

Cooperation and/or Conflict in the Arctic?

The Meaning of National Images in International Arctic Governance

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Acronyms

AEPS - Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy

Arctic Council - AC

MFAs - Ministers of Foreign Affairs

NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATO+2 - The NATO members plus Sweden and Finland

NRC - NATO-Russian Council

The Arctic states - USA, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Russia

The Western Arctic states - USA, Canada, Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland

USA - United States of America

Abstract

This thesis criticises previous research on international Arctic governance for being biased towards liberal theoretical assumptions. It is argued that this bias has led to an inability to also include theories that can provide nuance about cooperation and conflict in the research on Arctic. General assumption of the region as a "zone of peace" and sometimes an excluding focus on the work and progresses made in the Arctic Council have been favoured over nuanced accounts of conflict and cooperation in international Arctic governance. The criticism is delivered by suggesting a theoretical perspective which draws on Kenneth Boulding's insights on national images' role in the practise of foreign policy, which is believed to be able to account for nuances and deeper understanding. Drawing on this theoretical perspective, statements and speeches made by the Arctic states' ministers of foreign affairs are analysed by using the discursive method of predicate analysis to study how the ministers of foreign affairs image the other Arctic states. These images are assumed to have impact on how the Arctic states practise their foreign policy in the region. The main findings of this thesis suggest that national images can potentially provide understanding and nuances about cooperation and conflict in international Arctic governance. However, further research is needed to strongly argue that national images should be included in further research on international Arctic governance.

Keywords: Arctic, governance, cooperation, conflict, national images, Boulding, friendliness, hostility

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1. Introduction

Processes that require academic attention are, and have been for some time, going on within the Arctic. The sea ice extent in the Arctic Ocean has reduced greatly during the last decades due to global warming, which is also causing the permafrost and snow to melt within the region. The declining sea ice has led to various consequences and created new opportunities and challenges inside the Arctic, which in turn raise questions about governance. This has drawn the attention of international relations scholars who have sought to explain the international political developments regarding governance in the region and its potential future. More recent previous research on international Arctic governance has come to see the Arctic as a region characterised by peace and stability. Some even describe the Arctic as a region where international governance takes place without the interference of other political conflicts in the rest of the world. This "Arctic exceptionalism" implies that the region is a zone of peace, for various reasons. Some scholars often refer to the work and progress of the Arctic Council (AC) towards peaceful governances in the Arctic to make these claims. However, there are also testimonies of conflict in the Arctic which implies that the international Arctic governance is not as peaceful as the previous research depicts it to be, and these testimonies are seldom well accounted for in the previous research.

In this thesis it is argued that the previous research on international Arctic politics is biased toward liberal assumptions about cooperation. This, in turn, provides an explanation to why the testimonies which speak against the the notion of the "Arctic exceptionalism" are seldom discussed in the previous research. Since the liberal approach's aim is to provide a general explanation for why states engage in cooperation or conflict, it is argued that the liberal bias in the previous research has led to an inability to also recognise particularities which deviate from the general assumption about cooperation and exceptionalism within the Arctic. In response to this, this thesis' aim is to criticise the exclusive general liberal explanation in the previous research by suggesting a theoretical perspective that can potentially highlight nuances and provide deeper understanding about cooperation and conflict. This is believed to be important since the inclusion of a theoretical perspective that can also provide nuances to a research field that has been mostly occupied with general explanations. This will potentially enable insights on cooperation and conflict in future research about the Arctic that previous research has failed to do (through its bias towards liberal theories). The theoretical perspective suggested draws on Kenneth Boulding's insights on national images.

2. Background

This part begins with discussing the definition of the Arctic used in this thesis, which is followed by a description about the changing Arctic, its consequences and a historical account of Arctic governance; the purpose being to provide understanding about the Arctic region and the changes that have been taking place there in the past decades. This is followed by a brief review of how previous research portrays the international Arctic governance. By drawing on this background, the research aim and question of this thesis are formulated.

2.1 Defining the Arctic

What the Arctic is and where it begins and ends is hard to define if you do not base your definitions on certain assumptions. As Charles Emmerson makes clear, the Arctic can take on very different extent and meaning depending on which perspective you look at it from. For the geographer, the Arctic is a circular region delimited by the Arctic circle, which runs at a latitude approximately 66 degrees north of the equator. For the climatologist and biologist, the Arctic is defined as a climate with a certain weather, or conditions that make able the flourish of a certain biology (Emmerson 2010, 3-4). Since this thesis will focus on international politics in the Arctic and the work within the AC, it will use the Arctic circle as the definition of the Arctic. This is the definition used within the AC (Ottawa Declaration 1996) to define the members of the council, which are also often referred to as the Arctic states. By using the Arctic circle as definition, eight states have territory inside the Arctic. These are the USA, Russia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Denmark (by Greenland), Finland and Iceland. These eight states are also the members of the AC.

2.2 Consequences of a changing Arctic

Changes are taking place within the Arctic. The once "remote" (in relation to other regional and global political processes) region is changing and getting more attention in international affairs. A significant process contributing to a changing Arctic is the warming of the region. That rising temperatures have an impact on the Arctic environment is not a new discovery. Back in 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported on the reducing extent of sea ice, mountain glaciers and average snow cover within the Arctic region (IPCC 2007: 2). The reduction of ice,

glaciers and snow cover in the Arctic has continued since then, and now, the volume of ice in the Arctic Ocean present in September has declined by 75% since 1979. The warming of the Arctic will alter its ecosystem, and this transition causes the loss of entire habitats. Further, this has consequences for the native people living in the Arctic, whose daily lives are relying on these habitats (AMAP 2019). Nonetheless, the changes in environment also have other types of consequences. The declining sea ice, in combination with new technology, are opening up opportunities for resources extraction¹ and shipping that were hardly possible before. The reducing sea ice in the region makes sea routes possible during summertime that save thousands of miles, in relation to the traditional sea routes of today, during a journey between the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean. Also, the reducing sea ice changes the geopolitics in the Arctic. Since the Arctic Ocean will become easier to navigate in if the sea ice is reduced greatly, Russia's northern border will be more "open" than it was before. Today the Arctic Ocean is seen as a "natural barrier" between Russia and the USA. However, a continuing receding sea ice extent would cause this barrier to vanish and make Russia's long northern coast more vulnerable (Borgerson 2013, 2, AMAP 2019 & Boulègue 2019: 25).

The promises of shorter sea routes and resources, as well as the military strategic importance of the region, have impacted the meaning ascribed to the region in international affairs. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Arctic region was a remote and unexplored region with little importance in international affairs. During WWII and the Cold War, the region became militarised and eventually became a strategic military flank between East and West in the midst of the Cold War (Heininen 2005: 94). However, today, the region hosts modern industries that extract oil, gas, iron ores, nickel and zinc, which requires huge investments because of the harsh Arctic climate. Investments that are often provided by states (Emmerson 2010: 196-219).

It is important to note that people have been living in the Arctic for thousand of years, and today approximately 500.000 indigenous people are living in the region (Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat, 2019). For these people, their ancestors and the rest of the 3,5 million people living in the region, the Arctic was and is not remote; rather, it is home and everyday life (Engstrand 2018: 11, Nord 2016a: 2). Hence, the Arctic has not been a "frozen" area on earth without a history before

¹ In a widely cited study, made by the United States Geological Survey in 2008, it was suggested that "[the] extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the geographically largest unexplored prospective area for petroleum remaining on Earth" (USGS 2008).

states and industries started to pay greater attention to the region in the latter decades. However, the Arctic has changed in regards to international affairs. As Douglas Nord remarks, "the Arctic has evolved from being a rather remote region in *international affairs* to becoming an increasingly central concern of the global community" (2016b: 1). And with these changes, questions about and future prospects for governance arise (Nord 2016a: 1-5).

2.3 Governance in the Arctic

According to Douglas Nord, international relations within the Arctic has a tradition of peaceful settlement of disputes. Back in 1867, the USA and the Tsardom of Russia negotiated the cession of Alaska. The negotiation resulted in that the USA bought Alaska from the Tsardom. In 1920, the Svalbard treaty was signed and under its provision, sovereignty over Svalbard was given to Norway but all signatory nations were given the right to extract resources and conduct scientific inquiry in the Svalbard archipelago (2016: 23-24). However, during the Cold War the Arctic became a military flank and cooperation between the Arctic states deteriorated. But, in 1987, a speech in Murmansk by the Soviet Union's leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, indicated the return of peaceful governance in the Arctic. In his speech, Gorbachev expressed that he wanted the Arctic to become a "zone of peace". The Soviet leader also conveyed the importance of developing a peaceful cooperation for resource development and environmental protection in the north (Gorbachev 1987). In 1991, the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) was signed in Rovaniemi. The AEPS was signed by all eight Arctic states and the agreement emphasised the "highly sensitive" ecosystem, a need for international cooperation to ensure the protection of the environment and the cultures of the indigenous peoples, and sustainable development within the Arctic (AEPS 1991). The AEPS was a Finnish initiative that was driven by general environmental concerns in the high north, and transnational pollution originating from its Russian neighbour (Nord 2016b: 30).

Drawing on and developing the cooperation initiated by the AEPS, the Arctic states formed the AC in 1996 by the ratification of the Ottawa Declaration. The Ottawa Declaration emphasised very much the same topics as the AEPS had done. However, the ratification of the declaration led to the forming of a "high-level forum" that provided opportunities for regular intergovernmental consultation on Arctic issues. The issues mentioned in the Ottawa declaration were environmental protection, sustainable development, the rights of the indigenous people and scientific research. Nevertheless, the Ottawa Declaration clearly stated that the AC "should not deal with matters related to military security" (Ottawa Declaration 1996). The exclusion of national and military

security was a result of the reluctance from the USA to include such issues in the AC's agenda (Nord 2016a: 21-25).

Two decades have passed since the formation of the AC, and the high level forum has come to turn more and more into an international organisation that attempts to promote governance on environmental protection and sustainable development within the Arctic region through international cooperation (Nord 2016b, 164). The AC has produced research on environmental issues and sustainable development in the Arctic. Further, the AC has developed frameworks for coordinated cooperation between the Arctic states on certain issues. The *Agreement on Search and Rescue in Arctic Waters*, signed in 2011, provides a framework for cooperation on rescue operations in the Arctic. The *Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution and Response*, signed in 2013, deals with preparedness and response for oil spills and pollution in Arctic waters. The latest agreement, signed in 2017 by the Arctic states, was the *Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation*. This agreement was signed to improve scientific research cooperation among the Arctic states (Nord 2016a: 25-31 & Arctic Council 2018). However, recently, there has also been setbacks in the AC. During a ministerial meeting in May 7, 2019, the AC failed to end a ministerial meeting with a joint declaration for the first time ever. Reportedly, it was disagreement between the USA and the rest of the Arctic states on ambitions and wording regarding climate change that led to the unsigned joint declaration (Breum 2019).

When it comes to military issues, the political developments between the Arctic states have deteriorated in recent years. Since 2015, Russia has repeatedly conducted military exercises in the Arctic. In 2018, the NATO members plus Sweden and Finland (NATO+2) organised a military exercise that was partly conducted inside the Arctic circle, under the name Trident Juncture 18 (Boulègue 2019: 34). Hence, military exercises are dividing the Arctic states into two sides. On one side is NATO+2, and on the other side is Russia. Military cooperation between these two sides has been uneventful during the recent years. Immediately after the Russian annexation of Crimea, military cooperation between these blocks was halted. The potential arenas for a deeper and all-inclusive Arctic military cooperation, such as the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable and Northern Chiefs of Defence Forum, have been cancelled or held without the presence of Russian representatives (Østhagen 2015 & Wieslander 2019). Further, all practical civilian and military cooperation under the NATO-Russian Council (NRC) was cancelled after the annexation. However, since 2016, NRC has been conducting several meetings. But these meetings are seen as "channels of communication" rather than cooperative efforts in practical military matters (NATO 2019). Also, the relationship between the two military sides is not only frosty, but also hostile. During Trident

Juncture 18, Russia allegedly conducted GPS-signal jamming in the northern parts of Finland and Norway and announced that they would execute missile test in the basin of the Norwegian Sea during the NATO-led exercise (Boulègue 2019: 9).

2.4 Previous research's accounts on governance in the Arctic

In 2008, when the United States Geological Survey (USGS 2008) released their survey over the potential richness of petroleum resources within the Arctic, some academic voices were raised that warned for an Arctic "race for resources" between states (Hubert 2010 & Borgerson 2008). This race would lead to confrontation and conflict over disputed territories between states in the Arctic. In 2008, Scott G. Borgerson predicted the coming of anarchy in the Arctic and that the Arctic states would "grab as much territory as possible" if the USA did not take a greater responsibility in the region (2008, 73). However, since 2008, Norway and Russia have ended a 40-year old maritime border dispute bilaterally (Harding 2010) and the member states of the AC have continued to cooperate on the issues mentioned in the Ottawa Declarations. As a consequence, Borgerson even reevaluated his assessment of the anarchic Arctic. Borgerson argued that "[a] shared interest in profit has trumped the instinct to compete over territory" in the Arctic (Borgerson 2013: 77). Further, Borgerson argued that the Arctic as a region is peaceful and that this is due to most of the states surrounding the region having democratic governments (2013: 77). Even after the the Russian annexation of Crimea, cooperation within the AC has continued between Russia and the rest of the Western Arctic states.

In the more recent previous research, the Arctic is often described as a stable and friendly region where political cooperation, at least to some extent, is unaffected from the deteriorating relations between Russia and the West (Heininen 2016: 5-7, Chater 2016, Byers 2017: 394-395, Nord 2016b: 150-151 & Engstrand 2018: 79). Lassi Heininen, for example, argues that a robust and peaceful Arctic is of such importance for the Arctic actors, that a stability has been achieved within the region that is resilient to conflicts. Further, Sara Engstrand argues that the Arctic states have come to embrace the very idea of an Arctic zone of peace, separated from the rest of the world. Much of this research puts focus on the AC and its role in providing a forum for governance in the Arctic.

2.5 Research aim and question

Drawing on the review about the governance in the Arctic, it can be concluded that the region is divided when it comes to governance. In recent years, the AC has successfully established cooperation between the Arctic states, which the reached agreements on governance for issues such as environmental protection and sustainable development testify. However, recently there has also been setbacks. Despite the cooperation in the AC, there also exists a division between the Arctic states when it comes military matters, with Russia on one side and NATO+2 on the other. However, the more recent previous research on Arctic governance that is reviewed above very often depicts the Arctic as an exceptional and peaceful region. Much of the research mostly focuses on the successes of the AC and its progress towards becoming an international organisation that provides governance on environmental and sustainable developments in the Arctic.

By highlighting and emphasising the progress made in the AC, despite the overall international deteriorating interstate relations between the Arctic states, it is easy to conclude that the cooperation between the Arctic states in the Arctic is in some sense exceptional and peaceful. However, the cancelled, post-Crimea and not-all-inclusive military cooperations speak of a division between the Arctic states into two sides, the NATO+2 side and the Russian side. When these two sides are recognised and accentuated, it is hard to perceive the Arctic as a zone embedded in peace and resistant to conflict. Rather, the political developments when it comes to military matters seem problematic, since there are military activities dividing the Arctic states into two sides but no forums discussing these issues within the region (except the informative dialogues between Russia and NATO in the NRC). Further, the military cooperation in the Arctic was not at all isolated from the deteriorating relationship between the West and Russia after the annexation of Crimea. The conclusion that the Arctic is a zone of peace, cooperation and exceptionalism can therefore be questioned. On closer examination, the previous research on international Arctic governance seems to be unable to take the testimonies which speak against the depictions of the Arctic as a zone of peace, cooperation and exceptionalism seriously into account. How come the mentioned research on international Arctic governance has failed to acknowledge these bifurcated political processes of cooperation and conflict in the Arctic?

Elana Wilson Rowe discusses the sub-disciplinary battles within international relations, and how it has also infected the research on governance and international politics in the Arctic (2020). On one side of this academic battle is the realist paradigm, and on the other side, the liberal paradigm. The realist paradigm tends to focus on the testimonies for future conflict and states'

increased awareness of national security interests in the Arctic, while the liberal paradigm tends to focus on the prospects for cooperation and institution building in the region. This discussion can explain why the simultaneously bifurcated political processes of cooperation and conflict in the Arctic have not been recognised in previous research. By this academic divide, scholars have either wanted to argue that the Arctic states seek cooperation, or that they increasingly focus on safeguarding their own national interests at the expense of good relations with the other Arctic states. Commitment to one's own paradigm has in its turn made the scholars unable to provide a more complex description on Arctic international politics, since states are either constructed as units striving for cooperation or safeguarding their own national interest at all costs.

In the last decades, the academic focus on international Arctic governance has been dominated by the realist and liberal approach, with the recent previous research mentioned above being more inclined to the liberal approach. The Arctic has been described as a region unaffected by deteriorating conflict elsewhere since the Arctic states have been more focused on building cooperation through institution than, for example, balance-of-power. This liberal bias has made the previous research on international Arctic governance less able to also provide more nuanced accounts of cooperation and conflict in the region since the liberal approach is a theory focused upon providing general explanations on cooperation and conflict. As was mentioned above, general descriptions of the Arctic as peaceful and exceptional has been provided by previous research despite the seemingly looming conflicts in the region. The aim of this thesis is therefore to suggest an *inside* theoretical perspective which can provide more nuances and a deeper understanding about cooperation and conflict in the Arctic. By doing so it also seeks to direct a critique against previous research for being exclusively occupied with the general theory of liberalism.

International relations theory can be separated into two different camps. On one side are the outside theories which aim to provide general explanations about international relations, often by providing structural accounts about the international system and how it affects the behaviour of states. The liberal approach can be categorised under the outside explanations. On the other side are the inside theories, which instead focus on the insides of states. By doing so, the inside perspectives can often provide more nuanced accounts and highlight particularities of state behaviour since they are often occupied with studying beliefs, motivations and perceptions of state leaders to deepen our understanding of international relations, rather than providing general explanations or predicting the future (Herrmann 2013: 1-3). In this division, a very important implication for the aim of this thesis is embedded. Since I aim to criticise the exclusive bias towards liberal assumption (considered to be

an outside theory) in the previous research by suggesting an inside theory, two different theories with different uses are dealt with in this thesis.

Hence, I want to make clear that I am not criticising the liberal approach as a theory, useful to explain generalities. The aim of the outside theory of liberal approach *is* to provide general explanations about cooperation or conflict and why states engage in either of these. However, the liberal bias in previous research has led to an extensive focus on providing general explanations of the Arctic, while the testimonies of particularities have remained unaccounted for. Thus, the criticism is not directed towards the liberal approach - it is rather directed towards the failure to balance general theory together with inside theories in the research on international Arctic governance. The inclusion of inside theory is believed to be important since it could help future research to also highlight particularities which deviate from the general explanations about cooperation and conflict in the Arctic, such as the testimonies of a potential looming conflict in the region.

The theoretical perspective suggested in this thesis draws upon Boulding's insights on national images. The question which will guide the research will be: How come the Arctic states have simultaneously chosen to engage in cooperation on some issues, while chosen to disengage from cooperation on other issues? For example, why have the Arctic states chosen to continue cooperation on much of the issues discussed inside the AC, while choosing to keep all cooperation on military issues on hold and not engaging in any new ones since the Russian annexation of Crimea?

Providing an answer to this question by drawing on Boulding's theory on national images is believed to potentially show what insights can be made about cooperation and conflict in international Arctic governance by using a theory which aims to provide nuance and deeper understanding, instead of general explanations. This answer will in turn reflect back on the criticism directed toward the previous research if it is proven that the inside theory of national images can indeed provide new knowledge and insights about international Arctic governance that previous research has failed to do since they have mostly been occupied with the outside, and general, theory of liberalism. If national images are proven to be useful to highlight new insights, it should be included in the future research on international Arctic governance. In the next part of this thesis, a review of Boulding's theoretical insights on national images is presented. Further, it is explained why Boulding's insights on national images are of relevance for the aim of this thesis.

3. Theory

The theoretical perspective that is suggested draws on Boulding's insights on national images. In the first part of this section I will explain the assumptions that Boulding's insights on image theory are based on. This is followed by a discussion on why drawing on Boulding's insights can serve the purpose of this thesis.

3.1 Kenneth Boulding's insights on national images

One of the adherents to the inside approach back in the 1950's was Boulding. Boulding argued that people whose decisions determine the foreign policy of a state do not base their decisions on objective facts, based on reality, about the context. Rather, they base their decisions on their cognitive "image" of the context, since the truth is so complex that our human mind can impossibly understand it as it is. Therefore, high policy makers, as everybody else (including myself), must generalise and simplify the truth through images to be able to form the variables that are used, in turn, to make a decision. Boulding explained this by stating that "[i]t is what we think the world is like, not what it is really like, that determines our behaviour" (Boulding 1959: 120). Hence, the image is understood as the "total cognitive, affective and evaluative structure" of the behavioural unit. Boulding assumed that nations could be described as behavioural units since they could be ascribed a behaviour. The behaviour of a nation, and any other complex organisation, was believed to be determined by decisions made by "decision-makers". Hence, the images of these decision-makers were believed to be of prime importance by Boulding (1959: 120-121).

According to Boulding, the images that are important in international systems are what he called the "national images". The national images are the images nations have of themselves, and the other bodies that constitute the environmental system nations view themselves as being part of. However, since a nation is a complex of all the images of the people that constitute it, Boulding makes a distinction between the powerful and ordinary (Boulding 1959: 121). The powerful are those whose decisions affect the lives of other people, while the ordinary are those whose decisions only affect themselves. Hence, the national images of the powerful can be ascribed a greater relevance since their decisions, that are based on the national images held by them, affect more people. Hereafter, the terminology of decision-makers refers to those who are assumed to be powerful.

An important dimension of the national image, according to Boulding, is that of hostility and friendliness. National images always include some measure of friendliness or hostility of, or towards, other nations (Boulding 1959: 124-125). Since it is argued that images are what inform decision-makers' decisions, the dimension of friendliness or hostility in the national image is assumed to have influence on the decision-maker's decisions. Hence, if nations A's decision-makers image nation B as friendly or hostile will affect the implemented policy of nation A towards B. Hence, decisions taken by nation B can be interpreted differently by nation A if nation B is imaged as friendly or hostile. As Emanuele Castano, Simona Sacchi and Peter Hays Gries point out, if military build up in another nation should be seen as a concern depends on if the nation is seen as an ally or an enemy by one's own nation (2003: 449-450).

Boulding also argues that another important dimension of the national images is that of strength and weakness. This dimension is also believed to have impact on decision-makers' decisions. For example, if a nation is imaged to be hostile by a decision-maker, but not strong, it may be handled as a lesser threat than a nation which is imaged as both hostile and strong. Boulding understood strength and weakness broadly and mentioned material capabilities as factors determining the strength or weakness of a nation. However, he also mentioned more psychological factors such as willingness to sacrifice (Boulding 1959: 124-125).

3.2 Drawing on Boulding

This thesis draws on the insights that Boulding's theory of national images provide about the importance of images, especially the imaged friendliness, hostility, strength and weakness that nations have of each other. By drawing on these insights, I will be able to argue that the Arctic states' images of each other have an important part for the political development in the region, since Boulding's theoretical insights assume that it is these images that actors base their decisions on. As was discussed previously, I want to suggest a theory that can contribute with nuance and deeper understanding about cooperation and conflict in international Arctic governance, instead of aiming to provide general explanations. Boulding's theoretical framework is believed to potentially be able to do this since, according to this framework, states are not ascribed resolute behaviours that draw them either towards cooperation, or rivalry. Rather, Boulding's theoretical insights assume that states' behaviour depend on how decision-makers image other nations and the international system that they are a part of.

Boulding's insights on national images are further believed to be useful since they do not directly exclude other issues than military interstate conflicts as relevant for the study of international relations. However, Boulding wrote his piece during a time when international relations and security studies were dominated by the realist perspective, and the main goal of these academic fields were to prevent abrupt changes in the balance of power in the international system which would result in military interstate conflicts (Williams 2012: 2-3). Hence, it can be argued that Boulding implicitly meant that his insights on national images were only meant to be used to investigate the risk for interstate military conflict in the international system. It was not until late 20th century that issues such as environmental concerns started to be seen as important threats in the study of international relations and security studies (Williams 2012: 4).

That Boulding's insights on the friendliness/hostility and strength/weakness dimensions in the national image were meant to be used to analyse the risk of interstate military conflict should not be ignored. However, Boulding's framework on national images does not exclude the opportunity to include other issues than interstate military conflict. Since Boulding argues that the national image is the image that the nation has of itself and other *bodies* that constitute its "international environment", or international system (1959: 121), the framework opens up the possibility to include other issues than interstate military conflicts. For example, the nations in the AC view the council as a body that constitutes a part of their environmental system in the Arctic. However, the AC does not normally include military issues on its agenda. Hence, a broader inclusion of different issues is possible by drawing on Boulding's insights.

Since the Arctic states seems to engage in cooperation on issues on the AC's agenda, but disengage from cooperation regarding military issues, it is important that the theoretical framework used in this thesis acknowledges different issues as important in international politics to be able to answer the research question. However, even though Boulding's insights are believed to be useful to fulfil the aim of this thesis, they will need to be modified. According to Boulding, the relationship between nations can be placed on a scale. At one extreme we find stable friendliness, and at the other extreme, we find traditional enemies (strong hostility) (1959: 125). This scale will not do in this thesis.

To answer the research question posed in this thesis I need a theory that can explain why states can engage in both cooperation and conflict simultaneously. Hence, the theory I use needs to acknowledge that states can perceive each other as friendly and hostile simultaneously, in order to provide understanding about how they can engage in cooperation on some issues, while simultaneously disengaging from cooperation on other issues. Hence, such a scale is too simplified

to help me answer the research question. As Boulding himself states, conceptualisations of an international system and how it operates are approximations of the "immensely complex truth" (Boulding 1959: 2). Boulding's spectrum on the characters of intrastate relations can be viewed as such an approximation. Therefore, in this thesis it is assumed that states' high policy makers are able to possess national images of other states that are not cognitively bound to the spectrum that Boulding suggests. Rather, decision-makers can construct national images of other states, that at the same time seem contrary, which operate in a complex coexistence. Thus, it is assumed that decision-makers can image other states as friendly and hostile simultaneously.

4. Data Collection and Methodology

As was discussed previously, the suggested theoretical perspective in this thesis assumes that decision-makers' cognitive images are decisive for the decisions made, especially the images of friendliness, hostility, strength and weakness. Hence, the decision-makers' images are assumed to be decisive for the implicated foreign policy of a state. As part of its aim, this thesis seeks to draw on Boulding's insights on national images to suggest an alternative theoretical perspective that can provide deeper understanding about international Arctic governance. This perspective will be used to analyse statements and speeches from the Arctic states' MFAs to make inquiries about what images they possess of the other Arctic states. All this is done to assess what understanding can be revealed about international Arctic governance by using the theoretical perspective which draws on Boulding's insights. In this part I will discuss the data collection and methodology used in this thesis.

4.1 Selection

As mentioned above, the suggested theoretical framework will be used to analyse statements and speeches made by the Arctic states' MFAs. The reason I have chosen to use the statements and speeches from the Arctic states' MFAs is because they are the state representatives responsible for diplomacy and foreign affairs in general. Since the MFAs are representatives of the government, the terminology of nation will hereafter be replaced by state. This does not mean that the rest of the nation and societal institution in a state does not matter when it comes to foreign policy. As Boulding points out "[t]he powerful are always under some obligations to represent the mass, even

under dictatorial regimes” (Boulding 1959: 121). The ”powerful”, which are the decision-makers, must to some extent have the support of the people that they are supposed to represent.

Hence, the MFAs’ images can be seen as a proposed accumulation of the state’s nation and societal institutions’ interests. The MFA is believed to have an image of who it represents and what the ”who” wants, and combine this image with other foreign policy parameters, that are perceived to be important in international affairs, before making a statement or taking a decision. Thus, the MFAs’ decisions are seen as the results of their cognitive images, based on the accumulation of foreign policy parameters that is imaged as important by the MFAs of the Arctic states. Since the MFA is assumed to have images of who it represents and is responsible for the foreign policy of a state, the suggested theoretical perspective assumes that the individual MFA’s images also have a border implication for the whole state’s foreign policy. Hence, analysing statements and speeches made by them are assumed to reveal a broader understanding about a state’s foreign policy.

In this thesis I will use texts such as speeches and statements made by the Arctic states’ MFAs. The speeches and statements used were all published during 2019, with the oldest published on 14th 2019 February and the newest published on 22nd of August 2019. By choosing a specific time period I will make necessary delimitations in my research. The chosen period in time was selected because statements and speeches made by the MFAs, both within the context of the AC and outside the context of the AC, were regarded important to include. As was discussed in the background of this thesis, the AC provides one context for international Arctic governance, where focus has been on governance through international cooperation on environmental issues and sustainable development. However, if one looks outside the context of the AC, testimonies of conflict between the Arctic states can be noted, often in relation to military issues. Hence, I want to include statements and speeches from the MFAs made both in the context of the AC and outside the context of the AC in order to avoid selecting texts which only provide testimonies of cooperation inside the AC, or conflict related to military issues, in international Arctic governance. By making this division between contexts it was believed such biased accounts of testimonies could be avoided.

However, the AC holds ministerial meetings every two years. During these meetings the MFAs of the Arctic states often gather and give statements about their respective state’s Arctic policy. Focus often lies on the traditional issues on the AC agenda, such as environmental protection, sustainable development, indigenous peoples’ rights and scientific research in the Arctic. Hence, these ministerial meetings are good opportunities to get statements from the MFAs inside the context of the AC. In 2019, the AC held a ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi where all MFAs

where present. The ministerial meeting before that was held in 2017, however, not all MFAs were present in 2017. Since not all MFAs were present in 2017, this thesis was delimited to 2019. This since all MFAs were present and made statements during the ministerial meeting in 2019. However, this time period is also chosen because this thesis wants to research what understanding Boulding's insight in national images can provide about international Arctic governance in a near-present time Arctic context. Since previous research seems to have been unable to account for testimonies of conflict in the past, this thesis wants to investigate if there are any testimonies of conflict in the near-present time Arctic context.

Some of these speeches and statements were made in different contexts. However, they all share, and were selected based upon, some criteria. First, they were made by one of the Arctic states' MFAs. Since there are eight Arctic states, speeches and statements by eight Arctic MFAs were selected. In total, 15 texts were analysed. Second, they all contained statements made by a MFA about one or more Arctic states. This criterion is important since I will analyse how these statements depict the other Arctic states by drawing on Boulding's insights on national images. Thirdly, as was discussed above, all speeches and statements were made during 2019. Finding texts that fulfilled these criteria and that were made in the context of the AC was easy since the AC publish all statements made during the ministerial meetings online on their website.

However, no speech or statement made by the Danish MFA from outside the context of the AC that fulfilled these criteria was found. One possible reason for why no such text was found may have to do with the criticism that has been directed towards the Danish government from members of the Danish national assembly. They accuse the Danish government of ignoring certain issues in the Arctic that are not normally included on the AC's agenda (McGwin 2018). However, texts that fulfill all these criteria made by all the other Arctic states' MFAs outside the context of the AC were found. Another important note is that each MFA's two texts, the one from inside the AC context and the one from outside the AC context, were made by the same individual. This does not, however, apply to the Danish MFA since no text from outside the AC context was found. Before discussing the method used to analyse the statements and speeches by the MFAs, a short clarification of titles must be made. All Arctic states have ministers in charge of foreign affairs, except the USA since they have a secretary of state which is responsible for foreign affairs. However, in order to avoid complications, the USA's secretary of state is included in the category of MFAs when all Arctic states' officials and ministers responsible for foreign affairs are collectively mentioned.

4.2 Predicate analysis and national images

Since this thesis will study the images of the MFAs, I will need a method that enables the inquiry of cognitive images. The discursive method is believed to allow such inquiry. By using a discursive method I will be able to interpret beyond what is said in the speeches and statements from the MFAs. I will hereafter refer to these speeches and statements as the selected texts. Jennifer Milliken states that "discourses operate as background capacities for persons to differentiate and identify things, giving them taken-for-granted qualities and attributes, and relating them to other objects" (Milliken 1999: 231). She further explains that discourses are not socially independent entities, but are actualised through the use of modes of significations, such as language practises (ibid). Therefore, the discursive method provides me with the opportunity to interpret the discourse that the selected texts are produced in by studying the language used, and by doing this, make inquires on how the Arctic states' MFAs image the other Arctic states. Since the MFAs' national images are part of the discourse they and the selected texts were produced in, interpreting the selected texts will enable the inquiry of the national images of the MFAs. However, does my theoretical framework and my chosen methodology fit?

Theoretical insights on discourse are closely related to discourse analysis as a method. Hence, when using discourse analysis as a method it is important to use a theoretical framework that suits the method. Boulding's theoretical insights are believed to fit the discursive method used in this thesis since they share some basic ontological assumptions with discursive approaches. Firstly, both Boulding and the discursive approach share the constructivist ontological assumption that our understanding of the social reality is not based on the external reality (Milliken 1999: 229). Rather, people socially construct the meaning of things. Secondly, since the social reality is dependent on how people construct the meaning of things, human action and practice are produced by the construction of meaning. We (people) act upon the world based on constructed meanings, rather than essential attributes external from our own construction of meaning. Because the discursive approach and Boulding's theoretical insights share these basic ontological assumptions, it is believed that the theory and method used in this thesis will fit together.

The particular discursive method that will be used in my analysis is predicate analysis. The predicate analysis is a suitable method for analysing language practices in texts such as diplomatic documents, speeches, transcripts and interviews which are the commonly used material in international relations discourse analysis. Predicate analysis focuses on the verbs, adverbs and adjectives that are attached to nouns (Milliken 1999, 232). By studying the language practise this

way, one can make inquiries about how another state is constructed by the creator of the text. For example, if a MFA describes another state (noun) as aggressive (adjective) it will construct the state as a particular type of state. By being ascribed as an aggressive state, it is implied that the state in question is emotionally driven. Therefore, by using predicate analysis, I will be able to interpret how the Arctic states' MFAs image the other Arctic states by interpreting the meaning of the words used in relation to the other Arctic states. I will specifically focus on verbs, adverbs and adjectives that the MFAs use in relation to the other Arctic states that express images of the other Arctic states as friendly, hostile, strong and/or weak. This selection of characteristics is chosen by drawing on Boulding's insights on the national image. As discussed in the theory part, Boulding understands the friendliness, hostility, strength and weakness images as important features of the national images.

The concepts of friendliness, hostility, strength and weakness will be understood broadly in my analysis and will be adapted to fit the aim of this thesis. Since the analysis will focus on national images in international Arctic governance, the concepts have been adapted to fit this context of international politics. Hence, friendliness is understood as a relationship a state has to one or more states which includes a sense of shared interests or characteristics from the state involved in the relationship. Hostility, on the opposite, is understood as a relationship a state has to one or more states which includes a sense of mistrust from the state involved in the relationship. The strength and weakness concepts will be understood even more broadly. As Boulding notes, the concept of strength includes many different elements, and some of them are hard to assess (Boulding 1959: 125). However, in this thesis, strength will be understood as having decisive influence or capacity to have impact on an issue or development in international politics. Weakness will be understood as having little or no influence or capacity to have an impact on an issue or development in international politics. So, if the analysis shows that a state images another state with mistrust, it will be described as a hostility image against the mistrusted state. Further, if the same state also images the hostile state as having influence or capability to have an impact on issues or developments in international Arctic governance, it will be described as a strength image.

Since the theory and method used in this thesis assume that discourse and the images produced inside the discourses are decisive for human action, the MFAs' constructions of the other Arctic states are believed to be decisive for the decisions made in foreign policy. So, if a MFA expresses a hostility image of another state, the hostility image, in turn, will be assumed to have impact for what foreign policy the MFA's state practises toward the state imaged as hostile. A friendliness image is assumed to enable the practise of a foreign policy more focused on cooperation and peaceful dialogue towards the state or states imaged as friendly. Hostility images

are assumed to have constraints on the possibility to practise a cooperative-focused foreign policy towards the state or states imaged as hostile. Rather, a confrontative and conflictual foreign policy is expected from the MFA's state if the MFA expresses a hostility image towards a state or states. The strength and weakness images are believed to be useful to provide a deeper understanding about the friendliness and hostility images. A state may image another state with mistrust (hostility image), but not a threat since it is not imaged to possess enough strength to constitute a potential threat. Hence, the strength and weakness images provide nuance to the friendliness and hostility images.

4.3 Limits with the method

Discourse analysis is always selective; some parts of the text analysed are highlighted, seen as relevant and questioned, while other parts are ignored. Hence, there is no such thing as a "complete", "objective" or fully analysed text (Fairclough 2003: 14). Texts can be measured by counting the words used in them, the average length of the sentences, etc. However, by just counting and measuring words and the structure of a text, we can only conclude on numbers that do not mean that much if we do not interpret them. Hence, if we want to say more about the text and its meaning in a context, we need to *interpret* it.

An often mentioned problem by those who criticise interpretive research is that the conclusion's scientific meaning can be questioned since it is the researcher's individual interpretations that the conclusions are based upon. If the research can be conducted again with the same method but with another researcher, and conclude on another result, can its scientific conclusion be seen as meaningful? Is social research not reduced to arbitrary interpretations of the world if we accept this kind of method? However, the aim of this research is not to provide a conclusion that is based on "objective facts", independent of who is conducting the research. The research conducted in this thesis is interpretive research. This means that the research conducted in this thesis is focused on understanding contextualised meaning-making (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012: 91). Hence, finding "objective facts", independent of the specific meaning-making in a context, and generalisable over different contexts, is not what is anticipated with the research conducted in this thesis. Such an enterprise is also seen as problematic from the ontological assumption which the research in this thesis is based upon, since the meaning of social reality is assumed to be constructed, and not derived from an external reality which is inter-contextual.

The aim is to suggest an alternative theoretical perspective, based on Boulding's insights on national images, that can potentially highlight particularities and provide a deeper understanding

than the previous research on cooperation and conflict in international Arctic governance has been able to. Boulding's insights on national images suggest that research on international relations focuses on the images held by the decision-makers. Since it would be a hard task making any meaningful inquiry about decision-makers cognitive images by operationalising concepts into variables to be measured, an interpretive approach was selected. Hence, the results of this thesis are not going to provide any broad and generalisable insights, and that is not the point either. Instead, the results should be seen as a contribution of a perspective which can provide understanding in a debate about international Arctic governance, limited to the specific context analysed in this thesis. Also, the research question posed in this thesis will not be provided with an answer which explains how come the Arctic states simultaneously choose to engage in cooperation on some issues, while choosing to disengage from cooperation on other issues. Rather, the answer to the research question will hopefully provide a deeper understanding about cooperation and conflict in the Arctic. Hence, the answer to the research question will make no claim of explaining the answer to the question, beyond the context analysed.

The division between the inside/outside context of the AC is not seen as a transparent division between two different contexts. By making such a division one risks making the mistake of only focusing on the testimonies which describe the AC as a council where only cooperation and peaceful dialogue prevails. Still, this was seen as a useful division to make in order to collect empirical material which would reflect both testimonies of cooperation and conflict. Since the AC actually is a context focused on the issues which the Arctic states seem to agree and cooperate on, while excluding the military issue which they seem to disagree on, the division between inside/outside the AC was used to collect empirical material which would not only reflect testimonies of cooperation or conflict.

Another shortcoming with this thesis is the very limited empirical material. This in combination with the fact that only secondary sources are used as material is a weakness since one can question what can really be said about international Arctic governance by simply analysing this material. For example, can the national images of the MFAs be accurately traced by only focusing on such a small quantity of secondary sources? Would not primary sources, such as interviews for example, strengthen the accuracy of the national images traced in this thesis? Further, the analysis is only based on one case. This increases the risk of selection bias. By including more cases, the risk of selection bias could have been avoided. However, because of the need to make necessary delimitations, I settled with one case.

Another shortcoming with the selected material is the lack of any empirical data on the actual behaviour and actions of the Arctic states in practice. In this thesis it is only assumed, based on theoretical assumptions, that national images construct practice. However, if such data would have been included, the thesis could have more strongly connected the expressed national images with the actual practice of the Arctic states. All of this implies that the results of the analysis should be viewed with modesty and vigilance. The results are not going to provide any robust and generalisable insights about national images' meaning in the Arctic. However, as has already been remarked, this thesis only suggests a theoretical perspective which could potentially contribute with nuances and deeper understandings in a field of previous research which is believed to have been exclusively occupied with general explanations.

5. Analysis

In this part of the thesis I interpret the Arctic states' MFAs' images of the other Arctic states. I will focus on descriptions which express friendliness images, hostility images, strength images and weakness images of the other Arctic states. Since it is assumed that the practice of foreign policy is constituted by the national images held by the MFAs, these images are studied to provide understanding about international Arctic governance in a near-present context. This part starts off by analysing the statements made by the MFAs during the ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi 2019. After this part, the selected speeches and statements made outside the context of the AC will be analysed. This is done to make inquiries about the images held by the MFAs. This is followed by a discussion about the implications of the images on international Arctic governance.

5.1 Rovaniemi ministerial meeting 2019

Inside the context of the AC there seems to be a broadly shared friendliness image between the MFAs. All MFAs, in the context of the AC's ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi 2019, described themselves and the other Arctic states either as "we", or related to each other as partners (Pompeo 2019a, Freeland 2019a, Guðlaugur 2019a, Søreide 2019a, Samuelsen 2019a, Wallström 2019a, Soini 2019a & Lavrov 2019a). By describing the other Arctic states as "we" the MFAs indicated that there is a similarity and equalness between them. They share something together. Using the word "partner" to describe each other also indicates that something is shared together, since someone involved in a partnership is cooperatively engaged in a joint activity. So, what is it that

brings the Arctic states together? There seems to be a broadly shared strength image of the Arctic between most of the MFAs where the region is depicted as emerging in international politics. The change in the climate is causing challenges in the region, but also opportunities. These emerging challenges and opportunities require cooperation between the Arctic states, since no Arctic state alone possesses the strength to solve them alone. Hence, according to this broadly shared strength image, the Arctic states must cooperate with each other on issues such as environmental protection, sustainable development, the rights of the indigenous people and scientific research in order to face these challenges and opportunities efficiently in the emerging Arctic region.

The USA's secretary of state, Michael Pompeo, also expressed friendliness images and the collective strength image of the other Arctic states during the ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi. However, Pompeo did also give expressions of a hostility image of the Arctic states during the ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi. Pompeo stated:

Collective goals, even when well-intentioned, are not always the answer. They're rendered meaningless, even counterproductive, as soon as one nation fails to comply. Regardless of whether our goal is in place, the United States strives to operate with honesty and transparency. Though we are not signing on to the collective goal for reduction of black carbon, America nonetheless recently reported the largest reduction in black carbon emissions by any Arctic Council state. We are doing our part, and we encourage other states to do the same...(Pompeo 2019a).

The collective goal on black carbon reduction that Pompeo refers to is the unsigned declaration which was discussed in the background section of this thesis. In Rovaniemi 2019, it was the first time ever that the Arctic states failed to sign a new joint declaration during a ministerial meeting. Reportedly, it was because the USA and the rest of the Arctic states could not agree on ambitions and wording on climate change. In this statement, there is a sense of mistrust towards the other Arctic states. By depicting the USA as a truthful partner who fulfils its part of the cooperation and then encouraging the other states to do the same, it is implied that the other states (the rest of the Arctic states) are not operating as decisive and as transparent on the reduction of black carbon emission as the USA. Hence, a sense of mistrust (hostility image) toward the other Arctic states is directed to them. This hostility image is further based upon a strength image of the other Arctic states, since they are imaged to be able to do more for the reduction on black carbon, but are not doing so.

5.2 Outside the Arctic Council

Pompeo was the only one that expressed hostility images of the other Arctic states inside the context of the AC. However, outside the context of the AC, and when questions of military security were in focus, the MFAs were more prone to express hostility images. USA, Canada, Iceland, Sweden, Finland and Norway's MFAs (hereafter referred to as the Western Arctic states' MFAs) all expressed hostility images of Russia by using words like "aggressive" and "unpredictable" in relation to it, or raised questions about Russia's increased military strength in the Arctic (Pompeo 2019b, Freeland 2019b, Guðlaugur 2019b, Wallström 2019b, Soini 2019b & Søreide 2019b). By attaching words like "aggressive", the Western states image Russia as an emotional driven state, whose behaviour easily turns offensive. Attaching "unpredictable" in relation to Russia's behaviour makes Russia appear as a state that cannot be trusted, since it can change its behaviour in an instant and unexpectedly; one must always be on guard when dealing with Russia. By imaging Russia as a growing military power in the Arctic and raising questions about the purpose of Russia's increased military presence, Russia was also imaged as an untrustworthy state. This since Russia is depicted as having a hidden agenda, not well-intentioned, with their military armament in the Arctic.

However, Russia was not only mistrusted (hostility image) by the Western MFAs, but also imaged as a threat by the Western Arctic states' MFAs. The Norwegian and Finish MFAs described Russia's military as something that needed to be monitored since it could potentially constitute a threat to one's own state (Søreide 2019b & Soini 2019b). The Swedish MFA and the USA's secretary of state described Russia as a threat by stating that its activities and behaviour destabilised and posed threats to security orders in Europe and the Arctic (Wallström 2019b & Pompeo 2019b). The Canadian and Icelandic MFAs saw Russia as a threat by implying that NATO needed to cooperate in order to deter and keep Russian aggressive behaviour at bay (Freeland 2019b & Guðlaugur 2019b). This implies that they also share a strength image of Russia, since Russia is imaged to possess the decisive influence and capabilities to pose a threat in international politics. If Russia would have been imaged as weak by the Western Arctic states' MFAs, Russia would not have been imaged to have the capacity to constitute a threat.

However, despite the hostility image of Russia that many of the Western Arctic states' MFAs gave expression for, their hostility image of Russia differed. Sweden, Canada and Finland's MFAs all imaged Russia as hostile by describing Russia as aggressive and unpredictable (Wallström 2019b, Freeland 2019b and Soini 2019b). But they only imaged Russia as hostile in relations with the Eastern European region. The Swedish, Canadian and Finish MFAs all discussed Russia and the

Arctic in the selected texts. However, Russia was only imaged as hostile and a threat (strength image) in the Eastern European region. None of these MFAs expressed images which depicted that Russia's aggressive behaviour in the Eastern European region could reflect on the Arctic as well. Sweden's former MFA (however, MFA in the analysed time period), Margot Wallström, made the clearest distinction between Russia in the Eastern European region and Russia in the Arctic. Wallström first expressed a hostility image of Russia by ascribing Russia an aggressive behaviour in Eastern Europe. However, she then also stated that "At the same time [as Wallström described Russia as aggressive], we ... have contacts and dialogue with Russia.... We need to cooperate where we have common interests." (Wallström 2019b). She continued the statement by mentioning the AC as a forum where cooperation with Russia could be maintained. Russia is here described as a "we" which Sweden shares common interests with in the Arctic. This indicates that Wallström images Russia and Sweden as equals in a sense. Hence, Wallström expressed both a friendliness image of Russia (in the Arctic) and a hostility image of Russia (in the Eastern European region) in the same text.

However, Iceland and Norway's MFAs, together with Pompeo, expressed hostility images of Russia in the Arctic in the texts produced outside the AC context. They discussed Russia's military strength in the Arctic. Iceland's MFA, Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson, stated that:

As others, we recognise Russia's right to safeguard their legitimate security interest in the region [Arctic] with credible defence capabilities. However, the scope, speed and apparent ambition of the Russian military build-up in the Arctic does raise questions (Guðlaugur 2019b).

By first ascribing Russia a legitimate right to have a military defence capability in the Arctic, but then raising questions about Russia's current build-up of military strength in the Arctic, Guðlaugur expresses an image of the Russian military build-up in the Arctic as illegitimate. Further, since Russia's military presence in the Arctic would be legitimate for defensive purposes, but questions are raised over the current military build-up and its ambitions, it is implied that Russia has other goals which are not legitimate or well-intended. Hence, Guðlaugur images Russia's military build-up in the Arctic as potentially hostile, since he mistrusts Russia as not having legitimate goals with their military armament. Norway's MFA, Ine Eriksen Søreide, also imaged Russia as a potential threat in the Arctic. Søreide also viewed Russia as an actor who was in the process of military build-up in the Arctic. She stated:

We are monitoring Russia's military activity in our neighbouring areas closely. What we are seeing is a Russia that has made great strides in its large-scale military modernisation in the north [the Arctic] (Søreide 2019b).

By describing Russia's military activities as something that needs to be monitored in relation to Russia's military armament in the Arctic, Søreide expresses a hostility image towards Russia's activities in the Arctic; Russia's activities cannot go unnoticed. Instead, they must be inspected and traced. Pompeo also expressed a hostility image of Russia in the Arctic. However, his hostility image of Russia in the Arctic expressed the strongest mistrust. Søreide and Guðlaugur constructed Russia's military build-up as suspicious and ill-intended, but did not ascribe Russia an aggressive behaviour in the Arctic. Pompeo did. After accusing Russia of making illegitimate territorial demands in the Arctic, Pompeo stated:

These provocative actions [the illegitimate demands] are part of a pattern of aggressive Russian behavior here in the Arctic. Russia is already leaving snow prints in the form of army boots. ... [W]e know Russian territorial ambitions can turn violent. 13,000 people have been killed due to Russia's ongoing aggressive action in Ukraine (Pompeo 2019b).

Russia is a clearly aggressive state that has showed the world once before in Ukraine that it is ready to use violent means to achieve its goals, and it is indirectly suggested that there is nothing that is keeping Russia from potentially doing so again in the Arctic, since Russia is ascribed an aggressive behaviour in the Arctic as well as in Ukraine. Hence, according to Pompeo's statement, the intention of Russia's military armament should not be trusted being for defensive purposes only.

However, interestingly, even though Søreide and Pompeo imaged Russia as a threat in the Arctic, they also imaged Russia as a partner in the very same text. Søreide stated that "Norway and Russia have a long tradition of cooperation in areas of mutual interest...". She continued by mentioning cooperation between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea, which is part of the Arctic Ocean, as an area of mutual interests. Hence, Søreide also expressed a friendliness image of Russia in the Arctic, since Russia was imaged as a state that Norway shares interests with in the region. Pompeo described the seven Arctic states in addition to the USA as "fellows" in the same text in which he expressed the hostility image of Russia in the Arctic. Since Russia is one of these Arctic states, Pompeo expressed an image where Russia was seen as an associate in positive terms (fellow)

which is involved in the same activity as the USA. However, Russia's MFA, Sergey Lavrov, also expressed hostility images in the texts produced outside the context of the AC. Lavrov stated:

As I have said, we don't see a single issue here [the Arctic] that would require a military solution, not a single topic that demands NATO's attention... I am hoping the spirit of the Arctic Council will prevail in the attitude of the Arctic countries to our relations rather than war games like the recent Trident Juncture 2018, which were aggressively anti-Russia (Lavrov 2019b).

In this statement, Lavrov does not provide a hostility image of any single Arctic states alone. Rather, he provides a hostility image of the constellation of NATO+2 by describing Trident Juncture 18 as a war game and aggressively anti-Russian. Since all Arctic states except Russia participated in Trident Juncture 18 in the constellation of NATO+2, this hostility image partly reflects on all the rest of the Arctic states. By describing Trident Juncture 18 as a war game the exercise is seen as unnecessary and unprofessional; games are conducted for entertainment. The earlier depiction of the Arctic as a region without any military issues needing the attention of NATO also strengthens the image of the military exercise as unprofessional and unnecessary. The military exercise is imaged to be conducted because of some other reason than any real military concern shared by the members of the NATO+2 constellation. The only reason, Lavrov suggests, is that Trident Juncture was aggressively anti-Russian. This implies that the only meaning of the exercise was to forcefully signal opposition against Russia. Why they would do so is unclear. Hence, the NATO+2 constellation's activities in the Arctic is imaged with mistrust by Lavrov, since they are only conducted to oppose and intimidate Russia.

Lavrov also expresses a strength image of the NATO+2 constellation, since its engagement in the region is imaged to be able to have influence the spirit inside the AC by changing the attitude of the Arctic states. Later in Lavrov's statement, he explains that it is a spirit of teamwork which is shared in the AC. If the Arctic states (except Russia) continue to engage in the constellation of NATO+2, their attitude risks changing into a more anti-Russian one, since Lavrov images that the constellation operates on such motives in the Arctic. However, there is also a friendliness image in Lavrov's statement; that when the Arctic states engage in the AC they all share a spirit. Hence, Lavrov images that there is a sense of teamwork around the issues dealt with within the AC, which Russia shares with the rest of the Arctic states.

5.3 Implications of the national images

In this part I summarise the analysis and discuss its potential implication for international Arctic governance. The reader should be reminded that the national images of the MFAs are believed to be decisive for the practice of foreign policy of the state they represent. Hence, the MFA's images will now be assumed to have a broader implication for the foreign policy of the whole state that they represent. Also, by discussing the implications of these national images, understanding will also be provided about international Arctic governance.

The analysis shows that there is a difference in the MFAs' images between the inside and outside context of the AC. Inside the AC, the MFAs mostly expressed friendliness images of each other, while outside the context of the AC, and in relation to military issues, the MFAs were more prone to express hostility images of each other. The broadly shared friendliness image inside the AC is related to a strength image where the Arctic states image that none of them alone possesses enough influence or capabilities to handle challenges and opportunities that the emerging Arctic region poses. Hence, these images can provide understanding about why the Arctic states cooperate in the AC. They do so because they are partners out of necessity. If these images were to prevail inside the AC, it is assumed that cooperation is likely to continue in the AC, since these images enable a cooperative focused foreign policy.

However, there was also hostility images inside the AC context. The USA's secretary of state's hostility image of the other Arctic states regarding the cooperation on reduction of black carbon suggests that the USA has practised a more restrained foreign policy on environmental cooperation. This also provides understanding about why the USA and the rest of the Arctic states could not agree on a joint declaration during the ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi 2019. Since Pompeo images the other Arctic states with mistrust, since they are believed to be able do more to reduce emission of black carbon but are not doing so, the USA saw it as meaningless to cooperate with the Arctic states on this issue. If these images were to prevail, the future possibility of USA's engagement in Arctic cooperation on issues related to reduction of emission (to reduce the impacts of climate change) could be restrained. This since the USA would then continue to practise a foreign policy which would focus more on conflicts over who is doing the most to reduce their emission.

Outside the AC context and in relation to military issues, all Western Arctic states' MFAs expressed hostility images of Russia, and Russia's MFA, in return, expressed hostility images of the NATO+2 constellation. Sweden, Finland and Canada's MFAs did not express an image of Russia as

hostile and capable of constituting a threat in the Arctic. However, in relations to other regions, such images were expressed. Hence, these MFAs only seem to image Russia as a friend in the Arctic. However, they only did so in relation to the AC and the issues on its agenda. Therefore, these MFAs did not seem to acknowledge any other state's or states' military or military activities in the region as an issues which required attention. This, in turn, suggests that these MFAs' states only focus on the issues on the AC's agenda in their Arctic foreign policy.

However, the USA, Norway and Iceland's MFAs imaged Russia with mistrust and saw it as capable of constituting a threat in the Arctic. These images provide understanding about why the Arctic states have not chosen to resume an all-inclusive military cooperation with each other in a near-present Arctic context. Since Iceland, USA and Norway viewed Russia as a problem in the Arctic when it came to military issues, rather than a reliable partner to govern these issues with, a foreign policy from these states seeking deeper cooperation on military issues with Russia was out of option. Hence, the foreign policy of these states has been to confront Russia regarding their military armament in the Arctic, since they imaged it with mistrust and ill-intent.

However, Lavrov imaged the constellation of NATO+2's engagement in the Arctic as the problem when it comes to military issues. He imaged the constellation's engagement in the Arctic with mistrust and as a threat. This, in turn, provides a further understanding for why no inclusive military cooperation has been established in a near-present Arctic context. Since all the Arctic states except Russia are part of the constellation, Lavrov's hostility image of NATO+2 partly reflects the other Arctic states. Since this constellation has been an important framework for the Western Arctic states' joint cooperation on military issues in the Arctic in recent years, and Russia views this constellation with mistrust, Russia has practised a foreign policy which condemns and confronts the Western Arctic states' military engagement in the Arctic. This while practising a foreign policy within the AC focused upon further cooperation on the issues on the AC's agenda, since under this context, the other Arctic states have been imaged as friends.

6. Conclusion and discussion

This thesis set out to answer the following research question: How come the Arctic states have simultaneously chosen to engage in cooperation on some issues, while chosen to disengage from cooperation on other issues? To reconnect with the thesis' aim and research question, the inside theoretical perspective of national images suggested proved that it could *potentially* highlight nuances regarding conflict and cooperation in international Arctic governance. I state potentially

because of the shortcomings regarding the empirical material in this thesis. I will return to this in a moment. Examples of the highlighted nuances are the differing images of hostility and friendliness depending on issues and contexts, and the different hostility images of Russia in the Arctic between the Western states (with Canada, Finland and Sweden on one side, and USA, Norway and Iceland on the other). This in turn reflects back on the research question since national images, potentially, can provide understanding about why the Arctic states have cooperated on some issues, while failing to cooperate on other issues. The suggested answer, drawing on the results, is because they perceive each other differently depending on the issues discussed and in which context.

Further, the aim of the thesis (which was to suggest an inside theoretical framework in order to criticise previous research's bias toward the liberal approach's general explanations) was also partly achieved. By showing that the inside theory of national images can potentially provide understanding and nuances about international Arctic governance, a critique can be directed towards previous research's bias toward the general theory of liberalism. Since national images can potentially bring about new nuanced revelations about international Arctic governance it should at least be considered a relevant theory of choice to be included in further research on international Arctic governance. This would be important since then, future research could also account for particular testimonies, such as the testimonies of looming conflicts in the region. Here, the reader is reminded that it is not the liberal theory *per se* that the critique is directed towards. It is the liberal bias in previous research and the following exclusion of inside theories in research on international Arctic governance that is criticised.

However, as was discussed before, the selected material is very small and only consists of secondary sources. Also, only one case is drawn upon. These shortcomings hugely affect the potential implications of this thesis' results. No far-reaching conclusions should be made based on this research, and the critique against the liberal bias is modest since the results only suggest that national images can potentially provide nuances and deeper insights about cooperation and conflict in the Arctic. Hence, to state that the theory of national images can increase understanding and contribute to nuances about conflict and cooperation in the Arctic based on the results of this thesis would be wrong. However, to more strongly argue for the inclusion of the inside theory of national images and direct criticism toward the liberal bias in previous research, further research on national images would be needed. This research should include a larger quantity of sources, including primary sources and more cases, and focus on tracing the connection between the expressed national images and the actual practice of foreign policy. By successfully tracing this connection

one could argue more strongly that the national images actually constitute the practice of foreign policy.

As was discussed in the method part, when interpreting texts some questions are asked about the texts, while some questions are dismissed. Also, certain aspects of the texts are highlighted while other aspects are ignored. Hence, I think it is important to remark, once again, that a text is never fully interpreted. For example, there were interesting statements in some of the texts about the emerging presence of China as an important actor in the Arctic. Since this thesis was delimited to the eight Arctic states, the statements made on China's emerging role in the Arctic in the selected texts were left out in the analysis. This is just one example of interesting aspects in the selected texts that were left out in the research conducted in this thesis, and surely there are more.

6.1 Further research

Drawing on the research conducted in this thesis, potential further research is here discussed before the thesis is concluded. First, it would be interesting to study the images of the Arctic states' MFAs over a longer period of time. Since this thesis needed to make delimitations, the scope of the thesis was limited to 2019. By extending the scope of the thesis, the MFAs' images over time could be studied. It would be interesting to see if the theoretical perspective suggested in this thesis could bring any insights if there has been hostility and conflict in the AC further back in time. Besides, by extending the scope of the research, changes or permanence of the Arctic states' national images could be studied over time. For example, do national images change when states change their MFA? Increasing the scope of the thesis could also increase the chances of finding a text produced by a Danish MFA where statements are made about Arctic governance outside the context of the AC.

In this thesis, it was assumed that the images of the MFA were believed to have a broader implication for the foreign policy of that state. Even though the MFA is highly responsible for the foreign policy of its state, the assumption that conclusions about a whole state's foreign policy can be made by only studying the MFA's image should be further researched. There are other decision-makers which participate in the arrangement and administration of a state's foreign policy, whose images can have implications for the practise of foreign policy. Hence, further research should include the images of other decision-makers as well, in order to draw a broader understanding about the practise of foreign policy. Based on the understandings provided about the Arctic states' national images in this thesis, it would be interesting to study how come the Arctic states have different images. For example, why do the the NATO+2 partners seem to image Russia differently? Why is it

that the MFAs of USA, Finland and Norway express images of Russia as hostile and a threat in the Arctic, while the Danish, Swedish, Canadian and Finish MFAs only express such images of Russia in Eastern Europe?

At last, further research should seek to provide more understanding about the lack of any governing forum for military issues in the Arctic and its implication. As was understood from the analysis, there seems to be conflicts regarding military activities in the Arctic. How does the lack of an all-inclusive governing forum for military issues in the Arctic affect the relations between the Arctic states in general? What could be expected by a stronger engagement by the constellation of NATO+2 in the region, or a resumed all-inclusive cooperative engagement on military issues? These are just some question which can be posed by drawing on the understandings provided by this thesis.

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