“Cool Neighbours”: How has Sweden’s attitude towards Russia changed since the end of the Cold War?

Author: Karin Lidqvist
Abstract

This thesis aims to describe how the attitude of the Swedish Riksdag towards Russia has changed during the post-Cold War era. Describing the change in attitude is done by using Alexander Wentd’s Social theory of international relations, and the constructivist idea of external shocks influencing state behaviour. More specifically, the thesis examines, (1) what external shocks/events that can be found during the post-Cold-War-era? and (2) In what way and/or direction have these events caused a shift in culture? This study uses a qualitative approach to conduct a single case study in order to explain the Sweden-Russia relationship. By looking at protocols from the Swedish Riksdag, the opinions of the politicians can be established, which ultimately is where the attitude of Russia is formed. The study shows that the relationship has, indeed, changed. Through events like the Chechnya, Georgian and Syrian war, the appointment of president Vladimir Putin, the 9/11 attacks and the Ukraine crisis, the Swedish attitude towards Russia has has experienced a change for the worse. The relationship has shifted from being based on friendship, to be based on rivalry.

Key Words: Sweden, Russia, Attitude, Foreign Politics, Culture.
Table of Content

1. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 4

2. LITERATURE REVIEW ................................................................................................. 6
   2.1 The Sweden-Russia relationship ................................................................................. 6
   2.2 Swedish Security and Foreign Policy towards Russia ................................................... 7
   2.3 What is missing from the existing literature? ................................................................. 9

3. THEORETICAL APPROACH ......................................................................................... 10
   3.1 Social Theory of International Relations ................................................................. 10
   3.2 Cultures of Anarchy ................................................................................................. 11
      3.2.1 Hobbesian Culture ............................................................................................... 11
      3.2.2 Lockean Culture .................................................................................................. 13
      3.2.3 Kantian Culture ................................................................................................... 14
   3.3 External Shocks ......................................................................................................... 15
   3.4 Applying Social Theory ........................................................................................... 16

4. SPECIFIED AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION ......................................................... 18

5. METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN ........................................................................... 19
   5.1 Single-Case Study ................................................................................................... 19
   5.2 Gathering Documents ............................................................................................... 20
   5.3 Idea Analysis ........................................................................................................... 21

6. ANALYSIS ...................................................................................................................... 23
   6.1 External Shocks ......................................................................................................... 23
      6.1.1 The End of the Cold War ...................................................................................... 23
      6.1.2 The Chechnya War .............................................................................................. 27
      6.1.3 The Georgia War ................................................................................................. 30
      6.1.4 President Vladimir Putin & 9/11 ......................................................................... 32
      6.1.5 Russian involvement in Syria & Re-electing Vladimir Putin .................................. 36
      6.1.6 The Ukraine Crisis .............................................................................................. 40

7. CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................. 43

8. REFERENCE LIST .......................................................................................................... 46

Table of Figures

3.5 Analytical Framework - The cultures of anarchy and degrees of internalisation in regards to Sweden and Russia ................................................................. 17
1. Introduction

Russia has always been an important player in the international arena. It is a country with a history filled with wars and conflict, but also prosperity and growth. Throughout the last few decades Russia has been part of several armed conflicts that have been looked upon with criticism by the rest of the world, in particular by the European Union (EU) and its member states (Oldberg, 2012). The conflicts that have been criticised most since the end of Cold War have been the Russian involvement and aggression towards Chechnya, Georgia, and most recently the Crimean Peninsula in Ukraine. The international community condemned these conflicts, due to Russia’s lack of respect for human rights and characterised them as illegal conquests (Sakerhetspolitik, 2011, 2014). One of the most vocal condemners of the Russian disrespect of human rights has been its Scandinavian neighbour Sweden.

The term “cool neighbours” has been used in order to describe the relationship between Sweden and Russia. This is not far from the truth. The current relationship is relatively stable economically and politically, but it is constantly reminded of its troubled past filled with conflicts, distrust and diverging views on ideas and values (Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009). Russia is arguably one of Sweden’s most important neighbours, and a functioning relationship between the two has been sought after.

At the end of the Cold War, Sweden and Russia were on good terms. Sweden had a benevolent attitude towards Russia. When the Soviet Union dissolved, Sweden saw is as their chance to have a positive influence on its Eastern neighbour Russia. Sweden contributed with economic and political aid, and wanted to help Russia modernise its society and make their transition into a democratic regime. Russia gladly accepted the offer (Sida, 2009).

In recent years however, this attitude towards Russia seems to have experienced a change for the worse. An increased offensive foreign policy from Russia towards Sweden can be seen almost on a weekly basis in Swedish media, with statements stating that Russia has become a threat to the peace of Europe, and thus also Sweden (Wallström, 2015). Sweden has received concrete threats from the Russian foreign minister about joining NATO. If Sweden does so regardless of the warnings, Russia will have to take countermeasures (Winiarski, 2016). Russia becoming an increasingly bigger threat to Sweden brings cause for concern. Sweden and Russia have not been to war with each other in over 200 years (Etzold & Haukkala, 2011). In order for Russia to become a legitimate threat to Sweden in today’s society, there ought to be some sort of historic
explanation for it. According to the media, Russia is becoming a potential threat to Sweden. But what does the Swedish Government think? It is not the media, but the government who conducts the actual interaction, whether it be politics or economics, with Russia. What is their attitude towards Russia, and how has it changed since the end of the Cold War when the two states were seemingly friends? How did the the nature of the relationship change over the years since the end of the Cold War? How did these shifts happen, and which events led to the shifts?

Research concerning Sweden and Russia is sparse. Most instances where Sweden and Russia are mentioned together are in academic research Russia where Sweden gets a mention, or in research on NATO and their relationship with Russia where Sweden has come to be an increasing. It is also found in research where the Scandinavian and Nordic countries get clumped together to examine their importance/relationship to Russia. Little research has been done specifically on the Swedish-Russian relationship. This fact alone creates a gap in the literature, which is a very wide gap to fill. Finding out why the Swedish attitude towards Russia has changed over the past couple of decades allows for a place to start.

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship shared between Sweden and Russia. The relationship is of highest priority for Sweden, and finding out why the attitude of a relationship that is and always have been very important has changed so drastically over the years will allow for a deeper understanding of both Sweden’s relationship with Russia, but also how Sweden conducts foreign policy. By looking at the relationship since the end of the Cold war, and identifying reasons and causes as to why the attitude of Sweden has changed, a clearer picture of the relationship will hopefully become clear.

Following the introduction, the Literature Review discusses existing research done on the subject, and identity the literature gap is to be filled by this thesis. The third chapter is the theoretical approach which uses Alexander Wendt’s Social Theory of International Relations together with Thomas U. Berger’s idea of external shocks influencing state culture in order to conduct the analysis. The chapter ends with an analytical framework. The fourth chapter is the the specified aim and research questions, which have been derived from the theoretical chapter. Chapter five deals with the research method and design which discusses the the choices of making a qualitative, single case study using idea analysis. The sixth chapter shows the findings and results of the thesis, and chapter seven summarises the findings and suggests ways to continue the research on the Sweden-Russia relationship.
2. Literature Review

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to three lines of scholarship within the field of international relations. The first line is that of the Sweden – Russia relationship, and the other two are about the Swedish national security and foreign policy. Most existing scholarship are on the historic part of the relationship, what interests Russia can possibly have in Sweden/the Nordic countries or about NATO’s interests in Sweden in relation to Russia. What this thesis aims to contribute with is to describe how the attitude of the Swedish Government has changed towards Russia during the post-Cold-War era. A very limited amount of scholarly work within the field of political science can be found on the Swedish-Russian relationship. Existing literature on the relationship between Sweden and Russia will be examined first, followed by a section looking at the literature on Swedish security interests and foreign policy towards Russia.

2.1. The Sweden – Russia Relationship

The relationship between Sweden and Russia is a line of scholarship that is relatively narrow academically. Most of the existing academic research on the subject are about the historical perspective of the relationship, and what it has looked like up until now (Oldberg, 2012; Etzold & Haukkala, 2011; Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009; Sergevic, 1996). Hagström Frisell & Oldberg (2009) coined the name “cool neighbours” to describe Sweden and Russia’s relationship. The name is certainly fitting with the relationship in its current form being overall politically stable and with growing economic ties. The relationship, however is overshadowed by a complicated history filled with distrust, conflicting values and diverging views on issues such as democracy, human rights and foreign policy (Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009; Etzold & Haukkala, 2011). Many wars were fought up until the 19th century in attempts to get hegemony over the Baltic Sea. Ever since 1809, when Sweden lost its Finnish part of the kingdom, Sweden has been avoiding wars or conflicts with Russia and the Soviet Union. Through Sweden’s policy of neutrality, it has succeeded to do so without mishaps (Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009: 7). Throughout the Cold War, incidents having to with espionage, reconnaissance and a Soviet submarine being stranded Swedish’ waters put strain on the relationship. This raised question about the country’s security and sovereignty. During the 1990s Russia seemed to be moving towards a market economy and democracy, which made Sweden more positive towards the relationship (Etzold & Haukkala, 2011). Russia had been sceptical about Sweden’s contact with NATO, but became more positive as Sweden’s neutrality policy
turned into a military non-alignment policy, keeping Sweden out of NATO as they instead joined the EU (European Union) in 1995. (Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009).

Trade between the two countries started properly in the 1990s as economic aid was given to Russia to assist in their transition to a market economy. The trade has steadily grown since then. Swedish exports consist mostly of telecommunications, vehicles and chemicals, whereas Russian exports are predominantly energy resources. The trade has grown increasingly since the end of the 20th century, but has decreased somewhat since the economic crisis in 2009 Swedish businesses have continuously complained about the Russian bureaucracy, rampant crime, corruption, unclear rules and protectionism that is present in the trading. Russia, on multiple occasions, has imposed tariffs in order to protect its own industry (Oldberg, 2012; Högberg Frisell & Oldberg, 2009).

2.2 Swedish and Russian Security and Foreign Policy

As was stated above, most academia on the relationship are concerning the historic perspective of the relationship. The other literature that exists outside of that is more or less only about the security and foreign policy of these two states have in relation to each other. FOI, the Swedish Defence Research Agency, and UI, the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, have both published numerous reports throughout the years on Russian military capacity, and its relations to other states, including to some degree its relationship to Sweden (Hedenskog, 2015; Normark, 2001; Oldberg, 2014).

Sweden has, due to its small size, benefitted security-wise from becoming a member of the EU. On joining the EU, Sweden accepted legally binding agreement the European Union has towards Russia – the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. This agreement includes commitments concerning freedom, democracy, human rights, security and justice, external security, economy and the environment, as well as research (EU, 2010). The Swedish relationship to the EU has, and continues to be very important, and has been used as a tool in Sweden’s relationship with Russia (Schmidt-Felzmann, 2016; Kulhanek, 2010).

Actions and decisions made throughout the Swedish-Russian relationship have caused tension. When looking at Swedish domestic and foreign policy, it is difficult to miss the fact that values of democracy, human rights, and rule of law are essential. It has thus led to criticism from Sweden’s part (more so than from many other EU states) when Putin moved Russia toward a more
authoritarian rule. Sweden has also been vocal about the restrictions that have been placed on the Russian media and organisation, and other individuals, to stop them from publishing or saying what they want and therefore effectively hindering Russian citizens from practicing certain human rights. (Etzold & Haukkala, 2011; Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009; Oldberg, 2012).

In 2008 the political relation between Sweden and Russia reached a low point with the Russo-Georgian War. Pro-Russian militias in southern parts of Georgia did not want to be a part of the country anymore as they saw themselves as Russians, and declared independence from Georgia. Moscow sent Russian military to help the pro-Russian militias seize full control of the area. This put the Georgian military and South Ossetian provocation against each other. A ceasefire then came into place, but it severed most diplomatic ties Russia had with Georgia (Freedman, 2014).

After the conflict in Georgia there was a push for the EU and the West to start including countries that was once members of the Soviet Union. Because of this Sweden and Poland initiated the launch of The Eastern Partnership (EaP) in 2009. This was created in order to offer support and accelerate political and economic cooperation between the countries neighbouring Russia and the EU. It thus allows for the countries to move towards a EU and NATO membership. Sweden condemning the Russian aggression towards Georgia and being such a big advocate for the partnership was met with scepticism from Russia (Hagström Frisell & Oldberg, 2009; Fean, 2009; Normark, 2015).

The most recent event of tension is the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014. The crisis has developed since 1991 and the dissolution of the Soviet-Union. Crimea spent much of its history being ruled by Russia and the Soviet Union, making the population having different ideas of what they identified themselves as. This has created divides and clashes in culture, ethnicity and language. Similar to that of Georgia, Russian special forces were deployed in Crimea in order to back up pro-Russian militants who wanted Crimea to belong to Russia. The retaking was successful and Crimea voted for independence from Ukraine. Ukrainian governmental forces have tried recapturing the area but to varying degrees of success. Russian forces are still present in Crimea, and there is no actual solution to the conflict as of yet (Bebler, 2015; Deliagin, 2015; Freedman, 2014, 2015). These conflicts have caused Sweden to increase their cooperation with NATO, both when it comes to exercises, joint forces and basing agreements. Internal discussions about the country actually joining the alliance has intensified as well, something that Russia does not take lightly, and has threatened to take “appropriate measures” in preventing it to join (Oldberg, 2016:8). Sweden has also taken economic measures in the form of sanctions against
Russia and the parts of Crimea that is under Russian control to show their discontent (Regeringen, 2015).

2.3 What is missing from the existing literature?

In order to understand the Swedish relationship today, and the attitudes that can be seen in today’s Sweden, we need to look at the history leading up to this point.

Sweden can often be seen being mentioned in academia about Russia and the current conflicts, but mostly because Russia has become increasingly offensive in its foreign policy, and because the possibility of Sweden joining NATO does not sit well with Russia. Russia being increasingly more on the offensive can clearly have consequences for Sweden and be a large threat, as it’s a close, and very important neighbour. This can be seen in Swedish security reports published by the Swedish Government (2015) and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (2012). However, most of these are speculative, since nothing can be known for certain, and things can change very rapidly.

Most of the existing literature on the relationship is either on the historical aspect of it, or centred around Russia and Sweden is mentioned as one of their northern neighbours which may or may not be important in the future. There are as mentioned, also plenty of reports from Swedish agencies and institutions describing the Russian threat from a Swedish point of view. Little literature can be found the evolution of the relationship, and how this evolution and progress has contributed to the current relationship we see today. This is the gap this thesis wants to fill. By filling this gap, a better understanding of the current situation between Sweden and Russia will hopefully arise.
3. Theoretical Approach

In this chapter, Alexander Wendt’s Social theory of international relations will be explained and the main idea of the three anarchic cultures will be explained. Wendt’s Social theory will be combined with one of constructivism’s ideas of exogenous shocks (events) forming and shaping ideas, norms and identities of states.

3.1 Social Theory of International Relations

Alexander Wendt is arguably one of the most influential theorists with his book *Social Theory of International Relations* (1999). Wendt’s Social theory of international relations (IR) is based on the ideas of constructivism changed to fit IR theory. The idea of constructivism is that actors are socially constructed. This also makes the society that is created by actors and their ideas socially constructed. Wendt, however, argues that constructivism does not say enough about where these actors are constructed or what actors to study.

In Wendt’s social theory, states are the main unit of analysis. He argues that states are “unitary actors”, and they can therefore be given qualities such as identities, interests and intentionality. States are thus treated like the people of the international system which gives them a sense of self and personalities. This allows for social theory to analyse the behaviour of states as if they were individuals (which constructivism is concerned with) (Wendt, 1999: 40-44).

Social theory emphasises the importance of shared ideas and norms in shaping and describing state behaviour rather than material forces. How these ideas and norms shape states’ identities and interests are also very important. Identities refer to who actors (states) are whereas interests refer to what they want. States identify themselves and their identity as the Self and other states as the Other. Throughout this thesis the word ‘Self’ or ‘Other’ will refer to one state’s relationship with another. In the case of this thesis, the Sweden will be referred to as the Self and Russia as the Other, since this thesis is written from the perspective of Sweden’s change of attitude towards the Other (Russia). When individuals, as well as states, have shared ideas it creates a social structure called a “culture”. When the Self and Other share ideas about the system and the world, a culture is created (Wendt, 1999: 249).

Some interests, although not all, are created in part by the international system, such as physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being and the collective self-esteem (a group’s need to feel good about itself, and to have respect or a status). Without the international system, these
interests would not be necessary. In order for a state and its society to be secure all of these four interests must be met. States where these interests are not met tend to die out sooner rather than later (Wendt, 1999: 234-238).

The international system is anarchic in nature, meaning that all states are homogenous. In domestic politics of states’, the ordering is hierarchical, with the governments being at the top. In an anarchy all states are at the same level of decision making and no one has higher ranking or more authority than the next. According to Wendt (1999: 246-259) anarchy can have at least three different kinds of structure (cultures): Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian. Depending on what structure a state has affects how the state is constructed.

### 3.2 Cultures of Anarchy

As mentioned, the international system is anarchic, meaning that there is no centralised authority present to guide states. Instead, micro and macro structures (states’ domestic policy and international policy) are present in the system to guide states. The anarchic system has three different cultures dominating the international system at the macro-level: Hobbesian, the Lockean and the Kantian culture. Each culture is based on a certain logic, with a different role at each culture’s core: enmity (role of enemy) for the Hobbesian culture; rivalry (role of rival) for the Lockean; friendship (role of friend) for the Kantian. The nature of the anarchic system will thus depend on which of these cultures that is dominating. States will be pressured by the nature of the system into adapting the roles each of these cultures demand.

Each individual culture consists of three different degrees of internalisation. These are different degrees of how incorporated the culture has become into the state’s society. These degrees look different in each of the different cultures, and correspond to each of the three different logics that they are based off of (enmity, rivalry, friendship). These degrees will be explained in more detail below. The concept of internalisation in international relations refer to the extent a state or other actor has accepted a set of norms and/or values. In this thesis, the degrees of internalisation will be used as a way to explain the evolution of the relationship between Sweden and Russia rather than to explain to what extent certain norms have been accepted (Wendt, 1999: 246-259).

#### 3.2.1 Hobbesian Culture

Enmity is at the core of the Hobbesian culture. The Other is defined as the enemy who does not
recognise the Self’s right to live as an autonomous state. The Other will not willingly limit its violence towards the Self, but will exercise unlimited violence. Limits on violence between enemies are due to inadequate capabilities or pressure from external forces. The enemy often shows willingness to destroy or enslave the Self. Enemies often have long historical pedigrees with one another which the enmity is rooted in. The Hobbesian culture has a logic of war of all against all. States act on the principles of ‘every man for himself’ and ‘kill or be killed’. It is a self-help world, and states are unable to trust or count on others for help, thus depending solely on military power in order to survive.

Having an enemy has consequences on states’ foreign policy and how it behaves. Wendt lists four implications on states’ behaviour and foreign policy: (1) States live by the principle of ‘kill or be killed’, and being on the offensive is needed in order to survive. The Self thus acts in the same way towards the enemy, as the enemy does towards the Self. (2) Decision-making in a state with enemies tend to heavily discard the future and instead focus on worst-case scenarios. Negative possibilities rather than positive probabilities will dominate the state’s policy, and cooperative moves done by others tend to be ignored. (3) Judging the military capabilities of the enemy will allow for predicting the enemy’s behaviour, thus making relative military gains on the enemy extremely important. Finally, if it does come to war, no limitations on violence are possible for the Self. The Self is forced to mirror back the representation it has given the Other. The role of the enemy has then become the role of the Self. The Self become the Other’s enemy in order to survive (Wendt, 1999: 262-263). As more states see others as enemies, a tipping point is reached and enmity takes over the logic of the system, and becomes a property of the system rather than something between a few single individuals. Because of this logic, neutrality is very difficult to achieve in the Hobbesian system. A lack of self restraint and inhibition also makes balance of power difficult to maintain. (Wendt, 1999: 263-266).

If a state finds itself in the first degree of internalisation they comply or listen to the enemy only through the enemy’s use of force, threats and punishment. Severe mistrust between states forces them to assume the worst of each other. In the first degree, states have no choice but to have the Other as the enemy, as they are unable to respond (Wendt, 1999: 268-270) In the case of the Sweden Russia relationship, it would mean that Sweden would comply with Russia due to their superior military capabilities, and the threats that come with that. In the second degree states actually have a choice. Here, instead, Sweden would follow the norm of having Russia as an enemy because it is in their self-interest - the benefits of complying outweigh the costs of not
complying. As soon as it would be too costly, Sweden would have to change its behaviour towards Russia. (Wendt, 1999, 270-272). In the third degree of internalisation states follow the norms because they think it is legitimate, and therefore want to follow it. This degree is only possible to reach if a conflict is not viable. In this degree, having Russia as an enemy is imprinted in Sweden’s culture, and the norms of the state. Conflict and fighting has thus become the “good” and “right” thing to do (Wendt, 1999: 272-278). When analysing the data found on the Sweden-Russia relationship, quotes indicating Russia to be a threat to Sweden’s national security and an enemy of the Swedish state, the relationship is headed towards the Hobbesian culture.

3.2.2 Lockean Culture

In the Lockean culture the “kill or be killed” logic has been swapped for a “live and let live” logic and enmity has been changed for rivalry. The Self and Other still regard each other with respect to violence but “these representations are less threatening: unlike enemies, rivals expect each other to act as if they recognize their sovereignty, their "life and liberty," right, and therefore not to try to conquer or dominate them.” (Wendt, 1999: 279). Violence in the Lockean culture is used to settle disputes between rivals, albeit within the limits of the 'live and let live' logic. Wars are thus limited in the Lockean culture, and international law is working effectively at keeping it that way. Neutrality, unlike in the Hobbesian culture, is in the Lockean culture an accepted status. Enemies and rivals tend to be equally prone to violence, but the difference in their roles of enemy and rival make a big difference in the degree that violence is used. Rivalry has implications for foreign policy. It forces states to behave in a status quo fashion toward other states’ sovereignty, no matter what. The future matters more to rivals, where absolute gains are seen as more important than relative gains, even if relative gains still are important in order to predict behaviour. Unlike enemies, rivals limit their violence towards one another thanks to norms if war was to actually occur (Wendt, 1999: 280-285).

In the first degree of internalisation, rivals accept the norms of sovereignty and each other’s autonomy, but only by being forced to by stronger states with superior power. This would mean that Sweden and Russia, respectively, accept the other’s sovereignty, but only because they are forced to from other countries that put pressure on them to do so. In the second degree, rival states do not give much care to the norm of sovereignty, but rather they accept sovereignty only as being in their best interests. In this case, Sweden and Russia are no longer forced by the international system to recognise each other’s sovereignty, but rather have incentives to do so due to advancing national interests. In the third degree of internalisation, most states comply with
the norm of sovereignty because they think it is legitimate. The norm has become so internalised that it is almost forgotten – states see the norm of sovereignty to be a part of their identity and sovereignty is therefore just “accepted” as being legitimate. Here, Sweden and Russia accept each other’s sovereignty because that is the right thing to do. There is no question about whether or not another’s sovereignty is recognised, that is simply the way the world works. (Wendt, 1999: 285-289).

Words and phrases indicating that Russia is an aggressor of sorts, either towards Sweden or others, would indicate that the relationship, and the attitude Sweden has towards Russia, is leaning towards a relationship of rivalry.

3.2.3 Kantian Culture
The third and last nature of anarchy is the Kantian culture, which is based on the role of friendship. This role can be described by two rules that all states having the friendship role should follow: all disputes between friends are supposed to be settled without any violence or the threat of violence. All threats, directed to either the Self or the Other, should be addressed together as a team. Conflicts between friends are resolved through negotiation, arbitration and courts (by institutional and economical means). In the culture of friendship, there is no expectation from either party that the relationship is going to end. This is different from an alliance, which is only temporary, until the agreed threat or problem has been taken care of. Allies engage in the same behaviour as friends do, but the relationship is expected to eventually go back to a condition where war and conflict is possible. Once you have made a friend, you are friends forever. Collective security is created among friends. Collective security comes from a shared understanding of every friend’s peaceful intention and behaviour. NATO, for example, was from the beginning thought to be only a temporary alliance, but has since turned into a permanent collective security system (Wendt, 1999: 297-302).

In the first degree of internalisation, states are being forced into not attacking each other, or to co-operate through the existence of a common threat. There is no voluntary aspect of the role at this point. Here, Sweden and Russia would cooperate because of a common threat, such as terrorism for example. In the second degree friendship is used as a strategy that benefits the state’s current interests. This kind of friendship can be difficult to maintain in the long run. Here, Russia and Sweden are friends simply because their own interests can be advanced because of it. Sweden and Russia may, for example, gain a substantial increase in trade if they stay friends. In
Sweden’s case, it may also be important to be friends with Russia since this eliminates a potential enemy for Sweden. In the third degree states fully accept the constraints of friendship as being legitimate. The security of the Other is seen as part of the Self’s security, and through this, collective identities develop. In this degree, Russia and Sweden have become true friends and a shared identity has been created. The friendship seen in this level is comparable to the relationship Sweden has with the rest of the Nordic and Scandinavian states (Wendt, 1999: 302-307). In the analysis, data showing that Sweden and Russia talks highly of each other would indicate a move toward the Kantian culture of Anarchy.

3.3 External Shocks

According to Thomas U. Berger (1996), in order to explain state and policy behaviour, one needs to look at the domestic cultural and institutional context in which the policies were created. In his article, Berger looks at the specific cases of Germany and Japan, to explain why they have come to rely heavily on antimilitarism. In order to explain behaviour, for example when policies are created, one needs to look at the state’s historical experiences surrounding it and how these were interpreted by domestic actors. Depending on the historical events that have taken place, beliefs and values have developed to make the state either reluctant or prone to certain behaviour (Berger, 1996: 317ff).

According to Berger (1996) both Germany and Japan have a history that can tell why antimilitarism is favoured. Before World War 2, both states were very centralised around military. With the disastrous defeats in WW2, the countries took considerable blows to both their economy and spirit. With the aid of Western powers, and the occupation from the US to both countries, they had little choice but to move towards antimilitarism. When being faced with the Cold War and possible rearmament of the military, Germany and Japan instead chose to deepen the relationship they had with allies, and become involved with more multilateral organisations and agreements with others. If Japan and Germany had not experienced such defeat in WW2, and continued being highly militarised, the countries would look drastically different today. One cannot explain and understand these states’ antimilitarism if one does not look at their history, and how their ideas and behaviour changed due to specific events in the past which shocked the state into adapting a different behaviour. (Berger, 1996: 330ff).

Although the parts of Berger’s article on Germany and Japan specifically are not directly comparable to my specific research question, the idea of looking at domestic cultures and
external historical events, is. If one does not factor in cultural and ideological variables when describing foreign phenomena and outcomes, it is difficult reach a well-rounded answer. In order to be able to predict how states might behave in the future, or why they are behaving the way they are now, it is important to look at the states’ history, and events that have occurred that may have influenced the way states think.

The idea of culture, as was mentioned earlier in the chapter, is the notion that behaviour is guided by ideas and beliefs that are shared and transmitted socially. The culture of a society determines how it acts when it comes to politics, security and other national interests. Values and ideas of cultures can change rapidly, but core ideas are often very difficult to change. In the case of this thesis, Sweden’s preference for democracy would be one of these core ideas. It would be very difficult to ever get Sweden to change its mind about not favouring democracy. The only time this would happen would be if the society is under extreme strain, or the values have been discredited to a very large extent. (Berger, 1996: 319-329)

3.4 Applying Social Theory of International Relations

In this thesis, the Social Theory of International Relations will be applied to the case of the Swedish-Russian relationship and how the Swedish attitude towards Russia has changed since the Ukraine Crisis. In this thesis, I have chosen to look at the Wendtian “culture” of Sweden. By using Wendt’s concept of cultures of anarchy, rather than looking at the relationship from any other perspective, I will be able to fully focus on the notions of enmity, rivalry and friendship. Depending on which of these three roles are present, the relationship and the parties included in it, will look and act very differently. In the case of Russia and Sweden and their relationship, these different roles have come to be increasingly important in how they act towards one another. This thesis wants to find the answer to how the attitude of one individual (state) in a relationship has changed towards the other member in the relationship, it is important to look at how Sweden’s ideas about Russia and its perception of the relationship between Russia and itself have changed over the years. By using Wendt’s Social Theory that emphasises the importance of identities and shared ideas in shaping state behaviour towards other states, an answer to the question will be reached. Berger’s idea of external shocks causing changes in a state’s culture and behaviour will also be used. Russia has always been, and always will be, one of Sweden’s most important neighbours. Berger argued in his articles that in order to be able to really understand the choices a state has made, one needs to look at the historic events that may have influenced its’ behaviour (Berger, 1996). Thus, by finding out the historic events that have played a part in
the evolution of the Sweden-Russia relationship would contribute to a better understanding of why it has turned out the way it has.

To find out how the Swedish attitude has changed towards Russia, an analytical framework is created in order to summarise and make sense of the theoretical approach of this thesis. The analytical framework illustrated below shows the three different anarchic cultures and their three different degrees of internalisation. The analytical framework is written from the perspective of Sweden. The idea of this framework is to be able to analyse official governmental documents starting from the end of the Cold War all the way up to present time in order to see if and how the relationship has moved culture. As was written above, the main objective this thesis has is to identify if there has been a change in culture in the Sweden-Russia relationship, the three degrees of internalisation belonging to each culture will then be used to explain this evolution.

3.5 Analytical Framework – The cultures of anarchy and degrees of internalisation in regards to Sweden and Russia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third Degree of Internalisation</th>
<th>Second Degree of Internalisation</th>
<th>First Degree of Internalisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russia as an ‘enemy’ is now a norm in society</td>
<td>Compliance to Russia due to perception of self interests</td>
<td>Compliance to the enemy (Russia) through intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting is ‘good’ and ‘right’</td>
<td>Benefits of complying to Russia outweighs costs of not doing it</td>
<td>- Enmity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of state identity</td>
<td>Sovereignty of Sweden/Russia is accepted due to perception of self interests</td>
<td>- Rivalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sovereignty has become a norm and is seen as fully legitimate</td>
<td>Sovereignty has not yet become a norm</td>
<td>- Friendship is seen as fully legitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friendship with Russia is only seen as a strategy to advance self-interests</td>
<td>- Collective security &amp; identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Sweden and Russia are forced to cooperate due to a common threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Forced to never attack each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Friendship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hobbesian Culture
- Enmity

Lockean Culture
- Rivalry

Kantian Culture
- Friendship
4. Specified Aim and Research Question

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the Sweden-Russia relationship from a Swedish perspective, and see how the attitude of Sweden has changed towards Russia in the post Cold-War era. Alexander Wendt’s Social theory of international relations together with the idea of external shocks influencing ideas, identities and norms, will be used in order to analyse in this time period.

More specifically, I want to find out if, and in that case in what way, the Swedish attitude has moved from one Wendtian culture to another since the end of the Cold War. I also want to identify to what degree of internalisation this has been done. The specified research questions are as followed:

1) What external shocks/events can be found throughout the post-Cold-War era?
2) In what way and/or direction have these events caused a shift in (Wendtian) culture?
5. Method and Research Design

A single-case study design will be used in this thesis. It allows for deep examination and thorough analysis of one specific case. This is crucial in the case of this thesis in order to find out how Sweden’s attitude towards Russia has changed. The data will be collected from the Swedish Riksdag’s official documents that are published for the public to read. The analysis will use a qualitative method in the form of an idea analysis. This will be used in order to find detailed meaning in the ideas presented by the Swedish Riksdag. The collected data will be analysed with the analytical framework based on the Social theory of International Relations in mind.

5.1 Single-Case Study

A single case study will be used in this thesis in order to find out Sweden’s change in attitude towards Russia. The single case that is studied is Sweden-Russia relationship. In a single case study, an intense and detailed analysis of a single case is done in order to find and identify a specific type of inquiry is made (Bryman, 2010). A single-case study is beneficial in the case of this thesis because in order to answer this specific reason question a very deep and thorough analysis of Swedish foreign policy and security interests needs to be done to find changes in ideas and attitudes of the Swedish Government.

This thesis uses a case study as they are particularly good at explaining and giving a detailed analysis of political phenomena, since it produces very rich textual descriptions (Halperin & Heath, 2012; Berg, 2007). It is important to keep in mind the weaknesses a single case study might bring. Even if it does allow for very thorough analyses of political phenomena, it can be difficult to draw generalisations from the findings. A case study investigates one case, which means applying the findings to other cases can be difficult. Case studies with similar hypothesis may end up with very different results depending on the theories, methods and design that are used. Adding more cases can therefore be beneficial to remove some of these problems, but the research design is then changed to a small-n comparison. (Halperin & Heath, 2012: 208). Despite these apparent limitations of a single case study, the internal validity, that the design and method is suitable to answer the research question, is high. The aim of this thesis is to look at a certain political phenomenon, and to explain the circumstances behind it. A single case study will allow me to do this.
5.2 Gathering Documents

The type of data that will be used and analysed in this thesis are mainly official documents collected from the Swedish Government (Riksdag). Most documents from the Swedish government are accessible for the public to read in order to increase the transparency of the work the Swedish Riksdag is doing. The only documents that are not for the public to read are documents that are concerned with certain sensitive areas or documents that could potentially have bad consequences if read by the wrong individuals (e.g. economy, security, crime etc.) (Riksdagen, 2015). These kinds of document will obviously not be available to me, and will thus be disregarded. There are a range of different types of documents available for me to choose from, such as motions, reports, records of proceedings, protocols, interpellations, and speeches. In this thesis, I will limit myself to protocols, as they will be able to give a clear idea of what the politicians in the Riksdag are actually saying and thinking. Some other types of documents may be used, such as newspaper articles, as long as they are relevant and important for this thesis. As will be made clear later on in the analysis, the Sweden-Russia’s relationship is frequently talked about in day-to-day media in Sweden. Using news articles as a source of data will allow for gathering information about very recent events and decisions that may not yet have been published by the Riksdag.

Like mentioned in the literature review, the Swedish-Russian relationship has had its ups and downs. Notable downs are the Georgian war and now the Ukraine crisis. Throughout, the relationship has been experienced Russian scepticism towards Swedish contact with NATO. NATO was created as a war alliance to, in part, discourage further expansion of the Soviet Union (NATO, 2015). Because of NATO’s history with the Soviet Union, Russia and NATO have been rivals. Due to Swedish contact with NATO has been met with scepticism by Russia, this place seems like a good place to start my analysis. It is also important to remember that at the end of the Cold War, Swedish and Russian relations were overall rather good. The time period that I will look into will start at the end of the Cold War in 1991, up until today, May 2016. By looking at this time period with the events that took place throughout, a Swedish attitude towards Russia can be identified and evaluated based on the analytical framework that was presented in the theory chapter.

It could potentially be difficult to find the relevant documents when gathering data since I am looking at public documents from the Riksdag. Even when limiting myself to protocols, a very large amount of data is still found. When gathering the data, most of it will probably not be
relevant for this study. The reliability of this study could potentially be damaged due to the sheer amount of data available. There is little reassurance that someone conducting the same study will choose the exact same data as I have, even though the results most likely would look similar. The opinion of politicians varies depending on what party they are on. Depending on what opinions you are focusing on the answer may potentially be different. In order to mitigate this risk, I have tried to include opinions from both the left, and the right wing parties. Another problem could be that there aren’t enough documents dating back to the end of the Cold War, depending on how much the Riksdag has published from that period in time. For this study, only documents that talk of Swedish foreign policy towards Russia or Ukraine are relevant. Documents about Ukraine are important to this study in order to see how Sweden has reacted to the Russian aggression towards Ukraine in more recent years.

5.3 Idea Analysis

This thesis will provide a qualitative analysis. It is the process of analysing texts and documents try to find a hidden meaning buried in the text. When reading a text one tries to find out meanings and motives in the texts that are not directly stated (Halperin & Heath, 2012: 319). This will be helpful in this thesis since it wants to find Sweden’s ideas about Russia. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, this thesis also wants to find out which culture of anarchy and degree of internalisation that the Swedish and Russian relationship has today, and how it has changed throughout the years. The data presented in the analysis is going to be matched and compared to the analytical framework presented in the theory chapter, which acts as the backbone of this entire thesis. Thus, the analysis presented will be deductive. The analysis is grounded in the social theory of international relations and this theory will then be applied onto a case, the Sweden-Russia relationship, in order to explain it (Halperin & Heath, 2012).

The data presented in the analysis will be classified based on the analytical framework presented previously. Relevant data from the Swedish Riksdag will be analysed and fit into the analytical framework, in order to get an understanding of how the relationship has changed since the end of the Cold War. The analysis will focus on the shocks/events in the Swedish-Russian relationship that potentially have caused shifts in either culture or degree. First, these events will be identified, followed by the way in which they have influenced the relationship. Each event will be dealt with systematically. Each event will be presented, followed by a detailed description of what the Swedish Riksdag has had to say about it. These ideas and opinions of each event will
then be put into the analytical framework in order to find out what anarchic culture and degree of internalisation they belong to.

In analysing the data from the chosen documents, an idea analysis will be used. This method allows me to, in a systematic fashion, study political ideas and statements meticulously, which is the main purpose of this thesis. One can use the idea analysis for three different purposes: to define and interpret political messages, consider durability and longevity of a political message, and to explain how political messages are created and what implications they may have (Bergström & Boréus, 2005). The aim of this thesis is to show Sweden’s political ideas towards Russia. Therefore, this thesis will limit itself to the first purpose of describing and interpreting political messages.
6. Analysis

The aim of this thesis is to describe how the Swedish state’s (the Swedish government) attitude towards Russia has changed during the post-Cold War era. This will be done with the help of Wendt’s three cultures of anarchy, and the constructivist IR idea of exogenous shocks shaping states’ norms, ideas and identities. From the gathered data from the Swedish Riksdag, a thorough analysis of its content will be done. The Swedish Riksdag’s opinions about the external shocks and the evolution of the Swedish-Russian relationship will be the focus of this analysis. In addition to the main shocks/events that have taken place throughout history, other important incidents and events may be mentioned, as long they are relevant and contribute to the analysis. The word ‘Sweden’ used in the analysis refers to the data collected from the Swedish Riksdag. When it says that ‘Sweden argued…’ for example, it refers to what the Swedish government argued. If other actors’ opinions are stated, it will say so in a clear way. When the word ‘relationship’ is used it refers to the relationship between Sweden and Russia.

6.1 External Shocks

The various events/shocks that have influenced the Swedish-Russian relationship will be dealt with in a chronological order. The analysis begins at the end of the Cold War, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The analysis will then continue on, looking at all the events that may have caused a change in attitude, until reaching the present time. Before describing what the Swedish Riksdag has to say about each event there will be a short description of what the event in question was actually about. Because this thesis is focusing on the Swedish Riksdag, the description of the external shocks/events are more so reflecting a Western perspective and standpoint of the events, rather than a Russian perspective. In order to give a more balanced view of these events, a short description of the existing Russian narratives will be included, if necessary, when describing each event.

6.1.1 The End of the Cold War

The Cold War started in 1947 and lasted all the way until 1991, when the Soviet Union was disbanded. During this time, the world was bipolar in nature, with the West (the United States) on one side, and the East (the Soviet Union) on the other side. The war was a constant power struggle between these two blocks, and both wanted to become world hegemons following World War 2. There was clear difference between the two blocks, with the West being associated with democracy and market economies, and the Soviet Union being associated with dictatorship,
communism and planned economies. Although both ‘superpowers’ supported and was involved in conflicts elsewhere (eg. the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Cuban Missile Crisis), no direct military conflict ever occurred between the US and the Soviet Union, giving it the name ‘the Cold War’ (Warner, 2011; Painter, 2002). The end of the Cold War started with the new Russian president Mikhail Gorbachev being elected in 1985. The Soviet Union started to pursue a friendlier relationship with the West, and realised that democratic values were needed to some degree in order to better the relationship. The Soviet Union began recognising the sovereignty of states in Eastern Europe and troops were being withdrawn from numerous conflicts around the world. The war came to its official ending on Christmas day 1991, when the Soviet Union was officially disbanded (Painter, 2002: 104-111).

A democratic Soviet Union is a condition for a stable peace in our close vicinity and in the world as a whole. We welcome president Gorbachev’s quick response to president Bush’s initiative to dismantle large parts of the tactical nuclear arsenal.¹ (Prot. 1991/92:12)

Already before the disbanding of the Soviet Union Sweden could be seen, in this quote, to have a positive view of what the future might look like for the Soviet Union. Sweden has always been a top advocator for human rights and other democratic values. Therefore, when Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union, Sweden was pleasantly surprised at his willingness to go towards democracy. Sweden saw this as the only acceptable way forward. Sweden welcomed Gorbachev’s political and economical reforms, which eventually would come to cause the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Following the dissolution, Sweden was quick to express the need to help the former Soviet members in their transition to become democratic states: “Sweden can and should contribute with substantial economic support to aid in their transition”² (Protocol 1991/92:70).

According to the Swedish Riksdag, a Russia that was no longer burdened by communism and imperialism had created new and better conditions and potential for developing a very fruitful relationship between Sweden and Russia (Prot. 1992/93: 60).

In 1993, a declaration was signed between the Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt and the Russian president Boris Yeltsin which dealt with many political matters and issues of trade - a field where Sweden and Russia is doing extensive work together. It allowed for easier trade with one another, as well as bringing up a much debated incident that happened during the Cold War where two

¹ Original Swedish Translation: Ett demokratiskt Sovjetunionen är en förutsättning för en stabil fred i vårt närområde och i världen i dess helhet. I detta sammanhang välkomnar vi president Gorbatjovs snabba gensvar på president Bushs initiativ att skröta större delen av arsenalen av taktiska kärnvapen.

² Sverige kan och bör lämna ett väsentligt bidrag till de nyligen befriade nationerna i Central- och Östeuropa i deras omvandlingsprocess.
Soviet submarines were spotted in Swedish waters at different occasions. The Soviet Union refused to acknowledge any incidents at all, and was under critique from Sweden. In this new declaration, President Yeltsin promised the Swedish government to get to the bottom of the problem and find the truth. In Carl Bildt’s own words: “we can now say that we have put down a foundation for good and prosperous connections with our democratic neighbour Russia” (Prot. 1992/93: 60). 3

By helping Russia to become more democratic the security threat to Sweden and to the rest of Europe would significantly decrease. In order for these potential changes in Russia to have a lasting difference, it has to be done together with the rest of Europe and the EU which is shown by the following:

The Soviet Union has been disbanded and the former member-states have been set free, with democracy, market economies, and friendly connections with the rest of the world as their goals. The new independent states in the East are on their way to becoming fully fledged members of the European cooperation. The revolution in the East has contributed to a substantial increase in Europe’s security. 4

And,

In order for a stable development to take place in our region, Russia needs to be integrated into the European cooperation to the fullest extent possible. This is an overarching goal in Sweden's connection to its neighbour and superpower.5 (Prot. 1992/93:67)

And,

With developing democracies around the Baltic Sea, the Swedish security policies should focus on peaceful integration and disarmament, so that war between states of Europe becomes just as unthinkable as war between the Nordic states. 6 (Prot.1991/92:30)

From these quotes, it is apparent that the dissolution of the Soviet Union was seen as a new starting point for the Sweden-Russia relationship. In helping Russia to become a democracy, the security in Europe and Sweden would increase. We can thus say that the relationship is somewhere among the second degrees of internalisation, since it has to do with Sweden’s national interest of security. In the second quote Sweden wants to further its relationships with its neighbours and other superpowers. This point to a positive development, and the culture of

3 Vi kan numera säga ha lagt grunden för goda och framåtblickande förbindelser med vårt demokratiska grannland Ryssland.
4 Sovjetunionen har upplöst och de republiker som däri ingick har frigjorts med demokrati, marknadsekonomi och fredliga förbindelser med omvärlden som sin målsättning. Det nya eller nyupprättade staterna i öster är på väg att bli fullvärda deltagare i det europeiska samarbetet. Revolutionen i öster innebär att det säkerhetspolitiska läget i Europa avsevärt förbättrats.
5 För en stabil utveckling i vår region är det nödvändigt att Ryssland i största möjliga utsträckning integreras i det europeiska samarbetet. Detta är också ett övergripande mål för Sveriges förbindelser med denna grann och stormakt.
6 Med framväxande demokratier runt Östersjön borde Sveriges säkerhetspolitiska huvudlinje vara fredlig integration och nedrustning, så att krig mellan stater i Europa blir lika otänkbart som det redan är mellan de nordiska länderna.
rivalry can thus be excluded. It could then be concluded that at this point in the relationship it is located in the Kantian culture of friendship.

Something that can be seen throughout the protocols from this time period is that although most opinions on Russia are positive, there are also a number of negative ones. An underlying fear of Russia going back to their old ways can be seen: “One should recognise and discuss the risks for potential set-backs in the development of Russia…” (Prot. 1991/92:52), “Despite all the positive things happening in former Soviet Union, people still feel anxious about the uncertainty the future has to bring” (Prot. 1991/92:70), and “… the difficulties and problems the last seven decades have left behind are that grave, that we cannot dismiss the risk of serious drawbacks and problems with the reform process” (Prot.1992/93: 60). Russia carries a long and dark history in many aspects, and anxiety is only to be expected from others - but as the politician Pierre Schori once argued: “Regardless of whether we are pessimists or optimists, one thing remains certain: however heavy and dull the day may seem in the East, it’s still better than the restraints of the past” (Prot. 1992/03: 67). This indicates a positive outlook on the relationship and its future, although the history between the two countries has been tense.

The end of the Cold War was important for the relationship between Sweden and Russia overall. It had been a cautious relationship previously, with sporadic incidents of territory breaching and espionage (Etzhold & Haukkula, 2011) during the Cold War. The end of the Cold War, however, presented some interesting opportunities. The dissolution of the Soviet Union led to a fresh start for Sweden and Russia. Sweden saw it as a responsibility of theirs to provide Russia with the help necessary to become a more democratic state. And this is something Russia accepted. The transition from a communist, authoritarian state to a democratic state with a market economy was never said to be an easy one, and this is something Sweden recognised. After the Cold War, trade connections between the two states increased rapidly. A strong Russian economy was needed alongside the political changes in order to make it work.

When analysing this data, it is apparent the relationship is not belonging to the Hobbesian culture of enmity. Russia is not seen to be an enemy of Sweden; neither is it seen to possibly become one
in the future. In the Lockean culture the concept of sovereignty and recognition of one’s territory is the main idea. The concept of sovereignty, however, is not really something that is discussed at all in the Swedish-Russian relationship. Both states recognise each other’s sovereignty and they know it to be true. It can then be agreed on that the Swedish-Russian relationship will be somewhere within the Kantian culture post-Cold War. Looking closer at the three degrees of internalisation it is clear the first degree can be disregarded. The first degree argues that states are friends because they are forced to because of a common threat. From the data presented no sign of any kind of collective threat can be seen. The threat that previously existed, the threat of a full-blown war between the US and the Soviet Union, no longer exists. Sweden has nothing to be threatened by, and neither does Russia. Left are the two last degrees of internalisation in the Kantian culture. The third degree argues that friendship has become a norm, and that collective security present. It would be doubtful, however, that either Russia or Sweden would come to the other’s rescue if one was to be attacked. The two countries do not have a particularly strong relationship dating back, and neither is the relationship particularly strong at this point in time either. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the relationship between Sweden and Russia is without a doubt becoming stronger, but it has not yet reached that point of friendship. That leaves the second degree of internalisation. This degree argues friendship is created and upheld as a strategy because it is suitable for a state’s current interests. The data states Sweden needed Russia to become more democratic since it would drastically reduce security risks for Sweden. Sweden supports and promotes democracy and human rights in Russia and a closer tie to the EU in order to lessen the risk of Russia turning against the West and ultimately Sweden itself.

6.1.2 The Chechnya War

Numerous conflicts took place after the Cold War, and there is one conflict in particular that was heavily criticized by Sweden – the Chechnya War. Chechnya is a located in North Caucasus, which is the southern-most region of Russia and therefore making it ethically Russian. When the Soviet Union was separated in 1991, Chechnya wanted to declare independence from Russia (Sakerhetspolitik, 2015). With all of what was going on with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Moscow’s leaders had to leave Chechnya for another day. Lawlessness spread throughout the region and raids, plundering and hostage-situations were common. In 1994, Moscow went in with military forces to recapture the area. The conflict became more violent than first anticipated and around 80 000 were killed, most of whom were civilians. Towns and cities were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people had been forced to flee their homes. Meanwhile, all of this was broadcasted for the world to see, which led to increased criticism towards Russia. In 1996 a
truce was made. After the fighting stopped, however, the war-ridden country became victim to increasing terror attacks and gangster mobs, which is still present today. Russia never lived up to their promise of helping to re-build the country (Sakwa, 2005). In Moscow, the Chechen war has been legitimised by arguing that Russian intervening was to fight the terrorism that existed in the country. This way of framing the war has been very successful among the Russian population, increasing the support for the war. The war has, however, also been critiqued by the Russians for having an unreasonably high price tag (Gerber & Mendelson, 2002).

Sweden have been vocal in their disliking towards Russia violating human rights in Russia. In the conflict, innocent civilians were getting caught in the middle of a war that was not their decision to begin with. Russia’s bad handling of the situation was met with disapproval. Whenever the Swedish Riksdag mentions the war in Chechnya, there is a clear opposition against Russia’s course of action. Violations against the country still continue today despite the truce.

In 1995, positive changes could be seen in Russia, which the Riksdag encouraged:

> It’s a rising democracy with a working freedom of speech. There truly is an open and ongoing debate in the country and in the media. There is criticism against the president, the regime and military establishment. … Russia is not doomed to fail. There are plenty good forces working towards democracy and modernisation.¹¹ (Prot. 1995/96:32)

This was, however, followed by:

> With this said, we have to observe the opposite forces. There are clear negative tendencies in the country. … The Chechnya operation was frightening in its brutality. What is even worse is that it might be the beginning of a new way of thinking, or rather, a relapse back into old thinking. The rhetoric’s against the Baltic countries and the discussion about the sphere of influence in [Russia’s] the near abroad is not only disturbing, but absolutely unacceptable. We cannot have an [international] order where major powers discuss their possibilities to affect their neighbours in an unacceptable way.¹² (Prot. 1995/96:32)

Good and positive changes in Russia can clearly still be seen, and that is something the Swedish government recognises. Something that has changed since the end of the Cold War is, however, that the Riksdag recognises that there are certain causes of concern that have arisen. With the Chechnya War in 1994, and the showcasing from Russia of what they were prepared to do to its

---


neighbouring states, the Swedish government feared that the history was repeating itself. There were risks of Russia relapsing into their old thinking which was something that had been criticized by the Swedish Riksdag.

The conflict in Chechnya created concern for the democratic development in Russia. The blatant oppression of human rights of the civilians in Chechnya was unacceptable and not at all in tune with what Russia should be doing in order to foster democratic relations and development. Statements like “The matter of fact is that human rights continue to be ignored in Chechnya”\textsuperscript{13} made in 2002 (Prot. 2001/02:68), and “… violations of humans rights with torture, disappearances and other forms of excessive violence can still be seen” \textsuperscript{14}(Prot. 07/08:120) in 2007 proves this point.

Human rights have not only been violated by Russia through their aggression towards Chechnya. In 1997 Russia adopted a new law which limited the citizens’ freedom of religion, which violates the Russian constitution. The Swedish Riksdag argued that it is unacceptable for Russia to breach their own constitution, as well as various partnerships and agreements Russia has with the EU to protect human rights. The EU says itself to be the protector of human rights in Europe, and Sweden urged them to take action against Russia. Sweden argued that no one, not even Russia, should be able to get away with violating human rights (Prot. 97/98:12). Setbacks for Russia in their democratic transition, such as these one, have not been completely surprising for Sweden. This can be seen in the statement:

> What is happening in Russia is crucial for the safety and cooperation of Europe. We can hope, and believe, that the democratic process will continue. This process will take a long time, and failure and setbacks will most likely occur. It is also entirely possible that the process completely comes to a halt, and an authoritarian regime comes to power. This is something we cannot forget\textsuperscript{15}.

In the first half of the 1990s, Sweden was mostly positive towards Russia and their transition towards democracy. With the Chechnya war coming into full force, the Swedish attitude started to change. Russia displaying their readiness to violate human rights caused alarms to go off in the Swedish Riksdag. Sweden further emphasised cooperation with the EU in order to signal to Europe that what happened in Chechnya was not accepted. Even though recent events and

\textsuperscript{13} Men det är ett faktum att mänskliga rättigheter fortsätter att ignoreras i Tjetjenien.

\textsuperscript{14} … Allvarliga kränkningar av mänskliga rättigheter med tortyr, försannanden och andra former av övervåld.

\textsuperscript{15} Det som händer i Ryssland har avgörande betydelse för säkerheten och samarbetet i hela Europa. Vi kan hopparas, och rent av tro, att den demokratiska utvecklingen kommer att fortsätta. Processen kommer sannolikt att ta lång tid och ske med avbrott och bakslag. Men det är också fullt möjligt att processen avstannar och en auktoritär regim kommer till makten. Detta kan vi inte bortse ifrån.
Russian behaviour had caused a slight strain on the relationship, the undertone of it was still positive. The Swedish Riksdag recognise the challenges that come with a transition from one way of ruling to another and it did not assume the transition to be completely smooth, which is important to recognise.

The Swedish-Russian relationship was on good terms at this point, even if certain negativity existed. Referring back to the analytical framework no major chance has occurred. There is still no talk about either enmity nor sovereignty, at least not between Sweden and Russia. Although not an aggressor towards Sweden, Russia has been portrayed as an aggressor towards its neighbour Chechnya. This could possibly indicate a slight move towards the Lockean culture of rivalry. Though these changes in Russian behaviour are seen as negative, a primarily friendly belief of Russia’s being able to shape up and fully commit to a democratic regime exists, even if a little help from others might be needed. It can be said that thus far that the relationship has experienced very positive developments but also some doubt and uncertainty. Although it might not be in the same degree of friendship as could be seen in at the end of the Cold War, the relationship has not yet reached the point where rivalry exists. The relationship still sits comfortably in the second degree of the Kantian culture, where they are friends due to self interests, since being friends with Russia still allows for greater security in both Europe and Sweden. Despite this fact, it can and should be argued that a tinge of negativity and doubt now affects the relationship, that could not be seen previously.

6.1.3 President Vladimir Putin & 9/11

In the year 2000, there was a turning point of sorts for the relationship. In this year, Vladimir Putin became president. Putin’s presidency was welcomed by Sweden and the EU due to his pro-western approach. Before Putin became president, at the end of the 90s, the country was ridden with economic and political problems:

Russia holds free elections for the parliament and presidency, but in reality democracy has not quite settled in. The democratic institutions are flawed. Severe problems also exist with corruption and controversial politicians being murdered [for being against the government]. … I haven’t heard anyone who believes in a positive development in Russia and that is optimistic right now. That is somewhat worrying.16 (Prot. 99/00: 40)

---

16 Ryssland håller fria val till bl.a. parlament och vad gäller presidentposten, men i praktiken har demokratin ännu inte satt sig fullt ut. Det finns brister i de demokratiska institutionerna. Det finns allvarliga problem med korruption och att kontroversiella politiker ibland t.o.m. mördas. … Jag har inte hört någon som tror på en positiv utveckling i Ryssland och som är optimistisk just nu. Det är ganska oroande.
Both Sweden and the EU responded to this with saying that strengthening the bond with Russia is the most urgent and important issue for the EU (and Sweden) over the next decade (Prot. 1999/2000:40). When Putin came to power in 2000 he made it clear that he wanted a closer relationship between the West, NATO and Russia. These attitudes from Russia were very welcomed in the West. Russia also had the ambition to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO). After this, the policies from both Sweden and the EU became increasingly focused on improving the help and connections that already existed. Sweden was strongly determined to further push the connections and contacts it already had with Russia, both when it came to political and economical development (Prot. 2001/2002: 68).

On September 11th 2001, New York was hit with terrorist attacks which claimed nearly 3000 lives. After these events, Putin further pushed the idea of closer ties between Russia and the West. A declaration signed by the president of the United States George Bush and Putin regarding a drastic nuclear disarmament emphasised this. In the same time period, Putin, Bush, and NATO met to decide on a way to make Russia have more influence and input in the work of NATO. Something positive thus managed to emerge in the wake of such tragic events (Prot. 2001/2002: 55; Prot. 2001/2002: 41). In 2006, further evidence of Sweden and the world being more positive towards Russia can be shown in the following quote: “We can establish that since the 11th of September 2001, the intentional critique against the Russian government has been reduced” (Prot. 2005/06: 73)

Moving forward a couple of years, the situation looked a bit different. The attitude was no longer the very positive attitude that could be seen in the years prior. The attitude towards Putin had come to look similar to the attitude that was directed at Yeltsin before he quit the presidency. Yet again we can see statements like “Earlier years’ enthusiasm over the development in Russia has been changed, and rightly so, to questioning where the country is headed under the rule of Putin” (Protocol 2003/2004: 67) and “The democratic development in Russia is going in the wrong direction. Human rights are still being violated on a daily basis in the world.” (Protocol 03/04: 67). Anxiety once again seeped into the relationship. The criticism of Russia had definitely

---

17 Vi kan konstatera att sedan den 11 september 2001 har den internationella kritiken mot den ryska regeringen dämpats
18 Tidigare års entusiasm över utvecklingen i Ryssland har dock förbytts i ett berättigat ifrågasättande av vart landet under Putin är på väg.
19 Demokratiumvecklingen i Ryssland går åt fel håll. Mänskliga rättigheter kränks fortfarande dagligen någonstans i världen.
lessened following the attacks of 9/11, but the slow return to old ways of thinking were reason enough for Sweden and the West to have a legitimate worry about Russia’s future.

With Russia getting a pro-western president it is only to be expected that the the anarchic nature or the degree of internalisation was to change. The relationship previously belonged at a comfortable second degree in the Kantian culture. With the positive changes Putin brought with him, one could argue that the the relationship might have even dabbled slightly in the third degree, where friendship becomes a norm and collective security is introduced. At that point in time friendship and positive relations with Russia seemed to be the consensus. A norm could be seen in the Swedish Riksdag about having a strong relationship with Russia, and it did not seem to have an expiration date.

Skipping ahead a couple of years and the consensus seems to have changed. Sweden and the EU have yet again been given reason for concern regarding Russia. Human rights are still being violated, and there does not seem to be any attempts from Russia to stop it the violations either. Anxiety about the future and where Putin might lead the country are also very noticeable. The relationship no longer dabbles into the third degree of the Kantian culture, but instead seems to have taken yet another step back, and instead stands in the first degree of the Kantian culture. The relationship has not turned into rivalry, which means the Lockean culture of rivalry is not an option. The relationship is still friendly, but the increasing doubt about Russia’s future has caused tension to rise. The first degree of Friendship argues that friendship is only created due to a common threat. Sweden wants to stay friends with Russia in order to reduce the risk of potentially being attacked by them in the future, if they were to revert back into their old days of being an authoritarian rule. In the case of this relationship, the threat may not be a common threat, but both states do have threats. In Russia’s case, not being friendly with Sweden could mean lost opportunities with the West. And as can be already seen in the case of Russian behaviour, they are not in need of further criticism.

6.1.4 The Georgian War

Georgia gained independence in 1991 when the Soviet Union was dissolved. Tension and conflicts were ongoing long before the actual war took place later in 2008, due to militias and separatists. The Georgian war in 2008 was caused due to these separatists wanting independence for the regions South Ossetia and Abkhaz. The war started on the 8th of August 2008, and lasted for five days. Battle took place between Georgian military and South Ossetian and Abkhaz military units. Similar to the war in Chechnya, the separatist forces were once again supported by
Russian military. The war has been a target of much criticism from the on-looking world. And after five days of intense fighting, with extensive human losses, a truce was made between Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili and French president Nicolas Sarkozy. President Sarkozy represented the EU in the negotiation (EU, 2009; Sakerhetspolitik, 2013). Though critiqued by the rest of the world, Russia thought differently about the war. The Georgian war was a way for Russia to establish that they are capable to act as a great power, and that they can advance geo-strategic interests through a quick victory over Georgia (Sajjadur Rahman, 2009).

The attitude towards Putin and Russia had worsened following the years of the 9/11 attacks. Russia was accused on multiple occasions of not respecting human rights, and the values of democracy. Newspapers and media were being censored, and Russian journalists said that the freedom of speech and press were becoming increasingly limited. In 2003, and 2006 the murder of the regime-critical journalist Anna Politkovskaya and poisoning of officer of the Russian secret service Aleksandr Litvinenko caused the Russian regime to be highly criticised by the on looking world. There also seemed to be little to no attempt at solving the murders (Prot. 2006/07: 14, 30). The violation of human rights in Russia was even confirmed by Ella Pamifilova, who sat as chairwoman in President Putin’s council for civil society and human rights. She said that “the values of human rights unfortunately do not have a sensible place in in the minds of our citizens or bureaucrats … People still don’t understand that their living standards have a direct connection to human rights.” (Prot. 2006/07:60). The same negative attitude that was directed at Russia during the Chechnya War could once again be seen. The praise that had been given to Putin when he first became president had declined drastically leading up to the Georgian War, and it certainly did not improve as a consequence of that war either. The renewed friendship between Sweden and Russia that was found around the time Putin was appointed President was once again becoming a relationship lined with doubt and discontent.

The worsening attitude the EU and the world had against Russia was mirrored by the Swedish Riksdag: “lately we have been given reason for increased worry towards Russia’s strategic politics. … Russian politics have the ambition to politically rule surrounding neighbours” (Prot. 2005/06: 73). According to the Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt, one could express certain

---

20 Olyckligtvis upptar sådana värden som mänskliga rättigheter inte någon anständig plats i sinnena hos våra medborgare eller byråkrater … folk förstår fortfarande inte att deras levnadsstandard har en direkt koppling till respekten för mänskliga rättigheter.
21 Men på senare tid har vi tyvärr fått anledning till ökad oro inför Rysslands strategiska politik. … Den ryska politiken har ambitionen att politiskt styra sina kringliggande grannar.
worries about Russia in terms of how they acted towards Georgia, and argued that: “The real
quality of a large nation’s politics can be measured in regards to how much respect they show
their smallest of neighbours, and it is obvious that Russia does not live up to the norms and rules
present between states” (Prot. 2007/08: 120). The Swedish Riksdag was clear in its condemning
of both the Chechnya and Georgia wars, and it placed critique on Putin’s way of ruling the
country.

\[\text{The ruling of the society has been strongly centralised during Putin’s time as president. … The regime
completely dominates [controls] the media … I believe that when it comes to foreign policy, Sweden’s
biggest challenge is Russia. It has been that way historically, and it clearly is today.}^{23}\ (\text{Prot. 07/08:
120})\]

And,

\[\text{We are clear in our criticism we direct towards the abuse of human rights in Chechnya and Georgia,
where the Swedish voice has been the loudest among the European choir [Europe/EU].}^{24}\ (\text{Prot.
07/08: 120})\]

Critique was directed towards Moscow for the lack of respect Russia showed to their
neighbouring regions and states. Moscow had difficulties realising that they no longer had these
states under their control, and they seemed to think that they had the right to do whatever they
wanted with the states surrounding them. If any of these expressed the wish to move towards a
membership with the EU or NATO, Russia thought it to be their right to intervene (Prot.
2009/10: 23). Simultaneously, the importance of the Swedish relationship with Russia, and wish
for Russian progress and their transition to democracy could still be seen. The Riksdag expressed
the importance of not forgetting the democrats, independent journalists and other people
fighting for democracy in Russia (Prot. 2009/10: 116). It argued that it will always continue to
criticise Russia for violations of people’s rights and freedoms, but also that a fruitful and practical
cooperation and relationship with Russia is always going to be strived towards. Russia is, after all,
too important of a neighbour to not have a good relationship with (Prot. 2009/10: 76). When it
came to the various frozen conflicts the Soviet Union and Russia had taken part in throughout
history, such as Chechnya and Georgia (which still to this day has not been solved) the EU had
split opinions on how to deal with them. Some member states were ready to give up on

\[\text{\textit{22 Den verkliga kvalitén i en stor nations politik kan oftast mätas i den respekt som man visar de minsta av sina
grannar, och på denna punkt är det uppenbart att Ryssland inte fullt ut lever upp till de normer och regler som gäller
i umgången mellan stater.}}\]

\[\text{\textit{23 Makten i samhället har under Putins regeringstid start centraliserats. … Regimen dominerar fullkomligt medierna.
… Jag tror att utrikespolitiskt stavas Sveriges stora utmaning stavas Ryssland. Så har det varit historiskt, och så är det
alldeles uppenbart idag.}}\]

\[\text{\textit{24 Vi är mycket tydliga i den kritik som vi riktar mot övergrepp mot till exempel mänskliga fri- och rättigheter i
Tjetjenien eller i Georgien där den svenska rösten har varit en av de allra tydligaste i den Europeiska kören.}}\]
fundamental positions and views that were needed for the future of European security. According to the Riksdag, Russia’s role in solving the conflicts was also being anything other than constructive. For this reason, Sweden had a necessary role to play in securing the collective security of Europe and the world. Sweden thus emphasised the need for an increased and closer cooperation with NATO, and the Partnership for Peace, which is a programme created by NATO to increase the cooperation and security between them and states in Europe (Yost, 2015; Prot. 2010/11:33).

Once again, a mixed attitude towards Russia can be seen from the Riksdag. They are condemning the Russian involvement and action in Georgia and in Chechnya. According to the world around them, Russia had done little to nothing about these conflicts which both turned into frozen conflicts as the years went by and no solution was reached. Sweden has throughout these events argued itself to be one of the most vocal states about condemning the Russian violations of human rights. Sweden has always advocated the importance of EU’s help in transitioning Russia to a democracy, but with members of the EU being unable to decide what to do, Sweden thought it to be their duty to step up their work in helping Russia. A theme that has been seen consistently with the Swedish Riksdag’s opinions about Russia is that no matter the criticism directed towards them, the Riksdag believes democracy to be the right path for Russia in their development. This belief is still present in the Riksdag to this day.

In the previous events that have been analysed, most opinions from the Riksdag has been positive in regards to Russia, and there has been an undoubted hope for the future. Doubt has always existed, but the general opinion is to see Russia in a positive light. When it comes to the Georgian War this seem to have changed. The situation is now reversed, and the Riksdag seem to have changed to having a more negative attitude towards Russia, with the odd positive opinion and view of Russia every once in a while. Turning to the analytical framework to evaluate the external shock of the Georgian War, it is evident that changes have occurred. What had earlier been a relationship based on friendship with a piece of rivalry has now become a relationship based less on friendship and more on rivalry. Defining Russia as an aggressor has now become more common, with it being the second instalment of Russian intervening that violates human rights. With Russia repeating the very condemned actions that took place in Chechnya, and the fact that the human rights in the Russia itself is being violated, it became increasingly obvious to the Swedish government that Russia may be on the way back to old habits and behaviours.
Russia was, as stated above, increasingly being referred to as an aggressor towards its neighbours, indicating that the Lockean culture of anarchy may be getting a tighter grip on the relationship. Russia is said to be doing little in order to correct their mistakes, and the cooperative approach Russia had towards the West at the beginning of the 21st century seem to be gone. To have a Russia that is less than cooperative is highly worrying, as it would compromise the security a democratic and cooperative Russia would create. The change in Russia’s behaviour, and the apparent nonchalance for human rights, could potentially lead to a new threat towards the security of the EU and Sweden. As argued by the Riksdag ‘It’s about their freedom, but it is also about our own peace’25” (Prot. 2010/11:60) If Russia was to continue their behaviour in the same manner, corrective action would eventually have to be taken against Russia by the EU and Sweden, in order to force them into making a change. These changes have not yet fully become the reality and it would therefore be wrong to say that the relationship between Sweden and Russia has become one entirely based rivalry. It could, however, be argued that the relationship is moving in that direction, even if Sweden still holds out hope that Russia will make a drastic change in the way they behave.

6.1.5 Russian Involvement in Syria & re-electing Vladimir Putin

In early 2011, a series of demonstrations, anti-government protests and rebellions spread across the Middle East, referred to as the Arab Spring. People no longer wanted aging dictators, and a government filled with flaws and corruption. After demonstrations, Syria plunged into a civil war, where the population wanted the dictator Assad gone. Russia, however, decided to act as a diplomatic shield for the regime of the Syrian dictator Assad (Allison, 2013). With their involvement in Syria, Russia have positioned themselves as a key player in combating terrorism and extremists. With this being a common goal among the West, Russia’s hope is for the West to lift their sanctions they have against Russia in regards to the Ukraine crisis in 2014. The Russian involvement can also be seen as Moscow showing off their military capabilities and that they do not hesitate to use force to advance their interests (Tabachnik, 2016).

The Russian support to the regime was criticised by the Riksdag, and can be seen in the following quotes:

Despite the situation in Syria being just as terrible … Russia and China are stopping the international community to intervene through their veto votes. The responsibility for what is happening in parts of Syria … can be put not only on the Syrian regime, but also on Russia and China. This is very

---

25 Det handlar om deras frihet, men det handlar också om vår egen fred.
unfortunate. Sweden is acting, and must act even stronger by intensifying its efforts in increasing the pressure on Russia and China to accept UN intervention.²⁶ (Prot. 2011/12:70)

And,

Pressure needs to be put on Russia by the international community, so that they back down from their unlimited support for the regime. As long as Russia and China are on the regime’s side the killing will continue. The responsibility is on us to stop this²⁷ (Prot. 2013/14:40)

Here we can see that Sweden still relies heavily on the EU and UN in helping to solve conflicts around the world. Russia’s flagrant disregard for the cooperation of the international community therefore caused Sweden to have an even more negative attitude towards Russia. Once again Sweden argues that it is their job to put pressure on Russia, not only for ignoring the international community, but also by continuing their violation of human rights. By supporting the Assad regime, Russia indirectly contributes to further suffering of innocent civilians in Syria. The situation then becomes even more worrying since the US supports the opposition in Syria. The Riksdag asked itself the question of “How are we supposed to make Russia stop their weapon deliveries to the regime if the US delivers weapons to the opposition at the same time?²⁸” (Prot. 2012/13:123). If Sweden was to put pressure on Russia for exporting weapons to Syria, then pressure would have to be put on the US too. Sweden has always had the goal of helping Russia to become a democratic regime, and to create closer relationships between Russia and the EU and UN. This has not only been a goal, but Sweden has seen itself to be one of the main players in making that happen.

The expressed support for the Assad regime increased further when Vladimir Putin was re-elected as Russia’s new president in 2012. When Putin’s earlier presidency ended in 2008, Dmitry Medvedev became his successor. Medvedev had driven a more liberal foreign and domestic policy than Putin had, and had promised reforms to modernise the country. It can be argued whether or not he actually managed to implement them (Säkerhetspolitik, 2012). Putin’s return as President brought with it an even firmer foreign policy than before. There was an increased support for the Syrian regime, and an increase in criticism towards how the EU and UN had handled the intervention in Libya (Allison, 2013). Due to this development in Russian policy,

²⁶ Trots att situationen i Syrien är lika fruktansvärd … blockerar Ryssland och Kina genom sina veton världssamfundet från att ingripa. Ansvaret för vad som nu utspelar sig i delar av Syrien… bär utöver av den syriska regimen nu även av Ryssland och Kina. Det är mycket beklagligt. Sverige agerar, och måste agera än starkare, genom att intensifiera sina ansträngningar för att öka pressen på Ryssland och Kina att godta att FN agerar.
²⁷ Ryssland måste pressas hårt av det internationella samfundet så att de backar från sitt obegränsade stöd till regimen. Så länge Ryssland och Kina står på regimens sida kommer dödandet att försätta. Ansvaret ligger på oss alla att hindra detta.
²⁸ Hur ska vi kunna förmå Ryssland att upphöra med sina vapenleveranser till regimen om USA samtidigt levererar vapen till oppositionen?
Sweden became increasingly cautious. There was “reason to be concerned about the development in Russia, not to mention the Russian citizens\(^{29}\)”, and Russia showed “major flaws when it comes to the rule of law, fighting corruption, and the rebuilding of a strong civil society\(^{30}\)”. The election in 2012 was also criticised by both people within Russia, and onlookers from around the world. People (mostly the educated middle-class) were getting tired of constantly reusing Putin in their political elite whether it be as president or as prime minister, which he had been both before he became president in 2000, and between 2008-2012 when Medvedev was president (Prot. 2011/12:70). Around the same time as the election, Sweden argued that “Politically, Russia is going entirely in the wrong direction\(^{31}\)”, which was shown when election fraud was uncovered following the election. Corruption was widespread and the supposedly free press and media was being restricted, none of which helped towards democratising Russia (Prot. 2011/12:49).

Around the same time as Putin was re-elected, the Swedish Riksdag started to bring up the issue of Sweden’s security in regards to Russia – a matter that had not been seriously discussed since the Cold War. Evidence of Russia returning to an undemocratic and more authoritarian rule under Putin caused alarm bells to go off in the Swedish Riksdag. Arguments stating the following became increasingly common om the Riksdag: “After 200 years free from any wars with Russia, including two world wars in Europe, we need to once again ask ourselves the question if Russia will become a real threat to Sweden\(^{32}\)” (Prot. 2011/12:49), and “We do know from experience with the Georgian Crisis … We know that there is a change in the pattern of training missions carried out by Russia in the Baltic Sea. We need to have prepared for the future.\(^{33}\)” (Prot. 2011/12:49). These quotes are only talking about Russia as an aggressor, and it being Sweden’s potential aggressor at that. This is a clear indication of a shift towards the Lockean culture of anarchy. Since the Syrian civil war and Russia’s involvement the Swedish debate has been getting progressively more negative and the trust that was once very obvious in the debate about Russia’s future has now been swapped for doubt. The mostly positive view of Russia has now subdued drastically, and the relationship has taken a turn for the worse. One positive aspect the Riksdag is still holding on to is the one about trade and the economic relationship Sweden has with Russia.

\(^{29}\) Anledning att vara bekymrad över utvecklingen i Ryssland, inte minst för de ryska medborgarnas del
\(^{30}\) Betydande brister vad gäller rättsstat, bekämpning av korruption och främjandet av uppbyggnaden av ett starkt civilt samhälle.
\(^{31}\) Politiskt går Ryssland helt fel väg.
\(^{32}\) Efter över 200 år utan krig med Ryssland, inbegripet två världskrig i Europa, reses åter frågan om hur Ryssland kan bli ett reellt hot mot Sverige
\(^{33}\) Vi har ändå en erfarenhet från Georgienkrisen. … Vi vet att det finns ändrade övningsmönster från Ryssland i Östersjön. Kort sagt måste vi ha en beredskap för framtiden.
The trade between Sweden and Russia is important for both countries, and although this is the case, the political aspect of the relationship continues to taint the Swedish attitude:

We have close economic ties and we are pleased by Russia's membership in WTO last year. At the same time we can see an increased worry about the decreasing respect for human rights, the declining civil society and that the elite seems to prioritise modernisation of the military rather than the Russian society\(^{34}\) (Prot. 2012/13: 64).

It is difficult to have an economic relationship if the political side of the relationship does not work. In the case of Sweden and Russia, the relationship has not by any means reached the bottom. At this point in time the relationship is experiencing a shift in attitude. It is moving from a very friendly relationship being located in the second degree of the Kantian culture, to a relationship based on rivalry. This culture is based on the idea of sovereignty, however the concept of sovereignty is not an issue in terms of the relationship between Sweden and Russia. It can thus be argued that the relationship, at this point in time, is situated in the third degree of the Lockean culture of rivalry. This degree indicates that the concept of sovereignty of the Other is seen as the norm, something that just is supposed to be that way. Sweden and Russia have no issues regarding their own sovereignty, and it seems unlikely that it would happen any time soon either. Why I am arguing that the relationship is located in the Lockean culture and not the Kantian culture is because of the frequent number of times that Russia is being referred to as an aggressor by Sweden. Russia does not recognise others’ sovereignty, and violates human rights. Russia is becoming increasingly bold in their behaviour, and little is done in order to hide it: “No one denies the fact that Russia and Putin are rearming their militaries. The question is, though, how to interpret Putin’s actions. It is obvious that Russia wants back into the heart of politics. Russia is using their military rearmament as a way to achieve this\(^{35}\)” (Prot. 2012/13: 38).

In the case of Sweden and Russia, being a rival does not necessarily mean that two states despite or hate each other as long as violence is limited, it may simply mean that tension exists, and that there is a difference in how the two think and behave. Russia is moving away from Sweden and the Swedish way of thinking and behaving, rather than coming closer. Sweden had tried to help

---

\(^{34}\) Vi har täta ekonomiska förbindelser och gläder oss åt att Ryssland i fjol blev medlem i världshandelsorganisationen WTO. Men samtidigt ser vi med stigande oro på att respekten för de mänskliga rättigheterna försvagas, att utrymmet för det civila samhället krymper och att ledningen tycks prioritera modernisering av de väpnade styrkorna framför moderniseringen av det ryska samhället.

Russia modernise and democratise, and was optimistic in doing so, but the return to old ways of thinking by Russia has caused Sweden to wonder if it is possible or possibly just wishful thinking.

6.1.6 The Ukraine Crisis

Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula in Ukraine on the 18th of March 2014. By the on-looking world, the annexing of Crimea is seen as illegal, but according to Russia it is nothing other than protecting Russian minorities and taking back what was once theirs. Russia occupying Crimea is simply seen as a rightful reunification (Deliagin, 2015).

Ukraine was on their way towards joining the EU and NATO. Ukraine’s pro-Russian President Victor Yanukovich turned away the EU and instead turned to Russia. This sparked protests which led president Yanukovich to flee the country. During the same time, Russian minorities in Crimea wanted independence. Russia deployed Russian special forces in Crimea in order to support these local militias. Together they seized administrative buildings and government institutions in Crimea and the port of Sevastopol. The successful retaking of these buildings led to a debated referendum in Crimea where they voted for independence (Freedman, 2014; Bebler 2015). Ukrainian governmental forces have tried recapturing the area but to varying degrees of success. Russian forces are still present in Crimea, and there is no actual solution to the conflict as of yet (Bebler, 2015; Freedman, 2014; Freedman, 2015).

The Riksdag believed the situation in Crimea to be extremely serious, and much like the Georgian War, Sweden condemned Russia’s actions: “We will never recognise or accept that parts of Ukraine’s territory has been taken through military aggression”36 (Prot. 2013/14:84).

Quotes such as this one can be seen frequently throughout the data, as Sweden is clear to make a point of how Russia it is behaving.

Once again, Russia is willing to intervene in their neighbouring states. It created heated debates and increased worry among the members of parliament: “To be willing to use violence to change the borders of Europe is very serious. I have been clear about this: this must have consequences for us … There is a worry among us when we look at the development in Russia and in Ukraine, because we are not prepared for the future”37 (Prot. 2013/14:87), and “What Russia has done is

---

36 Vi kommer aldrig att erkänna eller acceptera att delar av dess territorium rycks bort genom en akt av militär aggression.
unacceptable, and it will bring consequences for the defence and security not only in Europe, but of course also in Sweden”\(^{38}\)(Prot. 2013/14: 87). Russian aggression has in recent years been seen as a possible and legitimate threat to Sweden. The question of joining NATO has since become important to Sweden. A NATO membership would give Sweden more influence in deciding NATO action. If Russia was to start a conflict, Sweden would handle it better with NATO backing them (Wolff, 2015; Prot. 2014/15: 50; Prot. 2014/15: 116). In 2016, Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov argued that “if Sweden joins NATO Russia will have to take necessary measures” (DN, 2016). This way of thinking has been seen in recent years from Russia, and is one of the few reasons Sweden has not yet committed to a membership. Lavrov’s statement if one of the first ones where Russia is referred to as an aggressor towards Sweden. This is a clear indicator that the Swedish attitude and relationship has become one based on rivalry. In earlier years, the possible threat of Russia had always been mentioned but not to any serious degree. It is during the Ukraine crisis that the Russian threat for the first time is looked upon as legitimate.

Due to the Ukraine crisis, the Riksdag made three strategic observations: Firstly, Russia is prepared to use military violence towards its neighbours much easier. Secondly, through decisions made by Russia, an increased uncertainty about Russian future and current behaviour had been created. And thirdly, the Ukraine crisis clearly showed the need for an even stronger cooperation within the EU. Only a strong and united Europe would be able to handle a crisis and challenge of this level (Prot. 2013/14:84).

To show support for Ukraine, the EU, UN and Sweden all contributed with economic aid and support. To further denounce Russia’s actions, heavy sanctions have also been imposed on trade with Russia (Prot. 2013/14:84). These sanctions include for example weapon embargoes, ban on imports, exports and investments to Crime (Regeringen, 2015). A result of the sanctions can be seen in the following statement: “Russia is currently under a strong economic pressure. We see a Russia that is moving away from Europe in order to create partnerships as a consequence of the imposed sanctions”\(^{39}\) (Prot. 2014/15:116). A Russia moving away from the EU and Sweden reflects an unwillingness from Russia to solve the existing problems. Russian foreign minister Lavrov also spoke on the Ukraine crisis, where he argued that Russia intervened due to “… Nationalistic radicals that came to power and threatened to destroy Russians and Russian-

\(^{38}\) Det Ryssland har gjort är oacceptabelt, och det kommer att ge konsekvenser för försvars- och säkerhetspolitisk utveckling inte bara i Europa utan självklart även i Sverige.

\(^{39}\) Ryssland är nu under stark ekonomisk press. Vi ser ett Ryssland som mer och mer söker samarbeten i andra riktningar än mot Europa som en följd av sanktionerna som införts.
speakers in Ukraine, starting with Crimea” (DN, 2016). In addition to Russia moving away from
the EU, the differences in how the Ukraine crisis is perceived by Russia and Sweden also poses a
problem in solving the conflict, as Russia refuses to recognise that they have done anything
wrong in the first place. The Riksdag has stated that: “Russia’s warfare in Ukraine is still ongoing.
Yes, the EU’s surrounding area is everything but peaceful. It is everything but stable.”40(Prot.
2015/16:65). This statement does not reflect a positive outlook on the future. It does, however,
further establish Russia’s role as an aggressor towards the EU and Sweden.

In March 2016, two years after the illegal annexation, the Swedish Riksdag published an article
condemning Russia for their actions against Crimea, and the continued violation of human rights.
They argued that Ukraine must be supported at all costs, and that the on-looking world must
continue to put pressure on Russia:

But we should remain vigilant. Together with other countries that have followed suit, such as Norway,
Iceland, the USA, Canada, Australia, etc. we must constantly, and in no uncertain terms, restate our
unwavering commitment to the key principles of international law and the European security order.
Letting Russia’s actions pass unchecked would be a recipe for more instability and less regard for
international law as future aggressors would no longer be deterred by the cost of such behavior.
(Regeringen, 2016)

From the analysed data in the last part of this analysis, the relationship between Sweden and
Russia today can be seen to be based on rivalry. When one part of a relationship can be referred
to as an aggressor towards the other, the relationship has moved into the culture of rivalry. The
Swedish-Russian relationship is therefore, according to the analytical framework, a relationship
based on the Lockean culture. It can be debatable in which degree of internalisation the
relationship belongs to, although I would argue that it belongs either to the first or the second
degree. Sweden is definitely forced to some degree by Russia to act in certain ways, like the issue
of NATO for example. Unless Russia had threatened to act if Sweden joins the organisation,
Sweden potentially would have done it sooner, seeing as the potential threat of Russia had been
around for a while. The relationship could also fit into the second degree of internalisation as it is
in Sweden’s best interest not to anger Russia. It would also be in Russia’s best interests not to
anger Sweden, as that potentially could cause the EU and UN to take action. From what has been
seen in this analysis, Russia certainly do not need more reasons for the international community
to condemn their actions.

---

40 Rysslands krigsföring i Ukraina pågår alltjämt. Ja, EU:s närområde är allt annat än fredligt. Det är allt annat än
stabil.
7. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyse how the Swedish attitude towards Russia had changed since the end of the Cold War, with the help of Alexander Wendt’s social theory of IR, and the constructivist idea of external shocks influencing states’ behaviour. The research question posed were: (1) What external shocks/events can be found throughout the post-Cold-War era? And (2) In what way and/or direction have these events caused a shift in culture?

The data analysed in the sixth chapter were mainly from the Swedish Riksdag’s. It included mostly meeting protocols, in order to get the most accurate picture of the Swedish attitude towards Russia as possible. The external shocks that appear to have made the most impact on the Swedish attitude include the following six: the end of the Cold War, the Chechnya War, the Georgian War, Vladimir Putin becoming president in 2000 followed by the the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Russian involvement in Syria and lastly, the Ukraine Crisis. The second research question is arguably the most important one for this thesis. Through the analysis we can see that the attitude towards Russia has, indeed, experienced a change in culture since the end of the Cold War. The relationship between Sweden and Russia has moved from the Kantian culture of friendship, to the Lockean culture of rivalry. The end of the Cold War and the appointment of Vladimir Putin in 2000 alongside the 9/11 attacks have all contributed to a friendlier and more positive relationship, that was located in the Kantian culture. The Chechen, Georgian, Syrian and Ukrainian conflicts, however, instead contributed to an attitude based in rivalry. There has always been an underlying fear in Sweden of Russia returning to their old way of thinking, that could be seen during the Soviet era. The most serious relapse back to these old ways can be seen most recently in the Syrian conflict and the illegal annexation of Crimea.

Prior literature on the Swedish-Russian relationship is limited. The existing literature mostly focuses on the historical aspect of the relationship, but few go to any notable depth as to why the relationship has developed the way it has. The relationship is mentioned more frequently when it comes to strategy and security reports from for example the Swedish Government and NATO especially in relation to the most recent event of the Ukraine crisis. This thesis had a very large gap to fill, and it did not have much to go on from the beginning. Finding out how the attitude of the Swedish government has changed towards Russia in the Cold War era has been a start of further understanding the relationship.
By using the Social theory of IR, this research has shown that looking at ideas and norms is important in describing state behaviour. The events presented in this thesis have previously been described by state interests. This thesis argues that that is not enough in explaining why states behave the way they do. In order to get a full understanding of why states behave the way they do, one needs to look at how that specific state might have been influenced by historic events that potentially could influence their way of thinking and behaving. This research also shows that it is problematic to expect states to change their cultures and norms, since these are not easily forgotten. This can be seen by the difficult transition Russia has had in trying to become a democratic state. It matters little that other parts of the world want them to. What matters to Russia is their history, and their way of viewing the world, which is clearly different from that of Sweden. Sweden, simultaneously, has a difficult time accepting the actions of Russia, since human rights and democracy are deeply ingrained in the culture and norms of Sweden.

Alexander Wendt’s theory about culture, and the idea about external shocks have undoubtedly helped me to arrive at a very interesting conclusions. I do, however, believe that it is important to mention the limitations of these. By using external shocks, I have concluded that certain events play a major role in how states behave towards one another. But the events that have taken place between Sweden and Russia are not the only factor influencing the relationship. Other things, such as actual cultural differences in Sweden and Russia’s societies may also be possible factors influencing the relationship and contributing to the increased animosity between Russia and Sweden. Sweden and Russia are two countries believing in fundamentally different values which shape their societies. Sweden, for example, highly values gender equality, where men and women have the same rights and cultural barriers and values have been removed allowing the two sexes to do the same things. In Russia, however, the “traditional” family values still have a tight grip on the society. These are the expectations that the woman is to care for the family, and the man earns the living. Another cultural value that differs vastly between the two countries is that of religion, and the importance of it. Sweden is one of the most secularised countries in the world, where the church’s power in society has significantly decreased. A different reality can be seen in Russia. Under the rule of Vladimir Putin, Russia has experienced a dramatic Orthodox Christian revival, and religion has become increasingly more important, both in domestic and foreign policy.

The historic and current events taking place between Sweden and Russia have contributed to a strained relationship, as we can see from the analysis of this thesis. Adding to this, fundamental
differences in cultural values, such as those mentioned above, more divides are created between the two countries that could potentially be difficult to overcome – from both sides.

To conclude this thesis: in order to further the research on this topic, a similar study could be conducted looking at the Russian perspective of the relationship instead, and compare to see if they have experienced a similar change in culture. One could also look at different time periods, to see if events earlier on in the relationship have played important roles in today's relationship. Different from this thesis, but similar in the way it is conducted, research could be done on other relationships and events in international politics, such as the US war in Iraq and the events of the Arab Spring. In both of these cases, states have been forced to adopt the idea of democracy, and to make it into a norm, to varying degrees of success. It would be interesting to see how much these states' history play a part in deciding how well states adapt to new ideas and behaviour.
Reference List


Doeser, Fredrik (2010) ”Sovjetunionens upplösning och utrikespolitisk förändring i Sverige” Nordisk Østforum 24(2): 149-166


Katz, Mark N. (2014) ”The international relations of the Arab Spring” *Middle Eastern Policy* 21(2): 76-84.


- 1991/92:70 Onsdagen den 26 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 1992/93:60 Torsdagen den 11 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 1999/00:40 Måndagen den 6 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2001/02:41 Onsdagen den 5 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2001/02:55 Tisdagen den 22 januari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2001/02:68 Onsdagen den 13 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2005/06:73 Onsdagen den 15 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2006/07:14 Tisdagen den 24 oktober Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2006/07:30 Torsdagen den 30 november Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2006/07:60 Onsdagen den 14 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2007/08:123 Torsdagen den 5 juni Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2009/10:23 Onsdagen den 4 november Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2009/10:76 Onsdagen den 17 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2010/11:33 Måndagen den 13 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2010/11:60 Onsdagen den 16 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2011/12:49 Torsdagen den 15 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2011/12:70 Onsdagen den 15 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2012/13:38 Torsdagen den 6 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2012/13:64 Onsdagen den 13 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2012/13:123 Fredagen den 14 juni Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2013/14:40 Torsdagen den 5 december Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2013/14:84 Fredagen den 14 mars Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2013/14:87 Torsdagen den 20 mars Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2014/15:20 Onsdagen den 12 november Stockholm: Riksdagen
- 2015/16:65 Onsdagen den 10 februari Stockholm: Riksdagen


Schmidt-Felzmann, Anke (2016): ”The breakdown of the EU’s strategic partnership with Russia: from strategic patience towards a strategic failure”, Cambridge Review of International Affairs


