

RUSSIA'S ARCTIC:

**A Study of Russian Culture, Self-Identification
& National Pride as a Basis for Russia's
Endeavours in the Arctic**

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Table of Contents

• Summary in Danish/Sammenfatning af Afhandling	1
• Introduction, Problem formulation & Hypotheses	3
• Limitation & Methodology of the Study	5
• Historical Background of Russian Relations in the Arctic:	
○ The End of the Cold War & Interstate Relations in the Subsequent Years	10
○ New Opportunities & Threats in the Arctic	13
• Empirical Examples of Russian Geopolitics in the Arctic:	
○ The Territorial Claims of the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf	15
○ Treaty on Maritime Delimitation Between Norway and Russia	19
○ The Northern Sea Route	22
○ The Arktika 2007 Expedition	25
○ Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole	28
• Constructivism as an International Relations Theory & the Question of National and State Identity	30
• Eurasianism: An ideology within Russian Geopolitics	33
• Eurasianism: A Critique by Marlene Laruelle	39
• Eurasianism in Russia's Foreign Policy Concepts of 2000, 2008 and 2013	41
• Eurasianism in Russia's Arctic Policy	49
• Analysing the Submission of the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf	51
• Analysing the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation	54
• Analysing the Opportunities of the Northern Sea Route	58
• Analysing the Arktika 2007 Expedition	64
• Analysing the Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole	71
• Discussion & Conclusion	76
• Appendices	80
• Bibliography	81

Summary in Danish

Sammenfatning af Afhandling

I takt med den globale opvarmning, er Arktis blevet tildelt mere og mere opmærksomhed, og områdets mange muligheder og ændrede omstændigheder for de arktiske lande er blevet relevante emner i moderne politik. På grund af den smeltende is i det Arktiske Ocean, er den ressourcerige arktiske havbund blevet nemmere tilgængelige end nogensinde før, og de arktiske staters kapløb om territoriale udvidelser i dette område blev sat i gang med publiceringen af Ruslands territoriale krav i 2001. De arktiske stater i denne undersøgelse er de fem kyststater der grænser op til det Arktiske Ocean; dvs. Rusland, Norge, Canada, USA og Danmark via Grønlands grænser. Rusland er, udover at være udenfor NATO fællesskabet, også alene i Arktis som tidligere supermagt fra den modstående blok. Dennes handlinger er derfor ikke blot betydningsfulde for udviklingen i Arktis, men for den geopolitiske udvikling og globale magtbalance.

Formålet med dette studie er at undersøge Den Russiske Føderations handlinger i Arktis området, med udgangspunkt i fem følgende empiriske eksempler, og vise hvordan elementer af kultur, identitet og national stolthed kan forklare udgangspunktet for Ruslands politik i Arktis.

Ruslands ansøgning til De Forenede Nationers havretskommission i 2001 og dennes aftale med Norge omkring grænsedragning i Barentshavet i 2010 samt Nordøstpassagens mange muligheder, er tre eksempler på Russiske handlinger og bestræbelser i området, som undersøgelsen behandler. Derudover bliver Arktika 2007 ekspeditionen og den Olympiske ilds tur til Nordpolen undersøgt, med fokus på hændelsernes symbolske og emotionelle aspekter.

Studiet begynder med en historisk gennemgang af afslutningen på den Kolde Krig og de efterfølgende år, samt præsenterer de nye muligheder og omstændigheder i området som den globale opvarmning har forårsaget. Derefter bliver de empiriske eksempler og teoretiske tilgange præsenteret, efterfulgt af en analyse af Ruslands udenrigspolitiske og arktiske

strategidokumenter, der danner base for undersøgelsen af de empiriske eksempler. Konstruktivismen som en teori i international politik, og Eurasianismen som en indflydelsesrig politisk ideologi i den russiske Duma, bliver benyttet til at gennemføre analysen. Eurasianismens beskrivelse af russisk særegenhed, ideologiens værdier og målsætninger for Rusland som en magtfuld stat i Arktis såvel som i verden, har præget russisk politik, og dette præg bliver belyst i analysen.

Projektets undersøgelser viser den markante indflydelse som de historiske minder fra den Kolde Krig har haft på bedrifterne i Arktis, og hvordan de psykologiske aspekter har spillet ind på Ruslands aspirationer i Arktis. Analysen identificerer aspekterne af kultur, identitet og national stolthed i de empiriske eksempler, hvorefter betydningen af disse for en forståelse af russisk politik i Arktis såvel som på den globale scene bliver diskuteret. Analysen demonstrerer vigtigheden af at medregne de kulturelle og irrationelle aspekter når man ser på russiske politiske handlinger, da disse udgør en unægtelig supplement til de rationelle kalkulationer som for eksempel økonomiske fordele. Analysen bekræfter tesen om at Ruslands moderne udenrigspolitik er rodfastet i de omstændigheder og verdensorden der var tilstede under den Kolde Krig, og at dette har haft indflydelse på landets bedrifter i Arktis. Analysen bekræfter også tesen om at Rusland trods alt har moderniseret sin tilgang til udenrigspolitik, da denne kan se fordelene ved samarbejde med sine arktiske naboer, og ved at omstille sig til omstændighederne i en moderne verden. På den måde bliver den mangesidige arktiske og udenrigspolitik afsløret; politik der balancerer mellem at tilgodese statslige interesser og ideologiske overbevisninger.

De fem eksempler på Ruslands bedrifter i Arktis bliver brugt til at finde den kultur-, identitets- og stolthedsbaseret mønster i den russiske politiske tankegang, der belyser den overordnet udgangspunkt for russisk udenrigspolitik, og kan hjælpe med at forudse den fremtidige politiske udvikling.

Introduction, Problem formulation & Hypotheses

The Arctic has received growing international attention over the past years, as a result of climate change and the evolving possibilities this has entailed. Likewise, territorial disputes and claims have received growing international attention, commencing with the first territorial claims submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in 2001. This submission was made by the Russian Federation, and entailed various endeavours by the country, with the objectives of maximizing its prospects in the area and demonstrating its presence in the Arctic. In connection with this, geopolitics has once again become relevant, as well as the necessity of understanding the diverse aspects of decision-making in the area.

There are five states in question in this study: The United States of America, Canada, Norway, Denmark, through governance of Greenland, and the Russian Federation – all bordering up to the Arctic Ocean. Russia is the sole non-member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and furthermore, the former opposing super power of the Cold War era. Due to this historical background, with opposing ideological beliefs in the past, Russia's benchmark for its foreign and Arctic policy is expected to be different than that of its Arctic neighbours. It is therefore intriguing to see, what it is that has affected Russian decision-making and how the ideological differences of the past have affected its benchmark for politics. With the help of Eurasianism, an influential political ideology in Russian politics, this study will shine a light on this issue.

This study will examine five telling examples of Russia's endeavours in the Arctic, starting with its submission of territorial claims in 2001, followed by its agreement with Norway regarding the Barents Sea territories, moving on to the opportunities within the Northern Sea Route, then analysing the Arktika 2007 expedition and finally reviewing the Olympic Torch Relay expedition to the North Pole in 2013. The study will take into account the various factors that constitute a country's decision-making process, but will focus on uncovering and

examining the elements that are irrationally driven, as these are unavoidable factors to consider when studying Russian reasoning.

The problem formulation is the following:

How can culture, self-identification and national pride explain Russia's endeavours in the Arctic?

The first hypothesis of this paper is that the benchmark for Russian contemporary foreign politics is engraved in the historical circumstances of the Cold War, and its endeavours in the Arctic are likewise affected by memories of the bipolar world order of the past. With the growing influence of Eurasianism in Russian politics, this ideology is a vital element in the understanding of Russia's true perceptions of the balance of global power and intentions in the Arctic.

The second hypothesis of the study is that despite history, despite memories of opposing relations with the West during during the Cold War, Russia has found it advantageous to work together with its Arctic neighbours, and has adapted its politics to the modern world and new post-Soviet world order. Hereby, Eurasianism has influence in Russian politics, but it is also queering its own pitch with its traditionalist views. Russia finds itself in a struggle between being stuck in the past with grievances and moving forth with cooperation.

Through the application of constructivism as an international relations (IR) theory and detection of the Eurasianism in the five empirical examples, it will become apparent how the cultural dimension can explain Russia's actions in the Arctic.

Limitation & Methodology of the Study

The study in this paper will seek to identify the cultural dimension and aspects of self-identification and national pride within Russian foreign politics and actions in the Arctic. A variety of sources will be applied in order to carry out a thoroughgoing analysis of a selection of empirical examples that demonstrate Russian endeavours in the Arctic. Through analysis via the lens of constructivism as an international relations theory, these examples will illustrate how the cultural dimension and aspects of self-identification and national pride have contributed to shaping the benchmark for Russian contemporary foreign politics.

This study will take up the question of the Arctic, indicating the states bordering up to the Arctic Ocean. These countries are: The Russian Federation, Canada, Norway, Denmark (Greenland) and the United States of America. Referral to the Arctic will thereby imply these coastal states, with the exception of specific examples that identify other actors in the area, namely the Arctic Council member states. Referral to Russia and the Russian state will embody the Russian Federation as one political union, without touching upon the political variability within the country. When dealing with Eurasianism, this will imply the political ideology within Russia, and not in any other countries that are located in the Eurasian geographical territory.

The study will address five empirical examples, which have been some of the most defining events of Russian presence in the Arctic in recent time. Starting with the submission of territorial claims to the United Nations in 2001, and followed by the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation of 2010, these two examples will provide a basis for examining Russian objectives and relations in the Arctic from officially publicised documents and treaties, and the circumstances surrounding these. The Northern Sea Route will be introduced, and this empirical example will create a basis for analysing Russian interests and potential in the Arctic, and what it means for Russia to have this potential. Hereafter, the Arktika 2007 Expedition and the Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole of 2013 will be examined, drawing a picture of the symbolic aspects of these Russian doings, and their significance for Russian

politics. As apparent above, the empirical examples will not follow a chronological order, but a thematic sequence.

The analysis will be focused on Russia's cultural dimension in politics, its self-identification and its national pride, in order to highlight some of the most significant factors that have influenced the benchmark of Russia's foreign policy as well as its endeavours in the Arctic. In order to identify these elements in the specific empirical examples that have been selected for this study, the idea of Eurasianism will be examined. The convictions of Eurasianism, such as its understanding of the contemporary world order, its description of Russian, and the values and objectives that it promotes will be the parameters the analysis will apply, in order to identify elements of this political ideology within the examined acts and statements. As the ideology has received growing support from the Russian government and has influence on its decision-making, it is relevant to examine this stream of thought, the basis of its ideas, and how these are evident in Russian foreign and Arctic politics.

Russian foreign and Arctic politics will be examined through a review of Russia's Foreign Policy Concepts of 2000, 2008 and 2013 and Arctic Strategy of 2008, to obtain a complete picture of Russia's agenda in these documents. As the previous Arctic Strategy will not be applied, dating back to 1969, the current Strategy will be applied to define the Russian agenda in the Arctic. The time-scope for these documents is based on their genesis within the era of Vladimir Putin's leadership. The time frame 2008 to 2012, when Putin was not President but Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, will be treated as part of this Putin era, as Putin had stayed close to power, and the benchmark of Russian politics was based on the leadership of the same party Единая Россия (United Russia), as during Putin's presidential terms.

The time-scope for the empirical examples of this study is from December 2001, when Russia submitted its continental shelf claim to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, until October 2013, with the Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole. In this way, these examples can be fitted into the time scope of the examined Foreign Policy Concepts and Arctic Policy documents, illustrating Arctic politics and endeavours in practice and holding them up next to the theoretical documents in question. The general time-scope for the study extends to the last years of the Cold War, as these are essential for understanding the historical

memories influencing Russian culture, self-identification and national pride. A brief account of the circumstances surrounding the end of the Cold War will be presented, laying the benchmark for understanding the historical background of following events. The final years of the Cold War and break-up of the Soviet Union have also been essential trigger points for the establishment of constructivism as an IR theory as well as for the emergence of Neo-Eurasianism, verifying the relevance of applying these ideas in this study. Occasionally, references to earlier events and legislation of earlier dates will appear, as their mentioning will be relevant for the understanding of the main content. The time-scope of the study will span to include the event of Olympic Torch Relay, which ended on February 7, 2014.

The introductory description of Eurasianism will consist of two parts, namely an introduction to Classical Eurasianism, and followed by an introduction to Neo-Eurasianism. As Classical Eurasianism is an idea born in the years leading up to the 1917 revolution, the time-scope for this section spans as far back as this. In the following section, Neo-Eurasianism will be explained, and hereafter the study will apply Neo-Eurasianism in its analysis. As political scientists and Eurasianists themselves refer to “Neo-Eurasianism” simply as “Eurasianism”, this study will follow this example. When working with Eurasianism, the primary source will be Marlene Laruelle, at-the-time Senior Research Fellow and Ph.D. affiliated with John Hopkin’s University’s School of Advanced International Studies, Washington D.C., and with the Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm. Laruelle’s study of Classical and Neo-Eurasianism will be dominant in this study because it can disclose more complete and concrete messages of the ideology. Statements of Eurasianists themselves, namely of Aleksandr Dugin, can pose the challenge of ambiguity in their messages, due to occasional adjustments to fit a specific context and to ensure political correctness. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that there is variability within Eurasianism, it will be the ideas promoted by Dugin that will be in focus, as his version of the ideology has received the most appreciation and influence in the State Duma. The introduction to Eurasianism will be followed by a section of critique of Eurasianism based on Laruelle’s observations, in order to shine a light on the points of concern to consider, when working with this ideology.

Furthermore, the Eurasian Economic Community will not be mentioned in this study, and the Eurasian Economic Youth Forum will be mentioned on one occasion only, as the focus of the

study will be on the cultural dimension within Eurasianism and within Russia, and not on the aspects of economic cooperation in the Eurasian region. The International Eurasian Movement and the political party Evraziia will not be elaborated on further, after being mentioned in connection with Aleksandr Dugin's rise to political power, as focus will be kept on Laruelle's study of Eurasianism as a general political idea, and only on rare occasions will Eurasianism in a specific organisation be applied.

The economic, commercial, judicial and environmental aspects of the situation in the Arctic will be mentioned briefly, to disclose the interests and circumstances that encircle Russian presence in the North, as well as the presence of its Arctic neighbours. Furthermore, the study will allude to the actions, expressions of opinion, interests and circumstances of the four Arctic coastal states, where this is relevant in connection with the study of Russia's endeavours and ideas. As the study is not comparative, the information provided about the other Arctic states will not be for comparative use. The technical aspects surrounding definitions of land and sea territories and continental shelves, as well as disagreements regarding the interpretation of these definitions, will be briefly touched upon in order to create awareness of these issues, and only discussed where found relevant for the main question of the study. The general political situation in Russia, its general foreign policy and the statements of Russian officials concerning questions of interstate relations will be mentioned where relevant for the understanding of Russia's political benchmark and political convictions. For example, the studies of the Russia Public Opinion Research Centre (VCIOM) and the Valdai Index will be applied to illustrate the general opinion within Russia as well as the global perception of Russia's internal and external affairs.

Regarding reference to international institutions, this study will focus on the United Nations as the global organ for managing the politics of the Arctic, as this is the institution that has handled the supra national questions of the Arctic, and it is also the institution that has received the biggest sign of trust from Russia. Regarding the empirical example of the Olympic Torch Relay, the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games will be mentioned as the international organisation in cooperation with Russia. The Arctic Council will be mentioned in connection with cooperation in the Arctic, but will not have as decisive a role in the study as the UN.

The international relations theory of constructivism will be applied to analyse the patterns of Russian culture and self-identification, to disclose the internal development within the country, and illustrate how this has influenced the benchmark of Russia's politics in the Arctic and on a global scale. Constructivism, as the theory that addresses the importance of understanding the cultural streams within societies to predict the development of international relations, is the most relevant international relations theory to apply to answer the main question of this study. In some cases, this study will indicate differentiating interpretations within constructivism by carrying out analysis through the eyes of conventional and critical constructivism, and the studies of Alexander Wendt and Ted Hopf will be mentioned and applied in the analysis. This will draw a picture of the various ways of interpreting the cultural aspects of international relations, even within one theoretical stream of thought, to emphasise the complexity of the analysis.

The analytical scope of this study is that of analysing the five empirical examples through the eyes of constructivism, discovering the aspects that reveal a cultural dimension, self-identification and national pride within the Russian acts. These aspects will be reviewed through the Eurasianist frame of thought to see where this political ideology is present, and finally a reasoning to explain the causes of the various actions will be presented. As the information of this study will be based on official documents and observations of political scientists, as well as on individual and collective expressions of opinion, the sources will make it possible to analyse these cultural aspects on the local and international, implicit and explicit levels, drawing a thoroughgoing picture of what lies at the core of Russian foreign and Arctic politics.

The following section will present a brief walk through history, setting a historical benchmark for the study, as well as introducing the general situation in the Arctic in terms of developments, opportunities and interests.

Historical Background of Russian Relations in the Arctic: The End of the Cold War & Interstate Relations in the Subsequent Years

The following section will provide an introduction to the historical background of Russian relations in the Arctic, focusing on the last years of the Cold War and the subsequent relations between the former East and West blocs. This will create a foundation for the examination of the empirical examples mentioned later in the paper, to review the cultural and emotional aspects of these, as well as their historical origins.

During his Murmansk speech in 1987, Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's stated:

"The Arctic is not only the Arctic Ocean, but also the northern tips of three continents: Europe, Asia and America. It is the place where the Eurasian, North American and Asian Pacific regions meet, where the frontiers come close to one another and the interests of states belonging to mutually opposed military blocs and non-aligned ones cross." (Gorbachev, 1987)

During the Cold War, the Arctic found itself uniting the Eastern and Western blocs in the Circumpolar North, whilst the two superpowers challenged each other in various political contexts in different locations around the world. The world order was bipolar, with the Soviet Union on the one side, and the United States on the other, representing the two contradicting ideologies of Communism and Capitalism in a global power struggle.

NATO, established on April 4, 1949, was initially a military alliance, Article 5 of The North Atlantic Treaty constituting collective defence in the case of an armed attack against one or several of its member states (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949). The four coastal states of the Arctic Ocean; the United States, Canada, Norway and Denmark represented four of NATO's sixteen original founding members, uniting these under a common defence strategy and principles since 1949.

The Warsaw Treaty Organisation of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, more commonly known as the Warsaw Pact, was created as a counterpart to NATO during the Cold War, initiated by the Soviet Union as an answer to NATO's inclusion of Western Germany in the Alliance on May 9, 1955. The Warsaw Pact involved the Polish, Romanian and Hungarian People's Republics, the People's Republics of Bulgaria and Albania, The German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovak Republic as well as the Soviet Socialist Republics. Its role was to "ensure joint defence and the maintenance of peace and security" (The Warsaw Security Pact, 14.05.1955). Like NATO, the Pact was a collaboration that focussed on opposing the military threats of the Cold War and officially united the states in an Eastern military bloc.

The Warsaw Pact was dissolved in 1991, following the reunification of East and West Germany and the break-up of the Soviet Union. Yet, NATO continued to exist. On February 9 1990, Gorbachev met with US Secretary of State James Baker in Moscow, and discussed what the Soviet Union wanted in return, if it were to remove its troops in East Germany and allow for German unification. According to Baker, when asked about the desired status development of NATO, Gorbachev expressed that "any extension of the zone of NATO would be unacceptable." (cited in Sarotte, 29.11.2009) No agreement had been settled at this meeting, but the following day was devoted to a continuance of the conversation, this time with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Kohl reassured Gorbachev that "naturally NATO could not expand its territory" towards the East, specifically East Germany (Ibid.), and a gentlemen's agreement was established, leaving no official document to verify this. The ambiguity in this case is the fact that US President George Bush had expressed a different opinion to the agreed terms, and was against promising to stop the expansion of NATO eastwards. He had sent a letter to Kohl prior to the his meeting with Gorbachev, expressing his position that East Germany was to have a "special military status" within the Alliance, and the possibility of expansion for NATO was to be left open. Records from Kohl's meeting on February 10 did not indicate this "special military status" being mentioned, meaning that Kohl had proceeded in continuation of the Baker-Gorbachev dialogue without including Bush's proposition. However, in September 1990, Gorbachev and Bush agreed on the terms set forth by the latter, Gorbachev embattled and in need of financial aid from Western Germany in return for settlement. He had failed to publicly criticise Kohl for the miscommunication that had occurred, but stated later that "he felt he had fallen into a trap" (Ibid.)

NATO's role after the Cold War extended far beyond security issues, and its strategy focused on balancing its traditional role as a "transatlantic organisation for collective defence in Europe" with the role of a geopolitical actor. The former Soviet republics and the Russian Federation entered into agreements of cooperation with NATO through the Partnership of Peace (PfP) and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), and the NATO-Russian Council was established (Heininen 2010;239). NATO expanded its membership ever since; in 1999, 2004 and 2009, drawing its borders further and further eastwards towards Russia, who openly expressed its contest to further expansion of the Alliance. With Georgia and Ukraine aspiring for the NATO Membership Action Plan at the Bucharest Summit in 2008, the reaction of Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was: "We will do all we can to prevent Ukraine's and Georgia's accession into NATO and to avoid an inevitable serious exacerbation of our relations with both the Alliance and our neighbours" (Deutsche Welle, 11.04.2008).

In 1989, the Cold War officially ended, but differences in values and opinion remained between the two blocs, as the continued existence and plans for expansion of NATO received on-going disapproval from Russia. The Arctic, having a strategically vital location between the two blocs, had opened up a variety of new possibilities for its coastal states. Yet, the Circumpolar North remained a space where, as Gorbachev formulated in 1987, "the frontiers come close to one another and the interests of states (...) cross". Whether these states still belong to "mutually opposed (...) blocs", or are "non-aligned" countries, is a question of political conviction and cultural perception.

New Opportunities & Threats in the Arctic

As the end of the Cold War brought with it a significant change in the international political system, the recent development of global warming entailed territorial and economic opportunities in the Arctic region. The following section will introduce these new circumstances within the Arctic, enabling for an all-around understanding of the benchmark of domestic objectives and interstate relations in the Arctic.

After the Cold War, new global threats emerged. One of these being terrorism, following the September 11 attacks, where Russia has become an ally of the US and NATO in the Global War on Terrorism - for example by opening former Soviet territory to NATO troops in the war in Afghanistan (Zellen 2009;84). Due to global warming, the Arctic is becoming more accessible to naval traffic, with growing access to Canada's Northwest Passage and Russia's Northern Sea Route. The latter will be elaborated on later. The risks connected with naval transportation include illegal trafficking and smuggling of goods along the sea routes, oil spills, posing an even bigger challenge due to slower degradation in the Arctic's cold waters, and finally the wildlife is at risk, entailing a problem for the entire food-chain and livelihood for the indigenous peoples of the North (Byers 2009;14).

The melting sea-ice also makes natural resources more and more accessible. The 2008, the US Geological Survey reported that the Arctic terrestrial and marine areas may contain as much as 13 % of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 % of the its gas (Brosnan et al. 2011;194). Most of these resources are located at a depth of less than 500 metres, making them accessible to drilling, but also requiring jurisdiction of an authorized Arctic state before they can be exploited (Byers 2009;10). This requirement has brought with it the necessity of underlying international law, and the current United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), finalised in 1982, aimed to establish:

"...a legal order for the seas and the oceans which will facilitate international communication, and will promote the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization

of their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment.” (UNCLOS 1982;preamble)

The UNCLOS, “in accordance to the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations” (Ibid.) has set geographical limits to the waters of the Arctic Ocean and its seabed. The UNCLOS identifies a state’s baseline, measurements for the state’s internal and territorial waters (12 nautical miles (nm) from the baseline), a contiguous zone (12 nm from the territorial waters) archipelagic waters, Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) (200 nm from the baseline) and finally a continental shelf, which is determined by the prolongation of the seabed until the outer edge of the continental margin (UNCLOS 1982;Part II-VI). UNCLOS’ limitation of territorial waters and seabed, along with the recent opportunity to access resources in the territory has caused the Arctic states to take action in identifying their Arctic territories. Russia, Norway, Denmark and Canada, having ratified the UNCLOS, have submitted information to apply for what they claim to be lawfully their territories on the continental shelves in the Arctic.

With new possibilities and challenges opening up in the Arctic, state interests in the natural resources within the Arctic territories, as well as the advantages of newly accessible shipping routes and the environmental and safety dangers that they entail, have become priorities of the Arctic states, influencing their interstate relations and necessitating international law to control this development. With four NATO member states in the Arctic and Russia as former super power of the Eastern bloc, the five empirical examples below will disclose the marks that the Cold War has left on geopolitics in the Arctic.

Empirical Examples of Russian Geopolitics in the Arctic: The Territorial Claims of the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

The following section will present five different examples of Russia's actions, endeavours and interests in the Arctic, painting a picture of the general circumstances in the Arctic, and providing in-depth information about each case for future use in the analysis.

Regarding the exploitation of natural resources beneath the Arctic seabed, the United Nations (21.12.2001) states: "the Convention (UNCLOS) gives coastal States sovereign rights to explore and exploit such resources, which have been estimated at being extremely valuable." As soon as the seabed exceeds national jurisdiction, management of its resources is to be established jointly by all member States through the International Seabed Authority, a division established by the Convention (Ibid.) Russia's application to add parts of the seabed in the Arctic Ocean to its EEZ, as well as its dispute with Norway over territories in the Barents Sea would require an agreement, if Russia were to commence resource development in the regions and promote state interests. On December 20, 2001 Russia submitted its continental shelf claim to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS).

Sovereignty can be obtained through submitting information to the CLCS together with scientific support that the territory is a prolongation of the state's continental shelf. If the applying state can prove that the claimed territory is its Extended Continental Shelf (ECS), delimited along the 200 nautical miles baseline of the territorial sea and EEZ and measuring an area in accordance to UNCLOS' criteria, the state will gain sovereignty over this territory (Riddel-Dixon, 19.09.2013).

Russia ratified the UNCLOS on April 11, 1997, and was the first Arctic state to submit its continental shelf claim, in accordance to Article 76 paragraph 8 of the Convention (UN, 21.12.2001):

"Information on the limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured shall be submitted by the coastal State to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (...) on the basis of equitable geographical representation. 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." (UNCLOS 1982;art. 76, para. 8)

Russia's initial claim constituted 1.2 million square kilometres of underwater terrain between the Lomonosov and Alpha-Mendeleev ridges in the Central Arctic Ocean, and it constituted the ECS leading up to the North Pole, as well as territories in the Barents Sea, extending 200 nautical miles from the Russian coastline and claimed to be in continuation of the Russian continental shelf. Finally, it constituted areas in the Bering Sea and Sea of Okhotsk, which Russia was interested in adding to its EEZ (The American Journal of International Law, 2002). An illustration of the claimed territory can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Denmark, Canada, Norway, the United States and Japan, as states in the risk of being affected by Russia's submission, publicised their reactions to Russian territorial claims, submitting these to the General Secretary and the Russian Federation. Denmark stated that more specific data was required for it to be able to form an opinion regarding Russia's submission. It was "therefore unable to state that the Russian claim would not be met by overlapping Danish/Greenlandic claims to continental shelf areas beyond 200 nautical miles in the Arctic." (The Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations, 2002¹) Canada also stated that it required more information in order to accept or acquiesce the claim of the Russian Federation (The Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, 2002). Norway pointed to its "maritime dispute" within the continental shelf of the Barents Sea and stated that a delimitation line will be agreed upon through consultations directly with the Russian Federation. Norway's notes were submitted in agreement with the Russian Federation, and Norway gave its consent to the Commission's examination of the Russian submission (The Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations, 2002).

¹ Despite this document being signed "2001", considering the surrounding dates and events, it is obvious that the document was in fact signed in 2002 and thus the date is a misprint.

The United States, which has territorial disputes with Russia over territories in the Bering Sea, asserted that Russia's "submission has major flaws as it relates to the continental shelf claim in the Arctic" (The American Journal of International Law, Oct 2002). The United States noted that Russia had provided insufficient information with its claim, and pointed to what it considered as incorrect geological definition of a continental margin, submarine ridges and the Lomonosov Ridge, and the Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge System. US' studies explained as follows: "Mounting geologic and physical evidence indicates that the Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge System is the surface expression of a single continuous geologic feature that formed on oceanic crust of the Arctic Ocean basin by volcanism" (Cited in The American Journal of International Law, Oct 2002), and by consisting of volcanic material, it is "not, therefore, a submerged prolongation of the land mass of Russia." (The Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, 2002) Regarding the Lomonosov Ridge, the Representative of the United States raised questions about the natural prolongation of the Ridge, stating that it is "a freestanding feature in the deep, oceanic part of the Arctic Ocean Basin, and not a natural component of the continental margins of either Russia or any other State." The US concluded its response by stating that more information was required in order to examine the submission further (Ibid.) The Japanese response was also critical, addressing a territorial dispute over territories in the Sea of Okhotsk. This dispute will not be elaborated on in this paper.

In April 2002, Russia submitted additional information to support its case, with a scientific presentation addressed to the General Secretaries of the four Arctic states. Ivan Gloumov, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, made this presentation, where he presented "(t)he final outcome of the delineation of the outer limit of the continental shelf of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Ocean" (UN, 05.04.2002). Regarding the Arctic coastal states' reactions to the Russian submission, Gloumov determined that these "do not contain any indication of the existence of disputes concerning the delimitation of maritime spaces or other territorial disputes and are, consequently, not an obstacle to the consideration of our submission." (Ibid.) Thereby, the communication between the Arctic states was, according to Gloumov, not expected to constitute any problems for Russia's application process, or in the case with Norway, to interfere with the negotiation process of the territorial dispute in the Barents Sea (Ibid.)

Following the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, an UNCLOS' Subcommission of scientists was granted time to examine Russia's submission (UN, 21.12.2001), and present its recommendations on how to fulfil the requirements of the application process. The Chairman of the Commission and the Subcommission's members were all from non-Arctic states to avoid favouring (UN, 08.10.2002), and the Commission's decisions would be based on scientific recommendations in terms of scientific research, and would not be binding (UN, 21.12.2001). The Commission would not be making recommendations with regard to overlapping territorial claims, necessitating for Arctic states to solve their disputes internally. (UNCLOS, 1982;Article 287).

With regards to the territories in the Barents Sea, the Commission's recommendation was for the Russian Federation to transmit the coordinates of the agreed delimitation lines, when agreements with Norway have been reached. Regarding the claims for territories in the Central Arctic Ocean, the Commission suggested for the Russian Federation to make a revised submission with findings based on the recommendations presented by Commission (UN, 08.10.2002).

Since Russia's submission to the CLCS, the remaining Arctic states that have ratified the UNCLOS have submitted their claims to the territories of the Arctic Ocean, disclosing various areas of overlapping interests. Norway submitted its information to the CLCS on November 27 2006, Denmark on June 14 2012 and Canada on December 6 2013. Canada has also shown interest in extending its continental shelf to the North Pole, and Denmark, with the possibility of filing additional information until November 2014, is also a potential competitor for the rights to the North Pole (Mazo, 11.12.2013).

Russia's pending submission is the key to commencement of further resource exploitation in the Arctic, and with overlapping claims to various territories, these disputes are a part of Russia's Arctic politics.

Treaty on Maritime Delimitation Between Norway and Russia

On September 15 2010, the dispute over the territories of the Barents Sea was put to rest after 40 years of existence, opening up to new opportunities of cooperation and resource exploration and development for both Norway and Russia.

Russian President Medvedev and Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg observed as their Foreign Ministers, Sergey Lavrov and Jens Gahr Store, signed the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean, hereafter referred to as the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation, which clarified the states' borders in the Barents Sea and established the guidelines of cooperation in the field of petroleum resource exploitation (Regjeringen Stoltenberg II, 15.09.2010). By drawing an eight-point geodetic line "connecting the easternmost point of the outer limit of the continental shelf of Norway and the westernmost point of the outer limit of the continental shelf of the Russian Federation" (Treaty on Maritime Delimitation, 2010) the disputed area of 175,000 square kilometres in total was divided into approximately equal parts (Henriksen and Ulfstein, 2011). An illustration of the agreed delimitation can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Since Norway's and Russia's claims to exclusive rights to the continental shelf in 1963 and 1968, negotiations regarding the maritime borders in the Barents Sea have been an on-going process since 1970 (Henriksen and Ulfstein, 2011). The fundamental disagreement lay in the dissimilar perceptions of the CLCS' Article 6, which depicted the circumstances for delimitation and based this on a median line, unless "special circumstances" could justify the placement of a different boundary. Norway sought to place its delimitation on the mentioned median line (Henriksen and Ulfstein, 2011). Meanwhile, the Soviet Union, and thereafter the Russian Federation, requested a so-called sectorial line, based on the ocean boundary between the two countries as an issue of "special circumstances", to draw the limitation (Ostreng, 2010).

When Norway submitted its territorial claims to the CLSC on extending its continental shelf in 2006, it addressed the disputed area in the Barents Sea. The Loop Hole, as the area was known, extended beyond 200 nm from the Norwegian and Russian EEZs. As a transmission of coordinates on the agreed delimitation lines had not yet been delivered by Russia in accordance to the UCLC's recommendations of 2002, the Commission once again recommended bilateral agreement:

"The Commission recommends that Norway proceed with the delimitation of the continental shelf beyond 200 NM in the Loop Hole by agreement with the Russian Federation with the assurance that both coastal States share entitlement to the seabed and subsoil located beyond 200 NM in this part of the Barents Sea as the natural prolongations of their land territories."

(UN, 13.03.2009).

Commenting on the agreed delimitation, the Norwegian Prime Minister denied the fact that Norway had abandoned its longstanding position on the median line delimitating the maritime territory, as he denied the fact that the so-called "special circumstances" had influenced the final delimitation. Stoltenberg clarified that Norway had simply had the median line as a point of departure, from which borders were adjusted to accommodate Russia's longer coastlines. The difficulties of determining the lengths of the coastlines had made the delimitation process difficult (Henriksen and Ulfstein, 2011), having made the negotiation process long and the agreement encouraging.

Stoltenberg pointed to the positive outcome of the agreement, saying: "This is a confirmation that Norway and Russia, two large polar nations, do not have a policy about racing, but a policy about cooperation." "I believe that this will open the way for many joint projects, especially in the area of energy", Medvedev had said after the signing of the Treaty (Gibbs, 27.04.2010). Provisions on rules and procedures regarding shared petroleum resources were listed in the Treaty's points of agreement, and the former disputed territory became open for exploration of resources (Treaty on Maritime Delimitation, 2010). According to the US Geological Survey, the undiscovered but technically recoverable petroleum resources in the Barents Sea could be estimated at 11 billion barrels of crude oil, over 115 billion cubic kilometres of natural gas and two million barrels of natural gas liquids (Neumann,

10.11.2010). Stoltenberg and Medvedev both added that the Treaty was in compliance with the norms of international law, and that international law would also be the basis for future settlements, if disagreements were to occur (Treaty on Maritime Delimitation, 2010).

Drawing a geodetic line to divide the disputed area opened up the opportunity of exploiting the area's petroleum resources, as well as establishing common ground for cooperation between the states. The Treaty on Maritime Delimitation laid the ground for the settlement of territorial disputes in the Arctic.

The Northern Sea Route

Flowing through the Barents, Kara, Laptev, East Siberian and Chukchi Seas along Russia's northern coast, the Northern Sea Route (NSR) has been a vital maritime waterway during the era of the Soviet Union, and has seen growth in popularity concurrently with the melting of its sea ice. (Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Report, hereafter referred to as AMSA, 2009;49). In 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev declared the NSR open to international traffic for the first time, and that summer the first foreign vessels² passed along the Route (Liu and Kronbak, 2010). In September 2011, Prime Minister at the time, Vladimir Putin said the following about the NSR:

"The shortest route between Europe's largest markets and the Asia-Pacific region lies across the Arctic. This route is almost a third shorter than the traditional southern one. I want to stress the importance of the Northern Sea Route as an international transport artery that will rival traditional trade lanes in service fees, security and quality. States and private companies that choose the Arctic trade routes will undoubtedly reap economic advantages" (Putin cited in Byers, 09.06.2012).

In 1991 the Russian Federation approved the Regulations for Navigation on the Seaways of the Northern Sea Route, hereafter referred to as Regulations for Navigation, which set domestic safety and environmental standards for navigating in Russian internal waters. Canada, owning the Northwestern Passage, is the only other Arctic state to have developed national legislation separately from international standards (AMSA, 2009;62), yet the significance of following international guidelines is deeply emphasised in the Regulations for Navigation.

The Regulations for Navigation, aim to "on the basis of non-discrimination for vessels of all States, regulate navigation through the Northern Sea Route" (Regulations for Navigation, 1991). In accordance with the UNCLOS' article 234, a coastal state has full sovereignty over its internal waters, and may apply domestic jurisdiction in relation to conditions for entry into its

² "Vessels" in this text are surface vessels, thereby excluding underwater vessels such as submarines. As submarines navigate below the surface, legislation for these in relation to the borderlines within the Arctic Ocean is different and will not be covered here.

ports, as long as these are non-discriminatory and are in pursuit of protecting the marine environment (UNCLOS, 1982;art.234). Russian NSR policy includes mandatory ice-breaker assistance and escorting support by Russian icebreakers, with required payment for these services (Regulations for Navigation, 1991;art. 3&7), as well as inspection of passing vessels and mandatory beforehand application for permission to enter Russian internal waters (UNCLOS, 1982;art.234). The internal waters of a coastal state give access to “innocent passage” for foreign vessels under its domestic laws, whilst the state has less sovereignty over international straits, where “transit passage” gives foreign vessels exceeding rights to pass without permission from the coastal state (AMSA, 2009;52-67).

With ice melting at about 13 % every decade for the last couple of decades (Phillips, 26.09.2013) the navigation season of the NSR has grown from 20 to 30 days per year in 2004 to an estimated 90 to 100 days per year in 2080 (AMSA, 2009;28). During the 1990s, traffic through the NSR halted due to lack of government subsidies for this project, nor was it commercially viable at the time. (Royal Belgian Institute of Marine Engineers, 2012). Once the environmental and economic conditions turned to the advantage of the NSR, the Route became active again, with two German vessels being the first foreign ships to sail the entire Route from start to finish in 2009. 2010 saw 4 vessels pass through, and 2011 had 34 vessels pass. By 2012, 46 vessels sailed through the Route (Pettersen, 23.11.2012), 28 of which were not Russian, and in 2013 as many as 61 vessels sailed through the NSR, 25 being foreign vessels (Keil, 13.01.2014).

Although exploited almost entirely by vessels bearing the Russian flag, the NSR has proven to be of great interest to various global market players, such as the European Union and China. In 2012, the first Chinese vessel, an icebreaker, sailed along the NSR, and the following year saw a Chinese cargo-vessel pass this route. This 33-day trip was more than 5,200 kilometres shorter than the Chinese’ traditional route through the Suez Canal, saving time, money and gas emissions. China expects around 5-15 % of its international trade, having a worth of around €526 billion, to use the Northern Sea Route by 2020 (Pettersen, 14.03.2013).

The United States has been the only state to challenge the sovereignty of the Soviet Union and now Russia in the NSR, stating that its straits are international straits, and should therefore

allow the more advantageous transit passage for foreign vessels. (Byers, 06.02.2012). The dispute can be dated back to 1965, when a US Coast Guard icebreaker was located by the Soviet Union in the Vilitsky Strait in the NSR. The American government experienced strong diplomatic pressure from the Soviet side, pressure that was perceived as a direct threat to take military action, if the Coast Guard did not change its course away from the strait (Byers, 09.06.2012). The following year, another icebreaker crossed into the East Siberian Sea in the NSR. The Soviet government sent an aide-mémoire to the Embassy of the United States in Moscow, presenting its position that the straits within NSR were internal waters. The reply was the standpoint of the straits in fact being international (Byers, 06.02.2012). Since this incident, no foreign surface vessels have been discovered sailing through the NSR without Russian consent. Canada has been the only Arctic state to take a stand in this matter, as it also finds itself in disagreement with the United States over its sovereignty in the Northwestern Passage. Thereby, Canada and Russia support each other's argumentations regarding sovereignty in the Arctic Passages. According to AMSA (2009;53), "national opinions have differed over the application of the straits used for an international navigation regime in the Arctic", leaving the definition of a strait and its function up for discussion.

Despite US lack of recognition of the sovereignty of the straits, Russia has continued developing and exploiting the Northern Sea Route, creating access to the large markets of Europe and Asia.

The Arktika 2007 Expedition

The Arktika 2007 expedition was carried out on August 2 of the mentioned year, lead by Arthur Chilingarov, deputy speaker in Russia's Lower House and veteran Soviet explorer. Along with fellow parliamentarian Vladimir Gruzdev and accompanying crewmembers, Chilingarov sailed on the vessel "Akademic Fyodorov" from Murmansk to the North Pole (BBC News (2), 24.07.2013). Hereafter the crew descended 4,200 metres beneath the Arctic Ocean in submersibles MIR-I and MIR-II, carrying out scientific research and planting a titanium Russian flag on its seabed (BBC News (1), 02.08.2007). The symbolism and political statements of this happening created controversy throughout the Arctic states, as the selected reactions mentioned below will demonstrate.

The expedition had undergone 8-9 years of planning and, according to Chilingarov, had required huge economic and organizational resources, its task consisting of geographical discovery as well as scientific research (RT on Youtube, 09.08.2007). Prior to this expedition, Chilingarov stated: "The Arctic is ours, and we should demonstrate our presence." His colleague, Gruzdev, expressed the importance of reminding "the whole world that Russia is a great polar and scientific power." (BBC News (2), 24.07.2007) Gruzdev pointed out that Russia had ratified the UNCLOS, and that the task of the expedition in question was to explore the Arctic Ocean in accordance with international law, and to attract state interest in the research of this region. Chilingarov emphasised how the expedition was proof of Russian technological capability to explore and develop the Arctic, and that Russia must continue its studies of the Arctic territory, which he identified as being Russian. Chilingarov stated that despite Canadian and Danish overlapping territorial interests, none of these countries were equipped to conduct the research that Russia had carried out, (RT on Youtube, 09.08.2007). "We have exercised our maritime right of the first night," – as Chilingarov put it (Baev, 2008;4).

Chilingarov told the press about a capsule that he had placed beneath the seabed at the North Pole, holding the following message:

"This capsule is sent from our time, during a major research experience, during the third international Polar year. This is a sign of tight scientific cooperation of Arctic polar researchers."
(BBC News (2), 24.07.2007).

Chilingarov commented on this, saying: "This is very important, because we had foreign friends participating in the expedition. This is an international expedition, and this is a Russian initiative." (Ibid.)

According to the expedition's Australian crewmember Mike McDowell, the scientific importance of this event had been forgotten by the media, and he expressed his opinion of the press focusing primarily on the politics and "confrontation" in this matter rather than the international cooperation that had been practiced. As McDowell stated at a press conference following the 2007 expedition, this event was about conducting scientific exploration, and an example of remarkable human achievement. This should be the main focus in the press. Furthermore, McDowell stated that he viewed neither Chilingarov, nor Gruzdev as parliamentarians, but as a renowned scientist and young businessman, respectively. The political aspects of the submersible's mission, as well as the political status of its members were thereby not significant to the Australian scholar, who pointed out that although the mission was led by Russians, it was an international project, and pointed to the international background of yet another crewmember, Swedish-German businessman Frederik Paulsen. According to McDowell, the Russian flag had been appropriately placed on the seabed, as the achievement of the expedition was remarkable (RT on Youtube, 09.08.2007).

Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay did not welcome the expedition and its symbolism, stating: "You can't go around the world and just plant flags and say 'We are claiming this territory'", adding that 15th century tactics are no longer valid (Baev, 2007;4-5). Prime Minister Putin said that he was "surprised with Canada's reaction", asking: "Why be so nervous?" and adding "the Americans once planted their national flag on the moon. Why should we be worrying about this? The moon did not become the property of the US" (Zellen 2009;112). Foreign Minister Lavrov confirmed this by saying: "Whenever explorers reach some sort of point that no one else has explored, they plant a flag. That's how it was on the

moon, by the way" (Eckel 08.08.2007), also referring to the United States' flag on the moon in 1969.

The Arktika 2007 produced remarkable scientific achievements yet also strong reactions from abroad, placing focus on, to use McDowell's term, the "confrontation" and politics in the Arctic.

Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole

The Olympic Torch Relay for the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games began in Greece on October 2, 2013, moving onto the territories of Russia from October 6. The Relay lasted 123 days, covering 65.000 kilometres in 135 towns and 83 regions of Russian territory, making it the longest Torch Relay in the history of the Winter Olympics (Olympic.org, 06.02.2014). The torch reached the North Pole on October 19 and was lit up the same day, after a record-fast 91-hour journey on the ice-breaker “50 лет победы”.

The team of the expedition was once again lead by Arthur Chilingarov, and consisted of members of the scientific communities as well as two Olympic medallists, representing all eight of the Arctic Council member states. The torch was passed on from crew-member to crew-member until finally being passed to Chilingarov, who lit up the cauldron at the North Pole. The flags of the eight participating states were placed on the North Pole to mark their presence (Heininen, 27.01.2014).

Chilingarov stated that “(e)xpeditons to the North Pole have been routine practice for Russian ice-breakers for a long time,” adding that the Relay was an opportunity for the Russian nuclear fleet to show its worth: “We will show the whole world once again that the Arctic is completely accessible to our fleet” (The Moscow Times, 13.09.2013). Dmitry Chernysenko, President of Sochi 2014, expressed that “(t)he route is designed to share the magic of Russia and demonstrate the beauty of our country,” while celebrating its history and potential. The relay would also be “personality driven” according to Chernysenko, and “illustrate a new young Russia” to the world (Inside the Games, 28.09.2013).

The Relay was planned and carried out under the responsibility of the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (Inside the Games, 28.09.2013), covering areas of different characteristics and symbolic significance for Russia, and applying various traditional and unusual methods of transportation. The project of bringing the Olympic Torch to the North Pole was arranged in collaboration with the State Atomic Energy Corporation, “Rosatom”, and its Director-General Sergey Kiriyyenko stated as follows:

"Rosatom" shares the values of the International Olympic movement, promotes the development of sports, and creates technologies that provide the comfort and health of the Russian people. We believe that (...) holding a Relay Stage there (the North Pole) will be an important world scale event, and a symbol of the Arctic Council's unity" (Kiriyenko cited in sochi.ru 12.09.2013)

Besides being brought to the North Pole, the Olympic torch also visited cultural sights around Saint Petersburg and the Golden Ring, an oil field in Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region and the largest gold mine in Yakutia (sochi.ru, 07.10.2013). The torch was brought to the bottom of the world's deepest freshwater lake, Lake Baikal, reached the highest point in Europe, Mount Elbrus, and went into outer space (Inside the Games, 28.09.2013).

The five empirical examples above illustrate the different affairs that have taken place in the Arctic, as well as the various approaches that the Russian state has used to promote its interests. These events can shine a light on the symbolism and political influence of the Arctic on Russia. In the following section, the IR theory of constructivism will be introduced, followed by a historical review of Eurasianism's emergence, its political ideas and a sample of the critique that exists regarding the nature of argumentation applied by Eurasianists. By reviewing the examples above through the eyes of constructivism, and considering the influence of Eurasianism in Russian geopolitics in the Arctic, the area's importance for Russia's self-identification and pride, as well as regional politics and international relations as a whole, will be disclosed.

Constructivism as an International Relations Theory & the Question of National and State Identity

The changes in global relations at the end of the Cold War also entailed a different approach to international relations, than had been seen before. Challenging neo-realism and neo-liberalism, constructivism as an IR theory seeks to explain global development through examining social norms and cognitive structures within states. According to Alexander Wendt, the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War could hardly be explained through the application of neo-realism and neo-liberalism due to the individualist and materialist orientation of international relations at the time, causing the emergence of constructivism with its “ideational and holistic view” of IR (Wendt, 1999;4).

Wendt explains the difference between the three most applied IR theories as follows:

“Neorealists see the structure of the international system as a distribution of material capacities because they approach their subject with a materialist lens; Neoliberalists see it as capabilities plus institutions because they have added to the material base an institutional superstructure; and constructivists see it as a distribution of ideas because they have an idealist ontology.”

(Wendt, 1999;5)

The idea behind constructivism is that states are socially constructed, and their interests and identities are determined more by national development and politics than by the international system (Wendt, 1999;246). To understand interstate development, constructivism examines the meaning of global balance of power, the relationship between state identity and state interest, and the racial, social and religious elements of national and state identity. In order to foresee future developments, it is essential to be in the know of cultural tendencies within a state, as well as its institutions, norms, shared beliefs and social practices (Hopf, 1998;172-174). Constructivists refer to this as national identity, often linked to irrational thought and emotion. In this way, states’ policies and interstate development can be determined, rather than through rational calculations, by irrationality (Wendt 1999;281), where emotions such as anxiety, fear and frustration take over when a state’s needs are not

being met and the feeling of satisfaction from succeeding is a motivator for policy makers (Ibid., 1999;132). Wendt (1999;236-237) also mentions the significance of collective self-esteem for states' relations with one another. If a state perceives disregard and humiliation from another state, this can entail a reaction of self-assertion, devaluation or aggression towards the other state. Thereby, self-image and intersubjective identity, as well as irrational behaviour are significant factors in international relations, according to constructivists. Recognition of sovereignty by other states is an important factor for intersubjective identity and relations, as the lack of recognition by the other states may cause a state to feel the need to secure its position in order to regain standing in the global community (Ibid.)

Intersubjective identity between states can determine credibility and expectations in international relations, where state identity is key. State identity refers to the preferences and consequent actions of a state, giving it an image amongst other states and a certain standing in the global society (Hopf, 1998;172-175). Yet, perceptions of states by other states vary, and can only be controlled to a certain degree; for example states' perceptions of the United States as a "leader of Western civilization" or a power-hungry "imperialist power". In the end, the identity of the United States as an influential hegemon is globally recognized by a vast majority, whilst conquering the same title would be difficult for another militarily strong power such as Russia, which would not seem as reliable to that same majority of states (Alexandrov, 2003;36-43). Alexandrov explains this by pointing to the role of Russia's image in the global society, which has been formed by its history and past alliances (Ibid.)

In his study of the interstate community as a determinant for a state's identity, Wendt (1999;236-237) looks at states' representations in a collective with other states, arguing that in friendly cooperation between states, the border of a state's self-identification might begin to expand to include its fellow states, where identification with one another's welfare and values becomes natural. For instance, the identity of "liberal democracy" is a state identification that has been expanded throughout a group of countries in, for example, Western Europe, where interests within this group support the idea of a liberal democracy. According to scholar William Bloom, the line of a state's foreign policy is determined by its national identity to begin with, thus making the concepts of national and state identity interdependent (Alexandrov, 2003;34-37).

As Hopf (1998; 199) explains the difference between two significant directions in constructivism, he points to how conventional constructivists look for shared values between states to explain their interaction, yet deny the presumption that global politics is so homogenous that a universal generalization can be applied to examine it. Turning to critical constructivists, Hopf explains that they have the starting point of looking for the differentiating and unique aspects of global politics, as this is initially heterogeneous and discursive (Ibid.) Critical constructivists often view the relation between the Self and the Other as being opposing, attributing positive traits to the Self, and negative to the Other. Yet, the Other does not necessarily have to be another state in comparison to one's own, the Self. The Other can represent the Self in the past, for example under a specific regime (Alexandrov 2003;37).

Constructivism seeks to explain recent development in global politics through a cultural parameter, and takes into account historical and psychological influences on policy-making, as well as the necessity for a state to nurture its national and state identity to have a standing in the global community.

Eurasianism:

An ideology within Russian Geopolitics

Eurasianism has undergone a vast development as a political ideology in Russian foreign politics and geopolitics, as its ideas have grown in popularity and influence. Emerging as a reaction to the frustration of the October Revolution and again of the break-up of the Soviet Union, Eurasianism has been an idea based on irrationality, national pride appreciation of Russian distinctiveness and self-assertion, transmitting these emotions into international relations.

Regarding the terminology of “Eurasia”, “Eurasian”, “Eurasianism” and “Eurasianist”, Laruelle (2008;39&71) points to the fact that Eurasianists apply these terms interchangeably about the political ideology, the Eurasian continent and Russia, distinguishing only when necessary. This study will apply the terms “Eurasianism” and “Eurasianist” to refer to the political ideology itself and factors affiliated with the ideology, and distinguish from “Eurasia” and “Eurasian” as a geographical territory and factors affiliated with this. Likewise, an overall term “Eurasianism” will be applied about Classical and Neo-Eurasianism, when a distinction is not needed, and the analysis will apply only Neo-Eurasianism, hereby referring to it solely as “Eurasianism”.

Classical Eurasianism developed in the years leading up to the 1917 revolution, departing in Slavophilism and Pan-Slavism of the 19th century, Asianism of the early 20th century, and Western intellectual trends in the interwar period. Marlene Laruelle (2008;16-17), analysing Eurasianism through its Western influences, concludes that this stream of thought was a “philosophy in exile”, developed in various places around the world by Russian émigrés, and united throughout the entire Eurasian continent from the Far East to the West. The Russian émigrés were intellectuals generally connected to the White movement, yet consisting of a broad political spectrum; liberals, socialists, anarchists, Cadets and supporters of constitutional monarchy. They were in exile from their homeland at the dawn of the October Revolution, and according to Laruelle, underwent a process of self-estrangement and adopted various ideas of Russian cultural distinctiveness as a reaction to the country’s development

and feeling of impasse. As Laruelle (2008;18-19) puts it: “Eurasianism was thus born in a context of crisis, in an atmosphere of eschatological expectations”, where “Russia seemed incapable of replicating the Western political system”. The disappointment with the West led to the blaming of the West for the country’s difficult historical development. Laruelle mentions the disapproval of the intellectuals of the 1939 Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the USSR. This elite of intellectuals felt a humiliation over their country’s political choices, but at the same time they saw potential in the Soviet Union’s geographic span. Recognising that the Bolshevik movement will stay in power in the Soviet Union, the émigrés sought rapprochement, whilst rejecting communism and the Western parliamentary regimes (Ibid.)

Classical Eurasianism was an idea of providing a “third way” for Russia, which it saw as distinct from Western civilization (Laruelle, 2008;199). Taking into account parts of European political thought, such as Traditionalism, Nationalism and Italian Fascism and Bolshevism, yet condemning the narrow nationalism of Mussolini’s policies as well dismissing Communism for its anti-religious policies, Classical Eurasianism could be considered a middle path between capitalism and socialism and between liberalism and dictatorship. This blend of ideas was by Classical Eurasianists found to be an appropriate solution for a Russia as a “third continent” (Laruelle, 2008;26 and 108-109), where the Orthodox Church and geographical position between Europe and Asia played a significant role in shaping Russian culture. For Eurasianists, territory had always played a significant role in self-identification, where geography accompanied the economic and geopolitical aspects of international relations (Ibid., 2008;32).

Neo-Eurasianism was a result of yet another political breakdown at the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as the territorial disconnection with former Soviet republics. The desire to rid the country of the post-revolutionary and post-Soviet chaos was played out through the idea of a traditional geopolitical cohesiveness of Eurasian territory, and a reestablishment of a unitary Eurasian state (Bassin, 2008;285). According to Laruelle (2008;1) the Neo-Eurasianist doctrine has been applied by intellectuals and politicians to try to explain the break-up of the Soviet Union, emphasising the lost territories of the Soviet Union, and to restore a sense of continuity for Russia. During the 1990s, Neo-Eurasianism was a current of ideas that was not

unified (Ibid., 2008;83-86), but functioned as an umbrella-ideology for the various ideological views that opposed the policies of Boris Yeltsin's presidency (Ersen, 2004;141).

Aleksandr Panarin promoted his thoughts of Neo-Eurasianism as a reaction to what he considered an inappropriate stream of Westernisation in Russia, implemented through the "shock therapy" reforms in the 1990s. Panarin defined these as an assault on Russian society and national culture, as well as an implementation of corruption, capitalism, drastic measures of privatization and incorrect exploitation of the country's national resources, in an unreasonable admiration of the West. Rejecting the West as did the Classical Eurasianists, Panarin saw the foreign policy of Europe as rooted in the political system of ancient Athens, where it based its success on enslaving the rest of the world (Laruelle, 2008;86-89). Russia, according to him, was different and irreducible to Western civilization, as all civilizations are different and unchangeable in their social structures. Therefore, the reforms made by Yeltsin's elite out of admiration for Europe were inappropriate for Russia. (Ibid., 2008;90&104).

Sharing the leading role in Neo-Eurasianism in the 1990s with Panarin was Aleksandr Dugin, who in the following decades would synthesize the various thoughts of Neo-Eurasianism under one ideology (Laruelle, 2008;83-86), and become the most prolific promoter of this idea (Ibid., 2008;113). With a career from 1996 to 2003 as advisor to Gennady Seleznev, the speaker of the State Duma, later in the position of chairman of the Geopolitical Expertise Section of the Duma's Consultative National Security Council (Laruelle, 2008;11) and having close ties with Putin's political advisor Gleb Pavlovsky (Ersen, 2004;146), Dugin's ideas gained access to the Duma. The political party Evraziia was formed in May 2002 and led by Dugin, building on his ideas of Neo-Eurasianism. It later transformed into the International Eurasian Movement in November 2003, which included members from some 20 countries (Laruelle, 2008;111-113). The movement's purpose was to formulate Russia's "national identity" and to have influence on government power. Since his recognition as a Neo-Eurasianist thinker, Dugin influenced various aspects of Russia's foreign politics in terms of geopolitical strategy. The newspaper *Obshchaia Gazeta*, endorsed Dugin's influence, stating: "Dugin is no longer considered to be the preacher of an ideological sect, but rather as an officially recognized specialist on geopolitical questions." (Cited in Laruelle, 2008;143)

Geopolitics, although no precise definition has been agreed upon, is generally the study of international relations in relation to the geographical and natural environment a state has at its disposal. Geopolitics can be observed in modern Russian politics after the Cold War. At this time, focus was on territorial rights for developing natural resources and establishing competitive shipping routes for the global market, and this remains the focus of Russian geopolitics in today's globalization (Karaganov, 19.05.2013).

For Dugin, Neo-Eurasianism is the only appropriate line of thought for Russia's geopolitics, as this is the sole way of restoring Russia's great power in the world (Laruelle, 2008;115-116). Dugin explains: "Russia is the incarnation of the search for a historical alternative to Atlanticism. Therein lies her global mission." (Dugin cited in Laruelle, 2008;119) The term "Atlanticism" is used by Eurasianists to refer to the unipolar or "mondialistic" world vision of the United States (Ersen, 2004;137), thereby the opponent of Eurasianism. As the founder of the French Nouvelle Droite movement, Alain de Benoist points out in a televised discussion with Dugin (De Benoist and Dugin, 2008) that despite the terminology often being used to depict a united movement with Western Europe towards a universalization of shared values, at a closer glance it is evident that Atlanticism is not a matter of course for Western European countries. De Benoist argues that the interests of Western European countries vary from those of the United States. Bassin explains this view in the following:

"Europe is as vulnerable as any other part of the world to America's hegemonic strivings, which means that it has natural 'geopolitical affinities' with Russia-Eurasia that could be the basis for a future alliance." (Bassin, 2008;291)

In order to challenge Atlanticism, Eurasianists see the establishment of a multipolar world-order as the necessary step to obtain several regional powers that would be able to counterbalance the hegemony of the United States (Laruelle, 2008;119). According to Dugin, Russia has always been the pivotal state of Eurasia, applying here Halford MacKinder's terminology; a pivotal state is defined as a state, which not only is regionally influential, but can form global politics. (Ibid., 2008;6) Dugin views Neo-Eurasianism as the counterpart to, in his view, a project of the United States to achieve global domination in a unipolar world order. Thereby, the opponent for Neo-Eurasianists is the United States of America (Bassin,

2008;286), and the former Western European threat is no longer relevant in Neo-Eurasianism.

Professor Andrei Tsygankov of the San Francisco State University has divided Neo-Eurasianism into the modernizers and expansionists, linking Dugin to the latter school. According to him, the expansionists believe that the world will continue to be bipolar in accordance to the geopolitical rules of the Cold War. Modernizers acknowledge the current weakness of the Russian state to face the West in a direct battle, so they promote economic and technological improvements to strengthen the position of the state. Modernizers also present the point of view that the end of the Cold War has not only brought with it the decline of the Soviet superpower, but also of the United States as a superpower, the deterioration of which is unavoidable with no major enemy to keep it intact (Ersen, 2004;138-139). Dugin has expressed this idea as well, discrediting the liberal idea of the West, and advocating for an alternative “third way” to counteract liberalism as a universal stream of thought (Dugin, 21.09.2012).

This “third way” is necessary for Russian distinctiveness and finds itself in prolongation of Panarin’s and the Classical Eurasianists’ lines of thought. In Dugin’s own words: “every people moves through History according to its own trajectory, upholding its own understanding of the world. That is why what is good for some peoples cannot be applied to others.” (cited in Bassin, 2008;138). Distinctiveness of the Eurasian civilization is based on a fusion of the Russian and Slavic Orthodox peoples, Turko-Muslim peoples and Asian Confucian peoples, and their religious foundations. This civilization is considered incompatible with the West and its secular model of government, which Eurasianists view as foreign to Russia.

When working with international relations, Laruelle (2008;1&12) points out that it is often through the incompatibility of civilizations that conflict appears. Thereby, it is comprehensible that clashes occur between Russia and Western states, in particular with the United States. Evidently, Atlanticism, the West and the United States of America are considered to be the primary opponents for Eurasianism, yet it is also apparent that these terms are often interchangeable and context-driven. By basing its ideology on the distinctiveness of its civilization, Eurasianism highlights the significance of a strong national

and state identity in Russia's international relations, making the theory of constructivism an appropriate tool for analysis of Russian foreign policy.

Eurasianism:

A Critique by Marlene Laruelle

The study of Eurasianism, as an ideology within Russian geopolitics, can be applied to understand the emotional aspects within Russian foreign politics as well as Russian national identity. The following section will focus on Laruelle's findings of inconsistencies and points of incredibility within Eurasianism and its argumentation. Several points of criticism will be presented, to highlight the difficulty of using Eurasianists', primarily Dugin's, direct arguments when analysing Russian politics.

Commencing with the benchmark of Eurasianism, Laruelle (2008;2) points to the extensive blend of national and foreign ideas that have contributed to creating this ideology. Its diversity of meanings before Dugin unified these, and its role as an umbrella-ideology for those opposing pro-Westernisation in the 1990s, made the firmness of its positions questionable at the time. Supporters of Russian Westernization claimed that Eurasianism and its alleged identification with Asian nations was simply a geostrategic alternative to Russia's failure in Europe and attempt to counteract Western centrality, and not a natural link to Asian culture (Laruelle, 2008;4). Internal critique within the Eurasianist camp, for instance the criticism of Eurasianism's over-exposure to European influence, as mentioned above, had also contributed to the scattering of this ideology's image (2008;116). It is thereby understandable that a unification of Eurasianism was necessary, and that Dugin, having created a unified Neo-Eurasianist movement, achieved the prominence that he did.

Dugin's ideas are described by Laruelle as being firm opinions influenced by European streams with a bad reputation (Laruelle, 2008;108-19), and she suggests that the ideology is devoted to fervent Russian nationalism (Dugin, 21.09.2012). Drawn on the intellectual stream of Fascism, which distinguishes itself from what is associated with the contemporary racist extreme right movement, Eurasianism shares its romantic idea of heroism whilst also promoting revolutionary and pro-socialist thought (Laruelle, 2008;131-132). Dugin explains Eurasianists' use of Fascism: "By 'Fascism' we do not mean a concrete political phenomenon, but our deep-seated secret fear that brings together the nationalist, the liberal, the

communist, and the democrat. This fear does not have a political or ideological nature; it expresses a more general, more deep-seated feeling which is common to all people, irrespectively of their political orientation.” (Dugin cited in Laruelle, 2008;134). He condemns the racism of Nazism, but supports the romantic thought of battle and death, and the establishment of a strong, healthy and pure Eurasian people. The nationalism promoted by Dugin is the so-called “nationalism of love”, as opposed to “nationalism of hate”, where the Russian ethos is recognised as being in the centre of Russian culture, but stresses the openness of the Russian ethos and culture towards others within the nation (Ibid., 2008;134-140). It is visible how Dugin denies promoting hateful Russian nationalism through Eurasianism.

Laruelle’s points of critique paint a picture of an idea that is in a struggle between its strong opinions and political correctness, entailing insecurity about the legitimacy of various points of opinion within Eurasianism. Therefore, using Dugin’s direct comments of the ideology can be misleading, as these can vary according to the applied context.

Yet, Eurasianism is an obvious ideology to examine when searching to identify the cultural dimension of Russian politics. Constructivism is likewise the most appropriate IR theory for this study, considering the blind angles of the conventional lenses of IR. Whilst neo-liberalism would have been able to explain the importance of the institutional structures and cooperation between the Arctic states, and neo-realism would provide a clear picture of the materialistic advantages of the Arctic’s petroleum reserves and naval transportation routes, these theories would be neglecting the importance of culture, self-identification and national pride for the Russian Federation. In the following section, Russia’s official Foreign Policy Concepts and Arctic Strategy will be examined for traces of Eurasianism, in order to depict the ideology’s direct influence on the strategic planning of Russian politics.

Eurasianism in Russia's Foreign Policy Concepts of 2000, 2008 and 2013

The following analysis will examine the three most recent Foreign Policy Concepts of Russia, to trace the streams of thought that either have been influenced directly by Eurasianism, or coincidentally follow this ideology. This will create a picture of Eurasianism's presence in Russian foreign policy on an official, planning stage.

As a response to Vladimir Putin's presidential election of March 2000, Dugin welcomed the president as a true "Eurasian man", and expressed his support for what he called Putin's patriotism and liberalism (Laruelle, 2008;110-113), stating on behalf of Eurasianists that "our patriotism is not only emotional, but it is also scientific, based on geopolitics and its methods," (Dugin cited in Laruelle, 2008;111). Although Putin was not explicit about Eurasianist influence in his foreign policy, his political advisor Gleb Pavlovsky, had had close ties with Alexandr Dugin, and in 1999 he had said that only a "pro-market but more conservative leader able to promote the 'state potential of liberal values' could command a majority in the next presidential elections". With this, Pavlovsky had summarized Eurasianism's vision of a required leader for Russia (Ersen, 2004;146).

The goal of achieving a multipolar system of international relations was mentioned in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 (President of Russia, archive 2008), creating the benchmark for the newly elected President's politics in line with a Eurasianist vision of the world. The following Foreign Politics Concepts, signed by President Medvedev in 2008, and President Putin once again in 2013, followed this path of pursuing multipolarism, mentioning the desire to strengthen Russia's authority in the modern world and make its influence indispensable for global development. The Concept of 2008 characterised Russian international relations as the following: "Отличительная черта российской внешней политики - ее сбалансированность и многовекторность. Это обусловлено геополитическим положением России как крупнейшей евразийской державы. " (The distinctiveness of

Russian foreign politics is its balanced and multipolar character. This is a condition due to Russia's position as a great Eurasian power) (own translation, President of Russia, 2008). The Concept of 2008 also celebrated cultural diversity within Russia, following Dugin's formulation of a "nationalism of love". The Concept promoted the cooperation of global civilizations, maintaining focus on global cultural diversity (Ibid., 2008).

Likewise, the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation of 2000 identified the need to promote a positive perception of Russia in the world. Stated in the document was the following: "Russia is a reliable partner in international relations. Its constructive role in resolving acute international problems has been generally acknowledged." (President of Russia, archive 2008) With this statement, the importance of a positive intersubjective identity for Russia is suggested, as the government identifies a desired identity for the country, hoping for it to be passed on to its own citizens as well as on to the general perception of Russia by other states. The current Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 likewise acknowledges the importance of establishing a positive image for Russia. It also mentions an objective to strengthen the "soft power" in Russian foreign politics, a modern political tool that has not been used very often in Russian politics in the past, but is described as "indispensable" in the document.

Soft power, as Joseph S. Nye explains the concept he developed himself:

"...is the ability to affect others to get the outcomes one wants, and that can be accomplished in three main ways – by coercion, payment, or attraction. If you can add the soft power of attraction to your toolkit, you can economize on carrots and sticks." (29.04.2013)

Soft power is a state's ability to seem attractive to others through its culture, its political values and having foreign policies perceived as legitimate and having a moral authority. But, as Nye elaborates, "combining these resources is not always easy." Nye goes on to criticize Russia's ability to adopt soft power in its foreign policy, pointing to Putin's repression of dissent within his country, and the fact that this will cause for the President to "step on his own message" (Ibid.) Nye explains:

"Russia make(s) the mistake of thinking that government is the main instrument of soft power. In today's world, information is not scarce but attention is, and attention depends on credibility. Government propaganda is rarely credible." (Nye, 29.04.2013)

It is hereby apparent through the assessment of the father of soft power himself that the Russian government's use of this concept is not in tact with the initial idea. Russia has difficulty seeming attractive to other states in terms of its culture, values and foreign policies, and its soft power is promoted too obviously through government propaganda and is thereby not credible.

The Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 presents its own critique of the risks of wrong application of soft power, stating that:

"...increasing global competition and the growing crisis potential sometimes creates a risk of destructive and unlawful use of "soft power" and human rights concepts to exert political pressure on sovereign states, interfere in their internal affairs, destabilize their political situation, manipulate public opinion..." (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013).

A possible interpretation of this can be the fact that the Russian government has acknowledged soft power as being an efficient way of achieving political goals. Its efficiency has been drawn mainly from its use by the United States, in its successful implementation of what Eurasianists would describe as Atlanticist values onto the global political scene. It is visible in the citation above that there is a negative opinion regarding political interference in other states' internal affairs, a factor that Eurasianists frequently refer to as part of American imperialist behaviour. The choice of the word "manipulate" unquestionably demonstrates the negative view of soft power in certain "unlawful" contexts, and being placed in the same context as the example of interference, it can also be interpreted as an implicit attack on the methods of the United States. A critique of European foreign policy can also be detected, if one considers Panarin's linkage of this to the political system of ancient Athens, which he claimed to have success on enslaving the rest of the world.

The Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 also emphasises the importance of establishing relations with the Euro-Atlantic states, declaring that these “besides geography, economy and history, have common deep-rooted civilizational ties with Russia.” The document calls for a development of a “truly unified region” and “partnership relations between Russia, the European Union and the United States.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013) This signals a desire to cooperate with states that Eurasianists initially saw as part of the Atlanticist movement. The claim of a common civilizational heritage amongst Russia and the Euro-Atlantic states contradicts the view of distinctiveness promoted by Classical and Neo-Eurasianists. In order to give sense to this statement in the light of Eurasian national and state identity, one could expect an explanation similar to the one provided, explaining Russian-American cooperation in the Global War on Terrorism: a pragmatism to cater national interests. This can be supported by the fact that the Concept of 2013 also emphasises on “(d)evolving friendly relations with China and India” (Ibid.) Russia is showing the objective to cooperate with both the West and the East, illustrating openness to both civilizations, whilst bearing national interests in mind.

Generally, the basic principals have not been changed in the most recent Concept – openness, transparency and rational pragmatism are key factors, as well as focus on achieving national interests whilst avoiding confrontation. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013) The choice of the word “confrontation” can be understood as a way of referring to intervention in other states’ political issues, if one were to view this through the Eurasianist lens, as this could be applied to implicitly address US policy. Rational pragmatism is an important part of Russian foreign policy, meaning the build-up of constructive partnerships with strategically appropriate states, and avoidance of unaffordable sentimentality and romanticism (Ersen, 2004;144). It seems to be important to avoid, or conceal, irrational decision-making based on national identity and ideology. The influence of Eurasianism in Russia’s foreign policy thereby becomes challenged, as this ideology presents so much sentimentality and romanticism that it becomes a necessity to counter this irrationalism in the Concept. By explicitly rejecting irrationalism in the Concept, it is visible how the Russian state attempts to establish a trustworthy state identity.

The previous Concept of 2008 was very devoted to the terminology of “modernization”, referring to the economic i.e. social market economy and social i.e. democratic development of the country (Ibid., 2008). The message of Dugin’s formulation “modernization without Westernization” was not explicit in the Concept, as democratization and market economy were referred to as “universal principles”, and given that democratization and market economy are rooted in Western civilization, one can conclude that the modernization mentioned here includes a degree of Westernization. Withstanding this, the Concept of 2013 discredits the strength of the Western economy by stating that “(t)he ability of the West to dominate world economy and politics continues to diminish. The global power and development potential is now more dispersed and is shifting to the East primarily to the Asia-Pacific region” and the Concept actually points to the negative influence that leading Western economies and the financial crisis has had on global development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013). Through this critical rhetoric about the failed Western economy and the rising East and Asia, one can see the Eurasianist modernizers’ argumentation of a declining United States, and a promotion of economic and technological improvements to settle old scores with the West.

Likewise, the prospects of Western dominance are furthermore challenged in the Concept of 2013 by pointing to the “reorganisation” of the balance of power in recent years. The Concept states that a new pattern of competition has been developing, where states that base their development on universal principles of democracy and market economy find themselves clashing and competing with each other. “Cultural and civilizational diversity of the world becomes more and more manifest.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013) This can be understood through Eurasian spectacles as the acknowledgment of global cultural diversity, yet it is also a claim that the “universalism” that has been employed in the above-mentioned states, is now backfiring and creating internal chaos for them. It can also be seen as an invitation to use this opportunity and exploit the distinctiveness of the Eurasian identity to prevail in this global competition. Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge the fact that the Concepts of 2008 and 2013 both emphasise their commitment to universal democratic values and a market economy (President of Russia, 2008 and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013). With constructivist spectacles, this could demonstrate that the Russian state desires to employ these universal values in line with its state identity as a developed and

democratic country. Yet it wishes to mould them into a way it sees appropriate for Russian national identity, a “third way” as proposed by Alexandr Dugin.

In his interpretation of the current Foreign Policy Concept of 2013, Feodor Lukjanov, Editor-in-chief of the “Russia in Global Politics” magazine, identifies the point that stands out the most from the documents of 2008 and 2000. He explains that in mentioning a “reorganization” of the world’s balance of power in the modern world, the current Foreign Policy Concept paints a picture of an unpredictable world, where threats can be expected from all angles. In this modern world, the importance of civilizational diversity prevails, and the importance of maintaining a strong national identity is key to protecting the state against these unpredictable threats. Lukjanov goes on to say that pragmatism no longer plays as large a role in Russian foreign policy as it did before, pointing to the mentioning of soft power in the 2013 Concept. Using Lukjanov’s description: “soft power, which in reality is the projection of one’s own identity onto other countries and the world” (own translation), it is thereby a new measure intended for Russian foreign policy, to promote its state identity whilst securing national interests of strategic partnerships (mentioned in Latuhina, 18.02.2013). From this analysis, it becomes apparent that pragmatics and soft power are both present in the language of Russian foreign politics, yet they are not always explicit and are often intertwined with one another in the objective of promoting state interests.

Throughout Putin’s terms as president, his foreign policies have been both welcomed and criticized from the Eurasian camp. Russia’s evolving partnership with China, its cooperation with states the United States defines as “rogue states” (Ersen, 2004;136), its refusal to intervene in the war in Syria and other actions within its foreign policy that have been viewed by the West as provocative, have often been regarded by Eurasianists as appropriate politics. On the other hand, foreign politics of Putin have also received criticism from Eurasianists in the aftermath of September 11 2001, when Russia announced a “strategic partnership” with the United States in the Global War on Terrorism. The Eurasianists’ argument was that Russian support to the United States was the equivalent of a pro-Atlanticist policy. But one might also say that this support was a part of Putin’s pragmatic politics to cater for his country’s national interests (Ersen, 2004;136). As Russia has been fighting a long battle against terrorism due to the war in Chechnya, it was in Russia’s interests to cooperate with

the United States in the Global War on Terrorism and to draw global attention to this problem, while strengthening its soft power in the West.

When reviewing the objectives of the Foreign Policy Concepts regarding the Arctic, it is evident that sovereignty and territorial integrity was mentioned as a priority for Russian foreign policy in the Concept of 2008 and is mentioned again in the Concept of 2013 (President of Russia, 2008 and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013), prioritizing the Arctic region and its sovereignty here. In this way, the point of territorial self-identification for Eurasianists is addressed. The changes in the energy sector and the competition for strategic resources are mentioned as important priorities for Russia, as well as the development of the area through innovative technology and operation of the Northern Sea Route. Securing Russia's territorial boundaries is seen as an essential part of Russian sovereignty in the Arctic, and is in its state interests due to the opportunities of exploring and developing natural resources. The 2013 Concept mentions the challenges that Russia is facing due to the territorial controversies in the Arctic, pointing to the "imposition of various unjustified restrictions and other discriminatory measures" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). Regarding its submission to the CLCS, the Foreign Policy Concept expresses trust in the UNCLOS, as the problem-solving establishment underlying international law:

"Consistently following its national interests, Russia believes that the existing international legal framework is sufficient to successfully settle all regional issues through negotiations, including the issue of defining the external boundaries of the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean."

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013)

It is apparent that the territories claimed to be Russian have an important role in the country's foreign policy, and that the UN is seen by the Russian state as a trustworthy organization to manage its claims. In terms of promoting a positive perception of Russia, the acknowledgment of international law gives Russia credibility and an image of confidence in its claim. Territorial importance is apparent in this context, and can be connected to the Eurasianist emphasis on territory.

In general, the territories in the Arctic are important assets for Russia and its economic development, so one could conclude that this is not necessarily in line with Eurasian thinking as much as simply a consideration of national interests. The emotional ties to Arctic territories, on the other hand, are demonstrations of Eurasianist thought, evident in the frustrated rhetoric mentioned above: “unjustified restrictions and other discriminatory measures”. By stressing the unfairness, as seen by the Russian government, the frustration of not having the desired sovereignty in the Arctic is evident. Emotional tendencies can be seen in the documents, revealing a cultural dimension and Eurasianist stream of thought. In the following section, Russia’s Arctic Policy will be reviewed in the same way, in the search for Eurasianist influences.

Eurasianism in Russia's Arctic Policy

The current Arctic Policy document "*Основы государственной политики Российской Федерации в Арктике на период до 2020 года*", in the following referred to as the Arctic Policy, offers pragmatic courses of action, as it identifies strategic priorities and national interests for Russia in the Arctic region. The Arctic is referred to as a "strategic resource base", and one of the main goals in terms of national interests is the development of this base and exploitation of its natural resources. Another focus of the document is cartology and scientific research in the preparation of material to support Russia's claim to Arctic territories, and the establishment of these external boundaries of Russian territory in the Arctic. The development of the NSR is also mentioned as a strategic point of interest for Russia (Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2008). The new focus on the Arctic's opportunities has entailed enormous expectations and objectives for Russia in the Arctic, as the various examples below will show.

It is obvious that the Arctic Policy is a very pragmatic document, focusing mostly on rational ideas such as support of national interests and power in the Arctic. The concluding paragraph emphasises the goal of Russia's Arctic Policy, namely for Russia to maintain its position as the "leading Arctic power" (Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2008). This demonstrates the Russian Federation's presupposed identification of itself as being the leading state in the Arctic. Considering the self-perception of Russia through Eurasianist spectacles, it is in clear support of this ideology; the Arctic Policy unquestionably confirms the existence of Russian leadership in the Arctic, as Eurasianism acknowledges the position of Russia being the pivotal state of the region.

The Arctic Strategy also mentions the necessity to cooperate with local Arctic organizations and the Arctic Council (Ibid., 2008), demonstrating an openness to cooperate with not only large international organizations such as the United Nations, but also the smaller ones. International cooperation is mentioned often in the Arctic Policy, as this is a way of achieving national interests and protecting the Arctic environment. In showing this willingness, Russia

demonstrates its soft power skills, a political tool recognized as “indispensable” in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013.

Although the Arctic Policy of 2008 shows little sign of emotional rhetoric or irrational thinking, and focuses on national interests in terms of economic and social development, traces of Eurasianism can be found in its self-identification as a leader in the region, and objective of maintaining this position. Considering the pragmatic and rational nature of the Arctic Strategy, it is intriguing to see where national identity and elements of the Eurasianist ideology can be found in empirical examples from the Arctic. Examining these very different examples will depict how the ideas of the Foreign Policy Concepts and Arctic Strategy and the cultural dimension within these ideas can be traced in actual doings in the Arctic.

Analysing the Submission of the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

Russia was the first of the Arctic states to submit its territorial claims to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in 2001, and has since engaged in research to prove its right to the claimed territories. The following analysis will illustrate the presence of self-identification and national pride in Russia's claim to the Arctic territories.

These territories, within the depths of the Arctic Ocean and leading all the way up to the North Pole, are considered by the Russian government to be rightfully Russian, not only for the purpose of their resourceful seabeds' economic benefits, but also because of the identity factor that these territories provide for the Russian Federation. By being the only country with nuclear powered icebreakers (RT.com, 06.11.2013), and hosting the largest icebreaker fleet, Russia has secured its technological superiority in the High North. Furthermore, it has a geographical advantage with the longest boarder in the Arctic Ocean, constituting about half the coastline of the Arctic Basin (Young and Osherenko 1989;30-31), and a strong determination to make the best of its opportunities, as its being the first state to submit to the CLCS can verify. If Russia's claims were to be accepted, it would have sovereignty over 45% of the Arctic (Kefferpütz, 2010), giving it sublime power and standing as an Arctic state.

Professor Steinberg of the International Boundary Unit of Durham University expressed the following regarding the claim for the North Pole: "It's more a symbol of national pride" (cited in Bennett, 31.12.2013) Viewing the Russian territorial submission through the eyes of constructivism, it is apparent that ownership of the North Pole is a question of national identity. The North Pole, being a household name; in some countries known for its folkloric identity as the home of Santa Claus; is an area that Russian citizens would see more pride in owning than Russia's other claimed territories.

The Eurasianist stream of thought can be identified in the importance of owning territory in the Arctic, and especially in the significance and symbolism of owning the North Pole. One can say, that by obtaining sovereignty in the Arctic, the identity of Russia as a pivotal state of

Eurasia is strengthened, as Dugin mentions Russia's geographical location as strategically beneficial and vital for the state (Laruelle, 2008;6). Likewise, Eurasianists might regard ownership of the North Pole as access to complete superiority in the Arctic, as the North Pole is the ultimate symbol of the Circumpolar North and a popular landmark, as confirmed by Canada's, and possibly also Denmark's overlapping claims to this area. The North Pole can function as a symbol of the Eurasian civilization's distinctiveness and expansion, as it is a neutral area in terms of Eastern and Western civilization. Obtaining sovereignty and making the North Pole Russia's very own Eurasian territory, the Eurasian civilization would have been expanded significantly on a global scale.

The responses of Denmark and Canada to the Russian submission imply a lack of engagement in the study of the Arctic at the time, as both states referred to their insufficient knowledge on the subject. The lack of preparation by these states gave Russia the benefit of strengthening its state identity as a leader in the Arctic; not only was Russia the first state to submit information for territorial delimitation, but it was also the only state to have prepared specific argumentation to prove its claims. Norway's reaction to Russia's submission mentioned the states' "maritime dispute" within the Barents Sea, but it expressed plans of cooperation and consultations with Russia. The document was agreed upon by the Russian Federation prior to its publication, and it emphasised plans of settling the dispute directly with the Russian Federation, signalling transparency in this process, signalling confidence in obtaining a suitable solution, and signalling trust towards Russia.

A contradiction to this is visible in the remonstrance publicised by the United States. The United States requested more information to draw attention to what it considered as flaws and insufficient argumentation in its submission, in an attempt to weaken the state identity of Russia as a leader in the Arctic. By demanding more in-depth information regarding the Alpha-Mendeleev and Lomonosov Ridges, the United States put itself in the position of being the main challenger of the "leading Arctic power" and in the process, bolstering its own state identity as a leader in the Arctic. The United States is not at risk of being directly affected by the Russian submission in the area of the ridges in question, as the US has neither ratified the UNCLOS nor has apparent overlapping territorial interests in the Arctic Ocean. Thereby, it is evident that Russia is being challenged by the United States, not because of direct conflict of

interests in the territories, but because participation and preparedness signals a state's identity in a global community. It would be a sign of weakness from the United States as a global hegemon if it did not have more specific argumentation to challenge Russia's territorial claims. As the US is not an apparent leader in the Arctic, due to lack of ratification of the UNCLOS and not having a longer coastline than it does, the action taken by the United States is one of a sovereign state on a global scale only. By hindering Russia in expanding its territory, the United States is attempting to protect its position as global hegemon and avoid changes in the balance of power in favour of the Russian Federation.

As Ivan Gloumov presented further data for the submission, he stated that communications between Russia and the Arctic states were not expected to constitute problems for the application process. This statement can be perceived as a reassurance of the presence of friendly diplomacy in this process, but it also provides Russia with the possibility of proceeding with its application without committing itself to considering the other states' positions. Gloumov pointed to the independent negotiations with Norway regarding the Barents Sea, signalling a confidence and trust in the countries' cooperation. Gloumov's statement sums up how Russia wants to be perceived by the international community in relation to its submission to the CLCS: as confident and diplomatically correct, and at the same time proactive and determined. Through constructivist eyes it is apparent how the state identity of the leading Arctic state is being nurtured.

Russia's submission to the CLCS, and being the first Arctic state to do so, underscores Russian dedication to exploit the opportunities of the High North to the fullest. The symbolism of owning the North Pole becomes evident, verifying the importance of considering national identity in an area of otherwise apparent economic benefits. The critical reaction of the United States to Russia's territorial claims shows the power-struggle that still exists between the two rivalling powers of the Cold War, exposing what Eurasianism views as American aspiration to hegemon power. In the end, should Russia gain sovereignty to the territories it has claimed, it would possess over 45% of the Arctic, not only strengthening its state identity significantly as a leader in the Arctic, but also benefit its position as a global power.

Analysing the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation

When the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation was signed in 2010, it entailed a stream of hope that other territorial disputes could also be resolved in the High North, as this 40-year-old matter had finally been concluded. The following analysis will illustrate the practice of soft power in Russian foreign politics, as well as a lack of Eurasianist pride and emotion in this case, whilst state identity and state interests remain in focus for the Russian government with the signing of this agreement.

The Treaty on Maritime Delimitation is an important symbol of trust and agreement between the Arctic states. As Prime Minister Stoltenberg stated: “This is a confirmation that Norway and Russia, two large polar nations, do not have a policy about racing, but a policy about cooperation.” Considering Russia’s state identity as a leader in the Arctic, compromise could only be expected from Norway, as the alternative would be to declare a competitive strategy in the Arctic and compete with its leading state.

Reviewing Alexander Wendt’s study of states’ representation in a collective, and viewing the Treaty as an example of friendly interstate cooperation, one can see that this publicised agreement is an act of promoting interstate relations. In that, Norway and Russia expand their borders of a state’s self-identification to include one another as partners within the newly agreed territory. When this happens, Wendt argues that states begin to naturally identify with one another’s welfare and values, and this can be seen in the establishment of common rules and provisions within the Treaty, as the territory in question has become a factor of common responsibility and interest for the two states. Both states have the interest of resource exploration in the region, as well as an interest of securing and preserving the area. Examining this from the view of conventional constructivism, it is apparent how the final common interests of maintaining the environment have lead the way to a compromise from both states in this agreement. However, viewing the situation through the eyes of critical constructivism, the signing of this Treaty can be seen as a necessary step in a discursive geopolitical path to forward national interests, despite the states’ differentiating benchmarks in their foreign politics.

President Medvedev's comment on the Treaty was that he believed it would "open the way for many joint projects, especially in the area of energy", as the agreement finally enabled the exploration of the vast resources on the territory's seabed. The energy sector is one of the most important economic areas for Russia, being the world's biggest gas producer and exporter (Bouzarovsky et al., 2011) and its development in the Arctic will undeniably serve state interests. The Arctic Policy emphasises the importance of international cooperation in order to promote national interests and protect the Arctic environment. Thereby, the agreement with Norway over the Barents Sea territory is a way of finally gaining access to the seabed's petroleum reserves and pursuing the economic advantages of the territory, while agreeing to compromise and work together with Norway. Ariel Cohen of the Heritage Foundation explains: "I don't think Russia has financial resources and technology to explore the Arctic for its riches alone" (cited in Zellen, 2009;99), thereby confirming the Arctic Policy's emphasis on the state interests within cooperation.

The Eurasianist idea of Russian distinctiveness is not visible in this context, as the idea precludes the natural identification with a Western state's values and welfare, claiming that the Russian and Western civilizations are incompatible. As Laruelle points out, it is through this incompatibility that conflicts occur between states, and considering the fact that the dispute has failed to be resolved for 40 years, Eurasianists could argue that the cause for this is precisely this incompatibility. So if the Eurasianist thought were the determiner for the outcome of Russia's negotiation process with Norway, the most likely outcome would be an unwillingness to compromise as much as Russia in fact had done with the geodetic line. Eurasianism considers the Circumpolar North to be an essential geopolitical stage on which vital development for the country can take place and the global balance of power can be shifted. This is supported by the memorandum text of the Eurasian Economic Youth Forum of 2010, which states the following: "our Eurasianism is looking for models, concepts, programs, which promotes a "New Northern Oecumene" – the cradle of that civilization which nurtured the Russian empire and its allies, the USSR and the CIS" (Staalesen, 29.04.2011). Thereby, the fact that Russia had compromised the territory between its initially requested delimitation line and the final geodetic line is not in support of the Eurasian sense of ownership of the area.

Nevertheless, struggles in negotiation did occur, and Russia did not accept compromise easily, according to Gibbs (27.04.2010). Norway's Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Store was quoted at a meeting of Arctic states in March 2010, saying that Russia was "not yet a stable, predictable state", as a reaction to the clashing interests and disagreements during negotiations (Ibid.) It is therefore important for Russia to prove Gahr Store, and other critics, wrong if it wants to promote a positive perception of itself as a "reliable partner in international relations", whose "constructive role in resolving acute international problems has been generally acknowledged", as stated in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000. The agreement has finally entailed a positive effect on Russia's relationship with Norway, as apparent in Stoltenberg's positive remark on cooperation, and demonstrates to the other Arctic states that territorial disputes can be solved, and negotiation and cooperation with Russia is possible. Russia's efforts to prove that it can be perceived as a reliable partner and a predictable state has paid off, bringing the country into a good light with the signing of this Treaty.

Russian soft power is evident in the signing of the Treaty, as the "indispensable" modern political tool it has been promoted as in 2013 Foreign Policy Concept. As Feodor Lukjanov (mentioned in Latuhina, 18.02.2013) explains, soft power is a new measure in Russia's foreign policy, intended to promote own state identity whilst securing national interests of strategic partnerships. Soft power is "in reality (...) the projection of one's own identity onto other countries and the world" (Lukjanov cited in Latuhina, 18.02.2013). It becomes apparent when considering Lukjanov's interpretation that soft power is yet another way of promoting own state interests. Russia's state interest in being perceived as a trustworthy state exceeds the economic interest it has in the territory it lost in the compromise with Norway. Thereby, through establishment of common rules and provisions within the Treaty and through the expansion of own borders of self-identification with regards to the newly agreed upon territory, Russia has the opportunity of projecting its own identity onto Norway's Arctic policy. As Russia is a stronger Arctic power than Norway, its identity will weight more in this cooperation than Norway's, so despite many areas of common interests, Russia will have the advantage of stronger state identity and greater influence.

The Treaty on Maritime Delimitation is an example of Russian soft power in its Arctic policy, and is an agreement that demonstrates the balance of nurturing state interests and state

identity at the same time. The elements of national pride and emotion that Eurasianism represents are not significant in this process of decision-making, although self-identification of being a strong leader in the Arctic is apparent, illustrating the diversity of Russian foreign politics.

Analysing the Opportunities of the Northern Sea Route

The Northern Sea Route is of great importance to Russia, as it provides the state with economic and political benefits, and gives the country a new opportunity to influence the large global markets of Asia and Europe. Development of the NSR is likewise highly prioritised by the Russian government, as it is a substantial way for Russia to prove itself once again in the global community and find itself on the geopolitical path supported by the Eurasian idea. The following analysis will apply constructivism, and its idea that internal development within a state determines its interest and self-identification, to explain the significance of the NSR for Russia. Likewise, constructivism will explain the tendencies within the NSR as a result of cultural factors and historical memories.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia looked to transform its economy and political system and build up a market economy and democracy, in an attempt of pursuing Western political models. Former Foreign (1996-98) and Prime (1998-99) Minister Yevgeny Primakov highlights the failure of the Russian Government here, stating that the economic losses of the 1990s were greater than those during World War II, caused by incorrect implementation of neoliberal principles, which he says were "incompatible with Russian reality" (Primakov, 15.04.2013). Furthermore, there was the case of an unsuccessful transition to democracy. Primakov (Ibid.) explains: "(d)emocratization in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union cannot be considered outside of the economic policy pursued by those who came to power." Advocating "a socialism with a human face" during the Perestroika, Russian officials had proposed to democratize socialism. Primakov elaborates:

"...once they came to power, they destroyed everything associated with the image of Soviet Russia, not only things that had to be rejected. And in many instances – and I want to emphasize this – they destroyed the mechanisms which had been employed for making scientific, technical, and economic achievements and which had helped mobilize resources for tackling numerous modernization tasks." (Primakov, 15.04.2013)

Primakov's significant role in Russian politics during this period is often mentioned by Eurasianists, as he has been one of very few politicians to promote closer ties with Asia at the time (Laruelle, 2008;7), highlighting the early indications of Eurasianism in the Duma. His criticism of the era of his own governance is thereby an interesting input to the Eurasianist idea, as it adds credibility to Eurasianists' arguments against Russia's pursuit of the Western way.

The economical difficulties, "shock therapy" and brain drain of the 1990s caused for the Russian economic and technological development to halt (Whitmore, 01.02.2011), damaging Russia's self-identification and intersubjective image, as it would lag behind the West. As Wendt points out, the need for self-assertion can be a reaction of a state to the feeling of insecurity, and considering Russia's wounded state identity, it is natural that the state had the need to prove itself. This can explain the significance of the NSR for Russia's economy as well as for its self-esteem, demonstrating the development within the state that is essential for constructivist analysis. The Northern Sea Route had provided an opportunity for Russia to regain influence and show its worth in the global market, and to re-establish its fragile economy.

Russia's technological and geographical advantages in the NSR entail pride and motivation for the country. Naturally, the development of the Northern Sea Route is mentioned as an important strategic point within the current Arctic Strategy and Foreign Policy Concept. An example of Russia's determination to further develop the possibilities of the NSR is the building of the world's largest universal nuclear icebreaker, expected to be finished in 2017. This record-setting vessel will surpass the present, also Russian "50 лет победы" icebreaker, which is the current record-holder (RT.com, 06.11.2013). Not only is technological progress a vital aspect for developing the NSR, but international awareness of this technological progress is just as crucial in Russia's strengthening of state identity as a leader in the Arctic.

The Northern Sea Route gives Russia the opportunity of flaunting its innovative technology, as well as being a link between the large European markets with the Asia-Pacific. The Route functions in Putin's words as "an international transport artery that will rival traditional trade lanes". Thereby, the NSR can be seen as a symbol of the modern Russia, contra the old,

traditional Trans-Siberian Railway, dating back to Tsars Aleksander III and Nicolai II (transsib.ru, 2001). The development and use of the NSR as a modern transportation route is a demonstration of Russia's state-of-the-art technological achievements, such as the "50 лет победы" and its record-setting successor, compensating for the decades of lagging behind Western technology. Using the approach of critical constructivists, one might say that Eurasianism distances its ideal Self from the Russia of that time, viewing it as the Other. Following this line of thought, the Northern Sea Route is an opportunity of self-assertion based on the strength and potential of the modern Russia, the Self, as opposed to the old and stagnant Other Russia of the 1990s. According to the Eurasianist modernizers, who acknowledge Russia's incapability of facing the US in a direct battle, Russia can only counterbalance the power of the United States through economic and technological improvements. The Northern Sea Route is an opportunity for just that.

By supervising this international shipping route, Russia indeed has a strong geopolitical card, as it will be able to profit politically by having the power of setting its safety and environmental standards for foreign vessels and supervising international navigation in the waters, as well as economically through charges for the mandatory services that the transportation entails. Despite the strong emphasis in Russia's Regulations for Navigation on following international guidelines of non-discriminatory management of the seaways, Russia can apply domestic legislation in the NSR. This is a significant factor for the perception of Russia, as it confirms Russia's state identity as a leader in the Arctic, and provides the state with a proud national identity of being in the forefront.

The emphasis on following international legislation is important in order to sustain the state identity of being a "reliable partner in international relations", as the NSR is the road to collaboration between Europe and Asia, with Russia in the driver's seat. The geopolitical significance of this is undeniable, as well as the Eurasian idea apparent. As an interface between European and Asian political culture, the Northern Sea Route's geographical position allows it to embrace the civilizational and political distinctiveness that Aleksandr Panarin identifies. In geopolitical terms the NSR is predominantly a vital transportation route and a growing interest for the international markets, with a growing number of foreign vessels passing through, and the Chinese planning to utilize the Route for 5-15% of its international

trade by 2020. The Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 mentions the significance of “(d)eveloping friendly relations with China” demonstrating Russia’s interest in the Chinese market. The Concept also states that global development potential is shifting to the East, primarily the Asia-Pacific region, illustrating the emphasis on Asia and its markets. During the Munich Security Conference in 2007, Putin elaborated that the vast economic growth in the BRIC countries, surpassing the cumulative GDP of the European Union and purchasing power of the United States, is a contributor to the strengthening of global multipolarity (Putin, 2007;08.18-08.25 min). This can be supported by the claim of Eurasianist modernizers, stating that not only has the Cold War entailed the decline of Soviet superpower, but also the deterioration of the United States as a superpower, as there has been no enemy strong enough to keep it intact. Multipolarity is attractive to Eurasianists, according to which it is necessary to obtain several regional powers in order to counterbalance the hegemony of the US and challenge Atlanticism (Laruelle, 2008;119). Thereby, according to Eurasianists, friendly relations with China and support of its economic growth are favourable for Russia and the multipolar balance of power that the Russian government intends to achieve, as the Foreign Policy Concepts of 2000, 2008 and 2013 confirm.

It is noteworthy that, as de Benoist argues in the following paragraph and as Bassin (2008;291) explains here, Western Europe is no longer regarded as a threat by Eurasianists. Europe is considered just as vulnerable to “America’s hegemonic strivings” as any other region, making it a potential ally for Russia in countering US global dominance. Eurasianism’s change of perception of Western Europe, from focussing on the incompatibility of the Eurasian and Western civilizations, to focussing solely on the undesirability of the United States’ model, is seemingly dependant on the given situation and national interests within the situation. In the case of the Northern Sea Route, cooperation with Western Europe is not only advantageous but also unavoidable for Russia, considering the geographical position it has as Europe’s neighbour. Thereby, the NSR can be considered as a political card to counter specifically the United States, and not the West as a whole.

One of Marlene Laruelle’s (2008;108-119) points of criticism with regards to Eurasianism is its lack of consistency, as it has shifted in a more politically correct direction, away from ideas that would give Russia a bad standing in the international community. This development over

time can be seen as a deliberate attempt to keep Eurasianism as appropriate for Russia's foreign policy as possible, and to avoid burning too many bridges for Russian international cooperation. As cooperation with Western Europe is beneficial for Russia and the Northern Sea Route, it is apparent, considering Laruelle's criticism, how the Eurasianist idea has been revised to suit the Western European audience in this context. Alain de Benoist's remark (De Benoist and Dugin, 2008) on Atlanticism not being a matter of course for Western European countries, has been applied by Eurasianists to verify their interest in cooperating with Western Europe. Thereby it is apparent how the focus of Eurasianism in Russian foreign politics remains on targeting US hegemony, in some cases with the idea of Western Europe as its ally.

The United States' lack of recognition of Russian sovereignty over the Northern Sea Route's straits is an influential factor for Russian-US relations. If one is to consider Wendt's statement regarding the importance for states of having their sovereignty recognised by other states, the question arises of whether the lack of recognition in this context can cause insecurity for the Russian government. The matter of the fact is that US disapproval shows the insecurity of the US itself, in that it expresses recognition of the NSR as a political threat to the United States. The US is thereby seeking to obstruct this opportunity for Russia, to rid it of the possibility of gaining more power over the global market. A reverse reaction is seen here in terms of Wendt's argument, as US' lack of recognition signifies its insecurity, and can breed a feeling of superiority for the Russian Government.

By viewing the situation through the eyes of constructivism, one can argue that the US disagreement of Russian sovereignty over the NSR straits is the outcome of an on-going tug-of-war between the United States and Russia since the ideological dispute of the East and West. There is a cultural tendency within the United States to interfere in Russian foreign and geopolitics – a tendency that has been brought on by the need to watch Russia closely in the global power struggle. The United States has openly shown its disapproval of Russian sovereignty over the straits since the Cold War, when the US icebreakers sailed through the Vilitzky Strait and East Siberian Sea in 1965 and 1966, respectively. The territorial disagreement over sailing rights is thereby culturally engraved in the ideological dispute of the Cold War and power struggle between the two global powers.

The United States' tendency to interfere in Russian internal, foreign and geopolitics is an issue that has been addressed numerous times by Russian officials, but it has often been disguised as a general misuse of US soft power in the global society rather than a direct aggression towards Russia. Putin referred indirectly to US interference in global affairs in his speech at the Munich Security Conference in 2007, where he spoke about on-going attempts to achieve global hegemony and the consequences of this. Putin (2007;5 min) explained that interference in other states' internal and foreign policies has led to "unilateral and frequently illegitimate actions that have not solved any problems". Likewise, the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 also addresses the "destructive and unlawful use of "soft power"" as a risk created by increasing global competition. Examples of this strong rhetoric are numerous, caused by anger and disappointment from incidents such as the miscommunication of the gentlemen's agreement between General Secretary Gorbachev and Chancellor Kohl in 1990. Due to this, the methods of the US and its Western allies have been frowned upon by Russia, and American soft power has often been viewed as a dishonest strategy in international relations. Ironically, Russian soft power has been criticized from the US bloc, namely by Joseph Nye himself, as mentioned in the "Theory" section of this paper.

The aspects of emotion, self-identification and pride that the new opportunities of the Northern Sea Route have entailed for Russia are undeniable, as well as Russia's stance on its relations with Western Europe and the US is ambiguous, if one is to consider the influence of Eurasianism on Russian politics.

Analysing the Arktika 2007 Expedition

The Arktika 2007 Expedition was an event rich on symbolism and political interpretation, entailing various perceptions of Russia and its political methods. An analysis of this event through the constructivist lens will depict the historical and emotional factors that have influenced the nature of this event and the strong rhetoric and feelings that this event has entailed.

As a response to the Russian expedition, the Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay expressed strong hostility, comparing the planting of the titanium Russian flag to 15th century tactics of conquering land. Viewing MacKay's reaction through the eyes of constructivism, it is apparent how his hostility has historical roots in the Cold War and Soviet territorial expansion. As Alexandrov (2008;43) argues, Russia's state identity has been influenced by its imperial past. This makes the planting of the Russian flag in new territory be perceived as more of a conquest or aggression, than if it were a state without elements of imperialism within its state identity. Furthermore, the North Pole has a strong international significance, and planting a national flag on its seabed can be perceived as provocative for the global community.

Prime Minister Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov compared the Russian expedition to the United States' planting of their flag on the moon, implying that planting flags has been an acceptable practice within geographical exploration. By stating: "Why be so nervous?" as Putin did, the Russian response was one of indirectly ridiculing Canada's fearful reaction. In doing so, Russia's superiority is evident, as Canadian criticism most likely does not affect its current position or future decision-making. As a "leader in the Arctic", Russia will carry on its Arctic endeavours without considering criticism of its actions. Choosing to use the US as a comparison in this context is not a coincidence. As a former superpower, Russia has a tendency of comparing itself to the only remaining superpower, and in this situation, Putin and Lavrov verify Russia's activity by counterbalancing the actions of its Self against the actions of the Other, the United States. Viewing Putin's and Lavrov's statements with the help of conventional constructivism portrays how the similarities between the two powers, the Self

and the Other, are in focus, in order to legitimize Russia's symbolic gesture. In focus here is the idea that if the United States can plant a flag in connection with exploration, then so can the Russian Federation. By choosing to compare the Russian expedition with the action of the United States, Russia demonstrates a preference of comparison with a state similar to itself.

According to the idea of conventional constructivism, comparison with the USA is more relevant for Russia than comparison with any other state in this situation, as the two countries share similar state identities as large global powers and leading celestial explorers. On the other hand, considering this through the eyes of critical constructivism, it is evident how the Self and the Other are viewed as having an opposing relation in international relations. If the Other, the Atlanticist representative can carry out a mission to the moon and plant its flag without having to justify this symbolic gesture, then the Self, the Eurasian state has the right to do the same. Considering this desire of Eurasianism to counterbalance the hegemony of the United States, the Eurasianist stream of thought is apparent in Putin's and Lavrov's defense of the Arktika 2007, as they refuse to let the planting of a Russian flag on the North Pole receive different treatment than the planting of the American flag on the moon.

Russia's stance in this matter is seemingly ambiguous, as different aspects of the expedition have been highlighted by the Russian Government, and by the crewmembers on board the submersibles MIR-I and MIR-II. Before embarking on the journey, Chilingarov stated: "The Arctic is ours, and we should demonstrate our presence." This proclamation is not diplomatically cautious, as the territories claimed by Russia have not been declared Russian by the CLCS. Thereby, the blunt utterance "The Arctic is ours" can be perceived as being too assertive, even aggressive, by the other Arctic states. Given Russia's imperial history and strong state identity, this perception is weighty. As notable in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013, the emotional ties to the Arctic are a part of Russian political thinking. The Concept's undeniably opinionated choice of words verifies this, as the phrase "imposition of various unjustified restrictions and other discriminatory measures" describes the territorial dispute in the Arctic. Chilingarov's assertiveness can be linked to this emotion, and to the territorial self-identification that is essential for Eurasianists.

Crewmember Vladimir Gruzdev pointed to the importance of reminding “the whole world that Russia is a great polar and scientific power.” His statement is in line with the aim of Russia’s Arctic Policy, emphasising the intent of maintaining what constructivists would see as Russia’s state identity as the “leading Arctic power”. Furthermore, the significant focus on the scientific achievement of the expedition is in line with the Arctic Policy’s emphasis of the importance of cartology and scientific research, which is needed to support Russia’s territorial claims. As the expedition had undergone 8-9 years of planning, it is apparent that this arrangement had started before Russia’s submission to the CLCS, and shortly after ratifying the UNCLOS, emphasising Russia’s longstanding scientific activity in the Arctic.

When emphasising the importance of research during the Arktika 2007 expedition, Gruzdev added that this would be executed in accordance to international law. By mentioning international law in this context, Gruzdev was nurturing the Russian state identity as a “reliable partner in international relations”. He went as far as to point to Russia’s ratification of the UNCLOS. This comment verifies that Russia is indeed taking international law into account, because it elaborates on what precise legislature is in question. What this comment also does, is highlights the fact that Russia has ratified the UNCLOS, implicitly referring to the United States that has not ratified the Convention, and seeking to discredit this Other that Russia so often chooses to compare itself to. By using the ratification of the UNCLOS as a means for justifying Russia’s symbolic doing, Gruzdev indirectly highlights the disadvantages of not having ratified the Convention, as the lack of ratifying major international Conventions is often perceived by the international community as a weakness. In this way, Gruzdev discretely addresses his remark at the United States, comparing Russia’s juridical rights in the Arctic to the US’ limited possibilities in this situation. The Eurasian aim of restoring Russia’s standing in the global community can be traced here, and as Gruzdev’s comments are for a Russian audience as well as for the international press, they can be viewed as an attempt to strengthen pride and national identity as well as how it is perceived by other states. Gruzdev added that the Arktika 2007 had focused on attracting state interest to this area of research, confirming the notion that a national audience was being targeted.

The Eurasian idea of discrediting the United States is apparent in Russia’s constant comparisons and referrals to its alleged mistakes. Whilst the modernizers within Eurasianism

state that the United States is deteriorating as a super power, Aleksandr Dugin, being linked to the expansionists condemn the idea of the West in his promotion of a “third way” for Russia as well as in his emphasis on Russia’s distinctiveness. Expansionists believe that the world will continue to consist of a struggle between the former East and West blocs, in accordance to the geopolitical rules set during the Cold War. Interestingly, the Russia Public Opinion Research Centre (VCIOM, 07.10.2013) confirms the popularity of this thought, demonstrating that in 2013, 46% of Russians responded that a renaissance of another Cold War was a likely scenario, contra 48% expressing an expected unlikelihood of this. With almost half the respondents able to envisage a new Cold War, a bipolar balance of power is seemingly still a part of Russian conscience and national identity.

The interest of stigmatizing the United States is also evident in Putin’s speech during the Munich Security Conference of 2007. When addressing the balance of global power in the modern world, and pointing to the pattern of unipolarity, Putin mentioned the destructive nature of being a sovereign in a unipolar world order. Indirectly referring to the United States as this sovereign, Putin argued that not only is a unipolar model not acceptable in today’s modern world, but it is also impossible, as its basis has no moral foundations, and it destroys other states as well as destroying itself from within (Putin, 2007;3.38-04.20 min). With this statement, Putin indirectly counters any arguments that would claim Russia to feel threatened by the United States as this sovereign, as he points to the fact that this model is self-destructive. To what extent this statement truly is Putin’s conviction, contra a rhetorical tool to signal confidence, is a question of interpretation. One may think that if hegemony lay in the hands of Russia instead of the US, it would not have been rejected by Russia. Considering Aleksandr Dugin’s explanation of the use of Intellectual Fascism in Eurasianism as a general stream of thought that “brings together the nationalist, the liberal, the communist, and the democrat” under the feeling of a “deep-seated secret fear”, it is apparent that there in fact may be fear in Putin’s statement. The fear of US global hegemony and the decline of Russian global power can be regarded as the basis of Eurasianist thought in foreign politics. Russian rejection of a unipolar world can thereby be interpreted as an element of fear of defeat that is deeply rooted within the Russian people.

Despite weighty political rhetoric, an attempt was also being made to turn the focus on the technological achievement and scientific capabilities demonstrated in the expedition, as well as on the international cooperation practiced during Arctic projects. Australian crewmember Mike McDowell expressed the opinion that the media was too focused on the politics and aspects of “confrontation” in the expedition, instead of putting emphasis on the international cooperation that had taken place. By pointing out that Chilingarov’s and Gruzdev’s positions as parliamentarians were unimportant to him, he attempted to tone down the aspect of Russian national politics within this event, and instead draw attention to its international aspect and soft power. He pointed to another foreign crewmember on board the “Akademic Fyodorov”, Frederik Paulsen, and stated that although lead by Russians, the mission was in fact international. As a crewmember of the expedition, McDowell’s interests are undoubtedly in promoting his participation in with top Russian researchers and in avoiding any participation in the global power struggle. McDowell’s comments thereby support the promotion of a positive image for Russia, yet the Australian’s comments have limited effect due to Chilingarov’s strong and contradicting “The Arctic is ours” rhetoric.

Nevertheless, the leader of the expedition did attempt to promote a positive perception of Russia alongside his strong rhetoric. The message within the capsule that Chilingarov had placed beneath the seabed confirmed the intent of celebrating the expedition’s international cooperation. In terms of state and national identity, this can be viewed via constructivism as a medium of promoting Russia as a cooperative state, as well as an initiator and “leading Arctic power”. International cooperation is often mentioned in the Arctic Policy as a means of achieving national interests, while the will to cooperate also demonstrates a state’s the intent to increase its soft power. Despite the intentions, Russia is not successful in strengthening its soft power in this way, as visible in McDowell’s own reference to the media’s confrontative aspect. Joseph Nye’s remark about the importance of being credible, when dealing with soft power, explains the failure of soft power in this situation: the expedition is regarded from abroad as government propaganda. Despite Gruzdev’s remark about attempting to draw state attention to Arctic research, Chilingarov’s and Gruzdev’s parliamentarian statuses stand in the way of creating credibility for foreign observers.

The general objective of the Arktika 2007 was the promotion of national interests and proving of Russia's worth to the world. Chilingarov mentioned the possibility of Canadian and Danish territorial interests to be overlapping Russia's claims in the Arctic Ocean. Emphasising Russia's technological achievement during the expedition, he pointed to the comparatively insubstantial technological capabilities in other states to conduct research of the same sort. "We have exercised our maritime right of the first night," Chilingarov said, expressing an opinion of Russian superiority in the Arctic. The competitive aspect is visible in this comment, as he glorifies the victory of Russia being the first country with a national flag on the North Pole's seabed. The explorer compared this victory to exercising the right of the first night, where, by consummating the marriage, the North Pole would become a legitimate possession of the groom, the first to get there; i.e. Russia.

For constructivists, being aware of the cultural tendencies within a state is vital for the understanding of international relations. Wendt refers to the feelings of frustration and anxiety, when a state's needs are not being met, and the motivation to prove one's worth in contexts of insecurity and lack of recognition from other states. Perceiving this case through the eyes of constructivists, the feeling that can be detected here is insecurity; insecurity of being in the application process with territorial claims, having overlapping interests with Canada and possibly Denmark, and with the lack of verification from the CLCS regarding the submission made by Russia. Making the statement: "The Arctic is ours, and we should demonstrate our presence", and emphasising Russian technological capabilities, can be viewed as a way of proving Russia's worth in the Arctic, in a time when there is no recognition of Russian sovereignty over its claimed territory in the High North. Chilingarov's emphasis on Russian technological superiority in comparison to other Arctic states', as he highlights that neither Canada nor Denmark would have been able to undertake similar expeditions, is yet another demonstration of strengthening national and state identity. Likewise, when states experience success, the natural feelings of satisfaction and self-esteem arise. Having uplifted its self-esteem, Russia can be perceived as more confident, and its national identity has also been boosted, yet its likeability and soft power had not been not significantly improved in this way.

The ambiguous objective of the Arktika 2007 expedition is visible when analysing the aspects of state and national identity that come into play. By proving Russia's worth through superior technological achievement and demonstrating a presence in the Arctic through the symbolic gesture of planting a flag, the Russian Federation has strengthened its state identity as a leader in the Arctic, though not improved its likeability, while it enhanced pride and the feeling of ownership within its national identity. The act of discrediting the United States is observed, and the Eurasianist influence and feeling of a "deep-seated fear" is disclosed. An emotional benchmark for the Arktika 2007 has thereby been detected.

Analysing the Olympic Torch Relay to the North Pole

The Olympic Torch Relay for the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games was an opportunity for Russia to promote its state identity and show the world what it is capable of achieving. The following analysis will uncover the basis of how Russia is perceived by the international community, and the underlying explanations of the lengths that Russia went to in its attempt to strengthen its intersubjective identity.

The Russia Development Index, in the following referred to as the Valdai Index, is an analysis that has been publicised annually since the 2009-2010 study year, basing its assessment on the patterns found throughout the four previous study years. Through analysis of polls of leading experts on Russia from 26 different countries, the Valdai Index presents a calculation of the general international perception of Russia's economic, political, socio-humanitarian and international development. Reviewing recent developments of the 2012-2013 study, it becomes apparent that there has been a negative development in opinion regarding domestic policy and the human dimension within the country. Likewise, there is a continuing expectation that economic growth will rely heavily on the exploitation of natural resources. (Valdai Index, 2012-2013). Deterioration is also seen in the perception of Russia's political values, as the level of tolerance amongst Russians towards immigrants is perceived to have worsened, and the same development concerns the Russian public's acceptance of the LGBT community. The perception of the feeling of freedom and mutual trust amongst Russian citizens has also become worse (Ibid.) Considering Laruelle's critique of the ambiguous messages of nationalism in Eurasianism, as she points to the fact that the ideology praises diversity within the Eurasian territory, yet is devoted to fervent Russian nationalism, the influence of Eurasianism in this seemingly deteriorating tolerance grants a possible explanation. As Dugin defines the nationalism that he promotes as "nationalism of love", as opposed to "nationalism of hate", he redefines this initially negatively perceived idea to make it seem more appealing. It becomes apparent that despite attempts to maintain political correctness, Eurasianism's traditionalist values have, according to the Valdai Index, in fact negatively influenced tolerance amongst Russians.

On the other hand, the perception of Russia's soft power has improved slightly due to a growing popularity of Russian cultural diplomacy. But further improvement would require an image of more tolerance and less traditionalist values, as Valdai Index study concludes. Furthermore, it is evident that the international panel of experts regards Russia to be a very proactive state in the geopolitical sphere, actively maintaining its interests in the global community and strengthening its role as a major political player in global politics (Valdai Index, 2012-2013).

In his speech at the Valdai International Discussion Club in 2013, Putin emphasised the importance of strengthening national identity for the creation of a stronger state. Putin stated: "Without restoring confidence in the society, we will lose the historic competition." (Putin, 19.09.2013;20.40 min.) Through the symbolic ceremonies of the Relay and extraordinary and record-breaking settings, the proud aspects of Russian culture and territory were promoted. Putin added in his speech: "(t)he citizens of Russia should feel themselves responsible hosts of their country, territory, motherland, property and life" (Putin, 19.09.2013;20.50 min.) In this quote the mission of the Relay can be summed up. The sochi.ru (2013) homepage confirms the high reachability of the event to the Russian population, saying that "(a)ccording to several polls, the Relay was one of the most memorable events of 2013 for Russians". Through symbolic gestures that remind Russian citizens of the country's history, culture and potential, the Olympic Torch Relay promoted national pride and strengthened the national identity amongst Russians, making them feel as "responsible hosts" of the Olympic event. The Eurasianist pride of Russian cultural distinctiveness is visible here, in line with Dugin's words: "every people moves through History according to its own trajectory, upholding its own understanding of the world".

As scholar William Bloom explains, national and state identity are interdependent, with national values and ideas leaking into states' foreign policies (mentioned in Alexandrov, 2003;34-37). Likewise, in continuation of Putin's statement in his speech in Valdai, emphasising the significance of the "quality of citizens" (Putin, 2013;04.57 min), it is visible how the President expressed for a strong national identity to be a vital element for successful foreign politics and encouraged understanding and development of Russia's national identity (Ibid.) Lukjanov (mentioned in Latuhina, 18.02.2013) points to the mentioning of

“reorganization” of the world’s balance of power in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013, which he says creates the idea that the world is unpredictable. Due to civilizational diversity, threats can be everywhere. According to Lukjanov, a strong national identity is therefore critical for the protection the country against these threats. Ceremonial events, such as the Olympic Games, are appropriate tools for uniting a nation under a common identity, once the concept of national identity has been agreed upon and developed. A Eurasianist identity could very well be an example of this concept of national identity.

Besides addressing the nation to strengthen its feeling of pride, the Olympic Torch Relay, as mentioned above, also focused on exhibiting Russia’s achievements and potential to the global society. The extravagance of the event, seen in its record-breaking settings, can be explained by the Russian Government’s need for self-assertion after its struggles during the 1990s. In order to show the world that Russia is back on its feet economically, proud of its distinctive culture, and has high prospects for the future, the government carried out this extraordinary Olympic Torch Relay, full of symbolism and patriotism. Russia’s low self-esteem had entailed the keen need of self-assertion, leading to the extravagance of the Olympic Torch Relay - like an inferiority complex can lead to overcompensation (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

During the Relay, Russia was able to display its presence in the Arctic. The Arctic, as mentioned earlier, plays an important part in Russian self-identification, and quoting Professor Steinberg once gain, “(i)t’s more a symbol of national pride”, it becomes clear that the North Pole, with its symbolic significance, would be a desired base for the Relay route. As the Relay had been planned and carried out under the responsibility of the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games, the decision to allow bringing the Olympic Torch to the North Pole is interesting, as this implies an acceptance of the North Pole as being Russian state territory ahead of any official decision. Director-General of Rosatom, Sergey Kiriyenko, stated that the project of the Olympic Torch to the North Pole was “a symbol of the Arctic Council’s unity.” He highlighted the shared values of Rosatom and the International Olympic movement, both organisations working to promote sports and create technologies for the comfort and well-being of the Russian people. This does not clarify why the Russian Olympic event had been permitted to take place in a territory not confirmed to be Russian by international law. Kiriyenko’s statement goes around the question of territory, and simply

emphasises shared values and cooperation of the Arctic Council member states. This can suggest that the political aspect of the territorial claims has been downplayed, in order to emphasise the message of peace and international friendship that the ceremony celebrates. But this situation can also be interpreted differently, as the following paragraph will show.

Chernysenko expressed how the route of the Relay would “demonstrate the beauty of (the) country”, without going into detail about the status of North Pole as one of the territories within the country. By putting focus on cooperation, a theme that all states can agree upon, it becomes difficult to argue against the North Pole being a base for the Russian event. The Russian presence here naturally evolves into a statement of ownership of the North Pole. One can also say that by taking the Olympic Torch into outer space, any arguments regarding serious territorial claims are also minimized, as it would be inappropriate to perceive this journey as an attempt to gain sovereignty over outer space. By putting the one extravagant project up against another, even more extravagant project, political and rational argumentation becomes trivial. Furthermore, a comparison of the extravagant to the more extravagant can lead to a reaction of acceptance of the former due to the comparatively insurmountable extent of the latter. It can thereby be interpreted that any intentions to claim the North Pole have been disguised within the complexity of the entire Olympic Torch Relay.

Avoiding the discussion of territorial rights, the focus of the Olympic Torch Relay has been on the cooperation between the Arctic Council member states, and the common interest of protecting the Arctic environment. By focusing on cooperation in the Arctic, Russia promotes the state identity of being a “reliable partner in international relations”, as international cooperation is encouraged in the Arctic Policy. Reviewing Russia’s intersubjective identity in accordance to the Valdai Index, it is apparent that the state’s cooperation within the Arctic Council is an example of cultural diplomacy, in an attempt to improve the general international perception of Russia and strengthen its soft power. For the Eurasianist idea, the incompatibility of the Eurasian and Western civilizations is a crucial point that would not accept this cooperation, as the Arctic Council includes not only Western European Countries and Canada, but the sovereign of the unipolar world, the United States itself. With the benchmark of discrediting the United States and claiming its values to be destructive, it is unlikely that there would be any recognition of this example of cultural diplomacy from the

Eurasianist bloc. The Arctic Policy, on the other hand, has a pragmatic approach to cooperation in the Arctic, viewing transparency and partnerships as the way of achieving national interests. Ultimately, considering Russia's advantageous position in the Arctic, collaboration within the Arctic Council members is not a threat for Russia, but a way of promoting own power in the spirit of the Eurasianist modernizers, who view economic and technological improvement as the appropriate way of tackling the declining US and Western countries. The state and national identity of being a leader in the Arctic is also nurtured, with Russia leading the expedition to bring the Olympic Torch to the North Pole, and the renowned Arthur Chilingarov lighting the cauldron at the end destination.

In the attempts to strengthen its intersubjective identity with the Olympic Torch Relay, Russia's eagerness backfires, confirming various examples of the international community's prejudice. For example, by bringing the Olympic Torch to the oil field in Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region and gold mine in Yakutia, Russia confirms the prejudice of the country's strong reliance on natural resources calculated by the Valdai Index. As the Valdai Index also shows, the Russian Federation is perceived as a proactive state in geopolitics, and is strengthening its role in global politics. Leading the expedition to the North Pole and demonstrating the country's technological and scientific capabilities during the Relay is an active affirmation of Russian power. By having a record-breaking Olympic Torch Relay, Russia proactively ensures itself a spot in Olympic history, with symbols of extraordinary achievement and extensive national territory to signify Russian self-identification and state identity. As for the zealous Eurasianist idea of restoring Russia as a great global power, the extravagant Olympic Torch Relay and lighting of the cauldron on the North Pole can be seen as a confirmation of Russia's unstoppable devotion to prove itself.

The Olympic Torch Relay as a whole, and its expedition to the North Pole, are very saying acts with regards to Russian self-identification, national pride and other cultural aspects that lie at the basis of the country's decision-making. By applying the constructivist approach, the analysis discloses signs of an inferiority complex that lies at the basis of this extravagant event. Simultaneously, it becomes apparent how the symbols of territorial ownership of the North Pole have been disguised in the overall extravagance of the Relay, and the political aspects of carrying out the ceremony in this area had been tip-toed around.

Discussion & Conclusion

Reviewing the five examples of Russian politics in the Arctic with a constructivist approach, it has become apparent how the Eurasianist stream, representing a popular stream of thought in Russian politics, has influenced various aspects of decision-making on a smaller scale, and on a larger scale contributed to the establishment of the benchmark for Russian foreign and Arctic politics. Via the theory of constructivism, the problem formulation of this study has been answered, depicting how culture, self-identification and national pride can explain Russia's endeavours in the Arctic.

Presenting the most essential circumstances and elements that had accompanied the end of the Cold War, and giving an introduction to points of interest and opportunity in the Arctic region, this paper provided the background that this study would be based on. The study has identified aspects of Eurasianism in Russia's Foreign Policy Concept and Arctic Policy documents, exposing the ideology's mark on Russia's agenda in these documents. Hereafter, the study has recognized elements of culture, self-identification and national pride in the empirical examples of Russian actions and endeavours in the Arctic, basing its findings on the parameters of Eurasianism and documents mentioned above, as well as on historical circumstances of the Cold War and the subsequent years.

The study answered the first and foremost question: What does the Arctic mean to Russia? Russia, being the first Arctic state to submit its territorial claims to the CLCS, proved its dedication to developing the area and getting the most out of its potential. During the Arktika 2007 expedition, Arthur Chilingarov expressed strong rhetoric of ownership: "The Arctic is ours, and we should demonstrate our presence", emphasising a head start in the Arctic race through his "maritime right of the first night" reference. Chilingarov's expressive statements reveal the factors of self-identification and pride that lie in obtaining ownership of Russia's claimed Arctic territories. Likewise, the emotional rhetoric of the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013, depicting the territorial controversies of the Arctic as "imposition of various unjustified restrictions and other discriminatory measures" reveals feelings of straightforward frustration over not having sovereignty over territories believed by Russia to be rightfully

Russian. These feelings have proven to be just as powerful motivators for the country to pursue the Arctic dream, as the rational economic advantages of natural resources, if not more powerful. Despite these economic advantages being a matter of course for all the Arctic states, Russia's first-mover activity and emotional rhetoric proves its devotion to the area and desire to show its worth after the hardships of its past. Simply put, the Arctic means more to Russia than it does to its neighbours in the North.

Russia has more at stake than the other states, and it has more to gain. The Arctic is Russia's geopolitical card to power, and the Russian government intends to play this card to the best of its ability. At stake is Russia's position in the global community, and with a recent history of being a superpower, the current situation can be regarded as a make it or break it opportunity. Ambitions are high for the Eurasianists, as they seek to promote their values as an alternative to Atlanticism and challenge the American hegemon. Vladimir Putin, in concord with Eurasianists, pointed to the deterioration of the power of the United States, and Feodor Lukjanov emphasized to a "reorganization" of the world's balance of power. The significance of the Arctic for Russia lies in the opportunity to turn this "reorganization" of power to its advantage, to exploit the decline of US power, and to secure its position in the modern world. Should all of Russia's territorial claims be accepted by the CLCS, it would be in possession of as much as 45% of the Arctic territories, providing it with sublime power not only in the Arctic itself, but also effecting its global standing. With the symbolism of the North Pole as a geographical point on top of the world, Russia would figuratively be placed at the top of the hierarchy in the Arctic, and figuratively on top of the world.

The study has also explained the nature of Russia's relations with its Arctic neighbours, reviewing the perception it has of itself as a player in the Arctic and the perception that the other Arctic states have of Russia. It is safe to say that Russian self-identification as a "leading Arctic power" has been affirmed by its actions and by how the other Arctic states have reacted to Russia's actions; from Canada's uneasy comments regarding the Arktika 2007 Expedition, to Norway's apparent withdrawal from any competition with Russia in the Barents Sea, to the US' denunciation of Russia's submission of claims and of its sovereignty in the NSR straits. Thereby, this self-identification has evolved into an acknowledged state identity of Russia as a leader in the Arctic.

Complimenting the perception of Russia as a leading power in the Arctic, the nature of Russia's Arctic relations is influenced by mutual ambiguity in the states' perceptions of one another. Despite frequent examples of pursuits to promote a positive perception of Russia, as a "reliable partner in international relations", it has been shown that its soft power is challenged by the difficulty of seeming credible to an international audience. Through examination of the five mentioned empirical examples it has become apparent that trust has not been fully established yet, as evident for example in Gahr Store's remark: "Russia is not yet a stable, predictable state" and in MacKay's referral to 15th century tactics in the Arktika 2007 expedition. Yet, the desire to cooperate does exist, as the signing of the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation has shown, foreign interest in the Northern Sea Route illustrates, and the celebration of international cooperation during the Olympic Torch Relay's North Pole expedition has confirmed. It is evident that cooperation is pursued wherever it is economically viable and ideologically possible. As the examples have also shown, cooperation between Russia and the other Arctic states is often pursued with caution and distrust.

This caution and distrust has proven to be mutual, being a result of memories of the Cold War and the bipolar world order. As the VCIOM polls have shown with a high public evaluation of the likelihood of a Cold War renaissance, it is apparent that a bipolar balance of power is still a part of Russian conscience and national identity. Its continued existence in the Russian mind is a result of the need for self-assertion, caused by the experiences of disappointment, humiliation and disregard by the Western states, apparent notably in Gorbachev's statement that "he felt he had fallen into a trap". Russia's numerous attempts to discredit the United States, and US acts against Russian influence and expansion, illustrate the constant tug-of-war that has continued to exist after the end of the Cold War. The careful approach to Western Europe, also a product of the clash between the blocs, has likewise been disclosed in Eurasiansim's rhetoric, which demonstrates not only ideological disagreements with the Western civilization, but also the prospect of Western Europe being a useful partner in Russia's geopolitical game. Hence, the study has disclosed various points of ambiguity in Russia's approach to and relations with the West, balancing ideological convictions with state interests. Thereby, whether the Arctic states still belong to "non-aligned" and "mutually

opposed (...) blocs”, to use Gorbachev’s words from his 1987 Murmansk speech, proves to be a relevant issue in contemporary Russian Arctic politics.

The first hypothesis of this paper can thereby be verified, as it has become evident how Russia’s politics in the Arctic, and on a global scale in general, have been strongly affected by Russia’s experiences of the past, its memories of the Cold War and the world order of that time. The miscommunication that the Cold War had ended with entailed a feeling of frustration, rooted in having to live in a reality that Russia feels it has been tricked into.

The second hypothesis of this paper can likewise be verified, as the ambiguity of Russia’s politics has become apparent, and an intertwining of rational thought and practice of soft power with strong rhetoric and symbolic actions has been revealed. The study has exposed various examples within Russia’s practice of foreign and Arctic politics that are not in agreement with Eurasianism, and one can say that in some cases, Eurasianism seems to be queering its own pitch with its traditionalist views and occasional politically incorrect statements.

Taking a look at the problem formulation one more time; How can culture, self-identification and national pride explain Russia’s endeavours in the Arctic?; it is apparent that these elements have influenced Russian politics on many levels, proving the importance of history and old wounds as well as psychology.

This paper shines a light on the importance of considering the irrational aspects of decision-making when analysing Russian politics, to move past its active doings and publicised documents, and discover the underlying reasoning and true objectives of these. It is important to remember the various other aspects that influence Russian decision-making, such as economic interests and environmental issues, as all these, in the end, constitute Russia’s foreign and Arctic policy. Nevertheless, taking into account the aspects of culture, self-identification and national pride in Russian politics will contribute to a more accurate prediction of developments within international relations, and more specifically, to foresee the Russian Federation’s future actions and endeavours in the Arctic.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Claimed territory in the Arctic Ocean, as submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf by the Russian Federation.



Appendix 2

Treaty on Maritime Delimitation: agreed geodetic line of delimitation (red) with the Russia's proposed sectorial line seen above the geodetic line, and Norway's proposed median line seen below the geodetic line.



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