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Security in the Arctic: High Politics in the High North¹

ABSTRACT *International attention on the Arctic, a region shared today by Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States, is increasing, and the region is slowly becoming a ‘hot topic’ in international affairs. In recent years, all Arctic states have published policies and strategies where they outline their objectives and goals. In this paper, these documents are analysed following a broadened approach to security that takes into consideration state-centred or traditional (that is, politico-military and politico-economic) as well as non-traditional, comprehensive or rights-based (human, societal, environmental and socioeconomic) aspects of security. This non-traditional approach, which is increasingly being addressed in some Arctic policies and strategies, switches the focus of attention from state to non-state actors, and favours the inclusion in the political agenda of otherwise often understated topics.*

KEYWORDS *Arctic, policies, strategies, security, critical security*

1. Overview: The political relevance of the Arctic

Today, and as it was during the time of the great polar explorations of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Arctic is the stuff of legends. A region that can be defined as the territory lying north of the Arctic Circle (roughly 66 degrees north of the Equator), the Arctic is often seen as wild, frozen, untamed, pristine, of difficult access and for most of it, cut off from the rest of the world. Yes, some Arctic areas and cities are as integrated and embedded in the world system as any other place, or even more than many places; but at the same time, large Arctic areas remain in the global periphery (often side-by-side with a global economic hub linked

to the Southern capitals of the states to which the region belongs). And the region, rich in natural strategic resources, has become the centre of attention of numerous analyses in diverse disciplines such as international relations, geopolitics, economics, sustainable development, and regional and sub-regional extractive industries’ operations and impact.

The Arctic is characterised by its remoteness, low population density, harsh environment, vast natural areas, a rather high presence of indigenous peoples, and an increasing international attention. Geographically, it is mostly an ocean covered in sea ice surrounded by land (unlike the Antarctic, which is a continent surrounded by an ocean). It is also a region divided amongst some of the most powerful and developed countries in the world: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. Slowly, the region is becoming a ‘hot topic’ in international affairs, even being labelled as a new *Great Game*, a sort of race or *Cold Rush* (Bourne 2016) for natural resources based on a zero-sum game. Both the media and research institutions often portray the Arctic as the new frontier for economic competition, conflict for ownership over territory and rich natural resources, and even potential geopolitical instability. Notwithstanding, the Arctic holds vast proven and estimated reserves of hydrocarbons and important minerals as well as biological natural resources. At the same time, existing sovereignty claims over different Arctic territories are disputed, thus increasing the potential for instability and conflict. In economic terms, the Arctic may be the *next frontier* in the long history of human search for natural resources; it also holds resources on which we have grown dependent, such as oil, gas or rare earths. And in political terms, the region is sometimes depicted as once again a Cold War-like theatre for competition between the US and its NATO allies against Russia. Large portions of the Arctic Ocean have been claimed by Russia and other countries, which, together with an increased military presence led by Russia (Dianu 2016), have fuelled the conflict narratives. Yet it is important to know what the existing claims are and how these disputes are expected to be resolved in order to understand the Arctic realities, as well as to soften the competitive and even bellicose narratives found in the media and elsewhere. Equally, it is also important to understand how the Arctic is governed: this is an ocean where the Law of the Sea applies, surrounded by landmasses divided among eight sovereign states (Canada, Denmark

[through Greenland], Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States [although Finland and Sweden do not have direct access to the Arctic Ocean]). And key to making sense of the political and economic relevance of the Arctic are the national policy and strategy documents of the Arctic countries; documents in which the declared intentions of the Arctic states towards the region as well as one another are collected.

High politics in the High North has been dominated by a security discourse characterised by a traditional approach where the state and national (security) interests are at the core. In political terms, and borrowing Wallerstein's world-systems theory (1974, 1982), the Arctic could be still considered, in the broader sense, as a periphery region. However, although in recent years attention on the Arctic is increasing, the absence of (high or low level) conflicts, the relatively high levels of cooperation, and the slowdown of economic activities linked to a dramatic fall in the price of hydrocarbons, together with other factors, have all resulted in a slower than expected economic development and transition process of the region from the periphery to the core. This perception of course changes if we focus on the point of view of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) Canada, Russia or the United States. Nevertheless, at the core of this perception it is possible to find a traditional approach to security where politico-military and politico-economic matters are dominant. Traditional military and political security, as well as related topics (the so-called traditional security) have been central topics when analysing high politics in the High North. This approach is fuelled by the growing military presence in the Arctic, together with the increasing interest of non-Arctic powers (e.g., China, the United Kingdom, Germany, India or even the EU, which published its Arctic policy in early 2016).

In the background of this traditional perspective we find the Arctic environment, and the Northerners, the four million people who inhabit the Arctic, and of whom about ten percent are indigenous peoples (Arctic Council/Stefansson Arctic Institute 2004; United Nations 2009; Hossain et al. 2016b). The Northerners and their environment are affected by the results of state and international policies and decisions taken elsewhere. A new approach that takes into consideration a widened understanding of security is thus needed for a more complete analysis of the Arctic reality. Some aspects of the non-traditional or comprehensive approach, such as

environmental security, are difficult to ignore, and have been included in the existing policies and strategies. In this regard, the effect of climate change is most visible in the Arctic, where, for example, animal migration patterns are being affected (which in turn affect the lifestyle of the human populations depending on them), records of low ice sheet extension are broken year after year, and average temperatures are increasing. Still, other aspects of what is called comprehensive or non-traditional security are often ignored, including human, societal, environmental or socio-economic security.

This article will offer a short analysis of the economic and political relevance of the Arctic, as well as the governing mechanisms currently in place, and in particular the Law of the Sea. It will also give an overview of what is understood as traditional and non-traditional security. In a nutshell, a traditional or state-based approach considers security solely in military and perhaps, but not necessarily, in macroeconomic terms. Yet a non-traditional or rights-based approach to security offers a new understanding of both referent objects (allowing for a broadening of the topics can be seen and addressed as security-related, thus moving these matters to the top of the political agenda) and securitising agents (allowing for local indigenous and non-indigenous communities to become driven agents on security matters, thus becoming equal agents *vis-à-vis* the state and state-driven institutions). The implications of this approach for the Arctic populations (indigenous and non-indigenous alike) are twofold. First, the broadening of the number and scope of securitising agents allows for the inclusion in the political discourse and debate of the threats to security perceived by local populations, making the security discussion in the Arctic more relevant to its inhabitants; second, and as a result of the first point, these additional security concerns (as perceived by local non-state actors) have a better chance of being addressed by the state actors and therefore become actionable policies. In a region where socioeconomic challenges are well-known and current and projected economic development is driven by extractive industries, a non-traditional understanding of security focussing on the needs and legitimate interests as well as the perceived threats to security of local populations may bring up these issues for discussion at the national, regional and even international levels, something that can be of great relevance to indigenous peoples. Thus, the paper

will also offer a brief review of the existing national policies and strategies for the Arctic in terms of traditional and non-traditional security. Generally speaking, some non-traditional elements of security, mainly related to environmental and socioeconomic security, can be found in these documents, although they are normally subject to the traditional aspects of security. However, other elements of the non-traditional approach to security, such as societal or human security, are still weak, particularly when referring to indigenous peoples.

2. Traditional and non-traditional approaches to security

Talking about security challenges in the Arctic may seem odd. If one is used to a traditional narrative of security, that is, a state-centred or state-driven Realist and partly Liberal approach to security, the debate about security in the Arctic is diluted down to power, military strength, sovereignty and perhaps economic power. Yet, any educated Arctic observer is aware that the region experiences many challenges and potential threats linked to, for instance, climate change or rapid industrialisation. It is in these areas where a non-traditional or comprehensive approach to security, an approach linked to theoretical developments connected to Constructivism and other critical approaches to security, offers a new epistemological approach as well as effective methodological tools to identify and address non-traditional threats to security. A non-traditional approach is, by nature, inclusive, and will not be limited to state or state-centred actors. On the contrary, and partly due to its rights-based foundations, it will cover the issues most relevant to the Northerners; it can also help establish a more inclusive and dialogue-based environment for policy makers (Hossain et al. 2016a).

Born in the aftermath of the Second World War, security studies have focussed on how referent objects (what is securitised) are threatened and/or securitised by the securitising agents (those who securitise). For a traditional approach (e.g., classic Realism – and many of the assumptions of classic Liberalism), the state is both the referent object as well as the securitising agent. Nevertheless, in a non-traditional approach (a widened approach linked to Constructivism and the main assumption that reality

is perceived differently by different actors, and thus socially constructed), other actors can become securitising agents, and the number of referent objects is also expanded to focus on, for instance, the environment, or local Northern communities. For most of its history, positivist approaches such as Realism and Liberalism have been dominant: states were the sole referent object, and security was seen and understood either as a politico-military or politico-economic subject. Marxist and Constructivist theories challenged these assumptions in the 1960s/1970s and 1990s, respectively. But while Marxist theories focussed mostly on economic and exploitation-driven explanations (in a rather traditional fashion), Constructivism questioned the foundations as well as the ontological and epistemological assumptions of security studies (for instance, what is security, who constructs security, or for whom security is constructed). Since the 1990s, a new wave of academics linked to Constructivism and Peace Studies has made an ever-stronger case for a widening of the concept and focus of security.

The new Critical Theories on Security (linked to the broader Constructivist family) questioned the foundational assumptions of the traditional approaches to security: the referent object (individuals and social groups instead of the state and IGOs), the nature and scope of threats (which are socially constructed), and the nature itself of Security Studies. The leading critical approaches are the Copenhagen School, or Securitization Studies (Buzan/Wæver/de Wilde 1998), which focusses on the securitisation act (including securitisation speech) and spectrum (non-politicised, politicised and securitised) as well as sectorial analyses of security; the Aberystwyth/Welsh School, or Critical Security Studies (Booth 2005, 2007), which focusses on emancipatory politics (the referent objects are individuals and communities) and questions the interpretation of security at both the ontological and epistemological level; and the Paris School, or International Political Sociology (Bigo 2013), which argues that security is a process of (in)securitisation, the objective of which is to create insecurity, thus forcing acceptance and consent on the public regarding security practices that are otherwise unacceptable.

Thus, two broad categories and six subcategories can be identified. A dominant *traditional* and state-centred approach based on the classic assumptions of Realism and partly of Liberalism, where politico-mili-

tary and politico-economic security can be found; and an emerging and rights-based *non-traditional* approach linked to Constructivism, where environmental, socioeconomic, societal and cultural and human security are placed at the core (UNDP 1994; Buzan/Wæver/de Wilde 1998; Wæver 2004; Booth 2005, 2007; Peoples/Vaughan-Williams 2010; Bigo 2013; Collins 2013; Mutimer 2013; Williams 2013). Together, these six broad categories offer a comprehensive approach to security that pays due attention to both state and non-state actors and to both traditional and non-traditional aspects of security. This comprehensive approach also helps addressing an Arctic reality that seems to be far more complex than the assumptions of a traditional understanding of security.

2.1 Natural resources and economic activities

In their strategies for the region, the eight Arctic states thoroughly address the importance of the potentially large amounts of strategic natural resources of both biological and non-biological origin. Yet, the exploitation of Arctic resources is no novelty. For example, mining and fishing activities have been present for millennia, and oil was discovered in the High North more than 200 years ago (Emmerson 2010). However, the Arctic hype experienced in the last years has been fuelled by the promises of wealth and economic development, something which is well reflected in the national strategies. This hype has been possible partly due to several factors, including relatively high prices that almost guaranteed profits after high investments; advanced technologies that allowed for cost-efficient extraction and transportation; the maturity of known and long-exploited deposits elsewhere in the world; and increasing world demand, particularly in developing economies. Still, volatile prices (particularly regarding hydrocarbons) and associated social and environmental challenges have cooled down the prospect of a fast development based on an extractive economic model. In addition, and although economic development based on extractive industries may bring economic opportunities to local communities, a twofold critique can be raised regarding the sustainability of this model: first, rapid development based on extractive industries may be short-lived and is dependent upon the industries' boom and bust cycles (Wilson/Stammler 2016; Saxinger et al. 2016), particularly with volatile commodity prices (the case for Arctic oil is a good example of

a past hype that nevertheless may make a future return); and second, this development model needs highly-qualified workers that are not always available locally, and thus there is a need to attract them to both a sector and an area where a rapid boom can be followed by a bust (Saxinger 2016). Additionally, opening shipping routes through the Northeast (Russia) or Northwest (Canada) passages have also gained much attention (e.g. Byers 2013); however, even if these routes represent shorter distances and substantive costs reduction, the traffic experienced through the Northeast Passage or Northern Sea Route is very low (e.g. Braw 2015), whereas commercial traffic through the Northwest Passage is to date non-existent. Although not frozen, economic development in the Arctic is to be taken cautiously.

Despite the currently relatively low prices, the exploitation of hydrocarbons is and will be a pivotal economic activity in the Arctic, and a central aspect of the short, medium and long-term development perspectives in the region. The Arctic holds 5 per cent and 21 per cent of proven oil and gas reserves, respectively (Lindholt 2006), and might hold up to 13 per cent and 30 per cent of the world's undiscovered conventional oil and gas resources, respectively (Gautier et al. 2008). Most of these resources can be found offshore, but well within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) limits. Yet, and besides market prices, it is important to note the other major challenges associated with drilling in the Arctic, namely the lack of general infrastructure and, in particular, transport infrastructure (both to get people and materials in and oil or gas out), harsh and difficult climate conditions, particularly offshore, and very long distances between the fields and the markets, among others.

The Arctic also harbours important proven and estimated reserves of minerals, including critical metals such as rare earths. As climate change alters physical conditions in the Arctic, an increased access to the region is expected, thus resulting in increased exploration activities and therefore the discovery of more mineral deposits. Minerals extracted in the Arctic include coal, iron and ferroalloy minerals, such as nickel, cobalt, chromite; nonferrous minerals, such as zinc, bauxite, lead, copper or palladium; precious metals, such as gold, silver and platinum; and industrial minerals, such as diamonds or phosphates (Lindholt 2006). To that, we must add the rare earths as well as the strategic metals and minerals industry, which

is becoming increasingly relevant in the Arctic due to the proven and estimated reserve of these materials. Biological resources, in particular fish and wood, also have a long history in the Arctic. Fishing industries in the region are relatively well-developed and a dramatic increase in this industry is not foreseen in the near-term. The vast Arctic woodlands produce some 2.2 per cent of the global wood output (Lindholt 2006), and logging is an important local activity. In terms of wood reserves, boreal forests cover about 17 per cent of the global land area, while the rest of the world's forests combined cover an additional 14 per cent (FAO 2010). Yet, as with fisheries, no dramatic increases are expected in the near future.

The exploitation of these resources, and in particular minerals and hydrocarbons, drives much of the political, academic and media debates on the Arctic. This exploitation also becomes a national security issue for extractive and resources-dependent economies, as well as for energy-intensive economies. Thus, energy security (security of demand for the former and security of supply for the latter) and effective exercise of sovereignty (for instance, territorial claims over disputed areas and/or military or military-like presence aimed at effectively controlling the territory within long-acknowledged territories) entangle and become a matter of traditional security, and may contribute to shaping or changing the different national and regional security perceptions, perspectives and dynamics.

2.2 Understanding sovereignty claims: Arctic governance and the UNCLOS

Although most of the land borders in the Arctic are long settled, there are a few territories and most importantly, large areas of the Arctic Ocean over which sovereignty is disputed by different states. Understanding the major governance mechanisms is paramount to understanding how disputes are to be resolved and what the present and future security and (geo)politics are or may be. Regional Arctic governance is, to date, relatively limited. Governance in the Arctic follows a niche rather than a holistic approach (Stokke 2010), and existing governance mechanisms focus on specific areas such as environment or economic development. In general, traditional aspects of security (such as territorial claims) are not addressed, but only at the national and/or bi- or multilateral levels (instead of at the pan-Arctic level). In this regard, the current situation presents an

incipient – as I call it – *Arcticlateralism*, an approach by which the Arctic states jointly follow a Westphalian-inspired and state-centred exercise of sovereignty and seek to limit the relevant political and legal frameworks to instruments that arguably favour their interests, thus becoming the most relevant decision-makers in the region and consequently eliminating or limiting the influence capacity of other state or non-state actors. An immediate consequence of this approach is that the decision-making capabilities of non-Arctic states and non-state actors is either non-existent or highly limited (for non-Arctic states), or limited to formal national mechanisms (for non-state actors).

Overall, the Arctic is governed by eight different national legal frameworks (regarding the Arctic landmass, as land territory belonging to each of the eight Arctic states) as well as one major international treaty, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). And here is where the political complexity of the region is revealed. The Arctic Ocean comprises much of the Arctic territory, and it is governed by the UNCLOS. The Convention establishes six areas where different degrees of sovereignty can be exercised under specific circumstances. Thus, internal waters (waters within the coastal baseline), territorial waters (waters 12 nautical miles or 22 kilometres from the coastal baseline, where the coastal state has full sovereignty, including over potential resources, but where “innocent passage” of foreign vessels is allowed if “it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal State”), the contiguous zone (an additional 12 nautical miles where the coastal state can enforce laws related to, among other things, taxes, pollution or customs), EEZs (200 nautical miles or 370 kilometres from the coastal baseline, where the coastal state has the sole right to exploit all natural resources), and the extended continental shelf (up to a maximum of 350 nautical miles or 650 kilometres, where coastal states have sovereign rights over mineral and non-living resources under the seabed, but not above it) and beyond (these cannot be claimed and are considered as international waters) are the six categorised areas. All Arctic states but the US are signatory parties, although the US has indicated on repeated occasions their acceptance of the principles of the UNCLOS as customary law. In 2008, through the Ilulissat Declaration, the Arctic-5 (Canada, Denmark, Norway, United States and Russia) indicated their intention

to govern the Arctic only through existing legal instruments such as the UNCLOS (Arctic Ocean Conference 2008), which was viewed unfavourably by Iceland, Sweden and Finland, as well as by the indigenous peoples of the North (Inuit Circumpolar Council 2009). This declaration fuels the notion of an Arcticlateralism led by the Arctic-5. Under the UNCLOS, claims to the extended continental shelf based on scientific evidence can be submitted, and Canada, Denmark, Norway and Russia have already done so. The overlapping claims (e.g., Canada, Denmark and Russia have all claimed the geographic North Pole through the Lomonosov Ridge) fuel conflict discourses and narratives mostly, but only in the media; however, the countries have agreed to resort solely to international law to resolve any disagreement (i.e., the final decision is to be made according to the mechanisms established by the UNCLOS, although this decision is non-binding), and no major conflicts are expected as a result of these disagreements over sovereignty (e.g., Le Mière/Mazo 2013; Hilde 2014). It is, however, important to note that most of the potential hydrocarbon resources are expected to be found in shallow waters relatively close to shores, and well within the EEZs. Thus, the overlapping claims to the extended continental shelf have more political than economic motivations, as there is no evidence that any vast mineral wealth will ever be found or extracted in or around the North Pole.

Other existing maritime claims include the currently ongoing US and Canada dispute over a large portion of the Beaufort Sea, an area which is expected to hold important reserves of oil and gas (Carnaghan/Goody 2006; Byers 2009), and the status of the Canadian Northwest passage, which Canada claims as internal waters, while the US, together with other nations, claim it as an international strait (Byers 2009, 2013). The Hans Island, located in the Kennedy Channel and claimed by Canada and Denmark, is the only landmass over which sovereignty is disputed (Carnaghan/Goody 2006; Byers 2013). Both countries have, however, agreed to find a peaceful solution, and proposals to split the island equally or to apply a shared sovereignty formula have been proposed (Byers 2013). These disputes are also not expected to escalate, but contribute to the bellicose and misleading discourse present in the media and linked to the claims over the Arctic Ocean.

3. Arctic policies and strategies

In recent years, the eight Arctic countries have elaborated and made public their policies and strategies for the Arctic. Besides the Arctic-8, other countries, as well as the European Commission (2016), have also published different strategic documents. Some of these countries include Germany (2013), the United Kingdom (2013) and Japan (2015), and it is expected that all observers in the Arctic Council will eventually develop their own documents. In these documents, the countries describe to their populations and to one another their priorities, objectives and the actions to be taken in order to achieve these objectives. The documents also depict particular interpretations and visions of reality, and set out a roadmap for development. They could also be used for society-driven and/or non-binding accountability purposes; that is, to check whether the states actually do what they say would do.

Analysing the policies and strategies of the Arctic countries is useful in a threefold way: first, states are currently the only actors that can set legislative and normative frameworks that frame and/or promote economic and social development in the Arctic. At the same time, states are best positioned to develop and implement policies for redistributing the wealth generated through resource-related activities, and to ensure a fair socio-economic development. Second, states clearly define in their policies and strategies the actors whose concerns are to be addressed. In this regard, an analysis of the policy and strategy documents will not identify what the legitimate priorities of all involved actors are, but will show which ones are taken into consideration at the national/state and regional/Arctic levels. Third, an analysis of policies and strategies can help set a baseline to identify whether countries are addressing non-traditional aspects of security, and to what extent they are doing so. If non-traditional aspects of security are considered as security matters at state level, at least to some degree, they will be addressed as such; that is, non-traditional aspects of security will need to be prioritised as much as traditional military and economic aspects.

Yet, a non-traditional approach to security, if considered by the Arctic states, allows for the inclusion of legitimate perceptions of non-state actors,

and places the rights of the latter at the centre of attention. After all, how good is the successful development and exploitation of hydrocarbons in the region if the local inhabitants are not to benefit? How can security be truly addressed if local populations do not have opportunities for socio-economic development, or the potential negative impacts of, for example, climate change or industrial development are not taken into consideration?

Overall, the scope of these policies and strategies is rather short-termed, focussing on the next few years and not so much on long-term transgenerational objectives. Much of the policies and strategies narrative focusses on traditional security approaches, mostly on exploitation of natural resources and ‘exercising sovereignty’, a euphemism that refers to a claim over territories that have been historically neglected and ignored. Furthermore, not all policies and strategies present an inclusive participative approach towards Northerners in general or indigenous peoples in particular. Mentions of the need to protect the culture and traditional lifestyle of indigenous peoples without directly including them in decision-making processes related to the future of the Arctic, together with varying degrees of self-government, seems somehow a rhetorical and rather paternalistic exercise. Although it is true that most Arctic states have democratic and representative mechanisms in place (including specific ones for indigenous peoples), obvious examples like the Russian, or subtle ones like the Canadian, illustrate how ‘national interests’ may prevail over local or regional perspectives. In any case, a combined approach, including traditional and non-traditional aspects of security, is present. Although it is clear that politico-military and politico-economic issues receive greater attention, environmental, socio-economic, societal and even human aspects of security are also addressed. Yet, there is an obvious disconnection between the former and the latter, and there is also a clear narrative indicating that the realisation of the latter will be subject to the success of the former. Non-traditional aspects of security are now present and taken into account; yet, the traditional approach is still dominant.

The following subsections offer a brief overview of the national policies and strategies of the Arctic-8, taking into consideration traditional and non-traditional aspects of security. Existing policy and strategy documents from other countries or organisations are intentionally left out, with the objective of focussing on the Arctic states.

3.1 Canada

Under the title “Canada’s Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future,” the Government of Canada released a strategy for the High North in 2009. The exploitation of mineral resources and hydrocarbons as well as biological natural resources in Arctic and Subarctic regions has been part of the Canadian economy for hundreds of years (Byers 2009). For example, the diamond mining industry alone represents fifty percent of the economic activity in the Northwest Territories (Government of Canada 2009). Canada has a well-developed strategy that focuses on the sustainable and responsible exploitation of natural resources and the inclusion and participation of local communities in decision-making processes at the national/Arctic level, while calling for a collaborative yet strong policy at international level. In this regard, the Canadian document pays great attention to indigenous peoples. Canada also stresses the importance of social development in the Arctic, as well as environmental protection. As stated in its national strategy, “[t]he North is central to the Canadian national identity” (Government of Canada 2009). The Canadian strategy is based on four pillars: 1) exercising sovereignty, 2) promoting economic and social development, 3) protecting the Arctic environment, and, 4) improving and developing governance, and empowering the peoples of the North (Government of Canada 2009, 2010). Even if the Canadian strategy includes many non-traditional elements of security, the dominant focus is on traditional security aspects. The Canadian priorities are thus very pragmatic, and the focus is on resolving territorial disputes, obtaining international recognition of its rights over its potential continental shelf, and developing the vast proven and potential oil and gas resources in the Canadian Arctic and Subarctic (Government of Canada 2009, 2010; Bailes/Heininen 2012). The strategy regarding natural resources is straightforward: to resolve territorial disputes and obtain recognition over the potentially vast continental shelf, so borders are clearly set, in order to exercise national sovereignty and therefore being able to securely develop the area in economic and social terms, including the exploitation of vast proven and potential reserves of oil and gas and other mineral and biological resources in the seabed and subsoil (Government of Canada 2010).

Societal and human security aspects are addressed, and in particular great attention is paid to indigenous peoples and local governments.

Strong mentions references to the use of Arctic resources for the benefit of Northerners both today and for future generations support this position. However, the documents also refer to the natural resources as the fuelling element for socioeconomic development in the North, thus indicating that non-traditional security aspects, although acknowledged, are subject to a more pragmatic traditional approach where politico-economic and politico-military security are predominant. Yet, examples like former Prime Minister Mr Harper's 2007 'sovereignty' speeches, where a pragmatic "use it or lose it" policy towards the Canadian Arctic was underlined (Harper 2007; Byers 2009), or the Peel river watershed case, where the Government of the Yukon territory ignored existing agreements with First Nations regarding the economic use, development and exploitation of the area (CBS 2016) –and which is just one in a long list of discrepancies between Canadian authorities and First Nations (Byers 2009) – indicate how there is still a long way to go in order to reconcile national security objectives and visions, and local (and particularly indigenous) perceptions and aspirations.

3.2 Denmark

Denmark is present in the Arctic through Greenland, the world's largest island. Greenland was granted home rule in 1979, obtaining greater self-governing power in 2009, including control over natural resources. The Danish document, "The Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020", was signed jointly by the Governments of Denmark (mainland), Greenland and the Faroes (an archipelago in the North Atlantic), showing a high level of decentralisation and an important step in acknowledging the relevance of Greenland and the Faroes in the Arctic. The Danish strategy presents a mixed approach, addressing both traditional and non-traditional aspects of security. This means that Denmark, much like the other Arctic countries, gives due importance to territorial recognition (including the extended continental shelf), exercising sovereignty, and making use of the vast economic potential of Greenland and the Faroes. Yet, the second goal of the Danish strategy is sustainable development and growth, with a very strong focus on the involvement, participation and ownership of the Greenlandic government, including increased self-government (Government of Denmark 2011; Bailes/Heininen 2012).

Although an increase in mineral revenues will translate into a more self-sufficient home rule, some authors see this as Greenland's funding plan towards full independence (Nuttall 2008; Emmerson 2010), an idea which is contested by other authors who argue that there are not enough resources to overcome the huge challenges in Greenland (McGwin 2014; Dingman 2014). Still, this recognition indicates a high degree of involvement of actors linked working within a non-traditional approach. The protection of the environment, another non-traditional issue, is a third area of attention, and the extraction of natural resources is to be subject to environmental protection (unless it collides with national security objectives). The document makes clear that, although natural resources in the Arctic are to be exploited for the primary benefit and development of local communities, this exploitation is to be done in a sustainable manner following the highest safety, health, environmental, emergency preparedness and transparency standards. In a way, the Danish strategy follows the path started by Norway, but with the aim of going one step further in terms of environmental protection and sustainability. Inspired by and building on the Norwegian example, Denmark aims at setting a new model for the sustainable and responsible exploitation of natural resources. The non-traditional approach is clear; even if traditional national security is the most important aspect, non-traditional issues, particularly environmental protection, are also at the top of the priority list.

The Danish document also pays consistent attention to indigenous peoples and future generations: a "strategy for the Arctic region is first and foremost a strategy for a development that benefits the inhabitants of the Arctic, [and the opportunities emerging from the warming of the Arctic] must be handled proactively – with care, with long-term accountability and with respect for the Arctic societies, the rights of Arctic indigenous peoples, the Arctic climate and the environment. [Furthermore,] Denmark and Greenland will continue constructive cooperation to strengthen indigenous people's rights to control their own development and their own political, economic, social and cultural situation, [including their right] to utilize and develop their own resources" (Government of Denmark 2011:9f.). For example, and following Norway's example, the Parliament of Greenland has established a fund where the wealth resulting from the exploitation of minerals can be managed and distributed among Green-

landers (Government of Denmark 2011). However, the implementation of the Danish document has not been always so straightforward. According to the 2009 Act on Greenland Self-Government, Greenland has sovereignty over her mineral resources. Yet, the (potential) exploitation of some of these resources has led to confrontation between Nuuk and Copenhagen. While Denmark is a non-nuclear country, Greenland has been eager to make use of its potential rare earths and uranium deposits (the latter also occurring as a by-product resulting from the exploitation of other minerals). Greenland argued that uranium is a mineral resource, while Denmark focussed on the security aspects of its potential military uses. An agreement was reached in early 2016 between Nuuk and Copenhagen, which in principle unblocks the situation and allows for foreign companies to exploit these minerals upon Copenhagen's 'clearance' (Fouche 2016; World Nuclear News 2016), which shows how traditional security is a paramount topic even in countries where non-traditional security is very relevant as well.

3.3 Finland

The Finnish presence in the Arctic, much like Sweden's, is rather limited. Most of the Finnish Lapland region, which itself represents roughly a quarter of the country's landmass, lies above the Arctic Circle. Also like Sweden, Finland does not have access to the Arctic Ocean, which limits its presence in some relevant fora. Furthermore, Finland's Arctic natural resources (mostly related to the mining industry) lie within their land borders. Perhaps because of these constraints, the Finnish strategy shows a rather pragmatic approach to the issues it addresses, focussing on challenges and potential solutions, and including traditional and non-traditional elements of security. Particularly, the Finnish document focusses on socioeconomic (welfare of local populations) and environmental (sustainable use of resources and environmental protection) security aspects. A more traditional approach is taken when stating the need to strengthen the status of Finland as an Arctic country (Government of Finland 2013). Logging, reindeer husbandry and tourism, as well as mining, are the key economic activities taking place in the Finnish Arctic, and according to the document these activities are to be continued. Taking advantage of the potential business opportunities taking place elsewhere in the Arctic, particularly in the field of extractive industries, Finnish expertise and

know-how may be an input of great value both in extractive and developmental activities (Government of Finland 2013). Although the document considers both politico-economic and socioeconomic development objectives, these seem to be somehow disconnected from each other.

The Finnish document shows a high degree of commitment towards the human and social development of the Arctic, with specific attention paid to indigenous populations in general and the Saami people in particular (the only recognised indigenous people in the EU). In a strong societal and human security fashion, the Finnish document states that welfare, that is, "mental and material well-being, access to work, efficient basic services, equality, security and education" should be secured (Government of Finland 2013: 11). Active involvement of local populations in all type of activities is to be pursued too, although the document fails to proactively include indigenous peoples in resource-related decision-making processes, as they shall be able to participate "in the debate and decision making in matters affecting their status as indigenous peoples" (Government of Finland 2013: 50) but not necessarily in the debate on how to use and take advantage of the Arctic wealth. Finally, and perhaps aware of its limitations, Finland would clearly like to see a greater involvement of the EU through the EU Arctic countries. Notwithstanding all this, the document was adopted by the Finnish Cabinet Committee on the European Union (Bailes/Heininen 2012).

3.4 Iceland

Iceland almost missed the Arctic Circle. This line north of parallel 66.5622° hits Icelandic territory in the tiny island of Grímsey, some 40 km off the north coast of the main island. Iceland has, however, a respectable share in the Arctic Ocean. In principle, nobody would deny Iceland's 'arcticness', but the country is often ignored in relevant fora dealing with Arctic Ocean issues. Perhaps driven by the fact that the prospect of finding large natural resource deposits in their territory is low, Iceland has decided to take a more pragmatic approach to ensure that their status as an Arctic nation is respected, that they have access to potential resources in their continental shelf, and that the country becomes a hub for economic activities (e.g. shipping and transport) in the Arctic Ocean. Although the document presents several non-traditional elements, a stronger focus is present

regarding the traditional elements (e.g., international recognition and participation as an Arctic player).

The Icelandic document was approved by the Icelandic Parliament, the Alþingi. Twelve principles rule the Icelandic policy for the Arctic, with a strong focus on “[s]ecuring Iceland’s position as a coastal State within the Arctic region” and on working towards a widened understanding of what the Arctic is and which countries can be defined as Arctic (Althingi 2011). The Parliamentary resolution is followed by a commentary in which some key aspects are further explained and addressed, with a strong focus on the exploitation of potential natural resources and the potential of the shipping industry in Iceland.

The Icelandic policy addresses the exploitation of natural resources in the Arctic, but it is vague in its formulation. The document mentions the potential resources that may lie beneath the Arctic lands and waters, and refers to Iceland’s geographical position as a key area for accessing these resources; however, little is said about Iceland’s own potential natural resources. As in the case of Finland, Iceland portrays the exploitation of Arctic resources as an opportunity for support activities as well as shipping and transport business. Fishing is, however, rightfully mentioned, as fishing and other related activities represent up to 26 per cent of Iceland’s GDP (Sigfusson/Arnason 2012). Tourism and energy production are also mentioned. The policy document lists the continental shelf areas in the Arctic where Iceland has the right to exploit natural resources, alone or in cooperation with other countries, including their own interpretation of the Spitsbergen Treaty. The Icelandic document explicitly mentions their right to use the “continental shelf resources” of Svalbard (Althingi 2011).

The Icelandic policy shows the commitment of the country to the sustainable management of natural resources, also supporting the “rights of Arctic indigenous peoples [while promoting] their involvement in decision-making in all issues affecting their communities, [including] economic [issues]”. The expected “increased [Icelandic] economic activity in the Arctic region [is expected to] contribute to [a] sustainable utilisation of resources and [to a] responsible handling of the fragile ecosystem and the conservation of biota, [as well as to] the preservation of the unique culture and way of life of indigenous peoples” (Althingi 2011). These strong references to indigenous peoples may, however, seem to be peculiar for a country with no indigenous peoples (c.f. Diamond 2005).

3.5 Norway

Norway presents a thorough and comprehensive “High North” strategy, first elaborated in 2006 and updated in 2009 and 2011. Norway was also the first country to publish a strategy document. The “High North”, as the Arctic is defined in the Norwegian documents, is presented as a fundamental part of the Norwegian identity. The Norwegian documents stress the importance of the exploitation of natural resources (mostly energy resources), albeit in a sustainable and responsible manner, and with a strong focus on environmental protection. The document also covers Norway’s sovereign rights in the Arctic, while at the same time stressing the importance of regional and bilateral cooperation, particularly with Russia. Much like Denmark’s or Canada’s, the Norwegian narrative includes traditional and non-traditional elements of security, although the latter is subject to the former.

For Norway, the Arctic is an emerging “petroleum province [where] more than two thirds of the undiscovered resources on the Norwegian continental shelf” may be located (Norwegian Government 2006: 13f.). The Norwegian strategy gives great attention to the development of natural resources in the Arctic, particularly hydrocarbons and biological marine resources (Norwegian Government 2009: 18ff.). Norway’s strategy is well-defined, identifying opportunities and addressing weaknesses. Sustainability and responsibility are also present, and Norway aims to conduct all economic activities according to the highest environmental protection standards and best practices. Although hydrocarbons are central in the Norwegian strategy, other natural resources and associated industries are also taken into consideration. Thus, Norway will pursue the further development of its fishing industry, bioenergy activities, and mineral-based industries, among others. Norway also intends to use its expertise and know-how as a valuable and tradable commodity (Government of Norway 2006).

The Norwegian strategy shows a very strong commitment towards indigenous peoples and future generations. Biological and non-biological natural resources are to be exploited sustainably and responsibly in order to “not undermine the opportunities” and help “to safeguard the welfare of future generations” (Government of Norway 2009: 29, 67). Although not mentioned in the documents, Norway is strongly committed to pass on wealth produced in the present to future generations through the Government Pension Fund Global (formally known as The Petroleum

Fund of Norway). Surpluses from the petroleum industry are deposited and managed in this fund, which currently holds some US \$850 billion (Norges Bank undated).

3.6 Russia

Russia has a clear policy towards the Arctic, based on economic development and the delimitation of the continental shelf. The principles of the Russian policy are based on the use of the Arctic as a strategic resource base, including the use of the North East Passage as a new and to be exploited transport route (Government of Russia 2008, 2013). Overall, the Russian narrative presents the most traditional approach to security, with a particular approach to politico-economic security. Although the document contains references to some non-traditional security matters, mostly related to socioeconomic development, it is clear that the development of Russian Arctic resources is to serve Russia's national interests. The Russian Arctic policy also explains the national intention to exercise its sovereignty, that is, to increase the state and military presence in the Russian Arctic (Sergunin/Konyshchev 2016). Some of these plans have already been executed (Klimenko 2015), but, as noted by some scholars (Murray 2016; Klimenko 2015), the often-found rhetoric of an aggressive Russian military build-up in the north may be exaggerated.

In economic terms, the Russian documents make it clear that Arctic natural resources are to be exploited and used for the benefit of the country. Nonetheless, and as of today, most of the economic activities in the Arctic take place in Russia. The Russian Arctic is also the most and best surveyed Arctic area, and it is where many of the promising reserves of natural resources are thought to lie. In this light, the Russian documents focus on the modernisation of extraction techniques and exploitation of resources rather than on sustainability or production. The Russian documents indicate that social and economic development is embedded within the expansion of the resource base and the development of the vast hydrocarbon, mineral, water, biological and other kinds of strategic raw materials in the area. In this regard, the documents mention upcoming surveys and investment projects, all one way or another oriented towards the exploitation of natural resources. The documents also stress the need to reach agreements regarding maritime spheres, and mention the right of Russia to be

present and conduct economic activities in Svalbard (a claim based on the provisions of the Svalbard/Spitsbergen treaty of 1925, by which sovereignty over the archipelago was recognised as belonging to Norway, yet giving equal economic and commercial rights to the other signatories, including Russia).

The Russian policy foresees the social and economic development of the Arctic, albeit this as being governed by the Russian state, and aligned with Russian national priorities. It is worth noticing that the rhetoric in these documents, in a very Realist and traditional understanding of security, focusses on the Russian Arctic rather than the Arctic in Russia. The very few references to socioeconomic development focus on the need to improve existing infrastructures, with vague and generic references to indigenous peoples and Northerners.

3.7 Sweden

Sweden's reality in the Arctic is much like Finland's. It does not have access to the Arctic Ocean, and just the north of the country is Arctic. However, Sweden approaches the Arctic as a whole, and not only as a territory divided between the eight Arctic states. Sweden's strategy, adopted in 2011, focusses on climate change and environmental protection, and the sustainability and preservation of the Arctic's habitats, indigenous peoples and gender (it is the only state addressing gender-specific issues, thus acknowledging and taken into account that approximately fifty percent of the Arctic population may have a specific and different perception), all non-traditional aspects of security. Sweden presents a strategy more focussed on international cooperation, and again, like Finland, is more supportive of the EU's involvement. The Swedish strategy is divided into three areas: 1) climate and environment; 2) economic development; and 3) the human dimension. Sweden's strategy has a strong focus on sustainable economic development but a limited interest in the exploitation of energy resources. Overall, this document presents a thorough approach to non-traditional security.

Natural resources in the Swedish Arctic are almost exclusively limited to the mining, fishing and forestry industries. Perhaps because of that, the Swedish strategy is oriented towards the protection of the Arctic and the sustainable use of its resources. On the whole, Sweden presents a highly

cooperative strategy, in which it is to play a role ensuring that economic activities in the Arctic are conducted responsibly. For example, and regarding the extraction of hydrocarbons throughout the Arctic, Sweden “will work to ensure that the anticipated extraction of oil, gas and other natural resources occurs in an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable manner” (Government of Sweden 2011: 6). For Sweden, “[m]ost of the Arctic Ocean constitutes an international marine area [...] where all states have the right to free shipping and research. [Furthermore,] it is undisputed that not only every coast has a continental shelf but also that the seabed that lies outside the jurisdiction of the coastal states constitutes humankind’s common heritage” (Government of Sweden 2011: 11). According to the document, Sweden is to play a role in favour of preservation and protection, counterbalancing national economic interests of other Arctic states.

In societal and human security terms, Sweden is committed to bringing “the human dimension and the gender perspective to the fore in Arctic-related cooperation bodies”. As for indigenous peoples, their right to “maintain and develop their identity, culture, knowledge transfer and traditional trades must be upheld”. Sweden is aware that the economic development of the Arctic, including the “increase in the exploitation of Arctic natural resources”, will bring “negative consequences”, for which countermeasures need to be taken (Government of Sweden 2011: 6). The document shows a clear commitment towards Northerners, including indigenous peoples and younger generations. And what perhaps is more important, this support is not limited to the Swedish borders, but looks at the Arctic in a comprehensive manner not shown by any other country.

3.8 United States

Thanks to the purchase of Alaska in 1867, the United States became an Arctic country. And the country is slowly awakening to its Arctic identity and reality. The US elaborated a policy for the Arctic under the Bush Administration in 2009, which was followed by a strategy elaborated by the Obama Administration and released in 2013. These brief documents address very similar ideas: the US is an Arctic nation and will exercise its sovereign rights; US national security interests are also linked to the Arctic; and the US will economically develop its share of the Arctic, keeping in

mind local and indigenous populations. Overall, this is a document deeply driven by a traditional approach to security, although some non-traditional elements (environmental, local communities and local societies) are present. The US strategy main focus is on “Enhancing Arctic Domain Awareness” and “Energy Security”, although, regarding the latter, the US’ aim is to promote the use of renewable sources of energy as well as an environmentally responsible production of hydrocarbons (Government of the United States 2013).

For the US, national interests (i.e., a traditional approach) are paramount. For instance, the Arctic is to contribute to America’s energy security; yet Arctic stewardship will also include environmental protection and an inclusive management policy. Territorial claims over Arctic waters are also an important point, and although the US has not acceded yet to the UNCLOS (and therefore cannot submit a claim for its continental shelf), the country has indicated on several occasions that it acknowledged the Law of the Sea as customary law. Extractive industries, which are linked to politico-economic security, are an important part of the Alaskan reality as well, as the US documents indicate. Hydrocarbons, and in particular petroleum industry activities, account for 34 per cent of jobs in Alaska (McDowell Group 2014).

This resource and economy-driven approach also has a societal, socio-economic and even human security dimension. In Alaska, benefits of the hydrocarbon industry are set aside into a fund managed by a state-owned corporation. This fund, established in 1976 by the Alaskan Constitution, manages some US\$53 billion from oil revenues (APFC 2016), and serves to fund the state budget as well as to pay an annual dividend to all residents. The US strategic documents also align with this policy, while acknowledging and propping up the partnership, retribution and reparation process initiated in the 1970s (Byers 2009; Government of the United States 2013).

4. Findings and conclusions

The Arctic is slowly but surely moving closer towards the core of the international system. Although it is still a periphery area, the region is

raising international interest in both Arctic and non-Arctic states, as well as in a large number of non-state actors both inside and outside the Arctic. Some countries, like the US, are gradually awakening to their Arctic reality. Others, like Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, are re-defining their relationship with their Arctic territories and trying to find a way to adapt to a developing situation. And others, like Canada, Norway or Russia, are reinforcing their long-found Arcticness, and finding new dimensions to it. However, all these countries have in some way agreed to lead a process to bring the Arctic forward in a novel Arcticlateral approach, i.e., with the limited intervention of non-Arctic actors. And, despite the sometimes strong rhetoric describing the Arctic as an area prone to competition and even escalating conflict, today the Arctic is a peaceful region where states tend to cooperate. Major territorial claims mostly refer to overlapping claims over the extended continental shelf, and all UNLCOS signatory parties have agreed to observe international law and seek peaceful solutions to their disagreements. Other sovereignty disputes involve states that are unlikely to declare war on each other, like Canada, Denmark and the United States.

In security terms, the traditional approach dominates the narratives of the Arctic policies and strategies. For instance, expressions like ‘exercising sovereignty’, which refer to a classic understanding of politico-military security, can be found throughout the documents. The national rights to the extended continental shelf are well covered by all states, and the proposed strategies are dominated by a traditional and state-driven understanding and application of security: issues of population, borders, sovereignty and (potential) threats posed by other states. In addition, the politico-economic understanding of security, with a particular focus on energy topics and natural resources, is all-pervading. The extraction and exploitation narratives complement the politico-military security approach. In this sense, and put bluntly, the Arctic states are getting interested in the High North *because* of natural resources present there, and will focus on and develop the region with the primary aim of extracting these resources. The narratives clearly state that development and industrialisation will occur led by extractive industries and other major economic activities, almost if as a consequence of them. Although the narratives also make reference to sustainability and environmental matters, and some countries acknowl-

edge the potential social and environmental risks of this economic model, the latter would, in practice, often be subject to the former.

However, non-traditional security elements can also be found, in particular with reference to environmental security and to some extent socioeconomic security as well. Environmental security aspects, such as the protection and preservation of the environment or the need to implement environmentally friendly economic activities and address environmental concerns, are, by far, the most evident non-traditional security aspect. This issue, which goes hand-in-hand with climate change in general and its effects in the Arctic in particular (for instance, record high temperatures or record lows in ice-sheet extension), has been addressed by all Arctic countries. Yet, the level of commitment seems to be much higher in the Nordic countries as well as North America, whereas the issue is poorly covered by Russia (where it is clear that economic development is a higher priority). Socioeconomic security is contemplated to some extent, but once again the narratives towards this issue are much stronger in the Nordic and North American states. Societal and human aspects of security are often excluded from the Arctic narratives, and often only refer to indigenous peoples, if at all. These areas (socioeconomic, societal and human security) are neither properly addressed nor well developed, and seem to indicate that the Northerners (both indigenous and non-indigenous) may be (unintentionally) lagging behind when it comes to Arctic development.

Nevertheless, it is also unmistakably clear that a broader understanding of security has made its way into the regional policies and strategies of the Arctic states; this represents a first step that undoubtedly needs further improvement in order to address the non-traditional security threats that climate change, rapid industrialisation and development, and a predictable economic system based on resource extraction may pose to the Northerners – indigenous and non-indigenous alike – throughout the Arctic: because traditional security cannot truly be achieved if non-traditional security is not properly addressed.

1 This is a translated, revised and expanded version of: Roncero Martin, Jose Miguel (forthcoming): Sicherheit in der Arktis: Hohe Politik im Hohen Norden. In: Saxinger, Gertrude et al. (eds.): Arktis und Subarktis. Geschichte, Kultur, Gesellschaft. Vienna: New Academic Press.

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ABSTRACT In jüngster Zeit wird der Arktis – eine Region, die Dänemark, Finnland, Island, Kanada, Norwegen, Russland, Schweden und die USA unter sich aufteilen – vermehrt Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt, und der Hohe Norden wird zunehmend zu einem zentralen Thema der Weltpolitik. In den letzten Jahren haben alle Anrainerstaaten Richtlinien und Strategien in Bezug auf ihre Zielvorstellungen für den arktischen Raum veröffentlicht. Der Artikel analysiert diese Dokumente anhand eines erweiterten Sicherheitsbegriffs, der neben traditionellen (politisch-militärischen und politisch-ökonomischen) auch nichttraditionelle (menschliche, soziale, ökologische und sozialwirtschaftliche) Aspekte berücksichtigt.

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