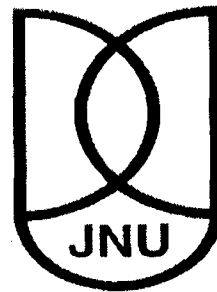


**GEOPOLITICS OF ARCTIC AND RUSSIA'S PERCEPTION**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the award of the degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "Geopolitics of Arctic and Russia's Perception" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

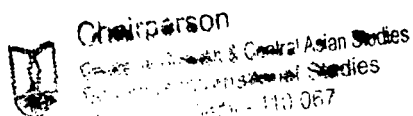
  
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## CERTIFICATE

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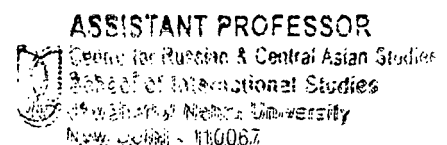
  
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Supervisor



*DEDICATED*

*TO*

*MY PARENTS*

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29<sup>th</sup> July, 2013

New Delhi

**Abhimanyu Sabar**

## Preface

The study of geopolitics has constitutes an important aspect in the domain of social science in recent years. Academically it has got multi-disciplinary approach Geopolitics always has been playing crucial for understanding international relations. From its emergence as a new discipline it has passed many phases. Traditionally it was associated with the relations between 'politics and geography'. Keeping this in mind the present study offers a conceptual explanation to geopolitics in the context of Arctic.

Geopolitically Arctic has become important region in recent years because it provides the study of major issues related to economic, environment and security. These issues created the international concern over the region. With this Arctic region invites the many countries to pursue their respective foreign policy to address the challenges and issues prevailing in the region. Arctic offers a huge opportunity to the Arctic, non-Arctic countries players and other important organizations to look at their personal objectives, agendas in framing the foreign policy.

The first chapter Introduction is focused briefly on Arctic geographical aspects and highlighted the resources, role of players and perspectives of different Arctic bordering countries, non-Arctic countries and the organizations.

The second chapter explains the theoretical interpretation of the Arctic in the context of changing geopolitics.

The third chapter gives Historical narratives of the region till the breakup of the Soviet Union

The fourth chapter highlights major players in the Arctic region and the role and position of Arctic players and their functioning in the region. It will look at the multiple interests adopted by the players with regard to Arctic.

The fifth chapter examines the Russia's involvement in the Arctic will examine the Russia's involvement and policy of comprehensive engagement towards the region.

The concluding chapter attempts to bring out some conclusion about discussed issues in chapters and focus particularly on Russia's perception in the Arctic region.

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### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

NATO	:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
CENTO	:	Central Treaty Organization
SEATO	:	South East Asia Treaty Organization
ANZUS	:	Australia, Newzealand, United States
WTO	:	World Trade Organization
WWF	:	World Wildlife Fund
AEPS	:	Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy
DEW	:	Distant Early Warning
BMEWS	:	Ballistic Missile Early Warning System
UNCLOS	:	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UK	:	United Kingdom
NWP	:	North West Passage
IASC	:	International Arctic Science Committee
CLCS	:	Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
EEZ	:	Exclusive Economic Zone
NGO	:	Non-governmental Organization
SCICEX	:	Science Ice Exercise
ICJ	:	International Court of Justice
EEA	:	European Economic Area
EU	:	European Union
CCG	:	Canadian Coast Guard
SIPRI	:	Stockholm International Peace Research
NERC	:	National and Environmental Research
USSR	:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
RAIPON	:	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples
NEP	:	North East Passage
INSROP	:	International Northern Sea Route Programme

# CHAPTER-1

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## Introduction and Research Design

No other region has gained importance in recent years as the Arctic. This region has gained significance because of its natural resources vast as well as its strategic importance and biodiversity. It is also regarded as the home to number of indigenous groups (NERC 2011). This can be inferred from the fact that number of important countries are located surrounding this region. Canada, Russia, USA, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Finland and the Sweden are these states (Orient Blackswan Atlas 2008:80). Thus to study the nature of this region has become significance. And to study the geopolitical aspect of the region a theoretical understanding of geopolitics is necessary.

Geopolitics is basically related with politics in relation to power and resources in combination with the territorial dimensions of the states. This is also means that spatial differentiation between certain territories are assessed for their utilization in different policy objectives as we have experienced the practice and ideas about the geopolitics in the late nineteenth century in the Germany with Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904). (Pater & Wusten 2002:70).

Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellen was further describing that element of politics that is “fundamentally concerned with the external relationships, approach and the politics of the state, and which looks for to employ such knowledge to political ends”. He focused on territorial dimensions of politics. In these ideas a given space is granted certain ‘absolute’ qualities, depending on the location of resources and physical characteristics. (Peter & Wusten, 2002:82) Apart from Swedish political scientist, German geopolitician Karl Houshofer who played an important role in arguing the fact that geographical factors play an important role in shaping the military and political world history. The prime objective of his studies was to look at how location of seas, oceans, mountains, resources and distribution of different culture and states based upon

those characteristics of the geographical environment shape the foreign policy making processes. (Peter & Wusten, 2002:82).

Halford Mackinder is also one of the pioneers of the geopolitical thinking who played a key role in formulating the geopolitical theory. He figured out the world map into three political regions: an 'outer crescent' across the Americas, Africa and the oceans; an 'inner crescent' across Europe and southern Asia; and the 'pivot area' located at the heart of the Eurasian land mass. To him whoever controls the pivot area, or Heartland, would be a major world power (Jones, 2004: 6). The key to the Heartland was East Europe. According to Mackinder the state that controls East Europe would have made the first step to world domination. The World-Island can be identified as Eurasia. Mackinder expressed his fear that after four centuries of maritime superpowers, the hegemony in world politics would change in favour of continental powers like Russia, China and Germany (Ibid).

Alfred Thayer Mahan was another prominent of geopolitical thought. He explained the role sea power as the basis for national policy. Even during the face of developments of nuclear, missile and space technology, he made the relevance of sea power as one of the element of national power. According to Mahan naval bases are successful maritime strategy for a nation, thus he paid attention to the importance of sea power which will dominate war. He further explained that sea powers are the most important strategic line that he called as the strategic points (Vego 2009:3-4).

In his book "The geography of the peace" Spykman explained the famous Rimland theory. He adopted the basic framework for heartland theory with certain modification. For him Eurassian landmass as Heartland which is labelled as inner crescent by Mackinder. For him region represents the both function of sea power and land power which is key to control the global control. He also noted the development of rail, road infrastructure of Eurassian land (Hanks 2011).

It has been observed that until the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the Geopolitics emerged as a formalised theory and the theory and practice was based on the Europe centred view, striving for western hegemony. However, it is obvious in today's world that geopolitics, as the struggle over the control of the spaces and places, focuses upon the power, or the ability to achieve particular goals in the face of opposition or alternatives. Geopolitical practices are seen simply as the relative power of countries in the foreign affairs (Gilmartin & Kofman, 2004:113).

Applying the same theoretical logic to the Arctic region one can state that this region covers around 6% of the earth's surface, and is inhabited by as mentioned above indigenous people who have been inhabitants of Arctic for many years. This region is surrounded by Sea, Lake, snow, ice caves. Unfortunately the ecological system of this region is under lot of strain due to excessive industrial activities in recent years. The Arctic region consisted of several Paleo-Eskimo cultures, including the independence culture and Pre-Dorset culture who are the inhabitants of central and eastern Arctic. Pre-Dorset culture evolved because of technological and economic advances during the period of 1050-550 BC but this culture vanished around 1500 AD (Hoffecker 2005).

The major power group in this regard consists of USA, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Russia and Canada. To resolve the disputes they have formed a group known as the Arctic council. It is the dominant governmental power in the Arctic. This body posses the right to formulate rules and regulations for this region also concerned about sovereignty and defence, resource development, shipping routes etc. and also dealing with the with the environment issues. In addition there are numbers of external powers such as; Japan, Britain, China and India are engaged in this region and these countries pursue the region as one of the fundamental objectives of their respective foreign policy and decision making approach. The international organisations/institutions are no exception as many countries come together to take the collective approach in solving the issues concerned with the region. (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008).

Another significant issue which might pose a challenge to the Arctic region is the issue of climate change and melting of ice and its impact on vulnerable eco-system, the livelihood of local inhabitants and indigenous communities, and the potential exploitation of natural resources. The coastal five states are a unique position to address these possibilities and challenges in the large areas of Arctic Ocean. In this regard five coastal states such as Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and USA met on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007 to discuss about the legal framework applies to the Arctic Ocean. These states decided on major issues like how to explore the natural resources, territorial sovereignty, management of flora and fauna etc. (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008).

One needs to highlight here the fact that apart from littoral state actors numbers of other external actors are taking a deep interest in this region. This heightened the geopolitical competition in this region. In this regard one can highlight the role played by China, Japan, UK and India. Both China and India are competing against each other to spread their influence in this region as exploring untapped hydrocarbon resources.

China is now world's second largest economy and largest exporter, energy consumer thus it has insatiable appetite for energy, mineral and other resources. While China is not an Arctic littoral state, the melting of Arctic sea ice will have impact upon China's environmental, energy, and trade relations. As a result, official and unofficial Chinese actors have expressed greater interest in the forthcoming "opening" of the Arctic in recent years. (Hugh 2012) However, China has been largely excluded from the Arctic region as it does not share any border with Arctic region. , For this region it is relying on the invitation and cooperation of the Arctic states – especially Russia and Canada – in order to advance its interests there. Despite its handicap in this region China is exploring the possibility of exploring contact with Canada and Russia to enter this area. More significantly China has entered into collaboration with Canada to explore the hydrocarbon resources. In recent years it is also interested in getting a permanent membership in the Arctic Council (Hugh 2012).

Though UK is not considered to be an Arctic state geographically, politically or culturally still it is taking an interest in this region. Historically UK took interest in this region since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Its objective in this region is manifold such as: protecting its ecological heritage, exploring energy resources as well as strengthening its presence in this part of the world (Global Issues: 2012). India is also taking interest in this region. Though there is certain limitation on part of India still India can play a role in this region as India has strategic cooperation with Russia (Russia-India Report 2012).

Apart from China and UK, European Union is also trying to influence this region. It is also one of the strongest contenders to shape the geopolitics of this region. The European Union wants to engage more actively in raising some of the issues like environmental degradation in this region, climatic conditions, etc. As it has been highlighted there are three major policy objectives in this region such as: (i) protecting and preserving the Arctic environment with the indigenous population, (ii) promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and (iii) the international collaboration (EEAS 2012).

It is in this geopolitical development Russia is taking an increasing interest in this region. It has been observed that the Arctic contain up to 22% of the world's undiscovered oil and gas and have given impetus to an international race to claim the region's \$1 trillion in oil and other riches. To achieve its goal in 2007, a Russian expedition named Arktika 2007, was launched in which a Russian flag was hoisted on the seabed below the North Pole to underline Russia's 2001 claim over this region (Bennet 2011).

Similarly in September, 2008, the Security Council of Russian Federation adopted the new Arctic Strategy "Fundamentals of the state in the Arctic for the period before 1920 and a longer perspective", (Medvedev 2011)The report further emphasized the significance of the Arctic as the main source of Russia's income (from the extraction and navigation of energy resources). In course of time Russia adopted the multi-vector policies which are positive steps such as; maritime border with Norway in the Barents Sea, climate warming gives access to energy resources of the Arctic thus opened a navigation route. The main objectives of Russia in its Arctic policy are to use Russia's Arctic as a resource source and also to protect its ecosystems, use the sea as a

transportation system in Russia's interests, and ensure that it remains a zone of peace and cooperation. Russia is strengthening its military presence in the Arctic and strengthening its military presence there. Over the years Russia used this region not only to explore the hydrocarbon resources but also to protect the rich ecological heritage of this region so that it will help in protecting the rich fish resources of this region. (Medvedev 2011)

In 2008 Russia announced that it would increase its sphere of influence in this region by deploying the northern fleet submarines. The Russian Geographical Society organized a Conference in Moscow (2010) that focuses on the importance of international cooperation. The conference also outlined the need to protect the environment, and making it as a “zone of peace and cooperation.” To beef up its presence in this region in July 2011, the Russian troops are stationed in this region. Similarly to develop energy in this region Russian oil company Rosneft entered into a negotiation with Exxon Mobil to develop the resources jointly (Kramer 2011).

In recent years geopolitics is going to play an important role in shaping the politics. In the Russian context geopolitical forces are also influencing the geopolitics of various regions within the Russian federation. Arctic is one such example. This region is gaining wider international attention in recent year and numbers of factors are trying to influence in the counters of geopolitics. One has to highlight the intricacies involved in this region like history, economy and polity in shaping the geopolitics of the region. Since it is located in the periphery of the Russian federation, Moscow is employing different means to achieve its strategic goal as a pre-eminent power in this region. The present study will explore not only the role played by Russia but also highlight how far the external powers perceive the region. In this regard role of China, America, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark as well as India's role in this region will be considered. Regional frameworks are also developed over the years by the Arctic states to spread their influence in the region.

Keeping these geopolitical developments in mind the present research work will examine following questions and hypotheses in mind.

#### **Research Questions:**



- (i) How far Arctic region is going to shape the Global politics?
- (ii) Examine the pattern of natural resources lying beneath in this region.
- (iii) How far Russia being a traditional player is involving itself in this region?
- (iv) Examine the pattern of alliance building processes in this region.
- (v) How far major external powers are trying to engage themselves with the region?

**Hypotheses:**

- (i) Because of its huge anted natural resources arctic is going to play an important role in shaping the Geo-politics of major powers.
- (ii) Russia being an emerging power is trying to assert itself in the geopolitical game-plan.

**Methodology:**

This synopsis will adopt historical comparative methods of study. Second chapter being historical in nature will adopt descriptive and historical methods of study. The other chapters on the other hand adopt comparative framework of analysis.

**Chapterisation**

1. Introduction and Research Design
2. Theretical Interpretation of Geopolitics
3. Historical Importance of the Arctic Region
4. Major Players in the Arctic
5. Russia's Involvement in the Arctic
6. Conclusion

## CHAPTER- 2

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### Theoretical interpretation of Geopolitics

Geopolitics has been playing an important role in the international relations because Geopolitical forces contribute a significant amount in shaping the behavior of the states. The use of the term is deviated drastically from its source in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As initially “geo-politics” meant an understanding of global affairs disposed by Social Darwinism. But over the period of time the meaning of the term has been changed considerably, as used in this framework “geopolitics” represents the interaction of natural resources, strategic governance and geographic space on the one hand, and the various state and actors pursue individual as well as collective interests on other. However, linkage to previous usage of the phrase is not exclusively broken. With the growing application of the term in the public sphere there is a need for a term which reflects the appearance of great power competition and also the rise of multi-polarity in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the term Geopolitics is not easy to define in a single and logical way as there has been inclination of changing the meaning of Geopolitics because of changes in historical periods and structure of the world order. In the early year of 20th century Kjellen and other thinkers used the meaning of Geopolitics as the western imperial knowledge of the relation between Physical earth and politics. Later it was associated with Nazi policy whose goal was Lebensraum meaning the pursuit of more “living space” for the German nation (O’ Laughlin 1994). Cold war Geopolitics was used to describe as the global contest between Soviet Union and the US to influence and control over the strategic resource of the world and this notion was rightly quoted by US secretary of state Henry Kissinger who used it as the synonym for the superpower game of balance of power politics (Hepple 1986).

The concept of Geopolitical thought was developed by the some founding fathers whose theories came to be known as the Traditional Geopolitics. These intellectuals built their theories that applied to various regions in the international relations.

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<sup>1</sup> “Geopolitics in the high north” URL:  
[http://www.geopoliticsnorth.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage](http://www.geopoliticsnorth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage)

## **2.1 European Geopolitics**

The first intellectual developments and the growth of the world Geopolitics is seen in the European continents particularly in Germany because, the great persons like Chancellor Bismark, Adolf Hitler and Hegels whose thoughts have inspired the nation consistently for many years. Thus it is rightly argued that the aims and philosophy of the nation has produced the development of geopolitical thought (Steed 1938: 655-681).

With the unification of Germany in 1871, it became the major powers in European continent. But the Versailles Treaty brought the empire in fragmented form as unified Germany was dissolved in 1918 which lost most of the territories and colonies. And after few years Adolf Hitler became the Chancellor of Germany. He invaded Poland in 1939 and this led the outbreak of World War II. Going through all these period the concept of geopolitics was associated with the feeling national awareness which awaked people from the false security. It also showed the interconnectedness of political and social phenomena across the global (Cahnman 1943:55). However territorial injustice of famous Versailles treaty became very influential in the later period because the position of Germany was determined by the demand of restitution its territories, of full sovereignty and the demand that Germany should be accorded sufficient lebensraum (living space) to support its people (Natter, 2007).

From the above analysis it is may be argued that both the theoretical and practical aspect of geopolitics is closely related with German identity. Freedrick Ratzel, Rudolf Klellen and Karl Haushofer are the most distinguished German Geopolitical thinkers, whose contribution will be discussed.

### **2.1.1 Friedrich Ratzel**

Friedrich Ratzel is a German geographer who laid the real base for the Geopolitics. He developed the organic concept of the state which treats state as natural organism and territory as its body living with biological laws. Another important theoretical outline given by Ratzel concerning geopolitics is that he coined a new term known as Lebensraum means state's need for living space. The concept of Lebensraum indicates the necessary for guaranteeing the life and development of the German people physically,

politically and economically. It embraces all kinds of issues based on the prestige, historical and geographical considerations (Kruczewski 1940: 488).

### **2.1.2 Rudolf Kjellen**

Rudolf Kjellen is another Geopolitical thinker who has further developed the Ratzel's organic state theory. According to Kjellen states has to apply five complementary types of policies in order to be powerful. Those policies are Econopolitik, Demopolitik, Sociopolitik, Kratopolitik and Geopolitik. He looks at Geopolitics in a realistic perspective based on Ratzel's organic state theory, Kjellen treated states as biological and geographic organisms. According to Kjellen states are dynamic entities which naturally grow with the greater strength. Culture is the base to growth and the more advance culture has the right expand its domain or control more territory. Therefore he regards it is only advance culture which can expand into other territory. Indeed Kjellen and Ratzel were the most distinguished geopolitical thinkers for ever who laid the foundation for the theories of their successors (Gokmen 2010: 27-28).

### **2.1.3 Sir Halford Mackinder**

Halford Mackinder (1861-1947) was a British geographer and politician who developed Geopolitics as one of the important distinct field. He provided the two important ideas: First to institute geography as an autonomous discipline in Britain to bring the break in opposition to continental Europe which was beyond the study and use of geohraphy thus gave importance geography as the essential element of British education. In 1907 he called upon to the nation that our aim is to make our people think imperially and to direct the geographical teaching (Dodds 2007: 121).His next ideas was to make a premise for the survival of Britain's imperial power in opposition to potential threats posed by the two major emerging powers of the time: Germany and Russia. During this period that Mackinder left his nearly all lasting mark upon history, because his thoughts produced the domino effect which changed the track of history. Mackinder put his well-known Heartland theory before the Royal Geographical Society in 1904, entitled "The Geographical Pivot of History" in which he explained the relationship between politics and geography in a historical perspective (Mackinder 1904).He argued that in the post-

Columbian era was small prospect for imperial states to occupy new territory because there was no option except few occasions left to pursue (Dodds 2007: 122).

#### **2.1.4 Karl Haushofer**

Karl Haushofer (1869-1946) was a German army officer, political geographer, politician and a leading proponent of geopolitics. His works were the product of the interwar period, under the influence of Ratzel's organic state of theory. The foremost aspect of Haushofer's theories was Ratzel's Lebensraum. Haushofer described Lebensraum like a state's right and responsibility to endow with necessary space and resources in favor of its own people. He argued that to attain Lebensraum state has the right to option to just wars. Secondly the concepts of Autarky given by Kjellen, which meant self-reliance and states right to uphold it. (Herwig 1999: 228) The third component was Pan Regionalism, which predicted state's growth with the space as well as the people of similar culture. He associated pan regionalism with the US idea of geopolitics that was basically Wilson's theory of self-determination. Pan regionalism he meant that the integration and invasion of the lands of settlements alike and to that of German culture. Haushofer's own contribution to the theory of geopolitics was the concept of dynamic frontiers. (Herwig 1999: 228) In contrast to the general conviction in fixed and static borders, he asserted for momentary borders that were destined to transform in accordance with the state's search for autarky, lebensraum, and pan regionalism. For him boundaries as living organisms and called for a new sense of dynamic and ever changing border region. He used Mackinder's idea of Heartland into his theories. According to Haushofer, this was Mackinder's Heartland which provided Germany with the necessary Lebensraum, Autarky, and pan regional success (Herwig 1999: 228).

#### **2.2 US Geopolitics**

American geopolitics was determined by the famous Monroe Doctrine until the First World War. This Doctrine was put forth by President James Monroe in the annual Congress in 1823 where he revealed that the Old World and New World had different systems and must remain in distinct spheres. The Doctrine stated that the United States would not involve in the wars between European powers and also any attempt by

European powers to control over the Western Hemisphere would be viewed as a hostile against the United States (Monroe 1923). While the centuries long power struggle was escalating in Europe, the new powers were developing. The Spanish-American war in 1898 was the first American overseas war which constituted the first crack in the doctrine. It resulted America's strategists and geopolitical analyst to think of generating the theories. In order to strengthening the power of their country, these strategists started developing theories for the neo-ocean naval supremacy that would challenge the British's rules on the waves (Brezzezinski 1997: 3).

Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914) was American geopolitical theorist, naval officer and historian. In his book entitled "The influence of Sea Power upon History, 1666-1783" Mahan deals with the importance of sea power over the land power and proposed that naval superiority was the fundamental principle and basis of foreign policy. His work was widely recognized in Great Britain and Germany because it is seen the address of 1904 paid the attention to Germany and Britain regarding discussion on land powers versus sea powers. Mahan influenced especially in Germany to build up naval forces before the World War I. Moreover, Mahan's distinction on land and sea powers continued influencing upon geopolitical thinkers throughout the Cold War, because Mahan also suggested an alliance with Britain to counter the Eurasian land powers (Flint 2006). Mahan provided many imperialist ideas, and wanted US to become a world power. He envisaged for the United States in order to become a world power, the USA would establish the strength on sea. He also asserted that international law and diplomacy are secondary importance whereas power is the basis for foreign policy. The beginning of the First World War marked the end of the Monroe Doctrine and then onwards was another point of extension of Monroe Doctrine. The United States argued that entering in the First World War as the result of its international moral responsibilities (Defay 2007: 24).

Bowman also played a crucial role for the foundation of Council on Foreign Relations and publishing of its famous Journal Foreign Affairs which became an important source for foreign policy experts to discuss the affairs of the United States in a wider way (K Dodds 2007: 130). Bowman in his book "New World: Problems in Political Geography", published in 1922, analyzed the implications of the peace settlement in 1919 in which foresaw an increasing role of the USA regarding world politics (Short 1993:19). He

believed that America would play a major role in development and evolution regarding the world economy. For him if power is to be exercised over the territories then there has to be informed by a commitment to free trade and diffused through international institutions. In this regard Dodds perhaps rightly pointed out that the location of UN in American city of New York was greatest testimony for how geographers like Bowman could able to promote American national interests as well as representing something more universal (Dodds 2007: 130).

### **2.3 Cold War and Post-Cold War Geopolitics**

After the end of Second World War the geopolitical situation of the world substantially changed. There seems to be two contradictory situations in the international relations; declining of colonial control around the globe, and facilitating the creation of a large number of newly independent states. Consequently, the USA and the USSR emerged as two super power, both were expanding their sphere of influence around the globe to contain each other geographically, economically and politically. This rivalry has reached at the peak and continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. This long span of time the antagonism between USA and Soviet Union is popularly known as the Cold War period, and this has crystallized the idea of regionalism in the geopolitical milieu because during this period, the entire world was mainly divided into two groupings under the two super powers (Gottmann 1971). Each of the country formed a number of regional blocs in the form of security pacts and economic associations etc. Primarily, these groups and associations were aimed at containing each other's expansion in different geographic regions (Liska 1977). They were motivated more by the geographic importance of political interests than by other considerations. Nevertheless, the process of economic integration among regional economies began during this period. The end of the Cold War with the collapse of the USSR was followed by deeper regional integration in Europe, North America and Asia (Arndt 1993).

With the dissolution of Soviet Union there is an end of cold war between two super powers and the whole world enters into a new era. The geopolitical aspect is characterized by the economic significance and economic governance. Now each country interested to form an economic integration.

### **2.3.1 Cold War Geopolitics**

After the end of Second World War the geopolitical scenario of the world substantially changed. There seems to be two paradoxical situations in the international relations; declining of colonial control around the globe, and facilitating the creation of a large number of newly independent states. Consequently, the USA and the USSR emerged as two super power, both were expanding their sphere of influence around the globe to contain each other geographically, economically and politically. (Gottmann 1971). This rivalry has reached at the peak and continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. This long span of time the antagonism between USA and Soviet Union is popularly known as the Cold War period, and this has crystallized the idea of regionalism in the geopolitical milieu because during this period, the entire world was mainly divided into two groupings under the two super powers (Gottmann 1971). Each of the country formed a number of regional blocs in the form of security pacts and economic associations etc. Primarily, these groups and associations were aimed at containing each other's expansion in different geographic regions (Liska 1977). They were motivated more by the geographic importance of political interests than by other considerations. Nevertheless, the process of economic integration among regional economies began during this period. The end of the Cold War with the collapse of the USSR was followed by deeper regional integration in Europe, North America and Asia (Arndt 1993).

The Cold War basically refers to the period of Soviet-American geopolitical and ideological confrontation between the World War II through to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Though the term geopolitics was rarely used till Kissinger revived the use of term in the 1970s, the term however continued to affect the political practice throughout the second half of the twentieth century (Dodds 2003: 203)

Dodds in his article "Cold War Geopolitics" argued that it was the Lippman an American Journalist who used the phrase Cold War for the first time in 1947 (Dodds 2003: 203). But according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the word was first used by eminent English writer George Orwell in an article in 1945 where he predicted that a nuclear stalemate between the US and the Soviet Union would mark the coming era. Encyclopedia Britannica states that the term was brought by the American financier and presidential adviser Bernard Baruch in a speech at the State House in Columbia, in 1947.



(Dodds 2003: 203). It was George F. Kennan who played an important role in bringing the development of the famous US Cold War containment policy. George Kennan's article entitled "The sources of the Soviet Conduct" was the landmark development regarding the Cold War. Here Kennan analyzed the nature of the Soviet dictatorship and the mindset of Communist party where he presented the Soviets as the main enemy of United States and US must continue to regard Soviet Union as its rival. With a view to Soviet he therefore argued that the main policy which had to be adopted should be based on long-term, patient and vigilant containment of Russian expansion tendencies. Now Kennan's view has become the core of US policy towards the Soviet Union when it called for a global conflict against communism. In 1950 US senate created committee headed by McCarthy in order to investigate domestic anti-Americanism and those who sympathised with Soviet Communism. Communism was regarded as an illness, infection and disease which had tendency to create a domino effect within the world system (Dodds 2007: 209).

The US policy of containment developed with remarkable speed in Europe. The European Recovery Program, which was referred as the Marshall Plan, came into force as a result of the Truman Doctrine. Turkey, Greece were aided financially in order to counter possible Soviet influence. (Dodds 2007:210). NATO was founded, in 1949 as a military Alliance against the threat of Soviet aggression. As per the US outlook during the Cold War the world was the body and the USA was the protector of that body. Soviet Union as a disease had the strength to bring an end to the body. Thus in order to combat this disease the USA as a protector of the body, divided the world into friendly and unfriendly spaces (Dodds 2007:210). Throughout the Cold War, both super powers concentrated on the geopolitical strategic views which guided and legitimized their actions to develop their roles as world powers. Thus it was not long after the end of the Second World War that two big camps emerged in opposition to each other and continued to live on.

### **2.3.2 Post Cold War Geopolitics**

The end of the Cold War brought the ending of various things and beginning of many things. The issues of globalization, culture and identity which had been remained freezing

during the Cold War era for so long has remained to the high political agenda. Whole world experienced the processes of integration and fragmentation. Many argued for the end of nation-states and withering away of territorial borders, while many others argued for becoming state stronger than before. Old world were being replaced by the New World Order. Gradually technological progress was taking place in every angle of the planet. As old has lost the new creation has determined the basic geopolitical characteristic of the Post-Cold War era. Even during this time the importance of geography has remained unchanged. (Dodds 2007: 1).

As Dodds put that in spite of the claims made in support of more extreme forms of globalization, the significance of territory, international boundaries, and claims to sovereignty remained as important as ever (Dodds 2007: 1). Geopolitics after Cold War has remained as high agenda. Samuel Huntington brought a new insight to the discussions who declared that the politics of the new era would take place along the civilizational fault lines. According to Huntington the primary sources of clash would be cultural rather than ideological or economic which is important aspect of global politics. This clearly represents that the words clash of civilization would determine global politics whereas the fault lines between civilizations would be the battle lines of the coming era. In his article "The Clash of Civilizations" Huntington gives a brief outline of the history of conflicts, consisting of four major periods: (i) pre-1789; (ii) post-1789; (iii) the Cold War period and (iv) the post-Cold War period. In the first three which consist of conflict among princes, nation states and ideological conflicts taken place within the Western civilization. But the distinctive feature of the fourth is that it marks the shift of international politics beyond the Western hemisphere which is determined by the interaction between the Western and non-Western civilization. Though the first three periods involved the non-Western entities these were involved as objects rather than subjects (Dodds 2007: 1).

Analyzing the reason of conflict among different civilizations Huntington argued that people are differentiated by each other based on their language, history, culture, tradition and religion. For him religion is the most important one. It is a difference that generates and will continue to generate politics and conflict. Secondly, as the world gradually becomes a smaller place, he argues that the civilizational consciousness and awareness

among the people increases and gets stronger. (Huntington 1996). This fact makes the fault lines clearer and more central. Thirdly, as a result of the identity crisis brought on by globalization there emerges a gap that is in most places filled by religious identity in a fundamentalist form. This revival provides a good basis for identity and commitment that transcends nation-states and unites civilizations. Fourthly, Western civilization reached its zenith in terms of power at the end of the Cold War, but non-Westerns will in the future have an increasing will and desire to confront and challenge Western civilization in non-Western ways (Huntington 1996).

Francis Fukuyama is another most popular scholar of the post-Cold War era with his famous book "end of the history and the last man". He asserted that what we human civilization had been witnessing not just only the end of the Cold War, but also the end of history. For Fukuyama the twentieth century in the end returned to its origin where it started: not to an end of ideology or the convergence of capitalism and socialism, but to the victory of economic and political liberalism.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of the famous intellectual who once served as President Carter's national security as policy advisor attracted attention to the post cold war era. Brzezinski in his book entitled "The Grand Chessboard", treated the world stage as a chessboard and analyzed the policies to be followed by the USA, because now it has become the history's first and true superpower. He therefore tried to determine the grand strategy for the US's exceptional position in the world with a view to special focus on Eurasia and aimed at laying out the realities of the board on which the game would be played. He argued that America is now Eurasia's arbiter, and no major Eurasian issue would be solved without America's participation (Brzezinski 1997).

#### **2.4 Critical Geopolitics**

Since the past two decades, critical geopolitics has become one of the prominent fields in human geography. It has developed to incorporate topics associated with popular culture, architecture, everyday life and urban form as well as the more familiar security issues, international relations and global power projection. The new geopolitical discourse was emerged by the work of Simon Dalby in 1990. Gradually this geopolitical analysis was developed by Dr. Gearoid Ó Tuathail in 1996 through his major work entitled 'Critical

Geopolitics'. Critical geopolitics is in itself a widespread structure to examine the range of geopolitical discourses and practices. The field known as the critical geopolitics sees a nation-state as not being the only unit of geopolitical analysis. The concept of critical geopolitics consists of four important elements: (i) popular geopolitics: It is concerned with geopolitical issues which are emerged out of popular culture, (ii) structural geopolitics: focuses on the contemporary geopolitical traditions, (iii) formal geopolitics: It refers to the geopolitical culture of more traditional geopolitical actor that pay attention to the ways in which formal foreign policy actors and professionals mediate geopolitical issues, (iv) practical geopolitics: describes the actual practice of geopolitical strategy regarding foreign policy focusing both on geopolitical action and geopolitical reasoning and the ways these are linked to formal and popular geopolitics discourse (Gaile & Willmott 2003:173).

## **2.5 The Variables of Geopolitics**

The field of Geopolitics has always been interested in the questions of natural resources such as; oil, natural gas and coal which constitute physical-geographical variables of strategic importance. Within geopolitics it is recognized that the relations among countries is guided by the resources they produce within the territory and it can enable the global system to establish the relations among the producer countries, transit countries and consumer countries which are considered as an important variables that can influence international relations. The factor 'location' where the energy resources are, and via which routes can them is brought to consumer countries constitutes an important area of study within the field of Geopolitics. Some important variables which can be discussed as follows:

### **2.5.1 Natural Resources**

Availability of natural resources is a significant geopolitical variable. The primary thrust of colonial excursions was to search for and exploit these resources. Dunning (1998) considers the availability of natural resources to be an important location-specific advantage that attracts above-average inward investment. Governance of natural resources is a key concern for countries holding such resources. It is also important that

the resource-seeking countries maintain good relationships with countries with natural resources.

### **2.5.2 Strategic Location**

Location is considered to be the important aspect in the geopolitical point of view. British political geographer Sir Halford MacKinder (1861-1947), in his famous 'Heartland' theory, proposed that because of the geographically strategic location and vast natural resources, north-central Eurasia would eventually be the heart of the world's controlling political and economic power (Agnew & Corbridge: 1995: 63). This theory crystallized the importance of strategic location. The region having strategic location would play a major role in the international affairs; politically as well as economically.

### **2.5.3 Geographic Proximity**

Physical distance is one of the major factors which constitute the core of the geopolitical dimension. It is generally believed that the geographic proximity enables companies from neighboring countries in engaging in the international business activities more frequently than their physically distant counterparts. As Kaynak and Stevenson (1982) rightly pointed out that countries within close proximity are considered to be psychologically 'near' to each other, facilitating trade and investment among themselves. The foreign companies always seek the business of the countries with those which are within close physical proximity because such proximity is seen as the advantageous for each national government to work with each other closely with respect to national security, trade and investment.

### **2.5.4 Role of Environmental, Ethnic and Religious Groups**

The World Trade Organization's (WTO) regulations provide certain provisions to the countries as well as organizations which can institute restrictive measures related to the conservation of exhaustible natural resources and also on domestic production or consumption (Hill: 2000: 178). There are many environmental groups in the world which are attempting to safeguard their natural environments, Pollution control, through to the maintenance of natural habitats for endangered species. These organizations campaign on

various country-specific, regional and international fronts. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Greenpeace and many other country-specific and regional organizations are involved with such movements and these activities can impact international business decisions. Apart from these ethnic and religious alignments are the two other major demographic factors. Due to the ethnic religious conflict there is an adverse impact on the national economy as well as the risks associated with doing international business in these economies. From some 180 nations in the international system, only a small number are ethnically homogeneous. A survey conducted by the Minorities at Risk Project (Carment, 1994)

Thus it is obvious that geopolitical variables play a significant role in shaping the International Relations. In addition role of cultures, identity and power of knowledge can be of the important ingredients of geopolitical analysis.

## **2.6 Application of Geopolitics to Arctic**

Alfred Thayer Mahan a prominent historian and American geostrategic of nineteenth century based his ideas on the book "The influence of sea power upon History, 1660-1783" (1890) that countries with great naval power will have greater worldwide impact. In his second book, "*The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812*" published in 1892, Mahan stressed the interdependence of the military and commercial control of the sea and asserted that the control of seaborne commerce can determine the outcome of wars. Mahan believed that national greatness was inextricably associated with the sea, and classified in two ways; (i) with its commercial usage in peace (ii) and its control in war. His goal was to find out the laws of history that determined who controlled the seas. His basic theoretical framework is derived from Jomini, with an emphasis on strategic locations (chokepoints, canals, and coaling stations), as well as quantifiable levels of fighting power in a fleet. The primary mission of a navy was to secure the command of the sea. This not only permitted the maintenance of sea communications for one's own ships while denying their use to the enemy but also, if necessary, provided the means for close supervision of neutral trade. This control of the

sea could not be achieved by destruction of commerce but only by destroying or neutralizing the enemy fleet, this called for concentration of capital ships (Crowl 1986).

Nicholas John Spykman was an American Geostrategist. In his book "America's strategy in World politics" he put his theory which combined those of Mackinder and famous naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan and this theory called the "Rimland Theory". For him Mackinder's Inner Crescent was the pivotal area, having more resources, As Mahan used the word a 'debatable zone' which is subject to control by both Heartland and maritime powers. Here he was giving sea power more important than the Mackinder conception of the railroad development. He argued that Heartland was not the key area, but the region referred by Mackinder a 'inner crescent' as most vital geographical arena. It was this area which was economically valuable, as Rimland had advantage of having access to both land and sea transportation routes. Besides, Spykman's Rimland contained vast amount of natural resources and high population. Spykman thus, advised the US to maintain a power balance in the region, because Rimland was the key to control the Eurasian Continent (Fettweis 2003:112).

Therefore Mahan's and Spykman's ideas are perfect to be applied in the context of Arctic. Arctic hold a high resource potential as it is assumed that 30% of World's natural gas and 13% of undiscovered oil reserves are located in the region (Bird 2008). It became economically important that provides opportunities to countries to pursue their interests and involve actively in the region. Climate change and accessibility for resource exploration raised many questions regarding Arctic governance. There have been many conflicts in the matter of territorial claims, border issues, and marine borders and particularly on the North West Passage; it became the conflict space for the actors. Thus the situation in the has become one of the important geopolitical issue which is often refferd as "Great Game" or the race for the natural resources to the High North (Killaby 2005).

The emergence of Arctic council, Arctic Environmetal Protection Strategy (AEPS) and other organizations related to Arctic, the military operations in Arctic sea are the response to the Mahan views on naval leadership that strengthen the sea power and also on the

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transnational forum or organizations deal with various issues and suggests the appropriate measures.

As far the actors in the Arctic are concerned, the two groups can be identified as; Arctic states and Non-Arctic states actors. The Arctic states have territory north of the Arctic Circle and are members of the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental body that was established in 1996. The main tasks of the Arctic Council are to balance the interests between the Arctic states and the indigenous peoples, as well as answer questions about climate change and environmental protection. The non-Arctic states actors and transnational organization like EU are increasingly involving activities in the region (Egnefeld 2010).

As I have dealt in the Chapter, the concept of geopolitics is important aspect in studying the International relations. I have illustrated the geopolitical thought by many thinkers whose contributions have been significant impact on the development of the state. Throughout my study I have found the shifting of geopolitical tendency due to change in importance of the variables of geopolitics which are solely responsible for determining the behavior of the state. Geopolitically, Arctic has gained importance recently. Despite its abundant natural resources the region got developed very late because of its harsh climatic condition. In the following chapter I would analyze the historical development of the Arctic.



## CHAPTER- 3

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### Historical Significance of the Arctic Region

#### 3.1 Historical accounts of the Arctic

Between the 16th and early 20th centuries there was quest of learning about the unknown lands lying above the 50th parallel of latitude in North America, and above the 70th parallel in Eurasia, provided a significant amount of arctic expeditions with a geographical objective. Northwest Passage can be regarded one among the famous quest of all, which is linked between the Atlantic and Pacific around North America that would supposedly shorten the trade route between east and west. (Richardson 1851) At the same time there were several expeditions undertaken by many countries for several centuries continuously and this provided to the knowledge about the arctic as well as discovery of new islands (Richardson 1851). The important driving force regarding polar geographical exploration for scientific knowledge about this vast and least known area was believed to have nationalistic pride for the countries in setting records or achieving 'furthest north' and attempts on the pole (David 2000:68). The first recorded explorations for a westerly passage to the Orient from Europe began with Columbus in 1492, followed shortly by John Cabot who made a landfall much farther north than Columbus, probably in Newfoundland. Then there were a series of discovery on landmass, rivers and routes around the different part of the planet, by 1610 Hudson Bay is believed to exist but most of the western coastline could not be able to explore until the mid 1700s (Edwards 2000). By the time passage through the Arctic Islands of Canada was considered to be the toughest one and it was eventually established that there was not possible for vessels to use Hudson strait to affect a northwest passage. Therefore further north, through Lancaster Sound became the only way for ships of that time to attempt the passage. But it was not suitable for the early explorers because Lancaster sound and other channels of these islands were frequently blocked by the ice for entire period of the year. With this

harsh environment vessels were beset in the pack ice for one or more years, sometimes these vessels were released and sometimes these were crushed to splinters (ibid.).

It is clear that the early explorers had to contend with ice arctic weather and numerous obstacles to gain the geographical information on the Arctic region. Amongst the most famous expeditions ever to attempt the Northwest Passage one of the important expedition was that of Sir John Franklin who departed England in 1845 with two Royal Navy vessels and never returned. In order to search Franklin and his crew over 40 search expeditions scoured the Arctic Islands for several decades (Richardson 1851: 1-32). It was until 1857 that some facts were found which showed that the vessels had been weighed down in ice near King William Island. Though Great Britain's aim to become the first country to conquer the Northwest Passage but the loss of Franklin and his crew cooled Britain and finally failed to achieve its target. However this made realization to British and other nations to go ahead towards the North Pole. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw a series of expeditions that achieved records of 'furthest north'. During this time Greenland was explored and mapped along its northwest coastline. The region north of Europe and Siberia also saw its share of polar exploration (ibid). In 1893 Fridtjof Nansen sailed in the *Fram* to determine whether there existed a westerly circumpolar current in the Arctic Ocean but it was beset in ice near the New Siberian Islands which was later on released from the ice near Spitsbergen in 1896. This, along with other evidence, demonstrated that a westerly set to the current does in fact exist. There is other evidence which would prove a dramatic climax to a long career in the Arctic, Robert Peary, along with Matthew Henson and Inuit explorers Ootah, Egingwah, Seegloo, and Ookeah made the North Pole by dog sledge from Cape Columbia on Ellesmere Island, on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1909. This achievement would not dampen man's enthusiasm for exploring the secrets of the Arctic. Today we have ice-breaker ships making way through the ice, scientific stations floating on the pack ice for years at a time, ecotourism trips to Greenland and elsewhere, and repeated efforts to get to the North Pole by sky, dog sledge, snowmobile, and aircraft (Edwards 2000).

### **3.2 Arctic during the Soviet Period**

The Arctic was characterized by harsh climate which was considered one of the non-permissible regions because there was lengthy winter, long nights and the temperature fell down below  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ . In this condition machines were impossible to functioning and many ceased to functioning (Seebohm 1880:236-241). However there was the determination among the Soviet Leaders to protect the Russian Arctic militarily and also tried to establish the Soviet rule so that they could be able to transform all small scale handicraft to the socialist economy, all through the modern technology. With this Bolsheviks encountered the challenge of harsh climate as their effort was to develop fish, forest, mineral, and other resources of the Arctic. Despite the obstacles posed by harsh climate and unwillingness residents, the Bolsheviks have never lost faith in their ability to conquer the region. Gradually, party officials recognized the importance of the region and needed to increase funding significantly in order to support scientists and engineers who would be sent to the north to study people and resources. Gradually both officials and specialists realized that science and technology were the keys to subjugate over the Arctic. The growing fleet of Soviet icebreaking vessels was also opening up the Arctic. The icebreaking steamer was used on research expeditions in 1929 and 1930. (Shmidt 1934). In order to join the western and eastern legs of the Northern Sea Route and make a regular working transport way from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, the Chief Administration of the Northern Sea Route was established in 1932, and more polar stations and observatories were created. The Main Administration of the Northern Sea Route which later on from the 1930s assembled an empire of economic, cultural, scientific, and other institutions that embraced the technological conquest of the Arctic sea route, and the people and resources in the vast region (Shmidt 1934).

With the beginning of the Northern sea route just after the famous sailing of the ice-breaker "A. Sibiriakov" in 1932, followed the significant development of Soviet maritime communications in the Arctic. It is said that as many as 28 polar stations were functioning on the shore of the Kara Sea. Moreover the entry of the Soviet Union in the war brought about considerable changes in its use of Arctic and the Northern Sea Route for trade between western and eastern regions of the country and brought forward a number of new tasks. (Luzin 2007) Apart from the objective existing in the 1930s for the provision of Arctic construction sites, polar stations and GULAG camps and the export of

goods, the need emerged to provide for the garrisons and war-ships stationed in the Arctic, as well as there being the requirement for the transportation of cargo from the United States and Canada along the Northern Sea Route, in Soviet vessels. The Northern Sea Route was also important for the transfer of icebreakers that were required in the Arctic during summer and in the White Sea and Far East during the winter (Luzin 2007). The significant developments have taken place over the region immediately after the World War-II. It is obvious that the Changes in political relations between the United States and the Soviet Union from wartime collaboration to cold war antagonism have inevitably concentrated attention on the Arctic, the shortest air route between the two powers. The inventions in weaponry; long-range strategic bombers, nuclear bombs, and intercontinental ballistic missiles, made the Arctic as a core area for detecting the approach of bombers and missiles from across the Arctic Ocean, and consequently for preserving the strategic balance. (Ostreneg 1977: 41-62) During the 1950-60 both sides constructed interrelated radar detection systems facing northwards in order to achieve an early warning. The objective of military interest in the Arctic can be seen mainly in three reasons: (1) the Soviet deployment of Delta-class submarines in an ever expanding base area at the Kola peninsula, (2) the sustaining of the early-warning systems on the North American and Eurasian continents and (3) the possible need for several countries to protect the activities of future economic exploitation (Ostreneg 1977: 41-62).

As far as Soviet Union's penetration in the Arctic is concerned the three relatively distinct periods might be observed;

**1<sup>st</sup> Phase:**

In 1964 the Soviet Union deployed the first SS-N-5 missile with a total range of 1270 km. with the proven ability of Soviet SSBNs to operate beneath the ice-cap. The Soviet Union may have chosen this because it would use the sheltered routes through the Arctic Ocean and the Canadian Arctic to avoid the US activities in the region (ibid).

**2<sup>nd</sup> Phase:**

In 1969 the Soviet Union deployed its first SS-N-6 missile with a total range of 2960 km. With this range the long discussed Hudson Bay approach could become a reality and from launch positions in Hudson Bay and in the Davis Strait, New York was within reach. With the deployment of SS-N-6 it reduced the previous need of Soviet SSBNs to

penetrate the GIUK Gap to reach launch station off the east coast of the United States (Gellner 1971: 595-617).

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Phase:**

Ostreng in 1977 pointed out that the deployment of the SS-N-8 missile in 1972 the Soviet Union drastically reduced the need of her SSBNs to exit the Arctic Ocean. From anywhere in the Arctic Ocean Soviet's SS-N-8 could now hit vital US, European, and Chinese targets. Taking into account the long range of this missile the Soviets may already have assigned the Barents Sea their main missile launching area in the Arctic Ocean. On the other hand, the Soviets may have chosen to spread out their SSBN fleet over the entire Arctic Ocean to minimize the risk of substantial attack by US and NATO and ASW forces on the Barents Sea area. As a matter of interest, the Soviet Union had more strategic options available than ever before. In this way Soviets were making their presence more global by operating in the Arctic Ocean (Ibid).

Since then the security landscape in the northern part of the globe has undergone dramatic changes, the essence of which can be captured by the concept of desecuritization. In the late mid of 1980s, the Arctic was divided into a 'Western' and an 'Eastern' sector, and there was little interaction between two. The lack of this interaction in the Arctic during the Cold War was mainly due to the dominant place of security concerns in national perceptions and policies. Instead of being perceived the region as a potential arena for international and regional cooperation, it was seen as a sensitive military theatre in which political, economic, cultural and other interests were subordinated to national security interests. This was particularly the case in the Soviet Union (Francois 2011).

The first indication of a change in the Soviet Union's approach to the Arctic came on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1987, when Mikhail Gorbachev visited to the Soviet polar capital of Murmansk. His visit was created the landmark of Soviet's history for its policy towards the Arctic, eventually a series of policy initiatives was launched that tied together a wide array of security, economic and environmental issues in a unified package which was radically different from previous Soviet approaches to the region (Gorbachev 1988). The move was aimed to transform the northern part of the globe from being a sensitive military theatre to becoming the international 'zone of peace'. In the West, the 'zone of peace'

refers to the concept which was closely linked to the capitalist strategy of desecuritizing economic interaction and the liberalist peace project of spreading democracy. On the other hand the Soviet Union was neither capitalist nor democratic, and was subsequently perceived as constituting a 'zone of turmoil' (Singer and Wildawsky, 1993: 3). However, this view was never shared by the Soviet leaders. Their perceptions of the 'zone of peace' concept were largely related to the presence or absence of Western military forces in the region in question, and the level of military tension (Handleman 1990). Thus, in the East, the 'zone of peace' concept was frequently used synonymously with 'demilitarized zone', 'nuclear weapons-free zone', etc. But it was also used to initiate new arrangements for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in non-military fields, as in the Arctic/Northern Europe. (Atland 2008: 289-311). This objective was to be achieved through the establishment of a nuclear weapons-free zone in Northern Europe, restrictions on naval activities in Arctic seas, and the development of trans-border cooperation in areas such as resource development, scientific exploration, indigenous people's affairs, environmental protection and marine transportation (Atland 2008: 289-311). Now there is a clear reflection on Soviet policy change which is most striking in the non-military sectors, whereas there were fewer and more difficult to spot in the military sector (Purver 1988: 1-8).

However while looking back at Soviet Policy in early 20<sup>th</sup> century it was primarily guided by two objectives: (i) territorial expansion and (ii) to project it as territorial sovereignty. Because according to the sector principle that territorial claim is based on the doctrine of contiguity. This provided the Arctic countries to claim the territorial sovereignty in this region based on the geographically determined sectors. As per the principle we can find that Russian government issued a declaration in 1916 claiming that the islands north of Siberia were to be considered as part of its islands, because these were the continuation of Siberian islands. In 1926 Soviet Union issued again a decree based on the sector principle for territorial claims in Arctic, which declared that lands and islands lying between north coast of Soviet Union and North Pole (Svarlien 1958). Similar view is reflected on the issue of Mendeleev ridge discovered by Soviet in 1948 and since then Russia has been claiming the region as part of its territory which was neither rejected nor accepted by UN Commission in 2002 (UNCLS 2009) .

### **3.3 Significance of the Arctic region**

Availability of natural resource and energy has captured the Arctic into the centre of Geopolitics. According to US Geological Survey the undiscovered oil and gas resources in the Arctic region and estimates indicate that about 24 percent of the world's remaining undiscovered oil and gas resources can be found in the Arctic (84% of these undiscovered resources are estimated to be found offshore. Apart from these there are several factors which enlarge the geopolitical significance to the Arctic region (Offerdal 2010: 30-42).

#### **3.3.1 Economic and Political Significance**

The Arctic Ocean is a part of the Atlantic Ocean whose littoral includes the land masses of the Northern Hemisphere. It has been referred as the 'Polar Mediterranean'. The area also referred to as "the American Arctic" which includes Greenland, northern Canada, Arctic islands, and northern Alaska. It is a region of extremely sparse population, but one which has assumed increasing importance in terms both of defense and of resource use. (Roucek 1983: 463). Arctic is economically important because it has richer in oil, gas and non-fuel minerals. Arctic fuels are potentially able to reduce, and possible even eliminate, North American dependence on Arabian Gulf oil. The "Arctic Mediterranean" is a perfect example of an area in which technological advances, especially in aviation, have caused far reaching changes which force a new evaluation of locational factors of the region (Roucek 1983: 463).

The Arctic offers the shortest Great Circle Route between the two great nuclear power states the U.S.S.R. and the United States which became the importance in contemporary international politics. Seattle, Chicago, Washington, and New York are all located less than 4,500 miles from Soviet Arctic settlements. The shortest distance between Moscow and the U.S. West Coast and between Peking and Washington is a line running directly across the North Pole (Hanessian, Jr 1963). Looking at the North Pole map Hanessian considers that the Arctic land areas are simply the northern extensions of the most heavily populated continental land masses in the world. Such cities as London, Moscow, Brussels, Berlin, and Vienna are all north of 50° north latitude; and also Helsinki, Leningrad and Murmansk are all north of 60° north latitude. Actually, the

Arctic Ocean, "instead of being a distant region, is a central connecting area between the North American and Eurasian continents". A large proportion of the world's resources, both human and natural, are located in this hemisphere (ibid.).

Politically Arctic attracts more players over the regions who are concerned on the issues of environment protection, climate change etc. More importantly it has become the core area by its neighbor states on the matter of defense, sovereignty and resource development. These states have their respective policies to deal with the region. Operation of Arctic council is regarded as important development which was constituted by eight Arctic states as a high level intergovernmental forum that acts on consensus basis mostly dealing with environmental treaties (Rasmond 2009: 17-34).

### **3.3.2 Strategic Importance of the Arctic**

Arctic was strategically important during Second World War because it was considered to be the important for military purpose. Naval operations were being carried out by many countries. During the cold war period this region was used for the arms race between USA and Soviet Union. It began to feel the effects of the unprecedented militarization and nuclearization. Various features of its geography began to take on strategic significance. Air space became extremely important, as ocean was entirely covered with ice. The ocean took on importance after the under-ice passage of the USSN, a strategic ballistic-missile firing submarine (SSBN), in 1957. The Arctic ice provided a cover from air and satellite surveillance of submarines (Chaturvedi: 1996:107). The significance of the region is found through the naval operations in different period of time. Several bases of German U-boats, aircraft and surface ships were established in Germany. Most of the German battleships and cruisers were operating from Norway. Even the German surface raiders and U-boats made their passage from the Baltic Sea into the Atlantic Ocean through the North Sea and the Greenland-Iceland gap. This could be easier for the Allies who occupied Iceland, the Faeroes, and Greenland (Lindsey 1977). As Lindsay said their use in World War II offers a good example of military operations on North American territory against a hostile power based on Asia (ibid.).

The most important development is the establishment of radar detection stations like Distant Early Warning (D.E.W) Line, the Mid-Canada Line and Pine tree system across



the Arctic that provides the earliest possible warning of oncoming attack directed against North America from across the North Pole. This had mission to detect aircraft In 1957, the U.S.S.R. successfully launched the earth satellite and placed it in orbit around the earth, with this U.S. policy of deterrence was no longer operative thus Washington immediately accelerated a testing program for a ballistic missile radar detection system and late in 1958 construction began in the Arctic on a three station radar network, called B.M.E.W.S. (Ballistic Missile Early Warning System). The first radar network made the effective element for strategy policy deterrence of the US. The second aim was to maintain the capacity to retaliate with a strong nuclear counter attack before the enemy struck. The combination of these two elements, would serve effectively to deter any would be aggressor" (Hanessian, Jr 1963). This region really has made militarily significant because of superpower corridor for air route and waterway.

### **3.3.3 Nuclear Energy in the Arctic**

Several nuclear energy installations have been done in many parts of the region for long years. Since 1958, around 2,600 ton submarines, nuclear-powered, equipped with Polaris intermediate range missiles, have successfully been navigated across the Arctic under the ice cover. The most publicized nuclear power plant in the Arctic is built at Camp Century. This is a year round station which is built entirely under the surface on the Greenland ice cap. With the installation of the especially designed 1,600 kilowatt nuclear reactor transported by air, ship, and tractor hauled sled, Camp Century began operating in October, 1960. The station includes some 21 tunnels and a "Main Street" 1,100 feet in length; the reactor provides 1 million B.T.U. of heat and all the electric power needed to operate this polar station (Roucek 1983).

### **3.4 Territorial claims in the Region**

Since the very beginning the claim of territory in the part of Arctic can be seen by Arctic bordering states which created the dispute among many states. The dispute in Arctic region is seen mainly by two reasons; (i) claiming water mass as their national water body (Isted 2009) and (ii) on the issue of north west passage (Macneill 2007). According to the sectoral principle Canada is the first country which extended its maritime

boundaries northward to the North Pole, but the claim of the ocean between pole and Canada's northern point is not recognized universally. Similarly Norway claimed some of the sector which contained the islands; therefore the claim over this sector was not pressed. Denmark claimed to be the sovereignty over the entire Greenland and this claim was recognized by US in 1916 and by an International Court in 1933. It could also move towards some sector in Arctic (Mckitterick 1939). In 1926 Soviet Union claimed over the region which fixed the territory between two lines drawn from west of Murmansk to North pole and in the east from Chukchi Peninsula to the North pole to be Soviet Union's territory (Ginsburgs & Simons 1994).

During the cold war period Canada sent its Inuit an indigenous people to the far north in high Arctic relocation, aiming to establish the territoriality. Apart from this Canada seemed to have claimed the water within the Canada's Arctic Archipelago as its own internal water, but United States did not recognize the Canada's claim on Arctic Archipelago water rather it sent its nuclear submarine under ice close to the Canadian islands. Until 1999 the North Pole and some part of the Arctic was considered to be international space which consists of seas and water bodies. But with the adoption of UNCLOS) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea strictly by all nations redefines the rights and responsibilities of the nations in their use of world's oceans, management of marine natural resources and guidelines for the environment etc. (UNCLOS 1982).

### **3.4.1 Russia**

For modern Russian territorial claims goes back to the 1926 when the claims was specifically applied to only lands and islands (Timtchenko 1996: 29-35). The first maritime boundary was signed in 1957 between Russia and Norway but tensions aroused soon after both countries engaged continental shelf claims in 1960 and Russia claimed more area which created the long informal talks between two countries to settle the differing claims (Neumann 2010). But it was only in 2010, Russia and Norway signed a treaty which divided the disputed territory in two parts, and also agreed to co-manage the resources in the region where these countries overlap the national sectors (Byres 2010).

In 1997 Russia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea which allows countries to claim over the extended continental shelf and accordingly Russia submitted its claims to an extended continental shelf beyond the 200 mile exclusive economic zone in December, 2001 to the United Nations on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in which Russia claimed the two underwater mountain chains; Lomonsov and Mendeleev ridges describing these as the extension of Eurasian continent and therefore part of the Russian continental shelf (Benitah 2007).

### **3.4.2 United States**

The United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea of 1982 provides coastal states exclusive rights to develop natural resources in a 200 nautical mile zone that is extending from the border of their territorial waters. Under this agreement Norway, Russia, Canada and Denmark ratified the convention. The main interests of the United States in the region include; limiting Russian economic and military expansion into the region, pressing for the Northwest Passage to be classified as international waters, and securing a favourable agreement with Canada on the Alaska-Yukon sea border. In spite of America's effort to legally extend claims to the Arctic continental shelf, has not been ratified the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea since long (Fillingham 2012).

### **3.4.3 United Kingdom**

As far as territoriality is concerned in the Arctic, United Kingdom (UK) has no territorial interest in the region but is an official observer of the Arctic council (Macalister 2012). But there is evidence during the Cold War that Britain as a NATO member was deeply involved in military operations and security planning and also had fishing and hydrocarbon interests in the Arctic region. Militarily, UK had worked closely with NATO allies with Norway against the possible Soviet threat to the region. The post cold war interest of UK can be seen on emphasis of confidence building measures and collective governance (Illulissat Declaration 2008).

## **3.5 Russia and Northern Sea Route**

The North West Passage (NWP) has remained a controversial issue between USA and Canada for so long on the matter of its legal position. In 1975 Canada publicly announced its position regarding the legal status of the North West Passage claiming it as internal waters of the state (MacEachen 1975). This was perhaps the first time that Canada articulated the legal status of the passage. Despite Canada's strong position on the North West Passage as internal waters of Canada, the US contends that the passage is an international strait and regardless of the legal status on the waters of archipelago it is still capable of being internationalized if it fulfills the legal criteria for an international strait under customary international laws and United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (King 2009). In 1986, Canadian government issued a declaration reaffirming Canadian rights to the waters but, the United States did not to recognize the Canadian claim. (ibid)

In 2005 US nuclear submarine was passing through the Canadian Arctic waters, the allegation arose soon after US navy released photographs of the USS Charlotte surfaced at the North Pole (Ozeck 2007). Prime Minister Stephen Harper challenged the Arctic waters as international stated that Canadian government would enforce its sovereignty in the region. In 2006, Canada's Joint Task Force North announced that the Canadian military would no longer refer to the region as the North West Passage but as the Canadian internal waters. Again in 2007 Prime Minister Harper declared that "Canada has a choice when it comes to defending our sovereignty over the Arctic region, we either use or lose it". He further said that Government is intended to use it, because Canada's Arctic is central to Canada's national identity which part of its history and it would represent the tremendous potential in the coming days (Harper 2007).

### **3.6 Gorbachev's Policy towards the Region**

Arctic has played a significant role during the Cold War period because of its strategic importance. Both super powers have been using the region for their personal agenda and thus pursue their interest in the region. It was on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1987, the president of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, made a speech at Murmansk outlining the Soviet Union's Arctic foreign policy. He delivered within the context of glasnost and perestroika but, this speech has been long lasting significance and impact on the international relations. At the

Murmansk Initiative, Gorbachev outlined six concrete goals and activities to promote the region as a "zone of peace". These are (i) to establish a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe. (ii) to restrict military activity and scale down naval and air force activities in the Baltic, Northern, Norwegian and Greenland Seas, and to promote confidence-building measures in those areas. (iii) cooperation on resource development, including technology transfer. (iv) organization of an international conference on Arctic scientific research coordination, leading perhaps to an Arctic Research Council. (v) cooperation in environmental protection and management. (vi) opening of the Northern Sea Route (Armstrong 1988).

The Murmansk initiative has laid the foundation for the many initiatives related to Arctic as best example such is establishment of Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). This was an agreement signed by eight Arctic countries such as Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland, USA, Sweden and Russia aiming at protecting the Arctic environment, assessment of environmental impact and to maintaining cooperation of scientific resource. It can also follow certain measures to monitor the level of and assess the effects of pollutants in all components of the Arctic environment (AEPS 1991). The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) founded in 1990, was a direct response to Gorbachev's speech which supports the Arctic scientific research. IASC is a non-governmental organization which encourages all aspects of Arctic research of all countries engaged in Arctic research and in all areas of the region (IASC 2013).

In concluding this chapter, I would highlight the fact that since the effort made by Bolshevik the Arctic has been developed gradually. It has got impetus during the Cold War period as this region was actively used by two super powers; Soviet Union and USA. It became the centre of militarization and nuclearization. Air route also became important. Arctic played important role politically, economically and strategically. At the same time there have been concerns by many players on issues of protection of environment and climate change as well as sharing of land boundaries. Keeping all these factors in mind many countries including Russia actively took part in the region. In the course of time Arctic has also been experiencing a transformation due to global warming and climate change this would provide the opportunity for human activities in the region.

In this respect many countries around the world take interest to play in the Arctic on various issues. The next chapter would be the role and position of major actors in the Arctic.

## CHAPTER- 4

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### Major Players in the Arctic Region

#### 4.1 Arctic Players

The Arctic has gained a remarkable importance by both politicians and scholars because this region is understood to stand considerable economic and political significance in the decades to come. Therefore this region is referred to as getting “huge international attention” (Gupta 2009: 174). Most significant is the growing importance of energy in the Arctic region as the area becomes more accessible for the exploitation of Arctic hydrocarbon resources (Byres 2009). Technical advances and high energy prices corresponding with growing demand for energy worldwide make such an endeavor gainful. Due to Arctic ice melt the new sea navigation routes will help to secure access to energy for Arctic petroleum extraction and that will significantly shorten the distance between Europe and North America to Asia. This also opens new opportunities for fishing, in response to the rising ocean temperatures a number of fish species are expected to appear in Arctic waters as fish stocks are moving northwards (Petersen 2009:41). Thus increasing opportunity for energy exploitation, transport and fishing, climate change connects to the increased human activity and economic interests in the area. This would have had adverse impact on the traditional livelihoods of the indigenous populations. (Bailes 2010). Apart from these the supply of more natural resources through the reduction of Arctic sea ice could also lead to the competition between various actors, for example with reference to sovereignty issues between the five Arctic states; US, Canada, Russia, Denmark and Norway. Moreover, regarding Russia’s renewed self-assertiveness European states are increasingly worried about threats to the stability and security of existing supplies of energy and are therefore looking for alternative measures for securing their energy demands. The High North may offer an option and safer supplies (Bailes 2010).

##### 4.1.1 United States of America

United States of America has been one of the eight Arctic nations and one of the five Arctic Ocean littoral countries. It has been a member of the Arctic Council since its inception in 1996 and assumes the Chairmanship from Canada in May 2015. The United States is also an observer of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. Because of geographical location of Alaska one of the US federal state, the United States' domestic policy toward Alaska becomes the part of its Arctic policy. United States Arctic Policy released in 2009, stresses upon following goals to meet national security and homeland security in the Arctic region; protection of Arctic environment and conserve its biological resources; ensuring that the natural resource management and economic development in the region are environmentally sustainable and to make stronger cooperation amongst the Arctic countries (The White House 2009).

However while observing this policy we may easily find the responses of US which can be discussed in two ways; (i) active, on the matter of sovereignty and (ii) inactive, on the developmental aspect over the region. One can easily find out a more active role by US when it comes to sovereignty issues, particularly in connection to Canada. The first concern is on dispute associated to demarcation lines in the Beaufort Sea between the two countries as well as the dispute concerning the legal status of the Northwest Passage. While Canada claims over those waters as domestic, the US and the EU maintain the same as the international waters. (Byers 2009). The US argues that the Passage fulfils the legal criteria for an international strait by connecting two expanses of high seas, the Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean and by being used for international navigation. This means foreign vessels have the right of "transit passage" but Canada still owns the waterway. On the other hand the Canadian standpoint, is that the Northwest Passage is its 'internal waters' and therefore foreign vessels have to have Canada's permission to sail through the waterway and are subject to the full force of Canadian domestic law (Byers 2009).

In order to maintain their bilateral relations, the US and Canada have so far agreed to disagree on the status of the Northwest Passage. This agreement includes that the US officially notifies Canadian authorities every time a US ship crosses the passage and the Canadians every time grant access. This is, however, not a long term solution and with shipping activities increasing in the Northwest Passage due to decreasing sea ice, the two countries will have to find a solution to their disagreement (Ebinger and Zambetakis



2009). But there is also US-Canadian cooperation taking place on Arctic issues. For the first time in 2008, again in 2009 and also very recently in 2010 the two countries started combined expedition to the region to gather information relating to the stretch of their continental shelves to the North. Both countries need this information to apply for the extension of their exclusive economic zones to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). While Canada plans to submit its application by 2013, the US currently cannot make such claims as it has not ratified UNCLOS yet. However, these expeditions show that the US is already preparing a claim to the UN Commission and thus apparently expects the ratification of UNLCOS by the Senate in the not so far future (Seidler 2010).

The United States policy by George W. Bush policy directive on the framework titled 'National/Homeland Security Directive on Arctic Region Policy' declared with reference to the national and homeland security, environmental issues, natural resource management, institutional issues, indigenous people and research issues (The White House, 2009). Though this document is considered the first official US declaration on Arctic Policy since the Clinton Administration announced a US Arctic Policy in 1994, but the US Administration headed by President Obama has shown no signs upon the new Arctic strategy paper (Barents Observer 2010). The new document prioritizes issues of missile defence and early warning, transport, energy security and the importance on the principle of the freedom of the sea with the top national priority on Northwest Passage and Northeast Passage. This concrete policy is thus to preserve the mobility of US military and civilian vessels and aircraft throughout the Arctic region. It states that, it is of environmental protection and sustainable resource development and promoting Arctic research, if necessary in the Arctic governance. On the other hand the issue of US sovereignty and interests is strongly emphasized as it is said Arctic is the fundamental national interest of US therefore is prepared to operate in the region to safeguard these interests. Further, this document also refers to the importance of preventing the development of terrorism in the Arctic region. This assertiveness of US shows the more active and influential presence to protect its Arctic interests (The White House 2009). While comparing the documents of EU and NATO, the EU and NATO both deal on the Arctic with the issues related to environment and climate change. However the US

document starts with security issues and has the mentioning of environment at the very end. Again, EU and NATO continue their priorities with issues related to indigenous peoples, multilateral governance, accidents, and research and monitoring as well as UNCLOS and international law. In contrast, the US focuses more on demarcation issues but also international governance (Bailes 2010).

The US has been inactive when it comes to the developmental aspects going on in the Arctic. This is mainly linked to the fact that it has so far not ratified UNCLOS and has therefore no right to file claims concerning its continental shelf and therewith the extension of its exclusive economic zone (EEZ). A group of influential Senators did block ratification as they fear the abdication of too much US sovereignty. (Borgerson 2008). Thus non-ratification of UNCLOS the US has failed to invest adequately in its icebreaker fleet. Despite maintaining a huge navy in the world it only commands one seaworthy oceangoing icebreaker, which is not even adequately configured for Arctic missions. In contrast, Russia possesses 18 icebreakers and even China, despite lacking own Arctic waters, owns one icebreaker. Scott Borgerson thus concludes that through its own neglect, the world's sole superpower a country that borders the Bering Strait and possesses over 1,000 miles of Arctic coastline has been left out in the cold (Borgerson 2008).

However, there has been increased debate in the US about ultimate Senate ratification of UNCLOS. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Obama has declared their support for Senate confirmation (Barents Observer 2010). In addition, environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the US Navy and US Coast Guard service chiefs as well as leading voices in the private sector support the convention (Borgerson 2008). Also, American strategic interest in Greenland has been revitalized recently when the Bush Administration in 2004 obtained an agreement with Denmark to integrate the Thule radar station in its Missile Defence programme. This radar station in Thule set up in 1961 and modernized in the 1980s is the hub of the US Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) that also services radars in Britain and Alaska (Petersen 2009:37). Additionally, in November 2009 the US Navy published its first Arctic 'road map' to guide its policy, strategy and investments in the Arctic region (Jakobson 2010: 7-26). This is in line with American military activities in the Arctic region, for example the

large scale 'Northern Edge' exercise in Alaska in 2008, involving about 5000 personnel, 120 aircraft and several warships (RIA Novosti 2008). Also and very recently, American scientific interests have experienced a revival. Civilian researchers have signed an agreement with the American Navy to revive a dormant program that uses nuclear-powered submarines to collect data about the Arctic ice cap. This program, called 'Science Ice Exercise' (SCICEX), began in 1993 but was halted after six years. The rapid changes in the Arctic region with new possibilities for tourism, shipping, energy, mineral exploitation and renewed security concerns have now awakened scientists and also the Navy's interest (Morello 2010).

#### **4.1.2 Canada**

The Arctic is vital for Canada due to several reasons. These reasons are categorized into three headings: security, environment and economic. Canadian Arctic policy is formed mainly by defence since Second World War. Because of importance of Arctic security Canada relied upon the USA for the Arctic security against the USSR (Rob Heubert 2008:16). Economically it is important as it provides the shipping and the exploration of natural resources, primarily for hydrocarbons. Changing ice conditions also have allowed navigation of the Northwest Passage which can be extended (Gunitskiy 2008:264). However for Canada the Arctic is mainly a case of sovereignty issues, which is deeply linked to the Northwest Passage case and delineation line disputes with the US but also with other actors such as Russia and Denmark. However, while sovereignty issues are also important to other Arctic countries, Canada differs in the sense that for Canadians the Arctic is also highly touching and figurative value. It is fact that the Canadian House of Commons in December 2004 commonly with one abstaining renamed the Northwest Passage to 'Canadian Northwest passage', which is meant to symbolically support Canada's sovereignty over the shipping lanes throughout the country's Arctic islands (Boswell 2009). Another case, in March 2010 a Canadian sample showed that half of the Canadian population would be in favour of exercising military strength to affirm Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic, 10% would even suppose that Canada should warm up its military muscle, despite the fact that as symbolic gesture. This has been interpreted that way that though Canada is not recognized for a desire to exercise military muscle in

general, the High North as a particular case as here Canadians are more expected to support military force (Harris 2010). Granholm (2009) describes that, the Arctic seems to be an essential part of Canadian's self-image. Michael Byers confirms this while describing Canada as a "Nation of the North" and the association between Canadians and the Arctic as an "emotional experience, because the Arctic gets into our hearts and minds and becomes part of who we are and Arctic is part of our national consciousness, too" (Byers 2009:19).

Regarding Sovereignty issues which has become main Arctic issue for Canada. There has been a general apprehension on the limits of Canadian territory and the possibility of international law which might restrain Canada in its rights in parts of that territory (Byers: 2009:5). Because Canada and the US differ over the status the Northwest Passage as either international or Canadian domestic waters and about the boundary between the two countries. Further, Canada and Denmark dispute about the possession of Hans Island and also between Canada and Greenland regarding Ellesmere Island which constitutes the disputed land territory in the circumpolar Arctic. Russia, Denmark and Canada all claim that the Lomonosov and Mendeleev Ridges are natural geological extensions of their territory map showing the unsettled boundaries in the Arctic (Young 2009:78).

Particularly on the topic of the Northwest Passage issue, Canada has tried in various ways in the earlier period to build up its position. The most important may be the opening of the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act in 1970, which obliged safety and environmental provisions on all ships within 100 nautical miles of Canada's Arctic Coast. (Byres 2009:46). The move becomes clear when other countries considered that the Act was opposing to international law, which did not identify coastal state's rights in the waters beyond 12 nm. Shortly after many other states, most strongly the US, protested against the Canadian move but Ottawa refused to get the Act back or present the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The dispute only receded after the approval of UNCLOS in 1982 when Canadian diplomats succeeded in legalizing the 1970 Act in Art. 234. It permitted coastal states to enact laws against maritime pollution out to 200 nm (Byres 2009:46).

Canadian recent Arctic strategy is clearly shaped by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Arctic sovereignty plan, which was central part of his election campaign in 2006. This

plan envisaged an increase of Canadian military existence in the north to protect Canadian sovereignty. (Petersen 2009: 47). It improved the submarine and mid-air surveillance as well as the presence of the navy, armed forces and air forces. This includes the building of six to eight strongly armed Arctic patrol ships, the development of the harbor on Baffin Island into a naval base and the institution of a 'cold weather training base' at Resolute Bay, Cornwallis Island, both in the eastern entrance to the Northwest Passage (Petersen 2009: 47).

The strong dependence on armed solutions to Arctic problems goes mutually with the Harper government's stress of the importance of the Arctic for Canadian sovereignty. This is reflected in his often quoted statement about the "first principle of Arctic sovereignty", which would be to "use it or lose it" (BBC News 2007). Furthermore, Canada's 'comprehensive Northern Strategy' focuses upon exercising sovereignty and protecting environmental heritage followed by promoting social and economic development and improving the Northern Governance.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the vast costs linked to the ambitious planned investments listed above have to be taken into account, especially in times of soaring government operating expense in relation to a global economic and financial crisis. Finally, bigger military expenditure could lead to irritations with other interested actors in the region, as these could understand Canada's actions as a threat to their Arctic claims. (Byers 2009: 18).

#### **4.1.3 Norway**

Norway has been one of the most dynamic European countries when it comes to reactions towards developments in the Arctic. Also a member of the Arctic Council and being a littoral state due to the Svalbard Archipelago, it has been active in looking for new possibilities for natural resource management in the Arctic. In 2003 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs published the Paper on the High North, emphasizing the growing international interests in the Arctic and suggested that Norway should also take an active Arctic responsibility to preserve its concern in the region (Ministry of Foreign

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<sup>2</sup> :Canada's northern Strategy: Our north, our heritage, our future", <http://www.northernstrategy.gc.ca/cns/cns-eng.asp>

Affairs of Norway: 2009). This proposal has been followed by the red-green government led by Jens Stoltenberg which came to power in 2005 and placed the High North at the centre of Norwegian Foreign Policy (Petersen 2009: 50). This proposal has been documented in a 73 pages paper called “The Norwegian Government’s High North Strategy” and since December 2006, it touches upon an array of issues together with energy, environment, conflicts of interest, strategic and armed aspects, research study, indigenous peoples, culture, resources, transport and business development etc. It also encourages a special focus on collaboration with Russia (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006). One key indication of the strategic significance of the High North in Norwegian policies is that in 2009 the government determined to move the centre of military operations from Jatta located in the south to Reitan in the north of the country (Jakobson 2010:7,26). Another report on Nordic defence cooperation written by former Norwegian foreign minister Thorvald Stoltenberg where he proposed the five Nordic countries; Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark to build up their security cooperation in the Arctic in order to maintain pace with the rising costs of modern armed forces and to meet new regional challenges (Stoltenberg 2009).

Norway is also termed as the foremost recipient of UNCLOS as it was only country which made successful agreement with the U.N Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. Norway’s newly defined continental shelf in the northern part covers 235,000 km<sup>2</sup> which is three quarters of the size of mainland Norway. The decision taken by the Commission in April 2009 is almost similar with the Norwegian requests, which were presented to the Commission in 2006 (Barents Observer 2009). Economically, Norway has been active in granting exploitation licenses for oil and gas resources. Statoil the largest oil company of the Nordic countries and the leading company of Norway involves in the Snohvit gas field, which is the first offshore development in the Barents Sea and the world’s most northerly offshore gas field. Snohvit is therefore the leading project relating to the exploitation of the Norwegian continental shelf.<sup>3</sup> The Norwegian Government also announced in June 2010 that a total of 94 new blocks will be made available for new drilling in the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea during the 21st

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<sup>3</sup> “High focus on Northern Norway”, URL: <http://www.statoil.com/en/NewsAndMedia/Events/Pages/GrowingNorth.aspx>

license round in spring 2011. Though Statoil has already been granted access in the Barents Sea, located north of the Snohvit field, again it is seeking permission for drilling at the Lunde field, which is located closer to the mainland (Barents Observer: 2010).

Regarding existing sovereignty disputes, Norway has one of the more relaxed positions as it recently solved its most insecure sovereignty dispute with Russia in the Barents Sea. Norway has also made it clear that it does not look for any demands on the North Pole (Doyle 2009) thus stayed out of any dispute on that issue. The only remaining disagreement is on the interpretation of the Svalbard Treaty of 1920 (The Svalbard Treaty 1920). It established Norway's sovereignty over the Archipelago which is barred from the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement with the European Union (EU). However, there are some ambiguities specially associated to its geographical scope. The major dispute is about whether Norway is also entitled to claim sovereign rights offshore over maritime areas as well as the waters and seabed, because treaty itself refers only to the territory of Svalbard, regarding economic zone and continental shelf are not mentioned in the treaty. Norway's claim is that the treaty's equal treatment of nationals of signatory states does not apply on the continental shelf. (Jensen & Rottem 2010:79). This position is openly challenged by Russia and not recognized even by Norway's allies including the US. So far as the issue is concerned there has been a low politics quality. (Jensen & Rottem 2010:79) This is due to the fact that no oil and gas extraction have been done on Svalbard's continental shelf and the fishing issue has been resolved by Norway establishing a non-discriminatory fisheries protection zone around the archipelago. However, there have been several instances that Norwegian coastguards apprehended some of the foreign vessels in the waters around Svalbard condemning them of poaching and dumping of fish, which shows the amount of tension that is nevertheless involved in the issue (Jensen & Rottem 2010:79).

#### **4.1.4 Denmark**

Denmark is an Arctic country because of its special relationship with Greenland. Therefore as an Arctic country its foreign policies are based within the geographical boundaries of the Arctic. While mainland Denmark has no territory north of the Arctic Circle, it is however considered as a full member of the Arctic Council and even by some

depicted as one of the bigger members given the vast size of Greenland that lies above the Arctic Circle and the economic potential the island possesses (Peterson 2009). The specialty of Greenland is also given due to the extensive autonomy that Greenland has achieved from Denmark and the fact that it is not a member of the EU. Greenland's form of government since 1979 has been "Home Rule" meaning that it governs matters applicable to its own domestic order. This self-rule has been expanded recently following a referendum in November 2008, Greenland obtained self-governance on 21 June 2009 with accountability for judicial affairs, policing and its natural resources. Also, the Greenlandic people were acknowledged as a sovereign people under international law and Greenlandic has become the sole official language. Denmark, nevertheless, retains control of foreign affairs and defense matters. The annual Danish grant to Greenland around 3 billion Danish kroner will be gradually reduced depending on the revenues Greenland will be able to collect from its natural resources (Petersen 2009: 37). In the long term even, self-rule offers the option of full Greenlandic independence from Denmark (Granholt 2009), meaning eventually Denmark would cease to be an Arctic state. This offers a reason for Denmark's positive approach as it sees its 'Arctic character' threatened in the long term. If it, however, by then has become that much intertwined in the politics of the region and thus a valuable partner for other Arctic actors, it might be a reason to think twice for Greenland if it wants to be cut the attachment to Denmark. (Granholt 2009), even though additional reliable estimates of the potential oil and gas reserves on the Greenlandic continental shelf is expected to promote Greenland's attempt for independence, the islanders also know that the representation and defence of Greenland's interests in a world of an economically and politically more and more important, Arctic will require physical, human and political diplomatic resources that a small nation of just 57,000 people inhabiting an area four times the size of France can hardly provide. Some therefore expect that even under self-rule Greenland's dependence on Denmark will increase as the latter will certainly enhance its presence in the Arctic (Petersen 2009: 38).

Economically, the Danish Arctic region has already experienced a numerous activities. a number of gold and diamond mines are already in Greenland and in 2004 the Greenland Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum auctioned licenses for exploiting resources of the



seafloor beneath the Davis Strait on the Greenlandic side (Mille 2005). Politically, Denmark's active move towards the Arctic also became evident when the then Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moller was successful in gathering his counterparts from the four other Arctic littoral states for a conference on the future governance in the region in Ilulissat, Greenland in May 2008. This discussion and its result the Ilulissat Declaration raised a lot of attention in the other excluded Arctic states and non-Arctic players like the EU. The excluded actors Arctic and non-Arctic states as well as NGOs criticized the Arctic-5 of trying to set up an exclusive Arctic club (Seidler 2010). The A5's argumentation goes that they are in a distinctive point to deal with the possibilities and challenges that the Arctic faces today (Ilulissat Declaration: 2008). They reaffirmed this position in their follow up gathering in Chelsea, Canada in March 2010, emphasizing the Arctic Ocean coastal states' "significant stewardship position" that they engage in the region (Cannon 2010).

Also in line with the Danish positive approach towards the Arctic, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Greenland Home Rule Government issued a document on their Arctic policy approach in May 2008. This 43-page long paper touches upon a variety of issues including Home Rule, sovereignty, Arctic and Nordic cooperation, indigenous populations, energy and mineral resources, environmental protection, climate change, research, infrastructure, trade and industry as well as cultural and scientific cooperation (Peterson 2009: 35-72).

Finally, in 2008 the Danish Defence Ministry set up an official Defence Commission with the directive to examine the implications that the Arctic developments potentially have on Danish security, especially associated to the supply of energy and mineral resources (Danish Defence Commission: 2008). In the same line are also the regular Danish military activities, for example in form of naval activities along the coasts of Greenland and in the Northwest Passage to practice search and rescue for civilian ships, often in cooperation with the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) (CASR 2009). This is mirrored in the decision of the Danish Parliament from July 2009 to set up an Arctic military command and task force by 2014 (Jakobson 2010).

#### **4.1.5 Finland**

Although Finland is not coastal Arctic state but it very much feels itself as an Arctic player by being a part of Arctic history and having one third of its territories lying north of the Arctic Circle (Stubb 2010). Thus, history and geography justify Finland's primordial interest toward Arctic issues, including economic, political and security interests in the region (Stubb 2009). As an Arctic Council members Finland has published its policy for the Arctic region in June 2010 (Cabinet Committee on European Union Affairs 2010). The document focuses on external relations and issues involving security, economy, environment, infrastructure, indigenous peoples as well as institutional issues (Finnish Government 2010). Shortly before the publication of the policy, the Finnish Government set up an Advisory Board on Arctic Affairs to carry and check Finland's activities in the Arctic region and in general to raise understanding about Arctic issues (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2010). Being one of the smaller Arctic countries, Finland stresses the need to work together on Arctic issues. For example, the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Stubb, said in a speech in June 2010 that "there is no substitute to cooperation", "the Arctic is not a region of disagreement but of cooperation" and "a regulated Arctic with a low degree of strategic tension" is the common aim to strive for (Stubb 2010). In addition, Finnish Arctic interests are particularly strong concerning cooperation in the Barents Sea area, forestry, Arctic shipping and mining industry, thus investments in transport, communications and logistical networks as well as facilitation of border crossings are deemed as necessary. All this is only possible with up to date Arctic research and knowledge which forms the basis of all Arctic activities (Stubb 2009).

Helsinki also strongly supports the setting up of an EU Arctic information centre at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland in Rovaniemi (Barents Observer 2010). In line with the official Arctic Strategy, Stubb puts emphasis on the necessity of strengthening the Arctic Council, which is the major intergovernmental medium to deal with Arctic policies and that brings the entire Arctic family together. Stubb also emphasized the stronger inclusion of non-Arctic countries into the workings of the Council because the future of the Arctic is not only concern of some states but a rightful concern for all states,

thereby supporting the request of such countries for permanent observer status. Finally, the Foreign Minister openly supports a better role of the EU in Arctic issues by saying that “Finland will act to cover the indisputable Arctic profession of the EU into a more explicit and stronger EU Arctic policy”. He also explicitly supports the EU’s application for becoming a permanent observer to the Arctic Council. (Stubb 2010 & Stubb 2009). Finnish investments in Arctic issues include for example a joint Finnish Swedish project for improving railway infrastructure in the Swedish and Finnish North (Barents Observer 2009). Joint infrastructure projects are also planned with Norway (Thrane and Sara 2010). Collaboration with Russia is also on the list of items, for example in joint construction of icebreakers and other technology for application in the Arctic and police cooperation between Murmansk and Rovaniemi (Barents Observer 2010).

#### **4.1.6 Sweden**

Sweden as Finland an EU member has a less active approach towards the Arctic in comparison to the other states. However, together with Finland, Sweden is involved in the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation with Norway and Russia. Sweden being the EU member is not able to involve aggressively in its international affairs, however its least involvement in the decision making could reinforce the decision making approach in the various issues. Also, Swedish complaints about being missed out from the Ilulissat and Chelsea conference of the Arctic littoral states give an idea about that it desires to be incorporated in all important matters in relation to the region and does not like to see the Arctic Council being undercut by rival formations (SIKU news 2010). (Freivalds 2004). In 2004 in his speech then Swedish Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds sketched the some of the important components of the Swedish Arctic policy by highlighting the significance of the Arctic Council as the crucial regional forum. Sweden also supports the applications of non-Arctic countries to become observers to the Council. This is observed as one of the important aspect which can influence the behavior of the states, more importantly it raises the voice that would be considered by the council. Freivalds also pointed out to “the need to support the interests of the Swedish Arctic population, the Swedish mining and forestry industries and fragile biodiversity in the High North. Sweden also has several research platforms with Arctic competencies, for example the

Swedish Academy of Sciences' scientific research station in Abisko, the Space Corporations launch facility Esrange for space research and atmospheric balloons and an icebreaker research vessel, the Oden" (Freivalds 2004). The recent actions include a Swedish-Finnish joint surveillance system for the Baltic Sea area and an announcement made by the Swedish Government to spend on two new state of the art submarines together with improvement of older vessels (Barents Observer 2010). Other teamwork projects comprise the air surveillance in the High North in assistance with NATO based on the Partnership for Peace programme, which would lead to a 'Nordic cooperation on air surveillance' between Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Norway. Another development was to set up a combined secretariat of the Arctic Council in Tromsø until 2012, when Norway, Denmark and Sweden successively had to lead the ministerial meetings (Koivurova 2010: 147).

All in all, the Swedish government supports the Commission's Communication as an important step towards the EU Arctic Policy. According to a government statement in response to the publication of the Communication, it is 'high time' that the EU turns its interest towards the developments going on in the Arctic and Sweden would even like to see a more detailed policy analysis of the EU in relation to the Arctic. Furthermore, the government emphasized that an 'influential climate change policy' must be a primary and central part of an EU Arctic policy (Utrikesutskottet 2009).

#### **4.1.7 Iceland**

Iceland is generally referred to as a 'subarctic' state as small piece of its territory lies within the Arctic Circle. Arctic issue is primarily a security character for Iceland, largely because of the American air and radar base in the Keflavik, which was device during the Cold War. However, the American military unilaterally withdrew from Iceland in 2006. Though Icelandic-US Defence Agreement goes back to 1951 that remained in place, it may be understood the US withdrawal as a sign of a paradigm shift from the Cold War to the War on Terror with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Ingimundarson 2009). Given the existing changing image of the Northern dimension due to enduring climate changes in the Arctic, Iceland stays concerned over the geopolitical meaning of its region and its own political, economic and strategic interest. The importance of security for

Iceland becomes obvious when looking at the Icelandic Arctic report published by Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland 2009. The report initiates with issues of multilateral cooperation and security and defence, followed by resources and environment, transport, culture and people as well as science and monitoring. All this shows a general turn in Icelandic security policy away from a strong American orientation towards stronger ties with NATO and other Nordic countries. However, Iceland also sees its security agenda contested by the consequences of the financial crises, which hit the country extremely hard with the collapse of its banking system in autumn 2008. It can thus be expected that after the formation of a left-wing government in early 2009 there will be more emphasis on societal security to restore social and economic stability at the expense of territorial defence (Ingimundarson 2009: 75). In conclusion, instead of being at the centre as during the Cold War, Iceland has moved to the geopolitical margins of political power games in the Arctic (Ingimundarson 2009: 78). However, together with Finland and Sweden but even more heavily Iceland protested against being excluded from the Arctic states meetings in Ilulissat and Chelsea (Seidler: 2010). This underscores that Iceland still sees itself performing a valuable role, if no longer in strategic so for sure in energy and maritime security in the North as a result of climate change, energy transports and increasing commercial activities in the North. One could even see a new geostrategic role of Iceland, as the country could become a guarantor of US energy supply through oil and gas transports from Russia and Norway to the US through the Icelandic EEZ (Ingimundarson 2008: 12).

Iceland's interests in the Arctic are based on Iceland's geographic and thus geostrategic location, its hopes for future material rewards and its traditional identification with the North; however, Iceland makes no territorial or resource based claims in the Arctic given its status as a subarctic state (Ingimundarson 2009: 75). One important move was the announcement by Iceland to offer offshore drilling licences in order to attract investments from big oil companies. The ca. 100 exploration licenses cover an ocean area of 40,000 km<sup>2</sup> more than 300 km northeast of Iceland. Joint Icelandic-Norwegian studies in the 1980s offered some evidence of the existence of oil-bearing rocks in the relatively unexplored area (Pagnamenta 2008). Iceland is also attractive in terms of new sea-lanes as a result of Arctic ice melting, as due to its location it could become a trans-Arctic

commercial hub for trans-Arctic trade and tourism (Ingimundarson 2009:77). Despite the nation-wide agreement on the necessity to boost the declining Icelandic economy, new transport, oil and gas undertaking will probably conflict with Icelandic self-conceptions as a natural haven and thus will raise strong environmental concerns. The current debate about the construction of more aluminum smelter factories is a telling sign that environmental safety in the High North will become a major issue in the near future (Ingimundarson 2008:9).

In 2004 the Icelandic Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry of Fisheries and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs published a joint report called “The Ocean Iceland's Policy”, which deals with issues of pollution, climate change, marine biodiversity, sustainable development, navigation and tourism (Icelandic Ministries 2004). Furthermore, in 2006 a working group of the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs published a report called “North Meets North Navigation and the Future of the Arctic”, which focuses on issues of climate change as well as shipping and its environmental impacts (Working group of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2006).

#### **4.2 EU**

Although EU has no direct coastline with the Arctic Ocean, it is closely linked to the Arctic in the historical, economic and geographical perspectives. EU is the importer of natural resources and thus has wider concern and responsibility for the global environment. In addition, three Arctic countries; Denmark, Sweden and Finland are EU Member States. The EU maintains close relations with Iceland and Norway through the European Economic Area. Canada, Russia and the United States are strategic partners of the EU. (European Commission 2012) The European Union is one of the world's strongest proponents to fight climate change, through the development of alternative energy sources, resource efficiency and climate change research. The European Union is also a major destination of resources and goods from the Arctic region. The European Union wants to be engaged at a higher level of cooperation with Arctic partners in order to increase its awareness of their concerns and to address common challenges in a collaborative manner. EU interests in the Arctic includes in the areas such as; environment, energy, transport, and fisheries.(Ibid) The Commission, as well as the

European Environment Agency and the European Maritime Safety Agency, have also been an ad-hoc observer in the Arctic Council for many years and have contributed to the Council's work. The EU is one of the largest contributors to Arctic research: €200 million has been committed since 2002 from the EU budget, excluding the individual contributions from EU Member States. The commercial fleet controlled by the EU Member States is one of the largest in the world and the EU industry has significant experience in shipping, ship-building, satellite navigation, search and rescue as well as port infrastructure development .(Ibid)

### **4.3 Non-Arctic State Players**

Over the few years, international attention towards the Arctic has gained dramatically. Major actors like the United States, Russia, Norway, Canada and the European Union have already developed Arctic strategies, whereas the role of international organizations and non-Arctic State players are still growing (Hansen 2008). These developments are motivated by set of several factors, including climate change and melt of the polar ice that projects increasing in economic activity of shipping and energy development. However, important motivation lied in the potential of huge oil and gas resources in this region.

It is widely assumed that China, Japan and South Korea would be among the earliest and most powerful non-Arctic nations to be drawn into the game as and when transit and investment possibilities in the polar region are opened up (Bailes 2010). The increasing interest in the Arctic from the side of India is also apparent which looks for strengthening the economic and political positions of the country in the region (Lunev 2012).

#### **4.3.1 India**

India's engagement in the Arctic goes back to nearly nine decades when it signed the Svalbard Treaty in 1920. At that time India was under the British dominion. It has been closely following the developments in the Arctic in the light of the new opportunities and challenges emerging for the international community due to global warming induced melting of Arctic's ice cap. India's interests in the Arctic region are basically based on the scientific, environmental, commercial and strategic. (Ministry of External Affairs of

India 2013). India initiated its Arctic Research Program in 2007 focusing upon climate change in the circumpolar north. Some major objectives of the Indian Research in Arctic Region includes the following: (a) to study the hypothesized connections between the Arctic climate and the Indian monsoon by analyzing the sediment and ice core records from the Arctic glaciers and the Arctic Ocean; (b) to characterize sea ice in Arctic using satellite data to estimate the effect of global warming in the region; (c) to conduct research on the dynamics of Arctic glaciers focusing on the effect of glaciers on sea level change; and (d) To carry out a comprehensive assessment of the flora and fauna of the Arctic region (Ministry of External Affairs of India 2013).

It had a long tradition of polar research in the Arctic region, with its permanent research station Himadri which was opened in 2008. The climatic conditions of the Arctic also have direct impact on the Indian monsoons that governs the India's economy even in the 21st century. The melting of polar ice caps opened the new sea routes that led to heightened interests in the region. (Mitra 2012). This new Arctic routes between America, Asia and Europe would be 40% faster than those of Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans. More importantly also it is estimated that around 10-30% of the world's undiscovered oil and gas reserves is located in the Arctic region. India's ONGC reportedly wants to have a stake in new oil and gas projects announced by Russia on the Arctic shelf. (Mitra 2012).

In addition, by the virtue of Svalbard Treaty India is looking for its possible approach to the Arctic region. These are; to maintain relationships with the Arctic Council members and argue for its membership of the Council, engage in policy research on the politics of the 'High North' and formulate an Arctic Strategy, undertaking of Arctic resource assessment and exploitation studies, regular expeditions to the Arctic and scientific research and to develop technological capability to exploit Arctic raw materials (Sakhuja 2010: 3-5).

India has been looking for past few years being a permanent membership in the Arctic Council. India which was granted as the observer status in the Arctic council in May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013 has sought economic opportunities in the region and also viewed participation in the



Arctic Council as a means of influencing the decisions of its permanent members (Myers 2013).

#### **4.3.2 China**

In recent years, the Arctic region has gained increasing international interest. This interest has been reflected in extensive media coverage bringing attention to the area's abundant resources, border related stakes, and the possible opening of new maritime routes (Gupta 2009). Located north of the polar circle, the region comprises a large number of seas, and borders eight countries. Among the latter, five are located along the Arctic Ocean Canada, Russia, the United States, Norway, and Denmark. New climatological conditions have created promising geostrategic opportunities for countries bordering the region, anticipating that the creation of a new trade route from north to east could lead to significant commercial profits and increase access to natural resources for economic growth purposes. As implied by extant analyses, such a route would be shorter and would facilitate trade flows compared to existing alternatives via the Suez Canal (Evdokimov, Backih & Istomin 2000).

Yet, interest in the region does not stop at circumpolar states. Other countries see a number of geostrategic opportunities and stakes involved in accessing the Arctic. China, which lacks a legal basis to articulate claims over access to the region, has been increasingly present. In recent years Beijing has succeeded in conducting a vast scientific Arctic research program in the fields of climatology, geology, and biology, among others. Moreover, Beijing has mobilised considerable efforts towards the building of political and economic ties with smaller Arctic countries such as Norway and Iceland, and has brought Arctic-related questions to its diplomatic agenda with Russia and Canada (Ministry of foreign affairs, republic of China 2012).

These efforts on the part of China since 2009 have engendered negative reactions on the part of the Western media, which portray China as ambitious, greedy, and ready to conquer and threaten the territorial sovereignty of countries in the Arctic region. Yet in reality the Chinese government had submitted to the Canadian Embassy in Beijing a formal request to enter the area (Teeple 2010). Chinese admiral Yin Zhuo's assertion that arctic resources are a world heritage (Chang 2010) was nonetheless cited as evidence of

the duplicity of the Chinese government, whose ambitions in the Arctic would threaten the interests of Canada and other countries bordering the region (Wright 2011). Discussions over potential natural resource reserves in the area and the opening of new trade routes have led to multiple speculations over the intentions of regional and world powers, increasingly concerned about their economies' dependence on energy security. In the context China is also interested in active presence over the region. (Wright 2011).

China's interest in the Arctic was not exclusively manifested in academic studies on the region. But it was Beijing which had organized joint five year scientific research program with one of the German universities in Arctic Ocean. This project has provided an opportunity for China to enter into International Arctic Science (IASC) in 1996. The aim of this organization is to promote research cooperation in Arctic. The objectives of China's to the program have been the study of the Ice Arctic Ocean, sea ice, and the Arctic's atmosphere. With the help this China has sought to learn more about the impact of climate changes in the North Pole on China. (Xiaowei & Yongqiang 2008).

The purchase of Ukraine's icebreaker called a Snow Dragon in 1994, enabled China to become the active independent researcher in the polar region, and to organize a large number of scientific expeditions in the Arctic. Coordinated by the Chinese Arctic and Antarctic Administration (CAA), these research projects have reached a significant scale. It has also founded its first station in 2004. Called Yellow River, the station is located in NyAlesund on the Island of Spitsbergen in Norway. In 2009, the Chinese government made the decision to improve its fleet's capacity by launching the industrial production of Chinese icebreakers. (Qian 2011).

Gradually China has developed several political and economic partnerships with Arctic countries, including Norway in 2001, Denmark in 2010, and Iceland in 2010. While China has been actively developing bilateral cooperation with most European countries, it has placed a particular emphasis on Scandinavian countries given the importance of their markets. Cooperative agreements were signed mainly in the areas of Arctic navigation, natural resource extraction, academic exchanges, and joint research (Koivurova 2009).

In April 2012, Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao went to Sweden and Ice-land with the purpose of strengthening economic cooperation and getting political support for China's application for permanent observer status in the Arctic Council (Barents Observer 2012).

The diplomatic visit took place following Denmark's to extract hydrocarbon in the Arctic with industrial cooperation agreements. Finally, China and Russia have launched a joint research program to address technical and technological problems pertaining to the construction of pipelines in Arctic and subarctic conditions (Reuters 2011).

### **4.3.3 United Kingdom**

Though UK is not the Arctic state geographically, politically or culturally, however as a near neighbor it established interests in the Arctic region including political, environmental, commercial, meteorological and scientific. (Christian Science Monitor 2011). The UK has been observer states to the leading inter governmental organization, the Arctic Council for example.

The United Kingdom's Arctic interests can be broadly categorized under four headings; (i) security,(ii) politics, (iii) economics and (iv) the environment, with an important contribution to the perception of the Arctic made by its place in the popular imagination.

Politically UK holds state observer status in the Arctic Council and Barents Euro- Arctic Council. It has interest in ensuring the Arctic region's governance on the basis of a rules based framework (Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology 2009). UK as a member of EU has interest in shaping EU's policy and strategy in Arctic region (Canada-EU Summit 2008).

Strategically UK being the NATO member has long viewed the Arctic and North Atlantic as significance to Britain's trading and strategic interests. During the Cold War, the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap was a major zone of interest, alongside fishing interests in northern Atlantic waters. While the post-Cold War era the region has altered the strategic environment, however, the UK continued to operate nuclear submarines in Arctic waters for the purpose of deterrence against hostile states, and remained militarily committed to the region through NATO and other EU allies, such as Sweden and Finland. These commitments are likely to be strengthened if the government continues to push for a more consolidated geostrategic role in the future of Northern Europe (Rogers 2011:56).

Environmentally, UK government ministers and agencies have repeatedly pointed out the importance of the Arctic both globally and regionally. The UK scientific community has contributed a significant amount for better understanding of Britain's relationship with the Arctic through research. It is obvious from the recent fact that the National and Environmental Research Council (NERC) announced a £15 million for Arctic Research Program to run during 2010–15 (NERC 2010).

Along with oil and gas exploration UK extended its commercial and trade related interests which include fishing, tourism, shipping and the insurance industry. UK govt. is expanding its trade links with Nordic and Baltic state. It also entered into a partnership with Norway to work together on oil exploration and the development of offshore wind farm. (Cameron 2011).

There are three different groups of countries with an interest in the Arctic can be identified; (i) the five coastal states (ii) the coastal states plus Finland, Iceland, and Sweden, which combine into the eight Arctic nations exercising sovereign rights within the Arctic Circle; and (iii) a heterogeneous group of non-Arctic states who have asserted various interests in raw materials, research, shipping routes, and Arctic infrastructure (Byres 2010). Of the coastal states, Russia and Norway attach strategic importance to the Arctic. Moscow views the Arctic from an energy perspective as well as in geostrategic terms. Russia's best access to the Atlantic and the Pacific is from the Arctic Ocean (Cratz 2012).

#### **4.4 Towards the Arctic Affairs; Convergence and Divergence**

Due to land and sea extension towards the Arctic region the Nordic countries are involved in many issues. All these countries are also the membership of Arctic Council. These countries have applied their national strategies to establish the cooperation in Arctic issues. According to the common strategy that countries would promote the lives of indigenous people and try to promote socio-cultural development of the Arctic people. They also made the strategies for protecting the environment, ensuring sustainable use of

natural resources and protecting the biological diversities.<sup>4</sup> At the same time geopolitical differences among these countries could bring disagreement. I will focus some of the documents of Arctic states referring to the Arctic.

#### **4.4.1 Norway**

Norwegian government has adopted a High North Strategy “The Norwegian Government’s High North Strategy” which was released in 2006 primarily aiming at sustainable growth and development in the high north. It contained seven important priorities, (i) exercise of Norwegian authority in the high north, (ii) as a forefront of international efforts to develop knowledge about the region, (iii) protection of environment and natural resources, (iv) to provide a framework for the development of petroleum activities, (v) to safeguard livelihood, tradition and cultures of indigenous people, (vi) to strengthen with Russia. The aim of the strategy is to reach these goals through the international collaboration on resource extraction, environmental management and research (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006).

#### **4.4.2 Finland**

For Finland it was “Finland’s strategy for the Arctic Region” adopted by Finnish Cabinet Committee in 2010. It presents the Finnish position as an Arctic State and thus natural Arctic actor. It defines the Finland’s objectives which are: (i) environment; (ii) economic activities; (iii) transport and infrastructure; (iv) regarding indigenous people. Both human security and environment security are significance in this policy.<sup>5</sup>

#### **4.4.3 Iceland**

In 2009 The Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a strategic document; the report “Iceland in the High North” and this was approved by the Icelandic Parliament in March

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<sup>4</sup> “A Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland’s Arctic Policy”, <http://www.mfa.is/media/nordurlandaskrifstofa/A-Parliamentary-Resolution-on-ICEArctic-Policy-approved-by-Althingi.pdf>. (accessed on May 27, 2013)

<sup>5</sup> Prime minister’s office Finland, “Finland’s Strategy For the Arctic Region”, August 2010, <http://vnk.fi/julkaisukansio/2010/j07-suomen-arktinen-08-finlands-strategy/pdf/en.pdf>

2011.<sup>6</sup> The documents serve as the basis for the Iceland's Arctic strategy stressing that Iceland is the only country located entirely within the Arctic region, and thus its prosperity relies heavily upon the sustainable utilization of regions' natural resources.

The Report consists of six main parts which are highlighted as follows:

(1) It gives emphasis on multilateral international cooperation: cooperation with neighboring countries within the Arctic region is of the highest order for Iceland, just like the Arctic Council serves as the significant venue for cooperation of all the Arctic states with the participation of indigenous organizations, and focusing on sustainable development in the region.

(2) It also mentions the Security through international cooperation, particularly environmental security. It gives prime focus on emergency response regarding the environmental protection.

(3) Regarding environment and resources, with the special emphasis on both sustainable development and Iceland's interests. Special attention would be taken while resource development is practiced in Arctic to protect the fragile environment and eco systems. It must also serve the interests of local inhabitants and communities contributing to economic development, providing improved living conditions.

(4) For transportation new shipping routes are expected to be opened between the Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans over the Central Arctic Ocean. That would provide good conditions in Iceland for establishing a trans-shipment hub which could serve transportation between European continent, North America and Asia across the Central Arctic Ocean.

(5) The unique cultures and heritages of Arctic Communities have brought the attention which should be preserved. Their cultural identity could be strengthened through cooperation.

(6) In response to changing environmental condition, the policy emphasizes to strengthen northern cooperation on research and monitoring the Arctic region has been regarded as successful Foreign Policy for Iceland.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *A Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's Arctic Policy at 139<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011* <http://www.mfa.is/media/nordurlandaskrifstofa/A-Parliamentary-Resolution-on-ICE-Arctic-Policy-approved-by-Althingi.pdf> (June 10th 2013)

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

Iceland's foreign policy as indicated in Report "Iceland in the High North" may remain important for some years and all these points may play significant role while formulating its policy.

#### **4.4.4 Sweden**

In 2011 the Swedish government has also adopted the national strategy for the Arctic region aims to present Sweden's relationship with Arctic, combining the current priorities and future outlook for Sweden on Arctic. The strategy introduces Sweden is an Arctic country. Then as an Arctic state it goes on to specify how, and through which international cooperation bodies the Government should achieve its objectives for the Arctic. Finally, it discusses the top three priorities in the strategy: climate and the environment, economic development, and the human dimension. This is perhaps the first strategy that the Government of Sweden has adopted on the Arctic which should be seen as a starting point for further development of cooperation in the Arctic region (Government Offices Sweden 2011). According to the Strategy Sweden will look for bringing the human dimension and the gender perspective in Arctic related cooperation bodies. Measures will be taken to counteract the negative health and social impacts of climate change, pollutants and the increasing exploitation of Arctic natural resources. The right of indigenous peoples must be promoted in order to maintain their identity, culture and traditions (Government Offices Sweden 2011).

#### **4.4.5 Denmark**

Denmark released its official strategy for the Arctic in 2011, the strategy titled on "Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020" applies to Country's realm that includes Greenland and Faroe Island. The main objectives of Denmark concerning Arctic is sustainability and social development. The Danish government also tries to prevent conflicts and avoid the militarization of the Arctic. The Danish government's Strategy goes over the issues of exploitation of non-renewable as well as renewable resources in balanced way. On the one hand, it is determined about the rights of Arctic residents to economic development based on extraction of natural resources. On the other, it stresses that all developments must be environmentally sustainable and live up to

the highest international standards and obligations. The national strategies are different and similar at the same time. (Government of Greenland 2012) .They are structured differently, place challenges in different orders and reflect different political perspectives.. At the same time, however, the strategies reflect common thinking on many points. The ministerial document highlighted the fact that: Management of resources, environment, economic development and indigenous people (Government of Greenland 2012).

There are different opinions regarding the legal issue delimitation of borders, economic zone and navigation rights. Different strategists have been issued in the matter of sovereignty and role of armed forces in the region. Regarding governance several organizations and forums like NATO, EU, A-5 and Arctic Council have adopted several strategies to strengthen their role in Arctic. Though countries for Arctic show that they have different Arctic perspectives, they also share many common policies and interests (ibid).

In this Chapter I have dealt with the various policies and role of many Arctic players. These countries adopted several means to influence their role in the Arctic region. To secure its goals in the Arctic US adopted the policies of protection of environment and conserve its biological resources to ensure natural resource management and economic development. For Canada security, environment and economic are major concerns to shape their Arctic policy. Norway is looking for natural resource management in the Arctic. Denmark, Finland and Iceland have focused on various issues involving security, environment, economy, infrastructure and indigenous people. While observing the countries' policies it is obvious that they have convergence and divergent points in many issues. In addition some organizations like EU and other non-Arctic countries such as India, UK and China are actively engaging in scientific research and other issues related to Arctic such as protecting environment and to conserve the biological resources. Russia being an Arctic bordering country is no exception as since very beginning it has been actively engaging in the Arctic region.



## CHAPTER- 5

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### **Russia's involvement in Arctic region**

#### **5.1 Factors shaping Russia's policy towards Arctic**

Though Russia's involvement in the Arctic has been apparent since long ago, the involvement of Russia in this region has gained a more controversial one. The geopolitical uniqueness of the Arctic plays significance role to draw the countries particularly the Arctic bordering states. At least three factors have fuelled the contemporary concern with the Arctic: a shrinking ice cap which, in turn, increases accessibility to resources and potential shipping routes; technological developments facilitating extraction of resources from deep seas; and the legal, political and technical processes relating to the ratification of UNCLOS, which allow countries to extend their sovereign rights in maritime areas (Strandsbjerg 2012).

However the most important factors which motivate Russia's activity towards the Arctic may be divided into two groups: objective and subjective. The first is a result of geographic position and cannot be modified by the state itself. The second group is a result of intentionally chosen policies by the countries. Geographic and climatic factors lay down the basic conditions for formulation of state policy. Rising international interest in the Arctic was greatly stimulated by the publication of the results of climate research in polar areas, which clearly confirms the intensification of ice melting process. (Jakub Korejba 2013). According to the experts, high temperature growth in the Arctic will go beyond average global warming double for the whole Planet during the 21st century. As a result, the ice exposure of the Arctic Ocean is continuously shrinking, and economic activity in this region becomes more striking and potentially profitable. Interaction with other states and non-governmental actors has demonstrated that given rising and inevitable activity in the region and the increasing role of the Arctic in global politics, two possible circumstances are likely to be realised: cooperative or confrontational. (Korejba 2013).

In the case that a cooperative situation is implemented, it may be based on such set-up as “Northern Cooperation”, cooperation within the Arctic Council, “A-5”, sub-regional forums or bilateral consultations. Russia perceives the productivity of cooperation with partners in Northern Dimension as very optimistic. Particularly the understanding of projects about environment protection, use of nuclear waste, recovery of former military bases and its employ for commercial and research purposes. Russia calculates on rapprochement with Northern European states, specially the realization of common projects within the Barents Sea Council, such as common management of the Northern Sea Route, as well as on the rise of technical cooperation with the possibility to enlarge it to other areas economic, strategic etc. On the other hand confrontational scenario of international interaction includes the increasing impact of non-Arctic countries, especially, the growing activity of British and China (Korejba 2013).

The global rivalry for scant natural resources has become one of the largest issues facing the world today (Hiscock 2012). Thus rich deposition of resource contributes the new form of race; Russia is one among the global race in the part of the Region (Breyfogle & Dunifon 2012).

The economic and political disorder of the year also has exposed that the ever-evolving international system is growing quickly in complexity and produces challenges that not only grasp the policymakers by surprise, but also go above their capability to produce sufficient answers. Russia is struggling to adjust to these accelerating power shifts while also sinking into its own crisis of governance driven by the collapse of the economic model based on rearrangement of expanding petro-revenues (Ivanov 2002).

In the period of increasing self-assertiveness in the mid-2000s, the rather basic worldview widespread in the Moscow political elite was shaped by the concept of multi-polarity, which basically predicted an unraveling of the unfair and unnatural U.S. dominance on the global arena. (Medvedev 2008). This suggestion is omitted in the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept (which also does not mention Russia’s status as a Great Power), but just a month after its approval, President Dmitri Medvedev formulated five principles of Russian foreign policy, and the second one asserts that:

“The world should be multi-polar. A single-pole world is unacceptable. Domination is something we cannot allow. We cannot accept a world order in which one country makes all the decisions, even as serious and influential a country as the United States of America. Such a world is unstable and threatened by conflict” (Medvedev 2008).

## **5.2 Russia’s interest in the region**

The Arctic is one of the most peaceful regions on the world map, as well as one of Russia’s most stable borderlands. Simultaneously, it is a resource-rich region with the potential to become a new strategically important channel of a maritime transit passageway. Both challenges and opportunities from the fast changing climatic conditions in the region have contributed to giving the Arctic a place high on the domestic and foreign policy agenda. The area’s economic and commercial significance attaches to its pre-existing strategic importance for the Russian Federation. Natural resources are one of the major forces driving Russian policy as they are viewed as a source for the economic development and also determine the country’s geo-political influence. The importance of the Arctic to Russia on the one hand, and the growing international interest in the region on the other, has reinforced Russia’s determination to make its role as a central Arctic nation highly apparent by political, economic, and military means. Moscow’s purpose is to build up Russia’s role as a “leading Arctic power.” (Barbora 2012)

The most important objective for Moscow is maintaining nuclear deterrence by securing open access of its submarines to world’s seas. From the viewpoint of economic development, of fundamental importance is extraction of natural resources and maritime transport. Moscow stresses the significance of the Northern Sea Route as the straight route for Euro-Asian transit, but the shipping costs still exceed the benefits. Russian national interests will be certainly challenged by other Arctic states (all NATO members), but Russia does not yet have sufficient capability to dominate the region on its own. It has become obvious that Russian military potential in the Arctic is much lower than the united potential of the NATO countries. (Barbora 2012) In a long-term perspective, with ongoing climate changes, the Arctic is opening for exploration of new deposits and development of economic and industrial activity. This means that the

resources will be linked to global markets more closely, playing an increasingly important role in the world economy. However, the undiscovered reserves will not be a fundamental game-changer for Arctic states, most of which are already major producers of oil, gas, and minerals (Barbora 2012). Questionably, the countries that stand to be most greedy are not in the Arctic at all they are emerging, resource hungry economies such as China and India whose future development is expected to be fueled by the exports from the far north. These considerations together with Moscow's continued reliance on the nuclear deterrent, along with its focus on enhancing naval power projection capabilities indicates that the military presence in the Arctic will remain high on its agenda for the foreseeable future (Ibid).

From Russia's viewpoint, the Arctic region has unique characteristics. For Russia, the Arctic comprises both internal and foreign aspects of its policy. Taking into consideration the fact that a large part of Russia is categorized as belonging to the Arctic region and even more is geographically oriented towards it due to physical relief and transportation, Arctic policy, unlike Russia's policy in more far parts of the world, straightly touches Russia's strategic and economic interests. However Russian Arctic policy is primarily determined by two key documents; (i) The fundamentals of state policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period up to 2020 and beyond (Osnovy 2008) and (ii) Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020 (Doktrina 2001). *Osnovy 2008* outlines the country's policy in the region and signifies Russia's role as a "leading Arctic power". The documents were written under the auspices of the powerful Russian Security Council, whose permanent members comprises the most important centers of power, such as the president, prime minister, ministers of interior, foreign affairs, and defense, and the directors of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation and the Foreign Intelligence Service (Zysk 2010).

National interests are based on two key elements; natural resources and maritime transport (Osnovy 2008). According to Osnovy 2008, Russia's ultimate objective is to transform the Arctic into "leading strategic base for natural resources" by 2020. Consequently, one of the main goals of the Russian Arctic policy is to increase extraction of the natural resources in the region and develop infrastructure and communication management of the Northern Sea Route. The particular importance is the defence of the

riches of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the continental shelf, ensuring free access of the Russian fleet to the Atlantic, the decisive role of the Northern Fleet for defence, as well as the increasing importance of the Northern Sea Route for sustainable development of the Russian Federation (Doktrina 2001).

The Arctic is clearly vital to Russia's relevance in world affairs. The role of energy reserves in strengthening the country's position and influence on the international stage is also emphasized in the National Security Strategy, adopted in May 2009. Moreover, the recent activity indicates a serious and growing Russian interest in the Arctic. At a meeting of the State Council in Murmansk in May 2007, President Vladimir Putin proposed setting up a National Arctic Council to coordinate national policy and strengthen Russia's interests in the region (Putin: 2007). Furthermore, in August 2007 the Regional Development Minister, Vladimir Yakovlev issued instructions for the creation of an inter-departmental working group to address the development of the Arctic zone (RIA Novosti 2007).

### **5.2.1 Economic Interest**

Russia's strategic importances to the Arctic are country's prosperity and competitiveness in global markets which is major source of revenue, particularly in energy production. The region stands for one of the least populated areas of the world with four million people (3 percent the Russian population) and accounts for around 20 percent of Russia's gross domestic product, and 22 percent of the total Russian exports (Medvedev 2008). Moreover, soon after the release of the *Osnovy 2008*, President Medvedev signed into force a law that permits "the government to assign strategic oil and gas deposits on the continental shelf without auctions" (RIA Novosti 2008). Thus the law facilitates participation only of companies with five years' experience and in which the government owns at least a 50 percent stake that effectively allowing only state-controlled Gazprom and Rosneft to participate over the region (Cohen 2011).

### **5.2.2 National Security**

The National Security Strategy primarily includes the planning to launch special Arctic military in order to protect the country's national interests and to guarantee military

security in different military and political circumstances. The future competition on energy near Russian borders may be resolved by a use of military power and the existing balance of forces on the borders can be changed (Strategia 2009). The Russian Defence Minister Serdyukov acknowledged that Russia has the world's maximum Arctic border, thus to preserve critical lines of transportation and to secure north borders, It has already announced plans to form two special army brigades that to be based in the Arctic cities at Murmansk and Arkhangelsk (BBC News 2011).

Russia has been frequently conducting large-scale military operation in the region. The military training activity in Russian High north includes the skill of navigation tasks in the Arctic and missile launching etc. As the then Commander-in-chief of the Russian Navy Admiral Masorin said, the training for submarines in ice-covered is indispensable for ensuring that in case of the threat of nuclear conflict, the threat of nuclear, because strategic submarines are ready for launching a retaliatory strike with ballistic missiles (Gavrilenko 2006). However Russia's activities in the region have negatively impact on the Russia's interest. According to Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy, a Northern Fleet Commander "a wide range of threats are concentrated in the Arctic region and that may adversely affect Russian economic interests" (RIA Novosti 2011).

Russia looks at the Northern Sea Route as the shortest route for Euro-Asian passage, but the shipping costs is still more than the benefits. Again Russian national interests would be definitely confronted by other Arctic states primarily the NATO members, as Russia does not have adequate potential to dictate over the region on its own. It has also become clear that Russian military prospective in the Arctic is lesser than the united potential of the NATO countries. ( Barbora 2012). Regarding the long-term perception, with current climate changes, the Arctic is opening for exploration of new deposits and development of economic and industrial activity, which means that the resources will be linked to global markets, playing a significant role in the world economy. In addition the increasing interest of non-Arctic players in the region is another important issue before the Russia ( Barbora 2012). Taking into consideration together with Moscow 's continued dependence on the nuclear deterrent and its focus on enhancing naval power projection

capabilities clearly points out that the military presence in the Arctic will remain high on its agenda for the next few years (Ibid).

### **5.3 Russia's Policy towards Arctic**

After the dissolution of Soviet Union, Russia was searching for its identity to restore its prestige in the international arena. In the multi-polar world order in spite of many challenges and threats Russian leaders tried to reformulate its foreign policy. Thus they needed an effective security policy that would strengthen the Russia's position in the international relations. It is in this light that the publication of Russia's latest National Security Strategy in May 2009 deserves closer attention. The National Security Strategy to 2020 (NSS), aims to define the domestic and foreign threats and suggests measures that will guarantee the security and development of the Russian Federation. The analysis of the NSS will be a useful indication on how Moscow plans to formulate its security policy for the coming decade. Arctic constitutes an important source of Russian wealth and serves one of the greater goals of Russian security policy its economic development (Giles 2009: 1-6).

#### **5.3.1 Russia's Arctic Policy during Yelstin**

After the end of the Cold War, Russia lost its geostrategic, economic, military, political and ideological edge. It was forced to admit a 'second class status' in the international system. Russia was incapable to reunite to this new position and tried to find a footing by investing in upgrading its international standing (Olena & Moldavsky 2011:73-74). This was done by adopting a 'multi-vector' foreign policy. Under President Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999), Russia applied a conciliatory approach towards the West and coined the term 'pro-American' or 'Atlanticist' policy. The primary motive was to make a non-threatening external environment that would be most favorable to Russia's domestic economic and political development. (Olena & Moldavsky 2011:73-74)

Yeltsin's foreign policy is based on the promotion of human rights and the universal values of global economic, environmental, and nuclear security, which had to be realized

through a community of democratic states. The new multi-dimensional foreign policy led to diversification of Russia's interest, resulting in strengthening of relations with every region, including the Asia-Pacific. After Gorbachev left power in 1991, Russia continued to be a strong promoter of multilateral co-operation in the Arctic. In Ottawa in February 1992, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney issued a declaration affirming that both countries supported the formation of an Arctic Council. Canada and Russia have joined forces in an extensive program to defend the Arctic (Handleman 1992). In a state visit to Canada a few months afterward in June 1992, President Yeltsin addressed Parliament. He told Members, only mutually can we resolve all of the problems relating the Arctic. The Speaker of the House of Commons, John Fraser, replied that in strengthening Russian-Canadian cooperation as northern neighbors, both countries stand the formation of an International Arctic Council which would deal with environmental and security concerns in the region (Yelstin 1992). Russia's public support in 1992 was decisive to the ultimate achievement of creating the Council. Russia, also, has continued to carry the large socio-economic program highlighted by Gorbachev's speech. When Russia held the Arctic Council chair from 2004 to 2006, for example, it proposed a polar decade. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov recommended a number of projects in the economic and social sphere, in addition to the traditional environmental focus of the Council. Russia hosted an economic forum in St. Petersburg, and a workshop on sustainable development with special attention to the health and housing of northern peoples (Oldberg 2011).

### **5.3.2 Putin Foreign Policy of Arctic**

Following Vladimir Putin became Russia's President in 2000 continued with his predecessor's policies with certain alteration. The three primary focus of Putin's foreign policy were modernizing Russia's economy; reforming the structure of power; and a new international role.<sup>8</sup>

However, during that time there was disorder in the international system, created by the US's attack on Iraq in 2003. Putin discarded the western method of democracy and the

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Rutland, "Putin's Path to Power" , <http://www.uh.edu/~pgregory/conf/Rutland.PDF> (Accessed on June 8, 2013).



relationship between Russia and US received a setback. With an outstanding economic revival witnessed by Russia, a new boldness in Russian foreign policy was observed (Simmons 2008). Putin with his self-confident and defiant foreign policy began to regain Russia's 'great power' status. He invested in diversification of relationships and started representing force and provocations towards the West. His dream of an 'independent great power' gave birth to the 'multi-polar' notion in Russia (Talukdar 2013).

Carrying forward its assertiveness, in 2007, Putin condemned the US policies of unilateralism, and deployment of anti-missile shield system in Eastern Europe. He showed his discontent towards the European Union's policy of the eastern extension. He also tried to improve Russia's economic competitiveness in the international system.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, regardless of an assertive foreign policy, Putin tried to balance Russia's figure by establishing proactive cooperation with the international system. Russia focused on a balanced foreign policy, a policy between Eurasia and Trans-atlantic. During his first term in office, he promoted the national security, military and foreign policy concepts to guarantee Russia's progress towards a multidimensional, balanced and pragmatic external strategy. In his second term (2004-2008), he continued with this approach and focused on inclusive development and transformation of Russia.<sup>10</sup>

During Vladimir Putin's presidential tenure, the Russian approach towards military power developed considerably. Russia's revival as a great military power was a visibly defined objective for Russian authorities. Ambitious goals, such as the navy's resurgence, were given a main concern in official rhetoric. A remarkable improvement in state finances made new military projects possible, which could gradually lead to increased Russian strike power in its neighborhood with the Arctic region. Putin has wanted to enlarge Russian military and economic presence in the Arctic. In August 2007, a Russian expedition named Arktika 2007, led by Artur Chilingarov, planted a Russian flag on the seabed below the North Pole to highlight Russia's 2001 claim submission. (Westdal

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<sup>9</sup> Russia introduces its New Foreign Policy Concept, People's daily online, July 17, 2008, <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90780/91343/6452442.html>, (accessed on May 15, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> Tatiana Zakaurtseva, "The current foreign policy of Russia", [http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no16\\_1\\_ses/05\\_zakaurtseva.pdf](http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no16_1_ses/05_zakaurtseva.pdf), (accessed on May 14, 2013)

2009). In June 2008 General Vladimir Shamanov pronounced that Russia would increase the operational radius of its Northern navy submarines and in July 2011, Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov declared plans for two brigades to be stationed in the Arctic. The country started to revise its decaying nuclear arsenal as well as the part of it located in the country's northwestern corner. For the first time in over a decade, Russian nuclear submarines were capable to continue patrols beneath the Arctic ice coat and in waters far from the littoral zone. Since 2004, missile tests have been conducted on a more or less regular basis in the White Sea, the Barents Sea, and the Arctic Ocean. The Putin-era increased the Russian military activity in the Arctic which was commonly in line with the country's new assertiveness in international affairs. (Westdal 2009).

### **5.3.3 Medvedev Policy to the Arctic**

Russia's foreign policy under Medvedev was similar to his forerunner with a vision to follow an 'open' and 'pragmatic' foreign policy. Medvedev aimed to set up a democratic global process, to decide global problems cooperatively by relying on the rule and regulation of international law, develop friendly relationships with neighboring countries, and eradicate or avoid the emergence of tensions.<sup>11</sup>

Like his forerunners, Medvedev also stressed on the component of foreign policy, focusing on national interests. The focus was on geostrategic concerns, leading to self-assertion. In this respect Russia is taking active steps to increase research, economic and even military presence in the Arctic region. In 2007 expedition named Arktika, led by Artur Chilingarov, planted a Russian flag at the marine of the North Pole which was done in the line of scientific research to demonstrate Russia's extensive continental shelf claim (W.J Broad 2008). As the special representative of the Russian president for international cooperation in the Arctic and Antarctic, Artur Chilingarov, set it in 2010, "We are going to show that the shelf belongs to Russia, the voyage is not just a scientific, but also a political act, I am convinced that all polar countries will pay attention to it". As Medvedev assumed during a state trip to Norway in 2010, "we constantly talk about the Arctic, we are Arctic country and for us the Arctic is not something located at the top of the sphere." (Rowe & Blakkisrud 2013). There was continuous Russia's obligation and

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<sup>11</sup> "Russia introduces", *People's Daily*, 2008

capacity to defend its Arctic interests. When Russia's new Arctic Strategy was discussed in the Security Council in 2008, the review noted that participants, with Medvedev and Patrushev, stated that Russia has to be prepared to support the defence of Russian interests in the Arctic (Rowe & Blakkisrud 2013).

Since Arctic provides the peace, stability and economic opportunity, Russian lay emphasis on their country as an important player with a clear set of national interests, it shares values and interests with the other Arctic states.

#### **5.4 Convergence: Domestic-External policies of Russia**

Growing global energy demand and rising energy prices provide essential condition for Russia's reemergence because oil and natural gas resources drive much of Russia's growing power and development. Thus Russia has strategy that determines the objectives and goals. In this regard it adopted the Energy Policy containing Strategy Document which defines the policies for the period up to 2020. The energy strategy document primarily deals with the priority of Russian energy strategy to increase the energy effectiveness, reduction of impact on the environment, sustainable development and technological development etc. (Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation 2010). It has domestic policy towards the "Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of North" (RAIPON) that represents 41 indigenous peoples of North, Siberia and the Far East. It has played a significant role to bring internationally co-operation among the indigenous peoples of other Arctic states by protecting their rights and legal interests (Wallace 2013). Russia's strategy can be applied in the Arctic region, because climate change in the Arctic brings easier transport and also enable the explorer to exploit the natural gases and oil. At the same time there is adverse impact on the environment and indigenous inhabitants. Therefore major steps have been taken by the Arctic countries through the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS).

Therefore the convergence of social, economic, technology and environmental forces turned global attention to some opportunities which are available in the Arctic particularly in the fields of energy, transport, food production, mineral exploitation, human settlement and so on. (Wallace 2013). The Arctic Ocean with its natural resources is important to the Russian Federation and this significance of the Arctic for Russia

enhanced the prospects for exploitation of oil and gas, shipping, fisheries and population issues. The main objective of Russia's policy is to 'enlarge the resource base' of the Arctic region of the Russian Federation, that would offer an opportunity to accomplish Russian need for natural resources such as; hydrocarbon resources, marine living resources, and other raw materials. The main purpose of this policy which was formally unified by Kremlin is to convert the Arctic region into Russia's strategic resource base and make Russia into a leading Arctic power by 2020 (Kaczynski 2013) .

### **5.5 Northern Sea Route**

Northern Sea Route is a transport passage in the Arctic Ocean that offers the straightway between Asia and Europe. Russia calls this route North Sea Route while the Europeans like better to call it as the Northeast Passage (NEP), being towards their East part. It has been played a significant role throughout Soviet history. The Northern Sea Route has provided as a passageway for the connectivity for Russian Arctic inhabitants that contributed to their economic and social wellbeing. (Ragnerl 2010). The route is also economically feasible passageway for trade and other products such as oil, timber and ores in the Russian Arctic region. In addition, the NSR supports Russian military activity and scientific setting up in the region. During the 1970's, Russia used the route for the developing the northern oil and gas industry, and by 1978 the all weather route was established between Yenisey and Murmansk to make possible the movement of oil and bulk shipping (Ragnerl 2010).

During the Cold War, the NSR was utilized only by the Soviet Union, because there was lack of international interest due to challenges posed by harsh climate. It was only in 1987 when President Mikhail Gorbachev planned that permission would be given the right of entry to the route by non-Soviet shipping, and in 1991 the route was officially opened to external users. As a result in 1993 Russia, Japan and Norway instituted several research projects to study the economic feasibility of the Northern Sea Route. (Ragnerl 2010).

The International Northern Sea Route Programme (INSROP), a study programme period from June 1993 to March 1999, created 167 technical reports covering wide range of

issues about the NSR.<sup>12</sup> The International Northern Sea Route Programme research acknowledged that commercial shipping operations through the NSR are possible as the cargo base improves in the region it can produce significant traffic. However, if we contrast the NSR with the Suez Canal-Indian Ocean route, it is not economically feasible. It also may be concluded that the NSR was most underhanded for shipping due to broad ice cap making it an impossible obstruction to navigation and would necessitate nuclear powered ice breakers to accompany the specially designed ice classed cargo ships to sail through the route. In addition, a large part of the NSR cannot be used round the year. (Ragnerl 2010).

In terms of cargo transportation, around 7 million tons of goods, mostly metallurgical ores, oil and gas were transported during the period of 1991-1996 and from then on the cargo volume began to decline and stabilized between 1.5-2.0 million tons annually (Ragnerl 2010). This may have partially due to the breakup of the Soviet Union and the poor performance of Russian economy in the following years. Since then, there have been few transits through the NSR by research vessels, military vessels, fishing vessels, Arctic tourism liners, and yachts but most of the international shipping has stayed away from the NSR. (Ragnerl 2010).

However, there was a new concern to use the route as it has become navigable, although only for a short period of time and offers the shortest passage for shipping goods from Asia to Europe and vice versa. The estimates by the NSR witnessed 5-6 million tons of cargo movements towards the eastern way and 2-3 million tons to the west. No doubt the shrinking Arctic ice cap has provided an opportunity for exploiting the NSR, but its economic viability merits attention. (Ragnerl 2010).

For Russia, the main focus regarding the NSR is its economic significance for the Arctic regions from Murmansk in the west to Chukotka in the east. The NSR has been an important corridor for carrying in supplies to the Russian Arctic regions, and for carrying out parts of their vast natural resources, thus contributing to the economic growth both of the Arctic regions and of Russia as a whole (Rangerl 2000).

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<sup>12</sup> "International Northern Sea Route Programme" <http://www.fni.no/insrop/> accessed on June 7<sup>th</sup> 2013

In this regard Russia's strategy to the Arctic Council plays a major role in determining the foreign policy of a country. For Russia it is natural resources that enable a country to be more powerful and progress, thus oil and gas reserves in Arctic are integral part of Russia's strategy (Medvedev 2008). Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North is a non-governmental organization which represents the indigenous small group of peoples of North, Siberia and Far East. It is one among the indigenous permanent Participants of the Arctic Council. Thus Russia can have the power to propose on a certain matter on cooperative basis however, decision can be taken on the basis of consensus. (Medvedev 2008).

### **5.6 Russia's Policy towards Arctic Council and the Arctic**

Arctic Council was created in 1996 as a high level inter-governmental forum by the Ottawa Declaration. Arctic Council as a forum encourages cooperation and interaction among the Arctic states concerning Arctic indigenous group of people and other inhabitants within the Arctic issues related to sustainable development and environmental protection (Luiza Savage 2013). Thus Arctic Council's first and foremost focus was on environmental issues in the Arctic. With the Climate Change and melting of ice made natural resource available and human access to the region. This brought opportunities to exploit natural resources such as; oil and gas (UNEP Report 2013). Therefore Arctic is becoming significance day by day because of growing interest in the region by players. Arctic Council as a central decision making body will become important for next coming days to talk about the issues related to Arctic. Again it may gain attention as a forum to argue broadly regarding Arctic issues like natural resources, militarization and trade routes etc. (Stratfor Global Intelligence 2013).

In a broader framework Russia's interests in Arctic are mainly based on economic, environment, scientific and geopolitical aspect. The importance of NSR is another factor that stimulates the Russian foreign policy towards Arctic. Arctic council as a means of its interest use in various ways to influence in the region.

## CONCLUSION

Because of its strategic location Arctic is gaining acceptance in the geopolitical discourses. Despite the obstacles faced by harsh climate Bolshevik came across the all challenges and played a significant role in developing the region. During the Soviet period Arctic became important in the field of science as many scientists and engineers were sent to study the Arctic environment. The development of the Northern Sea Route contributed enormously the geopolitical significance of this region. Many countries were interested collectively to work on various issues related to Arctic region. Arctic countries also play significant role in addressing the Arctic issues. The Arctic countries through intergovernmental organizations such as; Arctic council, Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) tries to solve the problems faced by the Arctic. The main objectives of Arctic countries are; to maintain the sustainable development and in the region as well as to consider the rights of local communities/inhabitants promoting their culture, tradition and languages. Moreover the countries provide the forum through which collective decisions would be taken in the matter of Arctic. These countries also tried to look forward the cooperation between each other.

Arctic region has gained importance because of its geopolitical factors. It possesses huge natural resources, oil and gas. It also provides the sea route for transportation. The climate change has brought the region into geopolitical calculations which will make over the region into commercial hub. With the ease of access in the region and huge natural resources created the opening for both cooperation and competition and dispute mainly for territorial claims and maintaining the maritime resources, which is referred as new game-power in the Arctic region. One needs to highlight here the fact that apart from littoral state actors numbers of other external actors are taking a deep interest in this region. This heightened the geopolitical competition in this region. In this regard one can highlight the role played by China, Japan, UK and India. Both China and India are competing against each other to spread their influence in this region to explore untapped hydrocarbon resources.

For Russia Arctic is a rich minefield of biodiversity as well as natural resources. Looking at this region for economic benefit Russia has been doing shipping and fishing for long years. Russia is also interested towards sea for the most part on Northern sea route for its transportation system. Currently Russia maintains the military operation in the Arctic and in coming days it might try to get better use of it. Considering these objectives one could assume that Russia tries adopt multi-vector policies to be applied in the Arctic region. Though Russia's objectives include the; socio-economic improvement of the region, protecting indigenous people, establishing cooperation among Arctic bordering countries etc. the most fundamental objectives is the security aspects; it emphasises on the military security endowing with defence and protection to the border of state, environmental security ensuring safeguarding of its rich biodiversity.

Due to the growing importance of energy as well as rich biodiversity in recent years numbers of external powers are also interested in the rich natural resources of this region. This results in growing competition among the Arctic powers to share the scarce resources. Non-arctic States are also interested in the development of the Arctic region. This results in growing competition among the states to get the same. This contributes to growing competition among the states to share the scarce resources.



## APPENDICE

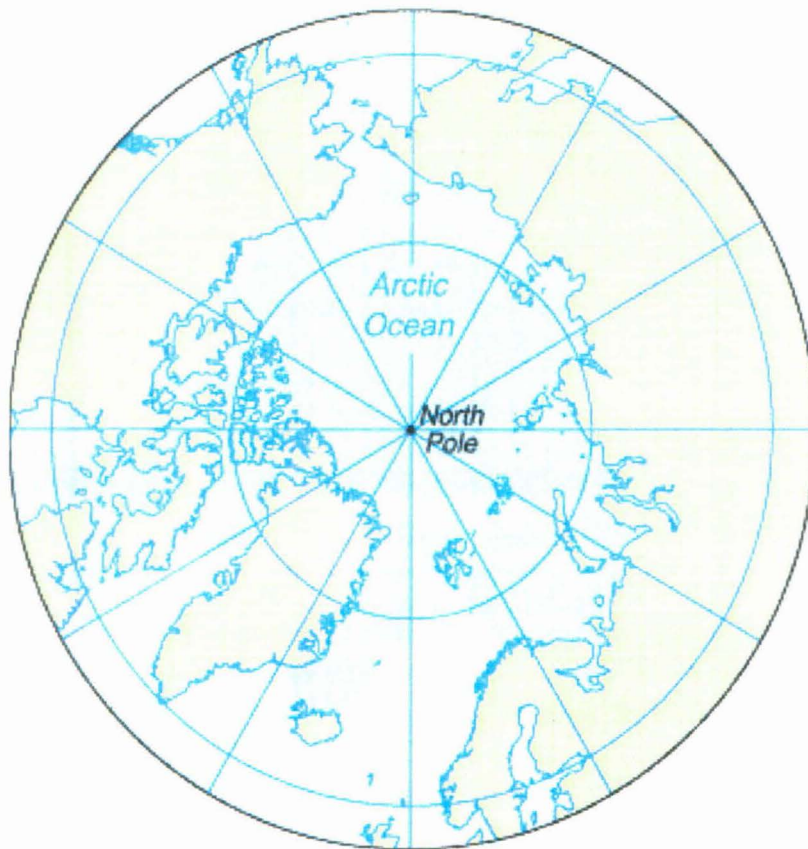


Figure-2: Arctic Ocean Region

Image Source: CIA World Fact book available at URL:  
<https://www.cia.gov/redirects/ciaredirect.html>



Figure-3: Arctic Region

Map produced by US Central Intelligence Agency (2007), available at URL: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands\\_oceans\\_poles/arctic\\_region\\_pol\\_2007.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/arctic_region_pol_2007.jpg)

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