



Russia's Foreign Policy Concept

A qualitative analysis

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ABSTRACT

This thesis conducts a qualitative analysis of the Russian foreign policy concept from 2016, as it is presented on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The analysis is based on the aspirational constructivist theory and is realized by utilizing a functional idea analysis with elements of argument analysis. By applying these tools this thesis is enabled to analyze implied messages as well as to provide a different approach in the analysis of strictly political documents.

The analysis is based in aspirational constructivism; a theory that seeks to find out a state's national identity in order to determine the state's political purpose. In turn, the political purpose creates political aspirations and therefore national interests. By utilizing all of the above-mentioned tools, this thesis aims to analyze how ideas about NATO, ethnolinguistics, and economics are manifested in the foreign policy concept. With this as a foundation the thesis will then discuss some open questions regarding how this new foreign policy concept, and as such Russia's national identity, might affect the European Union's security, territory and economy.

Keywords

foreign policy, Russia, national identity, security, aspirational constructivism

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Russian foreign policy is a heavily debated subject among many researchers around the globe. This thesis is an addition to that research and applies a theory based on the assumption that national identities greatly influence national interests and political decisions. The applied theory, called aspirational constructivism, is grounded in the work of Anne L. Clunan (2009) entitled *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*. As such, the thesis strongly differentiates itself from various realist approaches, for example John J. Mearsheimer (2014) in *Vems fel är Ukrainakrisen?*¹ or Elena Kropatcheva (2012) in “Russian foreign policy in the realm of European security through the lens of neoclassical realism”² by applying identity theories on top of its many similarities to realism.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze how the Russian national identity based in aspirational constructivism creates aspirations regarding NATO, the economy and the ethno-linguistic dimension, and how these aspirations are manifested in the most recently approved foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation. These dimensions have been chosen because they are particularly noticeable in the foreign policy concept and they all affect the European Union. On the base of this concrete aim, I formulate the following open questions: Is it likely that Russia will wage war against the EU? How might Russian expansionist tendencies affect the EU? And, what may Russia's Eastern economic expansion mean for the EU? These open questions are brought up and discussed because they come to mind when going through the analysis. However, due to our limited material, the questions will only be discussed and not answered. It is important to mention that this is not a full feathered analysis of Russia's foreign policy nor of the questions at hand due to the fact that we do not get into any subject that only emphasizes the U.S. – Russia relationship along with other factors that this thesis may overlook. This is due to a selection process conducted to maximize clarity in both the analysis of the document and its conclusions regarding the above formulated questions.

2.0 THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

2.1 Aspirational Constructivism

This thesis is built upon the theory called aspirational constructivism as it is presented in Anne L. Clunans book: *The social construction of Russia's resurgence*. Hence this book sets the

¹ John J. Mearsheimer, *Vems fel är Ukrainakrisen?*, (Stockholm: Karneval förlag, 2014).

² Elena Kropatcheva, “Russian foreign policy in the realm of European security through the lens of neoclassical realism,” *Journal of Eurasian Studies* (Vol. 3, No. 1), January 2012, accessed May 16, 2017, pages 30-40, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187936651100025X>.

major framework and foundation of the coming analysis and it is of great importance in how the study of the foreign policy concept is conducted.

Aspirational constructivism is a theory that focuses on the creation of identities and its significance in the formation of national interests. Nonetheless, it has its similarities with other theories, one of these being the rationalist branch of realism. This is explained by James G. March and Johan P. Olsen as if political behaviors and actions were the results of the political elite's desires in, and the expected consequences of, particular situations.³ According to William C. Wohlforth, such particular situations are usually defined by material factors. For instance, military balance, geography or economic interdependence. In his belief, the notion of material constraints is what dictates whether a country has a national interest in accumulating wealth and power by engaging in either conflict or cooperation.⁴ Other realists agreeing with that statement are, for instance, Randall L. Schweller⁵ and Stephen G. Brooks.⁶

In contrast, aspirational constructivism does not consider such material factors as sufficient when analyzing national interests and political behaviors, instead, it defines national identities as being the underlying factor of national interests. National identities are believed to be highly changeable and influenced by the political elite who in turn are influenced by human reason as well as the past and the present.⁷ Because of this, aspirational constructivism is in this thesis considered to be more complex than its realist counterpart. Additionally, realism contradicts several aspects of aspirational constructivism. For example, the realist oriented researcher John G. Ikenberry concluded that after the Cold War world politics would be significantly altered and that NATO faced an inevitable downfall.⁸ Of course, in retrospect it is well known that this never occurred. Subsequently, it exposed the flaws of realism which is something that aspirational constructivism is looking to make up for. Aspirational

³ James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," *International Organization* 52, (no. 4 1998), 947-948, 943-969, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&sid=f2bc046d-8486-43ad-afb1-424d2b3f1dc7@sessionmgr4008&hid=4213>.

⁴ William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* (Vol. 19, No. 3, 1994/95): 107-108, 111-112, 115, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=7da4d772-85cd-4954-8c6b-48490cc821d3@sessionmgr4010&vid=5&hid=4213>.

⁵ Randall L. Schweller and William C. Wohlforth, "Power Test: Evaluating Realism in Response to the End of the Cold War," *Security Studies* 9 (3) 2000: 86, 90.

⁶ Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "Power, Globalization and the End of the Cold War: Reevaluating a Landmark Case for Ideas." *International Security* 25 (3), 2000/2001: 29-31, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2626705?seq=25#page_scan_tab_contents.

⁷ Anne Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests* (Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 7-8.

⁸ John G. Ikenberry, "Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Persistence of American Postwar Order," *International Security* 23 (3), 1998, 43-44.

constructivism therefore opposes certain aspects of realism and consequently it will not be a subject of further discussion in this thesis.

Being a branch of constructivism itself, as the name implies, aspirational constructivism contains many of the ideas that are fundamental to the previous. Constructivism, according to Alexander Wendt, does not undermine the effect of material factors. Instead, these factors are considered to be highly influenced by cultural aspects, norms, and identity. These are in turn based on societal ideas, or rather, they are based on how human agents perceive society.⁹ As Wendt proclaims: “How agents perceive the world is important in explaining their actions, and they always have an element of choice in defining their identities and interests.”¹⁰ Further on, Wendt argues that social structures too are imperative to constructivism. Such social structures are also referred to as the international community’s distribution of practices, norms, and identities.¹¹ However, Clunan criticizes both Wendt’s and other constructivists’ approaches to social structures as they tend to focus only on the present, effectively ignoring the influence of history, which she also claims is the case for realism.¹²

Notwithstanding, there are constructivist approaches that do account for history, for example, Ted Hopf (2002) in *Social Construction of International Politics*.¹³ However, his approach is still lacking in explaining the role of history in how identities change and develop.¹⁴ Clunan makes up for such shortages by merging constructivism with social psychology, predominantly with the work of social identity theorists¹⁵ such as Alexander L. George¹⁶ and Robert Jervis¹⁷. Additionally, she supports constructivists Rawi Abdelal’s¹⁸ and Andrei P. Tsygankov’s¹⁹ idea that a state’s political interests are molded after its main national identity.

Primarily, the concept of self-esteem is established as one of the theory’s most important corner stones. Self-esteem, in this context, should be viewed on a national and

⁹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge, New York and Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999), accessed May 17, 2017, 135-138. <http://www.guillaumenicaise.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Wendt-Social-Theory-of-International-Politics.pdf>.

¹⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 137-138.

¹¹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Chap. 4 and Chap. 7.

¹² Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 5-6.

¹³ Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), Chap. 4.

¹⁴ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 7.

¹⁵ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 3, 8.

¹⁶ Alexander L. George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980).

¹⁷ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

¹⁸ Rawi Abdelal, *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post-Soviet States in Comparative Perspective*, *Cornell Studies in Political Economy* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001).

¹⁹ Andrei P. Tsygankov *Pathways after Empire: National Identity and Foreign Economic Policy in the Post-Soviet World*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

collective level. Like national identities, a national self-image is a collection of ideas dealing with the political purpose and the international position of a state. The difference here is that several national self-images can exist simultaneously and only when one of these images are chosen does it become a national identity. In other words, when the political elite of a country experiences a low national self-esteem this should create aspirations which themselves are based on the nation's historical memory and its current political situation. Thus, these aspirations are key in the formation of national interests.²⁰

Such an attempt to improve national self-esteem is also called an identity management strategy. These strategies are seen in the political discourse and are typically divided into three sections: creativity, competition and mobility.²¹

On one hand, a creative strategy may attempt to create new or reform how existing, national attributes are perceived, or it may entail manipulation of other's positive elements hence making it look as a negative feature. It may be a switch of perspectives and so comparing oneself to another inferior group rather than to a greater one, or it may simply be a comparison to the superior entity but along a different dimension. On the other hand, a competitive strategy might try to mobilize "resources to improve the group's" standing in relation to another group and a mobility strategy may leave or disown one group in an effort to become a part of another, more positively viewed, group.²² One example of this is how Russia attempted to join the west and pass for a liberal democracy by rejecting its past; a dominant strategy during both Gorbachev and Yeltsin.²³

In order for identity strategies to convert a self-image into a national identity, the self-image must pass both a history test and an efficacy test in the eyes of the state's political elite. Clunan describes these tests: "a history test [is a test] of the appropriateness of the image's portrayal of useable and important elements derived from the country's past, and an efficacy test [is a test] of the image's practicality".²⁴

²⁰ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 3-4, 12, 23.

²¹ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 24, 29, 34.

²² Alexei Shevchenko and Deborah Welch Larson, "Shortcut to Greatness: The New Thinking and the Revolution in Soviet Foreign Policy," *International Organization* 57, 2003, accessed May 17, 2017, page 79, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=399f3dc0-e6a1-465f-839d-678d039928f3@sessionmgr103&hid=120>.

²³ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 83.

²⁴ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 37.

2.2 Aspirational constructivism in the context of Russia as applied by the work of Anne L. Clunan

The fall of the Soviet Union should in the view of aspirational constructivism be a cause for identity crisis and low national self-esteem. This should then create a psychological need among the political elite to reform the national self-image, the political discourse and its identity management strategies.²⁵ During the 1990s in post-Soviet Russia, five different self-images were in competition with each other; the western self-image, the statist self-image, the national restorationist self-image, the neocommunist self-image, and the slavophile self-image.²⁶

All of these have in common that they view Russia as being part of the great power group and they all have a negative assessment of Russia's position in that group.²⁷ Below, the statist developmentalist self-image, a branch of statism, will be thoroughly explained as the other four self-images are set aside. With Vladimir Putin as president, this national identity is expected to greatly influence political decisions.²⁸ However, it is important to point out that statist developmentalism did experience opposition from the other self-images and political elites were never able to reach consensus on Russia's political purpose. Ought the Russian Federation follow a unique Russian path or should it implement Western systems?²⁹ Consequently, the Russian aspiration to attain its rightful superpower status served as a stand-in for the state's political purpose which, according to Clunan, is "the root of Russia's instability and inconsistency in foreign policy".³⁰

Clunan defines statism's main characteristics as: the view that Russia is part of the great power group due to its Soviet and tsarist history, the desire to integrate the former Soviet Union (FSU) under Russian leadership, the wish to establish a powerful centralized polity which does not favor the former soviet economic model, and the implementation of citizenships based on loyalty to the state and adaptation to the Russian language and culture. This differs greatly from the Western aspirations and view on citizenship, which contributes to Clunan's interpretation of Russia being neither Western nor Eastern.

²⁵ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 53.

²⁶ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 60.

²⁷ Michael A. Hogg, Deborah J. Terry, and Katherine M. White, "A Tale of Two Theories: A Critical Comparison of Identity Theory with Social Identity Theory," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 58 (4), 1995, 259-260.

²⁸ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 65-66.

²⁹ Mikhail K. Gorshkov, "Dynamics of Elite Attitudes regarding Russia's Proper Political Purpose," *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii: Mneniia Ekspertov*, (Moscow: RNICiNP po zakazu moskovskovo predstavitel'stva Fonda im. F. Eberta, 2001).

³⁰ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 140-143.

From statism comes statist developmentalism, which in addition to what is formulated above, seeks cooperation with the West on economic and technological areas. In that view, economics is the key driver in politics. Technological and economic resources are here what characterize a state's strength. The self-image focuses largely on industrial advancement and economic modernity, consequently, it wishes to be included into both regional and global organizations. This integration must be accomplished on Russia's own terms as to not belittle Russia's great power status. Furthermore, statist developmentalism desires only to integrate economically with those former Soviet republics that obtain a military and industrial infrastructure that would strengthen Russia's economy and its military capacity. Such countries include for example Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan.³¹

Typical identity management strategies for statist developmentalism is social competition strategies along with creativity strategies. A creativity strategy could in Russia's case entail diminishing the United States military along a different dimension than simply its power. Instead it might look down on its "over-involvement" in the issues of other states. According to Clunan, Russia sees this involvement as excessive partly because of its 19th century perspective on world politics which "putatively mean[-t] non-interference in another state's political economic system and [that] great powers respect[-ed] one another's sphere while jointly managing global security."³² Therefore, there is a lack of understanding for state involvement in matters of other countries' humanitarian issues.

A social competition strategy in the case of Russia may entail comparing themselves to the U.S. in order to create a perception of equal power status. For example, referring to an example from Clunan's work, were Putin makes a statement regarding the September 11 attacks in the U.S.³³

Russia is one of the most reliable guarantors of international stability. It is Russia's principled position that has made it possible to form a strong anti-terrorist coalition...Our major goal in foreign policy is to ensure strategic stability in the world. To do this, we are participating in the creation of a new system of security, we maintain constant dialogue with the United States, and work on changing the quality of our relations with NATO.³⁴

³¹ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 64-66.

³² Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 170.

³³ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 89-90, 97, 166.

³⁴ Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly," Moscow, Russia, April 18, 2002, accessed May 17, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21567>.

According to this statement, Russia is an advanced industrial country that has a place in Western coalitions without giving up its own historical traditions. Putin then further emphasizes a “belief in Russia’s greatness,” “social solidarity,” and “patriotism” as “foothold(s) for the unity of Russian society,” and in doing so he “was filling the psychological need to assert Russia’s distinctiveness from other, lesser, European countries.”³⁵

How said strategies are applied is contingent on the dominating self-image’s ingroups and outgroups. Whether a group is perceived as an ingroup or an outgroup depends on if there are shared ties to a specific social category or not according to the national self.³⁶ Thus, in the statist mindset the West is an ingroup due to its technological and economic advancement and its status as a great power. Conversely, historically and culturally, Russia diverges so much from the West that it will never be seen as anything more than a partial ingroup for statist developmentalists.³⁷ With this in mind, Clunan theorizes that cooperation will be sought for on the dimensions that unite Russia with the West, hence on the ingroup dimensions. This will then restrain competition and confrontation on the outgroup dimensions. However, the FSU is a complete ingroup, and since a “foreign state’s attitude toward the Russian population and Russian heritage is the most important criterion for Russia in determining whether a given state is friendly,” it is probable that if there would be a conflict between Russia and the West it would be because Russia experiences confrontation, threat, or competition regarding its status within the FSU ingroup.³⁸

Above-mentioned absence of a political purpose, lack of understanding regarding humanitarian intervention, and perceived great power status based on historical grounds could be why Russia’s political elite came to see European security as merely the effects NATO and its expansion had on Russia. Not only was it perceived as isolating Russia from the West and its institutions, a crucial part in the ultimate goal of becoming an independent great power, but it also threatened its position among the former Soviet republics. Thus, the West and NATO posed a threat whilst being required in order to restore great power status and national self-esteem. This resulted in that Russia’s foreign policy toward the West alternated between being competitive and cooperative.³⁹ Besides, Russia’s desire to be a great power might require some

³⁵ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 92-93.

³⁶ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 76.

³⁷ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 79.

³⁸ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 95-96.

³⁹ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 146-147, 153.

assimilation to the West but this is sought to be accomplished without being seen as a secondary partner to the former.⁴⁰

3.0 METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

To analyze the foreign policy concept, we will use two different methodological tools: idea analysis and argument analysis. The word *idea* in this thesis is defined as it is in the work of Bergström & Boréus *Textens mening och makt*. It is seen as a well-developed and well-grounded thought or collection of thoughts that are “characterized by a certain stability and continuity.” Such thoughts can be representative of how one believes that one should act in certain situations; in our case this would be how the political elite or even how Putin himself believes that the Russian state should act in respect to geopolitical conditions and national interests.⁴¹

As seen above we have chosen to only define the concept of idea and not the concept of ideology. Social science experts, such as Terry Eagleton⁴², Herbert Tingsten⁴³, and John Gerring⁴⁴ have all discussed how ideology should be defined but nonetheless there has been little agreement on the matter which has left a lot of room for subjective interpretations.⁴⁵ This in itself creates a validity problem. Therefore this has chosen to avoid the problematic definitional issues that comes with ideology by only analyzing ideas. However, the previously described theory could supposedly be interpreted as a sort of ideology analysis in itself but that is not how it is interpreted in this thesis.

The idea is to use the sort of *idea analysis* that Bergström and Boréus call a *functional idea analysis*, hence we will look for and describe ideas in general and how they are manifested in the foreign policy concept while simultaneously seeking to explain their origin and effect on Russian relations with the European Union.⁴⁶ Functional idea analysis has, according to Evert Vedung, traditionally been defined as the functions of ideas in a historical, psychological or sociological context. Often scientists attempt to establish how the idea is effected by its environment. Thus, traditionally the focus has been on explaining the origin of ideas. However, this type of analysis is also highly useful in analyzing their consequences,

⁴⁰ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 156.

⁴¹ Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus, *Textens mening och makt: Metodbook i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys*, (Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2012), 140.

⁴² Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: an introduction*, (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

⁴³ Herbert Tingsten, *Idékritik*, (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1941).

⁴⁴ John Gerring, "Ideology: A Definitional Analysis," *Political Research Quarterly* 50 (4), July 8, 1997.

⁴⁵ Gerring, "Ideology: A Definitional Analysis," 964-965.

⁴⁶ Bergström and Boréus, *Textens mening och makt*, 146-147.

which in this thesis' opinion makes it suitable to combine with the aspirational constructivist theory. This combination allows for an interesting and innovative analysis of identities' effect on ideas and ideas' effect on foreign policy. Hence, the origin of ideas in this thesis is based on the prevailing collective identity which is based on history, social psychology, and current political situations. However, according to Vedung, functional idea analysis is lacking in structure and precision.⁴⁷ The analysis can thus be conducted in many different ways which leaves a lot of room for subjective interpretation. The critique is justified, however, the same goes for all types of idea analysis.⁴⁸ Consequently, the author continuously needs to strive for objectivity to not create validity problems. Nonetheless, the method is still the most suitable tool for this thesis due to its flexibility and the innovative analytical approaches that this allows.

Three categories or dimensions that are believed to be of the utmost importance in analyzing the Russian foreign policy have been selected. The dimensions include NATO, ethno-linguistics and economic interests. These will therefore make up the analysis' subchapters. The categories are what Bergström and Boréus call dimensions which, in comparison to ideal types, are much less detailed. Because of this, the use of dimensions has been criticized to run the risk of being too general and unspecific but in this analysis, it is believed that using dimensions is the better option. That is due to the fact that during the creation of ideal types it is very probable that there would be either too many generalizations about Russian politics, economy, culture and NATO. Or the ideal types would end up being the result of the research itself, in which case it would not be an analytical tool. Hence, in order to steer clear of such issues this thesis will be utilizing dimensions.⁴⁹ And thus following *functional idea analysis* as presented by Bergström and Boréus.

On top of that there will be fragments of argument analysis, which mainly will assert itself as helpful in analyzing the implied messages in the foreign policy concept. An argument analysis is first and foremost an attempt to "understand the reasoning process of the author." This is done by finding out the specific aim or aims of the text, searching for arguments supporting or rejecting these aims, and lastly searching for the premise that the arguments rest upon. In addition, one can examine the quality, strength and validity of the argumentation but this thesis' will not conduct such a search.⁵⁰ Rather, the argument analysis will be contained to

⁴⁷ Evert Vedung, "Innehållslig och funktionell idéanalys," *Statsvetenskaplig Tidskrift*, January 1974, accessed May 18, 2017, 9-10, <http://gauss.stat.su.se/gu/sg/2012VT/btArgumentationsanalys.pdf>.

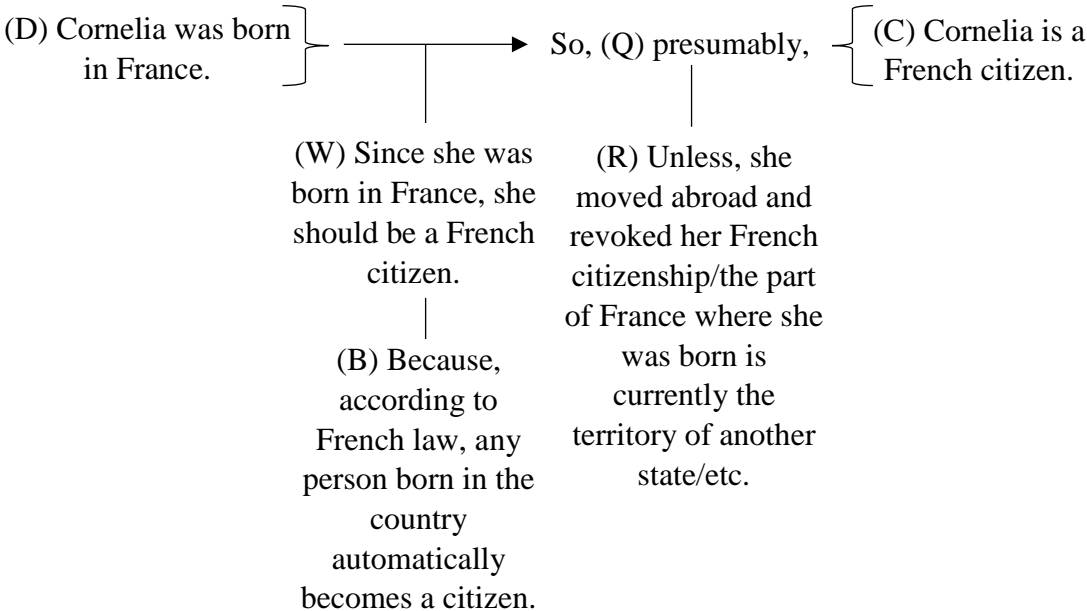
⁴⁸ Bergström and Boréus, *Textens mening och makt*, 173.

⁴⁹ Bergström and Boréus, *Textens mening och makt*, 167.

⁵⁰ Jan Garret, "Argument Analysis: The Basic Method," February 16, 2004, accessed May 18, 2017, <http://www.people.wku.edu/jan.garret/arganals.htm>.

the reasoning process of the foreign policy concept. Since this is an analysis of a political document it is expected that it will be required to read between the lines, or search for the implied aims, arguments and premise. Because of this we will be using the Toulmin model which has a strong focus on the implied.⁵¹

The Toulmin model is based on three parameters which Stephen Toulmin calls *claim* (C), *data* (D), and *warrant* (W). These are equivalent to what we just referred to as the aim, argument, and premise.⁵² However, the *warrant* relays on what is implied by the *data* or argument, hence it serves an explanatory purpose. Such explanations may be obvious in its simplest forms but they may also be more complex and representative of the authors interpretation of the *data*'s connection to the *claim*. In those cases, it is necessary to apply what Toulmin calls *qualifiers* (Q) and *conditions of rebuttal* (R). He explains that Q indicates “the strength conferred by the warrant...[and] R indicates[-ing] circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside.”⁵³ Toulmin then problematizes the term *warrant*. What if the warrant itself is questioned? And what is it based on? To answer this, he adds another element which he calls *backing* (B). *Backing* is the underlying facts for the warrant, hence it is the foundation on which the explanation or *warrant* is built upon.⁵⁴ This is what a Toulmin model argument analysis may look like:



⁵¹ Bergström and Boréus, *Textens mening och makt*, 106-107, 113, 115-116, 133.
⁵² Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, first published 1958), accessed May 18, 2017, 89-92, http://johnnywalters.weebly.com/uploads/1/3/3/5/13358288/toulmin-the-uses-of-argument_1.pdf.
⁵³ Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, 92-94.
⁵⁴ Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, 95-97.

Argument analysis in general is problematized because of its reliance on interpretation, which can result in validity issues. Nevertheless, the issue is solved by providing sufficient *backing*.⁵⁵ Hence, the model is still seen as useful to this thesis and will utilize it because of its explanatory orientation and its relative openness for interpretation of the implied. However, there will not be a graphic representation of the results. Instead it is to be used as a tool aimed to facilitate the interpretation of the implied messages regarding the ideas uncovered by the functional idea analysis. As such, it will serve as a compliment to the later.

4.0 DISCUSSION OF THE MATERIAL AND ITS MODERN-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Outline of the material

The document that is of analytical importance in this thesis is called *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* and was issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on the 1st of December, 2016. This official document was also signed by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, on the 30th of November, 2016, which makes it representative of Russia's official and legal standpoint on foreign policy and as such it is representative of the state's security policy and priorities too.⁵⁶

Being demonstrative of the Russian Federation's principles, priorities and goals within foreign policy, this 27-page document is in line with the state's constitution, principles and rules of international law, the state's National Security strategy, their Military Doctrine, and much more. Accordingly, it is expected to safeguard the nation's territory, national sovereignty and security, and to enhance lawful ruling and democratic institutions.

The document also shows a strive for parity in its relationships and collaborations with other states, and a desire to improve the manner that other states view Russian media, culture and language. There is also a wish for international a recognition of its historical legacy, as well as reinforcement of the Federation's influential capacity on the global community while simultaneously pursuing friendly relations with most states.

Moreover, there is a clear desire to create a stable economic growth by, among other things, impeding discrimination towards Russian trade. Hence, there is an aspiration for

⁵⁵ Bergström and Boréus, *Textens mening och makt*, 132-133.

⁵⁶ "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation on November 30, 2016," The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed March 16, 2017, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/asset_publisher/CptlCkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

the global community to view Russia more positively in terms of economics and trade. With this urge to improve economic standards come the wish to pursue technological modernization, and with the wish for parity, the wish to be seen in a more positive light, and the desire of recognition of its historical legacy, comes the aspiration of playing a major role in peace-keeping.⁵⁷

4.2 Post-Soviet foreign politics: a historical overview

As argued in the theory chapter of this thesis, several national self-images were in competition with each other during the post-soviet era and were therefore unable to decide on a political purpose. Due to this inability, the main characteristic of post-Soviet foreign policy was, in general, attempts to regain Russia's great power status in global economics and politics. Previously, the statist developmentalist identity was explained while excluding other national self-images, such as the Western one that indeed was a strong contender during the Yeltsin administration and somewhat noticeable during the Medvedev administration. However, under Putin's leadership, statist developmentalism came to be the national identity and therefore we will concentrate on foreign policy under Putin's current administration and the Putin administration, 2000 to 2008, whilst also incorporating a rough overview of the Yeltsin administration, 1991 to 1999.

4.2.1 The Yeltsin administration, 1991 - 1999

Boris Yeltsin was during his administration, according to the aspirational constructivist theory, representative of the Western self-image in post-soviet Russia. In short, this national self-image advocates assimilation into the West by abandoning Russian traditions as well as seeing its historical past as a negative factor unworthy of upholding. It seeks inclusion into Western institutions and favors democracy and the adoption of a Western political purpose.⁵⁸

Yeltsin fit into this category on an ideological spectrum as he decided to initiate a market transition in order to turn the planned economy into a Western market economy. This later became known as a shock therapy. The whole system was to change more or less overnight. He did this by contracting Western experts and relying on Western aid. One of these experts, Jeffrey Sachs, explains the strategy as "a quick pricing liberalization, a quick move to

⁵⁷ "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation on November 30, 2016," article 1-3.

⁵⁸ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, 61-64.

convertibility of the ruble, and a quick process of privatization.” However, due to this liberalization the general public could no longer afford basic goods.

Yeltsin went on to appointing Anatolii Chubais as the man in charge of the privatization of the country’s companies. A voucher system was created. These vouchers were then given to all Russians so that they later could trade them for stocks, however, many were unaware of the potential value of these stocks and the system ended up serving only a select few oligarchs. This resulted in a significant decrease in popularity for Yeltsin, which then caused him to take action in questionable ways, contrary to the democratic system he claimed to represent. Among other things, he prolonged his right to rule by decree, he decided to dissolve the parliament and even ended up assembling tanks to shoot down the parliament building which resulted in over a hundred deaths.⁵⁹ He also implemented “loans-for-shares;” a system that allowed oligarchs to purchase national assets, and to top it off, Yeltsin decided to accept a 10-billion-dollar loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which further strengthened the rising public opinion that Russia was too dependent on the West. Russia was not fulfilling the wish for parity with the West, hence neglecting Russia’s great power status, which according to Clunan was a big reason for Russia’s low national self-esteem.⁶⁰

4.2.2 The Putin administration, 2000 – 2008

Vladimir Putin, the previous head of security, was appointed as president in March, 2000. This caused Russian politics to take a completely different direction than what was preferred by the Yeltsin regime and other Westernizers. Namely, this was the start of statist developmentalism asserting itself as the country’s national identity. Putin began by increasing the state’s power, hence making it more centralized, and creating economic reforms that helped stabilize the Russian economy along with the rise of oil and gas prices. During those 8 years, the BNP doubled, wages tripled, and external trade increased dramatically.⁶¹

Putin saw Russia as a weak state, a state that had lost its glory, but a state that, nonetheless, deserved and was meant to have a place in the great power group.⁶² The country was humiliated and “jeopardized by plotters and revolutionaries.”⁶³ Russia was as such

⁵⁹, “Att skapa en Putin”, (SVT Play: Dokument Utifrån, December 11, 2016), accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.svtplay.se/video/11428622/att-skapa-en-putin/dokument-utifran-att-skapa-en-putin-att-skapa-en-putin?info=visa>.

⁶⁰ Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 119.

⁶¹ Örjan Berner, *Härskarna i Kreml: Från Gorbatjov till Putin*, (Falun: Bonniers, 2014), 391-392.

⁶² Aglaya Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin: A critical perspective*, (New York, USA and Milton Park, UK, 2015), 31-32, 36.

⁶³ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 35.

experiencing an all-time low self-esteem, a self-esteem that Putin wanted to rebuild. Considering this objective, both internal and external security, became of crucial significance. For this reason, any actor viewed as having the intention to exploit Russia in its weekend state was to be seen as a security risk or issue. Therefore, international terrorism became a key priority and the domestic events in Chechnya came to be seen as acts of terror or as existential threats against the Russian state.⁶⁴ According to Putin, Russia, when they retreated from Chechnya in 1996, left the region in the hands of militants and fundamentalists from Middle Eastern armed groups causing both the Chechen and Russian population to be humiliated. According to the prevailing discourse at the time, this allowed Islamic terrorist groups to operate from within the region and therefore threatening Russian-Chechen socio-cultural traditions and effectively justifying Russian intervention.⁶⁵ Russia's following victory "was presented as a key stepping stone towards Russia asserting its sovereign rights over its territory, and regaining its status as a confident and strong domestic and international actor."⁶⁶

As argued throughout the theory chapter and this background, the most important foreign policy objectives were economic and technologic modernization, international competitiveness and restoration of the state's historical great power status. Where this greatness should come from was heavily debated. Should it come from further integration of the post-Soviet republics, from its historical legacy, or from its energy resources and financial strength? The matter is discussed by Dimitri Trenin in an article from 2004.⁶⁷ Statist developmentalism argues for an incorporation of all of the above which is also shown in present day events and in Putin's foreign policy making. Russian aspirations for further integration of traditionally Eastern countries can, for example, be seen through their dependence on Russian oil and gas: in the case of Poland and Hungary, the nations' dependence on Russian energy exports were in 2006, 77% and 81% for oil respectively 58% and 72% for gas.⁶⁸ This goes hand in hand with financial strength being a key ingredient in how to measure the power of the state. In addition, the Russian reaction to NATO's expansions into post-Soviet territory, the 2003 Western invasion of Iraq⁶⁹ and the Color Revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgystan,⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Snetkov, *Russia's Security Policy under Putin*, 37-39.

⁶⁵ Snetkov, *Russia's Security Policy under Putin*, 48-49.

⁶⁶ Snetkov, *Russia's Security Policy under Putin*, 53.

⁶⁷ Dimitri Trenin, "Russia and global security norms," *The Washington Quarterly* 27, (2), 2004, accessed May 18, 2017, 63-79, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=b957f034-877a-4126-88c4-4192bfbe01f8@sessionmgr104&hid=120>.

⁶⁸ Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of Russian History* (Milton Park, UK and New York, USA, 2007), 169, 172-173.

⁶⁹ Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, "The Iraq War and Its Implications," *International Affairs* 4, (49), 2003.

⁷⁰ Snetkov, *Russia's Security Policy under Putin*, 71.

demonstrated how important it was for Russia to be seen as being on the same status level as the Western great powers. Thus, being respected in international decisions, especially those that may violate Russian national interests.⁷¹ It also shows how Russia perceived Western meddling on its previous territory as “U.S. efforts to install anti-Russian forces and to isolate Russia from its own backyard”.⁷² The Iraq invasion, that progressed without consent from the UN Security Council, created a view of the West as being capable of ignoring international law as well as “the principle of sovereignty and multilateral global governance”⁷³, and therefore contributing to the then and currently present Russian-Western tensions.

4.2.3 The current Putin administration and contemporary political events

After the 2012 elections when Putin was reappointed as president the regime’s ideological program took on a much more aggressive approach on patriotism and traditionalism than previously. In both his first and second cycles, Putin had connected his ideas of patriotism with progress and modernization, while in this third term he has seemed to be favoring making the connection between patriotism and protecting Russian values as well as focusing on the nations historical heritage as being “an independent and proud nation that function[s] beyond global developments and that does not bow down to the West.” However, this patriotism, in contrast to the one set by nationalist clusters such as the Moscow Defence League and the Russian Public Movement, was from the beginning distancing itself from ethnic patriotism, instead it centered on state patriotism. Nonetheless, the disputes over Crimea changed this tendency of the patriotic discourse.⁷⁴

The Crimean conflict originated from President Yanukovich’s decision to turn down an EU Association agreement for Ukraine with the purpose of joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). This was, in turn, met with massive protests and ended in his abdication from the presidential post. These protests were, by Russia, seen or at least depicted as not only illegal but also as a Western attempt to favor its own interests whilst undermining Russia’s position on what it believes is its own territory.⁷⁵ Furthermore, Russia expressed its support for various separatist groups that were against the new government. Such groups often took aggressive measures by, for example, seizing governmental buildings “and declar[ing] independent authority of their towns, cities and region.” The annexation of Crimea also had

⁷¹ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 110.

⁷² Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia’s Resurgence*, 134-135.

⁷³ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 75.

⁷⁴ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 147-148.

⁷⁵ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 162-166.

historical reasons going back as far as the 10th century when Prince Vladimir of Kiev successfully converted the population to Christianity giving the region symbolical value for Russian Christianity and identity. Moreover, Crimea had been used to assert Russian great power status when it was previously annexed by Catherine the Great.⁷⁶ This in itself may have motivated Russia to send in military troops and contributed to the already increasing anti-Western political discourse.⁷⁷

However, this does not mean that Russia does not have any interest in cooperating with the West. On the contrary, Russia seeks economic partnerships with Western countries.⁷⁸ This can be established since Russia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2012 and consequently eliminated trade barriers between the Russian state and the Western global market.⁷⁹ The desire to trade with the EU is further ratified by the fact that trade value reached a record high that same year, 215.124 million Euros. Nevertheless, this trade value has been on a steady decline ever since then: decreasing to a value of 118.661 million Euros in 2016.⁸⁰

5.0 ANALYTICAL FINDINGS

5.1 NATO

After going through the “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation” we have with the help of functional idea analysis found several references to NATO, both direct and implied. As Clunan theorized, Russia has a very negative view on NATO expansions into areas neighboring the Russian Federation. The *claim* is therefore that Russia wants to impede NATO’s expansions. The following examples are *data* that have been collected with the help of the Toulmin model which later is used to create *warrants* and *backings*. In this section there are no *rebuttals* due to that the *claim* is written in the foreign policy concept.

In article 61, the *data* states that NATO and the West in general are the main reasons for the deteriorating Russian – Western relations. It is even stated that “the containment policy adopted by the United States and its allies against Russia...and other pressure Russia is facing from them undermine regional and global stability...and run counter to the growing need

⁷⁶ Sophie Pinkham, “How annexing Crimea allowed Putin to claim he had made Russia great again,” The Guardian, March 22, 2017, accessed March 22, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/22/annexing-crimea-putin-make-russia-great-again>.

⁷⁷ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 162-163.

⁷⁸ Snetkov, *Russia’s Security Policy under Putin*, 161.

⁷⁹ “Russia becomes WTO member after 18 years of talks,” BBC News, December 16, 2011, accessed March 27, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-16212643>.

⁸⁰ “European Union, Trade in goods with Russia,” European Commission, February 2, 2017, accessed March 27, 2017, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113440.pdf, 3.

for cooperation and addressing transnational challenges and threats in today's world."⁸¹ From Clunan's, Shevchenko's and Larson's perspective this could be seen as Russia using a creative strategy in order to set itself apart from the West. A *warrant* could thus be: Russia is, contrary to the West, open to cooperation in order to fight international terrorism. Hence, in this *warrant* Russia comes off as more responsible than the West, thus the creativity strategy.

This statement is then strengthened by article 70 where the *data* says that Russia is willing to build a relationship with NATO, one that is based on mutual trust, predictability and transparency. In this thesis's opinion, their demands for this to progress are indeed reasonable. For instance, both parties need to strictly follow "the norms and principles of international law" and both are to "refrain from seeking to ensure one's security at the expense of the security of other States."⁸² Nonetheless, however reasonable this may appear there is room for much interpretation regarding this *data*. Other *data* in article 26c concludes that:

[Russia is prepared to] prevent military interventions or other forms of outside interference contrary to international law, specifically the principle of sovereign equality of States, under the pretext of implementing the "responsibility to protect" concept.⁸³

A *warrant* for this could be: Russia wishes to impede NATO's expansions because it breaks international law. Prior to this statement, in article 26b, Russia also claims that it will counter other states' "attempts to interfere in the domestic affairs of States with the aim of unconstitutional change of regime, including by supporting non-State actors, such as terrorist and extremist groups."⁸⁴ With this pretext in mind it is highly plausible that Russia is referring to the Crimea conflict. As explained, Russia saw the overthrowing of ex-president Yanukovich as a result of EU attempts to favor its own interests and therefore a breach of international law, which in itself serves as a *backing*. The functional idea analysis has therefore proved itself useful due to its focus on origin and environmental influences on ideas. Another *backing* for Russia is that, according to them, the EU was supporting an "unconstitutional change of regime" and non-State actors or extremist groups. However, the Russian Federation later military

⁸¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 61.

⁸² The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 70.

⁸³ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 26c.

⁸⁴ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 26b.

intervened in Ukraine, itself supporting extremist groups on the other end of the spectrum, effectively breaking international law itself. Who is right or wrong in this issue is not a subject that will be covered by this thesis, however, the examples show how differently international law has been interpreted by Russia in comparison to its Western counterparts. Furthermore, it exemplifies the creative strategy explained by Clunan.

As Clunan expected, Western meddling with FSU states is one of the likeliest causes of a major conflict with Russia and this is clearly stated in article 70:

The Russian Federation maintains its negative perspective towards NATO's expansion, the Alliance's military infrastructure approaching Russian borders, and its growing military activity in regions neighbouring Russia, viewing them as... [the cause for the] deepening of old dividing lines in Europe and to the emergence of new ones.⁸⁵

This *data* makes our established *claim* seem unnegotiable to Russia if there is to be any Western – Russian cooperation on security matters. During the Yeltsin administration, there were quite a few theories regarding how NATO's eastern expansion would affect the West's relationship with Russia. Among intellectuals it was for example thought that Russia would turn to China for military cooperation and that its nuclear weapons would fall into the wrong hands. It was even said by ex-Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, that NATO's expansion “would force Moscow to reappraise its policy of co-operation with the West, [and] threaten to trigger a fresh arms race.”⁸⁶

However, although Russia has been taking on a more aggressive approach toward the West and although it has been expanding its cooperation with the East in general, there is still a clear wish for friendly relations with the West as shown by previous statements. The reason for this, according to Clunan's theory, is that Russia still is rebuilding its self-esteem since the fall of the Soviet Union. To do that Russia's political elite had to decide on a common political purpose, either follow a unique Russian path or adopt Western principles. Unable to decide, Russia's history as a great power created a consensus on its rightful superpower status today, and this had to serve as a stand-in for a political purpose. This inability to choose between adaptation to the West or creation of a unique Russian path is also made very visible in the document as Russia first claims that:

⁸⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 70.

⁸⁶ Lilly A. Lo Manto, “NATO Looks East: A Realist Reassessment,” *Glendon Journal of International Studies* (Vol. 3., 2003), file:///C:/Users/namn/Downloads/35217-37761-1-SM.pdf, 105-106.

The Russian Federation is committed to maintaining intensive and mutually beneficial dialogue with the EU on key items on the foreign policy agenda, as well as further promoting practical cooperation on foreign policy, military and political issues. There is potential for Russia and the EU to step up combined efforts...⁸⁷

Here there is an obvious wish to cooperate with the EU, and so with the West. This goes hand in hand with article 72:

The Russian Federation is interested in building mutually beneficial relations with the United States of America, taking into consideration that the two States bear special responsibility for global strategic stability and international security in general...⁸⁸

As previously theorized, Russia has placed itself in the great power group. It seeks parity with the United States in order to rebuild self-esteem and to modernize both technologically and economically. The previous two are both pro-western statements. However, they are then countered by article 84:

...Russia intends to promote foreign policy cooperation with China in various areas, including countering new challenges and threats, resolving urgent regional and global problems, cooperation in international organizations and multilateral associations.⁸⁹

The statements serve as *data* since they are reasons supporting the *claim*. A *warrant* could thus be: With a lesser NATO involvement Russia is willing to cooperate and without it they will have no choice but to expand to the East. The *warrant* can be strengthened by the *backing*: Russia intends to expand and strengthen its Eastern partnerships with, among others, India, Mongolia, Japan, Iran and of course with the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)⁹⁰ and the Commonwealth of

⁸⁷ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 64.

⁸⁸ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 72.

⁸⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 84.

⁹⁰ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," articles 81, 85, 87-90, 94.

Independent States (CIS)⁹¹. Hence, there is no doubt that Russia has turned to the East for both military and other forms of cooperation and it is very likely that this is due to experienced hostility from the West and NATO's expansions. However, we have also seen that the West is a priority for Russia. This goes in line with the aspirational constructivist theory regarding statist developmentalism, namely, that for them the West is a partial ingroup and therefore unlikely to experience a real threat from Russia.

Lastly, this document was written when negotiations on the NATO annexation of Montenegro had already started.⁹² An issue that itself could be debated. However, although continued NATO expansions Russia still states that "...a large scale war, including nuclear war, between major powers remains unlikely... [however, there is] an increased risk of being drawn into regional conflicts and escalating crises."⁹³ This is also in line with the developmentalist identity which considers the West an ingroup on many accounts and will therefore try to avoid serious confrontation with the West. However, the FSU states are a greater ingroup to Russia and therefore conflicts are still to be expected in this area. As such, Bergström's and Boréus's definition of dimensions and Vedung's explanation of functional idea analysis, gave this thesis the foundation it needed in order to discuss the idea of NATO in the foreign policy document. Additionally, Toulmin's argument analysis has allowed it to turn implied messages in the foreign policy concept into a concrete idea with solid *data*, *warrants* and *backings*, supporting the idea's *claim*. Clunan's aspirational constructivism then aided in the explanatory process of the origin and consequences of these ideas.

5.2 The ethno-linguistic dimension

How is the ethno-linguistic dimension portrayed in Russia's foreign policy concept? As theorized by aspirational constructivism, the Russian language, culture and history are some of the most important things to preserve and promote in the statist developmentalist world view. The first reference to the ethno-linguistic dimension is in article 3h-i. Here, Russia expresses a desire to strengthen its "role in international culture" by promoting the Russian language and

⁹¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 49.

⁹² "US Senate approves Montenegro NATO accession bid 'to stand up to Kremlin'," Russia Today, March 28, 2017, accessed April 26, 2017. <https://www.rt.com/usa/382622-senate-montenegro-nato-approve-expansion/>.

⁹³ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 6.

so increase its world status, create more awareness globally regarding Russia's historical legacy, cultural identity and cultural achievements.⁹⁴

The consolidation of the Russian diaspora is another important subject. In other words, to bring together all Russians. Whether that is ethnic Russians, cultural Russians or simply Russian speakers is not mentioned in the document but it is not farfetched to assume that it implies all three categories due to the statist developmentalist mindset regarding citizenship. As explained, for them citizenship is defined by loyalty to the state along with adaptation to the Russian language and culture. All of the above contributes this thesis's *claim*: Russia has expansionist aspirations and intends to increase their sphere of indirect influence.

Consolidation could mean anything between simply promoting the Russian language, culture and history among Russian's residing abroad to bringing all Russian's back to Russia. The document aims to support "compatriots living abroad so as to enable them to better realize their rights in the countries of residence, and to facilitate the preservation of the Russian diaspora's identity and its ties with the historical homeland, as well as voluntary relocation of compatriots to the Russian Federation."⁹⁵ This *data* therefore supports Clunan's idea that statist developmentalists highly prioritize the Russian history, language and culture. In general, the document is very protective and supportive of Russian's living abroad, which they call compatriots, and applauds their contribution to "preserving and promoting the Russian language and culture."⁹⁶

In the view of this thesis, the Russian interest in spreading their language does not stop at simply increasing the general knowledge about it. With *data* such as "the learning and wider use of the Russian language... [is] an integral part of the global culture and...[is] an instrument of international and inter-ethnic communication,"⁹⁷ it cannot be helped but to compare it with the usage of the English language today. Utilizing an origin orientated functional idea analysis and aspirational constructivism, this thesis argues that Russia places itself on the same level as the United States and therefore wishes for their language and culture to be as widely spread across the globe. This also serves as a *warrant*. As in many other areas of the foreign policy there seems to be a perception of the West as the definition of great power.

⁹⁴ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 3i.

⁹⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 45f.

⁹⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 45e.

⁹⁷ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 45g.

Russia with its great power aspirations may therefore have adapted to and sometimes copied Western concepts whilst claiming to have a unique approach. As exemplified, these concepts do not only contain economics and technology, but also language and cultural status. The Toulmin model helps establish the *warrant*: Russia intends to spread its language and culture to increase its sphere of influence, and the *backing*: Because of Russia's great power aspirations and strive for parity with the U.S. it wishes to spread its language and culture.

Within the realm of the consequence orientated functional idea analysis, the idea to consolidate the Russian diaspora creates an interest in how Russia desires to integrate former FSU states. These states are today called Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Of course, this thesis will not cover all of these countries, instead it will give examples of Belarus and Ukraine due to that they are specifically mentioned in the document and not merely in groups such as the CIS. Nonetheless, to give an overview of the general integration process of the FSU states the following statement about the CIS is presented. In article 49 the *data* suggests that Russia seeks deeper integration with the CIS in general, which consists of all of the above except the Baltic states.

The foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation include developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation with member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and further strengthening integration structures within the CIS involving Russia.⁹⁸

With this *data*, another *warrant* can be created: Russia seeks to increase its sphere of influence by strengthening integration with the CIS. The matter is further developed in the *data* of article 50 with a reference to Belarus which states that "Russia is committed to expanding strategic cooperation with the Republic of Belarus...with a view to promoting integration in all areas."⁹⁹ Whether such deep integration is in Belarus's best interest or if it even is something that Belarus is in favor of will not be researched in this thesis but it is definitely a subject of interest for future research. Nonetheless, one can sense an expansionist tendency in these statements which is consistent with the statist developmentalist desire to integrate FSU states under Russian hegemony. It creates the basis for the *warrant*: Russia desires to increase its sphere of influence by promoting integration in all areas with Belarus. It also provides us with the *backing*: Due to

⁹⁸ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 49.

⁹⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," article 50.

Russia's history as a great power and its prevailing national identity it seeks to increase its sphere of influence by various means.

Russian 21st century expansionism is a term that has been encountered several times during the research process of this thesis. Several articles and larger academic works refer to this matter, of which a few of them are to be referenced here. In this context, expansionism should be understood as “a process allowing a dominant country to have indirect control over the sovereignty of other states.” That is how Russian expansionism is defined by Yale University and this thesis agrees. The same article claims that Russia's foreign policy is applying a “seven-stage trajectory of policies” in order to fulfill its expansionist goals. As this analysis has noticed as well, there is a very Western usage of soft power regarding humanitarian policies. The article then claims that “[t]his proceeds to information warfare; “passportization,” which hands out Russian citizenship and passports to compatriots abroad; calls for compatriot protection, which can eventually result in annexation of territories.” The article then claims that Russia's goal with this is to “achieve territorial expansion under the guise of compatriot or minority protection.”¹⁰⁰ Whether this is the ultimate goal of Russian foreign policy or not can only be theorized and remains to be seen in future events. However, with regard to the statist developmentalist view on integration of FSU states and aspirational constructivism establishing the Russian aspiration of regaining historical power, it is a possible outcome. Hence, by examining the surroundings of the expansionist idea, this functional idea analysis has found a clear example of how an idea can influence its environment.

This expansionism is supported by the aforementioned “passportization” and the foreign policy concept's clearly expressed effort to “delimitate the state boundary of the Russian Federation as well as its maritime boundaries, within which Russia exercises its sovereign rights and jurisdiction...”¹⁰¹ Combining Vedung's functional idea analysis with this *data* enable this thesis to conclude that Russia is intending to create new boundaries which will strengthen their influence on surrounding states and directly influence relations with the EU.

“Passportization,” or the act of handing out passports in foreign territory while simultaneously claiming to be protecting its citizens, is a method that has been applied by Russia several times during the 21st century. To clarify, the term citizen here refers to the statist

¹⁰⁰ Agnia Grigas, “Empire by Other Means: Russia's Strategy for the 21st Century,” YaleGlobal Online, February 2, 2017, accessed April 27, 2017, <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/empire-other-means-russias-strategy-21st-century>.

¹⁰¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 26f.

developmentalist definition of the term. For example, according to Putins former adviser Andrei Illarionov:

Following the Adjara crisis, Moscow further ratcheted up tension with Tblisi by expanding Russian military and administrative control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia and accelerating the distribution of Russian passports in the two territories. Henceforth it could rationalize its actions in these two regions by the claim that it was merely defending its “citizens.”¹⁰²

This fact can in itself serve as a *backing* to several of the previously established *warrants*. As these states belong to Georgia there is definitely reason to believe that the Russian foreign policy contains expansionist tendencies. A very similar event took place in Ukraine when Ukrainian separatist movements handed out Russian passports. Although there is no proof that these passports were handed out on governmental order, Russia still decided to accept the documents as valid for the time being. This thesis considers that as being an effect of that citizenship is defined by one’s loyalty to the state. Thus, Vedung’s, Bergström’s and Boréus’s view on functional idea analysis may consider this as the effect of an expansionist idea rooted in statist developmentalism. However, it may also be used as a *rebuttal*: EU involvement in Ukraine started the war which forced Russia to protect its compatriots residing abroad.

Russia’s expansionism into Ukraine is further backed up by humanitarian obligations¹⁰³ in article 56, which this thesis also deems to be a *rebuttal*:

[The] Russian Federation is interested in developing political, economic, cultural and spiritual ties with Ukraine in all areas on the basis of mutual respect and commitment to building partnership relations with due regard for Russia’s national interests. Russia undertakes to make every effort to promote political and diplomatic settlement of the internal conflict in Ukraine...¹⁰⁴

As pointed out by Clunan’s theory, statist developmentalists sees Ukraine as an important community to integrate economically because of their developed military and industrial

¹⁰² Andrei Illarionov, “The Russian Leadership in Preparation for War, 1999-2008,” *The Guns of August 2008: Russia’s War in Georgia* (ed. Svante Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, 2009), Armonk M.E. Sharpe & Co., 56.

¹⁰³ “Russia accepts passports issued by east Ukraine rebels,” BBC News, February 19, 2017, accessed April 27, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-39018429>.

¹⁰⁴ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 56.

infrastructure and because of the large portion of Russian speakers on Crimea. These factors, along with the historical reasons previously presented, are in the view of this functional idea analysis all important motives as to why Russia wanted to annex the region.

Considering the above quote and the previously established facts regarding “passportization” and delimitation of Russian borders, this thesis believes it is fair to say that Russia is practicing a sort of imperialism over the FSU states and that aspirational constructivism has been correct in applying the statist developmentalist national identity on the Putin administration. With the help of argument analysis and functional idea analysis this thesis has examined the ethno-linguistic dimension and the ideas it contains by researching the political environment and excavating the *claim, data, warrants, and rebuttals* of the foreign policy concept.

5.3 Economic interests

Just like Clunan expected, Putin’s statist developmentalist administration seeks to boost the economy in order to make it more competitive internationally and to encourage technological modernization.¹⁰⁵ However, this growth seems to rely less and less on cooperation with the West, instead, there has been a clear eastern economic expansion, which is noticeable both in foreign policy statements and in actual World Trade Organization (WTO) numbers, showing the value of EU-Russian trade. Therefore, this thesis’ *claim* is: Russia strives for an economic expansion to the East. This switch is mentioned in article 4:

The world is currently going through fundamental changes related to the emergence of a multipolar international system...Globalization has led to the formation of new centers of economic and political power. Global power and development potential is becoming decentralized, and is shifting towards the Asia-Pacific Region, eroding the global economic and political dominance of the traditional western powers.¹⁰⁶

This *data* is later followed up by several more specific descriptions and goals of expanding the Asia – Pacific economic cooperation. With Vedung’s explanation of functional idea analysis in mind, it is appropriate to examine the consequences this economic idea has had on its environment. Hence, referring to the background chapter, some of the consequences becomes

¹⁰⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 3b.

¹⁰⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 4.

clear. In 2012, when Russia first joined the WTO, the Russian trade value with the EU reached a record high. In 2016, however, the economic switch became visible and the trade value only amounted to slightly more than half of that. EU sanctions on Russia following the Ukraine conflict, EU attempts to decrease its dependence on Russian energy,¹⁰⁷ Western intervention in the FSU, increasing anti-Western discourse and the Russian aspiration of being an independent superpower may all have been contributing to this decline in trade. Furthermore, the eastern market expansion is evident in the creation of the EAEU in 2015, which is a Russian led free trade union between Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz republic.¹⁰⁸ This is a growing trade union and it is, along with the growing Russian – Chinese relations, representative of Russia’s Eastern market expansion and may in itself in part be what is causing the decline in Western – Russian trade.

The fact that the union is expanding can also be proven by looking at what is expressed in the foreign policy concept. Article 51 states that Russia considers it a key objective to expand and strengthen integration within the EAEU. This is hoped to fulfill statist developmentalist goals such as “comprehensive technological modernization” and economic competitiveness. As aspirational constructivism also expects from statist developmentalism, this economic competitiveness is inspired from Western models, in other words the EAEU is intended to “ensure the free movement of goods, services, capital and workforce, and offer a platform for implementing joint infrastructure and investment projects.”¹⁰⁹ This *data* demonstrates that statist developmentalists are in favor of applying Western economic models and that they intend to continue the eastern economic expansion.

In the foreign policy concept the Russian state expresses a desire to tap into new markets, to “expand [its] presence on the global markets” by “diversifying its exports” and to “gain a larger foothold in traditional... [markets]” as well as to counter all discrimination against Russian exporters and investors.¹¹⁰ The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC) defines such traditional markets, or at least the most profitable exports in 2015, as Crude Petroleum (\$90.1B), Refined Petroleum (\$57.5B) and Petroleum Gas (\$25.4B).¹¹¹ In

¹⁰⁷ Kennet Rapoza, “Europe Devises Energy Security Measures to Reduce Russia Dependence”, *Forbes*, February 9, 2016, accessed March 27, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2016/02/09/europe-devises-energy-security-measures-to-reduce-russia-dependence/#3f012724235c>.

¹⁰⁸ Eurasian Economic Union, “About the Union”, accessed March 27, 2017, <http://www.eaeunion.org/?lang=en#about>.

¹⁰⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 51.

¹¹⁰ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 40c-d.

¹¹¹ “Russia,” OEC, accessed April 28, 2017, <http://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/rus/#Exports>.

accordance, the *data* tells us that Russia wishes to “enhance cooperation with the leading energy producers” and to take advantage of “its unique geographic location by increasing transit cargo shipments with a view to facilitating the development of trade and economic relations between Europe and the Asia – Pacific region.”¹¹² As shown in the background chapter, many countries, especially eastern European states, are already highly dependent on Russian oil and gas. Even so, Russia attempts to expand its energy exports to new states as well as to enhance the dependence on Russian oil and gas in states that already are big importers. All of the *data* supports the *claim*. In continuation, it is therefore possible to create *warrants* and *backings*. For example, one *warrant* could be: Russia’s eastern economic expansion is visible in the state’s rising focus on increasing its presence in its traditional markets by, among other things, facilitating trade in the Asia – Pacific region. The *backing* would in this case be: Russia’s traditional markets are oil and gas exports and in order to increase their energy exports in the Asia – Pacific region they will have to build more pipelines heading to the East.

The fact that in 2015, Russia envisaged that by 2020 about 30% of crude oil exports and 15% of gas exports should be heading to Asia and that by 2035 about 36-39% of its total energy exports should be heading to the Asia – Pacific region, is in itself a *backing* to the *warrant*.¹¹³ An effect of this is the construction of the Power of Siberia gas pipeline that is expected to be completed by 2018, which effectively is fulfilling the goal to connect the European market with the Asia – Pacific one while simultaneously lessening Russian dependence on energy exports to Europe. A factor that was troublesome for Russia during the EU sanctions in relation to the Ukraine conflict.¹¹⁴ The tensions between Europe and Russia may have inspired other pipeline constructions as well, for example, Russia is currently planning to commence the construction of a pipeline heading to India who is one of the world’s principal consumers of oil,¹¹⁵ as well as a pipeline between Russia and Japan which is currently being negotiated.¹¹⁶ Hence, the functional idea analysis has again shown how the idea of regaining historical power is manifested in current events and in the foreign policy concept.

¹¹² The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 40g-h.

¹¹³ Nadia Rodova and Rosemary Griffin (ed. Dan Lalor), “Russia sees 30% of crude oil exports heading to Asia by 2020,” *S&P Global Platts*, September 4, 2015, accessed April 28, 2017, <http://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/moscow/russia-sees-30-of-crude-oil-exports-heading-to-26200666>.

¹¹⁴ “China begins construction of Power of Siberia pipeline for gas delivered from Russia,” *Russia Today*, June 29, 2015, accessed April 28, 2017, <https://www.rt.com/business/270352-russia-china-gas-pipeline/>.

¹¹⁵ “India, Russia to study construction of gas pipeline costing \$25 billion,” *Hindustan Times*, October 16, 2016, accessed April 28, 2017, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-russia-to-study-construction-of-gas-pipeline-costing-25-billion/story-3vW5HFqAHTpMuCm8V9BcXM.html>.

¹¹⁶ Vladimir Putin and Shinzo Abe, “Press statements following Russian-Japanese talks,” The Kremlin, April 27, 2017, accessed April 28, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/54391>.

However, it is possible to add a *rebuttal* here: Russia only seems to be expanding its eastern markets because of Western sanctions. However, the previously analyzed expansionist tendency disagrees.

These Asia-Pacific expansions does not automatically mean that Russia does not have any interest in energy exports to the EU, rather this thesis deems that it is a way of gaining independence from Western powers and that way increase its negotiation power and great power status. For instance, there are currently plans revolving the construction of a natural gas line called Nord Stream 2 through the Baltic Sea which according to the general description of the project is to secure the EU's need of additional gas imports.¹¹⁷

Toulmin's argument analysis model combined with Vedung's definition of functional idea analysis have allowed this thesis to interpret the meaning of the *data* by applying significant information on the events surrounding the analyzed dimension. This together with Clunan's aspirational constructivism has allowed it to draw some plausible conclusions regarding the dimension's effects on the EU, a subject that will be discussed in the coming chapter. The conclusions are solely based on aspirational constructivism and this thesis's analysis of the foreign policy concept and can therefore not be seen as concrete answers. Rather they are simply possibilities.

6.0 ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

So, what does the Russian foreign policy concept mean for the European Union? There are many answers to this question since it affects a number of areas. However, in this chapter we will contain ourselves to discuss aspects of the following open sub-questions, which are all related to the sub-chapters of the analysis and to a consequence orientated functional idea analysis: Is it likely that Russia will wage war against the EU? How might Russian expansionist tendencies affect the EU? And, what may Russia's Eastern economic expansion mean for the EU?

During quite a number of years newspapers have been publishing articles that would suggest Russian aggression towards the West. This has not changed and lately there have been articles that suggest 'a new cold war era' or that Russia is preparing itself for a large-scale

¹¹⁷ "Nord Stream 2 AG and European energy companies sign financing agreements," Nord Stream 2, April 24, 2017, accessed April 28, 2017, <https://www.nord-stream2.com/media-info/news-events/nord-stream-2-ag-and-european-energy-companies-sign-financing-agreements-47/>.

war or even a nuclear war according to *Independent*.¹¹⁸ The Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* published a similar article earlier this year, claiming that Russia is preparing itself for large-scale warfare. The suspicion arises not only from the increasing amount of military practice operations but also from the amount of money being spent on the up-building of the military. Russia is currently spending around 5,4 % out of their BNP on the military while the U.S. spends around 3.3% and China 2%. For statist developmentalists a great power has to have a good economy, be technologically modern and have military power that is on par with the most powerful of states. The article in *Aftonbladet* even states that currently only NATO and China can match Russia in military capacity.¹¹⁹ However, since we have established that the West continues to be a partial ingroup for Russia and that Russia therefore does not wish for confrontation with the West, this thesis concludes that a large-scale military confrontation is improbable. Based on the *data* presented in the analytical chapter, the most likely confrontation is alleged to be over NATO's expansions into countries neighboring Russia since this is perceived as a threat to national security. Due to that and to the expansionist tendency, it is believed that there may be continued conflicts or even wars in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, this thesis deems that a full-scale war between NATO and Russia or the EU and Russia as an unlikely outcome.

This belief is not only strengthened by the official foreign policy concept but also by the Russian reaction to continued NATO expansions, the last one being the accession of Montenegro. In response to these expansions the Russian senator Klintsevich said that Russia "will aim... [their] weapons, including the nuclear ones, at any of the alliance's site that would threaten... [them], wherever these sites are placed." Notwithstanding, as press secretary Dmitry Peskov claimed, Russian "lawmakers cannot determine the country's foreign policy."¹²⁰ And so far, there has been no official response that would suggest a large-scale war or nuclear attack. Hence, the West as a partial ingroup continues to be an immense inspiration for Russia to avoid a large-scale war. Notwithstanding, their foreign policy concept states that these expansions are "deepening old dividing lines in Europe and... [that they are contributing] to the emergence of new ones." Even so, due to the *warrants* and *backings* of the *data* presented in the analysis and

¹¹⁸ Charlie Cooper, "Nato risks nuclear war with Russia 'within a year', warns senior general", *Independent*, May 18, 2016, accessed May 3, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/nato-risks-nuclear-war-with-russia-within-a-year-senior-general-warns-a7035141.html>.

¹¹⁹ John Granlund, "FOI: Rysslands upprustning en förberedelse på storkrig," *Aftonbladet*, January 8, 2017, accessed May 4, 2017, <http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/P8rIX/foi-rysslands-upprustning-en-forberedelse-pa-storkrig>.

¹²⁰ "Russian senator promises nuclear response to NATO expansion," *Russia Today*, November 25, 2016, accessed May 4, 2017, <https://www.rt.com/politics/368146-russian-senator-promises-nuclear-response/>.

because of the actual response to NATO's expansions, this thesis deems that Russia will avoid war with NATO as much as possible. However, that does not mean that no countermeasures will be taken. Whatever form these countermeasures will take is not a subject of investigation here but we do believe that it will not be in the form of a large-scale or nuclear war.

So, how might Russian expansionist tendencies affect the EU? Russian expansionism in the foreign policy concept is presented in the form of integration and protection of minorities, the Russian diaspora, and human rights in general. The integration is sometimes sought for in all areas, and other times, in economic and military areas. However, as we have seen, many theorize that this will expand into accession of territory through means such as "passportization," as it already has in Ossetia, Abkhazia and Ukraine. "Passportization" gives Russia a reason to be overinvolved in other states affairs by arguing that they are simply protecting the rights of Russian citizens. This interpretation is based on Toulmin's argument analysis which has allowed us to interpret the connections between the *data* and the *claim*. In addition, the interpretation is in itself built on Vedung's functional idea analysis which allows for the ideas or dimensions to be put into a greater context.

As predicted by Clunan's aspirational constructivism the Russian language and culture is of great importance when it comes to how it justifies annexing, integrating or influencing foreign territories. This is further supported by the desire to regain historical power and self-esteem. In the foreign policy concept this is clearly manifested in claims regarding continued work for delimitating Russia's outer territories. In the document, there is mainly a focus on terrestrial borders as well as marine borders, but in the light of both recent and older events this thesis deems it likely that this delimitation goes for airspace as well. Such events are among other, the previous and continued intrusion of Swedish airspace and the more recent provocation very close to American airspace.¹²¹

The expansionist tendency will, according to this thesis, have the most effect on Eastern European countries who are not part of NATO. Our functional idea analysis has focused on the events surrounding its *claim* and has observed that Russia does not pursue integration with NATO members nor has there been a war between Russia and any of the states in the alliance. Hence, if a state is part of the EU, Russia will most likely refrain from overinvolvement due to that the state then constitutes a part of what is perceived as the West. This could cause conflict, which Clunan deems that Russia prefers to avoid. Nonetheless, if NATO continues its eastern expansion into states that are perceived as particularly important to Russia, there is,

¹²¹ "Ryska bombplan flög nära USA:s kust," *Svenska Dagbladet*, April 19, 2017, accessed May 4, 2017, <https://www.svd.se/ryska-bombplan-flog-nara-usa>.

according to the analysis, a risk that Russia either will intervene militarily claiming that they are protecting Russian citizens and their rights, or that other countermeasures will be taken. For example, it could have economic effects. Hence, our functional idea analysis concludes that the states who are of integration interest to Russia and that desire to join NATO or the EU are more likely to be exposed to military interventions or internal conflicts. Nevertheless, a World War III remains highly unlikely.

Thus, how will Russia's eastern economic expansion affect the EU? In 2014, the EU economic sanctions on Russia and Russia's counter-sanctions were heavily discussed in the media. It is this thesis belief that the eastern economic expansion that we see today and the decreasing Russia – EU trade is, at least in part, an effect of these sanctions. This result was also manifested in a study by the Austrian Institute of Economic Research.¹²² However, there is other research that suggests that the decreasing trade between the EU and Russia mainly is due to the recession in Russia and not due to the sanctions on either side. According to that study, it is extremely difficult to measure the impact of the sanctions because they coincided with the Russian recession and its falling oil prices.¹²³ Nevertheless, with the help of the foreign policy concept we can establish that Russia wishes for the sanctions to come to a halt. This can be seen in the previously analyzed *data*, such as 3d and 40d, stating that Russia intends to work against discrimination of Russian investments, investors, exporters, services and goods. Other *data*, such as article 12, claims that “the technological shift that is beginning to take shape in various economic sectors may further escalate economic competition, accelerating the redistribution of power on the international arena.”¹²⁴ Applying the ideas of Vedung and Toulmin this might imply that the sanctions are at least provoking Russia and is at least in part responsible for the eastern economic expansion on the Russian side.

However, Russian counter-sanctions on the EU are largely negligible for economies such as the UK, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and others.¹²⁵ All in all, the counter-sanctions are taking the most toll on the Baltic and Eastern European states due to the

¹²² E. Christensen, O.Fritz and G. Streicher, “Effects of the EU-Russia Economic Sanctions on Value Added and Employment in the European Union and Switzerland,” WIFO Study, Austrian Institute of Economic Research, Vienna, July, 2015.

¹²³ Daniel Gros and Federica Mustilli, “The Effects of Sanctions and Counter-Sanctions on EU-Russian Trade Flows,” CEPS, July 5, 2016, accessed May 8, 2017, https://www.ceps.eu/publications/effects-sanctions-and-counter-sanctions-eu-russian-trade-flows#_ftn4.

¹²⁴ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” article 12.

¹²⁵ Anastasia Nevskaya, “Russia-EU economic relations: Assessing two years of sanctions,” Russia Direct, June 16, 2016, accessed May 8, 2017, <http://www.russia-direct.org/analysis/russia-eu-economic-relations-assessing-two-years-sanctions>.

difficulty they have experienced in finding alternative markets.¹²⁶ This thesis deems that such an uneven effect was more than a mere coincidence, rather it believes it to be likely that Russia who is aware of the economic state of these countries chose to enforce sanctions that they knew would give them the most trouble. As aspirational constructivism theorizes, the countries who traditionally are seen as the West are an important part of rebuilding the Russian post-soviet economy and its role as great power. However, the Baltic states, who traditionally may be viewed as eastern, are according to aspirational constructivism desired to be under Russian hegemony and their union with the West may as such be seen as undermining Russia's historic role as a great power. Therefore, the counter-sanctions are likely to be a way of demonstrating Russia's continued influential capacity on these states. The eastern expansion may indeed affect the EU but after extensive research the Russian economy still seem to be taking the hardest hit, which gives the EU leverage over Russia. It is therefore expected that Russia will continue to pursue profitable economic relations with the EU while simultaneously expanding its eastern market.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This thesis has with the help of aspirational constructivism, functional idea analysis and Toulmins argument analysis model, analyzed the Russian foreign policy concept. The methodological tools have allowed the thesis to interpret *data* and *warrants* by basing its *backings* on historical facts and current political events. It has shown how the present foreign policy concept is influenced by the state's national identity, also called statist developmentalism. For statist developmentalism, the historical power of Russia plays a significant role in the state's aspirations and therefore in its national interests.

The analysis then investigated the dimensions: NATO, ethno-linguistics, and economic interests. This way, it has discussed in favor of three *claims*: Russia wants to impede NATO's expansions, Russia has expansionist aspirations and intends to increase their sphere of indirect influence, and Russia strives for an economic expansion to the East. This groundwork then accumulates into a discussion of possible effects on the EU, giving plausible answers to the following open questions: Is it likely that Russia will wage war against the EU? How might Russian territorial expansionist tendencies affect the EU? And, what may Russia's Eastern economic expansion mean for the EU?

¹²⁶ "Economic impact on the EU of the sanctions over Ukraine conflict," European Parliament, October 2015, accessed May 8, 2017, 5-7, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS_BRI\(2015\)569020_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS_BRI(2015)569020_EN.pdf).

The answer to these questions boil down to whether the EU's ingroup dimensions weigh heavier than the outgroup dimensions and if cooperation with the EU will boost national self-esteem. Even with continued Western meddling with FSU states and EU sanctions on Russia, the EU remains an ingroup on many dimensions. Thus, this thesis concludes that: a large-scale war between NATO and Russia, or the EU and Russia, is an unlikely outcome although regional wars remain a possibility; their eastern economic expansion will not have major effects on the EU's economy, hence the EU will have leverage over Russia and so remain an ingroup on this dimension; and Russia is likely to continue striving for indirect influence over the FSU and other eastern state's due to its statist developmentalist view on citizenship and its great power aspirations. Therefore, states of interest to Russia who are not a part of the EU or NATO risk conflict similar to the one's in Georgia and Ukraine.

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