

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC REGION'S INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT*

Рассматриваются вопросы социально-экономического развития коренных народов Арктики в контексте Концепции устойчивого развития. Показано соотношение процесса глобализации с новыми вызовами и путями сохранения традиционных форм народного хозяйства, социальной и культурной жизни коренного населения Арктики. Главное внимание направлено на рассмотрение развития коренных народов Арктики в рамках их специфического исторического развития.

Ключевые слова:

Арктика, глобализация, концепт устойчивого развития, коренное население, культурные традиции, окружающая природная среда, основные пути экономического развития коренных народов, регионализация, социально-экономическое развитие, социальные традиции, устойчивое развитие, экстремальный холод.

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Our planet has two regions of severe cold – the Arctic and Antarctic. Both regions are extreme in almost every sense of the word and their natural and geographical features are not favorable to the development of social and economic life. The climate in the Arctic region is not as severe as in Antarctica. There is at least one reason: Antarctica as a continent (some specialists consider it to be an archipelago) is covered by a four-kilometer ice sheet, thus giving it an average temperature of between -10°C and -15°C and keeping more than 90% of global fresh waters. The lowest temperature on the Antarctic plateau of -89.2°C was recorded in July 1983 by Soviet polar men. At the same time of year, the Arctic region can experience winter temperatures of less than -50°C and this point of such severe cold is known as ‘the Pole of cold’ in the Russian Arctic. Natural resources, especially flora and fauna, in these Polar Regions are extremely scarce. Antarctica is the only continent without a permanent population [5]. The Arctic, on the other hand, is quite different. Firstly, it has a large population with a great variety of indigenous people and ‘new’ populations which arrived there later, mainly to the so-called ‘Russian North’. The Arctic is divided into two main parts: sea territory, mostly covered by ice in winter months, and its land part with areas of permafrost. In this sense, a large proportion of the modern population in the Arctic has

no historical connection to this region but its contribution to the social development is the source of the region's most serious successes.

Defining the Arctic

Usually the geographical setting of this region of our planet is considered as follows: The Arctic is the Earth's northern polar area and includes the Arctic Ocean (Severniiy Ledovitiy Okean) and its seas: the Greenland Sea, Barents Sea, Kara Sea, Laptev Sea, East Siberian Sea, Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, as well as Baffin Bay, the Foxe Basin, the numerous straits and bays of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, the northern parts of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans; the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, Greenland, Spitsbergen, Franz Josef Land, Novaya Zemlya, Severnaya Zemlya, Novosibirsk Islands and Wrangle Island, as well as the northern coasts of the continents of Eurasia and North America. The Arctic covers an enormous region of around 30 million square kilometers. The indigenous population of the Arctic consists of over 30 different peoples who speak dozens of languages.

While it is considered a distinct region, the Arctic can be defined in a number of different ways. One way is to mark the border by $66^{\circ} 33'$ North latitude (the Arctic Circle), which is also the boundary of the “land of the midnight sun”. Above this latitude the sun remains above the horizon all day for a period during the summer, and stays below the horizon

* Article has been written on the basis of a speech given at the Conference of the Arctic University in September 2016.

all day for a period during the winter. These phenomena are called the “polar day” and “polar night”. In terms of climate, the Arctic is regarded as the region where the average temperature for July remains below 10°C. This isotherm approximately traces the ‘tree line’ beyond which conditions are generally too severe for trees to survive. The geographic and climatic boundaries for the Arctic differ somewhat. For example, although Iceland lies south of the Arctic Circle, it falls largely below the 10°C isotherm.

The Arctic’s total land area of approximately 14 million square kilometers consists of the northernmost territories of the eight Arctic states: Russia, Canada, Greenland (an autonomous country under Denmark), the United States (Alaska), Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. The Russian Federation and Canada account for nearly 80 per cent of the land; the Nordic countries around 16 per cent; and the United States some 4 per cent. The Arctic Ocean, which surrounds the North Pole and is largely frozen for much of the year, occupies about one-third of the region. The Arctic can be divided into several geographic sub-regions. These include: Russian Arctic; Canadian Arctic; Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat); Northern Alaska (United States); Svalbard (Norway); Iceland; Fennoscandia [4]. But there is another view according to which “... Arctic is a difficult region to be defined. The Arctic Circle, commonly marking the boundary of the Arctic, serves mainly astronomical purposes and marks the southern limit of the midnight sun, but has little other use. Many scientists adopt their definitions to suit their own particular subjects, based on, for example, the southern limits of sea ice, the northern limit of trees (tree line), or the distribution of certain native peoples” [8; 13].

In this study we will use both definitions. But in the examination of the major features of the indigenous population of the Arctic we will pay attention to two main trends of international development: **globalization** and **sustainable development** which will help us to understand what conditions and situations influence on the life of the Arctic’s indigenous peoples.

Globalization

The term “globalization” was coined in the beginning of 1980s by an American economist, T. Levitt. Being an economist at Harvard University, naturally he paid most attention to the economic processes of global development which were at the same time also termed “integration”. Levitt underlined that

close to the end of the twentieth century the process of integration had reached a new level of dynamism in its development and its ability to change the world economy. He considered the main features of globalization to be the cross-border transfer of goods, services, labour and capital.

There is another understanding of globalization which was presented at approximately the same time by an English sociologist, Roland Robertson, and a number of his colleagues. They shared similar positions on the issue but presented a different aspect to globalization. Robertson was one of the first scholars to study globalization as “the compression of the world and the intensification of the conciseness of the world as a whole” [12; 17]. Robertson considers the main characteristic of globalization as the compression of human communities and individuals into the same space “all together.” This “space” (a qualitative space) demands that each unit form a particular attitude that would have previously been eliminated by the limitations of a local context. In all situations and on all levels, according to Robertson, this global context of existence is the fundamental meaning of globalization which he understands to be a fact. The existence of the world as a whole forms a sense of “global culture” before individual and collective subjects. In this context, any choice, decision, or movement automatically acquires a “global dimension.” We live in a global culture, and this is irreversible [12; 17].

According to the modern understanding of the process of globalization the main features of it are stated below:

1. Liberalization: the freedom of the industrialist/businessman to establish industry, trade or commerce either in his country or abroad; free exchange of capital, goods, service and technologies between countries;

2. Free Trade: free trade between countries; absence of excessive governmental control over trade;

3. Globalization of Economic Activities: control of economic activities by domestic market and international market; coordination of national economy and world economy;

4. Connectivity: localities being connected with the world by breaking national boundaries; forging of links between one society and another, and between one country and another through the international transmission of knowledge, literature, technology, culture and information.

5. A multi-dimensional Process: economically, it means the opening up of national

40 markets, free trade and commerce among nations, and integration of national economies with the world economy. Politically, it means limited powers and functions of the state, more rights and freedoms granted to the individual and empowerment of private sector; culturally, it means the exchange of cultural values between societies and between nations; and ideologically, it means the spread of liberalism and capitalism.

6. Global State vs. Global Civil Society: in protest against the harmful effects of globalization on the vast multitude of people all over the world, particularly in developing countries, protest marches, demonstrations and meetings organized in different countries. These protests have taken on a more militant form in the last decade. Protest groups have tried to disturb and paralyze the meetings of the WTO, World Bank and IMF. They assert that these UN-based organizations are the agents of globalization and that they have been used by developed countries as instruments to exploit and dominate developing countries. These protesters include environmental-oriented groups, human rights groups, women's groups, farmers' groups and peace groups that have come together at a global level.

As a result, a global civil society, though yet not fully developed, has come into being but a global state is a distant dream [12; 17].

We can say that the term "globalization" usually has two principal meanings:

a) as a phenomenon, it implies a greater interdependence among different regions and countries of the world in terms of finance, trade and communications;

b) as a theory of economic development one of its major assumptions is that a greater level of integration is taking place among different regions of the world, and that this integration is having an important impact on economic growth and social indicators [16].

Since the end of the twentieth century and up until the present day a serious discussion about the process of globalization has been going on. Inside this discussion there are at least three main questions: When did it start? What is going on now? When will be the end of globalization? Speaking about the first question there are several points of view: it could have started at any time from the appearance of Homo Sapiens on our planet up to the previous century; the optimal time for the beginning of globalization was the end of the fifteenth century, when America was discovered by European explorers. Speaking about our case, it is important to note that at that time the indigenous population of the

Arctic was not widely influenced by globalization, though they had been living in those regions for many centuries; some modern political scientists consider that it would be impossible to stop the process of globalization in any case.

In recent years the process of globalization is much more noticeable than it was even in 19th-20th centuries, when it was cut by two World Wars [18]. One of the challenges of the globalization process now is that it works like a powerful vacuum cleaner sucking different countries all over the world into its system. It should be mentioned that modern multinational corporations are very active and play a strong role in this process. During the last couple of years, the idea of globalization has attracted many critics from a wide range of places: developing countries, the middle class in some developed states, such as France, Belgium and even in the United States. The new US foreign economic policy became one of the first "antiglobalization bells" and demonstrated that the process of globalization has a number of internal problems. But some American political scientists consider that it would be possible to stop this process only through another global conflict [6].

In the last few decades the process of globalization has been through several important changes. It has become much 'wider' and at the same time much more problematic. As it is written in the book "Russia and the World in 2020" devoted to the consideration of the new features of globalization, it includes now such important modules as: economic, environmental, cultural, social and a mixed one [6]. Speaking about the process of globalization today, we can say that it demonstrates at least two major trends: the appearance of a new system of world economy inside which national economies flow together as a unified whole. This system is mostly based on the liberal principles of the free transfer of goods and services, labour and capital. But new features will appear in the future, such as revolutions in technology, information and robotics as well as social transformations. In some cases the global development of society will be connected with new trends such as environmental (ecological) distribution and political ecology [1]. The process of globalization is undoubtedly connected with the other part of this paper – sustainable development as one of the possible approaches in solving the global environmental (ecological) problem. James Mittelman included in his book "The Globalization Syndrome: Transformation and Resistance" a special chapter, named

“Environmental Resistance Politics”, in which he writes: “Not all types of environmental degradation are of recent origin or global in scope – some are long-established and local. Even so unsustainable transformation of the environment under globalization differs from environmental harm in previous epochs” [15].

As the process of globalization becomes more and more active and has a substantial influence on many countries of the world, a new question has appeared. One of the patriarchs of American diplomacy, H. Kissinger, in his work “Does America Need a Foreign Policy”, wrote that, “The main factor of globalization – are the United States; they got the main profit from the forces they invest in” [2]. Such a definition of the role played by the US in the process of globalization brought some of its other characteristics into common parlance, such as: Americanization, Westernization and Macdonolization.

Sustainable Development

The term “sustainable development” appeared as part of a report by the UN International Committee for the Environment and Development presented at the second International Conference of the UN (1992) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Until today, however, there are different understandings of the aforementioned term, especially in the Russian milieu. It was caused by a mistaken translation of the word “sustainable”, as in the Russian language it has another meaning. But speaking about the time when this term appeared there were various points of view as to its precise history. A. Ivanova, in her master dissertation “The Concept of Sustainable Development and its Implementation on the Example of the European Union”, mentioned that the term “sustainable” was first used in 1713 by Hans Carl von Carlowitz, the head of the King’s mining administration in Saxony, who was discussing the problem of forest management in that field of the economy [14]. A well-known Russian academician, K. Kondratjev, considered that this term was used for the first time at the World Churches Congress in 1974 as an answer to the position of leaders of developing countries which considered the global environmental situation to be less serious than the fact that which millions of people were facing the very real prospect of starvation. He also wrote that for the second time the Concept of Sustainable Development (CSD) appeared in 1980 in documents by the International Union for Nature Preservation and Natural Resources (set up in 1949 as the International Union for Nature Preservation), well-known for its activity in the organizing the “Red Book” of nature [3].

The practical meaning of the “Sustainable Development Concept” was represented in a document at the Rio-92 Environmental Forum named “Agenda XXI”, where the main steps, mechanisms and instrumentations of implementing the idea of sustainable development were described. Special attention was paid to the socio-ecological (socio-environmental) aspect of development in each region of the world as all of them have their own ecosystems and correspondent sustainability. The main eco-geographical features of the Arctic region are very severe and poor and it is reasonable to consider them as a special environment in the framework of constructing local and regional nature management policy. A research group, led by Professor Monica Tennberg, paid particular attention to the real challenges of sustainable development, vulnerability and adaptation to societal and environmental changes. The group aimed its research projects at the sensitivity and vulnerability of peoples, livelihoods and institutions to societal and environmental changes. Also they included threats to biodiversity; pressures on cultural diversity by local, national and international economic development which needs special and increased attention. The adaptive capacity of Arctic inhabitants to these changes will be an important focus within the research to be conducted. People in the Arctic, their institutions and livelihoods, as was underlined by Professor Tennberg’s group, face rapid and cumulative changes in their natural environment, and in the societies surrounding them. The speed of these changes may make it difficult for them to adapt. Growing interest towards using the region’s natural resources and impacts of industrialization and global climate change directly and increasingly affect the lives of people and the state of the environment. Sustainable development requires a long-term perspective when it comes to the relationship between the environment, society and the socio-economic elements within them. That is why the sustainable development concept and its implementation are widely-accepted principles but remain contested. Different stakeholders have different views about what it means and how it should be promoted according to their understandings and interests. A wide diversity of ways to respond to the challenges of a changing social and natural environment among Arctic inhabitants could play an important role in the main approaches undertaken by the indigenous population. Sustainable development is also a question of international cooperation and governance

42 | in the region. Indigenous peoples have been increasingly recognized as partners of states in the field of possible international cooperation [9].

Indigenous population

An official definition of “indigenous” has not been adopted by the UN system due to the diversity of the world’s indigenous peoples. Instead, a modern and inclusive understanding of “indigenous” has been developed and includes peoples who: “identify themselves and are recognized and accepted by their community as indigenous; demonstrate historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; have strong links to territories and surroundings of natural resources; have distinct social, economic or political systems; maintain distinct languages, cultures and beliefs; form non-dominant groups of society; resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities” [7]. A Russian researcher, S. Sokolovskiy, writes that according to the World Bank definition the following aspect is the central one: usually indigenous people live in tribes or unions of tribes and they have several specific features: geographical isolation, low level of acculturation, natural level of economics, lingvo-cultural specifications, no political representation, low level of defending their rights for land, identification with territory, no written language [7]. It is important to highlight at this point that there are several other definitions of indigenous people in the whole world.

The total number of indigenous people in the world today is estimated to be about 370 million in more than 70 countries. They represent a rich diversity of cultures, religions, traditions, languages and histories; yet continue to be among the world’s most marginalized population groups [9].

The indigenous population of the Arctic

The Arctic is home to an estimated 4 million people of which around 10% is thought to be indigenous. Indigenous peoples of the Northern territories of Earth include the Saami people of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Northwest Russia; Nenets, Khanty, Evenk and Chukchi in Russia; Aleut, Yupik and Inupiat in Alaska (USA); Inuvialuit in Canada and Kalaallit in Greenland. Their geographical settings are not the same, thus allowing for the differences in their historical development as well as their characteristics today. They live in groups and not only in different geographical sub-regions but in

different countries and depend partly upon the environmental policy of each. There is a great variety of cultural, historical and economic backgrounds among these people. Despite this, however, a common feature for most of the indigenous communities in the Arctic is that they have already undergone substantial changes due to the globalization of the western way of life, state policies, modern transport and the introduction of a mixed economy. Their main traditional livelihoods are reindeer herding, fishing and hunting which have been practised for a great many years. There were craftsmen among them who produced some unique goods, including carvings on the fangs and bones of local animals. But for many years this was done only for themselves or local trade. It happened so that the Arctic natural environment was influenced by westerners, including Russians, a very long time ago. For example, during the reign of Peter I several northern geographical expeditions were conducted. One of them played a tragic role in the destruction of local wildlife: a large sea animal called “Steller’s sea cow”, named after the naturalist that first discovered and drew the animal, Georg Wilhelm Steller, was driven to extinction. Unfortunately, it was not possible to preserve the species but some specialist historians in Arctic natural history consider that there may have been local indigenous hunters who were the real reason for the disappearance of this sea creature.

Later on the process of globalization involved technological development of the Arctic’s indigenous people. Industrialization, the construction of new industrial enterprises, new cities with a new, ‘mixed’ population – more cosmopolitan people started to have an influence on the traditional way of life of native people. In the second half of the twentieth century, after huge oil resources were discovered in the northern territories, a new step in development of those territories was made: the extraction of oil and, later on, natural gas. It became necessary to establish here a new labour force with people taken from different parts of those countries in which deposits of oil and gas were found. Indigenous people were exposed to new cultures, new understanding of life in general. It became necessary for them to be more tolerant to newcomers which changed their traditional way of life. It was especially evident in the USSR with its administrative system and planned economy. The northern territories were subject to wide-reaching economic and social development but at the same time traditional livelihoods were neglected. Although there could have been a wide vari-

ety of cultural, historical and economic backgrounds among the indigenous groups on the territory of the Russian Federation, the reality was that there had been a common feature for most of them in the Arctic: they have already undergone substantial changes as a result of the influence of globalization. These changes included a predominantly new way of life, influence from state policies, modern transport, infrastructure and the involving into a mixed economy. Even today, however, the market economy is hardly developed in territories where arctic indigenous people live. The main reason is the very specific way of life, both economic and social, in those populations - a traditional understanding of community and mutual cooperation in the context of the severe geographic setting of the Arctic. We can conditionally divide the entire Arctic indigenous population, approximately 400,000 people, into two main groups: those who reside in the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation and those who live in other countries (Finland, Norway, Greenland, Canada and USA). When comparing them one can identify different living standards, socio-economic and environmental development as well as differences in the extent to which they preserve their traditional culture and livelihoods in spite of the challenge posed by modernity. These differences depend on a number of factors, including those that are unique to the European Arctic in the nineteenth century when national borders were changed (Russian Empire – Norway, Russian Empire – Finland). Despite this, however, their lifestyles do still closely resemble one another.

The Indigenous Population of the Russian Arctic

A great piece of work in the of field of Russia's indigenous population was conducted by the anthropologist and ethnologist, F. Volkov, which he began in 1910. He undertook several special expeditions around the Russian North and in the years 1910–1920 he visited the communities of such northern tribes as the Finno-Hungarians, Saams, Karels, Komi and more besides. According to his research, there were dozens of thousands of Saams the period 1897–1912, they used 10 dialects from the two major languages, West-Saams and East-Saams. All of them had managed to preserve their traditional style of life, including the control of natural resources, which had been used by their predecessors, and continued to retain the ability to survive in such severe natural conditions, as they had done for many years, before their lands had been included into the territory of Russia.

A well-known Russian educator and politician, M. Speranskiy, became the author of a series of statutes on the regulation of heterogeneous population of the Russian Empire in 1822. That document officially included the lands of indigenous populations into the territory of the Russian Empire but the government did not interfere with the lives of those people, thus making it possible for them to preserve their traditional way of life. At those times the Russian Empire recognized the uniqueness of different peoples and let them keep the culture and traditions of their predecessors.

According to the view of Nina Veysalova a permanent participant in the Arctic Council and NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN, it is necessary to conduct several reforms in order to support the Russia's indigenous population in the Arctic. The main step which should be taken is connected with land heritage. These indigenous people had access to the ancestral lands of their predecessors, that is to say, their parents and grand-parents, but they never established the concept of property and legal control of the land, says Veysalova. It was strongly forbidden to enter the ancestral lands for foreigners and there never was an idea of subduing nature, as indigenous settlers consider themselves to be a part of nature. However, in the current situation they can only use the fauna of their immediate surroundings: reindeers, wolverines, polar foxes, fish but that is only if they have official access to them, continues N.Veysalova. As the indigenous population of the Russian Arctica is currently required to pay for the use of land and local natural resources, they are in the process of applying to the government to provide them with the right of permanent access to and possession of the land free of charge. They consider themselves to be the best land-users, environmentalists and protectors of nature. It is well known that those species which were included in the "Red book" could be found only in the regions of the Arctic.

In the post-Soviet era, when the country appeared to be in a transition period, the indigenous population of the Russian Arctic were placed into a very complicated situation. The process of privatization and the adoption of a market economy forced the indigenous population into a new social framework. Some of them did integrate into the new social and economic processes whilst still managing to preserve some of the own traditional consciousness. Such groups could continue in their traditional ways of managing

44 | the environment and did not change their attitude towards it, thus preserving the belief that they themselves were part of it. There were, however, those groups which could not so easily continue into this new historical and economic setting. Put simply, they were not able to compete with other actors in the Arctic region and were forced to change their approach. The indigenous population did not have the modern infrastructure needed to integrate into regional markets and, as a result, continued to use the traditional techniques and technologies, preserving the knowledge passed onto them by their predecessors. They did, however, lose much of their reindeer pastures, their hunting territories and waters rich in fish.

Further to this, the Federal government provided them with sufficient medical services, educational institutions appropriate to their understanding of society and to satisfy their requirements. Since 2010, no state organized statistical monitoring, including that of the demographic situation, current state of the health of the population has not been monitored nor have the living standards of the local population been estimated. It is for this reason that the Association of the Indigenous Population of the Northern Regions of Russia, the Siberian and Far East of the Russian Federation came together at a special gathering in 2013. A special sociological research, "Life for small indigenous populations: problems and ways of solving them" was conducted and the following problems were put forward: no recognition of the nationality to which one belongs which has been deemed a prerequisite for certain rights; no real possibility to practise traditional economic activities, including fishing, hunting and reindeer breeding; no real possibility to participate in the discussion of how best to implement certain decisions, etc.

Some very important steps were undertaken in this aspect, of which we will focus on the following: representatives of the above mentioned Association will be permitted to take part in the activities of various state ministries and institutions such as President's Administration, State Duma, Ministry of Nature and Ecology, Federal Forest Agency and some others. With this decision, it became possible to analyze more than 30 prospective laws connected with the rights and interests of indigenous population of the Russian Arctic. Nevertheless, it remains a necessity to better understand the most effective measures to provide all indigenous people with the rights that will allow

them to pursue their own economic development in such a way that is close to the traditions which were used by their predecessors. In this case we have cause for optimism with regards to the lives of the indigenous population, but it should not be forgotten that there remains a need to be active in this respect [19].

The Indigenous Population of North America

The geographical setting of this population is not the same as those who live and work in the Russian North but they do have some similarities. These regions lie near to or above the Arctic Circle and include the northernmost parts of present-day Alaska and Canada. The topography is relatively flat, and the climate is characterized by very low temperatures for most of the year. The region's extreme northerly location alters the diurnal cycle; on winter days the sun may peek above the horizon for only an hour or two, while the proportion of night to day is reversed during the summer months.

The indigenous peoples of the North American Arctic include various groups such as the Eskimo (Inuit and Yupik/Yupit) and Aleut; their traditional languages are in the Eskimo-Aleut family. Many Alaskan groups prefer to be called Native Alaskans rather than Native Americans. Canada's Arctic peoples, on the other hand, generally prefer to be referred to as Inuit. The Arctic peoples of North America relied upon a culture of hunting and gathering. Winters are harsh, but the long hours of summer sunlight supports an explosion of vegetation that in turn draws large herds of caribou (close to reindeers in the Russian Arctic) and other animals to the inland North. On the coasts, sea mammals and fish formed the bulk of the diet. Small mobile bands were the predominant form of social organization; band membership was generally based on kinship and marriage. Dome-shaped houses were common; they were sometimes made of snow and other times of timber covered with earth. Fur clothing, dog sleds, and vivid folklore, mythology, and storytelling traditions were also important aspects of Arctic cultures. Some of these representatives of the local indigenous people can have old connections with those ones in the Russian Arctic. The population of these parts of the Arctica does their best to sustain traditions and ways of life of their predecessors [11].

This region lies south of the Arctic and encompasses most of present-day Alaska and most of Canada, excluding the Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island), which are a part of

the Northeast culture area. The topography is relatively flat, the climate is cool, and the ecosystem is characterized by a swampy and coniferous boreal forest (taiga) ecosystem. Prominent tribes include the Innu (Montagnais and Naskapi), Cree, Ojibwa, Chipewyan, Beaver, Slave, Carrier, etc. Their traditional languages are in the Athabaskan and Algonquian families.

Small kin-based bands were the predominant form of social organization, although seasonal gatherings of larger groups occurred at favored fishing locales. Moose, caribou, beavers, waterfowl, and fish were taken, and plant foods such as berries, roots, and sap were gathered. In winter people generally resided in snug semi-subterranean houses built to withstand extreme weather; summer allowed for more mobility and the use of tents or lean-tos. Snowshoes, toboggans, and fur clothing were other common forms of material culture [11]. This culture area reaches from the present-day Canadian provinces of Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritimes (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) south to the Ohio River valley (inland) and to North Carolina (on the Atlantic Coast). The topography is generally rolling, although the Appalachian Mountains include some relatively steep slopes. The climate is temperate, precipitation is moderate, and the predominant ecosystem is the deciduous forest. There is also an extensive coastline and an abundance of rivers and lakes.

In some cases there were geographical and political changes of the Canadian indigenous population. It was connected with Nunavut region, which comprises a major portion of Northern Canada, and most of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. Its vast territory makes it the fifth-largest country subdivision in the world, as well as North America's second-largest (after Greenland). The capital Iqaluit (formerly "Frobisher Bay"), on Baffin Island in the east, was chosen by the 1995 capital plebiscite. Other major communities include the regional centers of Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay. Nunavut also includes Ellesmere Island to the far north, as well as the eastern and southern portions of Victoria Island in the west and Akimiski Island in James Bay far to the southeast of the rest of the territory. It is Canada's only geopolitical region that is not connected to the rest of North America by a highway. Nunavut is the largest in area and has the second-least populous of Canada's provinces and territories. One of the world's most remote, sparsely settled regions, it has

a population of 35,944, mostly Inuit, spread over an area of just over 1,750,000 km² (680,000 sq. mi), or slightly smaller than Mexico. Nunavut is also home to the world's northernmost permanently inhabited place, Alert. A weather station further down Ellesmere Island, Eureka, has the lowest average annual temperature of any Canadian weather station [20]. In the history of this region several changes of a certain kind happened that has led to its emergence as the territory we know today and not that which it was dozens of years before. It was separated officially from the Northwest Territories on April 1, 1999, via the Nunavut Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act, though the boundaries had been contemplatively drawn in 1993. The creation of Nunavut resulted in the first major change to Canada's political map since the incorporation of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1949 [10].

These cases demonstrate that the indigenous population of the Russian Arctic still has less socio-political rights than those of other European and North American countries. Taking a closer look at the national level, for example, we see that Saami peoples are represented by three Saami parliaments in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. Norway recognized the status of the Saami people with a constitutional amendment, while Finland considers the Saami people a linguistic minority rather than a people, despite the size of its population. Russia officially recognizes only 55000 indigenous persons on its territory, despite the fact that around 250000 indigenous persons live in Russia at present. Overall, in Russia indigenous peoples still have limited decision-making powers. In Canada's Northwest Territories, half of the population is indigenous. Land claims and self-government negotiation have led to the recognition of indigenous rights and the emergence of the territory of Nunavut, based on an Inuit land claim. So, for the Russian indigenous population it is important to become more active in the Russian Federation's political system as represented by the State Duma and the Council of Ministries.

Finally, all the indigenous populations of the Arctic should be given a platform in international activities, especially through those organizations that related directly to the Arctic. The most important of these organizations is the Arctic Council. Having been established in 1996, the Arctic Council includes eight countries that have territory above the Arctic Circle – the United States, Canada, Iceland,

- 46 | Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Since the beginning of its activities it has aimed to become a genuinely effective inter-governmental forum. The problems facing the indigenous people of the Arctic are also included into its plans. At the same time, the Arctic Council's central focus is on environmental issues in the region. This, however, includes the lives of the indigenous population and the extent to which they operate within the framework of the Sustainable Development Concept and its various practices.

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