a set of variables. Variable case-oriented approach focuses on a large number of cases, aiming at generalizable knowledge of relations among variables. Case-oriented approach on the other hand focuses on a small number of cases in order to understand the context, complexity and the differences as well as the similarities between the cases (Porta; Keating, 2008).

A case-oriented approach will be used in this thesis because it aims at offering an in-depth analysis of how Russia`s and the United States` domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic have changed since 2007. Another reason for using a case-oriented approach is the limited number of cases that will be looked into, namely the United States and Russia, because a case-oriented approach primarily focuses on a limited number of cases, which are then analysed on a range of dimensions in a detailed way with the purpose of enhancing the understanding of the units that are involved. In this thesis, the dimensions that are going to be analysed are: Military/strategic priorities; energy security; trade routes; and UNCLOS

The United States and Russia have been chosen as cases due to their position in the international system as great powers as well as their historic influence in the Arctic. However, some might argue that there is a country that should be added, namely China because of their presence in the Artic in recent years, with them declaring themselves as a "near-Arctic state" (Grieger, 2018). China is not added in this thesis because of the time period that this thesis is focusing on. This thesis will as mentioned be focusing on the time period 2007 until before Russia`s invasion of Ukraine February 24th, 2022. Considering that China declared themselves as a "near-Arctic state" in 2018 (Grieger, 2018). This would be too limited of a timeframe to analyse how their domestic and foreign policy in the Arctic has changed.

This thesis will use qualitative method in order to explain how Russia`s and the United States` domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic have changed since 2007. The use of qualitative data

is vital in in-depth analyses of countries and to better understand the reasons for why these actions have taken place (Lamont, 2015). This thesis will rely on primary sources, such as governmental documents, policy statements, and government strategies. Secondary sources, such as scientific articles, research report and new articles, are also referred to as important data sources.

Some of the data collected will be quantitative data. Adding quantitative data to this thesis will further help the theoretical framework of this thesis, which is neoclassical realism (Olsen, 2019). A key concept of neoclassical realism is "relative material power capability" (Rose, 1998, p. 151). This refers to "capabilities or resources with which states can influence each other" (Rose, 1998, p. 151). Quantitative data will therefore help measure these capabilities. Neoclassical realism, and the reasoning for choosing this will be further discussed under the theoretical framework chapter (Chapter 2).

One of the cases in the study is Russia, due to lack of Russian language proficiency there have been some limitations in terms of having access to all the potentially relevant research materials on Russia. However, this research also utilises additional secondary sources in both English and Norwegian that concentrate on Russia`s domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic. Relevant academic literature in the form of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, book chapters, that concentrate on United States domestic and foreign policy position vis a vis the Arctic in both English and Norwegian is also being utilised in the making of this research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis utilizes neoclassical realist theory as its primary theoretical lens. This thesis will be using neoclassical realism because after reading the literature I have come across a number of key statements that utilize neoclassical realism which will be relevant to this thesis. The specific ways through which neoclassical realism will be suitable for this thesis will be further discussed in greater detail later in this section. Before doing so, it is necessary to touch upon some of the key arguments coming from some of the main variants of realism. The purpose is to clarify why neoclassical realist variant will be utilized in this thesis, instead of other variants of realism or other theories of International Relations.

Realism identifies the sovereign states as the key actors in international politics, and that the state is the legitimate representative of the people and that is what gives the state the right to practice authority within its own borders. However, the situation outside of its borders are completely different according to realism. Outside of its borders, anarchy reigns as a result of every state seeing themselves as the highest authority. Realists believe that in the absence of an overarching authority in the international system, the primary objectives of each nation state therefore are to ensure their own survival, because there is no one else who can guarantee it. Because of the lack of an overarching authority, the sovereign states try to secure their existence through power and dominance. All nation states understand that if there is an unequal distribution of power, it is very likely that the end result will be the fall of one state whose power will be claimed by another (Olsen, 2019).

According to realists, one way that the states can increase its chance of survival is by increasing its military capabilities. There is however a drawback to this strategy, in some cases where the relative strength between two states is clearly favouring one state over the other. In those cases, it would be more beneficial to the nation state with the smallest military capabilities to rather balance the power through the establishment of alliances. There are however several versions of realism which I will be further explaining (Olsen, 2019).

One of these versions is classical realism. Classical realism focuses on human nature when explaining the behaviour of nation states. Classical realists also agree that the ultimate goal of every nation states is to prolong its survival and that the international system is a struggle for

power between nation states. Classical realists argue that the essential features of international politics such as competition and fear are basic components of human nature. When it comes to classical realism scholars argue that it does not consist of one common approach, but rather several different approaches. Gideon Rose argues that "unfortunately there is no simple, straightforward classical realism" (Rose, 1998, p. 153).

Michael Doyle also argues that the works of classical realist scholars are significantly different from each other in their assumptions and their focus on analysis. Doyle argues that there are four different directions of classical realism. These are:

> "(1) Machiavelli's 'fundamentalism' that focuses on individual leadership and ambition. (2) Hobbes' 'structuralism' that underscores the importance the international system. (3) Rousseau's 'constitutionalism', which emphasizes the importance of unit-level factors, such as decision-makers' perceptions and state structure. and then the one that the other three originates from. (4) Thucydides' 'complex' realism, which includes elements of each of the other" (Rose, 1998, p. 153).

Another version of realism is neorealism, also known as structural realism. Neorealists agree with classical realists that the international system is anarchical, and that international politics is a struggle for power. Neorealism do however differ from classical realism when it comes to the importance of the structures of the system for the struggle of power. Kenneth Waltz, the scholar who coined the term neorealism argues that the domestic system and the international system is entirely different. Since the domestic systems are hierarchic and centralized, while the international system is anarchic, calling international politics as "politics in the absence of government" (Waltz, 1978, p. 88). When it comes to the 'character of units', Waltz exerts that even though states can be entirely different in things such as size, wealth, power, and form, their actions in the international system mimics one another to a considerable extent thus variation at the unit level is deemed insignificant (Waltz, 1978). Regarding the 'distribution of capabilities', Waltz claims that what really changes the structure of a system is the changes in the distribution of capabilities, this change in distribution of capabilities is the key to understand the outcome of international politics (Waltz, 1978).

Neorealism can be divided into two parts, offensive and defensive realism. Both of them agree to the overall neorealist perspective that the international system is anarchical. They do however part ways when it comes to their view on how much power nation states want. Waltz who coined the term defensive realism, argues that nation states seek security, and that the international system is somewhat sympathetic towards each other. Thus, causing nation states

to balance against threats rather than them trying to maximise their power (Olsen, 2019). John Mearsheimer, the scholar who termed offensive realism argues that all states who become great powers are always searching for any opportunity to gain power over their rivals, and then they will attempt to pursue hegemony. This happens because, according to Mearsheimer, the structure of the international system encourages all states to pursue hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001).

Neoclassical realism is also another version of realism. Neoclassical realism was coined by Gideon Rose, who makes the distinction between theories of international politics, which aim is to explain how nation states interact with each other, and theories of foreign policy that aim to explain what states try to achieve in the international system. The rationale behind the need for foreign policy theories is that theories of international politics fail to explain the foreign policy objective of nation states. Rose defines the four main theories of foreign policy as: (1)) offensive realism, and (2) defensive realism, which Rose classifies as both theories of foreign policy and theories of international politics, (3) *Innenpolitik* theories, and (4) neoclassical realism. (3) *Innenpolitik* theories highlights the importance of domestic factors when analysing the foreign policy of a nation state. (4) Neoclassical realism emphasises the importance of domestic politics and conditions states when analysing the drivers of their behaviour as well as including systematic variables (Rose, 1998).

This thesis utilizes neoclassical realist theory as its primary theoretical lens. Neoclassical realists argue that a state`s foreign policy is driven primarily by its relative material power capabilities. These capabilities are "capabilities or resources with which states can use to influence each other" (Rose, 1998, p. 151). The concept of relative material power capabilities is vital to neoclassical realism and refers to among other things, political, economic, and military capabilities. These capabilities help explain how powerful a nation state is (Rose, 1998).

Unlike other theories of foreign policy, neoclassical realism emphasises both the systemic factors as well as the domestic ones. Neoclassical realists argue that a state`s foreign policy is determined by its position in the international system. This system is decided by its relative material power capabilities, but unlike other theories, neoclassical realists argue that the states relative material power capabilities have to go through the decision-makers perception, and the state structure. This is what determines a state's foreign policy (Rose, 1998). Unlike other realist theories, neoclassical realism assumes that the international anarchical system is "neither Hobbesian nor benign but rather murky and difficult to read" (Rose, 1998, p. 152). Rose argues

that “States existing within it have a hard time seeing clearly whether security is plentiful or scarce and must grope their way forward in twilight, interpreting partial and problematic evidence according to subjective rules of thumb” (Rose, 1998, p. 152) Neoclassical realists also believe that all nation states seek to control the international system, rather than seeking security for themselves.

Neoclassical realists argue that systematic pressure on states is indirect and complex because it has to be explained through intervening variables at the unit level. These intervening variables are unit-level variables that are neither independent variables such as systemic incentives, nor dependent variables meaning the actual foreign policy outcome. These unit-level variables are for instance, the perception of the people making the decisions and the domestic state structure. Neoclassical realists claim that the foreign policy decisions are made by what the opinions and perception of political leaders have about their state`s relative power in addition to fixed numbers of how much physical resources each nation states have. This might lead to an actor acting irrationally (Rose, 1998).

There are some limitations to neoclassical realism. Norrin Ripsman argues that it has four severe limitations. These are:

> “(1) States do not always perceive systemic pressures correctly. (2) Even if decision-makers do perceive systemic stimuli, they may not always respond rationally to them. (3) The international system does not always present clear signals with respect to threats and opportunities. (4) Political and economic circumstances prevent states from behaving as the international system requires” (Ripsman, 2017, p. 6).

Ripsman also argue that another flaw with neoclassical realism is that the theory requires all nation states to identify systemic requirements and act according to these. This is however not likely due to domestic, systemic, and human weaknesses (Ripsman, 2017).

Kropatcheva claims that when it comes to the energy sector, Russia has pursued both political and economic objectives where the interests of the state as well as well as the interests of Russian energy companies has overlapped at certain times. However, when there have been cases where the economic and political interests have differed, then the Russian government has decided to prioritize the political interests, even if it harms the economic interests. This is according to Kropatcheva a classic realist case (Maratov, 2017). One example of this is Russia

adding additional pollution prevention rules in the Arctic, despite their goals of increasing the development of oil and gas in the region. This will be discussed in greater detail later in the thesis.

The United States' foreign policy is characterized by the emphasis on their leadership role and the American belief that democracy, human rights and a free-market economy should be promoted to other nations (Huck, 2019). The strategic use of multilateralism and the tendency to act alone, if they see it necessary, are also the other key elements that characterise the U.S. foreign policy. The Arctic has been a strategic region for the U.S. foreign policy since the Cold war, and scholars have been analysing how this has changed in a post-Cold War world (Huck, 2019).

In order to comprehend Russia's reaction to its external challenges, it is vital to examine the opinions of Russia's officials and policymaking organisations. For instance, when it comes to their energy security it is vital to look at the role of the Russian energy companies involved in the Arctic. Bertil Nygren claims that "most great powers, very much including Russia, rely on Neoclassical realism when it comes to their foreign policy; and that Russian leaders recognize that resources play a key role in determining the achievability of state interests" (Nygren, 2012, p. 520).

Nygren also suggests that the Russian foreign policy will be influenced by the importance of ideational foundations of the ruling elite in Russia, because of the authoritarian grip on the country by the ruling elite which seems to be relatively popular among the eligible voter in Russia because of their emphasis on stability. Nygren also refers to a new ideational paradigm that he refers to as "Putinism" (Nygren, 2012). This paradigm consists of five different elements: (1) A strong and centralised government; (2) A further emphasis on strengthening the state control of major strategic resources i.e., metals, oil, and gas; (3) Strengthening the state control of the military; (4) strengthening the importance and power of the FSB over the Russian society; (5) Establishing an image that Russia is not only a regional power in Europe/Asia, but a global power (Nygren, 2012).

Romanova mentions the importance of Neoclassical realism when analysing Russian foreign policy. The Russian political system is built around a strong figure ruling as the highest governmental post of the state, in recent years it has been Vladimir Putin, regardless of him being President or Prime Minister. This is different from that of most other modern states (Romanova, 2012).

Neoclassical realism can explain why states in some instances do not act as expected when faced with what can be seen as obvious threats. Glenn argues that:

> "The goal of foreign policy decision-makers according to neoclassical realism is (1) to preserve the state's physical survival and political autonomy; (2) to maintain its power position; and (3) safeguards all other ideological, religious, political, social, and economic goals that they may possess" (Huck, 2019, p. 11).

The strength of Neoclassical realism is that it has the capability of combining realist assumptions with state-level factor to explain the foreign policy behaviour of nation states. It therefore offers a relevant theoretical framework for this thesis.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Suvanto points out that Russia have started to militarize the Arctic since the late 2000s. In her article, Suvanto points out that since 2008, Russia has been reopening and building new military bases in the Russian Arctic, as well as increasing the number of Russian soldiers stationed in the Arctic with more than six thousand solders in Murmansk. In addition to this, almost half of the Russian northern fleet, will now be stationed near Novaya Zemlya. This archipelago is of utmost significance to Russia because it allows the Russian Navy to monitor and control the NSR (Suvanto, 2016).

Former foreign minister of Norway, Jonas Gahr Støre disagrees with Suvanto, regarding a militarization of the Arctic. In January 2009, during a NATO seminar, Støre made a statement that is contradictory to Suvanto`s where he stated that "The Russian activities represent a return to a more normal level of activity for a major power with legitimate interests in the region" (Devyatkin, 2018).

Laurelle points out that there has been increased military presence in the Arctic and in order to preserve the Arctic as a region of cooperation and not militarize the region, the countries involved in the Arctic needs to create institutions for discussion and cooperation as well as improving the existing institutions already present in the Arctic such as the Arctic council and NATO (Laurelle, 2014).

This thesis will utilise the three aforementioned arguments presented by Suvanto, Støre and Laurelle regarding how the Russian military/strategic priorities in the Arctic have changed. This research points out the following: Although there has been an increase of military presence in the region in the last fifteen years, this activity should not be compared to the post-Cold War era, but rather to that of the Soviet period. Laurelle argues that the recent military activity in the Arctic is minimal when compared to the Soviet era. According to Laurelle, this proves that there has been no Russian military expansion in the area. The majority of new Russian structures also seek to patrol and protect national territories from nonconventional challenges, rather than preparing for any kind of interstate conflict. Yet there are still some uncertainties regarding the lack of institutionalized channels of discussion. There are some diplomatic channels, such as the Arctic Council and NATO (Laurelle, 2014).

The archipelago of Svalbard has for a long time been perceived by the Russians as well as the Norwegians as a potential goldmine for extracting oil and gas in the waters outside of the archipelago. Norwegian Petroleum Directorate stated in 2017 that areas surrounding Svalbard may contain 8.6 billion barrels of oil (Merriman, 2018). Because of this, Helge Lurås, a former officer and security political commentator, argues that Russia is changing their strategy in the archipelago, going from coal mining to tourism in order to have an ace up their sleeve if/when they find a large amount of oil and gas in the area (Lurås, 2015).

This thesis seeks to challenge this argument and argues that even though there are disagreements between the Russian and Norwegian government regarding future tax rights on Svalbard, the threat from Russia towards Norway remains minor when it comes to Svalbard. One of the main reasons for this is that there are several petroleum-rich areas in other parts of the Russian federation that are yet to be explored and exploited. Therefore, spending resources on a possible oil extraction and exploitation on the archipelago is not financially feasible for Russia in the foreseeable future.

According to Laurelle, there are also a lot of different challenges that could increase the costs of exploiting as well as amplifying the risk of an Arctic-based energy strategy for Russia. One of these challenges is how technically challenging it is to exploit the Arctic resources. Drilling under the extreme Arctic conditions requires specific equipment and knowledge; equipment and knowledge that Russia is still far from processing. Even with the lack of necessary knowledge and equipment, the Russian authorities launched a new plan in 2006 where they planned to build 60 new oil rigs and an even larger number of submarine installations. There have been numerous technical issues with this plan and a lot of them have been delayed for almost a decade due to the aforementioned lack of knowledge and equipment (Laurelle, 2014).

This thesis utilises these arguments from Laurelle in order to understand how the Russian domestic and foreign policies have changed regard their energy security. During this research the following argument will be presented: Russia`s Arctic economic prospects are quite paradoxical. They are relying on a combination of changes in their economy that the Russian government have close to no influence on. Some of these are changes in the hydrocarbon market, changes in the Arctic climate i.e., how much the icecaps in the Arctic Ocean melts as well as how fast it melts as well as laws that protect certain Arctic areas. Russia also possesses an aging Arctic infrastructure regarding their natural resources.

When it comes to the development of trade routes in the Arctic, Suvanto argues that even a trade route though the NSR is significantly shorter than one through the Suez Canal. The

shipping route through the NSR is still significantly more dangerous because of the harsh Arctic climate therefore the NSR will not be able to play a major role in global shipping (Suvanto, 2016).

Laurelle also agrees with the Suvanto when it comes to NSR not playing a significant role in global shipping. However, Laurelle also argues that it not just because the Arctic climate makes it more dangerous to travel, but rather the financial cost of improving the infrastructure that is required as well as the technological challenges create the real difficulties. According to Laurelle, the Russian government might be able to take the price for these developments, but the private companies are more sceptical due to the financial cost this entails in the short term (Laurelle, 2014).

This thesis incorporates parts of both these arguments and claims that from the viewpoint of Russia, the Northern Sea Route is primarily a domestic shipping route, and a major part of their strategy for developing the Arctic region. Russian government hopes to increase Arctic shipping and is ready to pay the price to overcome the required technological challenges. However, private companies involved in Arctic shipping have set far more limited goals due to the financial costs.

When it comes to UNCLOS. the approaches made by the United States and Russia vastly different. The Russian government decided to ratify the treaty, whereas the United States refused to ratify it. Rockford Weitz, a Professor at Tufts University, argues that the U.S. decision not to ratify UNCLOS might be a disadvantage to the U.S. foreign policy in the Arctic (Weitz, 2021). Weitz argues that ratification of UNCLOS would give the U.S. a stronger international legal position when it comes to contested waters in the Arctic (Weitz, 2021).

Similarly, Professor Roncevert Ganan Almond Professor at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. claims, "that even though the U.S. have not ratified UNCLOS, in practice the U.S. has accepted and complies with nearly all of the treaty`s provisions" (Almond, 2017). Weitz further argues that it would be better to ratify UNCLOS because as of this moment the U.S. as a non-party is not able to affect any future changes to the treaty, but still complies with nearly all of the treaty`s provisions (Almond, 2017).

This thesis will be utilising the arguments by Weitz and Almond and presents the following argument: The United States not ratifying UNCLOS is a major disadvantage to them when it comes to claiming territory in the Arctic, due to the fact that they are not able to join the

negotiation table in the United Nations when the other countries are discussing their territorial claims through the UN channels.

CHAPTER 4

NATURAL RESOURCES

4.1. How Has the United States` Domestic and Foreign Policies Changed on Natural Resources in The Arctic?

The decrease in polar ice in the Arctic can potentially alter the options for oil and gas exploration for the United States. Even though these areas are experiencing warmer temperatures, exploration will be costly due to the harsh climate in the Arctic. the harsh climate will also make development of the infrastructure that is necessary to produce, store and transport oil and gas from newly discovered deposits not only costly but also challenging (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Despite the harsh climate in the Arctic, the United States has in recent years increased their interest in exploration and exploitation of offshore as well as onshore oil and gas in the region. The United States has already started mapping projects of the areas beyond the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in an attempt to support future submissions to UNCLOS. Some of these areas are expected to contain large amounts of oil and natural gas (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

There are several factors that affect the potential of onshore energy development in the Arctic. one factor is the melting of permafrost. Permafrost is "ground, soil, rock, or other material remains frozen from year to year" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 69). The Arctic permafrost has historically been used as solid foundation base for the infrastructure in the region. The melting of the permafrost in the region will create challenges because it makes the infrastructure such as roads, and buildings more unstable, and in the worst cases they might collapse. This can result in higher costs for the development of onshore energy in the Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Another factor is the high transportation costs. Onshore exploration and exploitation of energy require transportation access to deliver the necessary machinery and supplies as well as transporting the product to the market. In most cases onshore facilities can be accessed by roads, but recent changes in the Arctic climate have affected the accessibility of onshore development. Current infrastructure in the region such as ice roads, has been heavily affected by the climate changes occurring in the region. These ice roads are built and used when temperatures fall and remain below a threshold, but in recent years as temperatures rise, the roads have been weakened and they might reach a point where they can no longer be used (Congressional

Research Service, 2021). The United States has responded to these challenges by increasing its interest in offshore oil and gas development in the Arctic.

Interest in offshore oil and gas exploration increased after a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) was published in 2008. The USGS stated the following:

> "Extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the geographically largest unexplored prospective area for petroleum remaining on Earth. The USGS estimates that 90 billion barrels of oil, nearly 1,700 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 44 billion barrels of natural gas liquids may remain to be discovered in the Arctic (including both U.S. and international resources north of the Arctic Circle)" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 63).

The U.S. Department of the Interior`s (DOI) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has estimated that there is approximately 25 billion barrels of oil as well as 124 trillion cubic feet of natural gas located in the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf. This is equivalent to roughly 25 percent of the world`s undiscovered natural gas and 10 percent of its oil (Congressional Research Service, 2021). Although not all of these resources may be possible to recover because of lack of technology, infrastructure, or the high cost of exploitation (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

4.1.1. Environmental Restrictions

In recent years, US policymakers have become more concerned that industries operating in the Arctic do not have the expertise to respond to possible oil spills in the region. New safety regulations for exploitation of oil and gas in the Arctic were announced by BOEM and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) in 2016. These rules included obligations for businesses operating in the area to limit the danger of oil spills (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The more conservative members of the Congress do however argue that these regulations are too strict and unnecessarily burdensome. Whereas some of the more liberal members of the Congress believe that the rules and requirements did not go far enough in protecting the Arctic environment (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Conditions in the Arctic may have implications for the environment in the region. One of these are oil spills. These oil spills are less understood, than in other regions of the world because of the lack of occurrences compared to other regions (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

4.1.2. The Development of U.S. Energy Policies During the Obama Administration Versus the Trump Administration

Concerns over possible environmental effects of oil and gas activities in the region has changed in the United States during various administrations. Since the 1980s, the U.S. policymakers rejected any regulated planning and permitting effectively banning any oil and gas exploration and exploitation in Bristol Bay in the North Aleutian Basin with an end date of 2004. In 2004, the U.S. Congress decided to not extend these bans, but this changed with the election of Obama in 2008 (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

President Obama focused heavily on the preservation of the Arctic climate. During the Obama administration, the previous moratorium to ban all gas and oil leasing in Basin Bay was reinstated. Obama later expanded these moratoriums to several other areas in the Arctic, including the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and specific areas in the North Bering Sea. These moratoriums effectively meant that oil and gas exploration and exploitation were now banned in a significant part of the U.S. Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

In 2017 President Trump issued an executive change to end President Obama`s moratoriums on oil and gas exploration and exploitation in all of the aforementioned areas except for in Basin Bay (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The Trump Administration stated their intentions of promoting offshore oil and gas development in the Arctic and issued a draft offshore oil and gas leasing program for 2019, a program that was intended to last for five years. However, in 2019, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska, rejected the possibility for this executive order stating: “The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act gives the President the authority to make withdrawals, but not to revoke prior presidential withdrawals” (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 65/66).

4.2. How Has Russia`s Domestic and Foreign Policies Changed on Natural Resources in The Arctic?

One of the main interests in the Arctic is its natural resources. It is not only the potential of natural resources offshore, but also the onshore that is so alluring to the Russian Federation. The Arctic is recognized as one of the last known regions in the world with vast untapped reserves of oil and gas. There are several uncertain estimates of how much of these natural resources that exist under the ice in the Arctic, these estimates can only be confirmed when major exploration projects have begun (Peimani, 2013). One of the most well-known estimates is the aforementioned 2008 US geological Survey. This Survey estimates that the Arctic Circle

holds roughly 25 percent of the world`s undiscovered natural gas and 10 percent of its oil (United State Geological Survey, 2008). This shows how big the potential developing natural resources in the Arctic is, and why it`s so important to Russia.

The Russian ministry for Industry and Energy estimates that within the next 10 years Russia could be extracting up to 160 billion cubic meters of gas and 100 million tons of oil from the Arctic. (Laurelle, 2014). There are however a growing number of people voicing concerns about the estimates, they are saying that these estimates are insufficient. According to the independent environmental foundation Bellona, even in the well-known western part of the Arctic only up to 12 percent of the Barents Sea reserves have been explored (Laurelle, 2014). Even Russia's own sources are contradictory to the estimates by the Ministry for Industry and Energy where a 2007 Arctic scientific expedition put forward figures that are only one-fifth of the estimates for the Barents and Kara Seas (Laurelle, 2014).

In 2008, Gazprom launched the Yamal Megaproject. The Yamal Megaproject is a new gas production center focusing on exploring and exploiting the vast resources that exist in the Yamal peninsula and is also focusing developing and innovating the infrastructure to overcome the harsh climate and environment in the Arctic (Gazprom, N.d). Gazprom also plans to build more than twelve thousand kilometres of new pipelines as well as developing a Yamal-Europe gas pipeline extending more than 4.000 kilometres all the way to Germany (Laurelle, 2014). The Yamal Megaproject is projected to become a major contributor to the Russian gas industry. In 2018 the center produced 87,4 billion cubic meters of gas, but they project to produce up to 360 billion cubic meters of gas per year by 2030 (Gazprom, N.d). If Russia also develops Arctic shipping, delivering liquefied natural gas by tankers will release some of the pressure on Russia`s aging pipeline system. This is a topic that will be discussed later in this thesis.

There are a lot of challenges for the exploitation of natural resources in the Arctic. One of them is inaccessibility of some of the potential resources. Meaning that some resources do not necessarily translate into potential reserves, because they may not be extractable. Moreover, estimated reserves are not necessarily proven reserves. Another issue is that proven may not always be commercially recoverable. The US geological Survey does not take into consideration the link between the cost of exploration and development. For instance, the International Energy Agency calculates that the cost of exploiting resources in the Arctic is between 40$ up to 100$ per barrel, whereas the Middle Eastern reserves are calculated to between 10 and 40$ per barrel (Laurelle, 2014).

Another challenge is the lack of infrastructure. This is still a major issue, although the Gazprom Yamal Megaproject is upgrading the infrastructure in the area. In 2010 the Russian government issued a strategy of the development of oil and gas resources in the Arctic for the next ten years. This concluded that the domestic oil sector in Russian territory is at a critical stage. The Russian government also stated the following: "Without reforms, Russia`s oil output will fall far short of what would be the needed to meet growth targets" (Laurelle, 2014, p. 185).

Russia continues to believe that the Arctic holds the key to its energy future, with over 80% of its gas reserves and 70% of its oil reserves located there (Laurelle, 2014). The majority of these resources are found in the Barents and Kara Seas, but another region, the Lomonosov and Mendeleev Ridges, may prove to be more profitable in the future. These ridges are at the heart of Russia's territorial claims to UNCLOS (Laurelle, 2014).

There are also a lot of different challenges that could increase the costs of exploiting as well as amplifying the risk of an Arctic-based energy strategy for Russia. One of these challenges is how technically challenging it is to exploit the Arctic resources. Drilling under the extreme Arctic conditions requires specific equipment and knowledge. Equipment and knowledge that the Russians are still far from processing. Even with the lack of necessary knowledge and equipment, the Russian authorities launched a strategy in 2006 for the development of oil and gas in the region until 2020. There have been numerous technical issues with this plan and a lot of them have been delayed for almost a decade due to the aforementioned lack of knowledge and equipment (Laurelle, 2014).

Russia`s Arctic economic prospects are quite paradoxical. This is because Russia relies on factors that are out of their control such as the rate of climate change, the accessibility of oil and gas resources as well as the changes of ice caps in the Arctic on a yearly basis as well as a daily basis. The aging infrastructure must also be upgraded. As well as the development of new operations must occur. (Laurelle, 2014).

4.2.1. The Importance of Svalbard

Northwest of mainland Norway is an archipelago by the name of Svalbard. Svalbard is a topic that is quite complex, but this archipelago is a perfect example of how Russia's foreign policies has changed over the years, but the topic of Svalbard goes far back in time.

The Svalbard treaty states that:

> "Svalbard is under Norwegian administration and legislation. Citizens of all signatory nations have free access, and the right of economic activities and Svalbard remains demilitarized. No nation, including Norway, is allowed to permanently station military personnel or equipment on the archipelago" (The Maritime Executive, 2020, p. 1).

Soviet Russia considered Svalbard as interesting not only for the oil and gas resources in the ocean surrounding the archipelago, but also the opportunity for coal mining to finish the railroad to Murmansk. The main Russian activity on the archipelago was coal mining, however the demand for coal has been in decline and the Russian government realized that they had to change to another economic activity that is more sustainable for the future and that is tourism. But making profit is not the only reason to change the focus from coal mining to tourism. It is there also for Russia to have a presence in the Arctic and to show the people how much Russian identity is tied to the Arctic. Some of these are arctic themed bars as well as museums showcasing Russian history in the Arctic. These are not attempts by Russia to develop their military capabilities in the region, but rather an attempt to project Russian culture and identity that goes a long way in connecting a tie between Russian history and the Arctic (Lurås, 2015).

There are still to this day disputes regarding taxation rights on the Archipelago, mainly between Russia and Norway. However, Norway does not recognize that there are any disputes regarding the country's exclusive interests in a 200 nautical mile zone outside Svalbard according to the Svalbard Treaty of 1920. In an attempt to ease the situation, Norway has chosen not to put the matter at the forefront and allows all nationals to fish with equal rights outside the archipelago. However, regarding the attempts to find oil and gas, the matter immediately becomes more financially decisive in terms of who should be able to tax the businesses. In 2012, Norway announced two blocks for exploration of oil and gas within the 200-mile zone outside Svalbard. This was followed up by three new blocks in 2015. In both cases, this triggered major protests from the Russian authorities (Lurås, 2015).

In the absence of a solution to the territorial issues concerning Svalbard, the current equality treatment solution for the fisheries management in Norway is likely to continue. When it comes to petroleum activities, the Norwegian authorities' tactics appear to be to make a cautious

opening from south to north across the disputed area in the 200-nautical mile zone outside of Svalbard. Russia might be worried that these small steps can eventually set a precedent, but at the moment it is not upsetting Russia to do anything beyond protesting. It is also possible that there is not a lot of oil and gas outside Svalbard, or that it will be easy to exploit at a price the market can pay. However, with an increasingly scarce global energy situation, there will be increasing pressure to look for and produce oil and gas in an ever-growing part of the marine areas off Svalbard (Lurås, 2015). However, the interest from Russia to start exploring for oil in this area is still low. One of the main reasons for this is that there several petroleum-rich areas in other parts of the Russian Federation that have not yet been developed (Lurås, 2015).

This chapter analysed the changes in domestic and foreign policy by the United States and Russia in the Arctic with a particular reference to natural resources. Both nations have increased their interest in the region in terms of the development of oil and gas exploration and exploitation the Arctic. This is coherent with neoclassical realist theory which argues that a state`s foreign policy is driven primarily by its relative material capabilities. Unlike other realist theories, neoclassical realists argue that the states` relative material capabilities have to go through the decision-makers perception, and the state structure. Therefore, neoclassical realism helps explain how the United States and Russia have focused on different policies in the Arctic regarding energy security and natural resources. President Obama emphasised the importance of protecting the fragile Arctic climate, whereas President Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin focused on the development of oil and gas exploration in the Arctic in an attempt to increase their material power capabilities in the region. These changes in domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic by President Obama, President Trump and Vladimir Putin supports the neoclassical argument of the necessity of studying the opinions of policymakers.

CHAPTER 5

MILITARY/STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

5.1. How Has Russia`s Domestic and Foreign Policies Changed on Military/Strategic Priorities in the Arctic?

During the Cold War, the Arctic was a region of strategic confrontation. During this period the region was heavily militarized and politically sensitive. In the Kola peninsula, the Soviet Union and its Northern Fleet had access to the Atlantic Ocean, an ocean that was vital to their military strategy. One of the reasons that this region was so important was that it represented the shortest flight path for Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and intercontinental bombers between the Soviet Union and the United States (Aliyev, 2019). The Arctic was equally central to the United States, and its allies. The most important strategic objective for the US and its allies was to protect the sea routes between Europe and America (Østerud; Horneland, 2013).

The military significance of the Arctic decreased throughout the 1990s. The Arctic went from being a region where the threat of military confrontation was high, to a region where the common agenda among the Arctic countries were focusing on environmental protection, research cooperation and economic interests (Byers, 2017). The US forces abandoned the Keflavik base in 2006, which is located in Iceland, and this was yet another sign that cooperation was now the main interest in the Arctic. Another sign of the decreased military activity in the region was the nuclear capabilities of the Soviet Union and later Russia in the region. In 1989, the Soviet Union had around 200 operational nuclear submarines in the region, and seven years later, in 1996, only half of these were still in service (Federation of American Scientists, 2000).

In the 1990s, the Russia was focused on the Chechen war. The army now found themselves in a position where they could no longer conduct operations in the Arctic. The Russian Navy was also affected by the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It saw its share of the defence budget drop by fourteen percent, down to only nine percent (Laurelle, 2014). This meant that the Russian government had to undertake huge modernization efforts of it navy, and that is exactly what they did. In 2001 the Russian government launched an ambitious plan to transform the navy into the second most powerful navy in the world in within the next twenty years. (Laurelle, 2014).

In order to become the second most powerful navy in the world, Russia also saw the need to upgrade its aerial activity. The Russian Air Force have for years been seen as old and obsolete, Russian flights over the Arctic fell from over 500 per year during the Soviet period to less than 30 during the 1990s. However, during the late 2000s, the Russian government has had an increased attention to upgrading the Russian Air Force. The result of this is an increased number of flights over the Arctic from 11 intercepts of Russian warplanes in the period of 1992 – 2005 to more than 45 intercepts from 2006-2011 (Lasserre; Tetu, 2016). Another example is the year 2010, where Russian strategic bombers carried out 10 missions in the vicinity of Norwegian airspace, this is just two less than the two previous years combined (Laurelle, 2014).

In recent years, the arctic countries have also been publishing official Arctic strategies. Russia has published several official Arctic strategies covering various topics. In 2009, Russia published its latest official strategy document for the Arctic. In this document, the Russian government differentiated their interests in the Arctic under four different areas, these are: (i) National interests; (ii) Strategic priorities; (iii) Measures of realization of the policy, and (iv) Mechanisms of realization of the policy (Suvanto, 2016).

In this document the two most important interests they mention that are most relevant to my thesis, concern national interests and strategic priorities. As Russia's national interests in the Arctic, they highlight four different areas. These are:

> "Using the Russian Arctic as a strategic resource base in order to solve social and economic development problems; maintaining peace and cooperation in the Arctic; preserving the unique ecological systems of the Arctic; and using the Northern Sea Route for national transport" (Suvanto, 2016, p. 24).

As for their strategy they list the following: "improving the quality of life of the indigenous peoples; modernizing and developing the Arctic transportation infrastructure; strengthening regional cooperation; and delimiting the maritime spaces in the Arctic Ocean" (Suvanto, 2016, p. 24).

The Arctic has gone from being a heavily militarized region during the Cold War to a region characterised by cooperation between all the countries involved in the Arctic. However, the region has seen an increase of interest by the actors involved in the region as well as an increased military presence in recent years.

5.1.1. Modernization of Russia`s Military Capabilities in the Arctic

Russia is prioritizing to defend what they call their historic right to rule over the region as well as securing their territorial interest in the Arctic against NATO-allied nations (Department of Defense, 2021). Since 2008, Russia emphasised the development of military basses in the Arctic as well as holding military exercises. In addition to this Putin also intends to create new military groups in Murmansk a force of more than 6000 soldiers, less than 100km from the Norwegian border (Suvanto, 2016). Since 2010, Russia invested over $1billion to upgrade 13 of their airfields in the region in order to improve their search and rescue capabilities. They also invested in technological upgrades, such as upgrading their radar stations including the development of Sopka-2 radar systems. The Russian government also announced that their intentions of increasing the number of missile defence units deployed across their Arctic territory. The increased power projection by Russia highlights their ability to deny access to the Barents Sea for the NATO or U.S. forces either by land, sea, or air (Department of Defence, 2021).

It is projected that the missions of the Northern Fleet will be more connected to protecting the economic interests of Russia in the Arctic (Laurelle, 2014). As a result, almost half of the Russian northern fleet, which now represents about 60 percent of the entire Russian Navy will be stationed near Novaya Zemlya. This archipelago is one of the most important strategic positions in the Arctic since it allows for Russia to monitor and control the Northern Sea Route (Suvanto, 2016).

The private Russian companies are also projected to accompany the military more than before. For instance, in 2005, the Russian navy and Gazprom signed an agreement that Gazprom could use the navy`s ports and naval military sites. Laurelle argues that the increased importance of the energy sector in the area indicates that the economy will take priority over security in the Arctic for years to come. (Laurelle, 2014). The reason for this is that the development of Russian military infrastructure seems to focus on protecting other Russian interests in the region such as their energy infrastructure

In 2019, Russia announced their withdrawal from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) agreement as a response to the U.S. who had announced that it was suspending its participation because of what the U.S. saw as several Russian treaty violations. Regardless of increased tensions between the U.S. and Russia, the two nations still seem to work constructively in the Arctic council as well as bilaterally (Conley; Melino, 2019).

In the last few years, the number of military exercises as well as military activities have increased by both NATO and Russia. Both parties have relocated military personnel, as well as

other capabilities into the Arctic in levels not seen since the Cold War. One example of the increased military activity in the Artic is the 2017 Zapad exercise in Russia, which involved between sixty to seventy thousand troops and more than seventy aircrafts as well as more than two hundred and fifty tanks (Conley; Melino, 2019). One year later, in 2018, NATO responded with a military exercise in Norway called Trident Juncture. This was the largest military NATO exercise in the Arctic since the Cold War and included more than fifty thousand military personnel from NATO and their partner countries (Conley; Melino, 2019). Does the increase in military activity mean that we are facing a global militarization of the Arctic?

The Russian President Vladimir Putin refused the allegations that Russia is militarizing the Arctic even though they have heavily invested in new and upgraded military infrastructure in the Arctic. Putin claims that "Those concerns are absolutely unfounded" (Staalesen, 2021). Putin also said that Russia is only restoring what they lost after the fall of the Soviet Union, claiming that Russia is willing to cooperate with the other nations in the Arctic, stating "I told our colleagues that I see no reason for concern. On the contrary, I am deeply convinced that we can cooperate and must cooperate in this direction. I do not see any problem [in the region] that we cannot solve" (Staalesen, 2021). The Russian President also emphasized that Russia is according to him:

> "Fully complying with international law on the Northern Sea Route, the waters that connect the North Atlantic and Barents Sea with the Pacific, and that international ship traffic, both commercial and military, will have smooth sailing through the area. A coastal state is committed to provide peaceful passage, including for military vessels" (Staalesen, 2021).

Although there has been an increase of military presence in the region in the last fifteen years, this activity should not be compared to the post-Cold War era, but rather to that of the Soviet period. On this matter, Norway stated that "The Russian activities represent a return to a more normal level of activity for a major power with legitimate interests in the region" (Laurelle, 2014, p. 173). The majority of new Russian structures also seek to patrol and protect national territories from nonconventional challenges, rather than preparing for any kind of interstate conflict. There are still some uncertainties, and that is the lack of institutionalized channels of discussion. There are some channels, mainly the Arctic Council. There is also the presence of NATO in the area (Laurelle, 2014).

Neoclassical realism argues that the international system is anarchical, therefore these types of platforms will not work. However, the distribution of material power capabilities is what

changes the international system. Therefore, Russia is trying to increase their military capabilities by developing and modernizing their Arctic military capabilities. The reason for this is that since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy has been driven by the thought of balance of power, in order to challenge the American dominance at that time (Varol, 2013).

5.2. The Development of U.S. Military and Strategic Policies in the Arctic

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the shared challenges of operating in the Arctic have been characterized by collaboration and cooperation between the countries involved in the Arctic. This status quo has however change in recent years. Russia has developed Arctic strategies which collide with U.S. interests. Russia seems to focus on strengthening their territorial claims in the region as well as advancing their military capabilities in the area and develop their natural resources in the region. The United States has seen this development by Russia as something that creates the risk for the Arctic to turn into a contested space where the United States will pursue the potential of using military as well as their economic power to gain influence in the area. (Department of Defence, 2021).

In 2009 the United States published their Arctic strategies. In this document, the United States specified six different goals it had in the Arctic. The first was to realise national and homeland interests where the United States stated their intentions of improving their infrastructure in the region, as well as increasing their Arctic military capabilities (The White House Washington, 2013). Their second goal was to continue protecting the Arctic environment as well as attempting to increase their scientific knowledge of the Arctic environment. The strengthening of international cooperation in the region was their third goal, aiming at enhancing the regional security (The White House Washington, 2013). The fourth goal announced by the U.S. was to keep the Arctic as an area free of conflict (The White House Washington, 2013). Increasing the cooperation between federal government and the private sector to protect the U.S. strategic priorities in the Artic was the fifth goal. The last goal was to enhance the relationship between the government and the native populations in Alaska (The White House Washington, 2013).

Four years later, in 2013 they published another document, called *National Strategy for the Arctic Region* (Suvanto, 2016). In this document the United States Stated that "the United States will be advancing their interests in the Arctic by pursuing responsible stewardship of the region, as well as strengthening international cooperation in the area" (Suvanto, 2016, p. 27).

The Arctic as a region is particularly vulnerable to a quick change in the geopolitical dynamic compared to other regions. This is because the region lacks a large, settled population in the Arctic as well as a robust governmental presence in the region. In addition to this the region lack economic and military infrastructure. This makes it particularly attractive for competition over the influence in the region by the great powers involved in the region (Department of Defence, 2021). The U.S. military has contributed to changing the dynamic in the Arctic through investing in their Arctic military capabilities, as well as increasing the Arctic training for U.S. soldiers and increasing the number of U.S. led exercises in the Arctic (Department of Defence, 2021).

5.2.1. The Obama Administration Versus the Trump Administration's Approach to the Arctic

The Obama administration regarded the environmental protection of the Arctic as a pivotal part of their national security strategy for the Arctic. During the Obama administration they created several new administration positions in order to emphasise the importance of the Arctic when it comes to climate change (Conley; Melino, 2019). The Obama administration also managed its Arctic Council Chairmanship. This chairmanship rotates every two years among the Arctic states, as a chairman you are able to set the agenda for the upcoming two years, thus holding the chairmanship gives the country an opportunity to promote parts of their foreign policies to the Arctic Council (U.S. Department of State, 2017). The Obama administration also increased the amount of federally protected lands and waters within their Arctic territories as well as minimizing the development in the area that could potentially damage the environmental protection efforts made by the administration.

With the election of Donald Trump in 2017, the United States' priorities changed dramatically. In June 2020, the Trump Administration released their first presidential memo on the Arctic. Previous U.S. strategic documents regarding the Arctic had hinted at an emphasis on the geopolitical importance of the Arctic, this memo however explicitly called stated plans to launch three heavy icebreakers by 2029 as well as establishing four support bases in the arctic (Li, 2020). The focus of the Trump administrations Arctic policy was overwhelmingly on the Military focusing on catching up with Russia who had been developing their Arctic military capabilities long before the United States. Under the Trump administration, the U.S. stated plans to launch six new icebreakers in order to address their lack of icebreakers compared to Russia. The United States also increased the number of military exercises in the Arctic during the Trump administration as well as conducting the first U.S. military exercise in the Barents

Sea since the fall of the Soviet Union (Li, 2020). This exercise came as a response to a Russian military exercise that was held in the Barents Sea, of the coast of Alaska earlier that year (Garamone, 2020).

5.2.2. NATO`s Role in the Arctic

The rising power competition in the Arctic has raised the question as to the future of the Arctic. Will the Arctic be characterized by cooperation and low tensions between nations as it has been since the fall of the Soviet Union, or will it be characterised by competition and increased tensions like it was throughout the Cold War? This rising power competition creates a potential challenge to what has been referred to as the "Arctic spirit", a tradition of cooperation, low tensions and attempts of diplomatic resolution of disputes as well as respect for the international laws, especially since the creation the of the Arctic Council in 1996 (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The rising power competition in the Arctic has led to a renewed interest in the Arctic from NATO (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The future of the Arctic for NATO has been an issue highly debated within NATO as well as other observers. Russia and President Putin have also expressed their disapproval to the idea of an increased involvement in the Arctic by NATO (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

During the Cold War, the oceans around Norway was considered to be the northern flank of NATO`s against the Soviet Union. This did however change with the fall of the Soviet Union, and the possibilities of a Russian aggression were seen as minimal. In the post-Cold War era, the NATO members shifted focus away from the Arctic towards other regions outside of Europe (Congressional Research Service, 2021). This seems however to have shifted again. With the great power competition in the Arctic once again rising NATO now seems to once again focusing more on how to deter potential aggression by the Russians in the Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Because of this shift in focus, Norway and its adjacent sea areas are once again receiving an increased attention by NATO. A clear example of that is the increased number of military exercises as well as the sizes of them. One of these exercises are Trident Juncture 18, a military NATO exercise that was lasted for 13 days and was held in Norway as well as the Baltic and the Norwegian Sea. All the 29 NATO members participated in the exercises plus non-NATO members Sweden and Finland. The NATO exercise was at that time described as the largest NATO exercise sine the Cold War, and because of the location of the exercise featured a strong

Arctic element. The exercise was also the first time a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier crosses into the Arctic Circle since the fall of the Soviet Union (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The approaches taken by NATO to again militarize the Arctic can hinder the cooperation that has previously taken place in the region. However, according to the congressional research service, the security issues in the arctic as well as the rising power competition can be seen as an exaggeration and the Arctic states and the other nations that has interests in the region should instead attempt to keep the region`s tradition of an "Arctic spirit" that is rooted in cooperation and low tensions. This has as previously mentioned worked to prevent the competition and tensions that have emerged in other parts of the world in recent years from happening in the Arctic. The congressional research service also argue that the increased emphasis on the security issues will hinder the work done by the Arctic states on issues such as climate change (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Considering how the U.S. is playing a pioneering role in NATO, the U.S. are influencing the policies of NATO in the Arctic, thus contributing to an increase in the militarization of the Arctic. The congressional research service argues that the actors that are involved in the Arctic should instead focus on managing the rising power competition and the tensions that are occurring in the region so that the other issues in the region can continue to be resolved as successfully as the conditions allow them (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

However, trying to preserve the Arctic as a region of low tensions may result in aggressive behaviour from Russia or China. In a U.S. Congressional Service Report prepared for Members and Committees of the Congress, they stated that:

> "Attempting to maintain the Arctic as a region of cooperation and low tensions, though well-intentioned, could actually help encourage aggressive behaviour by Russia or China in other parts of the world by giving those two countries confidence that their aggressive behaviour in other parts of the world would not result in punitive costs being imposed on them in the Arctic. maintaining the Arctic as a region of cooperation and low tensions in spite of aggressive Russian or Chinese actions elsewhere could help legitimize those aggressive actions and provide little support to peaceful countries elsewhere that might be attempting to resist them. This could facilitate a divide-and-conquer strategy by Russia or China in their relations with other countries, which in the long run could leave Arctic states with fewer allies and partners in other parts of the world for resisting unwanted Russian or Chinese actions in the Arctic" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 19).

5.2.3. American Rearmament in the Arctic?

The renewed interest from other great powers in the Arctic has raised questions about the United States' priorities and funding for the region. When the Arctic was generally characterized by low tensions and cooperation, U.S. policymakers may have viewed the region as requiring less attention and resources. However, after many years of unmet budgetary demands, the United States now appears to be addressing the deficiencies in its Arctic presence (Li, 2020).

DeHart stated that:

> "If you look at what is happening in our system over the last couple of months, you will see that we are launching a comprehensive and an integrated diplomatic approach and engagement in the Arctic region," and that "in a few years, people will look back at this summer [of 2020] and see it as an important pivot point, a turning point, with a more sustained and enduring attention by the United States to the Arctic region" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 20/21).

Yet the U.S. policymakers will have to face several challenges. The U.S. policymakers have to define the real challenges in the Arctic and focus on the threats that they consider most urgent as well as balance their military and non-military responses in the region (Li, 2020). On the other hand, renewed power competition is not just happening in the Arctic. There is also a rising great power competition in other regions. Some argue that these regions are also in need of increased attention and resources by the U.S. policymakers. The Arctic sees itself competing against other regions for the attention and resources by U.S. policymakers. One example of this occurred in January 2020, when more than 3000 military forces could not participate in a military exercise in Norway because the U.S. saw the need for them to perform missions in other regions instead of the Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Conley and Melino argue that the United States policies towards the Arctic have remained the same over a long period of time with a continued focus on international cooperation rather than developing their military power capabilities in the region. An example of this is the lack of funding for the U.S. Coast Guard. The U.S. Coast Guard is the U.S. agency with the most responsibility for protecting American Arctic waters. Despite this responsibility, the agency is in dire need for funding. As of 2009, the U.S. Coast Guard was only capable of a limited presence in the region, from July to October (Conley; Melino, 2019).

Despite what seems like a greater desire by U.S. policymakers for Arctic economic development, the U.S. Arctic infrastructure remains outdated and with a very limited budget. After years of negligence of the development of U.S. power capabilities in the Arctic, the result is that the United States is now struggling to maintain their presence in the region as other nations have prioritised and are prioritising the Arctic as a region of future geostrategic value (Conley; Melino, 2019). What are the United States doing to decrease the gap between them and other Arctic nations in terms of technology and military capabilities?

In May 2018, the U.S. Navy announced that it would re-establish the 2nd Fleet. The 2nd Fleet was created in 1950 and was the leading U.S. fleet tasked with countering Soviet naval forces in the Arctic during the Cold War but was disestablished in 2011. The 2nd Fleet has reportedly been tasked to focus on countering Russian naval forces in the Arctic as well as the North Atlantic since it was re-established in August 2018 (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

One year later, the U.S. Navy announced that it would send a Navy warship through Arctic waters in the near future on a freedom of navigation (FON) operation in order to assert U.S. navigational rights in the Arctic. This announcement would make it the first time the U.S. Navy performed a FON operation in the Arctic. At the time some observers heavily criticised the operation for provoking regional tensions in the region (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

In January 2021, the United States announced a new Arctic Strategy. This strategy laid out how the U.S. intends to generate, train, organize and equip their Army in order to secure national interests and maintain regional stability (U.S. Army Public Affairs, 2021). This strategy emphasizes the importance of especially four things:

> "(1) Establish a multi-Domain enabled operational two-star headquarters with specially trained and equipped combat brigades to increase our cold-weather dominance. (2) Improve the materiel readiness of Arctic-capable units to conduct extended operations in the Arctic region. (3) improve individual and collective training of our forces to operate in the region as well as other mountainous and high-altitude environments. (4) improve the quality of life for our Soldiers, civilians and families who live and work in installations and facilities in the Arctic region" (U.S. Army Public Affairs, 2021, p. 1).

The U.S. Department of Defence claims that by implementing this strategy the United States will: "Be able to project power from, within, and into the Arctic to conduct and sustain extended operations in competition, crisis, and conflict from a position of advantage" (Department of Defence, 2021, p. 22). This will be important to the U.S. because in most regions the region is

either a power projection platform or a region that receives forces from elsewhere, the Arctic however has the potential to become both. The reason for this is the unique geographic placement of the Arctic, where it lays within the area of responsibilities of the United States, their NATO allies, their partners as well as Russia. Depending on the specific threat, the Arctic has the potential of being a front line of defence or a platform to further strengthen a nations power projection. The military personnel and infrastructure operating in the Arctic are dependent on the ability to operate in various different ways depending on not only the threat, but also how to remain sustainable in the harsh Arctic climate (Department of Defence, 2021).

Everstine questions whether the DOD or the Coast Guard are allocating the necessary resources for defending U.S. interests in the region. This issue has emerged as a topic for congressional oversight (Everstine, 2021). On June 17, 2021, a press report stated that: "The Pentagon's 2022 budget is light on funding for defending the Arctic, but Defence Department officials expect future funding requests to rise with the region's growing importance" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 48).

When testifying before the Senate Appropriations defence subcommittee, Defence Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III said that the current fiscal 2022 request only provides "some capability" for the Arctic, adding, "We have to better resource our Arctic efforts in the future" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 48).

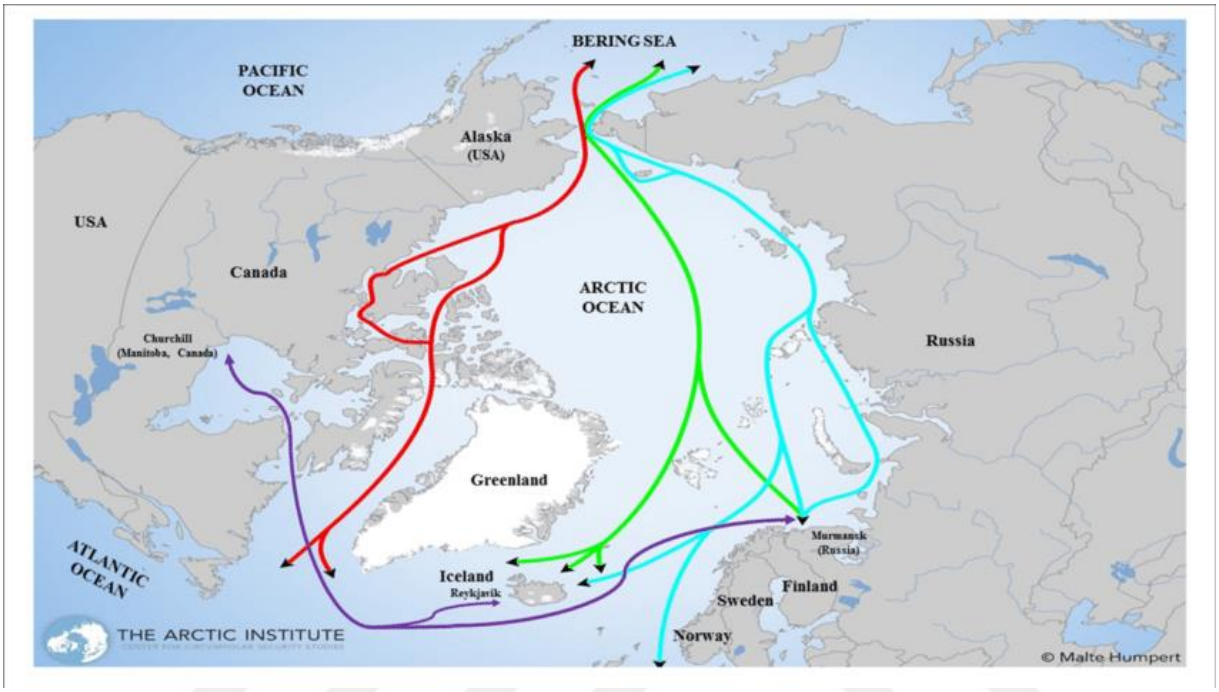
Conley and Melino argues that even though the U.S. believe that their current approaches to the Arctic is sufficient, Russia have taken earlier long-term views of the region and how to expand their economic and military capabilities as well as launching these strategies earlier than the U.S (Conley; Melino, 2019). The United States on the other hand has just in recent years begun to question whether their recent strategies towards the Arctic have been sufficient in order to reach the goals set by the U.S. policymakers (Conley; Melino, 2019). The recent changes in the geopolitical dynamic in the region as well as actions taken by the U.S` great power competitors, requires the U.S. to refocus and analyse their options in order to improve their Arctic capabilities and catch up with their competitors (Conley; Melino, 2019).

This chapter has discussed the changes in U.S. and Russian policies regarding their military and strategic priorities. This thesis has argued that although there has been an increased military activity by both the United States and Russia in the Arctic, in order to call it a return of great power competition in the region, one must compare it not to the activity during the post-Cold War, but instead to that of the Soviet period. The military activity in the Arctic now is minimal

when compared to the Soviet period. In addition to this, the majority of Russian military development in the region seems to focus on protecting the energy development in the region rather than preparing for interstate conflict.

CHAPTER 6

TRADE ROUTES



Source: The Arctic Institute

Figure 1. Map of the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route

There has always been a search for a shorter route from the Atlantic to Asia, and now with the ice in the Arctic Ocean melting two new possibilities might open. These two are the Northwest Passage (NWP) and the Northeast Passage better known as the Northern Sea Route (NSR). The melting ice in The Arctic Ocean raises the possibility of saving several days of sailing as well as thousands of miles between the Atlantic and Asia. The Northwest Passage, marked in red, runs through the Canadian Arctic Islands. The Northwest Passage has several potential routes. Its southern route goes through the Peel Sound in Nunavut in the south. This route consists of mainly one-year ice and has been open in recent summers, but not during the winter. The Northern route however goes through the Macclure Strait from Baffin Bay to Beaufort Sea, just north of the American State Alaska. This route has been highly prioritized from ocean carriers because it is more direct than the other route, however it is more likely to get ice blockages on this route. The Northwest Passage is seen as a less commercially possible route than the Northern Sea Route and Cargo ship transit through this route is very rare (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The other potential trading route in the Arctic Ocean, the Northern Sea Route marked in blue runs along Russia`s northern borders, from Murmansk in the West to Provideniya in the East. This trading route was opened in 1931 solely as a domestic shipping route, and in 1991 it was open from transit by foreign vessels (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The NSR is by far the shortest shipping route between the European and the Asian market. An ice-free Northern Sea Route could make the shipping from Western-Europe to the markets in the Far East up to 20-40 percent shorter, making it at least 13 days shorter than current route through the Suez Canal (Laurelle, 2014). The NSR has seen an immense increase in traffic. In 1997, only two ships sailed through the NSR, and the number of transits has increased from 48 in 2012 to more than 80 in 2021. The amount of cargo has also increased, in 2012 less than 3 million tons of cargo sailed through the NSR compared to more than 35 million tons in 2021 (The High North News, 2022).

Even though the new shipping routes are a lot shorter than the ones through the Suez Canal, they are still more dangerous due to its harsh climate and ice conditions, which is why the Northern Sea Route will not be able to play a bigger role than it currently is at the moment. That is why improvements and further technological advancements on the Russian infrastructure are one of the key factors that the Russian governments needs to address when it comes to Arctic shipping (Suvanto, 2016).

The ramifications of the possible year-round opening of these two trading routes are enormous, in a report to the U.S Senate from the United States Department of State they list the following as a potential outcome of the opening of these two trading routes:

> "Lower shipping costs could be advantageous for China (at least its northeast region), Japan, and South Korea because their manufactured products exported to Europe or North America could become less expensive relative to other emerging manufacturing centres in Southeast Asia, such as India. Melting ice could potentially open up two trans-Arctic routes" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 57/58).

6.1. Regulations of Arctic Shipping

The maritime trading nations have all adopted international treaties in terms of safety, pollution regulations and security for ocean carriers in various degrees. All these standards are agreed upon by the shipping nations through a United Nations agency that was founded in 1959 called the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

One of these agreements is the International Convention for the Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS) sets the minimum safety standards on the construction, equipment and operation of merchant ships. There are however some deficiencies in this agreement since it is not specific to the polar regions. In or to fix some of the deficiencies in SOLAS, a new IMO polar code went into effect in 2017 (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The agreement contains the following regarding safety measures in the Arctic:

"The code applies to passenger and cargo ships of 500 gross tons or more engaged in international voyages. It does not apply to fishing vessels, military vessels, pleasure yachts, or smaller cargo ships. The polar requirements are intended to improve safety and prevent pollution in the Arctic, and they include provisions on ship construction, ship equipment related to navigation, and crew training and ship operation. The code requires ships to carry fully or partially enclosed lifeboats. The code requires that the crew have training in ice navigation" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 61/62).

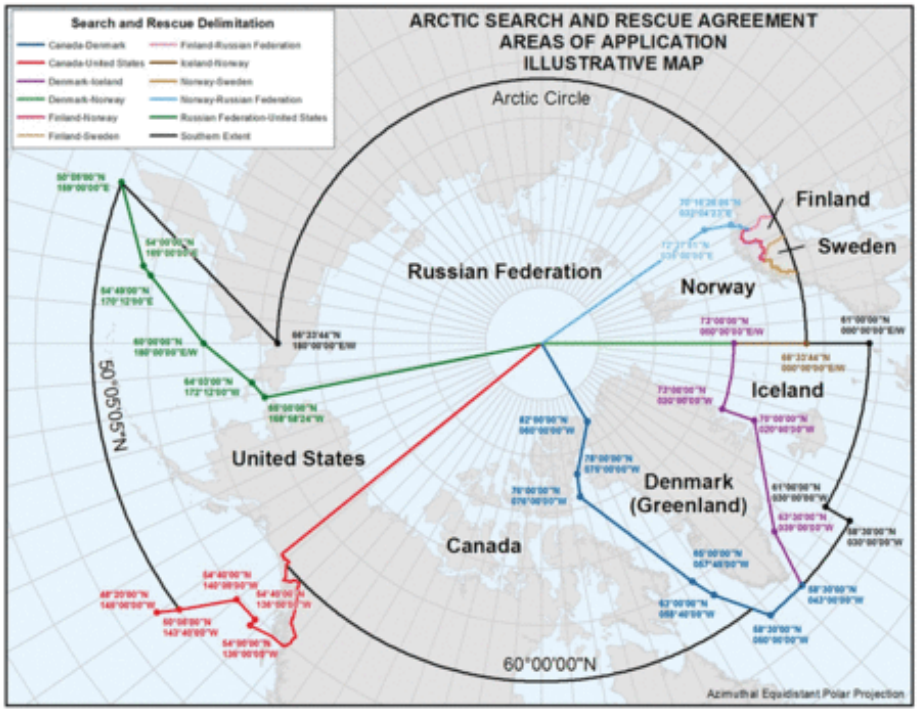
Nations are free to add additional requirements on shipping that are arriving at their own ports or travelling through their coastal waters, and there are differences among the countries. For example, the United States regulations mostly follow IMO conventions, but they have added some requirements in some of their areas. The United States coastal states can if they see it deemed require ships at their ports to take additional safety and pollution precautions. Russia has also added additional pollution regulations to their territory in Arctic waters (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Some argue that Russia has added these additional pollution regulations not because they have an increased interest in protecting the fragile Arctic climate, but rather using this as a bargaining chip. The reason for this is that since Russia implemented this pollution regulations, they have themselves focused on proposing less strict rules than in the agreement (Bognar, 2016). So why are Russia proposing less strict pollution prevention rules, even though they have previously agreed to implement additional pollution regulations? Some argue that the reason that Russia is doing this is because even though it would be more financially feasible to not implement these additional pollution regulations, Russia still has the possibility to publicly announce themselves as a nation that wishes to preserve the fragile Arctic climate, yet they are able to negotiate on other aspects of the arctic that might benefit them in the long run (Bognar, 2016).

The reasoning for Russia`s action can be explained by Elena Kropatcheva, she claims that when it comes to the energy sector, Russia has pursued both political and economic objectives where

the interests of the state as well as well as Russian energy companies has overlapped at certain times. However, when there have been cases where the economic and political interests have differed, then the Russian government has decided to prioritize the political interests, even if it harms the economic interests. This is according to Kropatcheva a classic realist case (Maratov, 2017).

6.2. Search and Rescue



Source: Arctic Portal

Figure 2. Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement. Illustrative map.

In May 2011, the Arctic council signed the *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic* (Arctic Council, 2011). One of the key features of this agreement was Article 3, an article that divides the Arctic into different areas where a party are accountable for conducting search and rescue operations. The article states the following: "the delimitation of search and rescue regions is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundary between States or their sovereignty, sovereign rights or jurisdiction," and that "each party shall promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue capability within its area" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 55/56).

The Arctic Maritime Safety Cooperation project of the Finnish Border Guard, in partnership with the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, undertook a survey of Arctic SAR capabilities in 2017. This survey found that the parties responsible for SAR in the Arctic are facing a number of challenges. Some of these challenges include long distances, severe weather, unpredictable ice and cold conditions, lack of communication network, lack of infrastructure as well as outdated equipment. These are all according to the survey a major challenge for maritime safety and SAR in the Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The survey has recommended the following improvements from the parties involved in SAR in the Arctic:

> "Enhanced practical cooperation between the stakeholders involved in Arctic SAR such as coast guards, rescue centers, other authorities, industry groups, private operators, academia, and volunteer organizations. Encourage further information sharing on infrastructure projects and resource assets, Automatic Identification System and weather data, emergency plans and standard operating procedures, as well as exercises and lessons learned via a common database. Furthermore, develop joint courses specifically intended for Arctic SAR and to establish a working group that examines new innovations and technological developments, are recommended as potential initiatives for improving practical international cooperation" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 54).

The countries responsible for Arctic Search and Rescue have recognized that there is a need to develop their infrastructure, develop a further advanced information sharing between the emergency authorities as well as other participants involved in search and rescue operations. They also aim to increase the joint training between the parties responsible for the SAR areas, as well as an attempt at developing their technology in communication networks, navigation, and rescue equipment in order to improve the search and rescue capabilities of all parties involved in the Arctic (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Although all the Arctic states have acknowledged and supports the overall goal of limiting the potential damage to the environment in the Arctic, the increased interest in growing the shipping activity in the region has led to several calling this out as misleading due to the lack of proper infrastructure in case an incident does occur. Claiming that the Arctic is not ready for an increase of shipping in the area, until the required infrastructure is in place (Arctis Knowledege hub, 2009).

6.3. How has the U.S. Domestic and Foreign Policies Changed on Trade Routes in the Arctic?

One of the concerns for U.S. policymakers is the fact that the NSR can potentially become a key shipping route between the European and the Asian market. Russia considers the NSR as a part of internal Russian waters, the United States on the other hand considers the Northern Sea Route to be international waters. This dispute between the United States and Russia can implicate not only the U.S-Russian relations and the issue of the Arctic, but it can also have ramifications for other countries and other parts of the world, for instance the South China Sea. The reason for this is that since international law is universal in its application, a successful challenge by the United States in one part of the world has the potential to serve as a precedent for challenging it in other parts of the world (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The Issue between Russia and the United States has however been a latent conflict for many years. This would however change in March 2019, when Russia announced the following:

> "The Russian government has elaborated a set of rules for foreign naval vessels' sailing on the Northern Sea Route. The foreign state must send a notification about the voyage at least 45 days ahead of its start. Included will have to be the name of the ship, its objective, route and period of sailing, as well as ship characteristics such as length, width, deadweight, draft and type of engine power. Also, the name of the ship captain must be listed. The ships must also have on board a Russian maritime pilot. In case the voyage is not conducted in line with the regulations, Russia will have the right to take extraordinary measures including its forced halt, arrest and in extreme cases elimination" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 25).

The United States has a severe shortcoming when it comes to its ability to conduct search and rescue operations, this shortcoming is the location of its current Coast Guard operating base. It could take the Coast Guard aircrafts several hours to reach a ship in distress or a drowned aircraft in the Arctic water. The situation is even worse for the Coast Guard cutters which can take days or even weeks to reach the ones who are in distress. The Coast Guard has stated that "The closest Coast Guard Air Station to the Arctic is located in Kodiak, AK, approximately 820 nautical miles south of Utqiagvik, AK, which is nearly the same distance as from Boston, MA, to Miami, FL" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 54). There is not just the distance to consider, in addition to this long distance the harsh climate in the Arctic also complicates the search and rescue operations in the Arctic

The United States has seen the need for upgrading their Arctic infrastructure. The United States Committee on the Marine Transportation System identified a list of infrastructure improvements for Arctic navigation in 2013. The report issues a need for the United States to prioritize the improvements for Arctic navigation, especially its information infrastructure, i.e., weather forecasting, nautical charting, and ship tracking. The report also emphasises the need to improve the emergency response capabilities for ships in distress (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The U.S Army Corps of Engineers, accompanied by the state of Alaska are also conducting studies on the possibilities of upgrading the U.S infrastructure in the Arctic, especially upgrading their ports in the area (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 28/29).

6.4. How has Russia`s Domestic and Foreign Policies Changed on Trade Routes in the Arctic?

It is not just natural resources that are driving the Arctic disputes. Russia and the other Arctic countries understand that making a profit on the oil and gas resources in the Arctic is quite challenging in the near future. Instead, Russia is focusing on other things as well to dominate the trade in the Arctic. With the potential of The Northeast Passage, also known as The Northern Sea Route (NSR), that runs along the Russian Arctic coast.

Shipping in the Arctic poses a number of different challenges. Although climate change is causing the Arctic Ocean to become ice-free in the summer, this does not necessarily imply that the ocean will be ice-free in the long run. Ice can accumulate quickly in a variety of locations, posing a significant risk of collision. In addition to this, it is highly likely that there will be an increase in the frequency of ice-storms as well as coastal erosion (Laurelle, 2014). As a result of this shipping companies that plan on shipping through or inside the Arctic Ocean will have to upgrade and make several ice-class vessels designed to handle the harsh climate of the Arctic, which adds to the financial costs of Shipping through the Arctic (Laurelle, 2014).

The lack of necessary operational rescue system is another challenge for traveling in the Arctic Ocean. Russia`s response to this is a planned upgrade of their naval fleet. Russia plans to develop the next generation of its icebreaker fleet, designed to support navigation in the Northern Sea Route. However, despite these planned improvements, the question remains as to how the 14,000 kilometres of Russian coastline will be secured (Laurelle, 2014).

Another challenge that the Russians are facing is the lack of infrastructure. At the moment, the existing navigation aids and radio stations are largely insufficient and their Arctic coastline is reportedly not covered by radio, and Russia has to purchase such information from the United

States and Canada. In response to the lack of infrastructure, the Russian government plans to establish a new-generation international telecommunications network named Polarnet in order to create a unified communication space in the region (Laurelle, 2014).

This need for technological improvements can be shown through the changes of Russian policies regarding the Northern Sea Route. Most national decisions related to the economic growth of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF) in recent years have emphasized the Northern Sea Route's critical role in the development of the Arctic (Schneider, 2018).

In December 2019 Russia launched the *Northern Sea Route Infrastructure Development Plan for the period 2020 up to 2035.* Alexandra Middleton, scientist at the Institution of Engineering and Technology in England stated that:

> "This document appears to be a roadmap full of solutions yet to be realized. However, there is no denying the determination of the Russian state to invest in the NSR and make it a safe and attractive international shipping route in the future" (Middleton, 2020).

To the Russians, the Northern Sea Route is above all a domestic Route, and a major part of their strategy for developing the Arctic region. The Russian government hopes to increase Arctic shipping and is ready to pay the price to overcome the necessary technological challenges. The private companies involved in Arctic shipping on the other hand have set far more limited goals. As Marlene Laurelle wrote in her book *Russia's Arctic Strategies and the Future of the Far North*: "Even if the Arctic becomes an ice-free ocean, the technological challenges, the financial cost and unpredictability do not guarantee its transformation into a major trading route" (Laurelle, 2014, p. 232).

This is also visible when you consider the shipping activity in the Northern Sea Route. In a report to the U.S Senate from the United States Department of State they found the following regarding the shipping traffic in the Arctic:

> "Most cargo ship activity currently taking place in the Arctic is to transport natural resources from the Arctic to the Russian mainland, or to deliver general cargo and supplies to communities and natural resource extraction facilities. Thus, cargo ship traffic in the Arctic presently is mostly regional, not trans-Arctic. While there has been a recent uptick in Arctic shipping activity, this activity has more to do with a spike in commodity prices than it does with the melting of Arctic ice. Even so, fewer ships ply the Arctic seas now than in the past. The NSR continues to account for the bulk of Arctic shipping activity" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 58).

This thesis argues that to the Russians, the NSR is mainly a domestic Route, and a major part of their strategy for developing the Arctic region. Russian government hopes to increase Arctic shipping and is attempting to develop the necessary technology and infrastructure. However, the NSR is expected to remain a domestic route, with Russia using the NSR mainly as a tool to develop their energy production in the region, thus further developing their material capabilities in the Arctic.

CHAPTER 7

UNCLOS

7.1. The Context

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international treaty that established the rules governing all uses of the oceans as well as their resources. The history of the UNCLOS we know today dates back to 1956 in Geneva, Switzerland where the United Nations held its first Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1) replacing the previous "Freedom of the Seas" concept. This meeting resulted in four international treaties: "(i)The convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone, (ii) convention on the Continental Shelf, (iii) Convention on the High Seas and the Convention on Fishing, and (iv) Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas" (United Nations, 2022). All of them entered into force within 1966, one of the countries who would become a party of UNCLOS was the United States, following the consent from the U.S. Senate ratified the agreement and became a party in 1961(Congressional Research Service, 2021). This thesis will later in this chapter examine in greater detail why the U.S. has not ratified UNCLOS.

There was however an issue with UNCLOS 1. This agreement had neglected the desire from several countries to extend national claims to include mineral resources, protection of fish stocks as well as means to enforce pollution controls. This desire to extend their national claims had started all the way back in 1945 when the President of the United States Harry S. Truman extended the United States control to all the natural resources of its continental shelf, thereby extending its territorial seas to a distance of 200 nautical miles (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

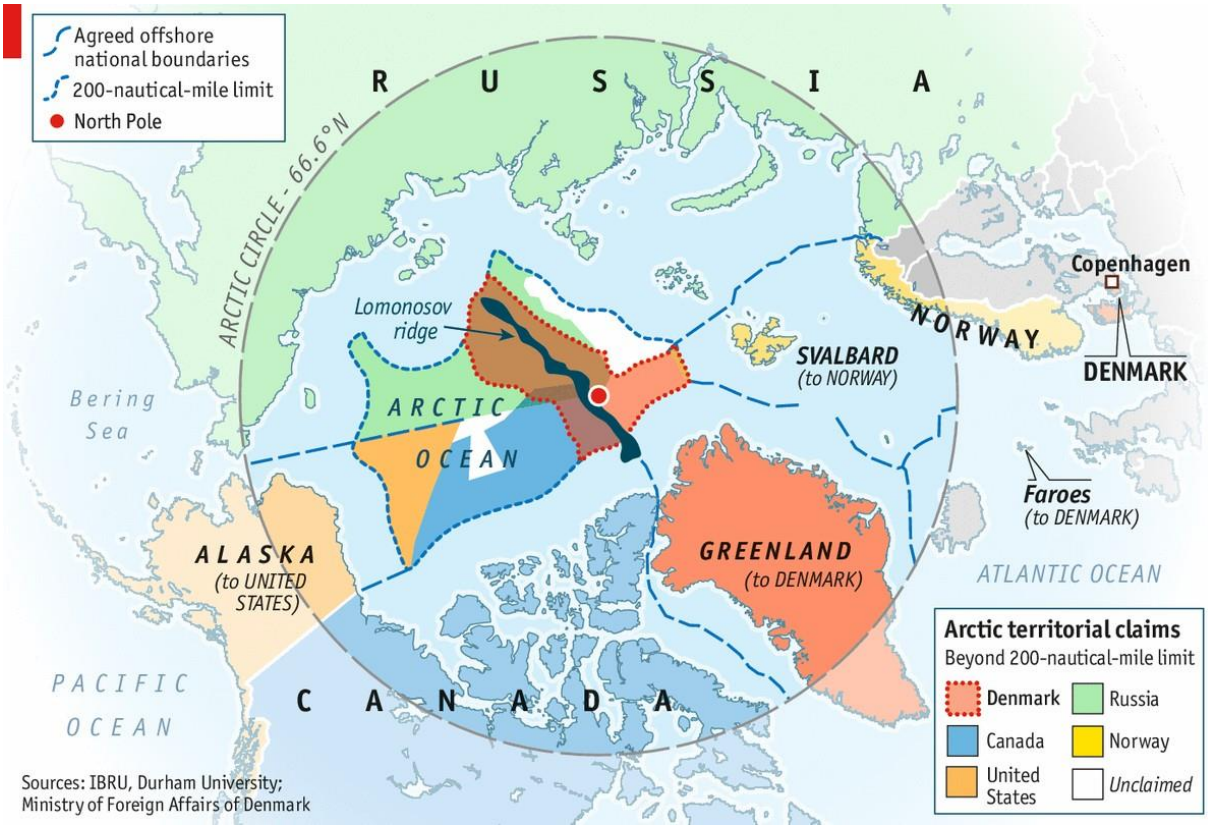
The United Nations tried to find a solution to this and in 1960 the United Nations held the second UNCLOS conference, however this meeting was not successful. The issue of territorial claims remained relevant after the conference and thirteen years later, in 1973 the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea took place. The most significant term that was agreed by the United Nations and the nations present during this convention was the establishment of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ`s), the implementation of the International Seabed Authority and deep seabed mining, as well as part six of the treaty known as the Commission on Limits of Continental Shelf (CLS) (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

During the 1982 UNCLOS convention, article 76 was implemented, this article is one of the most significant articles UNCLOS, because it involves the definition of what constitutes a continental shelf. This article states that:

> "The continental shelf of a coastal State comprises the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles if the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance. Article 76 states that the coastal State shall establish the outer edge of the continental margin wherever the margin extends beyond 200 nautical miles, and that "Information on the limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles... shall be submitted by the coastal State to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLS) set up under Annex II.... The Commission shall make recommendations to coastal States on matters related to the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf. The limits of the shelf established by a coastal State on the basis of these recommendations shall be final and binding" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 113).

One of the main reasons for the United States to not sign UNCLOS when it was adopted in 1982 was because they were highly opposed to the seabed mining provisions of the treaty mentioned in Article 76. The reason for this is that the treaty established an International Seabed Authority, this authority mandates royalties on all deep sea-bed resources which will be transferred to help developing nations (Bromund et al., 2018). The United Nations tried to address this by arranging several informal consultations in July 1990. These consultations led to the to the adaption of Part XI of UNCLOS in July 1994. This agreement entered into force two years later (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The United States is not a part of UNCLOS, they have however stated that they accept the agreement and intent to act in accordance with the changes made to Part XI of UNCLOS (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

7.2. Territorial Claims Made in the Arctic



Source: The economist

Figure 3: Arctic territorial claims beyond 200-nautical-mile-limit

The topic of borders in the Arctic is a matter that is still open for discussion and negotiation. Each country gets their default maritime border. These border are 200 nautical miles from their shores. The remaining water outside of these exclusive economic zones, can be claimed by any country which can prove that it belongs to them (The Fletcher School, 2021). This is the area marked inside the red zone in figure 3.

The scramble for the Arctic has intensified in recent years and in 2007 it reached a new level. During a televised event known as the 'Arktika 2007', a science expedition as part of a research related to the 2001 Russian territorial claim was conducted, in which Russia performed the first ever crew descent to the bottom of the North Pole. During this incident, Russia planted a flag on the seabed underneath the North Pole and claimed it as its own territory. Since this incident,

five Arctic countries have been in dispute over this territory in the Arctic Ocean. These five countries are: Canada, Denmark with the autonomous country of Greenland, Norway, Russia, and the United States (Dodds, 2010). Since this was a televised event, the other states were provoked to respond. For instance, the Canadian foreign minister Peter Mackay said, "This is not the fifteenth century, you can not go around the world and just plant flags and say we`re claiming this territory" (Dodds, 2010, p. 63).

The vital part in claiming an area in the Arctic, are the aforementioned continental shelves. A continental shelf is a part of a country's landmass. It is just covered with ocean. In the last 20 or so years, the ice has been melting. This change in Arctic climate has been a new opportunity for the Arctic countries, and they have been deploying submarines in order to gather data on the continental shelf, similar to what Russia did in the Arktika 2007 expedition. They then put together a scientific case and submit it to the CLS. This committee plays a crucial role in determining territorial estimations. They review Article 76 of the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that demands a detailed mapping of the relevant ocean sea floor. This Committee reviews the submitted claims and decides whether the country`s claim is scientifically valid. The countries must then negotiate on who gets what (Dodds, 2010).

The increased interest in exploring and exploiting natural resources as well as gaining geopolitical influence in the area has generated attempts by the Arctic coastal states to increase their EEZ limit beyond 200-mile. As previously mentioned, according to Article 76 of UNCLOS, nations can make a submission to the CLS. UNCLOS, Article 76 states that:

> "The submissions depend on the position of the foot of the continental slope, the thickness of sediments, and the depth of water. Also, the continental margin could include geologic features that extend from the continent out to sea, which may include undersea ridges continuing for hundreds of miles offshore" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 66).

There have been submission claims made by four different nations so far. The first one was made by Russia in 2001 which included the Lomonosov Ridge. Russia`s submission to the CLS supported the arguments from some observers who claimed that this was the beginning of Russia`s attempt to increase their political activities in the Arctic. The Commission found the Russian Federation`s submission to lack the sufficient scientific evidence, Russia then continued their research and submitted a revised claim in 2015 which this thesis will go into further detail later (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

In 2006, Norway became the second nation to officially submit a claim to the CLS, where they provided arguments to extend the Norwegian seabed claim beyond their 200 nautical mile EEZ limit. The Norwegian submission intends to increase their seabed in three areas in the Arctic. The submission also states that there may be supplementary submissions in the future (United Nations, 2009).

The third nation to officially submit a claim to the CLS was Denmark who submitted their claim in 2014. The submission claimed that the Lomonosov Ridge, the Gakkel Ridge as well as the Alpha Mendeleev ridge were all continuous land mass of Greenland and should therefore be a part of Denmark`s EEZ. The Commission is yet to make a decision on Denmark`s submission (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

In 2019, Canada became the fourth nation to make a submission to the Commission when they made a partial submission for the consideration of areas of the Central Arctic Plateau. These areas include the Lomonosov Ridge, Alpha Ridge and Mendeleev Ridge, claiming to provide evidence that these areas are a natural component of Canada. The commission is yet to decide on Canada`s submission (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

7.3. Territorial Disputes and Sovereignty Issues

There are still four ongoing territorial disputes in the Arctic. Two of these are disputes between the United States and Canada. The first dispute is that Canada continues to claim sovereignty over a section of the NWP that runs through the Canadian archipelago and is thus under Canada`s control. The United States on the other hand argues that these waters are a part of an international strait between two high seas and therefore international water (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The second territorial dispute between the United States and Canada are their differing positions regarding the military boundary in the Beaufort Sea part of the Arctic Ocean. This is located north of the border that separates Alaska from Canada (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 56). Both these regions have a great potential for containing large amounts of oil and gas resources. According to numbers by Canada`s National Energy Board, the disputed area potentially contains 1,7 billion cubic metres of gas and more than one billion cubic metres of oil (Griffiths, 2010). Both these border disputes can be traced back to the independence of Canada. According to Canada`s understanding of the treaty, Canada's maritime border extends into their sea north of the Alaska-Yukon border. The United States meanwhile rejects the claim that the treaty can create this border (Griffiths, 2010).

Russia and the United States are involved in the third ongoing territorial dispute in the Arctic. The U.S. and the USSR signed the U.S/USSR Maritime Boundary Agreement in 1990, which established the position of the U.S – Soviet maritime boundary in The Bering Sea. In 1991 the U.S. Senate ratified the agreement, but the Russian Duma on the other hand did not Ratify it, and they are yet to do such a thing (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Why did Russia not ratify this agreement? Some argue that the 1990 agreement was too favourable for the United States. The U.S. Minerals Management Service estimates that that gas and oil reserves in the disputed area can reach to 24 billion barrels of oil and 126 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (Kaczynski, 2007). The potential oil and gas resources located in the area is not the only factor for Russia seeing the agreement as too favourable for the United States, the fishing industry in this area is vital not only for the U.S. but also for Russia. The U.S. fisheries alone harvest more than two million tons of fish from this area, and the Russians give much of the blame for their lack of access in the area to the 1990 agreement. Some argue that the reason that Soviet signed the agreement before the fall of the Union in 1991 was that President Gorbachev, was too naive in his pursuit for better bilateral relations with the United States that he hastily signed the agreement (Kaczynski, 2007.) This argument supports Neoclassical thinking. Neoclassical realism claim that the foreign policy decisions are made by what the opinions and perception of political leaders have about their state`s relative power, not just fixed numbers of how much physical resources each nation states have. This might lead to an actor acting irrational (Kaczynski, 2007).

Denmark and Canada are the actors involved in the fourth unresolved territorial dispute in the Arctic. These two countries are yet to come to an agreement over the status of Hans Island, a tiny, uninhabited piece of rock outside of Greenland (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The border dispute regarding Hans Island has been nicknamed the “Whiskey War” because of the rather unusual diplomatic measures taken by both nations. Both Canada and Denmark claimed in 1973 that Hans Island was a part of their territory. Eleven years later a small number of Canadian soldiers visited Hans Island, planting a Canadian flag on the Island as well as leaving a symbolic marker from their visit to the island, a bottle of Canadian whiskey. The Danish authorities answered by planting a flag at Hans Island as well as leaving behind a bottle of Danish schnapps (Levin, 2016). In 2012, the Canadian and Danish government agreed on the border disputes in the waters between Canada and Denmark. This agreement did however only go to the shore of Hans Island but did not include the island itself (Breum, 2018).

There is also another dispute in addition to these four. This is the area known as the "Grey Zone" in the Barents Sea. This is a boundary between Norway and Russia which has been an issue between the two countries for decades. The "Grey Zone" is believed to hold valuable undersea deposits of natural resources. In September 2010 Russia and Norway signed an agreement regarding fishing rights between the two countries. This accord states that: "The roughly half of the 175,000-squarekilometer area to each country; it spells out fishing rights and provides for the joint development of future oil and gas finds that straddle the boundary line" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 141). This accord did surprise several observers because Russia conceded sovereignty over such a large, resource-rich area to their small neighbour to the west. Other observers, however, claim that the reason Russia did this was because they were hoping that making an agreement with Norway on this matter would be an incentive to the Norwegian government. This could potentially lead to cooperation between the two countries in developing offshore resources and eventually in winning approval with Russia`s Article 76 submission to UNCLOS (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

7.4. Russia`s Territorial Claims in the Arctic

As previously mentioned, Russia first submission was back in 2001, and in 2015 they submitted a revised version. The new revised version included not only the Lomonosov Ridge, but also the Mendeleev Ridge as well as the Chukchi Plateau. The United States never objected to this submission either to the Division of Ocean Affairs nor UNCLOS. In March 2021, Russia submitted two additions to the 2015 submission. The Russian submission with the two additions now captures more than seventy percent of the Arctic Ocean (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The new enlarged claim is extending into both Canada and Greenland`s EEZ. Noticeably, Russia is not trying to extend their continental shelf into the waters north of Alaska, which are known to be a part of the U.S. sphere of interests. This decision was made even though Russian Vessels were reported to have been collecting data about the seabed in this area in 2020 (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Kropatcheva claims that when it comes to the energy sector, Russia has pursued both political and economic objectives where the interests of the state as well as well as the interests of Russian energy companies has overlapped at certain times. However, when there have been cases where the economic and political interests have differed, then the Russian government has decided to prioritize the political interests, even if it harms the economic interests. This is

according to Kropatcheva a classic realist case. Russia decision to not try and extend their continental shelf into north of Alaska so that they do not further increase the tensions between themselves and the other Great power in the Arctic is yet another example that supports Kropatcheva`s arguments.

Stenberg claimed that:

> "Russia is enlarging its claim by approximately 705,000 square kilometres. The Russian claim now covers some 70 percent of the seabed in the central parts of the Arctic Ocean outside the EEZs of the Arctic coastal states. The Russian enlargement will significantly increase the overlap between Russia's claim to the Arctic seabed and the claims filed by Canada and the Kingdom of Denmark. Those three claims already overlap at the North Pole. The Russian claim now overlaps with the Danish claim with approximately 800,000 square kilometres, up from some 600,000 square kilometres" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 138). These estimates are, not official yet by any of the governments involved.

The submissions and additions to the CLS by the Russian government has been followed with an increase of Russian vessels charting the Arctic Ocean, especially the Underwater Lomonosov Ridge. By doing this, Russia is attempting to show to the world that the Lomonosov ridge is connected to Russia`s extended continental shelf (Congressional Research Service, 2021). Most analysts anticipate that the extended continental shelf application process will remain peaceful, since the parties participating appear determined to adhere to the United Nations' regulations (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

7.5. Different Attempts of Ratification by the United States

UNCLOS 3 was transmitted to the U.S. Senate in 1994, and there have been several attempts of ratification by subsequent Senates. In 2004, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held several hearings on whether approve the ratification of UNCLOS, the Committee reported it favourably and recommended to ratify UNCLOS. They did however not come to an agreement and no further action was taken by the Senate, and the ratification of UNCLOS was referred to as *sine die adjournment*, meaning without assigning a day for a further meeting or hearing on this topic (Congressional Research Service, 2021). In 2007, The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held another hearing on the treaty, where they yet again reported it favourably and recommended to ratify UNCLOS. However, the result was the same as in 2004. 5 years later,

in 2012 the committee held their third hearing on the matter, yet again the result remained the same (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

The possibility of UNCLOS being ratified by the U.S. Senate seemed modest, but in 2014 the issue came up again, only this time by the administration of the President, not the Senate Foreign Relation Committee. The Obama administration issued their national strategy for the Arctic region's implementation plan in January 2014. One of the initiatives was to ratify UNCLOS. The initiative states "the [Obama] Administration is committed, like the last three Administrations, to pursuing accession to the Convention on the Law of the Sea and will continue to place a priority on attaining Senate advice and consent to accession" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 115).

7.6. Should the United States Ratify UNCLOS?

Rockford Weitz a professor at Tufts University. Claims that the United States not ratifying UNCLOS, might be a disadvantage to American foreign policy in the Arctic. Weitz argue that if the United States were to ratify the agreement, they would have a stronger international legal position in the disputed waters in the Arctic. According to Weitz, ratifying the UNCLOS would also enable the United States to make a claim of more than 386 thousand square miles of the Arctic. Whereas without ratifying UNCLOS, the United States would rely on traditional international law in order to attempt any maritime claims in the arctic. This would weaken the U. S` international legal position not only in the Arctic, but also in the contested waters in the South China Sea (Weitz, 2021).

Another argument that supports Weitz comes from Professor Roncevert Ganan Almond Professor at Georgetown University. He claims, "that even though the U.S. have not ratified UNCLOS, in practice the U.S. has accepted and complies with nearly all of the treaty`s provisions" (Almond, 2017). Weitz further argues that it would be better to ratify UNCLOS because as of this moment the U.S. as a non-party is not able to affect any future changes to the treaty, but still complies with nearly all of the treaty`s provisions (Almond, 2017).

Supporters of the United States ratifying UNCLOS argue that because the situation in the Arctic is changing due to an increased interest in the Area, the United States must therefore try to strengthen their influence in the area. The best way to do this, is according to them to ratify the UNCLOS. They also argue that ratifying the treaty would improve the ability of the United States to protect its interests in the area, especially when it comes to the issue of navigation rights and territorial claims (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Weitz also argue that the main reason that the United States initially objected to ratify UNCLOS was due to a section that limited deep seabed mining, this section has however been modified to alleviate some of these concerns. He also argues that ratifying UNCLOS could boost U.S. influence in the Arctic, and work as a buffer to what he calls future looming conflicts in the region to quickly clarify the territorial claims that the United States has made in the Arctic (Weitz, 2021).

Not all support U. S` ratification of UNCLOS. Groves claims that the United States does not need to ratify the treaty to access the natural resources on its extended continental shelf. Instead, they should attempt to negotiate bilateral treaties with neighbouring countries, because according to Groves, the United States has successfully maintained its Arctic interests since 1867 (Groves, 2012).

Weitz also argue that the conditions in the Arctic have changed in the last few years. The Arctic has predominantly been a cooperative region. An example of this is the Arctic Council, who have been able to keep eight Arctic countries focused on the region's fragile ecosystem, quality of life for Indigenous people, and emergency prevention. This has however changed to a situation more focused on the natural resources in area as well as other ways of earning a profit from this region. Another change that has occurred in the last few years is that the so-called "near-Arctic" countries i.e., China, Japan, Great Britain as well as several European Union member states have increased their activity in the area. Thereby raising the tensions in the region. This might be the end of an era of cooperative engagement in the Arctic (Weitz, 2021).

Bandow argues that the United States should not focus on ratifying UNCLOS, but rather focus on finding potential alternatives or additions to UNCLOS. One of the suggestions is to create a separate international legal system due to the changing circumstances in the Arctic. Another suggestion is to declare the Arctic region above a certain parallel as a wilderness area, just like the Antarctic (Bandow, 2005). These scholars cite Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty:

> "No acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting, or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. No new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim, to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica shall be asserted while the present Treaty is in force" (Congressional Research Service, 2021, p. 115).

This chapter has discussed the importance of UNCLOS for the decision making of Russian and U.S. domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic. The United States and Russia have decided on

two vastly different approaches to UNCLOS with Russia ratifying it and the U.S. not ratifying it. One of the reasons why the United States have decided on this approach can be explained by how the U.S. foreign policy has been characterized where they emphasize on their leadership role and the American belief that democracy, human rights and a free-market economy should be promoted to other nations. Which can help explain how some U.S. decision makers have seen the increased great power competition as something that can hinder cooperation in the Arctic, therefore the need for UNCLOS is less important.

Russia has in recent years claimed a large portion of the areas beyond their 200 nautical mile border. These areas have a great potential for oil and gas exploitation. This can help explain how since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy has been driven by the thought of balance of power, in order to challenge the American dominance at that time. This is one of the reasons why Russia decided to ratify UNCLOS

This thesis argues that the United States not ratifying UNCLOS is a major disadvantage to them when it comes to claiming territory in the Arctic, due to the fact that they are not able to join the negotiation table in the United Nations when the other countries are discussing their territorial claims through the UN channels.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to highlight how the U.S. and Russia`s foreign policies in the Arctic have changed since 2007 by analysing four different dimensions of their foreign and domestic policies. These were military/strategic priorities, energy security, trade routes, and UNCLOS. This thesis focuses on a combination of both systemic and domestic factors. Choosing a theory that includes both factors was seen as the most relevant theory. Therefore, neoclassical realism was chosen as the theoretical framework for this thesis.

This thesis has argued that regarding energy security, both nations have increased their interest in the region when it comes to the development of natural resources in the Arctic in an attempt to increase their material power capabilities. The states relative material power capabilities have to go through the decision-makers perception as well as the state structure. In the case of the United States and Russia, President Obama emphasised the importance of protecting the fragile Arctic climate, whereas President Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin focused on the development of oil and gas exploration in the Arctic in an attempt to increase their material power capabilities in the region. These changes in domestic and foreign policies in the Arctic by President Obama, President Trump and Vladimir Putin supports the neoclassical argument of the necessity of studying the opinions of policymakers.

When it comes to military and strategic priorities, the U.S. believes that its current approach to the Arctic is sufficient in order to reach their goals for the Arctic. However, Russia has taken earlier long-term decisions regarding the region and how to expand their economic and military capabilities. The United States on the other hand has just in recent years begun to question whether their recent strategies towards the Arctic have been enough.

This thesis has argued that despite the increase of military presence and resources spent on Arctic military capabilities, the international community should not expect a military presence on the levels that it was during the Cold War. The reasons for this are that the current level of military activity in the region is minimal when compared to that of the Cold War period and in addition to this, the majority of Russian military activity in the region seems to focus on protecting other Russian interests in the region such as their energy infrastructure.

When it comes to the development of trade routes in the Arctic this thesis has argued that even though there is an increase of shipping in the Northern Sea Route, the NSR is still expected to remain a domestic trade route as a tool of developing Russian natural resources in the region due to due to the technological challenges, harsh climate, and financial cost it would be for the Russians to develop the NSR into a global shipping route.

Russia and the U.S. have taken two different approaches to UNCLOS. Russia decided to ratify the agreement and has in recent years claimed to have sovereign authority over a large portion of the areas beyond their 200 nautical mile border. These areas have a great potential for oil and gas exploitation. The U.S. on the other hand decided not to ratify the treaty. This thesis has argued that The United States not ratifying UNCLOS is a major disadvantage to them when it comes to claiming territory in the Arctic, due to the fact that they are not able to join the negotiation table in the United Nations when the other countries are discussing their territorial claims through the UN channels.

During the making of this thesis, an incident occurred that will most likely affect the development in the Arctic as well as other regions for years to come. This incident is the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. On February 21st, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that they recognized the independence of the two east-Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Three days later on February 24th Russia announced that their decision to undergo a "special military operation" in eastern Ukraine, thus the Russian invasion of Ukraine started (Psaropoulos, 2022). So far, the EU, NATO and the West have responded to this invasion by implementing several sanctions and bans. Some of these are, cutting several different Russian banks from the SWIFT service, and banning Russian civilian aircrafts from entering EU-airspace. Another implication of the Russian invasion of Ukraine is that several EU countries have announced the opportunity of banning/stopping the import of Russian oil and gas (Financial Times, 2022). In addition to this, two Arctic countries namely Sweden and Finland have decided to apply for NATO membership (NRK, 2022). The implications of the

Russian invasion of Ukraine are something that will most likely affect the developments in the Arctic and is something that future research should focus on.

If Finland and Sweden become NATO members, the border between NATO countries and Russia would be some 1,340 kilometres longer. This is something that would massively affect the power dynamics in the Arctic. In addition to this, if the EU decides to stop the import of oil and gas from Russia, this will have a huge effect on the power dynamics in the region, when taking into account that more than fifty percent of Russia`s oil and gas export goes to the EU and UK (Earl, 2022).

REFERENCES

Aliyev, N. (2019, June 25). *Russia's Military Capabilities in the Arctic.* Retrieved from https://icds.ee/: https://icds.ee/en/russias-military-capabilities-in-the-arctic/

Almond, R. G. (2017, May 24). *U.S. Ratification of the Law of the Sea Convention.* Retrieved from The Diplomat: https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/u-s-ratification-of-the-law-of-the-sea-convention/

Arctic Council. (2011). *AGREEMENT ON COOPERATION ON AERONAUTICAL AND MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE IN THE ARCTIC.* Retrieved from Arctic Council: https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/531

Arctic Portal. (2011, May 23). *Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement*. Retrieved from Arctic Portal: https://arcticportal.org/ap-library/yar-features/421-arctic-search-and-rescue-agreement

Arctis Knowledge Hub. (2009). *Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Arctic*. Retrieved from Arctis Knowledge hub: http://www.arctis-search.com/Search+and+Rescue+%28SAR%29+in+the+Arctic

Bandow, D. (2005, October 13). *Don't Resurrect the Law of the Sea Treaty*. Retrieved from CATO Institute : https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa552.pdf

Bognar, D. (2016). *Russian Proposals on the Polar Code: Contributing to Common Rules or Furthering State Interests?*

Breum, M. (2018, May 28). *Analysis: Hans Island - and the endless dispute over its sovereignty*. Retrieved from High North News: https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/analysis-hans-island-and-endless-dispute-over-its-sovereignty

Bromund, T. R., Carafano, J. J., & Schaefer, B. D. (2018, July 4). *7 Reasons U.S. Should Not Ratify UN Convention on the Law of the Sea* . Retrieved from The Heritage Foundation: https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/7-reasons-us-should-not-ratify-un-convention-the-law-the-sea

Byers, M. (2017). Crises and international cooperation: an Arctic case study. *International Relations 31(4)*, ss. 375-402.

Congressional research Service. (2021). *Changes in the Arctic: Background and Issues for Congress.* Congressional Research Service.

Conley, H., & Melino, M. (2019). *The Implications of U.S. Policy Stagnation toward the Arctic Region*. Retrieved from Center for Strategic & International Studies: https://www.csis.org/analysis/implications-us-policy-stagnation-toward-arctic-region

Department of Defence. (2021). *REGAINING Arctic Dominance*. Retrieved from Department of Defence: https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/2021/03/15/9944046e/regaining-arctic-dominance-us-army-in-the-arctic-19-january-2021-unclassified.pdf

Devyatkin, P. (2018, February 13). *Russia's Arctic Strategy: Military and Security (Part II)*. Retrieved from The Arctic Institute: https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/russias-arctic-military-and-security-part-two/?cn-reloaded=1

Dodds, K. (2010, February). Flag planting and finger pointing: The Law of the Sea, the Arctic and Political geographies of the outer continental shelf. *Political Geography Volume 29 Issue 2*, s. 63.

Earl, T. (2022, March 7). *How Russian oil flows to Europe*. Retrieved from transportenvironment: https://www.transportenvironment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/20220303_russian_oil_in_the_EU.pdf

Everstine, B. W. (2021, June 17). *DOD Leaders Want More Arctic Funding, But Not Right Now*. Retrieved from Air Force Magazine: https://www.airforcemag.com/dod-leaders-increased-arctic-funding-not-right-now/

Federation of American scientists. (2000, September 07). *Northern Fleet*. Retrieved from https://nuke.fas.org: https://nuke.fas.org/guide/russia/agency/mf-north.htm

Financial Times. (2022, May 17). *Russia's invasion of Ukraine in maps — latest updates*. Hentet fra Financial Times: https://www.ft.com/content/4351d5b0-0888-4b47-9368-6bc4dfbccbf5

Finstad, S. (u.d.). *The Svalbard Treaty*. Retrieved from Svalbard Museum: https://svalbardmuseum.no/en/kultur-og-historie/svalbardtraktaten/

Garamone, J. (2020, May 7). *U.S.-British Arctic Exercise Shows U.S. Concern for Region*. Retrieved from DOD News: https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2180254/us-british-arctic-exercise-shows-us-concern-for-region/

Gazprom. (n.d.). *"Yamal Project"*. Retrieved from Gazprom.com: https://www.gazprom.com/projects/yamal/

Grieger, G. (2018). *China's Arctic policy*. European Parliamentary Research Service.

Griffiths, S. (2010, August 2). *US-Canada Arctic border dispute key to maritime riches*. Retrieved from BBC.com: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-10834006

Groves, S. (2012, June 14). *The Law of the Sea: Costs of U.S. Accession to UNCLOS*. Retrieved from The Heritage Foundation: https://www.heritage.org/testimony/the-law-the-sea-costs-us-accession-unclos

Huck, L. C. (2019). Neoclassical Realism and Role Theory Revisited. *Master Thesis*.

Humbert, M. (2011, September 15). *The Future of the Northern Sea Route – A "Golden Waterway" or a Niche Trade Route*. Retrieved from The Arctic Institute : https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/future-northern-sea-route-golden-waterway-niche/

Kaczynski, V. M. (2007). *US-Russian Bering Sea Marine Border Dispute: Confl ict over Strategic Assets, Fisheries and Energy Resources*. Retrieved from https://css.ethz.ch/: https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/RAD-20-2-5.pdf

Lamont, C. (2015). *Research Methods in International Relations.* SAGE Publications Ltd.

Lasserre, F., & Têtu, P.-L. (2016). Russian Air Patrols in the Arctic: Are Long-Range Bomber Patrols a Challenge to Canadian Security and Sovereignty? *Artctic Yearbook*, 305-321. Retrieved from Arctic Yearbook 2016.

Laurelle , M. (2014). *Russia's Arctic Strategies and the Future of the Far North.* New York: Routledge.

Levin, D. (2017, November 07). *New York Times*. Retrieved from Canada and Denmark Fight Over Island With Whisky and Schnapps: https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/08/world/what-in-the-world/canada-denmark-hans-island-whisky-schnapps.html

Li, J. (2020, August 21). *A Shifting Focus of U.S. Arctic Policy: China and Security, Front and Center*. Retrieved from The Arctic Institute: https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/shifting-focus-us-arctic-policy-china-security/?cn-reloaded=1

Lurås, H. (2015). *Hva truer Norge nå?* Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Maratov, N. (2017). Has the 2014 crisis and its outcomes weakend Russi`s abilities to use its gas weapon vis-a-vis Ukraine? *Master thesis*.

Mearsheimer, J. (2001). *The tragedy of great power politics.* New York: Norton & Company.

Merriman, J. (2018, October 8). *Reuters*. Retrieved from https://www.reuters.com/article/us-norway-russia-oil-idUSKCN1MI1OL

Middleton, A. (2020). *Northern Sea Route: From Speculations to Reality by 2035*. Retrieved from High North News: https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/northern-sea-route-speculations-reality-2035

NRK. (2022). *Krigen i Ukraina*. Retrieved from NRK: https://www.nrk.no/nyheter/krigen-i-ukraina-1.11480927

Nuttall, M. (2014). *Encyclopedia of the Arctic.* Routledge.

Nygren, B. (2012). *Using the neo-classical realism paradigm to predict Russian foreign policy behaviou as a complement to using resources.* Swedish National Defence College.

Olsen, M. B. (2019). Great Power Competition in the Arctic? A Comparative Analysis of China's, Russia's and the US' Arctic Policy. *Master thesis*.

Peimani, H. (2013). *Energy Security and Geopolitics in the Arctic:Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century.* World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.

Porta, D. D., & Keating, M. (2008). *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A pluralist Perspective.* Cambridge University Press. .

Psaropoulos, J. (2022, March 23). *Timeline: A month of Russia's war in Ukraine*. Retrieved from Aljazeera : https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/23/timeline-a-month-of-war-in-ukraine

Ripsman, N. M. (2017). *Neoclassical Realism.* Oxford Research Encylopedia of International Studies.

Romanova, T. (2012, September). *Neoclassical Realism and Today's Russia*. Retrieved from https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/: https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/neoclassical-realism-and-todays-russia/

Rose , G. (1998). *Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy.* Cambridge University Press.

Sagalevich, A. (2015, August 26). *The Artcic.* Retrieved from Arctic.ru: https://arctic.ru/analitic/20150826/148239.html

Schneider, A. (2018). Northern Sea Route: From Speculations to Reality by 2035. *Taylor & Francis group, LLC. Vol 60.* Hentet fra highnorthnews .

Sevunts. (2019, 04 05). Russia scores scientific points. The Barents Observer.

Staalesen, A. (2021). *On Putin-Biden agenda: the Northern Sea Route*. Retrieved from The Barnts Observer : https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/arctic/2021/06/putin-biden-agenda-northern-sea-route

Suvanto, V. (2016). Geopolitics of the Arctic: Challenges and Prospects. *Master thesis*. Barcelona, Spain: Universitat de Barcelona.

The Economist. (2014, December 17). *Frozen Conflict*. Retrieved from THe Economist: https://www.economist.com/international/2014/12/17/frozen-conflict

The Fletcher School. (2021). *The Arctic and the LOSC*. Retrieved from Law of teh Sea: https://sites.tufts.edu/lawofthesea/chapter-eight/

The High North News. (2022, January 26). *Cargo Volume on Northern Sea Route Reaches 35m Tons, Record Number of Transits*. Retrieved from High North News: https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/cargo-volume-northern-sea-route-reaches-35m-tons-record-number-transits

The Maritime Executive. (2020, 02 17). *Norway Clarifies Svalbard Treaty After Russian Complaint*. Retrieved from The Maritime Executive: https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/norway-clarifies-svalbard-treaty-after-russian-complaint

The White House Washington. (2013). *NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARCTIC REGION.* Washington D.C.: The White House Washington.

U.S. Army Public Affairs. (2021, March 16). *Army announces release of Arctic Strategy*. Retrieved from https://www.army.mil/: https://www.army.mil/article/244261/army_announces_release_of_arctic_strategy

U.S. Department of State. (2017, January 20). *U.S. Chairmanship of the Arctic Council*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of State: https://2009-2017.state.gov/e/oes/ocns/opa/arc/uschair/index.htm

United Nations. (2009, August 20). *Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf*. Retrieved from United Nations: https://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_nor.htm

United Nations. (2009, June 3). *Submissions to the Commission: Submission by the Russian Federation.* Retrieved from UN.org: https://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_rus.htm

United Nations. (2022). *United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*. Retrieved from legal.un.org: https://legal.un.org/diplomaticconferences/1958_los/

Untied States Geological Survey. . (2008). *Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle.* U.S. Deparment of the Interior.

Varol, T. (2013). *THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN ENERGY POLICY.* European Scientific Institute .

Waltz, K. N. (1978). *Theory of International Politics.* Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Weitz, R. (2021, April 19). *Competition heats up in the melting Arctic, and the US isn't prepared to counter Russia.* Retrieved from The Conversation: https://theconversation.com/competition-heats-up-in-the-melting-arctic-and-the-us-isnt-prepared-to-counter-russia-149341

Østerud, Ø., & Hønneland, G. (2013, 10 26). Geopolitics and International Governance in the Arctic. *Arctic Review, 5(2)*, pp. 156-176.