Maritime Militarization in the Arctic: Identifying Civil-Military Dependencies

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This paper reconsiders extant discourses on Arctic security within the wider body of militarization literature and suggests that the enduring peacetime roles of Arctic maritime forces has resulted in a limited, but recognizable, militarism. However, this militarism is not to be confused with alarmist interpretations of potential interstate conflict or a predilection towards violence. Rather, in focusing on the blurred responsibilities between regional naval, coast guard, and civilian organizations, I highlight the social-economic and material dependencies between Arctic civil societies and their governments' security providers. Specifically, this paper compares Norwegian, Danish, and Canadian approaches to their respective regional maritime security interests, emphasizing how the process of militarization has developed in the relationships between their Arctic civil societies and those countries' Arctic maritime security infrastructures. It argues that Arctic literature would do well to move beyond binary debates over whether the Arctic is or is not militarized, and instead recognize that certain sectors of regional societies have long been dependent on the continued sustainment and modernization of maritime and, occasionally, naval power, which continuously provides support for peacetime civilian ways of life. Only with this understanding can the material developments of Arctic military and paramilitary power be properly contextualized.

Introduction

Discourses of current and future prospects of Arctic interstate relations have tended to fall into two primary frames: that the Arctic region has been and will remain a zone of cooperation and non-violence, or that the Arctic has seen a lesser or greater degree of "militarization" that will lead to increased acrimony and conflict (Pincus & Zebich-Knos, 2016). On the one hand, numerous international agreements between erstwhile rivals on the international stage – specifically Russia and the Western powers – appear to point to an "Arctic exceptionalism" denoting a successful separation of the region from the conflicts and differences that mark those actors' relations elsewhere on the globe (Special Senate Committee on the Arctic, 2019: 90; Exner-Pirot & Murray, 2017) On the other hand, Arctic-dedicated military exercises have increased in scale and frequency alongside expensive recapitalization of Arctic-capable military equipment (Special Senate Committee on the Arctic, 2019: 105). And so, while clear examples of Arctic cooperation can be

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seen in the 2010 resolution of the Barents Sea disagreement between Norway and Russia or the 2011 Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement, equally clear signs of potential conflict can be seen in the resumption of Russian bomber flights near NATO member airspaces and NATO's 2018 Trident Juncture exercise in Norway (Jensen, 2011; Arctic Council, 2011; Haynes, 2019; NATO, 2018). These contradictory developments have led to arguably unproductive stalemates in the literature regarding the extent to which each "camp" is correct about the state of Arctic militarization and prospects for future conflict versus cooperation (Huebert, 2019: 10-15; Lajeunesse, 2016: 298; Käpylä & Mikkola, 2015: 7; Exner-Pirot & Murray, 2017: 59-61).

Assumed within this set of discourses is a binary approach to the idea of "militarization": the Arctic either is or is not being militarized. In understanding militarization, the default association has been with physical military equipment or events, such as new military bases or training exercises. Within the broader literature on militarization, however, is the understanding that militarization is a process that is done not just to spaces and places, but to and by people and societies. Specifically, militarization has been defined by German historian Michael Geyer as the "contradictory and tense social process by which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence" (Geyer, 1989: 79). Under this definition, militarization is not simply the obvious increase in the numbers of military equipment or occurrences of exercises, but a broader acceptance and effort by society's non-military sectors aimed towards the ability to do violence. Hand-in-hand with the process of militarization is its manifestations as militarism, which is understood most commonly to be "the prevalence of martial values in civil society", but which Geyer introduces as the dependency of civil society sectors on the preparation for and production of violence.

It is with this latter understanding of militarism that I analyze the debate over Arctic "militarization" and propose that the discussion can be more productive if we recognize that sectors of Arctic societies have already become militarized in their reliance upon their respective state's (para)military institutions and capabilities. Specifically, this article explores the ways in which Norwegian, Danish, and Canadian civilian sectors have become socio-economically and materially dependent on their countries' maintenance of maritime (para)military assets on land and sea. These three countries are chosen for their shared relatively small sizes compared to their Russian and American neighbours, and relatively less attention regarding the history and development of their (para)military forces. The article begins with an overview of how militarization has been discussed within Arctic literature, which is followed by a deeper discussion on the concepts of militarization and militarism. It then employs these conceptual understandings to recontextualize the capabilities and roles of the three countries' current maritime forces and infrastructures within their respective populations' everyday lives.

Arctic conflict and cooperation: parallel views

Central to the recent discussions on Arctic interstate conflict versus cooperation is the observation that all eight Arctic states have been procuring Arctic-capable (para)military equipment, building new military infrastructure along Arctic coastlines (where applicable), and engaged in repeated military exercises throughout the region. Collectively referred to as the "militarization" of the Arctic, these observations focus on the physical elements of traditional "national" security – as opposed to non-traditional "human" or "environmental" security, and non-material security relationships. But interstate relations are not characterized solely by military activities, and much of the literature have also highlighted the enduring cooperative atmosphere between the Arctic

states in matters that are not, on the face of it, traditional military and national security issues. This section will outline in further detail both sides of this discussion in order to characterize the extent and limits of the debate.

Within popular media, the predominant discursive frame for Arctic politics is one that focuses on the aforementioned physical military elements, especially as tools for pursuing regional economic resources. With headlines such as "Military drills in Arctic aim to counter Russia, but the first mission is to battle the cold," (Cooper, 2019) or "Climate change opening up new resources in the Arctic, and a new fight to claim them," (Moran, 2019), a casual or even interested reader would be hard-pressed not to assume there is a massive military role in the search for and exploitation of the Arctic's natural resources. Canadian politicians, including Northwest Territories premier Bob McLeod, have expressed concerns about sovereignty that could be lost to unnamed others (Moran, 2019; Edwards, 2019), and modernized Russian Arctic military bases defended by Bastion anti-ship and Pantsir anti-air missiles have received significant public attention (Isachenkov, 2019). In the United States, Alice Hill, senior director of the Obama Administration's National Security Council, recently called for increased US Arctic military preparation to avoid "falling behind in the race to capture new economic opportunities" (Hill, 2019). Such articles are not limited to the recent years of increased Russian-Western antagonism following the former's invasion of Crimea, however: the previous decade saw similar articles, such as *The Guardian*'s "A very cold war indeed" with the lead explicitly referencing "major military build-ups beginning in the area" (2008). The dual constants of Arctic resources and military build-ups have continually and consistently been framed in relation to each other, with the general claim that those military investments would be used to secure the extraction of those natural resources. Why military force is necessary to secure these resources, of which 95% is within recognized Exclusive Economic Zones of their respective countries, and how, exactly, those military forces might be used for such an objective is generally left to the reader's imagination (Brosnan, Leschine, & Miles, 2011: 180; Østerud & Hønneland, 2013: 168; Breum, 2018: 43).

In contrast, Arctic scholars and governmental experts have generally taken great pains to emphasize an atmosphere of international cooperation and legally-constrained behavior between the Arctic states, especially as it pertains to the relationship between economic resources and military means (Grant, 2010: 429-43; Coates, Lackenbauer, Morrison, & Poelzer, 2008: 163-165; Exner-Pirot, 2018; Breum, 2018: 43). The core of this rests upon the 2008 Illulisat Agreement, in which the Arctic Ocean coastal states affirmed their intentions to adhere to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as the legal mechanism for resolving any maritime disputes. Certainly, the history of the past eleven years bears this out: none of the Arctic states have employed military forces to assert ownership of any disputed natural resources or geographic space. Despite popular articles claiming states are engaged in a "scramble for resources", scholars like Klaus Dodds (2016: 174) have noted that "interested parties will need to negotiate on the matter of sovereign rights in the central Arctic Ocean"; such a peaceful prospect is buoyed by cooperative examples such as the September 2010 agreement between Norway and Russia on delimiting their boundary in the Barents Sea (Jensen, 2011). Even the most pessimistic of Arctic scholars do not foresee an Arctic conflict erupting over the hydrocarbons and minerals resting under the seabed. Rob Huebert, for example, suggests that if there were to be interstate military conflict in the Arctic, then it would stem from global geopolitical competition between the United States, Russia, and China rather than for solely securing Arctic economic resources (Huebert, 2019:

10-15). Meanwhile, Marc Lanteigne at the University of Tromsø highlights how geopolitical competition between the global great powers is moving the Arctic region "from the strategic periphery and towards an uncertain mainstream in emerging global strategic discourses" (Lanteigne, 2019). Such acknowledgements of the Arctic's national security role often cite Russia's invasion of Crimea as a sign of the country's willingness to use military force as a regular instrument of national policy in violation of international norms and laws, with implications for similar future behavior in the Arctic.

At the other end of the spectrum, some scholars continue to downplay the significance of military assets in the Arctic Circle. Michael Byers, for example, goes so far as to claim the Soviet (and current Russian) nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) fleet was based out of the Kola Peninsula not "because it is in the Arctic [but rather] because the Barents Sea is ice-free throughout the year, providing assured access to the Atlantic Ocean" (Byers, 2019: 6). This, however, ignores the 1980s turn in Soviet naval strategy that focused on establishing "bastions" under the Arctic ice cap for their SSBNs, the missiles on which had acquired the range to strike North America without needing to go past NATO anti-submarine lines and into the Atlantic. Simultaneously, the United States and NATO began planning and practicing an offensive naval strategy aimed at stopping the Soviet SSBN fleet before they could reach relative safety under the Arctic ice cap (Grove, 1991: 21, 29-30; Lehman, 2018: 58, 182-183; Wood, 1989: 340; Dodds, 2016: 157; Tamnes and Holtsmark, 2014: 27). This bastion strategy continued into the post-Soviet era, cementing the Kola Peninsula and its Arctic Ocean access as a fundamental part of Russian national security (Boulègue, 2019: 6-8). Furthermore, Russian submarines have continued to exercise the practice of "pierside launch", whereby they fire their missiles from their Kola bases without setting sail (Pry, 1999: 169; Nilsen, 2019). Thus, contrary to Byers' claim that the Kola Peninsula has not been "weaponized", the opposite has, in fact, long been and continues to be the case. He is, however, to be commended for distinguishing between "militarization" (supporting infrastructure) and "weaponization" (actual weapons emplacement), though both terms remain firmly defined by military materiel and, by their own definitions, apply to the Kola Peninsula's many military bases (Byers 2019: 5). In material and strategic terms, parts of the Arctic have long been, and continue to be, heavily "militarized", playing host to some of the world's most expensive military equipment (e.g. SSBNs and anti-ballistic missile systems) as well as being a weapons launch zone and transit area in the event of major superpower conflict (Tamnes and Holtsmark, 2014: 31-32).

Militarization and militarism: bringing in the rest of society

In the above characterizations of militarization in the Arctic, the Arctic is treated as a primarily physical, geographic, space. From "remote" military bases standing alone amidst polar bears and endless ice, to oilrig platforms and icebreakers surrounded by frigid oceans without any other humans in sight, there is an implicit assumption that man-made instruments of power are disconnected from the human societies of which they are a part. However, these materiel do not exist for their own sake: they serve functions, both intended and incidental, that cannot be separated from the rest of their respective national societies. It is this societal, human, element of militarization that this section will now elucidate.

In recognizing militarization as a social phenomenon rather than merely a material one, German historian Michael Geyer highlights the distinction between militarization and militarism. While the

former is the "*process* in which *civil* society organizes itself for the production of violence" (emphases added; Geyer, 1989: 79), militarism manifests in two ways. The older, more conventional militarism was the "predominance" of martial values in civil society, where the state's military "was presumed to have an extraordinary influence…capable of affecting society at large." Geyer (1989: 67-68) termed this "nineteenth-century" militarism, modeling it off of the Prussian-German experience, where societies' "genuine interests and outlooks were presumed to be peaceful [but] could succumb to militarism by taking on the *Gessinnung* (spirit), language, and behavior of military castes." In this sense, martial values were transferred unidirectionally from the military to civilian society.

Geyer, highlights, however, that the mass mobilizations that occurred during the World Wars resulted in a dramatically different and more deeply entrenched type of militarism. This "twentieth century" militarism could be described as the dependency of civil societies on the preparation and/or conduct of war – whereby, borrowing Clausewitz's famed statement, "war is not just the continuation of social organization by other means, but [rather] war becomes the very basis of social organization; that is, if societies live off war or its preparation and propagation either economically, politically, or culturally" (Geyer, 1989: 80). Within popular consciousness, the idea that "peaceful" and democratic societies can become held enthralled by war-preparation or war-making requirements is perhaps best encapsulated by US President Eisenhower's simultaneous defense and critique of the American military-industrial complex, especially in the prioritization of the critical perspective in popular readings of Eisenhower speech (Janiewski, 2011: 684-686). However, while the idea of profit-seeking industrial elites dictating the terms of government policy may be attractive in its simplicity, Geyer's observation runs at a much deeper, more nuanced level.

As an example of Geyer's definitions as a framework in action, American anthropologist Catherine Lutz highlighted the militarized economic and social dependencies of civil relations in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Chosen for its proximity to Fort Bragg, "one of the largest military complexes in the world" (US Army, 2019), Fayetteville has become one of several cities in the United States in which civilian lives are inextricably tied to the development and existence of a nearby military base. As part of the city's militarization, "labour and resources allocated to military purposes" became intensified (Lutz, 2002: 723). For example, in order to serve the thousands of soldiers and their families at Fort Bragg, an outsized proportion of Fayetteville's labor force became dedicated to service and retail industries. These low-paying jobs suppressed the economic development of the city, rendering it continually one of the poorest in the state. This is further aggravated by the fact that military bases are federal property and therefore cannot be taxed by the municipality despite making up nearly a quarter of the city's geographic area (Lutz, 2002: 726-727). Paradoxically, Fayetteville and other cities can use their close ties to local military infrastructure as leverage for federal funding and investment. The latter includes vital infrastructure such as interstate highways, which the federal government implements in return for the city's continued acceptance of the economic and social conditions required to sustain the base (Lutz, 2002: 726). As a result, such cities are militarized in the sense that their civilian populations and economy have become dependent on the continued existence of military bases. So long as such bases exist, the cities are severely limited in what economic activities can take place; at the same time, should those same bases be downsized or altogether decommissioned, these cities might well collapse due to the sudden lack of income from military personnel and families who buy groceries, go to movie theatres, and frequent restaurants, as well as reduced federal interest.

Thus, unlike the discussions on the Arctic, dedicated literature on militarized societies highlights not only military equipment and bases themselves, but especially the institutionalized dependencies of civilian lives and sectors on the continued maintenance of the means required for war. This militarism that closely integrates the military and the civil results from the continuous process of militarization – ergo, if we can identify instances of militarism in the Arctic, then it can also be safely said that militarization has long and already been underway in the region.

Militarized dependencies in the civilian North

Recognizing the societal aspect of militarization and militarism allows us to examine the Arctic beyond the typical debate about inter-state conflict and cooperation. That being said, the physical environment can play, as will be argued in this section, a significant role in determining the extent to which civil societies become reliant on militarized institutions. Justified by their primary mission of defending the state against external human enemies, militaries often possess expensive self-sufficient abilities to operate at the full extent of extreme conditions. This allows them to provide vital services to civil society, such as all-weather search and rescue capabilities, that would be financially difficult to duplicate in non-militarized forms due to the relatively rare occurrence of events requiring such capabilities. And because the geographies of states can result in proximity to adversaries in regions that are sparsely populated, there is a further rationale in terms of deterrence and military response time to establish military presence in those regions away from population centres – a situation that is exacerbated in the Arctic. This presence can take the form of military bases, which in turn create a source of income and jobs for local civilians. Similar to Lutz's observations of Fayetteville, a dependency by civilians on continued military presence is formed. However, this dependency is not always met with resentment, or indeed acknowledged as problematic.

Perhaps one of the most poignant examples of this was the objection from local civilians when the Norwegian government announced the closure of the Andøya Airbase by 2022, located near the village of Andenes in the country's north. The airbase is operated by the Royal Norwegian Air Force and hosts P-3C Orion anti-submarine maritime patrol aircraft. It is also the municipality's single largest employer, providing some 700 jobs. Given Andenes' population of 2,694, it is easy to understand why the base's closure was decried as Andenes' "kiss of death" – the sudden unemployment would be further exacerbated by the loss of income from base personnel who would otherwise frequent local businesses (Statistics Norway, 2019; Eilertsen, 2018; Staalesen, 2018). For instance, Andenes coffee shop owners Robert Svendsen and Gina Wold told NRK reporters that the closure "is a tragedy" and "a great disappointment" (Skeie & Bjelland, 2018). When the closure was announced in 2016, Andenes' mayor expected it to result in "at least 1,000" residents leaving the region (Berglund, 2016). Although 2022 remains a few years away, the impact of the announcement is already being seen: technicians working at the air base and living in the area have already begun leaving, resulting in a "critical" lack of personnel required to service the aircraft still stationed at the base (Skeie & Steinholt, 2018; Olsen, 2018). Similar to the federal-municipal relationship experienced by Fayetteville, Andenes has also become beholden to the decisions of Oslo. The decision to close Andenes, put forth by the federal Labour party, faced disagreement and opposition from its own representative in Andenes, Kjell Are Johansen, who claimed that his party "[did] not choose to listen to the economic, military and environmental arguments for preserving Andøya air station" (Skeie & Bjelland, 2018).

At the same time that the Andøya base is being closed, the aircraft currently based there are being replaced with new P-8 Poseidon aircraft, which will be based out of a new air base at Evenes. This transition to Evenes has been justified in terms of consolidating limited numbers of expensive long-range surface-to-air defences with air force aircraft to ensure the latter's safety on the ground in the event of war. The 1400 citizens at Evenes are reportedly "very happy" about the move, which expects to bring four hundred new jobs to the even smaller village (Mehren & Eriksen, 2018). It is important to note that this militarized dependency manifests not in a rejection or resistance by the civilians to military presence, but a *desire* to acquire and maintain that presence. Within the context of limited economic opportunities in the sparsely-distributed population of the north, it appears that having such a large proportion of the civilian population economically beholden to the continued existence of a local military base is worth the risk of potentially facing the same future mass unemployment as Andenes. The cost of this militarism is not limited to the civilian population, however: from an operational perspective and as argued by Andenes union representatives, Evenes is further inland than Andenes, which reduces the aircraft's ability to loiter and monitor the ocean space in support of, for example, fisheries protection (Mehren & Eriksen, 2018). The wartime martial requirement for protecting military forces is thus in contradiction with those forces' peacetime objectives of surveillance.

Norway's Arctic maritime capability

At sea, Norway's Coast Guard (Kystvakt), operating under its Navy, illustrates the prioritization of day-to-day civilian-support missions, institutionalized in its material force structure and activities. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the Kystvakt has greatly modernized its fleet of both offshore and inshore vessels (Saunders, 2011: 578-579). Whereas the Cold War era fleet of offshore patrol ships were built to support both the daily mission of fisheries patrol as well as to be able to fit missile and torpedo armament for wartime contingencies, the new vessels were built to prioritize environmental protection with only a single gun on the bow for enforcement purposes. Equipped with a low, flat stern deck for equipment such as tow ropes and oil containment booms, these ships have formed the backbone of Norway's maritime federal presence – not just far away from shore to ensure fisheries regulations are adhered to, but within the country's territorial waters as well. The Coast Guard Act of 1997 invested the Kystvakt with the legal responsibilities and rights to support other Norwegian governmental agencies, such as customs and the police, as required (Forsvarsdepartmentet, 2017; Forsvarsdepartmentet, n.d.). Kystvakt members are invested with the authorities of those agencies, acting in their stead where unique seagoing capabilities are required. This effectively has meant that a military agency has become responsible for duties as varied as the following: ensuring cruise ship exhausts meet sulfur pollution restrictions through the use of aerial drones (Stensvold, 2018); ensuring tourist fishermen stay well back from fish farms in Norwegian fjords (Robak & Haukenes, 2018); and checking the papers of foreign merchant ships to ensure compliance with Schengen Zone regulations (Skram, 2007). Offshore in the EEZ, the larger Kystvakt ships also serve as floating hospitals and firehalls, providing vital medical and firefighting services for the civilian fishing fleets that are so central to the Norwegian coastal economy (Skram, 2007; Pedersen, 2012: 10).

Denmark's Greenlandic and Arctic maritime capability

In the Danish Realm, the impact of remote military bases and their closure or opening has a much smaller effect on civilians. Whereas many Norwegian military sites are situated throughout a long

and narrow strip of territory away from large civilian population clusters, the bulk of Denmark's military is concentrated on the continental homeland of Jutland and islands spanning the Danish Straits between the North and Baltic Seas, which minimizes the proportional economic impact of Danish military bases (Forsvarkommandoen, 2019b). Meanwhile, Denmark's interest in the Arctic lies with its self-governing offshore territories, the Faroe Islands and Greenland. For the former, no large military facilities exist, while the latter currently plays host to only three major military installations: Thule Air Base operated by the United States Air Force; Grønnedal, a naval base that served as the primary port for Danish warships during the Cold War but is now little more than a refueling depot; and Kangerlussuaq, the only international airport in Greenland used for regular commercial jet aircraft and home to the Danish Air Force's Challenger aircraft, used for surveillance and search and rescue (Forsvarskommandoen, 2019a). Additionally, Kangerlussuaq, as well as Narsarsuaq and Kulusuk airports, were built by the US military during World War II and the early Cold War as airbases, which now serve as major hubs on which many local communities depend for domestic and international travel (Air Greenland, 2020; Visit Greenland, 2019). Otherwise, the Royal Danish Navy's patrol ships of the *Thetis* and *Knud Rasmussen* classes operate out of the civilian harbour at Nuuk, as well as through Reykjavik in Iceland, which serves as the closest resupply and crew change port to eastern Greenland (Jensen, 2011: 321; Stockmann & Sturkell, 2018; Breum, 2018: 40-42). As a result, there are comparatively minimal direct dependencies between military facilities in Greenland and nearby civilian populations. Grønnedal, for example, used to be its own small town with some 140 occupants as late as 2009, but which had been closed down in 2012 and major functions consolidated at Joint Arctic Command in Nuuk (Scheelsbeck, 2009: 4; Søndergaard, 2014). The base did, however, provide scheduled medical and air transportation services for the 150 civilians living in Arsuk, twelve nautical miles away (Forsvaret, n.d.: 4; Forsvarsministeriet, 2011). Grønnedal became the centre of a minor international drama when Chinese investors indicated an interest in purchasing it, upon which Danish authorities abruptly cancelled the port's sale and returned it to operational status in 2017, albeit at a much reduced state of activity with only a three watchkeepers and a slow cleanup underway (Krog, 2017; Matzen, 2017; Fischer, 2018).

Nonetheless, the role of the Danish military in the lives of Greenlandic citizens is not inconsiderable. While the primary mission of the Danish military in Greenland is to ensure the territory's sovereignty through constant presence and surveillance, its day to day missions focus on ensuring Greenlandic and Danish civilians' ability to work on and around the oceans through fisheries inspections, search and rescue, and environmental protection (Forsvaret, n.d.: 3; Scheelsbeck, 2009: 4; Breum, 2018: 48-49; Danish Ministry of Defence, 2019). Although such roles are often delegated to dedicated coast guards, long-standing concerns over Greenlandic territorial integrity has meant Denmark continues to use its navy for these peacetime roles.

When they were first built at the end of the Cold War, the four Thetis "inspection ships" were designed for both peacetime and wartime functions in offshore areas, built with the "STANFLEX" system allowing weapons, such as torpedoes and anti-ship missiles, to be fitted in standardized slots. Since then, however, two of the ship's three STANFLEX slots have been repurposed to better reflect their primary peacetime missions: new enclosed hangars for small boats have been built on top of the spaces formerly reserved for STANFLEX, and the crane module that used to occupy the STANFLEX slots are now permanent additions on the ships. Nonetheless, the ships retain an ability to employ limited violent force if necessary, with a 76mm

rapid firing gun on the bow a constant presence in addition to .50 calibre machine guns that can be mounted throughout the ship's decks if necessary. These ships' newer, smaller cousins of the *Knud Rasmussen* class are similarly fitted with STANFLEX capability, but face logistical challenges should advanced weaponry be equipped (Breum, 2018: 55). These violent means are a reminder that although the Danish navy's 1st Squadron, under which these patrol ships fall, functions to ensure the safety of civilians and to enforce environmental regulations, it is nonetheless prepared to use military force to defend the territorial integrity of the Greenlandic and Faroe maritime spaces. That said, sovereignty assertion can be enhanced in more ways than through the demonstration of brute force. As Danish journalist Martin Breum details, the Danish patrol ship *Ejnar Mikkelsen* rendezvoused with the cruise ship *Expedition* in September 2010 in northeastern Greenland. The purpose of this was not just to be present in case of a rescue emergency or to enforce hunting regulations, but to also, literally, show the flag: "…the naval officers [on *Ejnar Mikkelsen*] also calculate…that photos of the *Ejnar Mikkelsen* and a swaying Danish flag will be uploaded to Facebook and the rest of the internet. The whole world will learn that Danish naval ships are in attendance here" (Breum, 2018: 61). The dual nature of the Danish military in the Arctic, then, is clearly illustrated: the "continuous process", in the words of Danish admiral Nils Wang (Breum, 2018: 63), of sovereignty assertion that is manifested through the military's ability to provide regulatory and emergency services – activities that are, in more populous regions, usually conducted via strictly civilian institutions.

These Arctic states' reliance on military institutions for civilian functions are also characterized by the unique nature of their regional maritime environment. Because Denmark's patrol ships in Greenland were built to operate in remote ice-covered waters, they have also proven to be opportune vessels for civilian objectives that involve in-ice operations, such as updating navigational charts that require clear readings of the seabed or taking salinity readings of the water column. Civilian scientific research organizations have entered into agreements with the Royal Danish Navy to make use of these patrol ships where research objectives and patrol areas align; indeed, such civil-military cooperation is so close that one such organization, the Danish Centre for Marine Research (Dansk Center for Havforskning, or DCH), worked with the RDN on the design of the third *Knud Rasmussen* class patrol ship, HDMS *Lauge Koch*, to make it more suitable for oceanographic research. The DCH even funded some of the key equipment that is used on board *Lauge Koch*, such as a permanently-installed Teledyne Reson 7160 multibeam sonar and various modular hydraulic winches to lower and retrieve scientific instruments (Dansk Center for Havforskning, 2018). Similarly, the Kystvakt icebreaker KV *Svalbard* became the first Norwegian ship to reach the North Pole on August 21, 2019, while supporting civilian scientists from the Nansen Center (Bentzrød, 2019). All of this, of course, on board vessels armed with at least one rapid-firing cannon on the bow. The fact that military forces, particularly maritime ones, routinely operate in remote Arctic spaces that are prohibitively expensive to access and of minimal direct importance to most civilians means that civilian researchers interested in such regions are often dependent upon the state's military or paramilitary infrastructure to support their work.

Canada's Arctic maritime capability

In Canada, while civilians occasionally remain reliant on military assets for search and rescue, much of the responsibility and capability have devolved into civilian hands. Whereas Norway's Coast Guard is a part of their navy and has its own armed capability and the Royal Danish Navy's 1st

Squadron is responsible for both traditional defence and coast guard duties, the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) is a wholly separate civilian organization from the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Because Canada's ice-capable federal vessels are currently all Coast Guard vessels, this means the Canadian maritime presence in the Arctic is predominantly a civilian, rather than military, one. When civilian scientists wish to conduct research in Canadian Arctic waters, they travel on board the CCG's unarmed icebreakers (Amundsen Science, 2019; Romaine, 2019). If a major oil spill were to occur, it would not be an RCN frigate that arrives with pollution control equipment stored ad-hoc on the helicopter deck, but a CCG vessel with dedicated space and storage for containment and recovery – perhaps even a pre-positioned container loaded onto the CCG ship using its own heavy-duty crane or a contracted civilian ship (Canadian Coast Guard, 2008: [sic] 4-15, 5-12 – 5-13). In the event of a search and rescue (SAR) incident, however, all agencies are expected to play a role as and when available. Local civilian volunteers, such as those organized into federally-supported Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) units, will likely be the first responders given the potential remoteness of the location from major federal rescue assets (Canadian Coast Guard, 2018). While CCG icebreakers often carry their own helicopters for ice reconnaissance and general transport, these are not purpose-built for SAR and lack infrared and night vision sensors and hoists that can lift injured persons into the cabin (Johnson, 2018). Rather, aerial SAR in Canada is the domain of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), whose unarmed bright yellow CH-149 Cormorant helicopters and CC-115 Buffalo fixed-wing airplanes are dedicated to SAR missions and accordingly equipped (Royal Canadian Air Force, 2015). In the event of emergencies, Joint Rescue Coordination Centres (JRCC), such as the ones in Trenton and Halifax, coordinate federal and local military and civilian assets. This multi-level approach is necessary especially for the Canadian Arctic due to the vast distances involved. The aforementioned RCAF aircraft are based in the southern part of Canada and can take many hours, if not days, to arrive at a distress location (Royal Canadian Air Force, 2015). This makes it imperative that local, often civilian, responders are ready to play a role in locating and saving lives.

Canada's current reliance on unarmed assets to carry out SAR and environmental protection duties in its maritime Arctic therefore stands in contrast with its Scandinavian neighbours. While all three involve civilian entities as part of potential responders, only Canada has a dedicated offshore response capability that does not play an armed military role. For Norway and the Danish Realm, offshore and remote SAR and environmental duties have been militarized in their heavy dependence upon armed naval forces.

In the coming years, however, this situation may begin to homogenize. The first of Canada's eight *Harry DeWolf* class Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels (AOPVs) is nearing entry into service. Six of these 6300-ton ice-capable ships will be operated by the Royal Canadian Navy while two will be for the Canadian Coast Guard in an offshore patrol role (Gunn, 2019). Lightly armed with a weather-protected 25mm gun on the bow and a pair of .50 calibre machine guns (it is uncertain whether the CCG variants will be similarly equipped), these vessels will provide Canada with an armed naval capability in ice-covered waters during the summer season for the first time since the 1950s. Much like their current Scandinavian counterparts, the *DeWolf* class are expected to play a primarily non-military role, being focused on supporting SAR, scientific, and environmental protection activities in the Arctic and offshore areas, while bringing with them a basic armed capability to assist in sovereignty operations and law enforcement activities taken under the legal

authority of other agencies such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Fisheries Officers (Royal Canadian Navy, 2019).

At the same time that the RCN is growing to introduce a more constant Arctic presence, the CCG, which has traditionally taken the federal maritime lead in the Arctic, is slated to only remain at its current size – if not decrease. It was only as recently as August 2, 2019, that the Government of Canada announced its decision to procure, in addition to the *Diefenbaker* polar icebreaker, six new medium and heavy icebreakers for the CCG to replace its existing fleet of the same number (Public Services and Procurement Canada, 2019). By the mid-2020s, when all of the *DeWolf* class vessels are expected to enter service, six out of fifteen Canadian government vessels capable of summer Arctic operations will therefore be a military vessel. Of course, maintenance and training schedules mean not all fifteen ships will be operating at the same time, but nevertheless we can expect to see nearly half the summer federal maritime presence be of a militarized character in contrast to the current primarily civilian architecture. The exception to this has been the sporadic Canadian Armed Forces exercises in the Arctic for brief periods as part of Operation Nanook, which usually take place in ice-free areas or on land (Government of Canada, 2019).

Conclusion

While academic debate over the extent to which the Arctic is militarized tends to focus on the procurement, emplacement, and exercise of military hardware, much of the discussion tends to ignore the civil population occupying it. The centrality of military forces in the Arctic during the Cold War did not disappear overnight with the collapse of the Berlin Wall and rise of the unipolar moment. The extensive and intensive physical and social infrastructures that had developed to support sovereign claims and a prospective transpolar war were not so quickly or easily dismantled. At the same time, this need for military presence in the remote northern regions provided opportunities to support civilian objectives, ranging from scientific expeditions to simply assuring a country's citizenry could use the land and seas to their full extent, secure in the thought that rescue services would be available.

Militarization in the Arctic is not, in itself, subject to debate: the presence and use of military forces in the region have and continue to be well-established. Therefore, what much of the Arctic militarization literature *should* be concerned about is not so much *whether* militaries are in the Arctic, but rather *what* their roles are. However, the two have often been conflated, where militarization is in itself seen and framed by popular media and a minority of scholars in an alarmist manner, where military presence is assumed to be for interstate confrontation over access and resources (Pincus & Zebich-Knos, 2016: 126-127). At the same time, scholars arguing for and highlighting a cooperative atmosphere in the Arctic region should not ignore the very real and enduring militarism embedded in the societies of Arctic states: a militarism characterized by the dependence of civil sectors on the maintenance of military forces and their unique capabilities, rather than a predilection towards the use of violence or other martial traits.

It is important to recognize that although militarized dependencies are clearly prevalent to differing degrees across the Arctic, it would be difficult to argue that this is to the absolute detriment of the peoples living in the region. Military equipment can often provide enhanced abilities that make them more suitable than civilian alternatives. On August 13, 2019, two tourists and their guide requested assistance from Greenlandic authorities when they found themselves disoriented in the

midst of wildfire smoke between Sisimiut and Kangerlussuaq. While local police diverted Air Greenland's SAR-dedicated S-61 helicopter to try to find the trio (Air Greenland, 2019), it was unsuccessful. Fortunately, the Royal Danish Navy support ship HDMS *Absalon* was in the area supporting the firefighting efforts, and the ship's SH-60 Seahawk helicopter, equipped with more advanced sensors required for traditional military missions, was sent to assist. The Seahawk succeeded where the civilian S-61 did not, safely bringing the three persons to the Sisimiut hospital (Vinther, 2019). Such uses of military forces for peacetime missions in support of civilians has tended to be ignored in literature concerning Arctic military developments, often focusing on wartime or high-tension scenarios. In taking seriously the peacetime role of military forces and the specific physical capabilities that requires, Arctic militarization can be analyzed with greater nuance without defaulting to a security dilemma-driven framing of spiraling confrontation.

Table 1: Armed Offshore Patrol Ships of Norway, Denmark, and Canada (August 2020)[1]

Country and Ship Class	**Number in Class**	**First of Class in Service**	**Full Load Displacement (t)**	**Armament (current, excluding small arms)**	**Ice Rating (theoretical in 1st year pack ice, unless otherwise stated)**
Norway					
KV *Svalbard*	1	2002	6375	1x57mm cannon	1 m
KV *Nordkapp*	3	1981	3200	1x57mm cannon	1 m as built (since deprecated)
KV *Barentshav*	3	2008	4000	1x40mm cannon (not always equipped)	n/a
KV *Harstad*	1	2005	3132	1x40mm cannon	n/a
Denmark					
HDMS *Thetis*	4	1991	3500	1x76mm cannon	80 cm / DNV ICE 1A
HDMS *Knud Rasmussen*	3	2008	2050	1x76mm cannon	85 cm (empirical)
Canada					
HMCS *Harry DeWolf*	1 (+5 more for RCN and 2 more for Canadian Coast Guard, totaling 8)	2020	6440	1x25mm cannon, 2x0.50 calibre heavy machine guns	1.2 m

Notes

1. Data collated from the following: Arild-Inge Skram (2017). *Alltid til Stede: Kystvakten 1997-2017*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget. 104-105; Harald Danielsen and Martin Lund Tverå (May 2019). *Kriseberedskap i Arktis* [Bachelor's Thesis]. Sjøkrigsskolen [Norwegian Naval Academy]. https://fhs.brage.unit.no/fhs-xmlui/handle/11250/2608109. 27; Jan P. Jansen and Per Christian Blichfeldt (1998). *Havets Voktere: Historien om Kystvakten*. Oslo: Schibsted. 144; Per Herholdt Jensen (2005). *Atlantsejlerne: Flådens inspektionsskibe i 100 år*. Copenhagen: Aschehoug. 245; Per Herholdt Jensen (2010). *Grønlandssejlerne Flådens: inspektionskuttere og inspektionsfartøjer*. Frederiksværk: Nautilus Forlag. 303-304.; Per Herholdt Jensen (2011). *Støt Kurs: Flåden ved Grønland i 275 år – Grønlands Kommando i 60 år*. Frederiksværk: Nautilus Forlag. 201; Naval Material Command (u.d.). *THETIS Class Patrol Frigate* [Official Pamphlet]. Royal Danish Navy. 4, 10; Royal Canadian Navy (2019, November 15). Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship Project. Government of Canada. http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/fleet-units/aops-multimedia.page?.

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