Effective Planning of the Future of the Arctic

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Abstract. The problems of the Arctic region have become the most important ones in the world. Political risks hinder the industrial development of the region. This paper addresses the problem of planning and modeling the future of this region. It presents the problems of developing a model of the future due to the ideologies and strategies of two main actors in the Arctic, the United States and the Russian Federation. The effects of a bipolar perception of the future of the region and of the whole world are shown. A model of the effective planning of the future of the Arctic region is proposed.

1. Introduction
The Arctic region with its natural resources and high economic potential attracts many companies and has become an important area of transnational development. According to recent reports “all across the Arctic, changes in climate will create new vulnerabilities for infrastructure and present new design challenges” [2]. Global warming can greatly change the Arctic region. So, “despite uncertainties in the magnitude of expected global warming over the next century, one consistent feature of extant and projected changes is that Arctic environments are and will be exposed to the greatest warming” [12. P. 449]. The climate and nature changes in the region are under study. For example, “as a part of the national Norwegian monitoring program, long-term surveys of contaminants have been carried out” [6. P. 281], another survey “emphasizes a need to investigate nonstationary climate response of Alaskan coastal forests to warming in other tree species” [11. P. 211].

The international status of the Arctic is fixed in international agreements. The region itself is divided into five sectors of responsibility between the U.S., Russia, Norway, Canada, and Denmark. But the most important problem of development in the Arctic is that “given the sensitivity of Arctic development, there is greater risk from changes in regulation or investment frameworks, following either a change of political leadership or a specific risk event, even one in which the company is not itself implicated” [8].

Consequently the problems of the future of the Arctic and the planning of that future lead us to the problems of the future of all the Arctic countries and even those of the whole international community.

2. Data sets
The Arctic contains enormous unexploited energy resources, primarily oil and gas. According to the United States (U.S.) Geological Survey, the oil reserves of the Arctic (both offshore and onshore) are 90 billion barrels [4]. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) of 2008 presents “the first-ever wide-ranging assessment of Arctic oil and gas resources, estimating the region’s undiscovered and technically recoverable conventional oil and natural gas resources. Of the 33 Arctic sedimentary
“provinces” that the USGS evaluated, 25 were found to have a greater than 10% probability of having oil or gas deposits larger than 50 million barrels of oil equivalent” [1. P. 2].

However, recent surveys show that “disagreement over the legal status of the Northwest Passage and potentially over the status of Russian Arctic waters could lead to claims that double standards are being applied” [8]. For the Russian Federation the Arctic continental shelf is a region of high geostrategic and long-term economic interests of the state. This fact makes of this territory an independent object of national policy [3].

In areas neighboring the Arctic are located the components of the Russian and American missile warning systems. Also there are American air-defense interceptors in Alaska, and Russian analogs located on the coast of the Arctic Ocean. There is a Russian nuclear testing area on Novaya Zemlya (an archipelago in the Arctic Ocean in the North of Russia and the extreme Northeast of Europe).

Some of the Arctic countries conduct military exercises in the region. In 2013 Russia conducted military exercises using the cruiser “Peter the Great” and nuclear submarines “Orel” and “Voronezh”; launches of cruise missiles were also conducted. In turn, in 2013 the U.S. carried out the “Arctic Challenge” training exercises in the Gulf of Bothnia and in the Barents Sea with the participation of the air forces of Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

3. Problems of the future in political and social reality

The sense of the future is organically inherent in a man as a thinking, living being. This sense is located on the basic axis of coordinates on which a person is oriented in the world. It is included in individual, social, and therefore in political time. The temporal horizon of the modern society is determined by the future [9]. That is why the planning and the programming of the future are so important for our modern social structures.

The constructivist approach to social reality supposes that in the consciousness of a human being this reality is completed by projects. The future can be defined as a projective completion of a present reality. Therefore, the individual’s temporal dimension is determined not only by sense of social time and also by culture. Thus, this temporal dimension is in turn a part of that culture. The question is about the political culture as well as about culture in general. A model of the future has a key position in contemporary communication and in formation of a modern dynamic society.

Therefore, the concept of the future is an important basic notion for an individual as well as for the society in general. This concept forms one of the elements of the orientation scheme “time – space”. It brings meaning and dynamics for the actions of individuals and society.

According to the typology of British scientist Peter Laslett [6], there are four types of changes in society categorized according to their speed:

- fast, e.g. political changes, fashion or judgment changes, changes in international relationships;
- medium, e.g. economic, communication, technical, demographic, and institutional changes;
- slow, e.g. constitutional, religious changes; and
- very slow, e.g. normative changes, changes of productive relations and social structure.

The problem is that the future belongs to the category of slow and very slow changes while the political transformations and events (elections, regional conflicts etc.) belong to the fast ones. Thus, this situation provokes discordance of political cycles and problems in understanding of the future.

4. Representation of the future in the U.S. and Russia ruling political parties’ programs

The planning and modeling of the future of the Arctic are inextricably connected with the models of the future proposed by the official ideology of the Arctic region countries. Although there are five countries present in the Arctic, due to the general international situation and global processes, the most important actors in the Arctic are the U.S. and Russia. Planning of the future in the Arctic region depends on the strategies and the programs of these two countries.
Additionally, the dominant party determines to a large extent the official ideology and national doctrine of a country. So when speaking of American and Russian strategies for the future, we examine the ideologies of the dominant parties that are reflected in their official program documents. For the U.S. we will examine the Democratic Party platform “Renewing America’s Promise” [5] and for Russia, the Electoral program of United Russia party [7].

The structure of a political party program represents the programming image of the future. Analysis of goals, values, and objectives declared in the political party platforms allows us to conclude that the governing party of the U.S. proposes the future on the basis of the principles and values of the past, while United Russia creates an image of the future mostly by reference to the prospects viewed in the present situation. Nevertheless, the United Russia political program contains some measures of the restoration kind, in regard to Soviet ideology. In this way the party is trying to spark the interest of a wide range of voters.

Over the years the ruling political parties pretended to possess total control of the future. But nowadays, in our postmodern society the political parties have to renounce their claim to this control. Citizens are free to choose the definitive model of the future represented in one of the parties’ programs. Thus today the most important goal of a party is to create a model of the future that will be the most popular with the masses.

Ideology and doctrine remain in the political parties’ programs. But each party tends to create and to propose to the citizens goals and values that will combine as high as possible a vision of a personal future for the majority of the population with the vision of their country’s future.

Both the Democratic Party and the United Russia formally declare their ideology to be centrist. However, detailed examination of their platforms leads us to the conclusion that these parties are both of the conservative type. Such a political orientation is rather natural for the dominant parties that rule their countries during a period of economic crisis when the demand for a liberal model of the future is almost zero.

In spite of the fact that changes in ideologies and doctrines are slow and even very slow, modern political reality shows that during a period of serious economic and social shocks, the goals and the values of the parties are subject to accelerated changes. And the voters appreciate these changes.

5. Interpretation of the results
The research demonstrates that the Democratic Party of the U.S. creates its image of the future through sources and values of the past, while the United Russia presents its model of the future through sources and values of the present day. Also, the Democratic Party in its program associates the future of the country with the condition of the whole world. Its model of the future includes almost all the countries and regions of the world. The United Russia program presents only ideas of cooperation with limited number of neighbors.

The models of the future proposed by the U.S. and the Russian Federation do not facilitate safe and effective planning of the future of the Arctic region.

As a result of the political and military actions of the countries, “Arctic development is often politically contentious, with sometimes opposing interests and perspectives between local, national, and international levels. Political support for development will continue to represent an uncertainty for businesses seeking to invest in Arctic projects” [2].

Also, “beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), countries must demonstrate that the seabed is a “natural prolongation” of the continental shelf in order to claim seabed rights. These practices have led to several overlapping claims between countries. For example, Russia has made a claim that its shelf extends all the way to the North Pole along the Lomonosov Ridge, a claim that the Canadians (as well as others) vigorously reject” [1. P. 5].

Today the political and geopolitical risks for the Arctic remain significant. The global balance of power in the Arctic region is in some way unstable.
6. Conclusion
U.S. and Russian planning and strategies in the Arctic region cannot guarantee a safe and stable future there. The Arctic countries must create an effective planning system that will assure the sustainable development of the Arctic region. The ideological opposition of the two leading countries of the region could destroy the future of the Arctic.

The analysis of program documents of the political parties and the response of the voters during the last elections (2008 and 2012 in the U.S., 2007 and 2011 in Russia) suggest that there is a strong need for a political model of the future. At this stage the political parties cannot fully satisfy this need. Modern society stands in need of long-term prospects of the future.

In order to ensure peace in the region a new model of the future has to be created. In the modern global world the most successful political concepts are those offering not only a close relationship between the future of each individual and the future of his or her region and country, but also a further link with the future of the world and humanity in general.

Therefore the key to the effective planning of the future of the Arctic region is in a model of the future that takes into account the mutual interests of all the actors of the region, and presents a multipolar image of the future of the Arctic.

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