International Cooperation in the Arctic as a Way to Preserve the Natural and Cultural Heritage

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Abstract. The rapid growth of the threat to the destruction of natural and cultural values prompted the world community to realize the need to join efforts to preserve the achievements of nature and culture. Henceforth, the importance of the factor of cooperation in international relations becomes greater. The article considers multilateral cooperation in the field of preservation of cultural and natural heritage in the Arctic. The Arctic is a territory where the interests of many states overlap, so cooperation issues are particularly important here. The Arctic region has a unique natural and cultural heritage that needs constant protection. The authors aim at analyzing the modern system of defense of the world cultural and natural heritage, developed by UNESCO. The authors mean the world heritage as the most valuable foundation, a set of artifacts of spiritual and material culture created by man, and the wealth created by nature, inherited from past generations are preserved at present and transferred to future generations. The article pays attention not only to sites already on the UNESCO World Heritage List, but also to those that are to be included on the UNESCO List. Special attention is paid to the interaction of Russia and UNESCO on the issues of identifying new sites of natural and cultural heritage in the Arctic.

1. The Arctic Is the Territory of the International Dialogue

New trends in the international relations at the end of XX - beginning of XXI centuries, cultural integration, globalization and acceleration of civilizational processes make cultural contacts extremely important by opening new capabilities for them and hasten the processes of multicultural communication and exchange of cultural values [1]. One of the characteristic features of the modern international relations has been the significant strengthening of the so-called “soft factors”. It is no coincidence that the importance of cultural and humanitarian cooperation along with the traditional spheres of politics, economy, trade and security has so markedly increased in our days. All peoples and countries are involved in a tight branching network of various cooperation that affect all spheres of human life. This became increasingly obvious in the context of contemporary globalization based on the development of a single global market [2].

International cooperation provides for interaction of two or more actors and is aimed at implementation of common interests by joint efforts. Traditionally, international cooperation may be implemented in terms of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. It should not be forgotten that international cooperation, especially in the cultural and humanitarian sphere, can serve as an effective tool of “soft power” aimed at overcoming the lack of mutual trust [3].
The Arctic is one of those regions where international cooperation is strong and diverse. The interests of various states intersect here: Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia, the USA, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, etc. “Non-Arctic countries”, for instance, France, Italy, and China, are showing their interest in the Arctic. We can say without any exaggeration that this region is strategically important for all mankind, but from the point of view of cultural and humanitarian cooperation is invaluable.

Nowadays, the Arctic zone is a very important subject of international geopolitics. is a zone of technological innovations and new perspectives and possibilities [3].

The Arctic has a unique ecosystem, vast natural resources, unique culture, and rich ethnic and linguistic composition. Small-numbered peoples live here, whereas their way of life and traditions require special attention and constant interaction for the purpose of protecting and supporting them. This wealth needs constant attention, and it should be carefully preserved not only on behalf of the people of the Arctic, but also in the interests of all mankind, otherwise the loss of this heritage will be irreparable. Preservation of the natural and cultural heritage, especially in terms of respect for the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the Far North, will be a good contribution to the preservation of a multicultural world [4].

Recognizing the strategic importance of the Arctic as a geopolitical and economic center for the development of Russia, the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin also emphasizes the importance of the international cultural and humanitarian cooperation in the territory thereof [5]. In short, the Arctic is truly a territory of international cooperation in the interests of man, nature, culture and development.

At present, international cooperation in the Arctic is developing very dynamically, including many areas. However, probably, the world community is most interested in the projects aimed at solving the cultural and humanitarian problems of the population living here. Among the main problems the most characteristic of the Arctic region and its inhabitants, firstly, are the high vulnerability of the environment and the significant risk of its destruction as a result of anthropogenic impact. Secondly, there is a threat of extinction of the languages and cultures of the indigenous minorities of the North, which result in their irreparable loss. Therefore, the issue of preserving the cultural and natural diversity in the Arctic is much updated on the international agenda, namely, the culture and traditions of the indigenous northern peoples, as well as the natural wealth of the Far North. In many ways, this problem is being successfully solved due to the activities of UNESCO - the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, engaged in implementation of a number of its programs in the Arctic.

2. International Cooperation in the Arctic in the Field of Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage

One of the main areas of cultural and humanitarian cooperation in the Arctic under the auspices of UNESCO is related to the defence of the world cultural and natural heritage.

Since 1972, when the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted, each year a number of natural or cultural sites are added to the list. The World Heritage status gives a number of advantages to the facility: it serves as an additional guarantee of its preservation, contributes to its popularization, and provides priority funding. The states in the territory whereof UNESCO heritage sites are located undertake to make every effort to protect them. UNESCO is engaged in the activities to identify potential candidates to be included in the List in cooperation with the relevant international organizations: the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, and the World Wildlife Fund. According to 2019, 167 countries have joined the Convention, 1092 sites are listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, whereof 842 have cultural status, and 209 have natural status and 38 more mixed-status sites.

It should be noted that despite its unique natural and cultural wealth, the Arctic was not immediately included in the responsibility of this international organization. In 1985, petroglyphs in Alta, discovered in 1972, were among the first listed on the World Heritage List. Since the discovery
of the first petroglyphs, more than 5,000 rock paintings have been found in the vicinity of Alta [6], which indicates the extraordinary richness of this monument.

It took almost a quarter of a century for the UNESCO List to have another object located in the Arctic zone. Only in 1996, the World Heritage List was added by another object - Swedish Laponia. Laponia is the union of four national parks in western Lapland, combining the unique nature and objects of Sami culture and located on the territory of 9400 square meters. The natural complexes of these places, which have remained intact for a long time, are now at serious risk due to the emergence of motor transport. Therefore, the inclusion of Laponia on the UNESCO List is at least a partial guarantee against further destruction.

In 2004, the first natural site appeared in the UNESCO List, representing the Russian Arctic - a natural complex located beyond the Arctic Circle and including the mountainous Wrangel Island (7,600 sq. Km) and Herald Island (11 km) along with the adjacent Chukotka and East Siberian seas. The Wrangel and Herald Islands have an extremely high species diversity of flora and fauna for the Arctic [7].

In addition, in 2004, another unique natural site was added to the UNESCO List - Ilulissat Ice Fjord in Greenland. This is one of several glacial “tongues”, whereby the ice sheet of Greenland reaches the coast of the sea. Each year, 35 cubic kilometers of ice breaks off from this “tongue”, which is 10% of the total mass of icebergs departing from Greenland. The huge mass of ice, moving with a deafening noise and forming icebergs, is a grandiose and quite spectacular natural phenomenon [8].

The great success of Russian specialists was the addition of another Russian Arctic site to the UNESCO List in 2010 - the Putoran Plateau. The plateau is located in the northern part of Central Siberia, 100 km beyond the Arctic Circle, and is a vast and practically unaffected by civilization basalt geological formation, rising in the north of Eastern Siberia just north of the Arctic Circle. Its decoration is served by numerous waterfalls, including a waterfall of 108 m in the valley of the Kanda River, one of the highest in Russia. The object was added to another important UNESCO program - “World Heritage Forests” [9].

Work on the introduction of cultural and natural heritage sites, located in Russia, under the protection of UNESCO, is performed on a constant basis. An example of this is the inclusion in the UNESCO Cultural Heritage List of the unique natural park Lena Pillars in central Yakutia in 2012. Lena Pillars is a unique miracle of nature, somewhat similar to a stone forest. On these rocks, scientists found cave paintings made in red and yellow paint [10].

All of the aforementioned sites, representing the unique nature of the Arctic and inscribed on the UNESCO List, demonstrate an example of joint international study and protection of the invaluable heritage of humanity.

International cooperation in the Arctic under the auspices of UNESCO is not limited to the identification of sites of the natural and cultural heritage and their subsequent inclusion in the List. To find the most effective ways to protect the Arctic heritage, as well as to strengthen interaction, UNESCO arranges for various international events: round tables, conferences, and seminars. Therefore, in 2007, an international meeting was held in Narvik (Norway), attended by the representatives of the Arctic Council, the International Council for the Protection of Monuments and Historic Sites, the Northern World Heritage Fund, the Prince Albert II Foundation (Monaco), and 8 states in the Arctic region: Canada, Finland, Denmark/Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia and the USA. The meeting resulted in the elaborated conceptual framework for cooperation on the preservation of the Arctic heritage. The meeting participants also drew up preliminary lists of potential heritage sites, on which inclusion to the main World Heritage List in the near future to all interested parties. Narvik discussed the issue of interaction with other international and national organizations to preserve the unique Arctic heritage [11], considered the possibility of joint projects with cultural and information centers of the Nordic countries that have interests in the Arctic region: the Finnish Institute, the Swedish Institute, and the Danish Institute. Many programs of these organizations are aimed at protecting and promoting the cultural and natural heritage in the Arctic, which brings them closer to UNESCO. An agreement was reached on joint projects at the multilateral level: UNESCO
and the Arctic Council plan to develop a general overview of the Arctic heritage sites, which are especially valuable for all mankind [12].

3. Prospects for the Promotion of the Arctic Heritage of the UNESCO World Heritage List

At present the Arctic region engrosses the attention of all mankind, many reputable international organizations, and specialists from different countries. The problems of preserving the cultural and natural heritage of the Arctic are of concern to all mankind. However, the cultural potential of the Arctic as a unique territory of international cooperation is not fully realized. Meanwhile, natural and cultural wealth, unique cultural and natural sites that have not only national but also international significance are concentrated here.

At the end of February 2016 in Paris, at UNESCO headquarters, there was a discussion about the possibility of including new sites of the maritime Arctic on the List of World Natural Heritage, in particular, in the circumpolar zone. The scientific analysis showed a clearly insufficient representation of the areas of the marine Arctic among the natural marine World Heritage sites. Experts note the need to include the following sites: the White Sea; Franz Josef Land and Severnaya Zemlya archipelagoes along with the adjacent shelf and continental slope (as part of a serial trans-boundary object together with Spitsbergen); Ob-Yenisei estuary; Great Siberian Polynia; the delta of the Lena; Bering Strait (trans-boundary object), the Southern coast of Chukotka (near Cape Navarin) with the adjacent water area.

Other international organizations, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Council for the Protection of Natural Resources (USA) and the UNESCO World Heritage Center, also participate in international cooperation in identifying natural sites that are candidates for inscription on the UNESCO List. Therefore, following the joint report of these organizations, it was proposed to include on the UNESCO List several natural sites of the maritime Arctic, including residual Arctic sea ice of many years and the ecoregion of the North-Eastern Water Polynya, the North Baffin Gulf Ecoregion, the Disco Gulf Ecological Region and Hellefiske Bank, the Polynyna Ecoregion Bay Skorsby, High arctic archipelago.

The significant potential of the Arctic is not limited to natural heritage sites, the possibility of which inclusion on the UNESCO List is now being discussed by experts. Among the unique Arctic heritage there are a lot of cultural sites, especially in the Russian Arctic, which would be part of UNESCO’s responsibility for their greater preservation and popularization. For example, in the Murmansk region there is one of the largest centers of the ancient rock art of Northern Europe - the archaeological complex “Kanozero Petroglyphs”, which is the largest cluster of petroglyphs throughout Europe and is among the five largest Neolithic monuments in the world.

Upon discovery in 1997, archaeologists have established the age of drawings. By the most approximate estimates, they were created in the middle of the 4th-3rd millennia BC. In 1998, the “Kanozero Petroglyphs” were recognized as a particularly valuable historical object and are now under state protection. In the north of Russia there are only four petroglyphs. The most famous of them are the petroglyphs of Lake Onega, created by the ancient Karelians in the 4th-3rd centuries BC, and the White Sea Petroglyphs - a monument of the 4th-5th millennia BC, located in the town of Zalavruga in the lower reaches of the river Vyg. On the territory of Russia there are also petroglyphs in the Altai Territory in the Kalbak-Tash gorge, there are petroglyphs in the Khabarovsk Territory near the village of Sikachi-Alyan, there are petroglyphs in the Kemerovo Region - the so-called “Tomsk pisantisa”, etc.

Since 2009, an interesting museum “Kanozero Petroglyphs” was opened in Umba settlement. In addition to viewing the exhibits in the museum, researchers organized guided tours to petroglyphs on the islands of Kanozero. In December 2014, over the rock paintings, experts built a transparent dome with a diameter of 20 m and a height of 10 m, which protects unique ancient drawings [13]. This approach is consistent with current trends in the protection of monuments of natural and cultural heritage. Such buildings, which are now found above many historical and cultural monuments in
different countries, provide a higher degree of preservation of the historical sites themselves, as well as create comfortable conditions for visitors and tourists who come to see them. Unfortunately, the Kanozero Petroglyphs are one of the most difficult to access cultural heritage sites. Despite this, in particular, for the funds allocated by the administration of the Murmansk region, numerous activities are being carried out to develop this interesting tourist route. The museum staff and the regional administration are keen to popularize Kanozero and offer original excursion programs for the widest targeted audience. One of such programs, called “Foot in the Stone Age”, in 2016 became the winner of the grant competition “Museums of the Russian North”. The funds received were then directed to the arrangement of a unique cultural site.

This site should be popularized at the international level. Kanozero Petroglyphs are worthy to make the List of Masterpieces of Russia’s World Cultural and Natural Heritage at UNESCO better. The inclusion of petroglyphs on the UNESCO List will make it possible to significantly enrich the earliest page in the history of mankind with interesting artistic examples.

It can be stated that today the cultural and natural heritage in the Arctic is presented fragmentarily on the UNESCO List, and as the region’s popularity grows, the new natural and cultural sites with which the Arctic is so rich will gradually be included in the orbit of this organization’s interests.

4. International Cooperation in the Arctic in the Field of Protecting Intangible Heritage

The Arctic region is interesting not only for its tangible, but also intangible cultural heritage. Unfortunately, precisely such samples of intangible heritage as traditional folk music, dances, holidays, oral traditions and languages of the peoples of the Arctic are endangered. The international community faces a difficult task - to preserve this heritage. The most important conservation activity is the complex and responsible work related to identifying unique samples of intangible heritage and transferring them to the auspices of UNESCO.

An important achievement is the recognition of the epos “Olonkho” as a monument of the intangible heritage of UNESCO. In 2000, the State Russian House of Folk Art was involved in the implementation of the UNESCO international project "Proclamation of the masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage of humanity". As a result of this initiative, the original ethno-cultural phenomenon of Russia — the spiritual culture of the family Old Believers of Transbaikalia (2001) and the Yakut heroic epos “olonkho” (2005) - were added to the UNESCO List of Intangible Heritage. The epos “olonkho” is of exceptional value to domestic and world culture as an outstanding monument to the epic heritage of the northernmost people of the Turkic-Mongolian world [14]. Unfortunately, already in the 40s of the twentieth century the interest in the epic began to gradually fade, and in the late 20th century, the threat of the irretrievable loss of the epos was clearly marked. Therefore, the inclusion of “olonkho” in the UNESCO List of Intangible Heritage has become an important factor in its support and further revival.

The Arctic also has other monuments of intangible heritage worthy of being included on the UNESCO List. The nomadic traditions of the peoples of the Arctic (“Traditions of reindeer herding”) are of considerable interest today as an example of original culture, every day and spiritual traditions, a vivid example of the intangible cultural heritage of Russia. Preserved ceremonies, traditions and customs, original activities, crafts, and forms of leisure are related to this primordial occupation of the northern peoples. Inclusion of the “Traditions of Northern Reindeer Herding” in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO would strengthen the position of Russia and help to increase attention to the industry as a whole not only at the state, but also at the international level.

In addition to the above, the traditions of northern reindeer husbandry make it possible to especially note the gastronomic traditions of the peoples inhabiting this region and present them as an independent object in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In actual fact, each of the peoples of the North has their own recipes and their own rules for using and cooking venison. For example, deer brain or wild deer kidney is considered a special delicacy for the Evenki. They prefer to eat wild deer meat. Deer milk is widely used, which is drunk with tea, berries are poured, porridge made from flour. Meat is cooked sausages, jelly. Yukagirs, for example,
use the blood of deer and often freeze it for future use. Even today, deer blood is made to make a thick soup called khasha. Tundra Chukchi consume frozen deer meat. During the mass slaughter period, the meat and blood of the deer are frozen, stored for a long time, and then used as food during the harsh winter time. The nomads of the North also take on the road finely chopped dried reindeer meat, which is folded into specially stitched pouches [15].

It is difficult to choose any one original dish made from deer meat, but one thing is clear - venison is really related to the inhabitants of this harsh region, with nations who have learned to live in harmony with fantastic nature in the conditions of the Far North. Their way of life, home foundations, culture need the support and attention of not only local residents, but also the entire world community. This is necessary in order to preserve the world of the original Arctic culture for posterity in all its delightful diversity. When carrying out security measures, great attention should be paid to the gastronomic traditions of the region, which are one of the manifestations of culture that are the most accessible to a third party.

As of today, gastronomic traditions are gradually included in the process of formation of a territory's brand or are themselves an independent brand, which is very popular, for example, when developing a tourist route.

Inclusion of sites on the UNESCO List would allow Russia as a whole, and the Arctic region in particular, to solve many important issues related to the protection and promotion of unique monuments. Foreign researchers note that the sites included in the UNESCO World Heritage List significantly increase the number of tourist arrivals in the regions by 9-12 times. In many countries tourism is considered as an integral part of foreign cultural policy, aimed at creating a favorable foreign policy image, a means of developing international cultural, humanitarian, economic relations [17]. In addition, participation in the activities of UNESCO for the country and the region offers the opportunity to join the modern scientific research, get expert help and advice. Also, of course, this raises the country's international authority, i.e. works as an instrument of cultural diplomacy.

5. The Arctic and UNESCO: Interaction Strategy
The participants of the scientific and practical conference “Polar Readings on the Krasin Icebreaker 2016. “Cultural Heritage in the Arctic. Questions of Study, Preservation and Popularization”, which was held April 28-29 in St. Petersburg, stated about drawing up an application for the inclusion of individual sites of the Arctic region in the Convention on the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage and Intangible Heritage of UNESCO [18]. However, the topic of the gastronomic traditions of peoples as an object of intangible culture was announced for the first time. Note that in the List itself, the sites of the Russian Federation are represented very modestly: only 2 sites are included, which certainly does not correspond to the real contribution of our country to the history, culture, and spiritual traditions of the world civilization.

Inclusion of the sites in the List of such an authoritative international organization as UNESCO will enable for solving many important issues related to the protection and promotion of unique monuments. The main purpose of the UNESCO List is to make known and protect sites that are unique in their kind. This is a kind of protection and advertising of unique masterpieces of human culture.

6. Conclusions
The Arctic region is a unique region that may become a catalyst for cultural and humanitarian cooperation. In particular, cooperation on the protection of the cultural and natural heritage and the identification of new properties worthy to become part of the world heritage of humanity brings special results. Guided by the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, UNESCO plays the main coordinating role in this issue. In addition to the traditional approach to the understanding of the world heritage as a combination of natural and cultural monuments, promising areas of international cooperation, such as the popularization of the intangible heritage of the Arctic, have been indicated today.
The invaluable traditions of the tangible and intangible culture of the peoples inhabiting the Arctic region require painstaking study, careful preservation and persistent popularization. International cooperation in the Arctic should be aimed at solving precisely the aforementioned issues. Strong cultural and humanitarian ties, numerous interesting projects will contribute not only to the development of the Arctic, but also to strengthening ties between states and peoples, which is very important under the current terms and conditions of political crises.

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