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Introduction

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Abstract: *As a major strategic arena for arms race in the Cold War, the North Atlantic controlled the connection between North America and Europe. Since then there has been a significant shift in the security architecture of the North Atlantic, as different stages and special features of its security indicate. The North Atlantic continues to be an area of international strategic and geopolitical significance regionally and globally because of its access to the Arctic Ocean and its potential sea routes. More interesting, the region is characterized by former major powers, e.g., Denmark, middle powers such as Britain, and the super powers, Russia and the USA, with their legacies and current interests. Furthermore, there are strong currents of devolution and independence, the results of which being creation of a new small state, Iceland, and a micro-protostate that is self-governing, Greenland.*

Keywords: devolution; micro-state; the North Atlantic; security; small state; sovereignty

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The North Atlantic – here defined as the sea space and its rim-land between the west coast of Norway, Scotland, the East Coast of USA (New England), and that of Canada up to Greenland in the north – has been, and continues, to be an area of international strategic and geopolitical significance. The sea space controls the connection between North America and Europe, which made it a major strategic “maritime theater” and arena for arms race during World War II, and particularly for the Cold War between the two superpowers (the USA and the Soviet Union). Together with the Barents Sea, this sea space also includes an access to the Arctic Ocean, which has just been “discovered” as a (new) ocean, i.e., without (multi-year) sea ice (e.g., Heininen, 2013, p. 94).

In the 1980s, in addition to the arms race, between the USA/NATO and the Soviet Union, the deteriorating state of the marine environment of the Northern seas, caused by long-range (water) pollution (e.g., DDT, heavy metals, POPs) as well as regional and local pollutants (e.g., dumped radioactive wastes and accidents of nuclear submarines) became a growing concern among the people. This was followed by the environmental awakening, as some sort of paradiplomacy by the people and environmental movements, which became so influential that it pushed the governments of the Arctic states to start international cooperation for Arctic environmental protection and establish the Arctic Council (AC) in 1990s. In early 21st century, the North Atlantic and the Barents Sea were transferred into a transit area for energy shipments from North-West Russia via the North Cape to Western Europe and North America. In the near future, these Northern seas together with the Arctic Ocean will be a potential region for trans-Arctic shipping between the North Pacific economic power houses of China, Japan, South Korea, the centers of the world economy of Western Europe and the Atlantic coast of the North America.

This, and particularly changes in the North Atlantic security architecture as well as Arctic geopolitics, can be defined by different stages of security due to the changes in problem definition of security discourses and premises, and by special features indicating main reasons for these changes (see Heininen, 2013, pp. 100–106): The different stages are (1) first, “militarization” by World War II, which was characterized by hot warfare and an arms race and consequently; (2) the second stage, “military theater,” which covers most of the Cold War period, and this includes political and military competition and arms race between the two superpowers and military blocs; (3) third, due to long-range

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pollution and the environmental awakening there was a transition period meaning a significant change in the geopolitics of the region and a shift in the traditional security architecture of the Arctic and changes in its premises meaning less military tension and more environmental cooperation; and (4) finally, in the 2010s the stage could be described something like “state sovereignty vs globalization.” Correspondingly, special security features are keenly related to these stages, for example, implementation of the technology models of (classical) geopolitics is one of the primary causes of the militarization of the region. Behind the environmental awakening of the people were severe nuclear accidents in the 1980s which resulted in nuclear safety emerging as a new kind of environmental risk, for Iceland and particularly for fisheries. It is part of a keen interrelationship between the environment and the military, since most of the radioactivity is caused by the military. Climate change with its local and regional impacts, as well as global implications, can be defined as a new security feature in the entire North.

The North Atlantic is also characterized by small states, and even micro-states, with penetration by super powers, and middle powers with colonial and imperial legacies. These entities share a historical legacy of being overseas dependencies of the Kingdom of Norway in the Viking and Middle Ages and subsequently the Kingdom of Denmark. There have been strong processes of penetration of the region by stronger outside powers. However, there are also strong currents of devolution and independence which created one sovereign small state, Iceland, and will in all likelihood create two even smaller micro-states, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, as Bertelsen describes in his chapter. In view of the weakness of the historical, current, and future sovereign actors in the area, and the geopolitical and strategic interests of stronger outside powers, there has always been, is, and will be strong penetration by these outside powers. This penetration has, however, varied greatly according to the state of the international system, and in the recent years have been a low point in this interest.

The processes of the growing sovereignty and responsibility of small and micro-states have influenced the North Atlantic area with the growing responsibility of Iceland and the growing independence of Greenland, as well as the Faroe Islands, and the interaction with outside powers. Iceland has skillfully managed its foreign and security policy with very limited absolute capabilities since sovereignty in 1918. From July 1941 and during the Cold War this was done through partnership

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with USA having the US air base at Keflavik, Iceland, as the linchpin. However, in the 1970s and 1980s there were special incidents, the Cod Wars between Britain and Iceland, and in the 2010s there was the Ice Shave episode due to the economic crisis in Iceland. The withdrawal of the US troops from the airbase of Keflavik in September 2006 pushed Icelandic capabilities to their limits, which was solved by the assistance in air patrolling of other NATO member states, particularly Denmark and Norway. All this has greatly changed the security environment of Iceland and meant growing responsibilities and deeper defense cooperation, as Petursson discusses in his chapter.

The Faroe Islands and Greenland have a self-governing status and are developing toward greater independence and responsibilities within the Kingdom of Denmark with extremely limited absolute capabilities. The Kingdom's Strategy for the Arctic 2011–20 clearly recognizes this, i.e., “an equal partnership between the three parts of the Danish Realm” and states “A peaceful, secure and safe Arctic, with self-sustaining growth and development” as the main aim (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, pp. 10–11). It will be a major challenge for these micro-proto-states to take on more security responsibilities and will require well-designed partnerships with surrounding states with much greater capabilities. One way to respond to this challenge is to have “paradiplomacy” and via that develop new kinds of (external) relations, as Greenland is already doing. There are, however, several open questions on how to proceed, as Ackrén asks in her chapter.

Denmark will be faced with greater constitutional and political complexity and tension in the Kingdom of Denmark, and Denmark will have to manage a process of devolving increasing power and responsibility to the Faroe Islands and Greenland (see Bertelsen, this volume). The Kingdom of Denmark has great constitutional difficulties with (con-)federative decision-making between different actors while there will continue to be extreme imbalances of capabilities. Denmark is destined to withdraw from the North Atlantic in the long term, but the process of withdrawal will be a major test to Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and bordering partners. Correspondingly, Norway will in all likelihood grow in importance in the North Atlantic, and it will for a very long time be the Nordic middle power in the region. Norway's strategic position and national security, as well as economy, are completely tied up with the sea space of the Barents Sea and the North Atlantic and will remain so in the future, as offshore hydrocarbon extraction is moving toward the High North.

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Britain, or UK, and Canada are middle powers on the margins of the area, which have and will, to a greater extent, partner with the small states being discussed here. Britain has historically been the dominant sea power in the North Atlantic until bipolarity of the Cold War. It still has keen strategic interests in the region, particularly in the North Atlantic, but also has policy interests toward the Arctic region, as the government's first policy document on the Arctic clearly shows (see UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2013). Also Scotland has obvious strategic interests in the Arctic and would become more active in the cooperation (e.g., Johnstone, 2012, pp. 110–125). If Scotland, which got her self-governing status in 1999, aims to become independent, then there are both Britain, or England, and Scotland influencing the region and its interrelations. The Faroe Islands is close to Scotland, the Orkneys, and the Shetland Islands. Britain and Norway, as well as Iceland, are the natural partners for the Faroe Islands in many respects including security, for example, Britain also occupied the Faroe Islands militarily during World War II. Canada is one of the other real Arctic maritime countries, together with the Russian Federation, which has many strategic and security interests in the far North, not least due to the rapid climate change seen to threaten (maritime) sovereignty of Canada. Canada will be a key partner in the Western North Atlantic for a more and more independent Greenland. For example, Canada, Denmark, and Greenland will have to design a partnership with a growing Canadian-Greenlandic partnership while solving the border dispute of Hans Island, one of the last maritime disputes in the Arctic.

The US hegemony over the North Atlantic was secured and structured through the NATO membership of the Kingdom of Denmark, Iceland, and Norway, and military bases in Iceland and Greenland. This hegemony was challenged by the massive Soviet naval presence on the Kola Peninsula and submarine operations in Northern seas. The USA changed the practicalities of North Atlantic security significantly with her withdrawal from the Keflavik air base in 2006, which meant that the USA and Iceland had to rethink their security partnership. The Thule radar station in North-West Greenland plays a pivotal role here, similar to the one it played in Danish-US Cold War relations. The future development of the Danish-Greenlandic-US partnership over Greenland, based on the Igaliku Agreement of 2004, will be crucial for the development of Greenland and its security toward greater independence and eventual sovereignty. NATO as a military bloc is still militarily and

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military-politically the main actor in the North Atlantic region, though not in the Arctic. There, the USA, as well as her military and navy, has approved state policy, although it has hardly been implemented there, which puts Corgan to claim in his chapter that, so far, the USA continues to be a spectator in the Arctic.

A former super power, the Soviet Union acted intensely in the North Atlantic and competed militarily there during the Cold War. While the Soviet Union challenged the US control of the North Atlantic, the Russian Federation is still interested in the North Atlantic geopolitically and economically. It has good trade and other relations with Iceland and Norway, and is building a relationship with the Faroe Islands and Greenland. The sea space with an open access from the Barents Sea both to the North Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean is still strategically important for the Northern Fleet of Russia, and a reason enough for the modernization of Russian navy, particularly nuclear submarines. This modernization of the Russian military is first of all to protect national interests, and it does not mean to seek military superiority in the High North, as Konyshov and Segunin argue in their chapter. These seas are also gateways for Russia's export of energy from the Russian Arctic to Europe and North America, and Murmansk is one end of the Northern Sea Route connecting the centers of the world economy, the North Pacific, and the North Atlantic. Russia continues to evolve its strategy for the Arctic region, as well as the North Atlantic, having more emphasis on economic activities and trade, particularly dealing with energy, and energy security.

The European Union is also strongly present in the North Atlantic, unlike in the Arctic (Ocean), where it "is inextricably tied to" (European Commission, 2008, p. 2). The EU has important security-political and economic interests, not least due to the communication lines between EU member states and Canada and the USA. The EU already has an impact in the Arctic through international negotiations on climate, financing Arctic science and research, and being a big buyer of the fishes caught by Iceland and Norway (for more information see Bailes and Heininen, 2012, pp. 84–97). The Union would like to become an active player in the region and therefore has developed its Arctic strategies, but it has problems convincing all the Arctic states, particularly Canada, and therefore has not, yet, succeeded. Indeed, the EU can be seen, or interpreted, to be either the "Good" or the "Evil" in the Arctic, as Balao puts it in her chapter.

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All in all, there is a significant shift going on in the security architecture of the North Atlantic, as well as a remarkable change in Arctic geopolitics, with changes in security discourses and premises, partly even paradigms, as we discuss in this publication. First, we will look at the processes of devolution of power and withdrawal through Denmark, or the Kingdom of Denmark, and its presence in the North Atlantic in the last centuries (by Bertelsen). Second, we look at the processes of sovereignty and responsibility of small states with a focus on the growing responsibility of Iceland, particularly in security matters (by Petursson), and the growing independence of Greenland and her interaction with outside powers (by Ackrén). Third, we examine and discuss the current military strategies and changes in security premises of the two superpowers, the USA (by Corgan) and the Russian Federation (by Konyshev and Sergunin). Finally, we describe and discuss on the European Union as an (global) Arctic player through its policies in and for the Arctic region, including the northernmost part of North Atlantic, and its Arctic strategy(ies) (by Balao).

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Devolution and Withdrawal: Denmark and the North Atlantic, 1800–2100

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Abstract: *The history of the North Atlantic encompasses the Kingdoms of Norway, Denmark – Norway and Denmark since 1814. These kingdoms have faced geopolitical pressures in the North Atlantic, especially since the Napoleonic Wars. Together with internal national-liberal pressures of national awakening, calls for self-determination have shaped the development of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic. Iceland developed through a national awakening in the 1840s from a self-government to a sovereignty in 1918 and subsequently a republic in 1944. The Faroe Islands obtained home rule in 1948, Greenland in 1979. Both home rules were expanded in 2005 and Greenland transformed to self-rule in 2009. The Kingdom of Denmark will continue to be marked by devolution and withdrawal far into the 21st century.*

Keywords: devolution, Kingdom of Denmark; Nation-building; Sovereignty

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Introduction

Many people probably think of Denmark as a small Continental European country at the entrance to the Baltic Sea, which has geopolitically navigated in a space dominated by Sweden, Germany and Russia for centuries. However, when we look at the constitutional unit, the Kingdom of Denmark, is a state that is geographically overwhelming placed in the North Atlantic and the Arctic, these regions having played a central role for the Kingdom of Denmark for centuries and will continue to do so. This book looks at the North Atlantic as a contested sea space consisting of micro, and small states that are penetrated by middle, great, and super powers. This chapter discusses key external and internal national security challenges to the constitutional integrity of the Kingdom of Denmark historically, today and in the future.

The story of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic is a central part of the North Atlantic story. It is about Nordic power in the North Atlantic constantly challenged by outsiders, for the last two centuries challenged by domestic political processes and most recently by environmental and political-economic globalization. For close to two hundred years it has seen an interaction between domestic and independent politics in the North Atlantic and outside geopolitical pressures on the Kingdom of Denmark, which together have shaped a process of devolution and withdrawal, which will continue. This development will in all likelihood in the long run create a North Atlantic dominated by the very small state of Iceland and micro-states of Faroe Islands and Greenland, heavily penetrated by outside states.

This chapter will briefly introduce the historical background of the state of Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic today, since we are where we are today because of historical events, ideational currents and geopolitical inflection points. It is important to have that history in mind to understand current and future developments. The Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic today is shaped by the combination of internal forces of independent aspirations for Faroe Islands and Greenland. Many Faroese and Greenlanders have a clear idea where this process should lead to, namely, fully independent Faroe Islands and Greenland. Denmark openly leaves the initiative for these aspirations to the Faroe Islands and Greenland, although there are occasional political voices dismissing the possibility of such independence and calling for continued unity in the Danish Realm.

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There is a lack of a joint public strategy for Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland for a long-term future of independent Faroe Islands and independent Greenland, which is the aim of many Faroese and is the consensus aim in Greenland. The author of this chapter personally believes in light of the Icelandic experience, that such a future of independence is much to be preferred for especially the Faroe Islands and Greenland, but also Denmark. This chapter will therefore be based on historical and current observations of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic conclude with remarks on what a joint Danish-Faroese-Greenlandic long-term strategy for the development of the Kingdom of Denmark toward independent Faroe Islands and Greenland should look like.

A very brief history of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic

The current North Atlantic was founded in the Viking Age and is shaped by movements of people and political events at the time. The modern Iceland and Faroe Islands trace their roots to the migration of especially Norwegian Vikings westwards, which settled Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland (together with settlement in the Orkneys, Shetland and wider). This migration was in response to the establishment of states and kingdoms in Norway (and Denmark). The North Atlantic as an integrated sea space stretching between West-Norway, Scotland, Northeast America and the Arctic was founded during this time. People, goods and ideas travelled throughout this space as they continue to do today. For further background reading to this history, there is rich printed and online material (Reykjavík 871+-2 Landnámssýningin The Settlement Exhibition, n.d.; Fleischer, 2003; Kristjánsson, n.d.; Karlsson, 2000; Løgtingið, n.d.; Jespersen, 2011; Schei and Moberg, 2003; The National Museum of Denmark, n.d.).

These Norse settlers founded independent commonwealths in Iceland (with the Althingi parliament in 930AD) and the Faroe Islands, and they settled in Greenland (where they met Inuit). The Norwegian king, consolidating his power in Norway, projected his power in the North Atlantic and gained control over the Norse settlements throughout the region. The Icelandic commonwealth was the last to submit to the King of Norway with the Gamli Sáttmáli, the Old Accord, in 1262. The

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Icelandic commonwealth years before had been the Golden Age of Iceland, with political freedom, prosperity and great cultural achievements (the Sagas). The memory of this Golden Age and the conditions of the Old Accord making the Icelanders the direct subjects of the King of Norway and not a part of Norway would be important inspirations in Icelandic independence politics almost 600 years later.

Through dynastic intermarriage and in response to outside pressure, the Kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and Sweden with Finland merged in a process culminating in the Kalmar Union of 1397 under Queen Margrethe I, “Sovereign Lady and Ruler” of Norden. This union brought the North Atlantic possessions of Norway under the common monarch. Sweden with Finland left the union in 1523, but the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway survived until 1814. This monarchy was an absolutist multinational Danish-Faroese-German-Greenlandic-Icelandic-Norwegian state (and with some Asian, African and Caribbean colonies). Throughout these centuries, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and later Greenland, were parts of the Kingdom of Norway, but Denmark-Norway had a tenuous hold on them, and Danish-Norwegian authority was constantly challenged by English, Dutch and German whalers and traders. The Norse settlers of Greenland disappeared in the 1400s, but their memory remained and in the early 1700s led the Danish-Norwegian Pastor Hans Egede to petition the king to rediscover Greenland to convert the Norse, believed to be Catholic. Hans Egede did not find any Norse, but Inuits and colonized Greenland for Denmark-Norway. Denmark-Norway tried to remain neutral in the Napoleonic wars, but were threatened on land by the advancing armies of Napoleon and on sea by Britain. Denmark-Norway was one of the foremost naval powers of Europe, and the strategic genius of Admiral Nelson was that he defeated the three competitors to the Royal Navy in three consecutive battles, the French navy at Abukir (1799), the Danish-Norwegian navy at Copenhagen (1801 and again 1807), the Spanish-French navy at Trafalgar (1805). This British attack forced Denmark-Norway into the war on French side. On defeat of Napoleon, peace between Denmark-Norway and the alliance was settled at the Kiel Peace in 1814, where Sweden forced Denmark to secede Norway to her. However, Denmark retained the North Atlantic possessions of Norway (Iceland, Faroe Islands and Greenland), which is why the Kingdom of Denmark remains a North Atlantic and Arctic actor today. Had Iceland, Faroe Islands and Greenland remained with Norway, we might have seen an independent Iceland today together with

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Kingdom of Norway encompassing the North Atlantic with the Faroe Islands and Greenland (Karlsson, 2000; Fleischer, 2003; Jespersen, 2011; Þórhallsson, 2012; Þórhallsson and Kristinsson, 2013).

The French revolution and the Napoleonic wars spawned ideas, which continue to greatly influence the world today, nationalism and liberalism. The sense of identity and community linked to a nation, and the idea that such a nation has the right to rule itself and is the basis of legitimacy and sovereignty. These are ideas that would tear the multinational Kingdom of Denmark apart and continue to drive independence politics in the North Atlantic.

Dissolution of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic

Ideas are important forces in international politics, nationalism and liberalism are among the most powerful. Iceland since its settlement has been intimately linked with the outside world and has keenly followed outside ideas and currents. Icelanders have travelled for studies to Europe since the earliest days, so Copenhagen was for centuries the home of Icelandic intellectuals and students. In the 1830s, four brilliant Icelandic intellectuals in Copenhagen founded the journal *Fjölnir* to reawaken the national consciousness of their compatriots. These Icelanders were keen observers of the currents of nationalism and liberalism in the early 1800s. Iceland was a nation, which should govern itself as it had done during its Golden Age of the Viking age commonwealth. These men were followed by the Icelandic independence leader, Jón Sigurðsson (1811–79). Jón travelled to Copenhagen to study in 1833, where he remained for the rest of his life as an Old Norse scholar in the service of the Danish king. When the Icelandic parliament, Althingi, was reconstituted in 1845 as one of the consultative assemblies of the absolutist King of Denmark, Jón was elected and he would remain a member for the rest of his life, often being Speaker of the Althingi, travelling to Iceland for its sessions. Jón was well acquainted with the Danish national-liberal politicians and intellectuals pushing for constitutional democracy in the Kingdom of Denmark (Sveinsson, 1996).

In 1848, Denmark had its peaceful revolution, where the king accepted the demands of the national-liberals to grant a constitution, which took effect 5 June 1849. The dream of the national-liberals was

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a constitutional-monarchical nation-state consisting of Denmark, the Danish North-Schleswig and the North Atlantic dependencies. However, this dream would clash directly with the national identities of Germans and Icelanders. It led to military rebellion by the Germans in Schleswig-Holstein leading to the first Schleswig war of 1848–50 (Danish victory, but followed by Danish defeat in the second Schleswig war of 1864). Jón clearly saw that Iceland had to remain outside this constitutional-monarchical Danish nation-state. When the governor general of Iceland, Count Trampe, presented the new constitution to the Althingi in 1851 for adoption for Iceland, Jón led the Althingi in successfully protesting this. So the new Danish constitution did not include Iceland, which remained an overseas dependency of the King of Denmark (Sveinsson, 1996).

In 1874, the Althingi and the Danish government agreed on a separate constitution for Iceland, which granted the Althingi legislative power in Iceland. However, the administration of Iceland continued to be under a Danish minister for Iceland in the Danish government and responsible for the Danish parliament. The question of the relationship with Denmark continued to consume Icelandic politics and debate. With the victory of parliamentarism in Denmark in 1901, Iceland gained executive home rule in 1904 with an Icelandic administration led by an Icelandic minister responsible to the Althingi. Icelandic politics continued to push relentlessly for full independence (Althingi, n.d.).

As mentioned throughout this chapter, the role of the Kingdom of Denmark (and before that Norway and Denmark-Norway) in the North Atlantic has always been deeply influenced by European geopolitics. Denmark had lost Schleswig (together with Holstein and Lauenburg) in 1864, which was a very painful loss. With the entry of the USA in World War I and President Woodrow Wilson's defense of the right of self-determination of nations, Denmark saw the possibility to regain the Danish North-Schleswig in case of German defeat, which it did in 1920 after referendums.

Denmark could clearly not refuse the right of self-determination of the Icelanders, while claiming it for Danes living under German rule. Therefore, Denmark and Iceland quickly agreed in the autumn of 1918 on the Danish-Icelandic Union Law, which on 1 December 1918 made Iceland into the independent and sovereign Kingdom of Iceland in a personal union of shared monarch with the Kingdom of Denmark. This union was an innovative vehicle for Iceland as a poor small state on the edges of Europe to develop as an independent state. Notably, the

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agreement stated that Iceland decided its own foreign policy, but was represented by the Danish Foreign Service. Also the Royal Danish Navy continued to conduct coast guard duty in Icelandic waters, while Iceland developed its own coast guard.

This union was dissolvable after 25 years, and Iceland made no secret that it would do so. In the meantime, European politics interfered with the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic again. World War II broke out again threatening Denmark's connections with the North Atlantic. These connections were severed on 9 April 1940, when Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany (Norway was also invaded by Nazi Germany on 9 April with continuing fighting for two months before withdrawal by king and government to London). Christian X, King of Denmark and King of Iceland, in Copenhagen could clearly not exercise his duties as King of Iceland. The Icelandic Althingi therefore took over the King's powers and elected the respected Icelandic diplomat Sveinn Björnsson as Regent in 1941. Iceland holds a key geostrategic position in the North Atlantic as is discussed in several places in this volume. Iceland was therefore peacefully occupied by Britain on 10 May 1940 (see Petursson in this volume). The 25 years clause of the Danish-Icelandic Union Law of 1918 expired on 1 December 1943, and Iceland was determined to dissolve the union and declare the republic. So on 17 June (the birthdate of Jón Sigurðsson) 1944, the Althingi declared the Republic of Iceland and elected Sveinn Björnsson the first president of Iceland. The fact that Iceland dissolved the Danish-Icelandic Union at a time when Denmark was under Nazi occupation was poorly received in Denmark.

Devolution and withdrawal

Denmark likewise lost touch with the Faroe Islands, when Denmark was occupied on 9 April 1940. The Faroe Islands were and are of key strategic importance to Britain, and Britain occupied the islands as early as 12 April 1940. The Faroe Islands were at the time a county (amt) of Denmark, and the county prefect Carl Aage Hilbert and the county assembly, the Lögting (with Viking age roots as the Icelandic Althingi), formally protested the occupation, but cooperated with the British. Britain refused to interfere in the constitutional status of the Faroe Islands and stated that it would return the islands to Denmark after the war. The islands were de facto self-governing during the war under the

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executive power of the county prefect and the legislative power of the Lögting and financially sustained by fish exports to Britain. This experience of self-government made it impossible to return to the county status that was before the war. Denmark and the Faroe Islands had difficulty agreeing on accommodating the autonomy aspirations of the Faroe Islands despite the experience of Iceland with gradually increasing self-government (In Denmark's relations with the North Atlantic, there is difficulties remembering and learning from the Icelandic case, which we will return to). In 1946, a botched referendum in the Faroe Islands produced a minority majority for independence and was annulled by the Danish government. In 1948, Denmark and the Faroe Islands agreed on home rule for the Faroe Islands in many domestic affairs.

In the early 1990s, the Faroe Islands went through a very deep economic crisis, which put 10% of the labor-force out of work and 10% of the population emigrated. In this crisis, the three Faroese banks either closed or were forced to merge. The culprit was the large Danish bank Danske Bank, and the Faroese felt, that the Danish government took the side of Danske Bank against them. This sentiment bolstered the following of Faroese independence-minded parties, who won the Lögting-election in 1998 and formed a government with the goal of Faroese independence. The legacy of the Icelandic experience was very clear. The Faroese government proposed a Danish-Faroese agreement closely modeled on the 1918 Danish-Icelandic Union Law creating a sovereign Faroe Islands in personal union with Denmark. However, the proposal fell on Denmark's rejection of continuing financially supporting beyond a period of 4–5 years and not the 15 years proposed by the Faroese. In the late 1990s, Danish sentiments about the Faroe Islands were ungenerous following the Faroese economic crisis in the early 1990s, and there seems to be very little institutional memory in Denmark of the 1918 solution with Iceland. This situation was very unlike autumn 1918, when Denmark was eager to recognize the right of self-determination of the Icelanders in order to gain recognition of the right of self-determination of the Danish in North-Schleswig. Also the Faroese in 1998 wanted to continue the Danish fiscal support for a significant period, where the fiscal ties between Denmark and Iceland were cut in 1918. When the Liberal-Conservative Danish government took over in 2001, it signaled to the Faroe Islands a willingness to rethink the position of the Faroe Islands in the Kingdom of Denmark. In 2005, the Faroese and Danish governments agreed to significantly expand the domains, where the Faroese home

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rule authorities could take over competences from Danish authorities: all domains except the constitution, citizenship, the Supreme Court, foreign, security and defense policy, and currency and monetary policy. The two governments also agreed, that the Faroe Islands was granted authority to act and negotiate on behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark in international matters of exclusive Faroese interest. The joint Fámjin declaration declared that the Danish government should consult the Faroese government on foreign policy matters where there is a Faroese interest. Faroe Islands got Icelandic 1904-style home rule in 1948, so the islands are approaching an Icelandic 1918-status in many respects except sovereignty and fiscal independence (Statsministeriet a, n.d.).

Greenland, recolonized by Hans Egede in the 1720s, was still a Danish colony at the outbreak of World War II. Greenland was also cut off from Denmark and was thrust for the first time into international security because of its centrality to North American security. Greenland was and remains deeply dependent on outside supply. The two governors of North and South Greenland, Eske Brun and Aksel Svane, assumed authority over Greenland as legislation authorized in case that Greenland was cut off from Denmark. In 1941, Aksel Svane went to the USA to handle Greenland's relations with the USA, while Eske Brun remained to govern Greenland. At the occupation of Denmark on 9 April 1940, a number of Danish ambassadors abroad had declared that since the king and government were not free to act, they could not take orders from Copenhagen, while Denmark was occupied. One of these ambassadors was Henrik Kauffmann in Washington DC. In 1941, Ambassador Kauffmann on his own accord signed a defense agreement with the USA allowing the USA to keep military bases in Greenland, which was the start of the US military presence in Greenland, which remains to this date. This US military presence in Greenland brought money, technology and outsiders to Greenland on an unprecedented scale.

After the World War II experience, Greenland could not remain a colony of Denmark, and Denmark did not want to be branded as a colonial power in the United Nations and elsewhere. Therefore, Greenland was integrated into Denmark as a county with the constitutional revision of 1953. The modernization of Greenland from World War II was continued as an intensive modernization program in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, which also had severe social costs. This modernization of Greenlandic society together with indigenous land claims in North America and the Icelandic and Greenlandic experiences led to a political

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awakening in Greenland. Young Greenlanders founded the political party Siumut (“Forward”- toward independence), and in 1979 Greenland gained home rule similar to the Faroe Islands in 1948.

Greenland as a county (since 1953) of Denmark followed Denmark into the European Economic Communities (EEC) in 1973 despite Greenlandic reservations and objections (the Faroe Islands with home rule remained outside the EEC). A majority of Greenlanders chose to leave the EEC in a referendum in 1982, and Greenland left the EEC in 1985. Subsequently Greenland negotiated a fisheries agreement with the EEC, gained status as Overseas Country and Territory and has a Partnership Agreement with the EU. Leaving the EEC was Greenland’s first independent foreign policy decision. On 6 August 2004, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller and Home Rule Deputy Premier Josef Motzfeldt signed the Igaliku agreement in Igaliku, Southern Greenland. The agreement made the US-Danish security partnership about Greenland since 1941 into a tri-partite US-Danish-Greenlandic relationship also developing scientific, environmental and economic relations between the USA and Greenland. The radar at Thule Air Force Base in northernmost Greenland was key to North Atlantic ballistic missile early warning during the Cold War, it is key to National Missile Defense today, and it will remain key to North Atlantic security. Therefore the USA and – especially an independent – Greenland will remain closely entwined security partners for the long term. In 2005, the home rule of Greenland was expanded equal to the home rule of the Faroe Islands, where Greenland could take over all policy domains except the constitution, citizenship, the Supreme Court, foreign, security and defense policy, and currency and monetary policy. Concerning foreign affairs, Greenland got the right to represent the kingdom in affairs of exclusive relevance to Greenland and where it had taken over all responsibilities. In the Itilleq declaration, Denmark and Greenland agreed to involve the Greenland home rule in foreign affairs of relevance to Greenland.

There is a strong political will in Greenland for greater self-rule and eventually full independence, greater than the Faroe Islands (see Ackrén, this volume). Late 1999, the Greenland home rule government decided to establish a self-rule commission in light of the increasing responsibilities of the Greenland home rule since 1979, the increasing role of the European Union for Denmark and globalization affecting Greenland. The commission submitted its recommendations in 2003, which recommended an equal treaty between Denmark and Greenland on Greenlandic self-rule. Based on

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these recommendations, the Danish and Greenlandic prime ministers on the 25th anniversary of the Greenlandic home rule in 2004 agreed on the terms of reference for a Danish-Greenlandic self-rule commission. Based on the work of this commission, Denmark and Greenland in 2008 agreed on self-rule for Greenland, which recognizes the right of self-determination of the Greenlanders and their right to pursue independence as well as grants them their mineral rights among other things. Self-rule took effect on 21 June 2009. The self-rule agreement freezes the amount of the Danish fiscal support of Greenland, and Greenland is keenly aware that the road to independence goes through fiscal autonomy. Therefore there is a very sharp focus in Greenland on developing energy and mineral resources, which can improve the fiscal situation of Greenland. There continues to be strong support for the goal of eventual full independence, which the premier of Greenland declares repeatedly to international audiences (Statsministeriet b, n.d.). Economic viability is without question the greatest societal/economic security threat self-governing Greenland faces today, and it will in all likelihood be so for a possible independent Greenland. Ensuring the sustainability of the Greenlandic economy is the key policy challenge for Greenland today and in the future.

Looking at the long history of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic, it stands out clearly, how Iceland went through a process of gradually increased home rule (1874 and 1904) before sovereignty in a personal union (1918) and then declaring the republic (1944). The Faroe Islands (1948) and Greenland (1979) have long passed the Icelandic 1904-moment concerning self-rule, and they are getting close to the 1918-moment concerning sovereignty. The Faroese independence-minded explicitly referred to 1918 in their 1998 proposal for Faroese independence. There seems to be no doubt that the Faroe Islands and especially Greenland will eventually move to full independence. This political desire raises the question whether the 1918-solution is a useful tool, and whether especially Danish policy-makers have the historical knowledge and institutional memory to be able to reach back into the toolbox of the history of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic.

Conditions for North Atlantic Independence

Looking at the histories and trajectories of Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, there appears to be a number of internal conditions allowing

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for independence from the Kingdom of Denmark. These conditions are necessary together to gain independence. They are human capital, fiscal independence and political will (Bertelsen, 2014; Bertelsen and Hansen, Forthcoming; Bertelsen et al., Forthcoming; Bertelsen, 2013).

It is clear from the Icelandic history, that Iceland was able to move through successive steps of increasing home rule to sovereignty and the republic because it satisfied these three conditions. The Icelanders have a strong tradition of domestic primary and secondary education going back to the late Viking Age cathedral schools at Skálholt and Hólar. The Skálholt school was the predecessor of the current day Reykjavik Junior College, which has produced two Nobel laureates. In the late 1800s, tertiary education was slowly built up in Reykjavik. Also as mentioned previously, the Icelanders have a centuries old strong tradition of brain circulation, of going abroad for higher education and returning. Therefore, Icelanders have staffed the civil service, the clergy and the medical professions for centuries. The Icelanders have been able to manage their own society in their own language practically since the Viking Age settlement. The independence luck of Iceland was that it got sovereignty and cut its fiscal ties with Denmark in 1918 before the establishment of the Nordic welfare state, when the public sector was a small part of the economy and the Danish grant an even smaller part. Therefore, Iceland could cut its fiscal ties to Denmark in 1918. The Icelandic welfare state developed based on the Icelandic economy, which made Icelandic economic security manageable. These two conditions made it possible for the Icelanders to pursue their unequivocal political desire to always take the next step to greater and eventually full independence.

In comparison, we see that the Faroe Islands and Greenland do not fulfill all of these three domestic conditions. The Faroese have strong human capital built on education at home and abroad, and Faroese society is largely managed in Faroese by Faroese today. Based on their strong human capital and natural resources, especially fish, the Faroese economy even today largely self-sufficient and the fiscal dependency on Denmark is quite small. However, as mentioned, the Faroese are politically divided on the question of independence from Denmark. There is extensive search for hydrocarbons in Faroese waters, so far without luck, but if oil and gas is found in significant amounts, full independence will certainly be an option for the Faroe Islands.

Greenland is in a much weaker position. There is strong political desire in Greenland for greater and eventually full independence. However,

the stumbling blocks are weak human capital and fiscal dependence on Denmark. Greenland is still dependent on especially Denmark for human capital in administration, education and health care to a significant extent. There are quality problems in the Greenlandic educational system with too few young people advancing from primary to secondary to tertiary education and with quality issues. Also there are issues about successful education outside Greenland and brain circulation. Greenland is deeply fiscally dependent on Denmark with an annual block grant of 3.4 billion DKK (about 630 million USD) for within 60,000 inhabitants. Greenland will therefore have to improve its human capital and its fiscal sustainability significantly to achieve its dreams of independence.

Denmark and the North Atlantic: the lack of strategy

The reality of the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic today and in the future is that the kingdom will be an increasingly complicated and fragmented Arctic actor (Bertelsen, 2014). This complication and fragmentation is a logical consequence of the centrifugal forces of independence politics in the Faroe Islands and Greenland, who both want to formulate their own policies and represent themselves to ever greater extent, and do so to a large extent since especially 2005. The current Arctic strategy of the Kingdom of Denmark is very much an attempt to keep the kingdom together as a global Arctic and North Atlantic actor (Heininen, 2012a, 2012b; Bailes and Heininen, 2012).

As mentioned, Faroese and Greenlandic politics are deeply engaged in questions of state building and preparing for greater and one-day full independence. On the other hand, there is Danish ignorance of the topic and lack of strategic debate, while people and politicians engage in romantic illusions of Faroese and Greenlandic desires to remain in the kingdom or dismiss the ability of these societies to govern themselves.

Even the very able strategic policy documents on Danish North Atlantic security from the Center for Military Studies at the University of Copenhagen assume that the “constitutional situation” in the North Atlantic will remain unchanged. This assumption is also fair to make for the time horizon they deal with, it must be said. However, the problem is that nobody in Denmark seems to be thinking strategically beyond that time horizon, where the “constitutional situation” in the North Atlantic

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definitely will change, and that can probably be extrapolated from the Icelandic history.

The Danish political parties seem to be generally indifferent to the North Atlantic parts of the kingdom. They usually simply state that it is up to the Faroese and the Greenlanders to decide whether to move on to greater or full independence, which is of course sympathetic, but a proactive thinking of the development of this relationship is missing. The only exception is the right-wing populist party, the Danish People's Party, which occasionally openly speaks against especially Greenlandic independence.

The global framework for this development of vibrant Faroese and Greenlandic independence politics and state building is also increasing pressures from both environmental and political-economic globalization. Environmental globalization is climate change, which is affecting especially Greenland with ice-melt and warming seasons. Climate change being particularly pronounced in the Arctic affects Arctic societies deeply and directs unprecedented global attention to the Arctic. Political-economic globalization is the "rise of the rest," especially China and other Asian emerging economies. These emerging powers are concerned with climate change and claim a role in global governance, including the Arctic, as reflected in the Arctic Council observer status of China, India, Japan, Singapore and South Korea since May 2013. These fast growing economies are also globally searching for energy and raw materials, which directs their attention to the Arctic. In the Greenlandic context, this has meant a completely unprecedented Asian interest for Greenland (Li and Bertelsen, 2013).

Denmark and North Atlantic – what a strategy should look like

The historical movement toward greater self-government and eventual independence of the North Atlantic nations in the Kingdom of Denmark driven by national identity and desire for self-government since the early 1800s is clear and will continue. Therefore, Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland – and including Iceland – should work on a joint public strategy for managing this process and for creating shared expectations. This strategy should be the outcome of an open and transparent process involving all sectors of these societies. Here I will make some suggestions of what I believe such a strategy should look like (Bertelsen, 2014).

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First of all, the strategy should be historically conscious. We must be aware, that the Kingdom of Denmark has gone through this process of devolving power to an overseas North Atlantic autonomy and building an independent and sovereign state, which turned out to be socio-economically highly successful, Iceland. We have done it before, and we can and will do it again. So what were the lessons of the Icelandic experience? It is foremost the domestic importance of human capital and secondly of fiscal independence. Here the domestic educational system of especially Greenland must be improved and brain circulation strengthened. Education is a Greenlandic responsibility, but Denmark, other Nordic and neighboring countries should partner even further with Greenland for education and brain circulation. Strengthening human capital will improve, but not solve, Greenland's fiscal dependency on Denmark. Stronger human capital will make Greenlandic economy and society more efficient, and make Greenland much more able to benefit from its natural resources. Such a strategy should openly agree on the end-state, independent Faroe Islands and Greenland, sustainably self-sufficient in human capital and fiscally.

In order to achieve this end-state, we need a shared roadmap with designated responsibilities and a time-table. As it is today, Faroese and Greenlandic independence politicians can speak of a future goal of independence with little obligation to take responsibility for the necessary steps.

There are two possible long-term outcomes for the Kingdom of Denmark in the North Atlantic. One is an indefinite status quo of the Faroe Islands as self-governing nations within the Kingdom of Denmark (the current state). The other is fully sovereign and independent Faroe Islands and Greenland. The first scenario, the indefinite continuation of the status quo, will be marked by increasing demands for self-government and self-representation especially in Greenland without the means to carry these wishes out because of human capital and fiscal dependency on Denmark. The Kingdom of Denmark will be an increasingly complex and fragmented Arctic and North Atlantic actor. This indefinite status quo scenario is in my view highly undesirable. The second scenario is much preferable in my view. It will implement the wishes of especially large parts of the Greenlandic population, but also of the Faroese. The Icelandic precedent shows that moving to full independence resolves political disagreements with Denmark and lays the foundation for very harmonious political, economic and people-to-people relations. Also

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independence allows North Atlantic political systems to focus all their energy on local socio-economic development, where before independence the relationship with Denmark takes up far too many political resources and attention. Moving to this second scenario of full independence will foremost require ensuring human capital and fiscal independence, which especially for Greenland is a challenge. Overcoming this challenge – if it is possible – will take considerable time. Greenlandic Premier Aleqa Hammond (born in 1965) usually states that she hopes to see an independent Greenland within her life-time. Myself, born in 1975, says the same. So we might be thinking about 30–40 years.

Conclusion

The story of the North Atlantic is largely the story of the Kingdom of Denmark (-Norway) for the last more than 630 years and even further back. It is the story of continuous challenges by outside powers and for close to two hundred years it has been the story of national-liberalism tearing apart the old multinational absolutist Kingdom of Denmark. First the Icelanders awoke their national identity and the determination to govern themselves, which lead to a process from the awakening of the 1830s to the republic in 1944. A process that Denmark would not and for geopolitical pressures could not resist. With delay the same national awakening arose in the Faroe Islands, which experienced de facto self-government during World War II, from which there was no turning back. World War II was also the beginning of the end of European colonialism, and so Greenland became an equal part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Greenlanders equally found the determination to govern themselves and be on a path to eventual independence, which may materialize over the course of the 21st century.

So, the story of the Kingdom of Denmark between the 1830s and well into the 21st century is a story of devolution and withdrawal, which has shaped, and will shape, the North Atlantic area. A current constitutional development in the area, which can be interpreted to have influences from the devolution and withdrawal, is the Scottish independence referendum. The relevant comparison for Scotland is the four “big” Nordic states, which are among the socio-economically most successful countries in the world. In my mind, there is no reason, why an independent Scotland should not be a success. The UK is also a multinational

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kingdom, but which has not faced the centrifugal national- liberal forces and external geopolitical pressure at home that the Kingdom of Denmark has for centuries. However, the UK having – in the words of Dean Acheson: “lost an empire and not yet found a role,” especially not a role in Europe – is facing much stronger national-liberal centrifugal forces in Scotland.

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3

Icelandic Security in a Changing Regional and Geopolitical Seascape: Limited Capabilities and Growing Responsibilities

Gustav Pétursson

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Abstract: Since becoming a sovereign state in 1918, Iceland successfully managed its security and defence policy by cooperating with its closest allies. Since 1941, Iceland has sought security partnership with the USA including a bilateral defence agreement, and in 1949, Iceland became a founding member of NATO. The end of the Cold War period transformed the Icelandic security environment: instead of having to grapple with military threats Icelandic policy-makers had to be able to deal with a large-scale search and rescue at sea. Currently, and increasingly in the future, Iceland will have to take on a regional role and build partnerships with its neighbors through bilateral agreements, as well as through the NATO, to tackle new security threats and risks in the North Atlantic and sub-Arctic.

Keywords: coast guard, Iceland; national security; sovereignty

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Heininen, Lassi, ed. *Security and Sovereignty in the North Atlantic*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137470720.0009.

Iceland's position during the Cold War

A sovereign state since 1918, Iceland gained full independence from Denmark in 1944 (see Bertelsen, this volume). In spring 1940, following the Nazi invasion of Denmark and Norway, Iceland was invaded and occupied by British forces. Prior to the invasion, the British government had sought to ally with its Icelandic counterpart – to provide British forces with important facilities in Iceland – but was turned down (Whitehead, 2006, pp. 21–64). The British invasion was a clear breach of Icelandic neutrality, but the invading force did not interfere in the domestic politics of Iceland and its governance, and the government continued throughout the war without British interference. The following year, Iceland moved closer to the Allied camp by concluding a defense agreement with the USA, valid throughout the war. Its purpose was to alleviate overstretched British forces which, in Iceland, were gradually replaced by US troops.

Even though US troops were withdrawn from Iceland, following Allied victory in 1945, Iceland was squarely in the US sphere of influence. In 1949 Iceland became a founding member of NATO, and in 1951 concluded a second Defense Agreement with the USA. This time the USA would be responsible for the defense of Iceland on behalf of NATO since Iceland did not, and does not, have any military capabilities of its own. The first US troops arrived in Iceland on 7 May 1951, and for the next 55 years the US operated a military base at Keflavík airport.

During the Cold War, the US Keflavík Naval Air Station (NASKEF) was the linchpin in NATO's defense of its Northern Flank, since the sea around Iceland was the main break-out route for the Soviet Northern Fleet into the North Atlantic. A system of radar stations was set up in Greenland, Iceland, and Britain – the so-called GIUK gate – in order to monitor Soviet activity. This included a sophisticated system of underwater Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) capable of detecting with great accuracy the passage of Soviet submarines in the waters around Iceland (Whitman, 2005). Throughout the Cold War, NASKEF monitored the activity of Soviet submarines, ships and airplanes in the area around Iceland, mapping Soviet pattern of activity. Deviation from these established patterns would then serve as a warning signal (Jónsson, 1990, p. 56). If war had broken out between the two Superpowers, Iceland would have been at the frontline in the struggle for supremacy in the North Atlantic.

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Soviet interests in Iceland and the surrounding area during the Cold War can be interpreted through the frequency of Soviet *visits* during that period. In 1966 fighter jets from NASKEF intercepted on average, in the skies around Iceland, Soviet planes three times a month. In 1968 the frequency of such interceptions had risen to 14 or one every other day (Gröndal, 1971, p. 88). In the late 1970s and early 1980s the interceptions of Soviet reconnaissance bombers entering the Icelandic Military Air Defence Identification Zone (MADIZ) continued to rise, concurring with a 63% surge in Soviet submarine deployments through Icelandic waters (Corgan, 2002, p. 159). Soviet military activity in the North Atlantic dwindled as the 1980s neared its end. A hundred and seventy Soviet planes were intercepted by fighters from the naval station in 1985, but in the following years these numbers continued to fall (Jónsson, 1990, p. 74). By 1991 Russian bomber flights in the skies around Iceland came to a complete stop. In the late 1990s and early 2000s Russian bombers renewed their flight in the skies around Iceland (Varnarmálastofnun, 2010, pp. 84–85), but they were sporadic and far from reaching Cold War era levels (see Konyshchev and Sergunin, this volume).

During the Cold War, there was also a human security element associated with the base. For a seafaring nation such as Iceland the safety of its fishermen is a vital concern, and inadvertently the US manned Iceland Defense Force played a vital role in ensuring the safety of North Atlantic seafarers. Stationed alongside the fighter jets at NASKEF was the 56th Rescue Squadron which consisted of five HH-60G Pavehawk helicopters. Of course, the purpose of the squadron was to provide search and rescue capabilities to the US forces at NASKEF, but during its 32-year deployment in Iceland the squadron responded to distress calls forwarded to NASKEF by the Icelandic authorities.

Between 1973 and 2006, the 56th Rescue Squadron greatly increased rescue capabilities in Iceland, and the North Atlantic. In total, the squadron rescued over 300 people from over 20 nationalities out of harm's way. Not surprisingly, most of those were Icelanders (174), followed by Soviet Union/Russian citizens (26), and trailed by Americans in the third place (25) (Iceland Defense Force, 2006, pp. 3–4). Although intended for military purposes, the squadron played the unintentional role, for over three decades, to alleviate threats to human security in the North Atlantic.

Although often overlooked, the military build-up and military activities of the two opposing Cold War camps in the North Atlantic also constituted environmental degradation, and – perhaps more

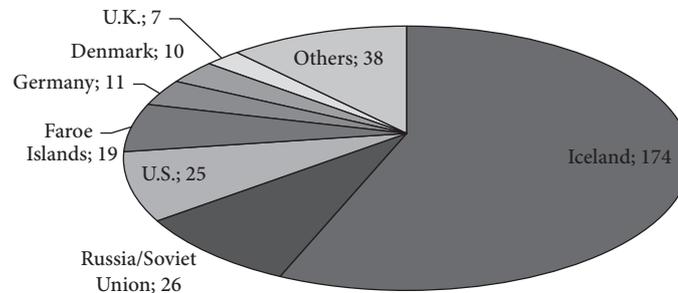


FIGURE 3.1 Number and nationality of people saved by the 56th Rescue Squadron, 1973–2005.

Source: Iceland Defense Force. (2006). Björgunarsveit Varnarliðsins á Keflavíkurlflugvelli. Keflavík

worryingly – possible radioactive contamination in the Arctic and the North Atlantic waters (Heininen, 2013, pp. 39–40), either through radiation from discarded nuclear waste, or as a result of an accident involving nuclear submarines ploughing the Arctic and sub-Arctic. For Icelanders, radiation in the waters around Iceland was especially worrying, since the Icelandic economy was – and is – heavily dependent on fisheries. In early 1980s, as Soviet activity in the seas around Iceland peaked (Corgan, 2002, pp. 159–162), concerns about possible nuclear accidents at sea prompted heated debates among Icelandic decision makers about the viability of a Nordic Nuclear Free Zone. Although, the idea of a Nordic Nuclear Free Zone remained just that – an idea – Icelandic decision makers persisted as active champions for nuclear safety in Northern seas (Bailes and Heininen, 2012, p. 72), thereby, linking environmental degradation with economic well-being of its citizens and translating that into foreign policy goals.

The post-Cold War era

Immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, scholars began to debate the meaning of a security concept that had privileged the state and emphasized military power. After all, the narrow emphasis on military security had been problematic and flawed from the beginning (Booth, 1991), as the escalating arms race between the Superpowers had simply produced higher levels of destructive power for people, instead of a commensurate growth of security.

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Of course, the concept of *security* is in itself problematic. Whose security do we mean, and what does being secure refer to? In a wide sense, security can be understood as, “... the pursuit of freedom from threat” (Buzan, 1991, p. 37), while insecurity – the complete opposite – reflects a combination of threats and vulnerabilities. In the context of international state system, states can attempt to increase their security by reducing their own vulnerabilities or by lessening or preventing threats. National security policy-makers are therefore presented with the options of focusing inward, and seeking to reduce the vulnerabilities of the state itself, or outward and seeking to reduce external threat by addressing the source of the threat.

As the focus of Arctic security shifted away from bombers and missiles, other security concerns thrust themselves to centerstage, i.e., safety of its inhabitants, their economic well-being, and threats to the Arctic environment. These dimensions of Arctic security were already picked up during the height of the Cold War in the 1980s (Rose, 1982; Young, 1985), but submerged by the imperative of military security. It was not until Mikhail Gorbachev’s Murmansk speech in 1987 that a crack appeared in the static Arctic security discourse. In his speech, Gorbachev opened the door for increased international cooperation in the Arctic through number of bold initiatives, such as nuclear free zones, restrictions on naval activities in the North, as well as peaceful cooperative development of Arctic resources (Young, 1998, p. 32). By the early 1990s, some of the ideas set forth by Gorbachev had gained enough political impetus, among the Governments of the Arctic states, to form an Arctic environmental protection regime (Rothwell, 1995), first through the creation of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) which later evolved into the Arctic Council.

Today, the emerging Arctic security trends predicted by Rose and Young in the 1980s have eclipsed traditional military concerns in the Arctic. Numerous rare minerals are mined within the Arctic, while up to a quarter of earth’s undiscovered oil and gas reserves are predicted to be found within that region (AMAP, 2007, p. 32). At the same time, the receding Arctic sea ice is expected to open up new Arctic sea routes through the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route (AMSA, 2009). Yet it is important to keep in mind that the Arctic is still militarized. Submarines carrying nuclear ballistic missiles plough the Arctic waters, and regular Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) test-launches are still being carried out by the Russian Navy (Heininen, 2010,

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pp. 239–245; Berkman, 2010, p. 62). Of course, the same concerns apply today, as in the 1980s and 1990s, about the effects military activity has on environmental degradation – especially with regard to possible radiation.

Present Icelandic Arctic security environment

During the Cold War, Iceland depended on US protection to stave off Soviet encroachment, whereas the US and fellow NATO countries depended on Iceland as a sea barrier to free movement of the Soviet Northern Fleet into the North Atlantic. The end of the Cold War heralded reductions of US military personnel at NASKEF in 1994 and 1996. Eventually in autumn of 2006, the US government closed NASKEF, and handed all base facilities over to their Icelandic counterpart, although the 1951 Defense Agreement is still valid. The lack of military defense in Iceland, following the removal of the last US F-15 fighter jets from NASKEF, prompted the Icelandic government and NATO to react. In spring 2008, periodic NATO Air Policing missions began in Iceland with the arrival of four *Mirage 2000* fighter jets from the French Air Force. Each deployment lasted about 4–5 weeks, with three deployments a year.

The position of Iceland, following the end of the Cold War, as a state without any military defenses, apart from sporadic NATO Air Policing Missions, may be an extreme case, but its position accentuates the complete transformation of the post-Cold War security environment. For Icelanders, how security relates to day-to-day functioning of society was articulated in a 2009 governmental report entitled *A Risk Assessment for Iceland: Global, Societal, and Military Factors* (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2009), setting the stage for a multidimensional analysis of societal risks and threats for Iceland. Among the topics tweezed out for concern in the report were increased importance of *Norðurslóðir* (the High North) and security risks inherent in increased traffic of vessels in the sea around Iceland (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2009, p. 21).

In 2011, many of the concerns voiced in the 2009 report were adopted by the Icelandic parliament through a resolution articulating Iceland's Arctic Policy (Alþingi, 2011). The resolution takes the form of 12 affirmations of which two give attention to Arctic security. As might be expected, security is widely defined, within the context of the Arctic Policy; emphasis is given to sustainable use of resources and responsible

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management of the ecosystem as well as conservation of the delicate ecosystem. Furthermore:

To safeguard Arctic security interests in a wider context, on civil grounds, and to work against any militarization of the Arctic. [Moreover to] [p]romote cooperation with other states within the fields of surveillance, search and rescue, and pollution preparedness in the Arctic. (Alþingi, 2011)¹

As previously mentioned, and evidenced in Iceland's Arctic Policy, for Icelanders the well-being of the North Atlantic marine environment is a pressing concern – not least because of economic necessity.

Although Arctic resource extraction, and Arctic shipping, may be a boon to (some) Arctic state economies, for others it poses a high risk and threat. Each year, up to 80 oil tankers, carrying 30,000 tons of oil each, sail to Iceland while 1000 cargo ships, laden with up to 1500 tons of fuel make the same journey to and from the country (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2009, p. 99). Future oil extraction in the so-called *Dreki* area (in the sea north east of the Iceland) (National Energy Authority, 2014) or any future industrial development in Eastern Greenland will only increase traffic of large cargo ships and tankers. For Iceland, a critical oil spillage in the seas around Iceland would put the food safety of Icelanders at risk, as well as dealing a heavy blow to the fisheries dependant on Icelandic economy.

But concerns about present, and future, traffic of tankers and cargo ships is not the only pressing matter. The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Report (AMSA), commissioned by the Arctic Council in 2009, estimated that over 2 million passengers travelled to Arctic destinations aboard cruise ships (AMSA, 2009, p. 79). An alarming trend, since they are known to travel close to the Arctic shore line and ice edge to view wildlife in close proximity, although these cruise ships are not constructed for traversing Arctic waters (AMSA, 2009, p. 79). Naturally, much of this traffic passes through Icelandic waters. In 2013, 81 cruise ships visited Reykjavík harbor (Associated Icelandic Ports, 2014), reaching the 2008 pre-financial crisis record levels, while at the same time the total number of passengers rose from 59,000 to 92,000.

Of course all is not gloom and doom. The Icelandic economy benefits from tourists visiting Iceland, and there are some prospects of Iceland's own economy profiting from the construction of storage, service, or trans-shipment facilities on its territory and even from discovery of oil and gas in its own Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). But such developments would need to be handled – in the light of the bitter experiences

of 2008–09 banking collapse – in a way that ensures their financial and economic viability as well as adequate Icelandic control, a fair share of profits for Iceland, and a non-distorting, sustainable impact on the Icelandic economy, society and environment.

Icelandic Arctic emergency capabilities

The dimensions of economic, societal, and environmental security in the Arctic are closely woven together, raising the question of what capabilities there are in Iceland to deal with oil pollution at sea or a large-scale search and rescue operation. The governmental body responsible for emergency management in the sea around Iceland is the Icelandic Coast Guard, and at its disposal, the Coast Guard has three vessels: sister ships *Ægir* and *Týr*, 927 tonnages each, and *Þór*, commissioned in 2011, approximately four times larger than the other two.

Not only is the Coast Guard responsible for emergency management within Iceland's territorial waters (12 nautical miles) and its EEZ (200 nautical miles), but also for a much wider area which is not under Icelandic jurisdiction. In 2011 Iceland, alongside other Arctic littoral states, signed the Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, under auspices of the Arctic Council. The Agreement is a legally binding agreement which gives each of the signatories a zone of responsibility for air and maritime search and rescue in the Arctic. It is worth noting that the Agreement was concluded on the basis of the 1979 International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), as well as the 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation. As such, the 2011 agreement reaffirms pre-existing international obligations. The novelty though is that the zone of each Arctic littoral state is now clearly defined, thus closing any possible gray areas. For Iceland, the 2011 agreement has in no way reduced or enlarged the Icelandic zone of responsibility.

The Icelandic zone of responsibility includes the greater part of the North Atlantic, covering the Faroe Islands and Jan Mayen, as well as cutting well into the Greenlandic/Danish EEZ. Therefore, the Icelandic Coast Guard is responsible for air and maritime search and rescue in Norwegian and Danish territory. Historically, cooperation has been close between the Icelandic Coast Guard and the Danish Navy. A Danish Navy Thetis Class Frigate patrols in the waters of Greenland as well as

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the Faroe Islands, alongside two to three smaller naval vessels. When needed, the Icelandic Coast Guard has been able to request assistance from the Danish Arctic Command in Greenland (Chief of Operations Icelandic Coast Guard, 2014).

Although Icelanders have been able to count on good cooperation with the Danish Navy, the Coast Guard has not been able to use their limited resources to the fullest. In the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008–09, the Coast Guard had its funding slashed – as other government bodies – and its naval assets have been leased out to make up for government cut backs. As a result, in 2012, roughly 20% of the Coast Guard’s revenue came from reimbursement for services rendered abroad (Icelandic Coast Guard, 2013, p. 7).

Consequently, the days of active duty in the sea around Iceland have decreased considerably. In 2012, the three Coast Guard vessels spent a total of 465 days of active duty on sea, of which 161 days involved duties outside Icelandic waters i.e., assignments on behalf of European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), border control in the Mediterranean on behalf of the EU FRONTEX mission as well as tugging scrap metal from Canada to Grenaa in Denmark (Icelandic Coast Guard, 2013, p. 7). Still, an improvement from 2011 when Coast Guard vessels actually had more days at sea abroad than in Icelandic waters, due to participation of *Ægir* in FRONTEX (Icelandic Coast Guard, 2012, p. 5).

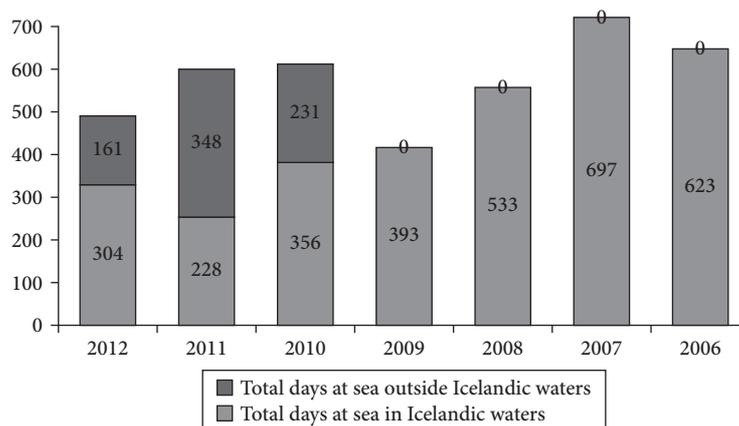


FIGURE 3.2 *Coast Guard vessels Total days at sea.*

Source: Icelandic Coast Guard (2013). Yearly report 2012. Reykjavik

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The reign of austerity has also affected operational capabilities of air search and rescue. At its disposal the Coast Guard has three Aerospatiale Super Puma AS-332L1 rescue helicopters as well as one Dash 8 Q300 surveillance aeroplane. At full operational performance, with two helicopters and the aeroplane, the Coast Guard can fly rescue missions up to 250 nm. If the aircraft is unavailable, the range is reduced to 150 nm (Chief of Operations Icelandic Coast Guard, 2014). In 2011 the Coast Guard had only two deployable Super Pumas available for 80% of the year, due to regular maintenance and upgrade, and for the remaining 20% of the time one Super Puma was available for search and rescue missions (Icelandic Coast Guard, 2012, p. 5). Consequently, for 2.5 months in 2011 the Coast Guard could fly their rescue helicopters no further than 20 nm from land as the crew had to be brought to safety in case the helicopter was to be abandoned (Chief of Operations Icelandic Coast Guard, 2014).

Lack of resources, compounded by government cutbacks, meant that, the Coast Guard did not have the necessary capability to deal with a large oil spill outside harbors, and was capable of only pulling a large tanker to safety (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2009, p. 99), although three ships are believed to be needed to provide adequate safety response. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the number of cruise ships and passengers visiting Iceland is on the rise, with the foreseeable consequences that the Coast Guard will not be able to provide adequate emergency response to deal with an accident involving hundreds, or even thousands of people, needing rescue from the sea.

Icelandic security and defense cooperation in the North Atlantic

Search and rescue obligations in the north, the closure of NASKEF, and financial cutbacks within the Coast Guard, following the financial crisis of 2008, invariably brings attention to possible security cooperation in the North Atlantic. Shortly after the closure of NASKEF, Iceland concluded a number of bilateral cooperative agreements with Norway and Denmark in April 2007, the United Kingdom in May 2008, and Canada in October 2010.² These agreements centered on increasing cooperation between Iceland and its neighbors in the North Atlantic through joint exercises and sharing of information, and are in accordance with the objectives outlined in the 2011 Arctic Policy. Although bilateral, these agreements

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cannot be separated from the fact that the signatories are NATO members as references are made to specific NATO policy documents, dictating host nation support as well as sharing of information amongst NATO members. Furthermore, each of these agreements clearly spells out that the signatories are NATO members and that the documents are founded on the North Atlantic Treaty.

If increased bilateral cooperation of Iceland with its neighbors is grounded on NATO membership, is NATO then a possible forum for increasing societal security in the North Atlantic? NATO is after all a military alliance and as such was the bedrock of Icelandic security and defense policy during the Cold War, but there is also a societal element to NATO which Iceland can exploit.

NATO exercise Dynamic Mercy is an interesting example of how a military organization can provide added value within the realm of societal security. Held bi-annually in the Baltic and the North Atlantic, its aim is to:

practise and develop inter-regional and cross-boundary cooperation and co-ordination between the RCCs [Rescue Coordination Centres] of Allies in NATO's northern region and between any Partner nations that have common Search and Rescue Region (SRR) boundaries with those Allies. (NATO, 2012, p. 4)

To that end, its objectives are to "Practise the conduct of SAR [search and rescue operations] operations in accordance with IMO and ICAO Regulations" (NATO, 2012, p. 4). Although a NATO exercise, organized by NATO Maritime Command in Northwood, Dynamic Mercy does not have any military connotation at all. Of course, rescue exercises in the North Atlantic can surely be conducted on a bilateral, or a multilateral, basis between participating states, but NATO's involvement facilitates cross-border/boundary cooperation between North Atlantic states which otherwise would be more difficult, such as standardization in equipment and procedures.

The 2012 Dynamic Mercy exercise is composed of two separate scenarios: (1) Search and rescue of an aeroplane, flying from Egilsstaðir Iceland, to Stavanger Norway, which went missing north east of the Faroe Islands. (2) Search and rescue of missing people in the aftermath of an earthquake on Jan Mayen, and the eventual evacuation of the island. The latter scenario is further complicated by one of the rescue planes being diverted to Greenland because of a massive fuel leak. In all, participating in the exercise were Icelandic, Norwegian, Faroese, and Danish assets and rescue centers. The focus of these scenarios is to respond to crisis

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situations which have risen because of an accident or natural disaster. There is no perceived adversary or an enemy. The purpose is to simply utilize assets and rescue centers in the North Atlantic to come to the aid of people needing help.

Whether or not NATO will move further into the direction of alleviating societal security threats among its members remains to be seen. After all, what NATO says or does is nothing more than what its 28 member states can agree on. It can be argued that further naval activity in the North Atlantic, under NATO aegis, is beneficial for maritime safety, but the counter-argument can also be made that by doing so, especially after the Ukraine crisis, invites Russian suspicion of re-militarization of the North Atlantic.

Conclusions

The Arctic security environment has undergone dramatic transformation in the last 25 years. Arctic states have moved from possible military confrontation, in a traditional zero-sum realist game, to grappling with common risks and threats deriving from increased human activity in the Arctic region.

Even though the security picture has altered, Iceland is tackling the same fundamental problem which plagued it during the Cold War: how to make up for its internal weaknesses, i.e., lack of capabilities, by drawing on the strength of an external actor. Iceland did so successfully for over 50 years through a bilateral defense agreement with the USA and by accepting US troops on its soil. Of course, the rationale for US military forces in Iceland was to secure the sea lanes of communication across the Atlantic and deter any possible Soviet aggression toward Iceland, but US search and rescue capabilities played a vital role for over 30 years in improving the safety of seafarers in the North Atlantic.

The departure of the 56th Rescue Squadron increased traffic in the seas around Iceland and government cutbacks have put increasing pressure on Icelandic authorities to seek external cooperation. Current developments seem to suggest that intentionally, or simply reflexively, Icelandic policy-makers are in fact moving toward fellow NATO members and NATO to be that significant partner which can alleviate the strain on Icelandic capabilities in the North Atlantic. Paradoxically though, the old hardware of the Cold War era (i.e., warships, helicopters) as well as the

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joint military structure of NATO may be an essential piece in the puzzle. Although, this time around Iceland is not seeking military security from a possible aggressor but capabilities to deal with human security threats which Iceland is unable to tackle on its own.

Notes

- 1 Translated from Icelandic by author.
- 2 These agreements can be viewed on the webpage of the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.utanrikisraduneyti.is/verkefni/althjoda-og-oryggissvid/varnar-og-oryggismal/grannrikjasamstarf/> (accessed 03.01.2014).

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4

Greenlandic Paradiplomatic Relations

Maria Ackrén

Abstract: *Paradiplomacy has become a concept for regional governments acting within international relations, i.e. sub-national jurisdictions developing their own international agenda. As part of the “soft security” dimension within international relations, paradiplomacy can be seen as a subordinated concept with a focus on non-military collaboration and exchanges with regions in focus. Regions become involved in transnational organizations and participate in international conferences and networks. This chapter focuses on the case of Greenland as an Arctic player in the new era of geopolitics in the entire North. How does Greenland operate in international relations in different policy fields? What is the current political strategy for Greenland, while the focus is on hydrocarbon and mineral assets? What role does the Greenlandic government play in these affairs?*

Keywords: Greenland; international relations; paradiplomacy

Heininen, Lassi, ed. *Security and Sovereignty in the North Atlantic*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

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Introduction

Greenland has a long history as part of the Kingdom of Denmark, dating back to 1721, when it was in the auspices of being a colony and later becoming a totally integrated part of Denmark in 1953 due to constitutional changes in Denmark. In 1979, Greenland reached Home Rule according to the Faroese model and in 2009 Greenland received even more autonomy due to the new Self-Government Act. International relations within the Greenlandic context is quite a new affair, since Denmark has been and continuously responsible for overall competencies regarding foreign and security policy (see e.g. Bertelsen, this volume; Ackrén and Jakobsen, Forthcoming). However, Greenland has become more aware of its possibilities to act within international relations as an independent nation. This is also in line with the political will of becoming a sovereign state in the future (Bertelsen, this volume).

The first international involvement from a Greenlandic perspective took its toll during World War II, when Denmark was under German occupation. Like Iceland (see Petursson, this volume), Greenland became an American outpost for the US military and received a strategic position and military bases were established on the island. The strategic geographical position of Greenland (lying between North America and Europe) has been of military importance until the Cold War. After the Cold War a more “soft” form of security dimension has become more vital. Climate change, claims for extended national jurisdictions related to the continental shelf, exploitation and exploration of natural resources, and the protection of the indigenous Inuit population are all issues that have demanded and continue to demand complex negotiations between Danish and Greenlandic authorities (see Ackrén and Jakobsen, Forthcoming).

In this chapter, the story of Greenland will be viewed from a paradiplomatic perspective. Paradiplomacy is the way of soft security that Greenland can use in its international relations between other states and nations, while still being part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Paradiplomacy not only takes place on a global level but also reflects the interrelationships with Denmark on a national level as well as what the Government of Greenland does on a local level. The chapter is divided into three main parts; first a short discussion around the concept of paradiplomacy is outlined, then the development of paradiplomacy is

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also mentioned, and last but not least, the rest of the chapter illustrates the case of Greenland through different policy fields.

The concept of paradiplomacy

Paradiplomacy is defined as the actions of regional governments or sub-national jurisdictions taken on international relations where they develop their own international agenda with other actors on the global scene, including both state and non-state actors (Lecours, 2008; Wolff, 2007). Paradiplomacy can therefore be seen as a link to the “soft security” dimension within international relations with regions in focus. Regions might open offices and conduct economical missions abroad; become members or partners of regional/international organizations and/or participate as independent nations in regional/international conferences or networks (Lecours and Moreno, 2006). This also fits with the human security dimension encompassing different social and cultural contexts where security and insecurity is dealt with through various social institutions. The most common examples of paradiplomacy have emerged in Western industrialized liberal democracies, such as Quebec, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Flanders, Wallonia and as well as in several German *Länder* and some French regions. All these regions have developed strategies and implemented plans for their international action (Lecours, 2008). For example, in Canada, provinces play a formal role in the implementation of international treaties. This takes place within thematic intergovernmental forums. In Belgium, the regional governments have the competencies in international relations in areas where the regional governments have already achieved domestic rights (Lecours, 2008).

Theoretically paradiplomacy can be seen to cover at least three different layers of politics. The first layer corresponds to economic issues and in this context a regional government aims at developing an international presence in order to attract foreign investments into the region, and promoting target markets for exports. In Catalonia this has been in the form of public-private partnerships or bodies with specific remits in matters of economic development or culture (Keating, 2000). Another vehicle for this has been the interregional associations especially in Europe, such as, the Council of Local Authorities and Regions of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe,

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and the Assembly of European Regions (AER) (Keating, 2000). The second layer of paradiplomacy involves cooperation in several policy areas, such as, education,¹ technical development, cultural development, environment and other areas, which are not entirely focused on economic gain. Cultural issues, for instance, are important in regions with their own languages and cultures. It is, for instance, important for Quebec to link into the wider Francophone world, German-speaking regions in Europe have common interests across state boundaries and so on (Keating, 2000). The third layer of paradiplomacy involves political considerations. This usually involves the international expression or voice of an identity distinct from the one projected by the central state government (Lecours, 2008; Keating, 2000). Here relations between Hong Kong/China could be illustrated. Hong Kong maintains its own delegation in several international organizations alongside China: e.g., Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asian Development Bank, the Bank for International Settlements, Copyright Clearance Centre, International Olympic Committee (IOC), and others (Wolff, 2007). All three layers of paradiplomacy might intervene with each other in one and the same region. This is especially the case of Greenland, which has bilateral agreements with the European Union; participates in cultural, environmental, and educational cooperation within several different organizations, networks, and institutions; and is pursuing its indigenous rights in international organizations where matters related to indigenous rights are handled.

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Paradiplomacy is an activity that typically falls in a legal and constitutional gray zone, since foreign and security policy exclusively is in the hands of the state or central level of government in a country (Lecours, 2008). This is true in most unitary states, but in federal arrangements this situation is more blurred. The Canadian Constitution, for example, is not clear about the foreign policy powers of the provinces, while Belgium on the other hand has a principle called *in foro interno, in foro externo*, which means that there is an absence of a hierarchy of legal norms. Federal laws and regional decrees stand on an equal footing, meaning that they cannot overrule each other (Bursens and Deforche, 2010).

There are also other motives for sub-national regions to be involved in international affairs. There might be a process of national aspirations or political parties within the region, which seek sovereign statehood or are driving forces in an ongoing nation-building process (Keating, 2000). Regions containing strong nationalist movements have a tendency to be

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more involved internationally (Lecours and Moreno, 2006). Scotland with its Scottish National Party has aspirations of becoming a Scottish state. Scotland is part of and participates in international forums like the EU, having their own Scottish Executive EU office in Brussels. The region has also established a US office operating out of the British Embassy in Washington DC, and recently Scotland established an office in China, based in the British Embassy in Beijing (Wolff, 2007).

If we turn our eyes toward the circumpolar North, we also find examples of what can be illustrated by Inuit diplomacy. The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)² is a true example of diplomacy between non-state actors as well as states, since ICC is also a member of the Arctic Council. The ICC includes citizens from four different states (Canada, the USA, Denmark/Greenland, and Russia) and in many cases the organization has a strong sense of national patriotism alongside their common Inuit identity (Shadian, 2013, 2010). The Arctic can be seen as an example of how centralized states are interacting to create a new type of international dialogue, where the Arctic Council is taking a leading role with both member states and non-state actors as members to cooperate and shape policy-making at the international level (Fabbi, 2012).

With experiences of the above-mentioned cases in mind, this chapter will elucidate how paradiplomacy is functioning in a more peripheral sub-national jurisdiction focusing on Greenland. Greenland can be seen as a Scandinavian welfare model but at the same time it also qualifies as a developing region, since the economy is dependent on the block grant from Denmark fixed at the 2009 level. The home-rule system derives from 1979, but since Greenland has been a former colony and recently become more involved in international relations it is interesting to see how Greenland has managed the new role of becoming more and more self-regulating in areas such as international relations. However, Denmark as the metropolitan state has the exclusive rights of foreign affairs. With the new Self-Government Act from 2009, Greenland has some room for maneuver in international relations, which will be further elaborated.

Development of paradiplomacy

Criekemans (2008) has traced three waves of paradiplomacy made by sub-states or sub-national jurisdictions. The first wave derives from the 1980s onwards. During this period a growing number of non-central

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governments are attracting foreign direct investments through own initiatives (e.g., Catalonia's early efforts in Japan) or using their culture and identity as a trade mark for placing oneself on the international map. These initiatives were of a more ad hoc nature with a minor form of integration. The second wave illustrates the 1990s, where the sub-state entities of certain European countries had taken a more formal step into diplomatic relationships, because of legal reforms (e.g., the Belgian state reform in 1993, which awarded formal *ius tractati* and *ius legationis* to the regions and communities). The current third wave is characterized by steps in the direction of a "verticalization" of the organizational structure of the administration or department of external/foreign affairs. This is an ongoing process, where the sub-states are forming their own foreign policy within their metropolitan states. One recent example of this is the Portuguese autonomous region of the Azores in the Atlantic. The amendment of the 2004 Constitution in Portugal changed the framework of the regional system of self-government, and as a consequence a new amendment of the Political and Administrative Statute of the Autonomous Region of the Azores from 2009 now states that the islands can pursue their own international policy with its own agenda and objectives. This will be done in cooperation with foreign regional bodies. The Azores can also take part in organizations created by international conventions (Lanceiro, 2009).

The Danish strategy in the Arctic is very much focused around the relationship between Copenhagen and Nuuk. This has both been stressed in the Danish-Greenlandic joint strategy from 2008 and in the Kingdom of Denmark's Arctic strategy from 2011 (Bailes and Heininen, 2012). The aim of the latest strategy can be seen as a reaction and response to the major ongoing environmental and geopolitical challenges in a growing global interest toward the Arctic and during the same time Denmark tries to redefine its role and strengthen its position as a key player in the Arctic in terms of referring to the whole kingdom including Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

The paradiplomatic part of the strategy emphasizes the cooperation between the three parts (Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands) of the kingdom based on a mutual understanding of preventing conflicts and avoiding militarization in the Arctic. Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands will work for a peaceful, secure, and safe Arctic with self-sustaining growth and development and with respect for fragile environment and nature, with the close cooperation of network with

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international partners (*Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020*).

The Greenlandic case

Before the advent of Home Rule in 1979, Greenland was totally under Danish jurisdiction, since it had become a county amongst other counties in Denmark from 1953. Before that Greenland was a Danish colony through the years of 1721–1953. With the introduction of Home Rule, Greenland had no real voice within international relations, since this matter was considered as a Danish overall matter referring to the whole kingdom. The call for more autonomy within international affairs came during the 1980s with the withdrawal from the European Economic Community (EEC)³ and the option of a status as an OCT (Overseas Countries and Territories). This was the first international decision ever made in Greenland. It was a reaction against the fishing quotas that Denmark had made within the EEC, which allowed vessels from other EEC-countries to fish in Greenlandic waters. There were, however, some problems in the 1990s regarding the cod fisheries due to changing sea temperatures. The EEC and later the EU continued to buy the right to catch cod in Greenlandic waters, but there were some concerns that this was not a very sustainable solution (see Gad, 2013).

In 2006, a joint declaration concerning EU/Greenland partnership was issued as an overall agreement covering different fields of interests, such as fisheries agreement, and a new special partnership agreement was signed regarding minerals, transportation, and climate research (Gad, 2013). This has been a result of the Greenlandic initiative on the “Arctic Window” policy within the EU’s Northern Dimension and as an aspect of the Commission’s proposal for enhancing Arctic related cooperation with Greenland (Heininen, 2011).

With the new Self-Government Act from 2009, the Government of Greenland can negotiate at an international level in agreement with the Danish state especially in areas of direct Greenlandic interests. The Greenlandic government can also sign international agreements and become a member within such international organizations that are of vital importance for Greenland without any intervention from the Danish state (*Lov om Grønlands Selvstyre*, 2009). Greenland is following quite the same system as the Azores in this case.

Paradiplomacy within the economic sphere

Greenland is economically dependent on Denmark through the annual block grant, which is now lying at DKK 3.4 billion according to the 2009 level. The main industries in Greenland are fishing industry, mining, and other private businesses. There is only a very low level of production of goods and services for the domestic market and therefore imports exceed exports (Jónsson, 1999). However, there is a lot of optimism regarding the future endeavors since, oil, gas, and mineral exploration is taking place both offshore and onshore in Greenland. The possible new extractive industries will attract a lot of international investors. According to the new Self-Government Act from 2009, there is a statement that the block grant will be reduced to half the amount if the incomes from natural resources exceed DKK 75 million (*Lov om Grønlands Selvstyre*, 2009).

The government of Greenland has taken has a cleartwo-step toward exploration and exploitation of natural resources 2009. First, there is a discussion around the issue of exploration and exploitation of oil and gas with the policy of licenses. In the second strategy plan, there is an outline of the policy regarding minerals (*Redegørelse til Inatsisartut vedrørende råstofaktiviteter i Grønland*, 2011). There is a political ambition that all activities within the area of extractive industries are made in such a way that it takes all aspects of security, safety, health, and environmental issues into account. The government has a goal to develop the mineral industry as a central economic branch in Greenland. The estimation is that Greenland will during the next five to ten years have at least five active mines with over 1000 citizens working within this business (*Redegørelse til Inatsisartut vedrørende råstofaktiviteter i Grønland*, 2011).

The Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum (BMP) in Greenland has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Energy Board in Canada since 2010. This agreement's purpose is to exchange experiences about management practices and issues concerning extractive industries. It is an agreement where "best practices" are in the forefront regarding regulations and procedures within this field (The Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum in Greenland). Another agreement has been signed with the Norwegian Oil Bureau. This is an agreement focused on the oil and gas sector (The Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum in Greenland). Recently BMP was divided into two different parts: As of 1 January 2013, BMP has been renamed to the Mineral License and Safety Authority (MLSA).

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The tasks of the former BMP have been distributed to several business units and partly underneath the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, and partly a new Environment Agency for Mineral Resources Activities (EAMR), which falls under the Ministry of Nature and Environment. This was a result of a revision of Greenland Parliament Act No. 26 of 18 December 2012, as an amendment of Greenland Parliament Act No. 7 of 7th December 2009 (*Report to Inatsisartut on Mineral Resource Activities in 2013: Annual Report*, 2013).

Within the economic sphere Greenland has been active in negotiating favorable agreements with the European Union. Greenland, together with Denmark, was a member in the EEC until 1985. In 1985, Greenland seceded from the EEC as the first territory to ever leave the EEC, but established agreements through the so-called OCT-order (Overseas Countries and Territories) (Gad, 2013). A fishery agreement was struck and has been renewed in several occasions. The agreements with the EU is not just focused on the fishery sector, but they also include cooperation within areas such as research (especially climate research), education, energy, tourism, and food security (*Grønlandsk-dansk selvstyrekommis-sions betænkning om selvstyre i Grønland*, 2008).

New agreements have been struck between Greenland and EU recently in February 2014. Greenland will receive € 217.8 million (DKK 1.6 billion) until 2020. This means an annual grant of DKK 228 million to 2020. The funding will merely go to educational purposes, especially the primary school and profession based educations. The agreement is covering the period 2014–20 (*EU vil give Grønland 1,6 milliarder kroner*, 2014).

Since 1992, a Greenlandic representative has worked in the Danish diplomatic mission in Brussels and held diplomatic status. Today, four persons work full-time in Brussels for Greenland within the Greenlandic Representation in Brussels. First, Greenland was part of the Danish delegation, but now both Greenland and the Faroe Islands have their own offices with own entrances (Gad, 2013).

Greenland can be compared to other European regions in this sense: – for instance, Bavaria in Germany and Scotland in the UK do have similar areas of interests as Greenland in relation to the EU. In the case of Bavaria, international trade, international cultural or educational policies, and even tourism are seen as separate areas, which are managed by separate institutions. In Scotland, public diplomacy has been in focus in the cultural and economic fields (Criekemans, 2008).

Furthermore, there is a lot of unity among businesses in Greenland. The framework regarding business policy is stated by the Government of Greenland, but the Bureau of Foreign Affairs is responsible for Greenland's offensive interests, such as, export, foreign investment, business with foreign countries, and so on (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013). A new agreement was signed between South Korea and Greenland in 2012 regarding cooperation within education and business. The Self-Government Act from 2009 gives Greenland the right to negotiate and sign bilateral agreements with other governments, which relates to Greenlandic issues according to the Act (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013).

According to the Government of Greenland's strategy from 2011 the main goal is to enhance the foreign policy within the economic sphere for the next 10 years to come. The aim is to make Greenland a nation of economic independence and to develop a self-government in that direction (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013).

Paradiplomacy within several other policy areas

Greenland takes part in several international organizations as an independent nation. One of the most important ones is the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). The ICC is an international non-governmental organization, which works for Inuit rights internationally and is supporting Inuit initiatives within national jurisdictions. Its governing body is the ICC General Assembly composed of delegations from Greenland, Canada, Alaska, and Russia. Between General Assemblies, held every third year, the ICC is led by a president and an executive council (Innuksuk, 1994). The ICC has UN membership as an NGO in ECOSOC and is therefore participating in various UN negotiations. One example illustrates the 2001 Stockholm Agreement on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (Shadian, 2010).

The ICC is recognizing that Inuit rights extend across the circumpolar regions, including marine areas and transcend the national boundaries of Arctic states (Innuksuk, 1994). The ICC launched an own Arctic strategy in the form of a declaration at the Ilulissat meeting in 2008 regarding the issue of sovereignty. According to the ICC, the form of sovereignty should be on a non-state basis, where the indigenous people should be included as an integral part in any sovereignty arrangement taken place in the Arctic. The claims of greater autonomy should be linked to

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indigenous forms of governance and the rights to own land/water and other natural resources by the Inuit (Shadian, 2013). With respect to other regions, such as, Québec, Wallonia, and Catalonia their paradiplomatic activities are very much centered on the issue of exporting identity and culture similar to Greenland (Crikemans, 2008). It only differs in what kind of identity and culture we are referring to. In the Greenlandic case it is about the Inuit traditional life, in Québec and Wallonia it is about French identity and culture and in Catalonia it is all about Catalanian identity and culture that the regions are exporting to other areas.

Another important organization is the Arctic Council (AC), where Greenland has been one of the “founding fathers,” signing the document on behalf of Denmark, when the AC was established in 1996. The organization functions as a forum for the Arctic states and nations in the Arctic rim (Motzfeldt, 2006). The Arctic Council is a high-level inter-governmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction between the Arctic states and indigenous peoples. The permanent member states are: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the USA. Added to this there are six permanent international organizations representing Arctic indigenous peoples. The most important issues within the Arctic Council have been related to climate change, environment and biodiversity (Motzfeldt, 2006).

The Kingdom of Denmark's chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2009–11 has highlighted peoples of the Arctic, the International Polar Year (IPY) legacy, climate change, biodiversity, megatrends (in the Arctic), integrated resource management, operational cooperation, and the Arctic Council in a “new geopolitical framework” (Bailes and Heininen, 2012). The Swedish chairmanship in 2011–13 has been focused on the establishment of a permanent secretariat placed in Tromsø, Norway. Greenland has been active in the Task Force on Institutional Issues, which has given the basis for the secretariat. The problem during the Swedish chairmanship has been the focus on only member states' participation in the Arctic Council meetings, which has left Greenland and the Faroe Islands outside important meetings. This missing chair policy was also the triggering factor for the Prime Minister Aleqa Hammond's boycott at the Arctic Council meeting in Kiruna, Sweden, on 15 May 2013. It was a protest against the Swedish chairmanship and was a notification to the member states within the council to consider if Greenland and the Faroe Islands might be able to receive the same

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rights as the other partners around the table in the council. The meeting in Kiruna accepted Japan, China, India, Singapore, South Korea, and Italy as new permanent observer countries in The Arctic council. Now the Canadian chairmanship is ongoing in the period of 2013–15 (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013). Canada has reinforced the chairs for Greenland and the Faroe Islands to be partners again around the table, but with the Kingdom of Denmark as the title on the representatives' name tags. The Greenlandic flag has also been abolished from the scene at the Arctic Council with only Denmark's flag symbolizing the whole Realm.

Greenland also takes part in several other cooperations with foreign countries. Denmark and Greenland have a Joint Committee with the USA, where cooperation is focused within the field of security policy, since the only American base, the Thule Airbase, is still operating as a strategic base for satellite surveillance. The Joint Committee is a result of the Igaliku Agreement signed in 2004, which updates the defense agreement from 1951 between Denmark/Greenland and the USA, includes cooperation regarding environmental issues at Thule, and also takes technical and economic cooperation into account. The long-term goal on defense involves a stronger focus on the tasks of the Danish Armed Forces in the Arctic and the North Atlantic (see also Petursson, volume). The Danish state is present due to its sovereignty over Greenland and the Faroe Islands (*Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020*). Since there is a lack of a coast guard in Greenland, the Danish Armed Forces handles security and surveillance around the island as well as on the island through its Sirius Patrol.

An other field of cooperation is language and education. In 2013, for instance, the professional English classes at the Business School in Nuuk were doubled and the Business School in Qaqortoq has also grown. Another feature of the collaboration is the Joint Science Education week in Kangerlussuaq for graduate research training and exchange (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013). The permanent committee has been having meetings in Washington DC with regard to the civil use of Pituffik (Thule), for instance, within exploration of natural resources and research.

At the global level, Greenland has been actively taking part together with Denmark in matters related to indigenous people's rights under the Human Rights Council. The government supports the work within

the UN Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples Issues (UNPFII) (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013).

Greenland takes also part in the Nordic cooperation through its membership in the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers since 1984. The most important issues in a Greenlandic context have been environment, indigenous peoples' status, and security (especially regarding the Thule Airbase). Greenland has established a Nordic Institute (NAPA.) since 1987 (Søndergaard, 2006). In 1985, another Nordic cooperation was established through the West-Nordic initiative with Iceland, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland as partners. This cooperation has further been developed into what is called NORA (North Atlantic Cooperation) with North- and West-Norway as members as well (Lytthans, 2006). There is also collaborating in the field of education, where a new Nordic Master program will be established between five universities in the NORA region, University of Greenland being one of the partners in such a cooperation.

At the national level there are so-called national sessions between the Danish Prime Minister, the Faroese Premier, and the Greenlandic Premier, which are held annually in all three parts of the kingdom. There are also meetings at the official level with officials from different departments both in Denmark and Greenland. The Greenlandic government has a foreign office, which handles the coordination and contact and it functions as an advisory board in international relations between Nuuk and the Greenlandic Representation in Copenhagen and the Greenlandic Representation in Brussels. The foreign office has a broad range of matters on its agenda, such as, the Arctic cooperation, the EU, the UN, Nordic cooperation, Indigenous Peoples, the Joint Committee between the USA and Denmark/Greenland, foreign- and security policy, and foreign commercial matters (*Udenrigsdirektoratet*). In the parliament (*Inatsisartut*) there is a foreign- and security committee, which was established in 1988. The committee is a mirror agency to the foreign office at the governmental level.

Political considerations regarding Greenland

The election on 12 March 2013 has been decisive for which way Greenland is going to go regarding international affairs. Before the election, each party profiled itself in relation to international relations. *Inuit Ataqatigiit* (IA) has been in the forefront in the international field. IA's policy is

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to develop Greenland into a fully sovereign state both politically and economically. Foreign affairs are important matters for the party in question. Greenland should become an equal player in the international arena together with other states or nations. IA is engaging in international agreements between other nations and is also establishing agreements with international companies, especially in the area of extractive industries. The goal is to develop the foreign office into a Department of Foreign Affairs (*Inuit Ataqatigiit*, 2013).

Demokraatit (D) also has a policy regarding international relations. Their policy is more limited to keep *status quo* in the sense that Denmark will continue to take care of the overall foreign- and security policy. *Demokraatit* would though like to have embassies in those cities which are important for Greenland. They have suggested opening embassies in the USA and Canada, and to keeping Greenland within NATO, even if Greenland were to become an independent state (*Demokraatit*).

Siumut (S), currently the leading party in the country, is also in favor of independence. The party is working toward preparation of what the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) will bring regarding the claims of the extended continental shelf that Denmark/Greenland has put forward to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). The application is still in process and will be delivered during this year (2014). *Siumut* is also in favor of better management of marketing Greenlandic products to the world markets and would like to see more trade agreements with other countries. In addition the party would like to work toward improving the country's international representation. Another point in the party's program is to establish some form of military in Greenland, for example, having an own navy or military service⁴ (*Siumut*, 2013).

Atassut (A) is more conservative than the other parties. The party expects Denmark to have the overall control over foreign- and security matters. *Atassut* wants the voice of Greenland to be heard in the EU, the ICC, and the Nordic cooperation, especially regarding the fishing sector and culture according to the party's program (*Atassut*).

The other two minor parties: *Kattusseqatigiit Partiiat* (KP) and the new party *Partii Inuit* (PI) do not have a special international agenda, since these parties are more focused on domestic issues. *Partii Inuit* is a new nationalistic party with independence on its agenda, but it is not clear what kind of foreign policy it wants.

According to the coalition agreement of the new government 2013–17 the international agenda is to enhance the Greenlandic competence regarding international relations. The possibilities within the OCT-order in regard to the EU should be better utilized and the trade with neighboring countries should be developed. New markets for Greenlandic products are also mentioned, but there are no details about what kind of markets the government is thinking of. Within the security dimension it is mentioned that there will be more control over the shipping traffic in Greenlandic waters, since this will probably increase due to climate change. Cooperation regarding SAR (search and rescue) operations will take place with neighboring countries (Koalitionsaftale 2013–17: “Et samlet land – et samlet folk”). The control over Greenlandic waters is in the hands of the Danish military vessels supervising the area under the Arctic Command (located in Nuuk). The cooperation with neighboring countries is the same rhetoric used as in the Kingdom of Denmark’s Arctic strategy.

A Greenlandic Arctic strategy?

Greenland is very active internationally in every field of policy that relates to paradiplomacy following other similar sub-national jurisdictions, with special emphasis by the government on impact of extraction of natural resources on the economy. The decision to open a Greenlandic Representation in Washington DC to discuss Greenlandic interests in North America (the USA and Canada) made in 2012 by the Greenlandic parliament is currently being implemented. The representation is done in with the cooperation of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs based on the same model as the Greenlandic Representation in Brussels (*Udenrigspolitisk Redegørelse*, 2013). The office will open this year (2014).

The Faroe Islands and Greenland have had Home Rule since 1948 and 1979 respectively. The Home Rule arrangements have been continuously modernized and developed throughout time. The Takeover Act on Power of Matters and Fields of Responsibility and the Act on Faroese Foreign Policy Powers of 2005 in the Faroe Islands and the Greenlandic counterpart has made it possible for the two island autonomies to negotiate and take part in international relations in a paradiplomatic way (*Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020*). The territories are heading toward more and more autonomy,

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and even independence as in the Greenlandic case, which means that these territories will become actors also in a more overall Arctic way (see also Bertelsen, this volume). What kind of role these sub-national jurisdictions will play in the future is hard to predict, but for Greenland with its major assets of natural resources, one can predict that as a future sovereign country it will have a lot to say about indigenous rights, environmental issues, and development in this area of the world.

The Faroe Islands have recently launched their own Arctic Strategy in 2013. The Faroe Islands have emphasized their area of interests in their own strategy, such as, economic opportunities, fisheries, research and education, the environment, and maritime safety and emergency response (Bailes and Jákupsstovu, 2013). Greenland might have to follow suit in writing its own Arctic Strategy in the near future to overcome some of the current disputes between Denmark and Greenland. Such a strategy might focus not only on the extractive industries, fisheries, research and education, the environment, but also on the culture or traditional values within the Greenlandic society. Greenland might have to find a balance in the issues of traditional life styles with fishing and hunting and the new modern form of developing the society into a mining and/or oil nation. Greenland's overall aim is to become the first Inuit state in the world, and so there are compromises to be made in order to protect indigenous livelihoods while at the same time developing a prosperous economic future.

Conclusions

A historic day in Greenlandic history was 24 October 2013, when the ban of extracting uranium was lifted and at the same time London Mining was given the green light for exploitation of iron ore in the *Godthåbsfjord*, 150 km northeast of the capital, Nuuk. London Mining is now on the lookout for powerful investors. A recent scientific report (*Til gagn for Grønland*) shows that it might take longer period before actual exploitation will take place in Greenland than what the government has estimated: 20–30 years. According to the report, Greenland's economy would require 12 large-scale projects between 2014 and 2040 in order to get the economy in balance. With this calculation in mind there should always be five projects going on at the same time (see *Greenland Oil & Minerals*, Issue 9, 2014).

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It is hard to predict what the next move will be for Greenland to deal with paradiplomacy. The politicians sometimes switch their policy on very short notice and we have also recently seen politicians change party affiliation or establish a party of their own (e.g., Hans Enoksen established *Partii Naleraq*, because of his disputes within *Siumut*). The Government of Greenland will pursue its aim to keep the country in the forefront as a viable option for multinational corporations to invest in, while keeping in mind the accompanying problems it may have with these corporations. This does not seem to be the case in every context.

Regarding the security domain, it is most likely that Greenland will keep its NATO framework with collaboration with the USA. The USA would probably be seen as a natural shelter country regarding this matter.

Notes

- 1 In the North cooperation within education and research takes the form of networks, such as, the Northern Research Forum (NRF) and the University of the Arctic.
- 2 The ICC was founded in 1977 and has become a trademark of Inuit cooperation between Greenland, Alaska, Canada, and Russia.
- 3 A referendum was held in 1985 by which Greenland withdrew from the EEC (Heininen, 2011).
- 4 However, this is quite unlikely since a calculation of possible military force would amount to between 10,000 and 15,000 persons, i.e. a very small force with no significance.

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5

The USA in the Arctic: Superpower or Spectator?

Michael T. Corgan

Abstract: *Since its purchase of Alaska in 1867, the USA has paid only fitful attention to this region on its border. Episodes of concern have come and gone but America's "Arctic aware" community has remained small. Cold War strategic concerns faded. Only the oil of Alaska's North Slope provided continuing interest. Now two factors, the melting of Arctic ice and a possible resumption of Cold War-type tensions between the USA and Russia, have re-awakened interest but no real action. Past administrations have issued nominal Arctic policies but these are perfunctory. The US chairing of the Arctic Council in 2015 may bring forth sustained, serious attention to the Arctic but will the USA act as superpower or remain a spectator?*

Keywords: the Arctic; military security/strategy; navy; the USA

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Introduction

There are quite a number of people in the USA who are experts in the various realms of Arctic affairs: security, transport, boundary issues, resources exploitation, aboriginal affairs to name just a few. These may be said to comprise an “Arctic aware” community. Does all this add up to a major focus of US attention to this region which has occupied so much attention of the other Arctic states in the past decade or two? As is the focus here, do security issues of the Arctic reflect the role of the USA as the strongest military power or are Arctic affairs relegated to a secondary role, if even that? In other words, is the USA a superpower or spectator in the Arctic?

Historical evidence could well suggest that the involvement of the USA in the Arctic has been doomed from the start to a plague of misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and missed opportunities. Now the most militarily powerful of the Arctic nations, in whichever way they are defined, the USA is actually, in the words of one Canadian specialist in Arctic affairs, a “reluctant Arctic power” at best (Heubert in Kraska, 2011, p. 256). James Kraska himself adumbrates this idea:

As a nation the United States views the Arctic with relatively minimal interest compared to every other Arctic nation, and enjoys a lackadaisical attitude borne from the perspective of a country with strong arctic allies and partners and the perception of a low-threat environment. (Kraska, 2011, p. 256)

From the beginning of its Arctic adventures, the USA has had an uncertain relationship with this last area of its expansions on the North American continent. Right from its purchase from Russia in 1867 for the bargain sum of \$7,200,000, Alaska was known as “Seward’s Folly” or “Seward’s Arctic Province.” Early attention in America’s new Arctic land had to wait until the celebrated “gold rush” of the late 1890s. However events elsewhere, particularly the Spanish-American War of 1898, drew the attention of the media and the public away from the faraway region. The Arctic would next come into popular regard through the reported exploits by a pair of US Navy explorers. First there was the claim of having actually reached the North Pole on foot by Robert E. Perry, Jr (later Admiral) on his 1908–09 expedition but his claim was almost immediately disputed. In retrospect, it seems that at best he only got within five miles of the geographic pole (Robinson, 2006). A somewhat similar controversy arose around the claims of Lieutenant

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Commander (later Admiral) Richard E. Byrd who claimed to have been the first to fly over the North Pole (with co-pilot Floyd Bennett) in May 1926. Like Admiral Peary, Byrd's claim was also challenged as soon as it was made. Nevertheless Byrd was awarded the country's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, in 1926 for his accomplishment (Polar Research Library, Ohio State). If Byrd was not the first to fly over the North Pole he was not even the first to promote trans-polar flight to an American public. In a 1922 *National Geographic* article by an Icelander, then resident in Canada, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, *The Arctic as an Air Route of the Future*, it was argued that the Arctic was a new "Polar Sea or Polar Mediterranean," a hub between continents which extended outward from it like spokes of a wheel. He even foresaw the populations of Canada and Siberia moving northward to the region. Both the sea and the islands abounding would become as valuable as well as the air routes over them (Stefansson, 1922, p. 289)

Cold War era

It was in the Cold War that the Arctic entered American consciousness again. The US Navy saw possibilities of transiting the Arctic seas submerged. In the summer of 1958 the nuclear submarine *USS Nautilus* made such a submerged transit from the Bering Sea to the Greenland Sea. A few weeks later another US submarine, *USS Skate*, surfaced at the North Pole. What was of great importance was the possibility of using the ice cap as a "bastion" under which ballistic missile firing submarines could hide until called into action.

With the ending of the Cold War, American attention on matters of security and national strategy rapidly shifted to other areas of greater immediate concern, particularly the Middle East. Many of the "Arctic aware" in the USA invariably called attention to the melting polar ice as portending a sea change in the role the Arctic would play in international affairs. However no serious and sustained efforts to fund the many proposals, scientific, commercial, and military, materialized. What might it take to return significant American attention to the Arctic in matters of security in both the military and constabulary realms?

US strategic thinking immediately after the Cold War focused on the role of the USA as the world's sole superpower. President George H. W. Bush's "New World Order" speech to a joint session of Congress

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in September 1990 exemplified this (Bush, 1990). The USA now assumed global strategic responsibilities but little if any of this thinking involved the Arctic. Only a few National Security Strategies, though required annually, were actually produced and the Arctic was not featured in any of them. However, Presidents Clinton, (George W.) Bush, and Obama did produce specific Arctic strategies of sorts and it is to these we turn.

Arctic strategies emerge: Clinton and George W. Bush

The first Arctic strategy came during the Clinton administration in 1994 (*Presidential Decision Directive 26 (PDD 26)*). It combined the Arctic and Antarctic in its scope but was never circulated (Bailes and Heininen, 2012, p. 53). Of course with no publicity the impact on public awareness and possible support for Arctic strategic enhancement were negligible. The attacks on US territory of September 2001 turned attention to direct threats to the US homeland. The first major public statement on the Arctic strategy of the USA after the Cold War came in the attack's aftermath during the administration President George W. Bush. This policy was simultaneously issued as National Security Presidential Directive NSPD-66, Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-25, *Arctic Region Policy (National Security Presidential Directive-66, 2009)*.

The document begins with an expected declaration that the USA is an Arctic nation and, in recognition of the 9/11 attacks, states that several developments, first among these being that "Altered national policies on homeland security and defense," have occasioned the Directive. The other developments enumerated are climate change, work of the Arctic Council, and fragility of the region and its resource potential. Lest there be any doubt that this is a policy formulated in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the policy section on National and Homeland Security Interests in the Arctic begins with an assurance found in the two National Security Strategy documents of the Bush administration issued in 2002 and 2006. "The United States...is prepared to operate either independently or in conjunction with other states to safeguard these interests." This "go it alone if necessary" language had been alarming to many US allies in National Security Strategies.

Interestingly, in the section on International Governance there was an assertion that "The geopolitical circumstances of the Arctic region" meant that, unlike the Antarctic, a broad scope Arctic treaty "is not

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appropriate or necessary.” Just what those different circumstances were is nowhere spelled out. But the USA being a bordering state with all sorts of resource and sovereignty claims in the Arctic but not the Antarctic is surely at the heart of the matter. However, somewhat surprisingly, given the views of many if not the great majority of those in the president’s own Republican Party, this claim of independent action in governance of the region is followed immediately by a statement that the Senate should act favorably on the US accession to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea promptly.

This nod to the international community can only make sense when one realizes that the NSPD-66/HSPD-25 was issued on 9 January 2009 when the Bush administration had only days to go and there was no chance of political challenge or recrimination from the president’s own base. The rest of the document goes on to outline, at greater length, proposed actions in the areas of scientific cooperation, transport, and economic and energy issues of the region. All this was to be “subject to the availability of appropriations.” Though given out in the waning moments of the administration, with no discussion of how any initiatives were to be funded, this Directive nevertheless spawned a great deal of activity by the many hardworking and involved participants in the US “Arctic aware” communities, both regional and epistemic.

US Navy responses to the Bush strategy

To judge how the Bush Directive on the Arctic, though that of a very “lame duck” president, had changed things, one needs to only observe that the Navy’s existing 2007 document on maritime strategy (CS 21) made only fleeting references to NATO, the Arabian Gulf/Indian Ocean, the Western Pacific and did not mention the Arctic at all (Department of the Navy, 2007). One of the first commentaries on the NSPD-66 in *The American Journal of International Law* observed that “The new directive results from the first comprehensive reassessment of US. Arctic policy in many years and seems likely to provide a framework for action by the Obama administration” (“Comprehensive Statement...”). Certainly this proved to be so for the military services in the new administration, particularly the Navy and the Coast Guard.

A Navy document produced in 2011 laid out what it called Arctic Drivers in the US military’s response to the Bush Directive (Department

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of the Navy, 2011). Behind this publication was the Navy's Task Force Climate Change established by the Chief of Naval Operations on 15 May 2009 with a charter noting "Global climate change impacts with near term Arctic focus" [emphasis in original]. The document mentions for one of the first times in a strategy assessment something it calls Native [sic] Perspectives. And also somewhat surprisingly recommends what has been quite controversial in the realm of American politics, support for ratification of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

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In the 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (February 2009, p. 19), the section on rebalancing force in the Arctic the term "domain awareness" is introduced. This phrase "domain awareness" means the monitoring of potential direct threats to the USA. Is this the stance of "domain awareness" that of an actively engaged superpower in the region or one of a spectator? There is no re-direction of resources to enhance the modest capabilities of the nominal superpower among the Arctic states when one compares what the USA has done with the other Arctic nations.

An article by Margaret Blunden in September 2009 (Blunden, 2009, pp. 125–127) provides a useful recapitulation of military activity in the Arctic region showing that while the USA had not increased its operations, other states had and their policies envisioned more bellicose possibilities. For instance, "Russian Security Strategy through to 2020" maintains that rivalry for resources will be a condition that "does not exclude the possibility of military confrontation..." (see also Konyshev and Sergunin, 2012). Further, she notes that "Norway became the first country to site its military command leadership in the Arctic," having moved its Operational Command Headquarters to Bodø, north of the Arctic Circle. In 2006, The Canadian Rangers, made up of aboriginal people, were to be revitalized. There was even the "nightmare scenario" of Finland and Sweden joining NATO as the Finnish Defense Minister advocated in 2008 (*ibid.*, p. 131). Whereas the USA had a period of "sustained inattention to the Arctic since the end of the Cold War," it had "only reluctantly joined the Arctic Council" and had unilaterally withdrawn its military forces from Keflavik in 2006 (*ibid.*, p. 131). A similar assessment of Russia's growing military might in the Arctic can be found in Negut and Bolma's (2011) "The Impact of Climate Change in the Arctic: Geopolitical Issues." Explanations for that presumptive US inattention to Arctic matters, especially security, may be found mostly in two other aspects of American thinking, the state of the economy and the political climate.

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Economic and political realities: Senator Murkowski's hearings

In the aftermath of the global financial recession of 2008, any new Arctic strategy of the USA that required new assets such as base infrastructure, icebreakers, additional personnel, surveillance equipment, and so on was bound to compete and in all likelihood lose to the demands of fighting two actual wars in the Middle East. The phrase “Acquiring the right capability at the right cost and right time” in the Navy’s 2009 Roadmap (Department of the Navy, 2009, p. 8) was a way of recognizing this economic reality. The idea of “domain awareness” simply means that nothing is going to happen anytime soon.

Politicians from the State of Alaska also took the opportunity to try to direct some of the American public’s attention on the Arctic. Senator Lisa Murkowski, a Republican and the senior senator from Alaska (and Alaska-born), held hearings on the “Strategic Importance of the Arctic in U.S. Policy” in August 2009 in Anchorage, Alaska before the Senate Subcommittee on the Department of Homeland Security (which is within the Senate Committee on Appropriations of which she was a member). She noted that “the United States is an Arctic nation because of Alaska and the region has always had great strategic value.” The Governor of Alaska Sean Parnell added that with respect to “homeland security... Alaska is America’s Arctic guardian.” He also noted that the threat “from the North to our oil production” was a real one. In his prepared statement, Mead Treadwell, Chair of the US Arctic research commission, pointed out that the Bush NPSD-66 was “the first public security policy ever issued for this region.”

A phrase used by Senator Murkowski, just before dealing with strategic importance of the region, was a telling indicator of the political nuances that had to be observed by someone in her Republican Party in order not to upset important party stalwarts. The Arctic was not an arena of “melting” ice implying global warming, it was rather “ice-diminished.” For many of some prominence in her party declared frequently that there was no such thing taking place. Most famously perhaps, Senator Inhofe of Oklahoma in a 28 July 2003, Senate speech said, “I have offered compelling evidence that catastrophic global warming is a hoax.” He also has criticized the notion of ozone depletion, particularly in regard to the Arctic (Inhofe, 2013). Senator Murkowski’s term “ice-diminished” avoided a possible challenge from her own fellow Republicans. Admiral

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Thad Allen, Commandant of the US Coast Guard, acknowledged her astuteness in using this term in the hearings.

The Coast Guard Commandant further went on to observe that it was unlikely that the USA would add to its current fleet of three icebreakers. An episode illustrating his point occurred in January 2012 when the city of Nome, Alaska, nearly ran out of fuel, and the Russian barge making its way there had to have much of its path cleared by a Russian icebreaker and finally be led into port by the only operating US icebreaker (*USA Today*, 2012). Two months later, an editorial in the Fairbanks [Alaska] *Daily News-Miner* quoted Mead Treadwell, now Lieutenant Governor of Alaska, lamenting that “The United States has no functioning heavy ice breaking ship today” (*Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 2013).

Perhaps the best summary of the likely impact of these hearings and other attempts to focus American attention on the Arctic came in a response to a question Senator Murkowski asked of all those present. Mayor Edward S. Itta of the township facing the Arctic Ocean on Alaska’s Northern coast gave the most poignant and revealing answer, when the Senator asked on how we could promote the importance of the Arctic. The mayor of the North Slope Borough answered that “So many in America did not realize Alaska was a part of the United States and that we are US citizens. I think this is a part of our challenge. How does what goes on in the Arctic relate to ... life in Des Moines, Iowa?”¹ Senator Murkowski’s Hearings did not inaugurate a new era of attention to the Arctic.

An article by Canadian David Rudd in the *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* suggested that the lack of US interest in the Arctic was much like NATO’s approach to the region, “laissez faire” (Rudd, 2010, p. 63). Almost as if in response to Rudd’s review of the NATO’s activities with regard to the Arctic, Luke Coffey of the American Right of Center Heritage Foundation produced an Issue Brief, “NATO in the Arctic; Challenges and Opportunities” that urged that “The U.S. Needs to Push the Arctic Up NATO’s Agenda” (Coffey, 2012). The next NATO summit, Rudd insists, should be held north of the Arctic Circle. Also sounding the theme of a diminished American presence in the Arctic is a Keith Suter article in *Contemporary Review*, “Russia now has more military vessels in the region than it had before the end of the Cold War.” Whereas, “The US by contrast is a long way behind in reinforcing its (much more) limited presence” (Suter, 2010, p. 191). Nor is it just Arctic States that are interested in and see a stake in Arctic security questions.

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Klaus Dodds (2010) argues the most pressing issues of security are subsumed under sovereignty issues and the need for “legibility” in maritime boundaries. Moreover, he argues that “extra-territorial actors and indigenous communities” which were marginal or marginalized in the Cold War world will come to be involved in Arctic questions.

US action on Bush strategy

In May 2011, the US Department of Defense released a “Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage.” This report stands as a fair summary of what had and had not been done since the Bush 2009 Arctic policy, NPSD-66. Uncertainty about the rate and linearity of climate change makes resource commitment difficult, it begins: “The challenge is to balance the risk of being late-to-need with the opportunity cost of making premature investments” (Department of Defense, 2011, p. 1). A prudent assessment but it is also one that can readily permit doing nothing at the moment. The report also has in its introductory sections a policy goal to “Involve the Arctic’s indigenous communities in decisions that affect them.” A footnote a bit later also shows concession to the rest of the world’s practice with respect to territorial claims in the Arctic and elsewhere by pledging to operate “... through the established framework of the law of the sea” (ibid., p. 12). There is also note of the overlapping authorities, missions, responsibilities, and timeliness for the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security in the Arctic (see below). Most telling, however, is the acknowledgment that “The near-term fiscal and political environment will make it difficult to support significant new U.S. government investments” (ibid., p. 12).

Almost simultaneously with the Department of Defense Report appeared a study by a Coast Guard officer at the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, seizing on one of the discrepancies cited in the report, a lack of coordination by the various federal agencies charged in providing security in the arctic region. Citing a litany of capability shortcomings, Commander Peschka then works his way through the usual initials-laden military and security command authorities in the Arctic region, both US and Canadian, and concludes that only a Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-Polar North can remedy the situation (Peschka, 2011, pp. 33–34). Nothing of the sort has happened.

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Some anti-militarists

It is only fair to note that a wide range of observers do not worry about the relative absence of US, or others', military or other security measures in the Arctic, but rather decry the damage that such military activities have already done. A professor at Cape Breton University, Lee-Anne Broadhead, maintained that "indigenous principles of holism have long been sacrificed on the modern altars of state sovereignty, colonial expansion, and military security" (Broadhead, 2010, p. 913). Although the burden of her arguments are against Canadian practice, in a section entitled "The Toxic Legacy of Arctic Militarism" she enumerates mostly US assaults on the Arctic ecology, including marine and air pollution from weapon exercises, the same exercises damaging animal migration patterns and Inuit life, PCBs from DEW line radar sites that have not been cleaned up, and, most damning, the crash of a B-52 bomber carrying thermonuclear weapons in Greenland in 1968 (*ibid.*, pp. 917–918; see also Heininen, 2010, pp. 233–238 and 248–249). This results from "military defence of the cartographic borderlines drawn up in an age of empire" (Broadhead, 2010, p. 928). In the same vein, Swede Agneta Norberg (2010, p. 30) warns against the supposed space satellite communication stations in the North that are in reality part of the US and NATO nuclear weapons structure and the militarization of space. Most recently, Cathy Park (2013), writing in a Chinese Model UN journal, cites the Bush Arctic policy as implying the USA is entering the "scientific and military race for sovereignty over parts to the Arctic."

Critiques of the Bush strategy

Returning to more mainstream assessments of US security capabilities and strategic infrastructure in the Arctic, a January 2012 report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) speaks in one of its chapters of "An Abundance of Governance, A Scarcity of Capabilities" (Conley et al., 2012, p. 13). For instance, the author notes that the Arctic Council in its founding document and at the insistence of the USA is not permitted to discuss issues related to security. As to security matters, the USA "has a woeful lack of Arctic Military capabilities" (*ibid.*, p. 20). In reviewing the Bush Arctic policy (NSPD-66) and succeeding government statements, the author went on to argue that the time to develop

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the capabilities the 2011 DoD “Report to Congress on Arctic Operations” (see above) had already arrived. With respect to Coast Guard capabilities, Captain Peter Troedson, USCG, a Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, in January 2013, issued a plea for more resources for that body at the same time insisting that the Coast Guard was suited for constabulary and not war-fighting tasks (Troedson, 2013, p. 2).

Obama’s Arctic strategy

The most recent presidential proclamation in the US development of Arctic security strategy was the issuance on 10 May 2013 of President Obama’s “National Strategy for the Arctic Region” (The White House, 2013), here the Obama Strategy. There are many interesting formulations in this document which is given out not as a Presidential Directive but more as a statement of intentions. For example, the president’s introductory letter refers to the Arctic region as “peaceful, stable, and free of conflict.” The letter concludes that “we will partner with the State of Alaska, and Alaska Natives, as well the international community and the private sector...” While this shows a heightened concern for aboriginal people, it seems remarkable that the federal government should be partnering with one of its own states. There is no other way to interpret this statement other than to conclude that the State of Alaska is going to bear the burden of much of the developments that may be necessary. Only the “Native Alaskans” (sic) can be happy with the emphasis on their prospective role in things. Incidentally, a footnote defines Arctic State as one of the eight nations making up the Arctic Council.

The document outlines three lines of effort: 1) Advance US Security Interests; 2) Pursue Responsible Arctic Region Stewardship; and 3) Strengthen International Cooperation. Under the rubric of Security Interests are three things the government will attempt: *Evolve* [emphasis added] Arctic Infrastructure and Strategic Capabilities; Enhance Arctic Domain Awareness; and Preserve Arctic Region Freedom of the Seas. In January 2014 the National Security Council issued an Implementation Directive adumbrating the stated goals of this latest Arctic Policy with a repeat of the emphasis on incorporating the ideas and inputs of natives of the region (The White House, 2014). Interestingly, the plan called for among many other things, “an Ecosystem-based management plan (EMB)” to integrate all aspects of science, economy and native concerns

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in the planning (*ibid.*, p. 15). And again there was a call for the US to accede to the UN Law of the Sea Convention. As well-meant as the implementation points sound, it is unlikely that in the current political climate of the USA anything significant in the way of resource commitment will take place. “Domain awareness” is the only likely outcome.

It seems to be up to Alaska itself to do any funding. Senator Murkowski and her Alaskan congressional colleagues, Senator Mark Begich (Democrat) and Representative Don Young (Republican), clearly have their work cut out for them. Naturally the Office of the Oceanographer of the Navy came out with a positive commentary on this new strategy that largely summarized it and assured readers that the Navy was on the job (Obama Strategy). However, in what might be the Strategy’s epitaph, The Arctic Institute/Center for Circumpolar Security Studies came out with a critical and even scathing interpretation (The Arctic Institute, 2013).

The Bush Arctic Strategy was dismissed by the institute in its assessment as “rather brief and vague.” Certainly as a result of the unsatisfying approaches that made up this strategy, in a July 2012 letter to the president, Senators Murkowski and Begich asked President Obama for a formal strategy that “ties together all the individual agency policies and visions.” What they got from a President who was famously on record as calling for “a pivot to Asia” in US policies was a document that effectively told them they were on their own. The institute’s assessment of what was missing from the strategy included lack of specificity, no plan to upgrade an inadequate and outdated icebreaker fleet or the deep-water ports, no budget information, failure to assign tasks, and many other shortcomings. No details were offered on just what Domain Awareness might entail. The aptly descriptive conclusion was that “U.S. Arctic strategy remains as elusive as a mirage on the Arctic ice-sheet” (The Arctic Institute, 2013).

In May 2013 the Coast Guard produced its strategy which included a comprehensive and thoughtful review of US actions and policies in the Arctic that remains an excellent source document on the subject (US Coast Guard, 2013). There were three specific objectives: Improving Awareness, Modernizing Governance, and Broadening Partnerships. In the latter two, the inclusion of tribal concerns and input illustrated the upgraded status for these native Americans in contrast to the sorry record of government treatment of their kin in the “Lower 48” [states]. In February 2014, the Navy also came out with a comprehensive update of its 2009 Arctic Roadmap that attempted with considerable specificity

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to forecast needs and activities several decades hence. The reason for this long-range forecasting was the above-mentioned Task Force Climate Change had concluded that “ice conditions in the Arctic are changing more rapidly than first anticipated” (Department of the Navy, 2014, p. 2). As with the other documents from the Executive Department, this new roadmap called for more investment and accession to UNCLOS. Neither is likely even within the long-range compass of this latest roadmap.

By contrast to these two responses to Obama’s Arctic Strategy, the Department of Defense Arctic Strategy of November 2013 outlined a more tangible set of actions or at least approaches to action that the DoD was preparing to take in the Arctic. The 2013 Strategy represents a sober and modest outlook on dealing with Arctic matters, noting that the region is at present relatively peaceful and that cooperation is key to maintaining that condition. The two key objectives to achieve the goal of preserving a conflict-free region are given as cooperation, with both allies and other US government agencies outside the Defense Department, and preparation for a wide range of challenges. This latter goal is prompted by a recognition that “Projections about future access to and activity in the Arctic may be inaccurate” (Department of Defense, US Government, 2013, p. 10). The strategy explains that the idea is to avoid “making premature and/or unnecessary investments” thereby reducing the “the availability of resources for other pressing priorities, particularly in a time of fiscal austerity.” Given the Secretary of Defense Hagel’s budget forecasts in February 2014 for a severely reduced US military, this point is particularly noteworthy. As if to underscore just how low a level an “evolving” Arctic infrastructure might entail, the strategy gives as an example of modification to existing bases “the addition of a new hangar.” Note the singular.

Conclusion

What we have seen of the US attempts at a post-Cold War Arctic Security strategy hardly seems like the action of a military or economic superpower. The first articulated strategy, President Clinton’s, was never circulated. The second strategy from President George W. Bush was brief and vague on key points and issued when he was the lamest of “lame duck” presidents. The third national security strategy issued by President Obama was even vaguer and seems to place much of the burden of doing anything

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substantive on Alaska. It is easier to say what isn't going to happen. In the current economic climate there is little prospect of any significant spending on Arctic matters by the US government in the next five to ten years. Given the rancorous political climate in Washington, the universally called for accession of the USA to UNCLOS is also very remote.

The primary forum for US actions in the Arctic will continue to be the Arctic Council, whose Chairmanship the USA assumes in 2015 but which it had precluded from its inception, from dealing with security matters. To be sure, Secretary of State Kerry has indicated that the USA must pay more attention to the region since it will become Chair of the Arctic Council in 2015. To that end he announced on 14 February 2014 that the USA "will soon have a Special Representative for the Arctic Region, a high-level official of stature who will play a critical role in advancing American interests in the Arctic Region, particularly as we prepare efforts to Chair the Arctic Council in 2015" (Department of State, US Government, 2014). Additionally the *New York Times* reports that the Secretary plans to deliver a major speech in summer 2014 on the links between climate change and national security (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/02/221678.htm>). Just as predictably, Senator Inhofe, Republican of Oklahoma, scoffed at the idea of any such linkage, saying that attempts to link global warming with threats to security in the same manner as nuclear weapons once were "shows how desperate they are to get the public to buy this" (Davenport, 2014). On 30 April, Democratic Representative Rick Larsen of Washington State called for nothing less than the appointment of an actual ambassador to the Arctic given the growing importance of the region, noting that the USA does have ambassadors to Tonga and Fiji (*Seattle Times*, 30 April 2014). All too predictably, midway through the summer (mid-July as this is written), no Arctic Representative has been nominated.

What is really needed to change the relative lack of American attention to the Arctic is a "champion" for Arctic matters, one who will capture the public mind. Although Senator Murkowski, lately joined by fellow Alaskans Senator Begich and Representative Young, has worked valiantly and diligently toward this end Alaska is just too small in population and too remote to impinge on the consciousness of the American public. There is no Charles Lindbergh to excite the imagination about flying when he flew solo across the Atlantic. There is no Robert Ballard or Jacques Cousteau who inspired interest in undersea exploration with their discoveries. There is no Albert Einstein who inspired interest in if

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not understanding of physics. The Arctic has no champion in America. President Obama wants to pivot toward Asia but is mired in the Middle East. The Arctic is not really on his map. It will take outside events to re-direct the focus in Washington to the Arctic.

Perhaps the last word at this time on US interests, security and otherwise, in the Arctic belong to another president. With US encouragement, China gained observer status in the Arctic Council. In September 2012, the Chinese icebreaker Snow Dragon sailed from Shanghai to Reykjavik with 60 scientists from the Polar Research Institute of China on board. Speaking of this “preoccupation” of China’s with the Arctic to a meeting of the [US] Council on Foreign Relations in April 2013, President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson of Iceland prophesied that this engagement of China with the Arctic “will have a greater impact on the USA than any other single development in the coming decades” (Grimsson, 2013). Meanwhile the USA will continue to exercise the one Arctic security capability it does have in place, domain awareness. In other words, until specific resources and specific time-tables are established, the USA will continue to be not a superpower but a spectator.

Note

- 1 Des Moines, Iowa, is often used, along with similarly located smaller towns, to stand for the so-called “middle America” which presumptively has less interest in global matters than coastal centers.

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6

Russian Military Strategies in the High North

Valery Konyshev and Alexander Sergunin

Abstract: *In contrast with Western perceptions of Russia as an expansionist power in the Arctic, this chapter argues that Moscow does not seek military superiority in the region. Moscow's military strategies in the Arctic pursue three major goals: first, to ascertain Russia's sovereignty over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf in the region; second, to protect its economic interests in the North; and third, to demonstrate that Russia retains its great power status and still has world-class military capabilities. The Russian military modernization programs are quite modest and aim to upgrade the Russian armed forces in the High North rather than providing them with additional offensive capabilities or provoking a regional arms race. Moscow favors soft rather than hard power strategy in the Arctic.*

Keywords: the Arctic; military security/strategy, Russia; sovereignty

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Introduction

The Western mass media is replete with assessments of Russia's Arctic policies as expansionist. According to some Western analysts, because of its economic weakness and technological backwardness Russia tends to make an emphasis on military-coercive instruments to protect its national interests in the North and this will inevitably lead to the regional arms race and even military conflicts in the Arctic (Borgerson, 2009; Huebert, 2010; Huebert et al., 2012; Smith and Giles, 2007). Moscow denies these allegations and points out that it plans use its military power only to protect its legitimate interests in the region.

This chapter aims to discuss the question – whether Russia is really a revisionist power in the Arctic or can it be evaluated in different, more positive terms, particularly as a country that is interested in the region's stability and open to international cooperation in this part of the world? However, before addressing this main research question the Russian threat perceptions should be analyzed.

Threat perceptions

Since the general focus of the Arctic policies had shifted from hard to soft security (see the Introduction of this volume) the Russian threat perceptions have also evolved significantly over the last two decades. Moscow is no longer concerned about the threat of a large-scale nuclear war and now pays greater attention to threats and challenges that stem from climate change and growing competition over Arctic natural resources and sea routes rather than from the military sphere. Now the Russian security structures are charged not only with purely military functions but also with issues such as cleaning the Soviet-made environmental mess, search and rescue operations (SAR), fighting oil spills, poaching, smuggling, and illegal migration.

It should be noted that some climate change implications such as, the Northern pole ice cap's meltdown necessitate some serious changes in the Arctic states' military strategies, including the Russian one. On the one hand, as the recent US Navy's document argues, the extension of an ice-free season can result in a significant expansion of surface naval activities in the Arctic (*The United States Navy Arctic Roadmap for 2014–2030*, 2014, pp. 8, 16–19). However, on the other hand, the shrinking

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ice cap provides less protection to submarines, making them visible to the enemy's satellites and aircrafts.

Along with significant economic and environmental interests, Russian perceptions of the Arctic to a larger extent are still based on hard security considerations. For example, the Kola Peninsula and the adjacent area are still considered a region of special strategic importance to Russia's national security. Direct access to the Arctic and Atlantic oceans, a relatively close proximity to potential USA/NATO targets, and a relatively developed military infrastructure make this region well-suited for strategic naval operations (Khramchikhin, 2013). The strategic importance of the Kola Peninsula is, above all, explained by the fact that it hosts two-thirds of the Russian sea-based nuclear forces. As some military analysts emphasize, the nuclear deterrent remains not only a key element of the Russian military strategy, but also serves as a symbol and guarantee of Russia's great power status (Zysk, 2008, p. 81). Maintaining strategic nuclear capabilities is, therefore, one of the highest priorities of Russia's military policies both in the High North and globally.

Russian military analysts believe that the Archangelsk Air Defense Sector is still crucial for the prevention of surprise attacks over the North Pole. The Norwegian Sea can still serve as a main launch area for Western seaborne attack, so, these analysts maintain, the Russian Navy should still be concerned about the readiness of its anti-submarine forces in the Arctic (Khramchikhin, 2013).

Both Russian politicians and the military repeatedly point to allegedly increasing political and military pressures from the USA and other NATO member states in the North. They believe that the West/NATO want to undermine Russia's positions in the region. They emphasize the fact that Russian armed forces in the High North are still facing NATO just across the border. The Arctic coastal states' armed forces modernization programs are predominantly treated in the alarmist way.

While American experts believe that Washington DC has quite modest military-strategic ambitions in the Arctic (see Corgan, volume), Moscow is worried about the recent US military strategy in the Arctic that envisages Washington's increased security activities in the region. Moscow is especially concerned about US plans to increase its readiness to conduct maritime and air patrol and interception operations; to exercise and assert its navigation and overflight rights and freedoms in the region; to ensure its access to global commons in the Arctic; to expand its power

projection capabilities, etc. (US Department of Defense, 2013; *The United States Navy Arctic Roadmap for 2014–2030*, 2014).

Given the ice-free Arctic in the foreseeable future (at least for part of the year) the Russian military analysts do not exclude the possibility that the USA could permanently deploy a nuclear submarine fleet and sea-based anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems in the Arctic Ocean (Khrumchikhin, 2013; Russia fears missile defense, 2009). In this case the USA will create capabilities for intercepting Russian ballistic missile launches and making a preventive strike. For the above reasons, this school of strategic thought recommends that Russia not only to keep its strategic forces at the present level but also to regularly modernize them.

President Vladimir Putin immediately reacted to the new US doctrine by ordering the Russian Defense Ministry to accelerate the creation of the Arctic Group of Forces (AGF), modernization of the Northern Fleet, and reopening the Soviet-time air and naval bases along the Northern Sea Route (NSR) (President Putin, 2013).

The Canadian military activities and plans in the North are perceived by Moscow with growing anxiety as well (Konyshev and Sergunin, 2011, 2012). For example, Ottawa plans to build a military training center and maritime infrastructure facilities in the town of Resolute Bay which is located 595 km from the North Pole and in the area of the strategically important Northwest Passage. To strengthen the capacity of the Coast Guard, Canada plans to build deep-water berths (in the city of Nanisivik), a new icebreaker named “Diefenbaker,” and three patrol vessels capable of operating in ice conditions. The latest Canadian space satellite RADARSAT-II, the joint Canadian-American system NORAD, intelligence signals interceptor station in the town of Ehlert (Ellesmere Island, Canadian Arctic Archipelago) will all be used to monitor the Arctic maritime and air spaces programs. Units of Canadian Rangers have been modernized and increased to 5,000 people at the end of 2012. They are largely recruited from the local indigenous populations and are expected to monitor and carry out SAR operations in the Arctic.

In 2010, the Canadian government announced it was buying 65 new F-35 Lightning II fighters from the USA for a total of \$16 billion, including aircraft maintenance for 20 years. It is not quite clear for what purpose Canadians are going to use these fighters in the Arctic. According to some Canadian experts, these purchases are more likely a security guarantee for the future than a response to today’s challenges. More specifically, these acquisitions aim at developing a proper potential

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for air and naval monitoring of Canada's Arctic coastline. These and other initiatives have led to a doubling of Canada's total military spending compared to the late 1990s (Blunden, 2009, p. 127).

Moscow is especially worried about NATO's growing activities in the North that substantially expanded since 2008 (Konyshov and Sergunin, 2011, 2012). NATO defined its priorities in the region most clearly at a conference on security prospects in the High North held in Reykjavik at the end of January 2009. In formal terms, NATO has the intention to focus on the soft security issues – the ecological consequences of global warming, human activity in the Arctic, the risks of ecological and manmade disasters, and so on. This focus does not, however, exclude a purely military component of NATO policy, as reflected in a series of exercises conducted under the aegis of the alliance.

In the Kremlin's view, the NATO has, in fact, declared a new priority: global competition for resources. As envisioned by NATO leaders, the main factors influencing the alliance's military potential and development are "political conditions in the world community, the operational-strategic situation, and reserves of resources and their distribution at the global level" (Scheffer, 2009).

Moscow points out that the NATO naval intelligence operations in the area are still rather active. NATO's military exercises in Russia's immediate proximity – regardless of their small scale – are interpreted as evidence of the West's aggressive ambitions in the region. According to Russian experts, the large-scale exercises in Norway under the code name *Cold Response*, which are held by the NATO on a regular basis since 2006, are aimed precisely at Russia (Diatlikovich and Grebtsov, 2009, p. 28).

Both Russian practitioners and experts unanimously expect that NATO will continue to expand its activity in the North. This can have some negative implications for Russia (at least at the perceptual level). Russian strategists believe that there is a risk that NATO can try to sideline Russia in the emerging regional security system as it does, for example, in Europe. They also fear that some NATO member states such as Norway and Denmark will continue to use the alliance to strengthen their positions in the region *vis-à-vis* Russia. And Russia, therefore, has to prepare itself for an uneasy dialogue with NATO to find acceptable forms of cooperation in the North (Konyshov and Sergunin, 2011, 2012).

It should be noted that there is some difference in threat perceptions between the Russian strategic and operative-tactical forces. For the Russian strategic forces, the Arctic, North Atlantic, and North Pacific

create a single operation zone or military theater where they confront the US strategic forces. For the conventional forces, the Arctic is an area where they should mainly protect Russia's economic interests and state borders (land, maritime, and air). From the operative-tactical point of view, the Arctic is split to several sectors which represent various zones of responsibility. In the Western sector, the Russian land and air forces confront the NATO (Norwegian) troops while the conventional component of the Northern Fleet protects Russia's economic interests in the Barents Sea and provides nuclear forces with auxiliary services. The Northern Fleet and Border Guards are responsible for the protection of the NSR and the Arctic Ocean's coastline while the Pacific Fleet controls the Bering Sea, Bering Strait, and access to the Chukchi Sea.

To sum up, Russia has quite substantial reasons to play an active role in the Arctic. It has important economic, social, environmental, and military-strategic interests both in its Arctic Zone and in the entire region, and it is proclaimed at the official level that these interests will be protected (e.g. Heininen, Sergunin and Yarovoy, Forthcoming). There is a clear tendency toward an increasing role of comprehensive or soft security-related interests, such as ensuring Russia's access to natural resources and transport routes in the region, climate change mitigation, and cleaning up environmental mess (see also the Introduction, volume). At the same time, as some Russian strategists believe, there are a number of security threats and challenges in the region that require preservation and further development of a certain military potential and presence in the North. They took notice that the ongoing Ukrainian crisis has negatively affected Russia's relations with NATO and its member states which unilaterally suspended several cooperative projects with Russia, including military-to-military contacts and the development of confidence and security-building measures (see also Petursson, this volume).

Russia's strategic vision of the North: evolving doctrines

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and prior to the early 2000s, the Kremlin paid little attention to the North. With the end of the Cold War the region has lost its former military-strategic significance for Moscow as a zone of potential confrontation with the NATO/USA. In the Yeltsin era, the economic potential of the region was underestimated. Moreover,

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in the 1990s, Russia's northern territories were perceived by the federal government as a burden or source of various socio-economic problems rather than an economically promising region. The far northern regions were almost abandoned by Moscow and had to rely on themselves (or foreign humanitarian assistance) for survival.

The situation started to change slowly in the early 2000s when the general socio-economic situation in Russia had improved and the Putin government with its ambitious agenda of Russia's revival came to power. On 14 June 2001, the Russian Cabinet approved the draft of the document titled "Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic" (Government of the Russian Federation, 2001) in which Russian national interests and main strategies in the North were formulated. It took, however, seven years (and another President) to develop a coherent version of Russia's strategy in the North.

On 18 September 2008 President Medvedev approved the "Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic up to and Beyond 2020" (Strategy-2008) (Medvedev, 2008) which was the first Russian post-Soviet Northern strategy. It should be noted that Moscow was one of the first among the Arctic states that managed to adopt such a document, and only Norway was ahead of Russia in shaping its official doctrine for the North in 2006 (Heininen, 2011).

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A six-page document listed the Russian national interests in the region: to develop resources of the Arctic; turn the NSR into a unified national transport corridor and line of communication; and maintain the region as a zone of peace and international cooperation. According to plans for the multifaceted development of the northern territories, by 2016–20 the Arctic should have become Russia's "leading strategic resource base."

The strategic security goal was defined as "maintenance of the necessary combat potential of general-purpose troops (forces)," strengthening the Coastal Defense Service of the Federal Security Service (FSS) and border controls in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation, or the Russian Arctic Zone (RAZ), and establishing technical control over straits and river estuaries along the whole NSR. Thus, the AGF was charged not simply with defending territory but also with protecting Russia's economic interests in the region. In turn, this required an increasing potential of the Northern Fleet which was (and is) seen as an important instrument for demonstrating Russia's sovereign rights in the Arctic, particularly the Russian Arctic Zone, and protecting its economic interests in the region.

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Although the document was mostly designed for domestic needs (particularly aimed at setting priorities for the RAZ development) many foreign analysts tended to interpret the Strategy-2008 as a “solid evidence” of Russia’s revisionist aspirations in the region (Huebert, 2010; Schepp and Traufetter, 2009; Willett, 2009). For them, Russian plans to “define the outer border of the RAZ,” create the AGF, and build a network of border guard stations along the coastline of the Arctic Ocean were the best proofs of Moscow’s expansionism in the region. The Kremlin’s mantras on a purely defensive nature of these initiatives were taken with a great skepticism.

The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation through 2020, released in May 2009, also underlined the quest for energy resources, which are considered to be the potential means for Russia to remain a great power. The document confirmed Russia’s interest in the North, which was elevated to the status of the Caspian Sea and Central Asia as one of the main energy battlegrounds of the future (Medvedev, 2009).

Since the Strategy-2008 was of a rather general nature it should be specified and regular updated by other documents. On 20 February 2013 a document titled “The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation” (Strategy-2013) (Putin, 2013) was approved by President Vladimir Putin. This document is both the follow-up and update of the Strategy-2008.

It should be noted that this document cannot be considered as Russia’s full-fledged Northern doctrine because it covers only the Russian Arctic Zone rather than the whole North. In this sense the paper is comparable with the Canadian and Norwegian strategies for the development of their northern territories. The Strategy-2013 has some international dimensions, including, for example, Moscow’s intention to legally define Russia’s continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean and file its new application to the UN Commission for the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UNCLCS)¹ or the need for international cooperation in areas such as exploration and exploitation of natural resources, environment protection, preservation of indigenous people’s traditional economy and culture, etc. However, the objective of the document is – first and foremost – to provide a doctrinal/conceptual basis for the RAZ sustainable development, i.e. it is designed for the domestic rather than international consumption.

The new Russian strategy is much more open for international cooperation to solve numerous problems of the North and ensure the sustainable development of the region at large. Similar to the 2008 document,

the Strategy-2013 emphasizes Russia's national sovereignty over its Arctic Zone and the Northern Sea Route and calls for the protection of country's national interests in the area. However, along with this rather traditional stance the new strategy has an impressive list of priority areas for cooperation with potential international partners. This provides the Strategy-2013 with a more positive international image than the previous document.

In contrast with the Strategy-2008, the recent document lacks any description of Russia's national interests in the Russian Arctic Zone. Given a special Russian Security Council's meeting "On the protection of national interests of the Russian Federation in the Arctic" (17 September 2008) it was expected that the new doctrine will improve and further develop the Strategy-2008's section on Russia's national interests in the region which were described quite vaguely and fragmentary. However, the Strategy-2013 only episodically refers to Russia's national interests in the North, not specifying or systemically describing them.

As far as purely military aspects of the Strategy-2013 are concerned, the document sets up the following tasks:

- ▶ Ensuring a favorable operative regime for the Russian troops deployed in the RAZ to adequately meet military dangers and threats to Russia's national security.
- ▶ Providing the AGF with military training and combat readiness to protect Russian interests in its EEZ and deter potential threats to and aggression against the country.
- ▶ Improving the AGF's structure and composition, providing these forces with modern armaments and infrastructure.
- ▶ Improving air and maritime space monitoring systems.
- ▶ Applying dual-use technologies to ensure both RAZ's military security and sustainable socio-economic development.
- ▶ Completing hydrographic works to define more precisely the external boundaries of Russia's territorial waters, EEZ, and continental shelf (Putin, 2013).

To sum up, the Strategy-2013 is a good invitation to further discuss Russia's policies in the North rather than a comprehensive and sound doctrine. To become an efficient national strategy in the region it should be further clarified, specified, and instrumentalized in a series of federal laws, regulations, and task programs. The Russian Northern strategy should be also better designed for the international consumption. Despite

the fact that the new Russian doctrine clearly addresses the soft security problematique, the foreign audiences – by the virtue of inertia – continue to perceive that kind of Russian documents as manifestations of Moscow’s expansionist plans in the North. For this reason, the future Russian doctrinal documents should not start from the Cold War-type threat and risk analysis that implies that the country operates in a hostile international environment. On the contrary, such documents should emphasize the opportunities for international cooperation and Russia’s readiness to collaborate with other regional players (see also Heininen, Sergunin and Yarovoy, Forthcoming, pp. 91–92). Probably, Russia should suggest a special program for international cooperation in the North (separate from the RAZ developmental strategy) where the Kremlin could explain in detail Russia’s national interests in the region and its strategic vision of the North, including the specific priorities for international cooperation.

Military activities and modernization plans

Contrary to the Western alarmists’ worries about Moscow’s military pre-eminence in the North, the Russian military presence in the region has considerably decreased over the last two decades. Both components – naval and air force – of the Russian armed forces in the region are inferior to the NATO ones (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

It should be also noted that in contrast with the Cold War period when Russian military strategies in the North were dictated by the logic of global political and military confrontation between two superpowers (Soviet Union and USA) or two military blocs (Warsaw Pact and

TABLE 6.1 *The Russian armed forces in the North*

	USSR in 1980s	Russia in 2010s
Submarines	172	30
– of them SSBN	39	7
SSBN in permanent patrol	10–12 (6–7 in Arctic)	1–2
Aircraft carriers	2	1
Larger ships	74	17
Auxiliary vessels	200	33
Aircrafts	400	100
Helicopters	–	40

Source: Arbatov (2011).

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TABLE 6.2 US and NATO forces capable to operate in the North

	US in 1980s	US in 2010s	NATO in 2010s
Submarines	78	33	85
– of them SSBN	28	6	8
SSBN in permanent patrol	–	6–8	–
Submarines armed with cruise missiles <i>Tomahawk</i>	–	39	–
Aircraft carriers	7	4	6
Larger ships	90	49	100
Amphibious assault ships	24	14	–
Aircraft	700	360	200

Source: Arbatov (2011).

NATO), the Moscow's current military policies in the region are driven by completely different motives. As the threat of a global nuclear war has disappeared, these strategies aim at three major goals: first, to demonstrate and ascertain Russia's sovereignty over the RAZ (including the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf); second, to protect its economic interests in the North; and third, to demonstrate that Russia retains its great power status and has world-class military capabilities.

The demonstration of Russia's military power and its regional presence in the Arctic are mainly done through strategic bomber and naval patrols as well as land and naval exercises.

The air force is perceived by Moscow as a central element in its demonstration of power. Over-flights of Russian military aircraft over the Arctic dramatically fell from 500 per year during the Soviet period. In 2007, Russian strategic bombers flew over the Arctic for the first time since the end of the Cold War. Two Tu-95MS, based in the Saratov region at the Engels aviation base with mid-flight refueling capability, now regularly patrol the region. These over-flights drew heavy criticism from Norway, Canada, UK, and the USA which have seen these patrols as evidence of Russia's return to the Soviet-like military practices and growing strategic ambitions in the North. However, as most authoritative Western military experts point it out, the resumption of the strategic bomber patrols may be interpreted more in terms of the desire not to lose capacities and, above all, as a political tool rather than the sign of renewed aggressiveness in the region (Lasserre et al., 2012, p. 16; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 128–129).

As far as the air force potential available for operations in the North is concerned, Russia's air assets consist mainly of the aircraft supporting the Northern Fleet or stationed in northern Russia. Many of these do not

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have the range for operations in the Arctic area outside Russia (Wezeman, 2012, p. 9). In addition, Russia has a fleet of ageing long- and medium-range bombers most which are located outside the RAZ. There are 63 turbo-propelled Tu-95MSs which are very old (designed in the 1950s) but still the mainstays of the Russian strategic aviation. The Russian air force also has 18 more modern, long-range Tu-160 *Blackjacks* bombers, as well as 80 Tu-22M *Backfire* medium bombers that were especially feared by NATO in the Cold War period for their anti-ship capacities. It should be noted that these planes are not stealthy and are easily detected when flying at high altitude, despite additional electronic countermeasures recently added to the Tu-160 and Tu-22M. Moreover, the shortage of mid-air refueling tankers remains the most serious problem affecting the operational capabilities of Russian strategic aviation. The airfield *Temp* on the Kotelnny Island (Novosibirsky Archipelago) although with quite limited and dual-use (military and civilian) capacities has been reactivated in 2013 (Zagorsky, 2013). Several other Arctic air bases in Alykel', Amderma, Anadyr', Nagurskoe, Naryan-Mar, Rogachevo, and Tiksi are to be reactivated in the foreseeable future (Shoigu sozdast, 2013).

No credible plans to modernize the above fleet are known. In 2009, the Russian government granted a contract to Tupolev company to develop a new stealth bomber the PAK-DA that would replace the Tu-22M, the Tu-160, and the Tu-95MS. The prototype is scheduled to fly in 2020 and the aircraft is expected to enter service only in 2025–30. However, these plans can be changed if other programs (e.g., the 5th generation fighter Sukhoi T-50/PAK-FA) become a more important priority for the Russian Air Force. Because of the long time frame for the development of the PAK-DA, it was decided to upgrade the Tu-22M and produce 10 more Tu-160s before 2020. Some experts suggest that probably many present Russian strategic and medium-range bombers will no longer be operational by 2025–30 and the air force will then be left only with its ageing Tu-160 and Tu-95 fleet (Lasserre et al., 2012, pp. 17–18).

As far as the naval patrolling is concerned, since 2007 Russia resumed long-range patrols in different parts of the world. This was symbolized by the patrols undertaken by the nuclear-powered guided-missile cruiser *Peter the Great* through the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas, Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans (2008–10). In 2008, Russia confirmed that it was expanding its current level of operations in the Arctic. The Navy resumed its warship presence in the Arctic Ocean with military ships patrolling near Norwegian and Danish defense zones. It also increased

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the operational radius of the Northern Fleet's submarines, and under-ice training for submariners has become a priority task.

Russia has ambitious plans to modernize its navy deployed to the High North. For example, after the *Peter the Great's* successful trip around the world in 2008–09, the Ministry of Defense announced that it would upgrade three other heavy nuclear-powered missile cruisers, the *Admiral Lazarev*, the *Admiral Nakhimov*, and the *Admiral Ushakov*. Currently, the *Admiral Kuznetsov*, the only Russia aircraft carrier, operates with the Northern Fleet, hosting 20 fighters and 10 anti-submarine helicopters on board. The destroyer *Vice-Admiral Kulakov*, which was recently repaired, was integrated into the Northern Fleet in 2011. The naval aviation includes 200 combat aircraft and 50 helicopters.

Looking at the problems that the Northern Fleet currently faces, it should be noted that the fleet needs coastal ships and frigates able to conduct rapid intervention operations. Several are currently under construction, but they have already experienced numerous delays. The project to build eight *Admiral Gorshkov* class and six *Krivak* class frigates which is constantly delayed will not be enough to renew Russia's ocean-going surface ships. There were plans to purchase two or four *Mistrals* helicopter carriers from France. However, it was decided to limit these plans to building only two vessels and deploying them to the Pacific fleet, not the Northern one.

Keeping nuclear deterrence capabilities is crucial for the future of the Northern Fleet. The older sea-based nuclear deterrent is in the process of deep modernization. Presently, Russia has six operational Delta III and six Delta IV strategic submarines. According to the Russian Defense Ministry, there are no plans to modernize the older Delta III class submarines. They were built during the 1980s and will be decommissioned in the near future. Only the Delta IV submarines undergo the process of modernization. They will be provided with a new sonar system and the new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) *Sineva* (Skiff SSN-23) which entered service in 2007. *Sineva* is a third-generation liquid-propelled ICBM can cover a distance up to 8,300 km and to carry either four or ten nuclear warheads (<http://www.arms-expo.ru/049055051051124052049049.html>). Russia is planning to equip its Delta IV class submarines with at least 100 *Sineva* missiles which are to stay on alert status until 2030. The *Sineva* missiles can be launched from under the ice while remaining invisible to enemy's satellites until the last moment (Laruelle, 2014, p. 122).

Another class of Russian strategic submarines, the *Typhoons*, which are considered as the world's largest, will be re-equipped with long-range

cruise missiles. For the time being, only one *Typhoon*-class strategic submarine, the *Dmitri Donskoy*, has been modernized and deployed to the Northern Fleet. It serves to conduct test firing for the *Bulava* system, a new generation solid-fuel SLBM, designed to avoid possible future US anti-ballistic missile defense weapons, and which can cover a distance of more than 9,000 km (<http://www.arms-expo.ru/049057054048124050052056054051.html>).

It is planned that in future, *Typhoon*-class submarines should be replaced with the new *Borey*-class fourth generation nuclear-powered strategic submarines. The first *Borey*-class submarine, the *Yuri Dolgoruky* – which was the first strategic submarine to be built in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union – has been in operation by the Northern Fleet since January 2013. Two other *Borey*-class submarines, the *Alexander Nevsky* and the *Vladimir Monomakh*, run the sea trials and the fourth one, *Prince Vladimir*, is under construction at the Severodvinsk shipyard (http://bastion-karpenko.narod.ru/955_more_01.html). These three submarines will be placed with the Pacific Fleet. The first *Borey*-class submarine is, and the remaining ones will be, deployed to the Northern Fleet to be based at the Gadzhievo navy base (about 100 km from the Norwegian border), where new infrastructure is being built to host them. This new generation of the Russian strategic submarines is almost invisible at deep ocean depths and having several types of cruise missiles and torpedoes – they will be able to carry out multi-purpose missions, including attacks on enemy aircraft carriers and missile strikes on coastal targets. According to the Defense Ministry's plans, the building of eight *Borey*-class submarines (four for the Northern Fleet and four for the Pacific one) should be completed by 2020, which once again seems too ambitious and unlikely.

To provide the logistical and administrative support to the Northern Fleet a new Arctic Centre for Material and Technical Support with a staff of more than 15,000 was created in 2012.

As far as the land forces are concerned, currently, there are two major units – the 200th independent motorized infantry brigade and marine brigade – both based at Pechenga (Murmansk region) close to the Norwegian border town of Kirkenes. There are plans to reorganize the motorized infantry brigade to the Arctic special force unit, with soldiers trained in a special program and equipped with modern personal equipment for military operations in the Arctic. The Arctic brigade should be operational by 2015 or 2016 (<http://www.discred.ru/news/>

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sukhoputnye_vojska_arkticheskaja_motostrelkovaja_brigada/2012-02-22-977; Wezeman, 2012, p. 9). According to the former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, one more Arctic brigade could be created probably to be located in the Arkhangelsk region. However, the current Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu did not confirm these plans referring only to the need to reorganize the 200th brigade (Shoigu sozdast, 2013). No future plans concerning the marine brigade at Pechenga were announced.

It should be noted that the above plans will not increase Russia's offensive capabilities because the newly created unit at Pechenga will replace the existing forces and another one – if created – will be located far from the Finnish and Norwegian borders and charged with the protection of the NSR and the Arctic Ocean's coastline rather than with potential operations against NATO in the Western Arctic.

Along with the army, air force, and navy, the efforts to strengthen the Border Guards Service's (which is subordinated to the FSS) control over the region were made. An Arctic border guards unit was created as early as in 1994. Its aim was to monitor the circulation of ships and poaching at sea. The unit was reorganized in 2004–05. In 2009, it was announced that new Arctic units had been established in border guard stations in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk. They started to patrol the NSR – for the first time since the Soviet time. Now the border guards assigned with the task to deal with the new – soft security – threats and challenges such as the establishment of reliable border control systems, the introduction of special visa regulations to certain regions, and the implementation of technological controls over fluvial zones and sites along the NSR. It is currently controlled from the air by border guard aircrafts and on the land and sea by the North-Eastern Border Guard Agency; the Russian border guards further plan to establish a global monitoring network from Murmansk to Wrangel Island. All in all, Moscow plans to build 20 border guard stations along the Arctic Ocean's coastline (Zagorsky, 2013).

As mentioned above, all the conventional forces in the RAZ should be united under the auspices of the AGF led by the joint Arctic command. Given an “increased NATO military threat” in the North, President Putin has decided to accelerate the creation of the AGF which is now scheduled for 2014 (Shoigu sozdast, 2013).

All the power structures (army, navy, border guards, and the Ministry of Emergency Situations) are charged with implementing the AC agreement of 2011 on the creation of a Maritime and Aeronautical Sea and

Rescue System. Each country is responsible for its sector of the Arctic and Russia has the biggest one. The SAR agreement's signatories undertake joint exercises on the regular basis. As many experts believe, the SAR activities are a clear sign of the shift from the armed forces' purely military functions to the soft security missions.

As mentioned above the Russian military is used not only for purely security purposes but also for non-military/civilian needs. For example, in preparing a new submission for the UN Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelf, Russia uses not only the academia but also the military. The objective of the Russian Navy's mission within the framework of the expedition *Arktika-2012* was to prove that its landmass extends to the North Pole by drilling into the sea floor to collect rock samples for scientific analysis (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2012).

To sum up, the Russian modernization programs do not affect the regional military balance. The most impressive programs are related to the modernization of the strategic forces that have global rather than regional missions. As far as the conventional/general purpose forces are concerned they will be at the same or reduced level. It should be noted that other Arctic coastal states have also begun to upgrade their military equipment and military doctrines with a view to better control the North, but it has nothing to do with an arms race. As, for example, the Canadian Standing Committee on National Defense concluded in its 2010 report, "there is no immediate military threat to Canadian territories. [...] The challenges facing the Arctic are not of the traditional military type. [...] Rather than sovereignty threats we face what might best be termed policing threat. These do not require combat capability" (<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=4486644&File=21&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=3>).

Conclusion

The overall assessment of Moscow's military strategies in the region demonstrates that the Russian ambitions in the North may be high, but they are still far from being realized, and they are not necessarily implying the intentions and proper capabilities to confront other regional players by military means. Russia may be eager to develop powerful armed forces in the North, but its plans to modernize its strategic air force, to recreate a strong navy, to modernize its fleet of strategic submarines,

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to lay down new icebreakers and replace the old ones, to create an AGE, to establish new FSS border control, and SAR units are a difficult task. It is hard to imagine that Russia has the financial and technical capacities as well as managerial skills to meet these objectives in the foreseeable future.

It should be noted that the Russian military modernization programs are rather modest and aim at upgrading the Russian armed forces in the High North rather than providing them with additional offensive capabilities or restoring the Soviet-time huge military potential. Given the financial constraints, these programs have recently become less ambitious and more realistic. Now they are comparable with the military modernization programs of other regional players. The Russian military increasingly aims at defending the country's economic interests in the region and control over the huge AZRF territory rather than expanding its "sphere of influence."

To conclude, the general "balance sheet" of Russia's Northern strategy is quite positive. It is safe to assume that in the foreseeable future Moscow's strategy in the region will be predictable and pragmatic rather than aggressive or spontaneous. In contrast with the internationally widespread stereotype of Russia as a revisionist power in the North, we believe that Moscow will continue to pursue a double-faceted strategy in the region: On the one hand, such a strategy aims at defending Russia's legitimate economic and political interests in the region. On the other hand, Moscow is open to cooperation with foreign partners that are willing to partake in exploiting the North's natural resources, developing sea routes and solving numerous socio-economic and environmental problems of the region. In doing so, Russia will prefer to use non-violent, diplomatic, economic, and cultural methods as well as to act *via* international organizations and fora rather than on a unilateral basis. This brings the Russian behavior (at least regionally, not globally) closer to the soft power model albeit there is a long way to go to Russia fully fitting in this frame.

Note

- 1 The first Russian claim for the underwater Lomonosov and Mendeleev ridges was declined by the UNCLCS.

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7

The European Union's Arctic Strategy(ies): The Good and/or the Evil?

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Abstract: *The European Union (EU) as a supranational regional organization considers itself to be in the Arctic region through three of its member states – Denmark, including Greenland which has the status of an Overseas Countries and Territories within the Union, Finland, and Sweden – and two other members of the European Economic Area – Iceland and Norway. The main objective of this chapter is to identify the dominant characteristics of each EU Arctic Strategy “definitions” from 2005 till date and to analyze its evolution by exploring political as well as security and defense issues in a multilevel and multi-perspective dimension.*

Keywords: Arctic strategy; European Union; global commons; global politics

Heininen, Lassi, ed. *Security and Sovereignty in the North Atlantic*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

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Introduction

The European Union (EU) as a supranational regional organization considers itself to be in the Arctic region through three of its member states – Denmark, including Greenland, which has the status of an Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) within the Union,¹ Finland, and Sweden – and two other members of the European Economic Area – Iceland and Norway. This *bond* is assured by a unique combination of history, geography, economy, and scientific achievements, which are expressed in the EU's document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: “the EU is inextricably tied to the Arctic Region” [EU, 2008, p. 2; also Heininen, 2011, pp. 58–59]. This institutional positioning can be better understood when we consider the historical background of this issue: when Greenland left the European Community in 1985, the EU was not physically present in the Arctic in spite of its remnant influence in the region (ibid., p. 58).

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However, the Arctic issues within the EU policies and strategies do not confer to a linear evolution, progress, or achievement. On the contrary, it can be seen as the result of a complex and persistent dialogue among multiple actors inside and outside the Arctic region, as well as the EU institutional framework (see Weber, 2014). It seemed that it was [only] in 1989, that MEP Ernest Glinne asked a question on the “State of the ozone layer over the Arctic” to the European Council, “[that] the Arctic Region appeared in EU documents for the first time” and in 1991 MEP von Habsburg pointed out environmental implications of Soviet military bases in the polar region, but the European Political Cooperation (EPC), responsible for the Union's foreign policy coordination, did not discuss the issue (ibid., pp. 45–46). These initiatives show two things: first, there was not a consistent European political speech on the polar region; and second, in the 1980s and 1990s, the concern involving that region was centered on environmental, resource competition, and security-military issues (Keskitalo, 2003).

When Finland and Sweden joined the organization in 1995, the EU returned to its Arctic physical presence, adopting a renewed and stronger positioning – highly supported by the Finnish initiative of including a Northern Dimension policy² within the EU, coordinated by the Commission Directorate General for External Affairs (DG RELEX). This *take off* was reinforced by the fact that at that time the European Commission was already one of the original parties of the Kirkenes

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Declaration, along with Russia and the Nordic countries, establishing the Barents Euro Arctic Council in 1993 (see Heininen, 2011, p. 58).

In fact, and in spite of not having coastal access to the Arctic Ocean, the European Union was for the first time confronted with the extreme and rare environmental condition of its Arctic member states and somehow these concerns became part of an internal issue agenda.³ In 1999, the European Parliament passed a resolution on “A New Strategy for Agriculture in Arctic Regions,” which clarifies the hard conditions of short growing, grazing seasons and smaller yields as a direct result of climate conditions together with the long distances to be considered for the goods to be transported among sparse locations (Official Journal of the European Communities C 175 (1999), pp. 21–22; also Weber, 2014, p. 47). Moreover, it also stresses the existence of a small population base and centralized trade structures that means significantly high agricultural production costs resulting in important competitive disadvantages within the EU. Besides the economic considerations and emphasis of the document, it also gives significant relevance to the Saami culture and its development (Official Journal of the European Communities C 175 (1999), p. 31; also Heininen and Zebich-Knos, 2011).

In fact, the parliament “considers it important to encourage and enable people to remain in the northernmost regions of Europe and hence stem population loss” (Official Journal of the European Communities C 175 (1999), p. 27), and it stressed its support for immigration facilitation and part-time farming concepts. With regard to the Agenda 2000 proposals, which include agricultural reforms, the parliament forwarded the resolution to the council and the commission and called for the implementation of necessary adjustments to common agricultural policy (COM (97) 2000 – C4-0522/97 (OJ C 210 of 6.7.1998, p. 180)). Therefore, the European Parliament’s resolution on agriculture in the Arctic region can be considered as a first step toward what can be called a “more comprehensive and systematic approach” (Weber, 2014, p. 48) toward the Arctic.

However, all these initiatives had no translation in immediate action. The EU’s Northern Dimension Policy containing an Arctic insight that was adopted in 2000, as a result of the Finnish initiative of 1997 to be implemented through two Action Plans (e.g., Heininen, 2011, p. 59), for example, could have been an important instrument for concrete action. However, and despite the fact that its link to the Barents region supposedly serves as an “Arctic window,” by 2008 it was considered to have

proved to be unsuccessful in engaging Arctic affairs and had “in so far not fulfilled the expectations” (Herman, 2008, p. 35).

Considering all the efforts that were made and the steps toward an Arctic issues agenda to be included in the biggest EU agenda, we must consider that the first “pre-designed” EU Arctic strategic objectives seem to have emerged in 2005. Following the European Parliament Resolution on the Northern Dimension, the member of the European Parliament and Vice President, Diana Wallis, submitted a written question to the Commission: “Taking into account the European Parliament’s resolution on the Northern Dimension (...) will the Commission confirm what steps it intends to take to be more active within the Arctic and the Barents Euro Arctic Councils and in particular what initiatives it might consider taking in relation to the preparation for a possible ‘Charter for Arctic Governance’ to coincide with International Polar Year?” (Wallis, 2005). With the preparation of the International Polar Year initiatives, and in spite of all the constraints, the fact is that after 2005 and 2006 the EU became increasingly active in Arctic affairs. Several official EU documents were released: first, there was the definition of the European Commission (EC) Strategic Priorities for 2005–09; second, the institutionalization of the Maritime Affairs Commission in the same year; and finally, the conceptualization of what was seen – at that time – as the document to become a future maritime policy: launched in 2006, the *Green Book* was available for public discussion/debate during a whole year.

In 2008, another “strategic” period was conceived and defined but with one slightly interesting evolution: from a purely scientific basis, there was clear political as well as security and defense emphasis. Moreover, there was an additional insight: the preparatory “works” for claiming the status of *global common* to be applied to the Arctic region were being considered.

To speak about a European Union Arctic Strategy makes one pave the way with some previous words on the context of this complex issue. Although it is not a completely new question, the mere existence of such *strategy* shows the scientific community that there is much more to be concerned with than the mere climate change and ice-melting facts would make one believe. In fact, this issue must be considered along with the contemporary globalization movement influence and the resurgence of geopolitics, here considered as the science dedicated to the study of the relations between politics and space. It can be understood “in various scales: that of a group (that is united, for example, by the same religion), of a State, of a particular space (one ocean, for example) or of a

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global scale” (Baud, Pascal et al., 1999, p. 150). Besides, it is fundamental to consider the fact that this science helps politics in the definition of its purposes and contributes to the strategic method, namely in concerning the construction of credible and sustainable scenarios (Godet, 1997; Godet et al., 2000).

In spite of all the constraints and challenges, Europe is still occupying an important place when it comes to political action either in the regional or in the global scales/levels. Moreover, the existence of a general peaceful and strategic dialogue theater within an organization like the EU is an example to be followed by other similar projects that had been designed and projected in order to be put into practice in the rest of the world. However, it is not possible to ignore that the positioning of this *supranational* regional organization concerning the Arctic issues will lead to several different but surely important consequences.

The international status of the Antarctic is defined and regulated already, being considered as what we could name *the last scientific frontier fortress* and a true *global commons* as mentioned in Garrett Hardin’s work (Hardin, 1968; Heininen and Zebich-Knos, 2011). Otherwise, the Arctic is in present times, somehow, the *last to be internationally regulated and accordingly recognized at a global scale physical frontier* of the Earth. Moreover, it is becoming a too big an issue to keep neglecting the Arctic region along with its indigenous and national politics with reference to global politics and its main actors. This fact is of great relevance as the Inuit built in 1977 a pan-circumpolar connectivity through their own transnational organization – the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Abele and Rodon, 2007; Heininen and Zebich-Knos, 2011; also Ackrén, this volume). Further, the Saami were the first northern indigenous people to start nation-building and they were united in 1980–81. These initiatives had an important result: the spawning of a national awakening that resulted in Saami self-recognition as a pan-national actor (Heininen, 2002). Today this fact is reinforced as human security is achieving an important role, together with other more classical concerns.

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Furthermore, climate change has become an issue of utmost relevance in the last few years, which is very convenient as it has been in the center of the mainstream political speech on the Arctic and, at the same time, is the better motive to be considered for taking action. Finally, and even if there was no other reason to justify such interest in that pole, the fact that it can be considered as an alternative or a diverse source for energy resources that have already been found there would be clearly sufficient. In fact, the

situation in Ukraine is an important additional factor for this scenario as the reality in main central European countries can become much more troublesome than used to be, namely when one considers the EU energetic dependency issue *a solo* or aggregated with the food dependency.⁴

All in all, in a realist perspective of analysis, the initiatives, policies, and resolutions taken in relation to a subject are always associated to the interests and objectives of the actors involved. A unique European Union policy toward the Arctic region is still to be “designed,” but the region “caught” the attention of many important actors of the so-called international community, the EU being one of many. Further, in spite of the continuous claims and attempts by the EU to become an observer member of the Arctic Council (through the European Commission), there has not been any success, so far. Facts, however, show that in the European Union there has been a continuous tendency since 2005 to focus the policy-making and policy-taking processes in a way that assures the reality of the EU’s impacts in the Arctic region to be “integrated” and addressed in specific terms where the needs and/or interests, somehow, justify.

Methodological premises

At the beginning of this chapter, I put the following question: “What are the main characteristics of the EU Arctic Strategy since it was first formulated, namely in the security and defense domains?” As explained above, and despite considering the multilevel perspective of analysis as instrumental for the understanding of the “big picture,” my concern is not the exhaustive analysis of the policy or policies of each Arctic State for that region. Instead, the purpose is to identify and comprehend for the subsequent explanation and interpretation the evolution of the EU strategy for the Arctic region in the domains previously referred and its alignment (or not) with the main interests that were considered to be those of the region.

A qualitative basis methodology with a documental incidence was chosen and the insights of political science, geopolitics, and strategy considered due to the complexity of the theoretical problem and for a better comprehension – in view of the explanation to fulfill interpretation purpose. The realist, systemic-contingent, and empirical perspectives will be mainly applied.

Considering the subject of this chapter on the European Union’s Arctic Strategy(ies) the it is clear as to what is the importance of considering the

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relations between politics and space in the context of a particular one, which is the Arctic Ocean and the consequences of the interest it is gaining on a bigger political scale. Moreover, the Arctic region is becoming a growing concern for the world as its “newly” discovered assets are of great economic and political value. These “ingredients” turn to be increasingly interesting, when trying to define scenarios or possible lines of evolution for the action to be taken by some actors. Similarly, the correspondent geostrategic perspectives and consequences have an important role. (Geo) Strategy is considered here as “the study of the consistent and variables of the space that is accessible to man and that, by being rationalized in the construction of assessment and usage models, or possible usage, of ways of coercion, project geographic knowledge in the strategic activity” (IAEM, 1993, p. 11; DIAS, 2005). Considering the context of this chapter, and its main purpose – to explore the EU’s Arctic Strategy(ies) in a multilevel perspective (national, supranational regional, and supranational global) – the operational insight of this concept is one of great relevance and justifies our option of considering the scientific assets with an empirical and interpretative application, as it plays an instrumental part. Moreover and amidst the transatlantic relations security context, this represents one of the most thriving, interesting, and concerning challenges of present times.

No matter which perspective is considered: either territorial (physical), maritime (sea), aerial (air), spatial (outer-space), or virtual (cyber-space), the fact is that this is always a purpose on demand by the political actors who *can afford it*. This is true for a national and sub-national level model of analysis but also for a multilevel one. Therefore, the *supranational* governance level must be considered as globalization movement makes the world interdependence rise. In this chapter, we use the *supranational* concept to refer to a reality situated “above” the State. It refers to the fact that several constraints exist “above” the National State borders level that are able to influence and limit those that would be considered to be the “natural” will and interest of the national State (meaning a single/individual territorial unity). The logic of the model is explained in Figure 7.1.

Previous considerations help us argue for the renewed importance of (geo) strategy as a central factor in the State (and main actors) balance of powers equation. This situation was confirmed by a new EU Arctic strategic document launched in 2012 and reinforced by High Representative and EU institutions in 2013 on the occasion of the rejection of the EU permanent observer status claim to the Arctic Council, and sustained in 2014 on the assumption of the growing importance of the region.

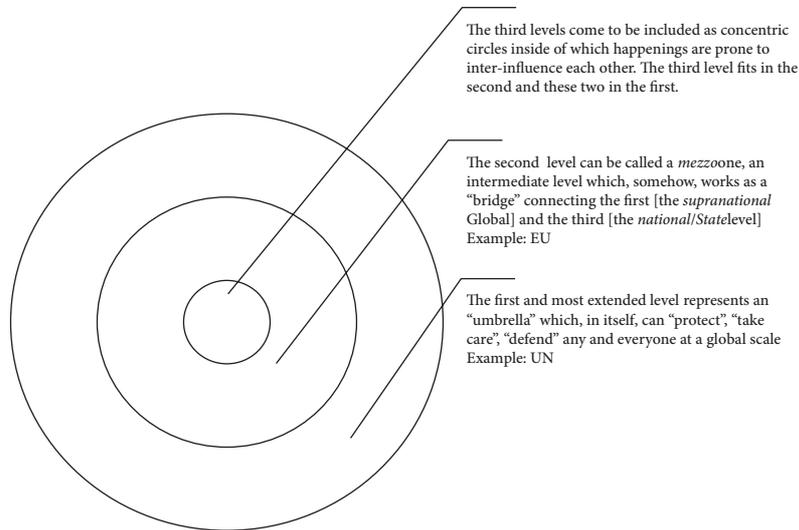


FIGURE 7.1 The multilevel model of analysis

Source: Balão, 2012 (© Sandra Balão 2012)

In conclusion, the source of information used to fulfill the needs are those with primary contents, namely the 2008 EU Commission Communication, the 2009 EU Council Conclusions, the Report of the European Parliament in 2011, the Joint Communication of EEAS and the EU Commission in 2012, the Resolution of the European Parliament in March 2014, and some discourses from actors playing determinant parts. Other secondary sources such as studies, monographs, and scientific papers that have made a contribution to sustain the conclusions were used too. I have also made use of the participant observation technique at the European Polar Summit (Brussels, 2009), during the preparation of the International Polar Year Conference (Montreal, 2012) as an APECS member, and at the Arctic Circle Conference (Reykjavik, 2013).

The importance of the Arctic Region for the European Union

In its 2008 document, the EU clarified that "The notion 'Arctic region' used in this Communication covers the area around the North Pole north of the Arctic Circle. It includes the Arctic Ocean and territories

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of the eight Arctic states: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States” (EU, 2008, p. 2). Under the *classification* issue on the Arctic Region and the States of the Arctic, the *tree line* or the *isotherms* are other criteria that can be used for defining it. According to each of the choices made by each author, a wider or strict *reading* of that reality can be made, being the last of the previously refereed the more restrictive one and the “Arctic Circle” criterion the less.

As stated in the “Introduction” of the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council “(...) EU policies in areas such as environment, climate change, energy, research, transport and fisheries have a direct bearing on the Arctic. It is a fundamental premise of the EU’s Integrated Maritime Policy that each sea-region is unique and needs individual attention in balancing its uses in a sustainable manner. (...) environmental changes are altering the geo-strategic dynamics of the Arctic with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests calling for the development of an EU Arctic policy. On the whole, Arctic challenges and opportunities will have significant repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come.(...)” (EU, 2008).

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The relevance of the security and defense issues in articulation with international politics was previously assumed by the Union in the statements expressed in the Climate Change and International Security Joint Policy Paper to the European Council of 14 March 2008 to the European Council: “The EU is in a unique position to respond to the impacts of climate change on international security, (...). The European Security Strategy recognized the link between global warming and competition for natural resources while the Communication ‘Europe in the World’ highlighted the effects of globalization on external relations (...)” (S113/08).

In spite of its known and recognized importance by many of the most important actors of the global political *arena*, the Arctic region is only poorly considered in the media and usually in the context of the mainstream speech that focus on climate change and environmental impact issues (e.g., Carpenter, 2001). However, the relevance of environmental politics must be understood within a bigger multilevel perspective. In the global and supranational political level and scale it is the aggregate action of the several actors as members of wider organizations with effective action capacity, as it is the cases of the United Nations (UN), the North

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Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), or the World Trade Organization (WTO) that can be considered. There are also supranational, regional political level, and intergovernmental organizations, such as the African Union (AU) and the EU, influencing the situation. Here I concentrate on the latter one, the European Union.

The available data prove that March 2008 was the moment for the EU to design the charter containing the definition of a policy for the Arctic region. At that time, the most important dimensions of the issue were identified: protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population; promoting sustainable use of resources, and contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance. To accomplish these objectives, there were some principles to be observed: promoting the defense of environment and fisheries and defending the importance of indigenous people and local population. Moreover, securing free access to natural resources (oil and gas), safe navigation, and definition of a political and legal status for the Arctic region (deep concern with the Arctic Governance) were also stressed. Nevertheless, cooperation with regional organizations (the Arctic Council), exploring the resources in a sustainable way and supporting an Arctic multilateral governance are the goals that were identified as the ones required to complete the task (EU, 2008; also Heininen, 2011, pp. 58–65; Weber, 2014).

All these dimensions and measures defined concerning the Arctic region assumed a capital relevance for the EU as they appear in line with those formal and institutional principles and values that make the organization known worldwide. Therefore, one can consider as valid the argument that by doing that, this actor was being coherent with its general purposes. Nevertheless, the Arctic region is important for the EU due to realistic interests and needs. The energy dependency of the EU is well known, since the central European countries are extremely dependent on energy from Russia; although Algeria has an important role here, the fact is that only a few EU member states benefit from this partnership. Taking this into consideration the Arctic region can easily become an important alternative for the EU, actually. The EU already heavily impacts the Arctic region, namely by 1) being an active negotiator in international negotiations of climate (change), 2) supporting and financing Arctic research, 3) establishing energy partnership with Russia; 4) buying fish from the Arctic states; and 5) boycotting trade of animal products (e.g., Heininen, 2011, pp. 58–65; Airoldi, 2008).

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The EU Arctic strategy

In the European Commission's strategic priorities defined for the 2005–09 mandate, the need for developing a stronger European maritime economy through an aggregate and environmentally sustainable policy based on outstanding marine scientific research and technology was stressed. The objectives were defined: “The Marine Strategy is also to be seen in the wider context of the development of a new EU maritime policy. A dynamic maritime economy in harmony with the marine environment is one of the European Commission's strategic objectives for 2005–2009” (EC, 2006, p. 7).

The EU does not have a coastal line directly connected to the Arctic Ocean, but considers to be in that region through its three member states and neighbor parties (meaning politically and geographically), and particularly because its member states and the whole European Community are big contributors to the research on the Arctic.

With the assumption of the need for defining an EU *policy* for the Arctic Region, the natural consequence was establishing a strategy for moving forward. The process began in 2008 with a document that is not entitled “Strategy” but “Communication”: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – The European Union and the Arctic region (EU, 2008). After this first attempt, in 2009, the EU's Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues (Council of the European Union, 2009) of 8 December in the aftermath of a Foreign Affairs Council Meeting in Brussels released a document containing several conclusions that pointed out the importance of the Arctic and of the achievements made following the 2008 document.

For the period 2008–09, the member States defined some principles to pave the way for a “strategy.” First, as referred, it was assumed that the EU needed to develop a strong maritime economy. Second, the need to defend and promote an integrated policy capable of assuring sustainable effects on the environmental dimension was recognized. Third, assuming that excellent scientific research in maritime and technological domains (of which the International Polar Year initiative with its main achievement – the creation of a consortium that own *Aurora Borealis* – is a reference example) was a “must have,” as well as recognizing the relevance of finding alternative ways concerning the future capabilities of the Arctic. At this stage, particular attention was paid to

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energy, transportation, environment, fisheries, security, and indigenous people dimensions.

The priorities defined for the EU action concerning the Arctic region during this period put the development of a cooperative Arctic governance system as one of the top ones. It was assumed that such a demand could only make sense if assured in the complete respect of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), signed in 1982 and entered into force in 1994, in order to safeguard objectives like security and stability in the region. Moreover, observing the rules defined by that legal instrument would assure the respect of a restrictive and mandatory environmental management program. Finally, and of the utmost importance, observing the UNCLOS would be sufficient to assure a free and equal access to the Arctic resources – known and estimated.

This period noticed the initiative of the International Polar Year 2007–09 that can be considered to be an important milestone in what refers to the commitment shown by the EU through its investment in order to promote research and scientific knowledge on the Arctic issues. Besides, this initiative had a second edition in 2012, with an International Conference that took place in Montreal, Canada. The Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council stated that “Under the Europe 2020 flagship initiative ‘Innovation Union’ and Horizon 2020, the proposed investment programme for research and innovation for 2014–2020 (...) (€80 billion) represents a significant increase on previous EU research programmes, and will allow the EU to make an even more significant contribution to Arctic research” (JOINT, 2012, p. 6). Through the fifth and sixth community support packages more than €200 million were made available for polar issues, contributing in a substantial way for the International Polar Year initiative.⁵

In the same document, M. Ashton considers “the challenge of safeguarding the environment while ensuring the sustainable development of the Arctic region” (JOINT, 2012) to be the most important concern. Moreover, it is stated that “Since 2008, (...) the EU (...) raised awareness of the impact it is having on the Arctic environment and of the potential for sustainable development in the Arctic region for the benefit of both the local Arctic population and the EU,” and that “The Arctic is an area of growing strategic importance” (JOINT, 2012, pp. 2–3). This Joint Communication can be considered as one of the

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most recent signs that show the EU is determined to increase the engagement and participation in Arctic issues and Arctic policy definition. In fact, this document follows the application by the European Commission on behalf of the EU for permanent observer status on the Arctic Council.

However, and in spite of all the efforts made and initiatives projected by the EU toward the Arctic region, in 2013 the main political objective was not achieved as Canada *vetoed* the admission of the EU (via EC) as a permanent observer of the Arctic Council due to EU trade ban measures on seal fur and other derivatives. In fact, and following this decision, on 15 May 2013, Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki declared that “Further to previous exchanges with the Canadian authorities the EU will now work expeditiously with them to address the outstanding issue of their concern” (EU, 2013). Effective diplomacy with each of the Arctic states actors on Arctic issues may be a better way to achieve the strategic and political objectives pursued for such a long time by the EU, without leaving behind some more traditional ones as those related to science and technology, namely the ones concerning the Lisbon Treaty’s stated EU shared space competence to be applied to the Arctic region (ECHR, 2012a).

If the relevance of the USA for the EU and the North Atlantic region is well known as a close partner playing a fundamental role in such issues as Security and Defense, when considering Russia, the perspectives tend to change and are, usually, different. This can be explained through a wide range of factors as the perception of the European tends to consider that actor as belonging to a different geographical territory and thus to a different reality. However, and whatever the perspective, the fact is that Russia cannot be left apart from this scenario. In fact, it is the biggest actor in the Arctic region with an assertive national Arctic policy (see Konyshov and Sergunin, volume). President Putin stated, quite recently, that “[the Arctic region] has traditionally been a sphere of our special interest. It is a concentration of practically all aspects of national security – military, political, economic, technological, environmental and that of resources. According to experts, the overall energy reserves of Russia’s Arctic section exceed 1.6 trillion tons, while the continental shelf holds almost a quarter of all the hydrocarbon resources on the entire world sea shelf” (Putin, 2014).

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The fact is that Russia is very important to the EU: it is the main supplier of energy resources for the great majority of the organization state-members, and the situation in Ukraine is causing serious concern due to the risks associated to the natural gas, for now. Counting Russia as a privileged partner will allow a potential security surplus in the entire EU, as closer relations would provide tighter ties among the different actors, no matter in what “quality” and or “level.” World history in general and European history in particular reminds us that on more than one occasion, it fulfilled important needs.

All in all, the Figure 7.2 illustrates the interests of the EU for the next decade and make it clear that the “Wider North” is one of the most important geographical areas to be strategically considered.

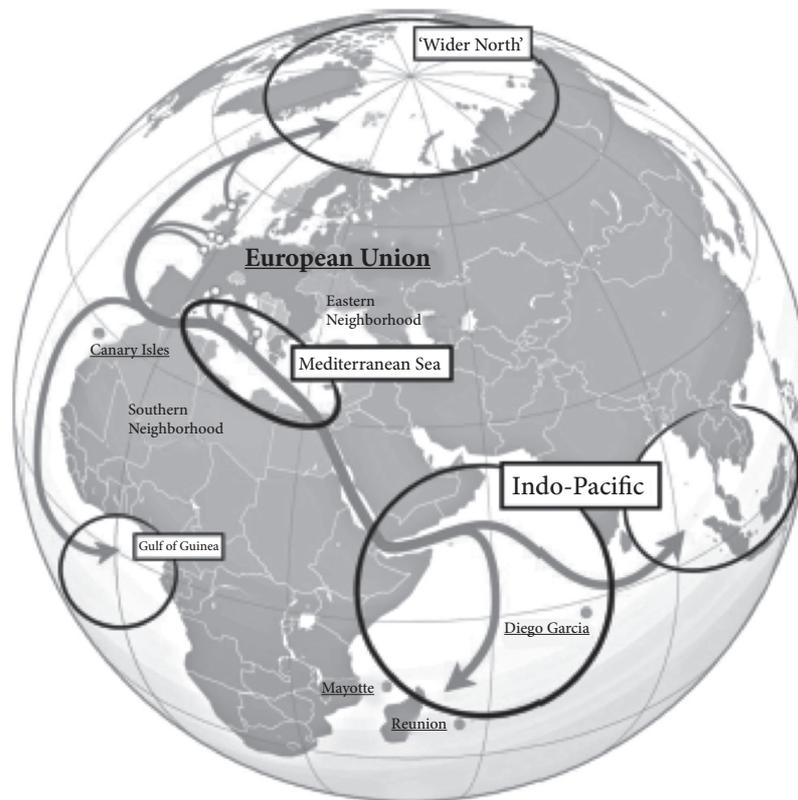


FIGURE 7.2 *The EU areas of privileged interest, 2013–25*

Source: Missiroli, A. Ed., 2013. (© EU Institute for Security Studies, 2013)

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Global politics, the EU and the Arctic governance: the good and the evil

Sustainable environmental development, empowerment of local populations and indigenous peoples, transportation, eco-tourism, and many others are some of the challenges the EU (2012) document identified as of great importance. Moreover, Arctic spatial information knowledge and seabed cartography (ECHR, 2012a) are two of several “new” issues being considered for research and analysis as the climate change brings new hotspots.

The fact is that there are a myriad of (new) challenges and questions involving the Arctic region. Besides those previously pointed out, we can consider the new sea routes that are seen as becoming important alternatives for trade and tourism, but for fisheries, also. This will mean the need for more and better surveillance, security and control of people, goods, and equipment. Moreover, the growing use of the Arctic Ocean will demand search and rescue infrastructures – which do not exist, at least not yet, although Russia is playing its part assertively: “We need to develop the best economic model for the development of the Northern Sea Route (...) to complete the creation of a modern navigation, communication, technical maintenance and emergency relief infrastructure along the entire length of the Northern Sea Route” (Putin, 2014).

Furthermore, evidence supports the claim for protecting the specific characteristics of the region. That is why the EU argues that in spite of agreeing with the fact that economic development of the region is important for the local communities and people, its sustainability must be assured as the effects of the occurring transformations are deep and will affect the Arctic region and its outer frontiers. A resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic (2013/2595(RSP)) was recently approved by the European Parliament on 12 March that “search” for better conditions to assure the approval of the EU permanent observer status in the Arctic Circle: “The resolution also provides an unprecedented open door to an agreement with Canadian Inuit on easing the ban on seal product exports. Article 5 is clear: the parliament “regrets the effects which the EU regulation relating to the ban on seal products has produced for sections of the population, and in particular for indigenous culture and livelihood.” The same document is claiming for creating an Arctic sanctuary: “This resolution can be read as an evolution of the EU’s threefold strategy. For instance, standards of responsibility have been

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much increased. A good example is Article 38, in which the parliament “supports the development of a network of Arctic conservation areas” and calls specifically for “the protection of the international sea area around the North Pole” (Laursen, 2014).

There are arguments to claim that a treaty or some legal source of international law is in need to guarantee that the Arctic region can keep its specific characteristics. They have not been, so far, successful, partly because the UNCLOS is seen to govern many of the issues concerning the world's oceans, including scientific research. On the high seas, which are the global commons of humanity and belong to no country, states may conduct marine scientific research “exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind as a whole” (UNCLOS, Article 143). However, there is no doubt that there are interests that can benefit the whole region and its actors, but many others benefit individual entities. In fact, if one considers the simple practice of scientific research in the circumpolar North it is impossible not to conclude on the benefits of that activity, as it helps to legitimize countries' claims to have a voice in the region. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for displaying technological capacity as only but very few countries have capacity to send an icebreaker to the Arctic. Those few are in a privileged position to “arrive, see and win” the access to the existing international waters.

However, and in association with the objective for a free and equal access to the existing resources in the Arctic region, it is important not to forget that there are eight sovereign states in that region and two important autonomous regions. Furthermore, some data point out that 97% of those known and expected resources are already under someone's jurisdiction (e.g., USA Club of Rome Report, 2012). Although governance is an important issue in and for the Arctic, there is one obvious question to ask: is there anything to share *freely*? The fact is that the territorial Arctic is not a “no men's land,” but there are several claims on maritime areas.

For that reason, it only makes sense for the EU, as a regional and global actor, to consider toward the Arctic region a strategy under which the importance of promoting dialogue and geopolitical cooperation (as a way to project its own “soft” power) is assumed. This can be the right path to search for the environmental safeguard, the development and deepening of Arctic science and knowledge, the empowerment of indigenous people, and the sustainable development of resources. Particularly, since there are many political issues and challenges to become involved in.

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The Arctic Council is considered and recognized as the main governance in, and for, the Arctic region. Although the EU has not, yet, got the status of an observer of the council, the EU member states Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and United Kingdom enjoy that status. Also Asian states, China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore became observer members in the Kiruna ministerial meeting in May 2013. All this shows the growing interest toward the Arctic and its energy resources (among others). Particularly, it shows that these Asian states have paid serious attention to the Arctic and the transformations it is undergoing.

However, the Arctic Council member states, particularly the indigenous groups, express deep concern about their fragile position in the “food supply chain” that is dependent on both the *decision-making* and *decision-taking* processes that are able to influence in a positive or negative way the political action to be taken within and for the region. Culture and traditional ways of life of local populations are, in many cases, in total opposition to the regulatory EU arrangements. For example, the EU laws forbid the trade of seal meat, which is one of the most important bases of the economic activities of the indigenous people. Therefore, it is easy to understand the reasons in the origin of the resistance as to the vote to oppose to the admission of EU (via EC) as a permanent observer member to the Arctic Council, although some political and strategic measures have been taken in the meantime.

In sum, in spite of climate change issues, energy and resource scarcity, health, and demographic change as well as human, water, and food security are being considered by the EU as big issues to be faced and solved, although other apparently smaller one can cause more harm. The policy-relevant results must be sought in order to inform economic and political decision-making but in parallel with the so-called soft power adhesion.

There are still, as mentioned, some important maritime disputes: the dispute between Canada and Denmark over the Hans Island. Another is that between the USA and Canada on the Beaufort Sea and over the Northwest Passage because the US government does not recognize Canada’s sovereignty over the passage and prefers freedom of navigation (see Pharand, 2009). Norway and several countries, including EU member states, interpret the applicability of the Svalbard Treaty in the 200 nm area around this archipelago differently. Finally, there are also the claims by Canada, Denmark, and Russia on the shelf of the Arctic Ocean beyond the national Exclusive Economic Zones: “Besides Canada

and Russian EEZ extension claims to the North Pole, Denmark has laid out its EEZ extension claims” (Laursen, 2014). Here the most important treaty, in present time, to be applied is the UNCLOS. However, by 2010 seven Arctic states have ratified it, but the USA remains concerned on some paragraphs of the document and with the subsequent transference of rights to the International Seabed Authority (see Corgan, this volume).

Conclusion

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned documents, particularly the “Council conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region” (which resulted from the Foreign Affairs Council Meeting of 12 May 2014), it is clear that a significant range of activities have been taking place under the auspices and or initiative of the EU. It is worth mentioning that a valuable contribution to Arctic cooperation through research (€20 million/year, in 2007–13), regional and cross-border investment (€1.14 billion, in 2007–13), and cooperation with the partners in the fields of environment, transport, energy, and maritime safety has been made possible due to the commitment of the EU. Moreover, the EU’s constructive engagement with Arctic states, indigenous peoples and other partners to find common solutions to challenges that require a global response, respecting the specificities of the region is intensified, since “Council recognizes the Arctic Council as the primary body for circumpolar regional cooperation and re-affirms its agreement to and its strong support for the observer status of the EU in the Arctic Council” (Council, 2014, p. 2). Furthermore, the Council requests the Commission and the High Representative to present proposals for the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy by December 2015.

All considered, it is possible to conclude that: first, a European Union Arctic Policy is forthcoming, though there is some skepticism (e.g., Weber, 2014, p. 49); second, the European Union Arctic Strategy(ies) is evolving from *soft* into *smart* (e.g., Heinen, 2012, p. 62); third, the *global common* institutional speech approach of the past is giving room for *global issues*, such as free access to resources (energy security), free shipping (security and defense), respect of the International Law, UNCLOS and possible creation of a *Polar Code* (security and defense), cooperation,

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indigenous peoples (human security), and environment (environmental security); fourth, the key word is *financing*, while national/state governments cut budgets in research and education, the supranational regional institution “gives” significant ones; fifth, national speeches and sovereign interests will tend to become more assertive (at least in some cases – the realist perspective of analysis seems to prove right) (e.g., Konyshev and Segurnin, 2012); sixth, the EU strategy(ies) has changed its definition from a *trying to be leading* actor, at the first phase, into a *trying to be into* Arctic governance actor; seventh, the present strategic and political tendency seem to be focused in accomplishing the conditions required to be accepted as a member of the Arctic Circle, no matter what; and final, currently the EU strategy is expected to be based on what can be called [new] instrumental and functional [*diplomatic*] *approaches: science & technology, international cooperation & global issues, international law & security, and indigenous people & empowerment.*

In the end, the EU positioning in relation to the Arctic future will surely be confronted with the need for making choices. Those will be divided between *fear* – which may be able to stop an effective action – and *challenge/commitment* – which will probably lead to action, to achieve goals through the implementation of policies translated in the application of measures able to create meaningful outputs and making the difference. In spite of all the EU measures and initiatives concerning the Arctic region, there seems to be a convergent *state of mind* among the Arctic states: a suspicious *mood* somehow based on the lack of recognition of EU effective understanding of what really matters within Arctic region politics and the subsequent capacity to defend the correspondent interests.

The options can be put in a rather simplistic way: if the political will is going to show its presence through action to cooperate to find solutions (the *good* will win) or omission (the *evil* will show its power). In any case, humankind will not stop being the main target and, in that perspective, the one to take advantage or disadvantage.

Notes

- 1 The Faroe Islands is not part of the EU according to both Rome Treaties. For more details on the Rome Treaties History, see: <http://www.cvce.eu/recherche/>

- unit-content/-/unit/en/3cb9e142-6ac4-4184-8794-fc3cf619cf33/3cb9e142-6ac4-4184-8794-fc3cf619cf33/Resources.
- 2 The Northern Dimension is a shared policy among its four partners: the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Russia, promoting stability, prosperity and sustainable development.
 - 3 Although Denmark is considered an Arctic state because of Greenland, Greenland itself is an OCT.
 - 4 See <http://www.oxfam.org/en/grow/pressroom/pressrelease/2014-06-03/g7-and-europe-face-energy-wake-call-food-and-fuel-crisis-looms>
 - 5 Wider Scientific Program centered in the Arctic and Antarctic regions between March 2007 and March 2009. The EU DAMOCLES Program, dedicated to the development of Arctic studies and observation capacities for long-term environmental studies, is the broadest individual contribution registered within this initiative.

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