

A Systemic Analysis of Arctic Security

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WHAT ?



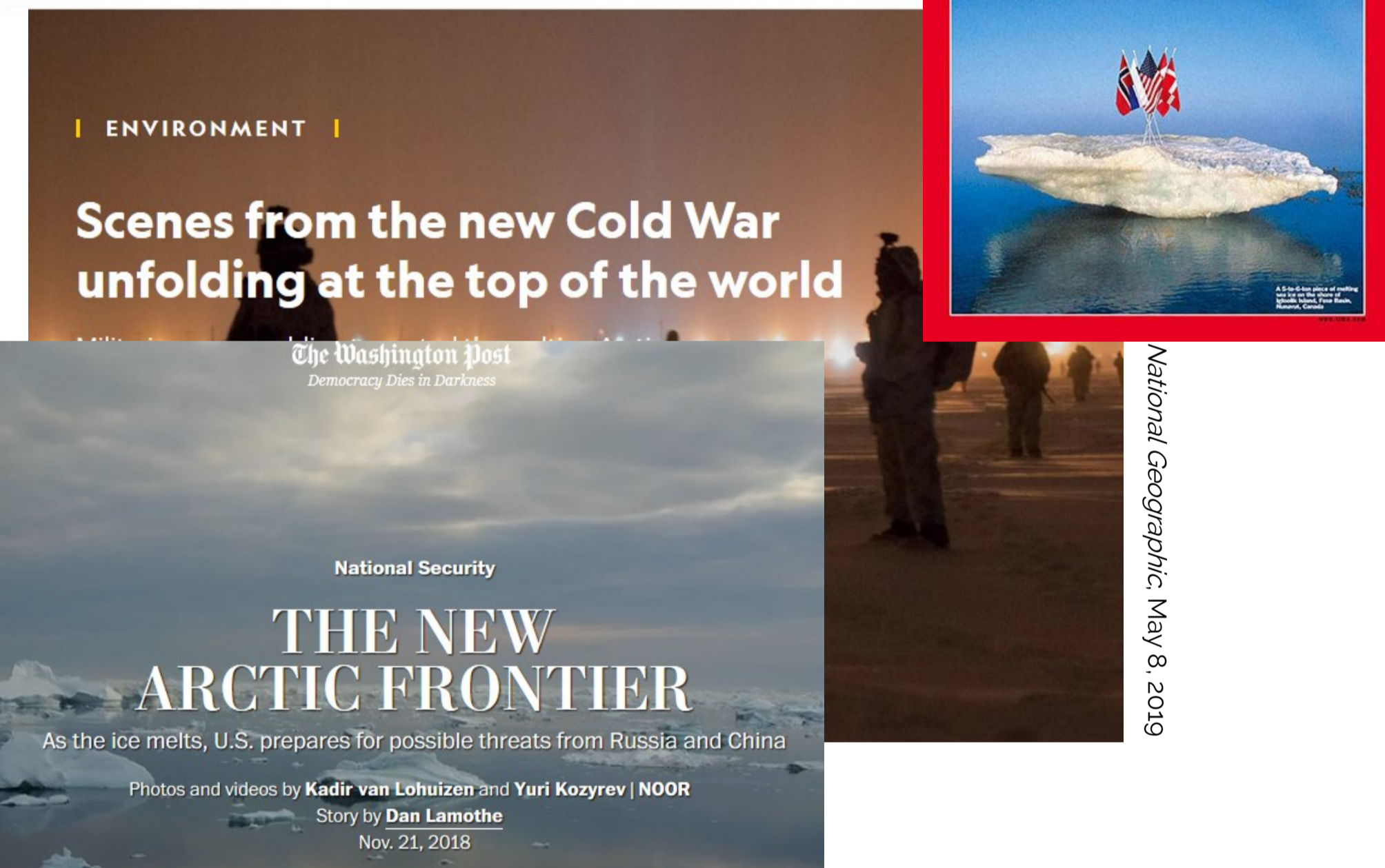
This work questions the 'Arctic' dimension of Arctic security:

→ What is 'Arctic' about 'Arctic security'?

Is it just a political label or can we outline 'Arctic specific' issues in the regional security system ?

WHY ?

Arctic security is a recurring topic in the media.



It is often linked to climate change, the disappearing sea-ice...

But does a changing Arctic mean a **new paradigm** for the definition of security ?

PRELIMINARY RESULTS



Fig. 1—Discursive framework for Arctic Governance

The figure was established using Arctic specific policy documents from countries around the Arctic ocean (Canada, the US, the Russian Federation, Norway, Iceland and Greenland (Denmark)) The bigger the word, the more it appears in the policy document.

B. Defining security and its referents in the regional governance system

- Security has a very wide definition in the Arctic, which goes way beyond the military and state security [2].
- A large variety of referent objects are put forward, if we group them by theme [1], we can establish a country profile. (fig. 2)
- Most of them have converging profiles, with some minor specificities.

A. Analysis of the policy framework for Arctic governance

- Text mining to identify the main themes in Arctic governance [1]
- Security is a priority [2] but out of the governance equation: the main pan-arctic governance institution is the Arctic Council and security is out of its mandate [3].
- International cooperation and region-building are two crucial elements in the regional government process.

→ Where and how does security fit in the system?

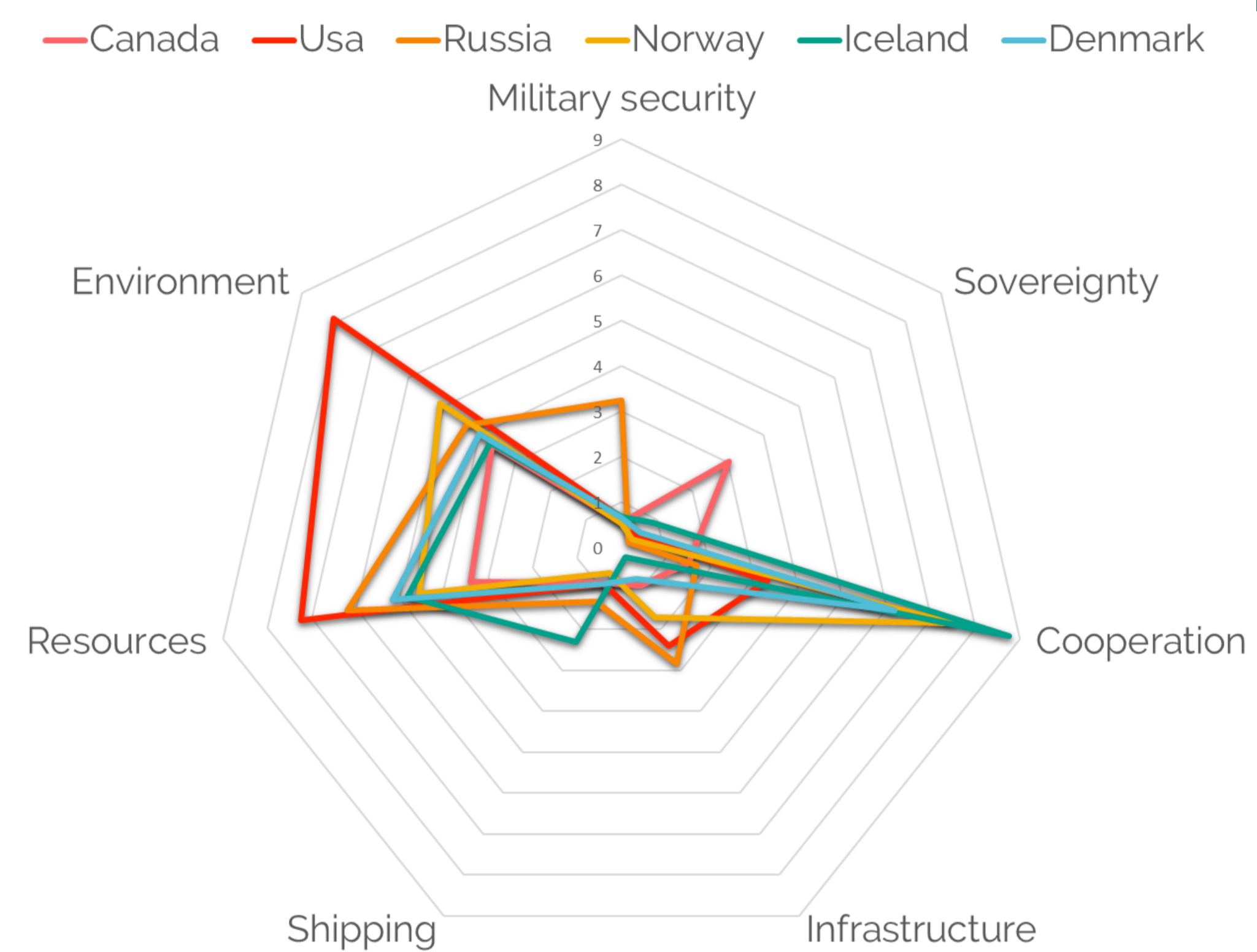


Fig. 2—Main themes associated with security, by country.

We used analytical coding [1] of all Arctic security related documents in the considered countries, to assess the relative frequency of each identified theme [4].

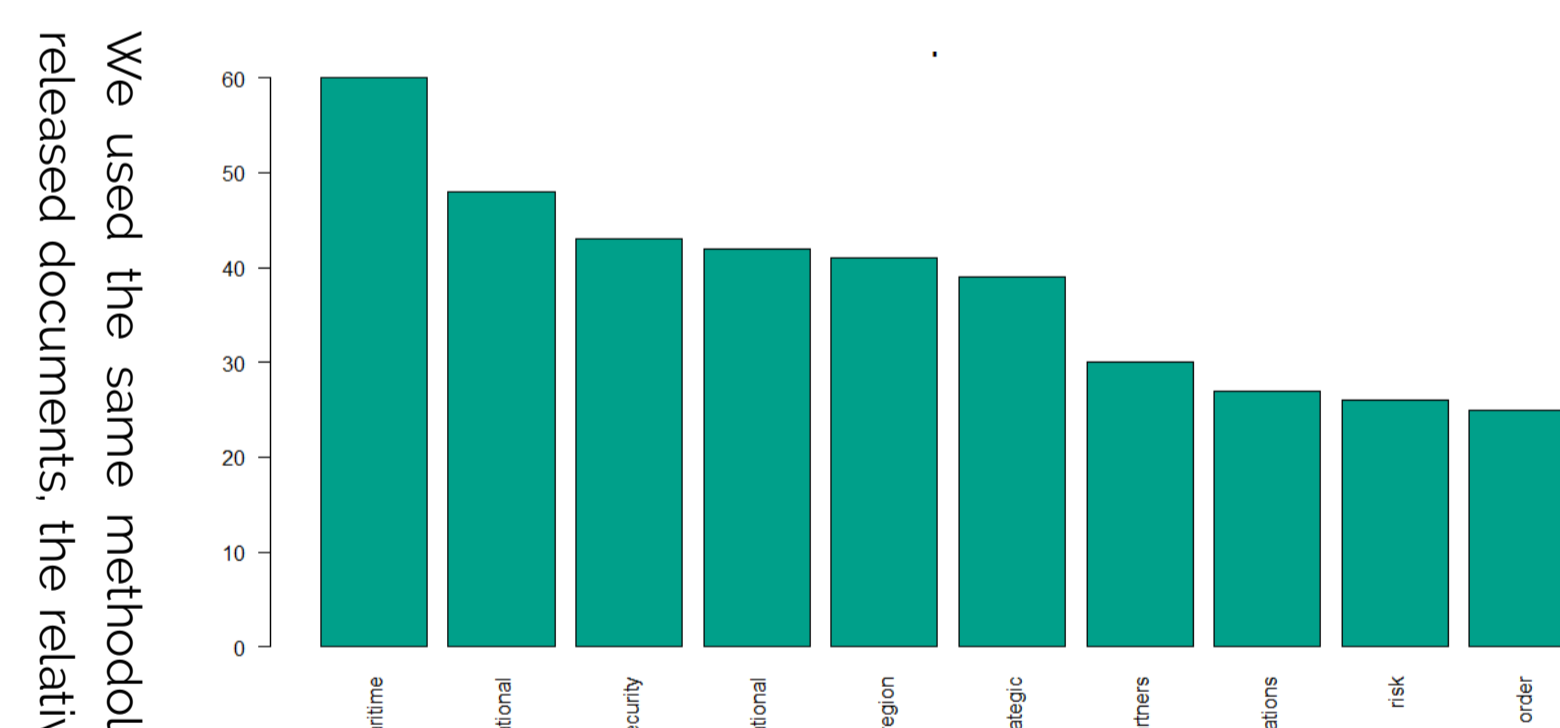


Fig. 3 (a) — Most frequent words, US coast Guard Strategic outlook (2019)

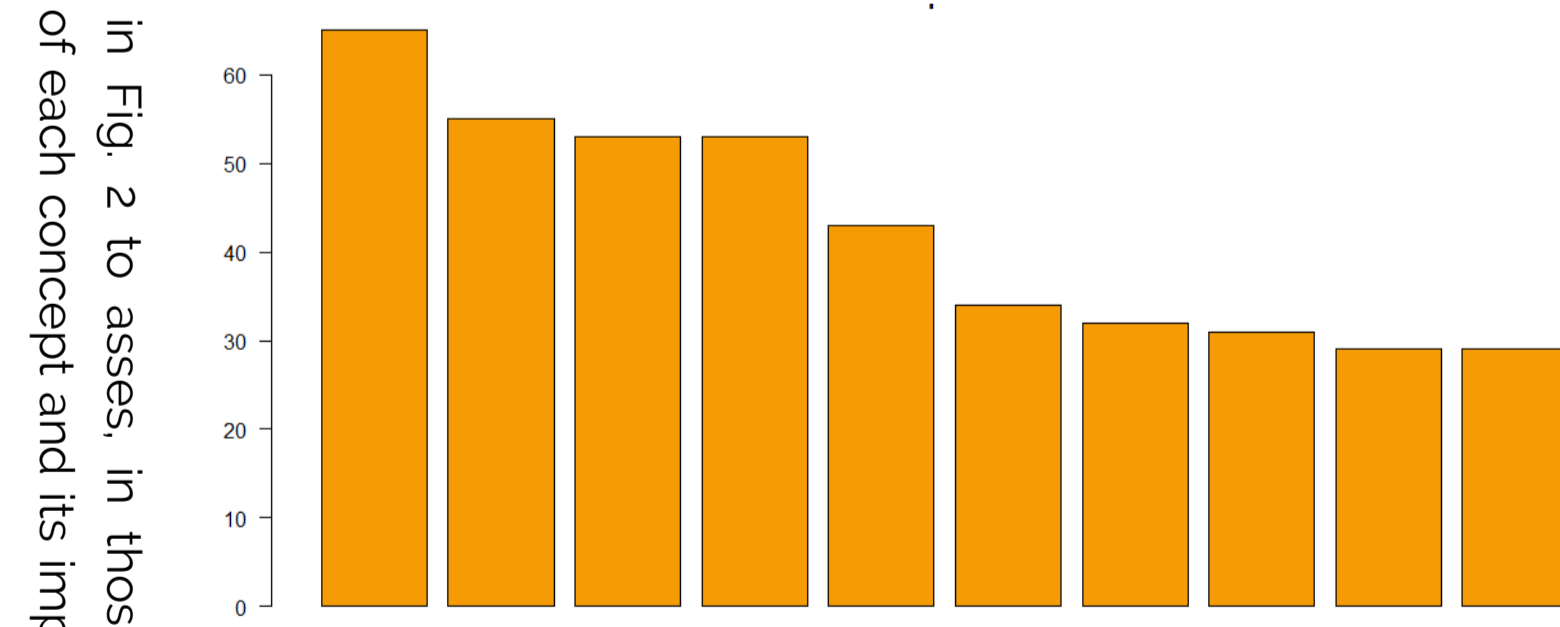


Fig. 3 (b) — Most frequent words, DoD Arctic Strategy, (2019)

C. Arctic exceptionalism in current geopolitics

- Recent events have suggested it would be the end of Arctic exceptionalism and that the region is no longer insulated from global geopolitics.
- Fig 1 & 2 were established based on released policies. Most of them are a few years old, ending in 2020. New one would most certainly draw a different picture, just as the newly released 2019 US policy does (fig 3 (a) & (b)).

HOW ?



- Official Discourse analysis
- Interviews with diplomats, officials, researchers...
- Political forums & conferences (Arctic Frontiers, Arctic Circle...)

CONCLUSIONS



- From a « High North, Low tension » paradigm to a « High North, underlying tensions » one ?
- Discourses have changed in scale : from a regional to a global perspective
- Hard security stakes in the region are not defined in the Arctic but integrate into broader security schemes and reflect them.

REFERENCES



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If you want to know more about this research, just scan this QR code to get access to the full paper (to be published soon)

