Harper's New Narrative: An Analysis of Canadian Foreign Policy during the Harper Era

Introduction

The concept of nation branding – and its effect on a country's foreign policy – is something that's receiving increasing attention in the studies of International Relations. In short, nation branding within IR can be described as how a state's image aides their foreign relations through soft power; how a nation's goodwill can help in diplomatic dealings with other countries, international bodies, and so on. Simultaneously, it is important to remember that nation branding – like all other types of communication is a two-way street: a state can attempt to create a certain brand, or image, for itself, but if the state does not live up to that image – i.e. if there's a lack of correspondence between ideal and reality – there will be a severe blow to that state's credibility.

In furtherance of the above, this thesis will utilise nation branding as a starting point. However, in an attempt to narrow it down, nation branding in Canada, and in particular during Stephen Harper's reign, will be at the core of this paper.

When discussing nation branding, a commonly used phrase is that every country "has a story to tell."[12] What is Canada's story then? One narrative, often told, about Canada is that it is the peacekeeping nation par excellence. Since Lester B. Pearson's (who won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1957, for his role in bringing an end to Suez Canal Crisis) leadership in the 1950s, Canada has been involved in countless peacekeeping operations, in various countries and continents. Furthermore, in 2006, Canada had the second highest peacekeeping fatality number of all the UN troop-contributors.[3]

Nonetheless, it could be argued that Canada's story is changing – or at least the narrative of Canadian peacekeeping is changing. In recent years, foreign policy efforts have seen

[1] Harper, quoted in CBC News, 2007
[2] Risi, 2013
[3] Dorn, 2008, 70

Canada shunning peacekeeping, and instead opting for US-led warfighting, or peacemaking, in Afghanistan and Libya. By taking this route, Stephen Harper and his government have received criticisms from both left-wingers and nationalists alike.

Instead of focusing on maintaining Canada's image as peacekeepers, Stephen Harper and his government have gone in an altogether different direction: branding Canada as one of the great Arctic nations, claiming what, they believe, is rightfully their part of the polar region. As our planet has become increasingly warmer, interest in the Arctic on the international scene has risen, correspondingly. According to reports[4], 13% of the world's untapped oil reserves are in the Arctic, and 30% of its gas, while minerals are plentiful too; as the ice is melting, these resources are becoming more readily available. This abundance of oil, gas and minerals is without doubt one of the defining factors for Canada's recent shift in foreign policy. Along the same lines, climate changes also present the opportunity for alternative, cheaper trading routes; one of these being The Northwest Passage, which Canada claims is in their internal waters, and therefore could, potentially, be of great value to them.

However, there are other reasons as well. One argument presented in this thesis will be that the Harper government sees the Arctic as part of "The True North", as something which is crucial to Canadian identity and self-image.

While Canada's reputation as peacekeeper has been in decline under Harper's tenure (and before that) — and their newfound image as an Arctic steward is gaining ground — there are other aspects of his reign that are interest to this thesis. On top of viewing itself as peacekeeper, Canada has also cultivated this larger image itself as a middle power – peacekeeping can, as will be argued later, been seen as a part of the make-up of a middle power. Considering that the Harper government is intent on shedding the Canadian peacekeeping image, another pertinent question becomes if it is only this part of the larger image that Canada wants rid of. In short, does the Harper Government still brand Canada as a middle power?

[4] Koch, 2014

Problem Formulation

Earlier, it was stated that the core of this thesis would concern nation branding in Canada during the Harper-era. However, in an attempt to narrow it down even further, this thesis will scrutinize how Canada has rebranded itself from the world's peacekeeper par excellence to protector of the Arctic, during Stephen Harper's reign. Additionally, focus will be on the correspondence between new brand and the actual foreign policy exercised. Moreover, these questions work under the assumption that Canada is/was a middle power and, by extension, a peacekeeper. Consequently, these questions will be prefaced by questioning Canada's role as a middle power under the Harper regime.

This leads to the following three Research Questions:

- How is/was Canada a middle power, and to what extent was Canada a middle power under the Harper Government?
- To what extent did Canada rebrand itself to the international community during Harper's reign?
- To what extent did Canada's new brand correspond with the foreign policy exercised in the Harper era?

Methodology

Introduction

Epistemologically, this thesis will be situated within interpretivism. Since this it deals with matters – the idea of rebranding, for example – that are not easily measured or directly observed, it can be argued that an interpretivist approach is to prefer over a positivist one. On a general level, interpretivism is seen as a strategy which concedes that there is a difference between people and objects, and that to understand the "[…] subjective meaning of social action […]"[5] such an approach is paramount. Also, an interpretivist approach fits nicely with the notion of branding which, at its core, deals with creating certain perceptions of reality.

To add to this, this thesis will also be utilising a mostly deductive approach. This entails starting off with a theory (or theories) and putting forth a hypothesis which then is either proven or rejected towards the end of the thesis.[6] No hypothesis has been put forward in this study, however, as it is merely deductive in the sense that it is guided by theory. By using existing theories, the ideal scenario here is to arrive at conclusions about the specific cases presented within; the main case in this instance being the rebranding of Canadian foreign policy under Stephen Harper. The theories guiding this thesis are those of nation branding, neorealism and neoliberalism.

As to why this this paper has not taken an inductive path, it can be argued the purpose is not to generate theories as a result of initial observations which is the aim of inductive studies[7] – as noted, this process was set off by theory not observations. In addition to this, it is important to note that studies seldom are purely inductive or deductive – they are often predominantly one or the other, but they also use their counterpart for certain parts of the study.[8]

The reason that a qualitative method has been chosen for this thesis is that it fits the research questions posed, as these are 'how' and 'to what extent' questions; they seek to

[5] Bryman, 2012, 30
[6] Ibid, 24
[7] Ibid, 26
[8] Ibid, 24-26

understand and explore how certain actions are taken by certain groups of people. Even though the phrasing in sounds like this thesis intends to engage in some sort of numerical measuring, as one would do in quantitative research; this is not the case. The choice of words is the result of an assumption of this thesis: that there, for example, is some correspondence between Canada's new brand and the foreign policy exercised, but to what degree is unknown. To quantitatively measure this would be impossible as there simply is no data that could adequately illustrate this correspondence – instead the aim will be to increase the understanding of it through qualitative analysis. The extent of correspondence between Canada`s new brand and the foreign policy exercised could be anywhere from a point where the lack of accord is harmful for Canada, to a point where they are completely in sync. In all likelihood, this thesis will conclude that the reality lies somewhere in between these two poles. As a method to help answer the 'extent' in the research questions, parameters will be created in the analysis. One such parameter will be: Harper has made lots of promises to the North and to its people; but how much has he actually delivered on? This can be defined as a parameter of credibility.

Apart from the considerations above, this thesis will also utilise a method for text analysis. The specific methodology chosen for this thesis will be Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). In what follows, I will delve into what QCA contains, and which approach to it I have chosen and why.[9]

Qualitative Content Analysis

Alan Bryman offers a very brief description of QCA. According to him, QCA involves searching for underlying themes within a text. He adds that the process of how themes are extracted does not need to be explained in great detail.[10] Moreover, in contrast to quantitative content analysis, qualitative content analysis is recursive; it is possible for the researcher to constantly revise his/hers chosen themes or categories.[11] The steps for conducting QCA are as follows:

[9] Ibid, 26
[10] Ibid, 557
[11] Ibid, 559

- "Generate a research question;
- Become familiar with the context within which the documents were/are generated;
- Become familiar with a small number of documents (6-10);
- Generate some categories that will guide the collection of data and draft a schedule for collecting the data in terms of the generated categories;
- Test the schedule by using it for collecting data from a number of documents;
- Revise the schedule and select further cases to sharpen it up. "[12]

In addition to QCA, Bryman also discusses thematic analysis which he argues can be utilised in conjunction with QCA. During the process of searching for themes, subthemes and categories one should, among other things, look for:

- *"Repetitions*: topics that recur again and again;
- *Metaphors and analogies:* the ways in which participants represent their thoughts in terms of metaphors or analogies;
- *Transitions:* the ways in which topics shift in transcripts and other materials;
- *Theory*-related material: using social scientific concepts as a springboard for themes."[13]

Repetition is the key criterion for finding themes. Bryman stresses, however, that repetition alone is not sufficient for labelling something as a theme; the terms being repeated, naturally, should be related to the research question(s) generated earlier in the process.[14]

While Bryman offers a general outline of QCA, without getting into too many specifics, Yan Zhang and Barbara M. Wildemuth's article *Qualitative Analysis of Content* includes a more thorough explanation of QCA and its different approaches.

Zhang and Wildemuth base much of their QCA research on the article *Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis* by Hsiu F. Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon – an article which offers the following definition of QCA: "A research method for the subjective interpretation of the

[12] Ibid
[13] Ibid, 580
[14] Ibid

content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns."[15]

There are three approaches to QCA, according to Zhang and Wildemuth: conventional qualitative content analysis, directed content analysis, and summative content analysis. In short, the conventional method involves deriving coding categories from the raw data – this is done directly and inductively. Directed content analysis where coding is instigated by either theory or pertinent research findings (or both). Subsequently, throughout the data analysis, "[…] the researchers immerse themselves in the data and allow themes to emerge from the data."[16] Validating or extending a conceptual framework is said to be the aim of directed content analysis.[17] The last approach, the summative method, suggests that the researchers begin with counting words. Then, the analysis is extended to include latent meanings and themes. Although this approach might sound quantitative at first, Zhang and Wildemuth argue that the purpose is "[…] to explore the usage of the words/indicators in an inductive manner."[18]

The approach selected in this thesis is directed content analysis. As stated previously in this section, interest and curiosity about certain theories (e.g. nation branding) and topics (Canadian foreign policy, the Arctic) were what instigated this thesis-writing process – this stands to contrast to both the conventional and summative method, whose starting points are observation and keywords, respectively. Furthermore, certain themes are essential to this thesis – inspired by the aforementioned theories and topics – but others will develop organically during the analytic process; again, this approach differs from conventional QCA as themes are only developed during data analysis. Lastly, it is also worth mentioning that, when conducting directed content analysis, the themes will develop from theory or relevant research findings, whereas in the case of the conventional approach, for instance, themes derive from the data entirely.[19] However, as stated earlier, approaches to method are rarely purely deductive or inductive – this holds true for this thesis as well, as themes are likely to be

[15] Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1278
[16] Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, 2
[17] Ibid
[18] Ibid
[19] Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1286

developed from the raw data too, resulting in it having a modicum of inductivity (and of the conventional approach).

While both Hsieh & Shannon and Zhang & Wildemuth favour the use of codes and categories in their QCA analysis, to offer greater detail and enhance credibility, this thesis will not conduct a QCA to that level of detail. One of the reasons for this is that such a detailed level of analysis would require an amount of work which would be too heavy for just one researcher. Moreover, for the purpose of this project, it is arguable that sticking with 'just' themes (and subthemes, perhaps) will be sufficient to effectively answer the problem formulation put forth. In order to solve the previously posed research questions, going all the way down to a word or category level would be unnecessary; investigating the larger ideas and motivations is more relevant for this study, as it concerns itself with the rather grand notion of a country rebranding its foreign policy. The recipients of these larger ideas i.e. other nations' publics, for instance, are not interested in the specifics of these ideas — down to a discourse level of analysis — but rather care about the surface-level of these ideas, or messages, that are spread.

Sources

The sources utilised in this thesis will be a mix of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources will consist of transcribed speeches held by Stephen Harper and other members of his government, Speeches from Throne, and documents from the government's official website – in addition to this, there will be some video content. These primary sources are those which, first and foremost, will be subjected to QCA where an attempt to seek out patterns and themes will be made. The reason for mainly considering official documents is that this thesis seeks to analyse Canadian rebranding, i.e. the image that the Canadian government is attempting to convey to both domestic and foreign publics and governments – it is this carefully constructed message, or strategy, which is of interest. On a slightly related note, a consideration that has to be made is that official statements can differ depending on the audience. For instance, what Harper relates to the local press somewhere up in Nunavut, might be quite different from what he informs the global press.

Another reason for mainly considering official governmental documents is that, with regards to nation branding, the main focus will be on the political aspect of it. A different thesis could take a more complete look at nation branding, and as a consequence, analyse completely different texts, or even different kinds of media. Looking at major sports event such as recent the Women`s World Cup in football in Canada, would make for an interesting – albeit completely different — project.

Returning to the consideration of sources in this study, a number of secondary sources will also be included. These will consist of a number of books, for example *Canada's Foreign and Security Policy: Hard and Soft Strategies of a Middle Power* by David Bosold and Nik Hynek. This book offers a detailed look at Canada's position in international politics today; it includes articles, by a variety of authors, mainly focusing on Canada's role as a middle power– a topic which is highly pertinent to the first research question. This book will be essential for delineating Canada's old/present image as a middle power, which is one of the assumptions at the beginning of this thesis.

Apart from books as secondary sources, a number of academic articles will also be utilised. Here, articles from experts on issues related to the Arctic and Canada, such as Michael Byers will be considered. Additionally, a number of newspaper articles may be valuable in this thesis – quotes from experts are often presented in newspapers such as *The Globe and Mail*, for instance. However, these must come under more intense scrutiny, as they are not held to the same standard as peer-reviewed articles.

In an effort to ensure credibility in this thesis, the notion of triangulation will be used. Basically, triangulation is the act of using one or more methods, or one or more sources to analyse data. It can be thought of as cross-checking.[20] With regards to this paper, triangulation will be helpful to determine the credibility of certain sources. For instance, if Stephen Harper, in one of his speeches, claims that everything is going according to plan in the Arctic that is only one account of the truth. If we then cross-check this statement with someone else's version of what is happening — for example Michael Byers — we might get a very different opinion on how well things are developing in the Arctic. Moreover, as noted at the beginning of this

[20] Bryman, 2012, 392

section, the content of the Harper Government`s message might differ depending on the recipients – triangulation can be for this as well, to see how dependent on context the message is. Triangulation of different sources — primary and secondary — will assist the researcher in getting a more objective picture of what is actually happening.

As noted, triangulating methods would be a way to ensure even greater credibility. However, there are limitations to what can be adequately covered in 60 or so pages, therefore only one method will be used in this thesis.

Delimitation

To properly account for the scope of this thesis, a brief delimitation will be offered in the following. As stated in the introduction, Canadian foreign policy, Canada's status as a middle power, and rebranding during Stephen Harper's reign — from 2006 to 2015 — will be the main focus of this paper.

More important, however, is to clarify what the rebranding aspect of this thesis entails. Within the notion of rebranding, primary focus will be given to the political aspect of it.
Canada's rebranding can, arguably, be viewed in several different political arenas. There is, of course, the increasing focus on the Arctic, which has already been mentioned numerous times, but then there is also those who argue that the Harper government has taken a demonstrably more realist turn regarding conflicts on a global scale. This can, conceivably, be witnessed in how Canada, for example, has acted in Libya, Afghanistan, and how rhetorically aggressive Harper has been towards Putin after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Additionally, there are some scholars who analyse this turn in Canadian foreign policy as a desire for the Harper Government to create a more masculine image of Canada – one to replace, or at least compete, with the dominant peacekeeping one.[21] Others frame it in a more domestic setting: how there has been an effort from Stephen Harper, via foreign and domestic policy, to shift the power from Liberals to Conservatives; from the East to the West.[22] There is, in other words, no shortage of ways of how the Harper Era has been framed.

[21] McKay & Swift, 2012
[22] Bricker & Ibbitson, 2013

In any case, while this line of thought is interesting, a study such as this only allows for a limited number of topics to be discussed, in order to achieve the desirable 'thick description' or 'deep analysis.'

Therefore, by taking the above into account, the main rebranding part that will be of interest for this thesis, will be the political rebranding from peacekeeping middle power to Arctic steward.

Summary

To conclude this chapter, a short summary will be offered. As stated at the beginning of this section, the method utilised for this project will mainly be deductive, with a few inductive elements.

Moreover, this will be a qualitative study; to be more precise, the method will be a sub-method within qualitative content analysis called directed content analysis. A characteristic of directed content analysis is that the study is instigated by theory or research findings. Another typical trait is that themes and subthemes are generated both before and during data analysis. The final characteristic of directed content analysis that was discussed is that themes and categories would develop from theory and research findings. It should, however, be noted that in the case of this study, it is very possible that themes will develop from the data as well (a trait typical for conventional analysis). Nevertheless, directed content analysis (mixed with a little bit of conventional analysis) is, arguably, the most fitting method for this thesis. With regards to sources, a number of primary and secondary ones shall be utilised throughout this project: transcribed speeches, government websites, books, academic articles, and newspaper articles. To ensure credibility, triangulation will be conducted when handling sources; this process of looking at sources from different angles leads to a more fair representation of the reality that is under scrutiny than just looking from one perspective.

Finally, a few thoughts were offered on the limitations of this thesis. It was stated that the timeframe for it was mainly from 2006 to 2015. In addition to this, it was also conceded that although it would be fascinating to look at rebranding in several different arenas of

Canadian foreign policy, this thesis' limited scope would only allow for the rebranding of Canada as a middle power to Arctic protector to be analysed.

Theory

Neorealism

Neorealism, or neo-structuralism, is the modified version of an earlier theory: realism – a theory that will be summed up quickly in the following.

Central to realism is the idea that only states are of relevance in international relations. These states can perform a number of actions: defend their interests, impose their will, form alliances, safeguard their resources, react to external threats, and impose their will on other states.[23] All of these aforementioned actions that states can perform equate to power – but how is power acquired in a realist world? Realism holds that the most important type of power is hard power (which is opposite from soft power). Hard power is first and foremost measured through military might: number of soldiers in reserve, number of battleships, tanks, aircrafts, submarines, missiles and nuclear warheads, and, additionally, infrastructure; does the state have access to highly developed railroads and seaports? A further indicator of hard power is economy, which is measured via GDP. [24]

The view that anarchy rules in international relations, is another central theme in realism. Anarchy on the international stage is the idea that there is no executive power which can control, or regulate, the behaviour of states. Agreements might be made, supranational bodies might be implemented, but the former do not last forever, and the latter can be ignored by states without all too grave consequences. There are two types of states: status quo states and revisionist states; the former attempt to maintain their status, to retain what is already theirs; the latter strives to improve their situation, to change, or revise, the international order.[25] Realism contends that states are in continual conflict. This behaviour is rooted in

[23] Shiraev & Zubok, 2013, 41
[24] Ibid
[25] Ibid

human behaviour – realists hold that humans are aggressive and greedy, and therefore states act accordingly; always looking out for their own well-being, interests, and permanently seeking to increase their power. Moreover, states are never equal: they are different in size, geographical position, have different natural resources, different economic and military power. Thus there are great powers, middle powers (theory on middle powers will be incorporated into the analysis later on), and small powers. Great powers have more options than small powers as their interests and influence extend to all around world. Further, great powers can offer smaller powers support, or protection, in exchange for political or economic concessions – the small power can, of course, choose to refuse protection and act alone (or seek help elsewhere) at its own risk. When a strong state, or great power, is so influential that it can impose its will on nearby states it is referred to as hegemony. Examples of hegemonic states, or empires, in the past would be Ancient Greece or Great Britain in the 19th century.[26]

While anarchy can said to be the natural state in international relations, realists argue, that, with time, an international order emerges. This order is determined by the distribution of power; the most powerful nations are at the top, naturally. There are three types of power distribution: unipolar, bipolar, and multipolar. Early in the 19th century, the world was multipolar i.e. a number of great powers: Britain, France, Germany, Japan, USA were all, somewhat, equal in strength. After the Second World War the world became bipolar with the US and Soviet Union keeping each other in check during the Cold War. Since the Cold War, unipolarity has arguably dominated the international stage, with the US becoming the most powerful nation by a distance.[27] With the rise of China, and to some extent the EU, and other states such as Brazil and India, there are those who contend that the world might return a multipolar system in the near future.[28]

Neorealism pays close attention to the aforementioned systems, or structures, of uni-, bi-, and multipolarity. Structure determines the behaviour of states – for example, with the US being the most powerful state today, all other nations have to adapt to this unipolarity. If the world was bipolar, or multipolar, they would act differently. Neorealists also hold that the

[26] Ibid, 42
[27] Ibid, 42-43
[28] Ibid, 44

motivation of states is not just to seek more and more power, but rather they seek security within the structure. As noted earlier, neoliberals agree that this structure is anarchic but they argue that the neorealist belief that this structure causes state behaviour to be completely guided by survival, or a quest for security, is over-exaggerated.[29] This neorealist argument, however, explains how stability can occur within an international order; if states within an anarchic structure feel secure, peace is possible.[30]

Contrary to traditional realists, neorealists do not work under the assumption that states behave like greedy and self-serving humans. Further, according to neorealists, war is possible but not unavoidable – the reason for this has, again, to do with the structure of international relations. There are two groups of neorealists: defensive neorealists and offensive neorealists. Defensive neorealists – the most prominent being Kenneth Waltz – argue that military confrontations should only be used as a last resort; they are lamentable results of shifts in power. An example of this is World War I where great powers were lured into war because of fear and suspicion.[31]

On the other hand, offensive realists such as John Mearsheimer contend that strong states are constantly attempting to maximize their influence and power. Offensive realism entails acting pre-emptively, before serious threats to the international order emerge. Furthermore, they also encourage decisive action against revisionist states; Britain's appeasement strategy during WWII is given as prime example of how *not* to act against a revisionist regime. Instead of negotiations and compromises, taking the war to Germany, acting offensively would have been the correct strategy.[32]

With regards to international cooperation and gains that can be achieved through such collaboration, neorealists subscribe to the notion of relative gains. They argue that when a mutual gain is possible for two states, the lesser, or the more insecure, of the two states will always question the division of the gain – specifically, who will gain more? The reason to this is the fear that the state which gains more might use their superior gain to somehow damage the

[29] Baldwin, 1993, 4-5
[30] Shiraev & Zubok, 2015. 45
[31] Ibid, 55
[32] Ibid

state which is receiving the lesser gain. Even if the state that gains less might still gain a considerable amount, the fear of the other state's, relatively, larger gain will discourage any cooperation at all.[33] One of today's leading neorealists, Joseph Grieco, sums this position up quite succinctly: "The fundamental goal of states in any relationship is to prevent others from achieving advances in their relative capabilities."[34]

In addition to its focus on relative gains, neorealism also concerns itself with state capabilities (which seems to be used somewhat interchangeably with power), as opposed to state intentions. Capabilities are easily measured compared to intentions: a state's hard power — its military and so on — is somewhat readily observable whereas what the political leadership of a state *intends* is uncertain. [35]

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is, as the term suggests, a newer, or modified, version of liberalism in International Relations.

Liberalism – as an approach to IR – is, in short, based on three core principles. The first one being its rejection of the notion that nations, as a result of worldwide anarchy, are in a permanent state of conflict – further, liberalism rejects the idea of power politics.[36] Moreover, liberalists reject the realist notion of relative gains — instead liberalists argue that it is possible for two states to both gain something via cooperation. This is referred to as absolute gains within a non-zero sum game. Consequently, a second core principle of liberalism is its underlining of international cooperation and mutual benefits. Closely related to the idea of international cooperation lies the third principle of liberalism: nations and states are not the only significant actors in international relations: international organisations and other non-state actors also play a vital role in shaping a state's policy choices and preferences.[37]

Another basic assumption of liberalism is the democratic peace theory. This notion holds that democratic states will never go to war against each other; they might fight non-

[33] Waltz, 1979, 105
[34] Grieco, 1988, 487
[35] Baldwin, 1993, 6
[36] Shiraev & Zubok, 2015, 46
[37] Ibid

democratic states, but not democratic ones. The reasoning behind this theory is that the populations of democratic states identify with each other: they share a similar culture of democracy, openness, compromise, and negotiation. They understand one another and do not fear each other, therefore a solution through negotiations and compromise is more likely than war. In addition to this, democratic nations often depend on each other, both economically and in other ways. Thus, a war would not only cost in terms of lives and military expenses, but also when it comes to the corporate aspect in both countries.[38]

While liberalism and neoliberalism are quite similar, there are a few differences. For example, neoliberalists emphasise the relationship between states and international non-state actors through the notion of complex interdependence.

Furthermore, neoliberalists are more cynical with regards to anarchy and chaos. While liberalism argues that anarchy in the international arena can be overcome, neoliberalists accept it to a point; anarchy may reign, but it does not prevent states from cooperating instead of fighting over power.

As noted earlier, neoliberals are more concerned with intentions vs. the neorealist worry about capabilities. However, Robert O. Keohane argues that neorealists are more concerned about intentions than they let on. Worrying about what another state might do with their relative gain is indeed worrying about the intentions of another state, and not their capabilities.[39]

Mentioned earlier was also the liberalist focus on international cooperation. Neoliberalism takes this notion further; they argue that complex interdependence contributes to mitigating anarchy. States become more and more entangled with each other, as they form international organisations and agreements in the shape of supranational institutions, common markets, military alliances and so on. This dependence on one another naturally decreases the uncertainty of state behavior. Neorealists agree with the fact that international institutions and organisations play a role in today's international relations, but they argue that neoliberals overstate their effect on anarchy. [40]

[38] Ibid, 51
[39] Keohane, quoted in Baldwin, 1993, 7
[40] Baldwin, 1993, 8

Finally, it is worth noting that while realism, traditionally, divided states into great and small powers, and that neorealism refined this idea slightly by adding middle powers to the mix, neoliberalist argue that an even more complex system is at play. Robert O. Keohane contends that there are four tiers of states in the world: System-Determining, System-Influencing, System-Affecting, and System-Ineffectual; or Great, Secondary, Middle, and Small.[41] As this theory was proposed in 1969, the heyday of the Cold War, it is, naturally, highly influenced by the bipolar structure at the time. When explaining the four roles, Keohane claims that the Great Power plays a critical role in shaping the system – much like Britain did when they were at their Imperial peak, and how the US and the Soviet did during the Cold War. The Secondary Powers might not be able to dominate the structure, but, nevertheless, they might have a large effect through unilateral or multilateral action. As for the Middle Powers, these can only hope to exert any influence via multilateral work in small groups, or alliances. Lastly, the Small Powers are seen as ineffectual; only able to have any effect in large groups where their stance is of little matter anyway.[42]

Summary of neorealism and neoliberalism

To end this section, a few summarising thoughts on the main characteristics of both neorealism and neoliberalism. For neorealists, states are the most important actors, although they have grown to admit that international organisations and institutions play some part in international relations. Neorealism contends that anarchy rules and that therefore the most powerful states – those who are strongest in terms of military and economy – are the ones that set the agenda in IR. The main motivation for states, however, is not increasing power, as realism purports, but instead security – power for the sake of protecting one against other states. In a neorealist world, structure is imperative: the international structure for states can be unipolar (dominated by one powerful country), bipolar (dominated by two equally powerful countries), or multipolar (controlled by a handful of great states). The behaviour of states then, is dependent on what

[41] Keohane, 1969, 296-7
[42] Ibid

sort of structure is present; states act differently in a unipolar world than they would in a multipolar one.

Neorealism can be further grouped into defensive realism and offensive realism. Defensive realists see war as a last resort, while offensive realists argue that pre-emptive attacks sometimes are a good strategy.

Although cooperation between states is seen as possible, neorealists adhere to the rather skeptical view of relative gains with regards to this. In short, the notion of relative gains promulgates that in any cooperation between states, one state will always gain more than the other. This leads to cooperation being seen as unfair and undesirable – after all, the state that gains more will utilise this to increase its capabilities which gives it the potential to destroy the state that got the lesser gain.

Neoliberalism accepts the neorealist assumption that the international structure of states is anarchical. One of the main differences between the two sides, however, is that neoliberalists do not see anarchy putting such severe constraints on international cooperation as neorealists do. Arguably, this line of logic ties nicely into the notion of absolute gains which is juxtaposed with relative gains. Basically, neoliberals are of the belief that even if cooperation between two or more states does not give all states the exact same yield, it can still be beneficial. State X might become relatively stronger than state Y because of the deal that was struck, but there is a very low possibility that state Y will attack state X because of this increase in capabilities. This more optimistic view of states is partly based on the democratic peace theory which holds that democratic states will not enter into a war with one another.

As mentioned earlier, neoliberalists place greater emphasis on international cooperation than neorealists do. Cooperation immediately becomes more attractive when adhering to absolute gains, but neoliberals also argue that it can have a mitigating effect on anarchy; when states become entangled with, and dependent on, each other they are less likely to enter into serious conflicts as this would be damaging in several different ways.

Nation Branding

The concept of nation branding is a relatively new one. Simon Anholt is credited with coining the term in the late 1990s,[43] [44] but there are those who argue that – although not named as such – something akin to nation branding dates back to the early 20th century. Gyorgy Szondi, for example, refers to one of the founding fathers of nation branding, Wally Olins, who contends that the process of nations branding and rebranding themselves has always been present – though obviously not before the birth of nations themselves. Szondi also points towards Goran Bolin who has a study examining The World Fairs (from the 1950s and onwards) as an arena for nations to market themselves.[45] In addition to this, Szondi also cites the case of Lithuania. When Lithuania declared independence in 1918, it subsequently, a year later, sought the recognition of the US. To help put a positive spin on the nation in the US, the Lithuanian government hired Austrian-American Edward Bernays (known as "The Father of Public Relations" by some). Bernays' lobbying included educating Americans about the Lithuanian language, their music, as well as sport in the country.[46] Ying Fan argues that nation branding draws inspiration from four different areas of research: *Country of Origin (COO)*, *Destination/Place Branding*, *Public Diplomacy*, and *National Identity*. Where nation branding differs from these four areas of study, especially the first three, is that it concerns itself with the image of a nation as a whole – not just parts of it.[47]

But what is nation branding, exactly? In the following, this thesis will investigate what a theory of nation branding encompasses.

In her book, *Branding The Nation: The Global Business of National Identity*, Melissa Aronczyk defines nation branding as "[…]the result of the interpenetration of commercial and public sector interests to communicate national priorities among domestic and international populations for a variety of interrelated purposes[…]."[48] In furtherance of this provisional definition, Aronczyk discusses three dimensions of nation branding. The first dimension

[43] Fan, 2010, 97
[44] Szondi, 2008, 4
[45] Ibid, 3
[46] Ibid, 3-4
[47] Fan, 2010, 98
[48] Aronczyk, 2013, 16

concerns international capital competitiveness: how a nation's public and private sector pool their resources together, in order to compete on the global stage when it comes to "[…] tourism, foreign direct investment, import-export trade, higher education, and skilled labor."[49]

The second dimension of nation branding, according to Aronczyk, is the desire to "[…] convey an image of legitimacy and authority in diplomatic arenas […]"[50] She expands on this by saying that earning valuable seats, or a voice, in various transnational, multilateral decision-making bodies and coalitions is a desired outcome of nation branding, as this provides nations with both proactive and reactive options for controlling their international reputation.

Finally, Aronczyk holds that there is a recursive element to nation branding. Similar to branding in the more traditional sense, one of the ideas of nation branding is that a nation has to differentiate itself if there is to be any global resonance. The hope and aim of nation branding differentiation is that if a nation's government succeeds in creating a positive image among foreign publics, that this success will resonate back home among the domestic audience. This will help foster domestic consensus and patriotism, argues Aronczyk.[51] She goes on to define nation branding as 'soft power,' and as means of promoting the positive side of nationalism: "[…] a nation's brand is meant to offer a version of nationalism rooted in the unifying spirit of benign commercial 'interests' rather than in the potential divisions of political 'passions.'"[52]

As noted earlier in this section, Ying Fan argues that nation branding is the larger whole, made up by four smaller components: COO, Destination/Place Branding, Public Diplomacy (which he also refers to as Political Branding), and National Identity. Indeed, scholars of nation branding seem to come from all these research areas, and this contributes to a lack of consensus on a general theory of nation branding, as they all seem to focus on different areas of the theory.[53] In his quest to define nation branding, Fan also discusses what the theory is not. He stresses the difference between a nation brand and a *national brand*: the latter being a brand that is distributed and sold nationwide, while the former is "[…] the mental image of a

[49] Ibid
[50] Ibid
[51] Ibid
[52] Ibid, 17
[53] Fan, 2010, 99-100

country held by foreign people."[54] Moreover, a nation brand differs from a commercial brand insofar that a nation brand is not something that can be fixed in the short term, through a catchy slogan, or a quick campaign.[55] Fan is also in opposition to the idea that nation branding is a means to 'remoulding national identities' as Wally Olins holds. National identity refers to how the people of a nation see itself, what the "[…] characteristics of a nation […]" are and which of these characteristics the public deems "[…] to be central, enduring and distinctive in a nation when past, present and future is taken into account."[56] Nation branding, on the other hand, concerns itself with image and reputation: "A nation's image is defined by the people outside the country; their perceptions are influenced by stereotyping, media coverage as well as personal experience."[57] Nation branding attempts to control this image; to promote a particular distinction of a nation. Reputation then, is the feedback that a nation receives from the foreign public – does this nation live up the image it promotes? In other words, is there any credibility?

The importance of credibility is why both Ying Fan and Simon Anholt[58] argue, that in order to become successful at nation branding, you have to practice what you preach: "Nation branding, in essence, is to align the nation's image to the reality."[59] The question then becomes: "What is reality?" Is *reality* a state's conduct and behavior in the international and domestic arena, or is it the public's national self-perception? Towards the end of his paper, Fan arrives at this definition for nation branding (or nation image management, as he calls it): "Nation branding is a process by which a nation's images can be created or altered, monitored, evaluated and proactively managed in order to enhance the country's reputation among a target international audience."[60]

If we are to compare Aronczyk and Fan's interpretations of nation branding, there are definitely some similarities. Both of them stress the importance of nation branding being a strategy meant to influence international audiences. In addition to this, they agree that image

[54] Ibid, 97
[55] Ibid
[56] Ibid, 100-101
[57] Ibid, 100
[58] Which Country Does the Most Good for the World? Anholt, 2014
[59] Fan, 2010, p. 101
[60] Ibid

management is an integral part of nation branding. Furthermore, they both discuss how differentiation, or national distinction in the case of Fan, is imperative to the theory. In general, Fan seems to focus more on the political aspect of nation branding, while Aronczykzyk's seems to be more all-encompassing in her view of nation branding. Fan concludes his paper by speculating if nation branding as a theory is perhaps not specific enough. After all, branding, in the traditional sense, often comes down to generating a relatively simple message that the masses can easily swallow. But is it possible to brand a country in that manner? Finding a simple way that truly describes a country politically, economically, culturally and so on is easier said than done.[61] This is especially true for a country such as Canada – often characterised as a cultural mosaic — which has two official languages, three recognised 'nations' within the state, and a plethora of different immigrant communities and so on. How is there ever going to be a national consensus on a simple description of what it is to be Canadian?

With regards to this thesis, the primary focus within nation branding will be on the political aspect as this is a paper mainly dealing with the shift in foreign policy Canada has experienced in the last decade.

Soft Power?

While soft power can be considered an integral part of neoliberalism, this thesis will, by and large, exclude this concept as a theoretical tool. Since a similar concept – nation branding — is already included in this project, adding yet another to the mix would arguably be theoretical overkill. The two concepts are extremely similar in the sense that they are all-encompassing, umbrella concepts that include the aforementioned dimensions of politics, economy, and culture. The most striking difference is the origin of the two concepts: nation branding deriving from a number of marketing disciplines; soft power developed from international relations theory, in particular neoliberalism. Consequently, nation branding innately concerns itself with the image of a nation, and, true to its marketing-roots, branding specialists may be hired by countries to conduct campaigns. Soft power primarily deals with the notion of attraction – the differences between the two concepts here, however, are semantic at best; after all, the idea of

[61] Ibid 102

cultivating a desirable image is to attract consumers, or in this instance, nations and their citizens.

Earlier in this section, Melissa Aronczykzyk defined nation branding as a sort of soft power. As an example of how nation branding and soft power might work together however, Ying Fan suggests that soft power can be communicated via nation branding. A country can have great potential for soft power, but if this fails to be properly communicated, or branded, it will be useless. [62]

Analysis

Introduction

The analysis section in the thesis will, mainly, be divided into two chapters. The first part of the analysis will concern itself with an assumption that lies at the heart of this project: that Canada, for a large chunk of the 20th century, has defined itself as a middle power, which is one of the leaders among nations when it comes to peacekeeping and diplomacy. As it stands, this is merely an unproven assumption but the hope is – through the assistance of a number of academic articles, and some of the theories already introduced in the previous section – that this presumption will be accounted for. Subsequently, this first part of the analysis will also include some analysis. To be more precise, the second half of the first research question — the part dealing with to what extent Canada could be consider a middle power during Harper's stint — will be answered. In order to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion to this question, QCA will be utilised on a number of different texts produced by the Harper Government.

After accounting for middle power assumption and the extent of Canada's middle power status, it will be possible to move on to other two research questions posed in the introductory section of this thesis. This will be the second part of the analytical section, and it will mostly look at these issues in an Arctic context. In order to answer how Canada has rebranded itself to

[62] Fan, 2008, 18

the international community in the 21st century, a number of texts – ranging from the Canadian government's international arctic policy to Speeches from the Throne – shall be taken into consideration. Furthermore, already introduced theories will, be utilised here – in particular that of nation branding. As noted elsewhere in this project, the focus will be on how Stephen Harper and his government have attempted to move from the established image of Canada as a peacekeeping middle power to a more forceful nation which, first and foremost, seeks to brand itself as the most notable protector of The Arctic.

This second chapter of the analysis will also consider the third research question posed in the introduction. To properly assess to what extent Canada's new brand corresponds with the foreign policy exercised during Stephen Harper's reign.

Canada as a peacekeeping middle power

Introduction

The following will be an analysis and outline of Canada's role as a middle power for the latter half of the 20th century. First, definitions of what exactly a middle power is will be considered; thereafter, a historical overview will be offered; subsequently, the decline in *middlepowermanship* in the 1990s up until now will be investigated; finally, the popularity of the middle power concept in Canada, among both government and public, will be analysed.

Apart from proving the assumption held in this project – that Canada is/was a peacekeeping middle power – the point of this chapter is also to explain the popular narrative which Harper is attempting to replace.

Towards the end of this chapter, Canada's current middle power status will be considered. Is the Harper Government content with just eradicating peacekeeping from the Canadian hearts and souls, or is this a larger fight which also involves a desire to move away from the middle power category? To answer this question, QCA will be applied to some speeches and middle power theory, which will be elucidated upon in the following, shall also be untilised.

Definitions

An article by *The Economist* in 1943 was perhaps the first mention of Canada as a middle power. In an age where the realist dichotomy of great powers vs. small powers was very much alive and well, the paper proclaimed Canada to be a middle power: "In absolute terms the distance which separates Canada from the Great Powers is less than that between her own achievements and that of any other of the small powers."[63] In 1945, Canadian diplomat Lionel Gelber allied himself with *The Economist*'s criticism of the realist dichotomy by arguing that "What the middle power idea does, in brief, is to adopt the conclusions of realism and extend them. Since major powers are differentiated by their far greater functions from the rest, the Middle Powers ask that they be distinguished from the lesser ones by the same criteria. A voice in decisions should correspond with strength in enforcement."[64]

Despite these calls for a more specific international role for Canada and other nations, the UN rejected the notion that there were more than two tiers of states in the world: Great Powers and Small Powers.[65] As time went on, however, especially after the Canadian success as mediator during the Suez Crisis in 1956-7, the notion of the middle power became more and more accepted. As was noted in the theory section of this thesis, Robert O. Keohane, in 1969, suggested that there were in fact four tiers of power: Great, Secondary, Middle, and Small – and, according to him, Canada was a middle power.[66] The re-invention of roles in the international system was also highly influenced by the bipolar Cold War. If the US and the Soviet Union were the only great powers, where did that leave former great powers, such as France, Britain and China?

But what exactly is a middle power? A simple explanation of what a middle power is, would be that is one that is situated in-between a great power and a small power, as was noted earlier. Canadian academic and diplomat John W. Holmes (he was part of Louis St. Laurent's government) defined a middle powers as states that "'did not claim great-power status but were far from negligible in military and economic resources, [and] ought to be assured more

[63] *The Economist,*1943 quoted in Chapkin, 2000, 192
[64] Chapkin, 2000, 193
[65] Chapkin, 2000, 192
[66] Keohane, 1969, 296

influential positions in international organizations and a greater share in the ordering of the world than should important smaller states."[67] To add to this, middle powers, especially in the climate of the Cold War, were able to perform a mediatory function when disputes between the two superpowers were on the horizon.[68] For Canada, this mediating quality led to a number of synonyms for the state: "The Helpful Fixer", "The Honest Broker", and "Peacemaker."[69]

In his attempt to define the concept of middle power, Richard K. Nossal divides the notion into two further concepts: *middlepowerhood* and *middlepowermanship*. The first concept refers to the condition or status of a state, i.e. what a state *is*. One way to look at this is through the realist and quantifiable idea of power-ranking: "[…] geographic size, size of population, size and nature of the economy, level of industrial and technological development, degree of economic dependence, size and sophistication of military capabilities."[70] In other words, very similar to how hard power is measured. However, such objective measures have been criticised for being arbitrary.[71]

Instead, the idea of middlepowermanship is used. Rather than by analysing what a state *is*, looking at what a state *does* is more helpful in defining whether a power is a middle power or not.[72] A particular type of diplomacy is utilised by middle powers; this diplomacy has three fundamental features.

The first essential feature of middle power diplomacy is compromise. Middle powers tend to seek compromise because they are negatively affected by great power conflict. Usually, a conflict between two states will end up with a winner-takes-all result (a zero-sum game), but middle powers attempt avoid this scenario through compromise. Peace is seen as prosperous for all nations – absolute gains are to be made – and thus avoiding conflict is imperative. Further, middle powers are relatively content with their standing in the world order; therefore, they can be seen as status-quo states, happy to preserve the international order.[73]

[67] Holmes quoted in John Hilliker, 2010, 192
[68] Hilliker, 2010, 192
[69] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 854
[70] Nossal, 2010, 25
[71] Ibid
[72] Ibid, 26
[73] Ibid

Secondly, middle powers tend to favour multilateralism. They might engage in the occasional unilateral or bilateral approach to policy, but multilateral solutions are always preferred.[74] As argued in the theory section, multilateralism, which can be seen as a form of interdependence, is desired in international relations as it increases trust among nations, and decreases the chances of conflict.

Finally, the idea that middle powers take part in "acts of good international citizenship"[75] is also a characteristic of these states.[76] These are acts that are performed by states that have a much wider definition of self-interest than the average state. For example, partaking in a peacekeeping mission in Rwanda does not directly benefit Canada and the Canadian people — however, it does help Rwanda and the wider Central African region. Alternatively, one can also argue that it does benefit Canada in the sense that peace in an African region also contributes to worldwide peace. Nevertheless, acts of good international citizenship can also be motivated by purely moral reasons, where the acting country receives no benefit at all – it will just be a case of 'doing the right thing' in the face of injustice.'[77]

While Nossal's criteria arguably make more sense than the arbitrary measurable method referred to earlier it has his problems — which Nossal himself is the first to reflect on. Firstly, this sort of reasoning is tautological. Middlepowermanship is being defined by looking back on how — the archetypal middle power — Canada has conducted its foreign policy.[78] Secondly, Nossal argues that the three essential features discussed above are not exclusively Canadian, or necessarily specific to middle powers. Many states, both great and small partake in multilateralism, compromise, and act as good international citizens. [79]

Admittedly, Nossal's second point is logical. Using a purely behavioral model does not help us define what a middle power is. However, a combination of the two models — power-ranking and behavior — is possibly the best method of defining a middle power. A state whose power-ranking is high and whose behaviour is an example of middlepowermanship is likely to

[74] Ibid, 27
[75] Evans, quoted in Nossal, 2010, 27
[76] Nossal, 2010, 27
[77] Ibid
[78] Ibid, 28
[79] Ibid

be a middle power. Needless to say, a small state with a low power-ranking is unlikely to be considered a middle power based on behavior alone. Similarly, one can argue that while states such has the US and Russia have the power-ranking and, sometimes, exhibit the middlepowermanship to be considered a middle power these should be excluded from the category on the basis that they also often act unilaterally.

Historical Overview – The Golden Age

The beginnings of Canada's role as a middle power can be traced back to WWII. Michael S. Neiberg argues that "Canada's ability to have a voice disproportionate to its size came, in an era of world wars, from the tremendous accomplishments of its conventional armed forces."[80] Similarly, Mackenzie King — the Canadian Prime Minister at the time — was of the opinion that his state deserved a greater role in international politics, given its contributions, both militarily and economically, to the Allies in WWII.[81]

In the 1940s, the first calls for Canada to be considered a middle power were heard, as we learned in the previous subchapter. That same decade, a Canadian delegation was present and an active co-founder in San Francisco, in 1945, where the UN was established[82] — moreover, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was authored by the Canadian, John Peters Humphrey. Another delegation was sent to Kashmir in 1948 to negotiate a ceasefire between India and Pakistan — in cooperation with a few other nations these negotiations were successful and marked one of the first acts of peacekeeping by Canada.[83] 1948 was also the year when Louis St. Laurent came to power in Canada — he had previously been the foreign minister under Mackenzie King and had been the chief architect of a number of foreign policy plans, which had been introduced the year before, highlighting an internationalist orientation that would influence Canadian foreign policy for decades to come.[84] However, it was eight years later — when Lester B. Pearson, Laurent's foreign minister, was instrumental in solving the Suez Crisis — that Canadians could truly reap the benefits of Laurent's work. Pearson won

[80] Neiberg, 2012, 9
[81] Nossal, 2010, 20
[82] Hilliker, 2010, 193
[83] Neiberg, 2012, 11
[84] Keating, 2010, 7

the Nobel Peace Prize the following year, as some argued that he prevented a possible nuclear war. This became a, or perhaps *the*, defining moment of Canada's status as a middle power. Moreover, Pearson established the UNs peacekeeping force, and later went on to become Prime Minister of Canada. This period, the 1950s and 1960s, where Canada demonstrated its qualities as a peacekeeper and mediator is often referred to as "The Golden Age."[85] [86]

Middlepowermanship under Pierre Trudea u

When Pierre Trudeau came to power for the first time, in 1968, he had a somewhat negative view of Canada's image as a middle power and a peacekeeper. According to a foreign policy review which was initiated by Trudeau in the 1960s, the middle power role of Canada was "doomed to disappear." Furthermore, Trudeau thought little of the notion that being "good fellows" was any sort of substitute for real foreign policy.[87] Nevertheless, during Trudeau's two stints as Prime Minister (1968-79 & 1980-84) he had two noteworthy instances of successful mediating. The first occurrence was in Singapore in 1971 where the prospects for messy break-up in the Commonwealth of Nations were looming: several African leaders were highly critical of Britain's decision to sell naval arms to the apartheid regime in South Africa. Trudeau negotiated a compromise where the Commonwealth would meet later to discuss maritime security in the Indian Ocean and he was involved in drafting the Singapore Declaration which included a "[…] carefully worded statement against racism."[88] 12 years later, in the last stages of his second term as Prime Minster, Trudeau launched himself on a self-declared peace mission where he, among other nations, visited the US, the Soviet Union, and China in an attempt to ease the Cold War tensions. During this tour, Trudeau in fact succumbed to the familiar, Canadian, middle power rhetoric as he argued "that middle powers could play a 'constructive part'[89] in defusing superpower tensions.[90] Trudeau's eventual succumbing to the discourse of middlepowerhood/middlepowermanship — despite his initial criticism of it — is a

[85] Hilliker, 2010, 193
[86] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 849
[87] Nossal, 2010, 21
[88] Hilliker, 2010, 194
[89] Granatstein & Bothwell, quoted in Nossal, 2010, 21
[90] Nossal, 2010, 21

testament to just how entrenched the concept was in Canadian foreign policy, according to Richard K. Nossal.[91]

The Decline of Middlepowermanship

In their respective official statements on foreign policy, the three consecutive governments after Trudeau's – Mulroney's statement in 1985, Chretien's in 1995, and Paul Martin's in 2005 — made no real mention of the middle power concept. Martin did briefly mention it, but only to call it an outdated term.[92]

Despite a declining status as a middle power, there were still some examples of middlepowermanship in the 1990s. It is, for example, worth mentioning that Canada had been involved in every peacekeeping mission up until the 1990s.[93] Further, it is also worth noting that Canadians had one of the highest amounts of personnel in UN peacekeeping missions in the 1990s (2,000 people[94]), and that up until in 2006 — as noted in the introduction to this thesis — it had the second highest amount of peacekeeping fatalities. As for peacekeeping specifically related to the 1990s, Canadians partook in the (disastrous) UN peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia. Furthermore, Lloyd Axworthy's work on human security and his successful involvement in establishing the Ottawa treaty, which banned the use of anti-personnel mines, also took place in the 1990s.

The decline of Canadian middlepowermanship arguably began in the mid to late 1990s, and has continued to this day. There were a number of factors contributing to this fall: unsuccessful UN missions in the early 90s, an international shift from peacekeeping to peacemaking, and successive governments with little to no interest in peacekeeping.

Perhaps the biggest failure in the history of Canadian peacekeeping occurred in Somalia in 1993, where two peacekeepers tortured and killed a Somalian teenager. The following years were unsuccessful in terms of UN peacekeeping too: in 1994 in Rwanda Canadians had a leading role in the UN peacekeeping force which failed to prevent a genocide resulting in the

[91] ibid
[92] Ibid
[93] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 845
[94] Keating, 2010, 13

deaths of 800,000 Tutsis; in 1995, 8,000 Bosnian men and boys were slaughtered in Srebenica by Serbian forces (although Canada was not specifically involved here). Needless to say, the failure of three consecutive UN missions led to a decline in UN peacekeeping the following years.

There is also the argument that peacekeeping only works with regards to interstate conflict — not intrastate, which has become more and more common. In the words of the retired Canadian major-general Mackenzie Lewis: "'There is no conventional peacekeeping out there; it's a myth", Lewis added that "The era of Cold War peacekeeping, with UN forces interpositioned along ceasefire lines is over and the UN has shown it isn't good at coping with messy sectarian wars."[95]

This fall can also be attributed to consecutive Canadian governments, beginning with Chretien who cut funding for international policy in the early 1990s.[96] Moreover, since the 90s there has been a significant lack of continuity in Canadian foreign policy — something that is perfectly illustrated by the carousel of foreign ministers which have been in government since 1993 (10 in 22 years, with only two, Axworthy and Baird, holding the position for more than four years). According to Tom Keating this has led to "[…] a more transient foreign policy directed more by the political whims of the day than by any clear course interests, let alone by responsibilities to the broader international community."[97] There is also statistical evidence for the decline in Canadian peacekeeping: as was noted earlier, peacekeeping personnel peaked in the early 1990s with 2,000 people deployed; in 2014, this number was down to a meager 118.[98] Finally, it should also be mentioned that Canada, while refusing to get involved in the Iraq War in 2003, have participated in NATO-led warfighting/peacemaking missions in Afghanistan.

[95] Mackenzie, quoted in Koring, 2012
[96] Keating, 2010, 11
[97] Keating, 2010, 12
[98] Shepard, How Canada Has Abandoned its Role as Peacekeeper, The Toronto Star

Why has Canada branded itself as a middle power?

Several scholars allude to this idea that Canada as a middle power is a self-perpetuated myth. Nik Hynek refers to it as "self-constructed,"[99] Adam Chapnick as vague, a myth,[100] and "mere rhetoric."[101]

What does Canada have to gain by creating this myth? The most important benefit of Canada viewing itself as a peacekeeping middle power was that changing Canadian governments concocted what Hynek & Thomsen refer to as, an "external and internal"[102] national identity. Along the same lines, Chapnick argues that the middle power category was a perfect tool for "promoting nationalism through an internationally recognized identity."[103] In short, creating a national identity in a country that consists of three nations within a state, two official languages, a number of native languages, a myriad of immigrant communities, and a province that sees itself as more Atlantic than Canadian (Newfoundland) is not a straightforward task. Hynek & Thomsen quote Barry Buzan in saying that a federal state cannot be based on nationalism — this point is perhaps even more relevant for a multinational state.[104]

Consequently, peacekeeping and the notion of the middle power has been the one unifying Canadian value for decades; it encompasses Canadian values and beliefs — "pragmatism, negotiation, multilateralism"[105] — and differentiates Canadians from "[...] its powerful and occasionally domineering friend to the south."[106] Further evidence for the unifying quality of middlepowerhood is the public support it draws from all parts of the country.[107] [108] In addition to this, the popularity of peacekeeping is also palpable from the homages to it on "[…] the $10 bill, the 2000 stamp series, the prominent 'reconciliation' monument in Ottawa, and the peacekeeping monument unveiled 9 August 2005 in Calgary."[109]

[99] Hynek, quoted in Nossal, 2010, 29
[100] Chapnick, 2000, 188
[101] Chapnick, 2000, 206
[102] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 852
[103] Chapnick, 2000, 188
[104] Buzan, quoted in Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 851
[105] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 848
[106] Neiberg, 2012, 17
[107] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 852
[108] Keating, 2010, 9
[109] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 852

Apart from the middle power role being beneficial for Canada, it is also a role that is suitable for the state. Hynek & Thomsen argue that because of Canada's condition as a multicultural society, it has experience in creating "[…] unity from diversity"[110] — and this is a tremendous quality to have with regards to diplomacy and peacekeeping. To add to this, Canada also has historical ties which make them fitting as a mediator and middle power; Britain, France, and the US are some of the biggest players in world politics today, and Canada has close relationship to all of them.[111]

Canada as a middle power under Harper

In what follows, this thesis will investigate Canada's status as a middle power under the leadership of Stephen Harper. To assist with this research, QCA will be applied on texts produced by the Harper Government — particularly on foreign minister John Baird's address to the UN in 2012, as this arena, historically, has been the main setting for Canada's middlepowermanship. The criteria, or parameters, for assessing to what extent Canada still is a middle power under Harper, will be the three features of middle power diplomacy outlined earlier: compromise, degree of multilateralism, and acts of good international citizenship. Much consideration will not be given to the notion of middlepowerhood as it quite clear that Canada's status there is somewhere in-between great and small: Canada is not as strong, in terms of hard-power ranking, as the US, Russia, China, or the EU, but at the same time, quite stronger than many other states.

The Harper Government has, arguably, demonstrated a lack of compromise a number of times in their reign. Harper has certainly been uncompromising in his rhetoric against Putin in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, referring to the Russian president as "[…] obviously a nationalist, an extreme nationalist, and he's obviously an imperialist."[112] Harper has also, on several, occasions reiterated that "Canada does not go along to get along,"[113] for example, in his speech to the Knesset in Israel where he stated that "[…] But such 'going along

[110] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 846
[111] Neiberg, 2012, 12
[112] Harper, quoted in The Canadian Press, 2014
[113] Speech from the Throne, 2013, 19

to get along,' is not a balanced approach, nor a sophisticated one; it is, quite simply, weak and wrong."[114] Such hints at a disdain for diplomacy are not uncommon in the Harper Government's discourse: the Speech from the Throne in 2007 stated, when discussing Canada's role on the international stage, that the government believed in "[…] focus and action, rather than rhetoric and posturing […]"[115] while the 2013 version offered a similar jibe at previous governments by claiming that the Conservative Government "[…] put[s] front-line capability before back office bureaucracy […]"[116] In a similar manner, Harper stated, in a lecture The Hudson Institute, that: "What I don't want to do is what Canadian governments have sometimes done in the past, which is to stand on the sidelines bragging about our differences, lecturing and not really accomplishing anything. We want to take a different tack."[117] A final example of this lack of compromise, which has characterised Harper's foreign policy, is found in John Baird's UN address. Herein, Baird discusses the decision the government's decision to suspend diplomatic relations with Iran which he claims it has done out of principle. In the same speech, Baird continues the previous rhetoric of criticising a lack of action: "Not in spite of our commitment, but because of our commitment to this body, we cannot and will not participate in endless, fruitless inward-looking experiences. Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations will henceforth devote primary attention to what the United Nations is achieving, not how the UN arranges its affairs."[118] Taking the above into consideration, it is fair to say that Canada, under Harper, is more uncompromising than compromising; there has been a tendency to dismiss compromise-seeking solutions as needles bureaucracy, instead preferring swift and decisive action.

The notion of multilateralism is closely connected to compromise; after all, compromise is necessary when engaging in multilateral decision-making. Baird's harsh criticism of the UN is quite representative of the Harper Government's stance on the multilateral body. The fact that Harper missed several of the UN opening sessions is symbolic of how he and his government think of the organisation; not enough action, and not tough enough on rogue states like Iran,

[114] Harper, 2014
[115] Speech from the Throne, 2007, 3
[116] Speech from the Throne, 2013, 18
[117] Harper, 2007
[118] Baird, 2012

North Korea and Syria, and too critical of Canada's ally, Israel. While it can be argued that the Harper years saw a somewhat unilateral retreat from the UN, the Harper Government did showcase multilateralism in other arenas — most notably in the Arctic Council, an organisation which consists of eight Arctic states and 6 Permanent Participants (indigenous organisations), where cooperation has, to a degree, flourished. But even in this arena, Harper's Canada has showcased unilateral tendencies: for instance, the decision to boycott some meetings as a protest against Russia, in the aftermath of the Ukraine invasion; and the decision to exclude certain states, and all the Permanent Participants, in the initial Ilulissat talks in 2008.

Finally, there is the notion of being a good international citizen. There are references to this idea in the rhetoric of the Harper Government. For example, in John Baird's address to the UN, he discusses the UN's failure to act in Syria. He asks, rhetorically, "What business is it of ours?" and answers: "Our citizens would argue that the business is our common humanity, and our mandate is the strengthening of humanity's bonds."[119] Similarly, in Stephen Harper's speech to the Knesset he argues that "this is a very Canadian trait, to do something for no reason other than it is right even when no immediate reward for, or threat to, ourselves is evident."[120] As noted earlier in this chapter, this idea of the selfless act is very much the definition of good international citizenship. However, while the Harper Government might hold on to some of this discourse of good international citizenship, it is important to look beyond the words; to analyse if there is, stressed elsewhere in this thesis, correspondence between what is said and what is done. Despite the slight retreat from UN-related activities, Harper was co-chaired the WHO Information and Accountability Commission which subsequently led to the UN initiative 'Every Woman, Every Child.' On the other hand, Stephen Harper has a poor record when it comes to foreign aid: in 2015 it was lower, when measured as a percentage of gross national income, than it was when the Conservatives came to power (which were financially strained times); more damning even is the fact that it is barely a third of what it was in the 1970s.[121] To add to this, Canada is the only UN member to denounce The United Nations

[119] Baird, 2012
[120] Harper, 2014
[121] Brown, 2015

Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD),[122] and their stance on landmines has changed radically since the Lloyd Axworthy's glory days.[123]

Conclusion

To sum up, the best way to define "middle power" is to use the two concepts of power-ranking and middlepowermanship; by combining hard power qualities (military might, geographical location and size, and technological advancement) with state behavior (use of compromise, multilateralism, acts of good citizenship) it is possible to arrive at usable definition of what middle powers are.

By looking at CFP in a historical context it was possible to conclude that Canada can be considered a middle power. As a country Canada fits all the power-ranking criteria of what a middle power should be. More importantly, however, is the fact that the Canadian state has demonstrated exceptional middlepowermanship for most of the latter half of the 20th century: the solution to the Suez-crisis, Trudeau's diplomacy in Vietnam, and just a general ever-presence in peacekeeping up until the 1990s are evidence for this argument.

Simultaneously, however, it is also hard not to notice that there has been a distinct fall in middlepowermanship from the 1990s and onwards. Reasons for this are unsuccessful UN missions in the early 1990s, which led to an international shift from peacekeeping to warfighting, but also a lack of continuity in CFP in these past two decades.

Finally, it was concluded that the image of Canada as a peacekeeping middle power was partly self-constructed; and, that this self-construction has been of great advantage for the country as it has allowed it to forge a strong national identity – a difficult task for any multinational state – around the concepts of middlepowerhood and peacekeeping.

With regards to Canada's current, or recent, status as a middle power, it is arguable that this status is somewhat declining. By using Nossal's three criteria for middlepowermanship, it was argued that Canada, under Harper, was considerably more uncompromising in their diplomatic dealings. Further, it was established that there was an increase in unilateralism: there was a retreat from UN-related activities in general, such as the UNCCD, and even in the

[122] Hamamdjian, 2013
[123] Westhead, 2012

multilateral Arctic Council, an organisation where Canada enjoys a leadership role; there was a tendency to act unilaterally. Finally, in terms of good international citizenship, it was concluded that while the Harper Government employed the discourse of this notion, it was often lacking in action: the decrease in foreign aid, the denunciation of the aforementioned UNCCD, and their unwillingness to follow through with the Landmines Treaty.

As Canada's status has now been accounted for, what follows will be a look into the new brand that Stephen Harper and his government have been attempting to construct from 2006 to 2015. In relation to this, a pressing question becomes: is it possible to replace a narrative which has been part and parcel of Canadian identity for more than half a century, in the span of two election terms? The most logical answer would be that something which has taken decades to build will also take decades to break down and replace. Nevertheless, the Harper government has attempted to replace the prevailing peacekeeping narrative, with one of Arctic sovereignty.

The Shift from Middle Power to Arctic Stewards

Introduction

In what follows, a number of texts and other media by Stephen Harper and his government will be analysed – using QCA — to argue that the new narrative in Canada is one that focuses on Canada's Arctic heritage and sovereignty. To reiterate what was stated in the delimitation of this thesis, there are a number of arenas which one could look at this shift in: for example, the more realist turn which Canada has taken when it comes to warfighting, or peacemaking, missions as seen in Afghanistan and Libya and so on.

However, as noted, the subsequent analysis will focus on the Arctic. In the Arctic case, the utilisation of history has proven to be important; Harper has, through a variety of text and media, made numerous references to historical occurrences where Canadian ties to the Arctic are documented and highlighted. Further, this thesis will contend that the Harper Government has paid much attention to the plight of the indigenous people in the Arctic. It will be questioned if this concern is genuine, good-hearted sympathy, or if there is a more pragmatic agenda behind it — of course, one does not necessarily exclude it the other. Additionally, it will

be argued there is a theme of fear, of having to defend the Arctic —against somewhat imagined foes — in Harper's Arctic rhetoric. To conclude the analysis, some thoughts will be offered on nation branding in Canada which, ultimately, ended up being far less relevant than expected in this thesis. Nevertheless, Canadian foreign policy will, briefly, be analysed through the lens of nation branding. Finally, the notion of nation building, which has far greater relevance for Canada foreign policy, will be dealt with in a concise manner.

To start this chapter, however, the emergence of the Arctic as an increasingly important part of world politics will be dealt with.

The Emergence of the Arctic

In the last couple of years, the issue of who owns what in the Arctic has become increasingly pressing as a number of suitors have staked their claim for various parts of this vast region. These have, mainly, been powerful Arctic nations such as Russia, Canada, and the US, but also smaller nations such as Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland are considered players. Even non-Arctic states have showed interest in the region, China, for example. As a result, this vying for perhaps the greatest territorial dispute in the world today has been dubbed "The Race for Arctic"[124] [125] while others entertain the idea that the issue might become a new and colder "Cold War."[126]

As was noted in the introductory section to this thesis, the main reason for this race is the melting ice, caused by climate change. Natural resources in the Arctic are abundant: 13% of the world's untapped oil reserves, 30% of its gas, along with a vast amount of valuable minerals – and because of the melting ice, extracting these resources is becoming easier and easier by the day. Apart from the great amount of natural resources in the Arctic, global warming is also opening up new sea routes. Of particular interest here is the Northwest Passage which Canada claims is in their internal waters. Potentially, this passage could, by the mid-century, offer the shortest route from Rotterdam to Yokohama – 20% shorter than the Northern Sea Route.[127]

[124] Kurek, 2015
[125] McFadden & Whitman, 2015
[126] Al Jazeera, 2015
[127] Meg Sullivan, 2013

Taking the above into account, it is unquestionable that sovereignty in the Arctic has the potential to benefit Canada – and all the other Arctic wooers — immensely from an economic point of view.

For the Harper Government, however, this thesis will argue that it is more than the economic benefits that are appealing; that the Harper Government, along with many Canadians, see the Arctic as an essential part of Canadian history and identity. Moreover, the argument will be that Harper and his entourage have, during their two terms as the ruling party, attempted to rebrand the Canadian story; to shift the dominant narrative – one of Canadians as a peacekeeping and diplomatic people – to one where Canadian identity is first and foremost based on the notion that Canadians are Arctic, or Northern, people.

It is hard to argue exactly how much focus the Harper Government has put on their Arctic policy in the context of Canadian foreign policy in general; there was, for example, no official foreign policy released by the government during Harper's two terms in charge. However, by looking at four Speeches from the Throne — which can be described as agenda-setting speeches, which, to an extent, outline a government's policy for a period of time — it becomes clear that the Arctic features quite heavily when it comes to foreign policy. To strengthen this argument, The National Post has an excellent article which illustrates, through the use of infographics, the key words in Throne Speeches by Jean Chretien, Paul Martin, and Stephen Harper. The results are supportive of the argument which this thesis is putting forth: neither Chretien nor Martin use the words 'Arctic' or 'sovereignty.' Harper on the other hand, makes use of these both these words between 5 and 10 times each in two of his speeches.[128]

The Harper government's Arctic foreign policy is outlined in the *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy: Exercising Sovereignty and Promoting Canada's Northern Strategy Abroad* (henceforth CAFP), and was released in 2010. This statement stands on the shoulders of the Harper government's domestic Arctic policy *Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future: Canada's Northern Strategy*, which was released the year before. The analysis of the Arctic in this thesis will use these two documents as a starting point as they are, naturally, quite representative of the Harper Government's Arctic policy.

[128] Warzecha, 2015

Both of these strategies are built on four pillars: exercising Arctic sovereignty, promoting social and economic development, protecting the environment, and improving and devolving governance in the North.[129] [130]

The notion of Arctic sovereignty features heavily in CAFP and in other aspects of the Harper government's discourse. In CAFP the exercise of sovereignty is described as "[...] the first and most important pillar towards recognizing the potential of Canada's Arctic […][131]

Further analysis will demonstrate that the Harper Government strives to showcase this sovereignty in three different ways: 1) by referring to Canada's historical presence and its political history in the Arctic; 2) by referring to the present presence of indigenous Canadians in the Arctic; 3) by referring to various operations in the Arctic by the government – mainly military. The emphasis on sovereignty in the analysis of Harper's Arctic discourse is chosen because this notion is crucial to how he sells this Arctic brand; it underlines that the region, with all its potential, is rightfully Canada's and that the Harper Government is willing to defend and protect it.

Historification of Authenticity

References to history are abundant in the rhetoric of Stephen Harper and his government. The CAFP states that "The Arctic is embedded in Canadian history and culture, and in the Canadian soul."[132] Stephen Harper is also quoted in CAFP where he claims that the "[…] Northern Agenda is based on the timeless responsibility imposed by our national anthem, to keep the True North strong and free."[133] Further, the CAFP goes on to state that "Canada has a rich history in the North […] Canada's Arctic sovereignty is long-standing, well established and based on historic title […]"[134] Moreover, the CAFP quotes Harper, who in turn quotes former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker who in 1961 said that "There is a new world emerging above the Arctic Circle."[135]

[129] CAFP, 2010, 1
[130] Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 2
[131] CAFP, 2
[132] CAFP, 1
[133] Harper, 2008, quoted in CAFP, 2010
[134] CAFP 3
[135] CAFP 16

Apart from historical references in the CAFP, there are, for example, speeches by Harper and members of the government where such allusions are also made. The 2013 Speech from the Throne alludes to Diefenbaker again, as the government states that it will complete Diefenbaker's "[…] historic vision […]" of completing the Dempster Highway[136] (extending it from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk, so it reaches all the way to the Arctic Ocean). The same speech offers another historical reference, as the government pledges to increase […] efforts to solve one of the most enduring mysteries of our past […] the fate of Sir John Franklin's lost Arctic expedition.[137] These efforts paid off in September 2014 when part of the expedition, the HMS Erebus, was located by Canadian navy divers. In a press conference, presenting the discovery, an elated Stephen Harper referred to the finding as a great discovery for both Canadian and world history, and went on to state that it was part of "[…] our country's broader Northern narrative and Northern identity. We're answering the age old call of the Great Canadian North, keeping the faith with the explorers and adventurers who have gone before us and breaking trails for the generations of Canadians yet to come."[138]

Previous Speeches to the Throne have also made mention of Canada's Arctic history. One of the 2007 speeches quotes Thomas D'Arcy McGee – one of the fathers of the Canadian federation – for speaking of Canada as a "[…] Northern nation, bounded by the blue rim of the ocean."[139] The speech goes on to state that "Canadians see in our North an expression of our deepest aspirations: our sense of exploration, the beauty and the bounty of our land, and our limitless potential."[140] In a follow up to the speech, Stephen Harper again referred to history, mentioning John Diefenbaker and John A. McDonald. Later speeches also make similar allusions: promises to keep the True North strong and free are made again,[141] and one of the 2010 speeches claims that "Canadians are deeply influenced by the vast expanse of our Arctic and its history and legends."[142]

[136] Johnston, 2013, 19
[137] Ibid
[138] Stephen Harper, 2015
[139] McGee, quoted in Speech from the Throne, 2007
[140] Speech from the Throne, 2007
[141] Speech from the Throne, 2011, 10
[142] Speech from the Throne, 2010, 12

As a final example of the Harper government's constant allusions to Canada's past, in the Arctic, it is worth considering the animated interactive video they released in 2015 titled *Journey into the Arctic* (the game was released as part of the wider *Canada 150* initiative which celebrates 150th anniversary of the Canadian Federation). In this interactive video you are an Arctic explorer, in the mould of Franklin, and — accompanied by dramatic string-music and a voice-over by the Canadian equivalent to David Attenborough — you have to make a number of choices to win the game: do you sail the Atlantic or Pacific route, do you accept help from the Inuit people you meet along the way or not, and so on. If you choose the Pacific route your ship sinks, and if you refuse help from the Inuit your men will die of scurvy or your exploration might end up as a failure because you prefer your European sled to the Inuit's dog sleds.[143]

On a surface level it is clear that these references, which permeate the Harper Government's Arctic discourse, are a method of legitimising Canada's sovereignty claim – both to domestic and foreign audiences. It is made indisputable that Canadians have a long and rich history in the Arctic and that this authenticates their claim.

Of equal importance however, is what is communicated on a somewhat deeper level. For the Canadians the message is one that is intended to be deeply romantic and powerful. This becomes evident by just looking at the language quoted above as there is talk of "[…] enduring mysteries […] a new world emerging […] age old call […] explorers and adventurers […] bounded by the blue rim of the ocean […]" and the allusion of the North as the home of the "deepest aspirations" of Canada. It is carefully constructed rhetoric which is designed to be colorful and enticing. The interactive video described above, arguably, carries the tone of the aforementioned rhetoric: the music and narration is grandiose and you are put in the shoes of a great Arctic explorer, fighting your way through the great unknown.

To add to this, there are numerous references to a line in the English version of *O Canada*: "The True North strong and free!" which, at least among the Anglophones, spurs on feelings of national pride. The allusions to historical figures such as John A. Macdonald, Thomas D'Arcy McGee and John Diefenbaker are also interesting. Two Fathers of the Canadian Confederation, and then Diefenbaker who was – as Hynek and Thomsen point out – quite

[143] Journey into the Arctic, 2015

popular in 1958 right after the success in Suez.[144] The latter was, perhaps, also the one Prime Minister, apart from Harper, who placed heavy emphasis on the North. The fact that these politicians are given prominence by the Harper government — ahead of peacekeeping icons such as Louis St. Laurent, Lester B. Pearson, and Pierre Trudeau — is no coincidence: it signals to the Canadian public that its political history is as much Conservative and focused on the Arctic as it is Liberal and focused on peacekeeping. Almost symbolic of this subtle hint to Canadians, that they should re-evaluate their icons, is that the icebreaker CCGS *Louis St. Laurent* will go into decommission in 2017 and its replacement will be the brand new *John G. Diefenbaker*.

Ultimately, the message to the Canadian public is that the Arctic now, more than ever, holds unlimited potential; that the North is central to the Canadian self and has been for centuries; and, finally, that it has been politically important for Canada since the founding of the state.

As a result, one of the central themes of the rebranding conducted by the Harper Government becomes this historification of authenticity. As presented above, the past is used in different ways to legitimise and authenticate both Canada's claim to the Arctic and the notion that the North is central to Canadian identity.

Credibility Through Indigenousness

The presence of the indigenous peoples in the Arctic is vital in terms of sovereignty; their current and historical presence in the North proves that the region is, and always has been, an area which belongs to Canada. In 1985, Brian Mulroney's government decided to – as a reaction to an American icebreaker sailing through the Northwest Passage unannounced – announce an order in council to draw baselines around the Arctic Archipelago, thereby securing that the Northwest Passage was their internal waters.[145] This order in council was based on an argument of, as Harper is quoted for earlier in this chapter, "historic title" which refers to the *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project*; a report which documents "[…] the historical usage by the Inuit people of 1.5 million square miles of land and sea in the Northwest Territories, comprising

[144] Hynek & Thomsen, 2006, 850
[145] Arnold, 2011, 111

significant portions of the Arctic Archipelago – including the Northwest Passage."[146] As a result, the Canadian claim for sovereignty in the Arctic is undeniably connected with the indigenous peoples. This connection, however, brings not only the promise of an enormous amount of untapped natural resources, but also the social and developmental problems of the North – in Nunavut especially. A report from 2012, for example, stated that the quality of life in Nunavut came in at 38th place in the world, right in front of Hungary, while the Northwest Territories, Ontario, Alberta and BC came in at 3rd place, alongside the Netherlands.[147] Therefore, in order to appear legitimate in front of not only the Canadian people, but also the international community, Canadian governments have been forced to take the rough with the smooth; to have an Arctic policy not only focused on how to extract the valuable resources in the region, but also how to improve the socio-economic state of the North.

The focus on improving indigenous communities in the Arctic is also evident in the rhetoric of Harper's government. It can be gleaned by analysing the CAFP: two of the four pillars — promoting social and economic development, and improving and devolving governance in the North — are geared towards the indigenous peoples. The CAFP emphasises that there is a greater need to understand the "human dimension" of the North and that one way of doing this is by [...] engaging Northerners on Canada's Arctic policy."[148] In furtherance of this, the CAFP promises to develop a circumpolar health observatory and comparative reviews of both circumpolar health systems and nutritional guides,[149] and to […] address infrastructure needs such as housing […]"[150] On a similar note, the policy statement also stresses the importance of "[…] promoting a better understanding of the […] cultures and practices of Northerners […]" and as a part of this the CAFP states that Canada defends sealing internationally.[151]

Further, the CAFP states that the capabilities of the Canadian Rangers — a voluntary sub-component of the Canadian Armed Forces, mostly made up out of native peoples — will be

[146] Ibid
[147] Weber, 2012
[148] CAFP 2
[149] CAFP 9
[150] CAFP 6
[151] Ibid

expanded. Most notable in the document, and in several of the Speeches from the Throne, however, are the number of investments to infrastructure etc. These include: upgrades to the port of Churchill in Manitoba,[152] completing the aforementioned Dempster Highway, the refurbishment of the naval facility in Nanisvik,[153] and construction of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) in Cambridge Bay,[154] Arctic patrol ships and expanded aerial surveillance.[155]

In terms of Canadian devolution — the process of granting the territories gradually more and more province-like powers of their own affairs — the CAFP offers little in terms of concrete plans. It stresses the importance of a dialogue between Northerners and the Government on Arctic policy and the further empowerment of indigenous organisations through the Arctic Council[156] (which is made up by the eight Arctic states mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, plus six Permanent Participants which consist of various indigenous organisations). The biggest issue within the context of devolution in the North is the Nunavut Lands Claim Agreement — which separated Nunavut from the Northwest Territories, so that it could be its own territory — which has yet to be fully implemented, 23 years after it was signed in 1993.

The above can be interpreted as another theme of the Harper Government's Arctic discourse: a theme of legitimacy which is acquired through sympathising with the indigenous people in Canada's North and by promising to involve them to a high degree in the development of the Arctic. Consequentially, however, the question then becomes: how credible is this legitimacy? Is there a correspondence between the promises made by the government — outlined above — and what has actually been achieved in the North? This question is one method of qualitatively measuring the 'extent of' the third research question, which concerns itself with the correspondence between the new brand and the foreign policy exercised.

[152] CAFP 8
[153] Johnston 2013, 19
[154] Speech from the Throne, 2010
[155] Johnston, 2013, 19
[156] CAFP 13

Some of the Northern promises outlined above have been delivered on, while others have not. For example, a Circumpolar Health Observatory has been established — although it is difficult to gauge how big of an achievement this is; rather than having its own location it has been incorporated into the Institute for Circumpolar Health Research, and its most recent publication dates back to 2010.[157] Despite significant investments in housing in the North — $600 million since 2006[158] — the lack of housing is still a major problem in the North, mostly due to the growing population.[159] The money spent on the housing situation in the North seems to not have alleviated the situation. For example, by comparing percentage of 'crowded dwellers' in all the four Inuit regions in Canada – Inuit Nunangat – it becomes evident that the issue remains unsolved: in 2006 38,7%[160] of the people in these regions lived in crowded dwellings while in 2011 the number had dropped a measly 0.7% to 38%.[161] During this period, from 2006 to 2011, the Harper Government had invested $500 of the aforementioned $600 million in Northern housing — but, judging by the statistics above, which represent a big part of the North, to no avail.

With regards to the numerous projects to advance the North's infrastructure, most of them are in progress — although delayed. The extension of the Dempster Highway, for instance, did not start until 2014 and is expected to be done in 2018.[162] Cost is expected to be around $300 million, with the government paying $200 million, and the construction will create 150 local jobs annually, as well as reduce living expenditures for the people of Tuktoyaktuk.[163] Perhaps more significantly, the highway will save big oil companies significant amounts of money; for instance, BP Operations is expected to save 15% of the cost of their total operations in the Beaufort Sea.[164] This is likely to be the bigger drawing point for the Harper government's $200 million investment, rather than the improved quality of life of the 950 inhabitants of Tuktoyaktuk. Along similar lines, the construction of the previously mentioned CHARS is,

[157] http://circhob.circumpolarhealth.org/
[158] Conservative Party, 2015
[159] Canadian Polar Commission, 2014
[160] Knotsch & Kinnon, 2011
[161] Statistics Canada, 2011
[162] McMillan, 2014
[163] Chase, 2014
[164] Bennett, 2014

according to atmospheric expert Tom Duck, more of an oil and gas research station than purely a science-minded one. Nevertheless, the station is predicted to be up and running in 2017.[165]

As for the naval facility in Nanisvik, which was announced in 2007, its original completion date has been pushed back three years – from 2015 to 2018. While the facility is expected to create 50-60 jobs, the main motivation for its refurbishment is to strengthen Arctic sovereignty, as it will serve as an important refuelling station for Arctic patrol ships.[166]

To sum up, it can be argued that Stephen Harper and his government have come through on several of their promises to the North — many of them have been delayed, but are, nevertheless, in progress. However, by examining these investments closely it also becomes apparent that they have either been insufficient, or driven by other agendas than improving the lives of Northerners. In fairness to Harper and his regime, however, they have done more for Northern infrastructure than other governments despite the fact that their motives might not be squeaky clean.

Statistics show that the hundreds of millions invested in housing in the North have had little effect — most likely, the considerations have not been taken for the fast-growing population in the area. Further, while infrastructure investments have been positive for the indigenous peoples in terms of job-creation, there has often been a bigger agenda at play — either one driven by big oil or one focused strengthening military capabilities.

To conclude this subchapter, a brief word on devolution. Perhaps the most damning example of the Harper government's hidden agendas in the North is their refusal to fully implement the Nunavut Lands Agreement. As several sources argue, the major sticking point for the government is that a full implementation would mean that Nunavut would gain control over resources that are rightfully theirs — resources in and under their internal waters. The hypocrisy is there for everyone to see: while the Harper government, to the international community, argues that the waters are internal theirs, based on the historical occupancy by the Inuit of the land and sea, the Harper Government seems reluctant to acknowledge this in their domestic dealings with the Nunavut government.[167] [168]

[165] Tom Duck, quoted in Prystupa, 2015
[166] Bell, 2015
[167] Arnold, 2012, 116

Realist Fear and Suspicion

As noted earlier in this chapter, there are three ways which the Harper Government have referred to Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. Two of them — the references to political history, and the references to the indigenous peoples of the North — have been analysed so far. The third way is, perhaps, the most obvious way of demonstrating sovereignty: patrolling the Arctic, defending it by maintaining a military presence.

The CAFP and Speeches from the Throne are rife with phrases which underline the importance for Canada to maintain its presence in the Arctic and defend the region. Apart from references made earlier in this analysis — including investments in infrastructure, military improvements on both land and sea — the CAFP also mentions Operation Nanook: "[…]an annual sovereignty operation […]" which "[…]shows the government's commitment to protecting and demonstrating control over the air, land and sea within our jurisdiction."[169] Similarly, Stephen Harper has an annual Arctic tour where he visits all the territories in the North and deliver speeches. The 2010 Speech from the Throne states that Canada's […] government will continue to vigorously defend Canada's Arctic Sovereignty. It will continue to map our northern resources and waters,"[170] while the 2011 version also refers to the mapping of the Arctic seabed. The latter version also notes how Canada needs to "[…] maintain their capacity to act […]"[171] if they are to defend the Arctic. In the 2013 version, similar statements are made. Particularly eye-catching is the phrase "But the eyes of the world increasingly look enviously to our North. Our government will not rest."[172] Summative of this stance of maintaining a presence and defending sovereignty is Stephen Harper's widely cited Arctic slogan, "use it or lose it."[173] [174]

As demonstrated above, there are plenty of examples of the Harper Government stressing the need to defend Canada's Arctic sovereignty and maintaining their presence in the

[168] Irlbacher-Fox & Mills, 2007, 9
[169] CAFP, 3
[170] Speech from the Throne, 2010, 13
[171] Speech from the Throne, 2011, 3
[172] Speech from the Throne, 2013, 19
[173] Chase, 2014
[174] Den Tandt, 2014

region. However, there is also an underlying message at play here: the notion that Canada's Arctic is under serious threat. All the Throne speeches analysed note how it is important to defend the Arctic. One of them mentions how the world looks "enviously" at Canada's North. Furthermore, many of the investments in infrastructure and the improvements in military might, can be interpreted as a realist wish to improve capabilities. The obvious question is: what is Canada defending itself against? The most likely foe is Russia, but anything resembling a threat from the Russians is hard to find. It is, in fact, easier to find examples of cooperation between Canada and Russia than conflict. Michael Byers quotes Harper for saying that relations with Russia are good and that the two countries cooperated on looking for the Franklin vessel. Moreover, both countries engage in multilateral cooperation via The Arctic Council (although, Harper has, on occasion, boycotted meetings because of Russia's involvement in Ukraine).[175] Nevertheless, several scholars agree that any Arctic conflict is "hyped up,"[176] "overblown,"[177] or even non-existent.[178]

In a sense, this theme of pessimism, fear and suspicion of other powers is quite realist in nature. Byers argue that the constant delays of the Arctic Patrol Ships, the John Diefenbaker icebreaker, and the Nanisvik naval facility hint at a lack of urgency from Harper. Which, in turn, means that Harper is not as worried about Arctic security as his rhetoric lets on.[179] Instead, this thesis argues, that the fear-mongering is a means of pushing the Arctic agenda; of gaining support for continual resource development in the Arctic — Harper sees Canada as an "emerging clean energy superpower, after all[180] — and, just as importantly, of keeping focus on the new narrative that the Harper Government seeks to implement.

Nation branding or Nation Building

To conclude this analytical section, some thoughts will be given on nation branding. In the introduction and problem formulation, nation branding was seen as one of the theories which

[175] Arctic War or Peace?, 2014
[176] Ibid
[177] Keil, 2014
[178] Exner-Pirto & Plouffe, 2014
[179] Arctic War or Arctic Peace?, 2014
[180] CAFP, 8

could explain the process of rebranding foreign policy in Canada under Harper. Through research and analysis, however, the concept appears to be less relevant than expected. Perhaps the main reason for this is that the Harper government's foreign policy has been remarkably introspective. In *Primat der Wahlurne: Explaining Harper's Foreign Policy*, Kim Nossal argues that rather than being driven by any sort of neoconservative ideology, as some argue, the main motivations for the Harper Conservatives are electoral considerations at home. Harper's harsh rhetoric directed at Putin for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, his unwavering support of Israel, and his complete U-turn on China (from acts of provocation – such as handing the Dalai Lama honorary Canadian citizenship in 2005 – to John Baird referring to China as an important ally in 2011) can all be conceived as pandering to the domestic crowd.[181] After all, Canada has large segments of voters who identify as Ukrainian-Canadian, Jewish-Canadian and Chinese-Canadian respectively. In Nossal's own words, if Harper is driven by anything it is the "[…] primacy of the ballot box."[182]

With regards to nation branding, there have been efforts by the Harper government to scale back initiatives such as the *Understanding Canada*[183] program and the University of the Arctic[184]; both programs predate the Harper Government and both have suffered significant cuts to their funding during Harper's reign. At the same time, embassies in Iran, Cambodia and Bosnia-Herzegovina have been deemed surplus to requirements.[185]

Nevertheless, there are some examples of nation branding, in the Harper era. As noted in the previous subchapter, the rhetoric with regards to the Arctic is often romantic and powerful – mythical, almost. And indeed, there are instances where the Harper Government refers to story-telling: "The story of the North is the story of Canada."[186] and "We are a country whose story is still being written."[187] In a similar manner, the introduction also noted that a common idea within in nation branding is that every country has a "story to tell." One could

[181] Nossal, 2014, 13-16
[182] Ibid, 17
[183] Blanchfield, 2012
[184] CBC News, 2011
[185] MacKinnon, 2015
[186] Speech from the Throne, 2013, 19
[187] Speech from the Throne, 2010, 11

contend that the Harper government is trying to brand itself and improve their image in the Arctic — despite their decreasing support to the University of the Arctic.

As it stands, Canada is, arguably, one of the leading nations in the Arctic. The Arctic Council — the most important intergovernmental organisation with regards to the Arctic — was established in Ottawa in 1996, with Canada having a leading role. Canada has also chaired the Council in 2013 and in the late 1990s and the Harper Government has been exercising their sovereignty in the area. All in all, this results in Canada's position in the Arctic being quite strong. Simultaneously, however, Canada cannot compete with Russia and the US when it comes to hard power, which is also likely why Canada has been a strong advocate for a "rule based-region"[188] in the Arctic — as neoliberal theory argues, a rule based region and one based on cooperation leads to a more stable environment, which is in the best interest of a middle power. Taking this into consideration, the idea of nation branding is relevant here: as Aronczyk argued in the theory section, conveying an image of legitimacy can be beneficial when it comes to exerting influence at multilateral decision-making bodies. As argued in the previous subchapter, Canada attempts to gain this legitimacy by championing the cause of the indigenous peoples — this is not only done domestically, but also in a foreign setting through the Arctic Council. Apart from giving Harper's Canada legitimacy, their focus also allows them to differentiate themselves from both the US and Russia. Recent statements by John Kerry — who is presently chairing the Arctic Council on behalf of the US — hint at climate change being their top Arctic priority.[189] As for Russia, hard power issues, such as resources and sea routes, are of more interest to them than social ones.[190] As noted in the theory section, differentiation is essential not only in the sense that it makes a brand stand out, but also in the sense that it, ideally, creates a positive image of the state among foreign publics. Foreign publics are likely to be more sympathetic to Canada's agenda of developing the human dimension in the Arctic than the Russian one of improving their capabilities – the US, however, are prioritising a similar, noble, agenda. Nevertheless, Aronczyk argues that having a positive reputation abroad — such

[188] CAFP, 1
[189] Koring, 2015
[190] Ragauskas, 2011

as the one Canada is attempting to cultivate with their Arctic agenda – is likely to foster domestic consensus and patriotism; different and morally superior to Russia, for example.

Despite that the above, arguably, can be considered as a form of nation branding, there is no doubt that there have been no overt plans of branding Canada. On the other hand, there is a strong argument to be made for the idea that there is a considerable amount of nation building occurring in Canada under Stephen Harper. In brief, nation building is the idea that it is possible to construct and shape national identity through the power of the state.[191] In a sense, this notion is similar to Wally Olins', some might argue outdated, view of nation branding, as remoulding of national identities. In addition to this, the concept of nation building also seems more fitting for this thesis if one accepts Nossal's view that foreign policy, under Harper, has largely been guided by domestic considerations. And indeed, the idea also suits the arguments presented at the beginning of this chapter: that the North is central to Canadian identity and acts as common ground for all Canadians. In Harper's own words: "We're not going to win or lose an election in the north. We're doing it because this is about nation building. This is the frontier. This is the place that defines our country."[192] Along similar lines, Harper is also quoted for saying the North is essential in his plans to "revive a robust and positive vision of nationalism."[193]

In any case, if there is a narrative that is able to compete with the one of peacekeeping, one centred on the Arctic is not a bad shout. Peacekeeping, as has been argued, is in decline, while interest in the Arctic is booming. If all goes well with regards to resources, the North has a possibility of living up to its mythical potential, and becoming an idea which is associated with success and the Canadian self.

[191] Deutsch & Foltz, 2010
[192] Harper, quoted in Campion-Smith, 2010
[193] Harper, quoted in Stackhouse, 2014

Conclusion

This thesis started off with a curiosity about nation branding and to what extent this concept was relevant in the context of Canadian foreign policy; how it, possibly, could offer a theoretical explanation for the shift that had occurred in foreign policy during Stephen Harper's reign (2006-2015). While nation branding, ultimately, ended up being less relevant than expected, the notion played its part in generating the research questions put forth in the problem formulation.

The first research question concerned Canada's status as a middle power in the latter half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. In the analysis of this question, middle power theory was briefly outlined; some historical context was given; the decline in middle powermanship, starting in the 1990s, was discussed; Canada's status as a middle power under Stephen Harper was reviewed; and finally, it was all rounded off with a conclusion. The conclusions in this first analytical chapter of this thesis were as follows. A middle power was defined by using a combination of power-ranking — basically, a country's hard power — and middlepowermanship, defined as degree of compromise, multilateralism and good international citizenship. The historical outline offered an explanation of why Canada has been considered a foremost example of middlepowerhood and peackeeping: Canadians played a key role in the foundation of the UN, Lester B. Pearson received the Nobel Peace Prize for his involvement in solving the Suez-Crisis — perhaps the most shining example of Canadian peacekeeping — while Pierre Trudeau demonstrated excellent diplomacy in Vietnam in the early 1970s. At the same time, it was concluded that there was a distinct decline in middlepowermanship from the Canadians, starting in the 1990s. This decline was heavily influenced by the failings of the UN in the same period, but there were also other reasons; such as poor continuity in Canadian foreign policy for years, as well as shift from interstate to intrastate conflict. As an answer to the question of why the notions of middle power and peacekeeping were so dominant in Canadian foreign policy, it was concluded that this image of Canada as a peacekeeping middle power was extremely beneficial for the state; not only did it grant Canada goodwill and legitimacy within the international community, but it also served as

an important vehicle for creating a common national identity. For a country that is so diverse, it has been a tremendous success to let foreign policy be a unifying factor instead of nationalism, for example.

To adequately measure the qualitative character of the latter half of the first research question, parameters were created. These criteria were Kim Nossal's three features of middlepowermanship: compromise, multilateralism, and good international citizenship. With these parameters as a yardstick, it was concluded that Canada, under Stephen Harper, was in decline as a middle power. Harper's rule was characterised by an uncompromising tone in foreign relations, where harsh criticism was directed at Putin and the UN — perhaps deservedly so, but the point is the undiplomatic nature of the criticism which was vastly different from previous governments. In terms of multilateralism, Harper notably pulled his government farther and farther away from the UN; no-shows at opening sessions became the norm and no one was surprised when Canada was the only UN member which pulled back its ratification on UNCCD. Even in the Arctic Council, where Canada assumes a leadership role, there were signs of unilateralism; Canada boycotted meetings as a protest against Russia, for example. Finally, when it came to the notion of good international citizenship, Canada, arguably, failed to practice what it preached. The rhetoric was all for this notion, but actions left a lot to be desired; the decrease in foreign aid being the most notable example of this lack of effort.

With the almost complete eradication of peacekeeping from Canadian foreign policy, and the decline in middlepowermanship from the Harper Government, the second research question addressed a problem that was a consequence of this. As the long-standing image of Canada as peacekeepers was on its way out, the question became what would replace it. Or, in other words, how did Harper attempt to rebrand Canadian foreign policy. It was established that this shift in policy, during the Harper Era, was evident in many different arenas — both domestic and foreign: a shift from peacekeepers to courageous warriors, one from Liberals in the East to Conservatives in the West, and from liberalism to realism. This thesis, however, argued that Harper sought to replace the peacekeeping narrative with a Northern narrative.

Consequently then, the second chapter of the analysis deals with Arctic foreign policy; it analyses how the Harper Government through a carefully constructed discourse has attempted

to convince the Canadian people of this new Arctic narrative. In the spirit of the thematic analysis which was outlined in the methodological section of this project, three major themes were discovered within the topic of Arctic sovereignty: a historification of authenticity, credibility through indigenousness, and a kind of realist fear and suspicion.

With regards to the first theme, it was concluded that the use of history was deployed extremely efficiently by the Harper regime. Constant references were made, through language that was intended to be both colourful and powerful, to Canada's history in the Arctic and to politicians who were fond of the Arctic. The ultimate goal with this strategy was to convince Canadians that the country's history was as much a story about the Arctic as it was one about peacekeeping; and that it was as much Conservative as it was Liberal.

As for the second theme, it was concluded that while the Harper Government's championing of the indigenous cause was sympathetic at first, it was clear that there was another agenda at play. It established that it was under no circumstances possible for the Harper Government to get away with their increasing focus on the resource-rich Arctic while turning a blind eye to the dire social and developmental situation in the North. Therefore, in order to appear legitimate, it was necessary to make promises to improve the situation for the Northerners. After analysing these pledges, it was concluded that the Harper Government had largely failed to live up to them; the critical housing situation remained unsolved despite hundreds of millions of investments and any investment to infrastructure in the North was deemed to be mainly motivated by a resource or military driven agenda. Moreover, the failure to fully implement the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was seen an example of hypocrisy by the Harper Government; internationally, Harper was happy to use the Inuit occupancy argument to bolster his sovereignty claims, but domestically, he had a harder time accepting this line of thought as it would have meant that Nunavut had a rightful claim to valuable resources.

The final theme at play in second chapter of the analysis is the one of realist fear and suspicion. Here it was concluded that the theme of fear was utilised to push an agenda — not because of any actual threat to Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic; a lack of urgency in

upgrading capabilities in the North is a testament to this. Rather the agenda was one of gaining support for continual resource development in the Arctic and for the new Northern narrative.

To conclude the analysis, some thoughts on nation branding were offered. Here it was argued that Harper's foreign policy was remarkably introspective. His supposedly haphazard foreign policy makes a lot more sense if one puts on domestic goggles. This view also gives an unexpected answer to the second research question of this thesis: to paraphrase, to what extent has Harper rebranded Canada to the international community. The answer is, short and simple: he has not. The rebranding has been almost entirely domestic, which also means that there has been more of a case of nation building than nation branding. Further, the third research question only makes sense if you think of nation branding domestically, or swap nation branding with nation building. In any case, the best answer lies in the parameter created in the methodological section. This parameter concerns itself with credibility. In short, Canada's new brand cannot be said to correspond well with the foreign policy exercised. As was argued earlier, there was a distinct lack of credibility when it came to case of the Harper Government and their promises to the indigenous peoples.

Ultimately, one might wonder what the endgame is for Stephen Harper here. Why the the focus on the Arctic? The only answer which seems logical has been touched upon before. Harper is driven by a domestic agenda and by a Conservative agenda. By a desire to remove the peacekeeping Liberal narrative and replace it with a Conservative Arctic one that has the potential to last for decades if the North's unlimited potential is unleashed.