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FOREWORD - INSROP WORKING PAPER

INSROP is a five-year multidisciplinary and multilateral research programme, the main phase of which commenced in June 1993. The three principal cooperating partners are Central Marine Research & Design Institute (CNIIMF), St. Petersburg, Russia; Ship and Ocean Foundation (SOF), Tokyo, Japan; and Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI), Lysaker, Norway. The INSROP Secretariat is shared between CNIIMF and FNI and is located at FNI.

INSROP is split into four main projects: 1) Natural Conditions and Ice Navigation; 2) Environmental Factors; 3) Trade and Commercial Shipping Aspects of the NSR; and 4) Political, Legal and Strategic Factors. The aim of INSROP is to build up a knowledge base adequate to provide a foundation for long-term planning and decision-making by state agencies as well as private companies etc., for purposes of promoting rational decisionmaking concerning the use of the Northern Sea Route for transit and regional development.

INSROP is a direct result of the normalization of the international situation and the Murmansk initiatives of the former Soviet Union in 1987, when the readiness of the USSR to open the NSR for international shipping was officially declared. The Murmansk Initiatives enabled the continuation, expansion and intensification of traditional collaboration between the states in the Arctic, including safety and efficiency of shipping. Russia, being the successor state to the USSR, supports the Murmansk Initiatives. The initiatives stimulated contact and cooperation between CNIIMF and FNI in 1988 and resulted in a pilot study of the NSR in 1991. In 1992 SOF entered INSROP as a third partner on an equal basis with CNIIMF and FNI.

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The Northern Sea Route and Local Communities in Northwest Russia: Social Impact Assessment for Murmansk Region

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Summary written by Yulian Konstantinov, Institute for Anthropological Field-Research, New Bulgarian University, Sofia (Bulgaria)

Murmansk Region is the most urbanized administrative area in the Russian Far North and also an area with a very sizeable presence of the military-industrial complex (VPK). The local communities whose livelihood is based mainly on reindeer-herding and fishing are only about 8% of the total of 1,250,000 people. As this tundra-connected population has been concentrated mainly in the inland, central part of the Kola Peninsula (*Lovozersky Rayon*), NSR expansion may be expected not to affect them directly, but mainly insofar as it has a bearing on current processes in the urban and VPK communities.

NSR expansion may be expected to alleviate the currently very critical situation of a stranded urban population - labour migrants from the South who are unemployed, but have no place to go back to. Participation of the VPK in the project may help improve its own state. As poaching-pressure on renewable resources in the Region comes primarily from these two major actors, alleviation of the crisis in their sectors, combined with new economic means for increased control, will with certainty contribute towards saving the resource-base of the tundra-connected local population.

The concept of tundra-connected local population is discussed in detail in the paper. Due to historical and demographic reasons it has come to include not only the indigenous Sami people, but also other groups: those of the Komi, Nenets, and Pomor communities. The area of concern for the local population must be expanded beyond the confines of a strictly indigenous status.

The main recommendation of the paper is that NSR expansion must not disrupt the traditional resource-base of the local groups by taking industrial, mining, or infrastructural projects into the main reindeer-herding area, administratively comprised by *Lovozersky Rayon*, i.e. east of the Murmansk-St. Petersburg railway-line. It is strongly suggested that the Rayon should be helped to acquire the status of a protected reindeer-herding and wild-nature zone, with infrastructural (transport) problems being solved by improved air transport. Furthermore it is emphasized that the ecological safety of the Region as well as of territories far beyond its boundaries critically depends on solving existing problems of storage and processing of high concentrations of nuclear waste which may be expected to increase with nuclear-powered ice-breaker additions and projected conversion activities.

Северный морской путь и местные общества Северозападной России: оценка социального воздействия для Мурманской области

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По уровню урбанизации Мурманская область стоит в Русском Крайном Севере на первом месте. Кроме того, она отмечает очень высокое присутствие военно-промышленного комплекса (ВПК). Местные общества, чье существование зависить преимущественно от оленоводства и рыбной ловли составляют только 8% общего насселения из 1 250 000 людей. Поскольку связанное с тундрой население сконцентрировано в основном в центральной части Кольского полуострова (в Повозерском районе), можно ожидать, что расширение СМП ему непосредственным образом не повлияет, а только посколько будет воздействовать на текущие процессы в городских и военно-промишленных секторах населения.

Можно ожидать, что расширение СМП облегчить теперешное очень кризисное положение, в которое попало "застрявшее" городское население - трудовые мигранты из юга, оставшиеся без работы, причем без места, где они могут вернуться. Участие ВПК в проекте рассширения эксплуатации СМП может улучшить его собственное состояние. Поскольку бракониерский нажим на возобновляемые рессурсы области связанный главным образом с этими двумя группами актеров, улучшение состояния в их секторах будет определенно способствовать для сохранения ресурсной бази связанной с тундрой местного населения.

Формулировка "связанное с тундрой местное население" дискутируется подробно в докладе. В связи с историческими и демографскими причинами, здесь входет не только коренное саамское население, а также другие группы: коми, ненцы и поморы. Предлагается, что область заботы о местном населении надо расширить за пределами строго исконного статуса.

Главная рекомендация доклада состоит в том, что расширение СМП не должно подрывать традиционную ресурсную базу местного, связанного с тундрой населения, в результате индустриальных, минно-горняцких, или инфраструктурных вторжений в главных оленоводческих териториях, административно принадлежащие к Ловозерскому району, т.е. к востоку от железной дороги с Мурманска на С.Петербург. Настоятельно рекомендуется приобретение статуса охраняемой оленоводческой и природной зоны для Района, причём инфраструктурные (транспортные) проблемы рекомендуется решать путем улучшения воздушных связей. Кроме того подчеркивается, что экологическая безопасность области, как и территорий далеко за ее пределами, связана важнейшим образом с проблемами сохранения и переработки ядренных отбросов.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 BACKGROUND: TERRITORY, POPULATION, AND INTER-GROUP	
BOUNDARIES	5
1.1 Brief Geography	
1.2 Ethno-national distribution	8
2.0 ACTORS	10
2.1 The tundra-connected population	10
The Sami	10
Pomors	11
Komi and Nenets	13
Big (numerous, "advanced") vs. small (few in number, "primitive") peoples	15
Exogamy and mixed status	16
Official Representation	
2.2 Urban Population	18
Railroad link to St. Petersburg: Murmanstroyka	18
"Gulagstroika"	20
Post-Soviet developments	22
The case of Revda	22
A relocation programme	24
2.3 THE MILITARY POPULATION - VPK AND BORDER-GUARD	25
Nuclear facilities and nuclear waste	25
Poaching pressure	27
The case of Gremikha	27
The case of Maloe Ramozero	
Complementary relations with the military	30
Population of the Limes	30
2.4 WILD-NATURE TOURISM	
2.5 Present and future industrial expansion in <i>Lovozersky Rayon</i>	32
3.0 CURRENT TRENDS IN THE TUNDRA-CONNECTED COMMUNITY	34
CONCLUSIONS	35
FURTHER RESEARCH	39
REFERENCES	40
MAP: MITRMANSK REGION: INDUSTRIAL WEST AND PASTORALIST E	AST 44

Table of acronyms and administrative terms

AO - aktsionernoe obshtestvo - shareholding company

brigadi - reindeer-herding crews

GOK - gorno-obogatitel'niy kombinat: mining-processing complex

IK/MOSND - Ispolnitel'niy komitet Murmanskogo oblastnogo Soveta narodnih deputatov executive committee of the Murmansk regional soviet of the people's deputies

MMP - Murmanskoe morskoe parohodstvo - Murmansk Shipping Company pogranichnie voiska (pogranvoiska) - border guard

Rayon - e.g. Lovozersky Rayon - district or municipality

SHPK - *sel'sko-hozyaistvennaya proizvoditel'naya kooperatsiya* - co-operative for agricultural production

TOO - tovarishtestvo ogranichennoy otvestvenosti - limited company

VPK - voenno-promishlenniy kompleks - military-industrial complex

Introduction

This paper assesses the influence that increased use of the Northern Sea Route (henceforth: NSR) may have on indigenous peoples in Northwest Russia (Murmansk Region, Kola Peninsula). Three major regional specifics must be taken into account. These are:

- (1) the need to extend the area of concern beyond the confines of a strictly indigenous status and introduce the more comprehensive concept of the local tundra-connected population, a complex which includes not only the indigenous Sami people, but also the Russian Pomors, the Komi, and the Nenets;
- (2) the significance of the area being historically the earliest Russian place of settlement in the Arctic, the emergence of an early colonial population, and, in this century, a massive labour-migration from the temperate and southern zones, leading to a uniquely high proportion of an urban population for the Russian Arctic (over 92%);
- (3) a similarly highly pronounced presence of the military-industrial complex (*voenno-promishleniy kompleks*, henceforth: VPK) and the largest concentration of nuclear facilities in the world.

These three specific features, the latter two singling out Murmansk Region not only from other regions in the Russian Arctic Zone, but also on a world-wide scale, are interrelated in a number of important ways. What is of primary significance in relation to increased NSR use are the following questions:

- (1) To what extent might such use reduce conflict-laden relations between the majority of urban and VPK population of Murmansk Region (henceforth: the Region), and the tiny fragment of local population, which has retained some form of traditional social structure, cultural heritage, and economic practices?
- (2) Likewise, in what way might an intensification of NSR activities increase the percentage of complementary and mutually beneficial relations between these two vastly assymetrical groups: assymetrical in terms of numbers, territorial distribution, and proximity to power?
- (3) Increased NSR activities have a bearing on existing problems of storage and processing of nuclear waste-materials, stemming from an expected increased use of the

nuclear-powered ice-breaker fleet. To what extent will planning be oriented to this vital point which presents a constant danger not only for the local tundra-dependant population, but for a much wider, circumpolar or even global population?

In what follows I shall try to provide the background necessary to assess the impact of increased NSR activities, or, in fact, of any major technological project concerning the Region and its traditional local population. Special attention shall be turned to the significance of developments since the onset of reforms in 1991/92, and especially to the present acute economic crisis in the Russian Federation.

This report uses the results of field-research conducted in the period 1994-1998 in the reindeer-herding territory of Murmansk Region. Field-research consisted of fourteen months spent with Reindeer-herding Brigade 3 and 5 (SHPK "Tundra", based at Lovozero); the Sosnovka Reindeer-herding Brigade, and Brigade 1 of TOO "Memory of Lenin", based at Krasnoshchelye. This research was supplemented by work in the libraries of Lovozero, Revda, and the Library of the University of Tromsø (Norway). The research was supported by grants from The Norwegian Research Council (NAVF, subsequently NFR), The Sami Institute in Kautokeino, the University of Tromsø, as well as by private support from colleagues in Arctic Research Departments in Norway and Sweden - Professor Trond Thuen of the University of Tromsø, and Professor Hugh Beach of the University of Uppsala. To these institutions and colleagues I owe a sincere debt of gratitude.

Basic premises

The first basic premise on which this report rests is that at present the Region has a sizeable stranded mass of urban unemployed, who originally came from the South, but have found it impossible to go back there. This stranded urban population constitutes a threat for the renewable-resource oriented traditional subsistence base of the local population. The VPK and border guard, who also experience serious economic problems themselves, constitute an even greater threat to traditional resources as they have direct access to power and are nearly immune from civilian jurisdiction.

In addition, a spatial division, to date, has separated reindeer-herding territories in the eastern half of the Region from the high concentration of industrial and energy-producing facilities in its western and southwestern parts (cf. Map). The dividing line is, roughly speaking, the railroad and parallel highway running vertically from Murmansk in the North, all the way down to the Port of Kandalaksha in the South, and on to Petrozavodsk (Karelia) and St. Petersburg.

Since expansion and intensification of traffic along the NSR is planned to engage only the ports of Murmansk and Pechenga, together with the rail-links from Pechenga to Murmansk and south to St. Petersburg, the vertical industrial/pastoralist division could be retained and thus the NSR would not directly affect the local communities and their way of life.

Providing that the industrial/pastoralist division described above is preserved, increased use of the NSR has to be seen as a positive development for the local communities. It may be expected to help solve problems of unemployment for the stranded mass of urban impoverished and thereby relieve the pressure on traditional subsistence resources for the tundra-connected local people. In a similar way, this applies to the VPK, as existing projects for conversion connected to NSR-use (i.e. projected conversion of nuclear-powered submarines as well as surface ships for transportation of liquid fuel - see Nilsen and Bøhmer 1994:138-140) may economically normalize life in far-flung garrisons and for the VPK population as a whole, thereby indirectly relieving the growing pressure on traditional resources.

Furthermore, an increase of NSR use and its trans-national orientation can be expected to raise the consciousness of all concerned as to the problems of storage and processing of nuclear waste accumulated in the Region, and attract the necessary funding for the construction of adequate facilities.

This beneficial effect, however, can be sustained only if the existing spatial compartmentalization of the Region is preserved, i.e. that only the ports of Murmansk and Pechenga are engaged, along with their existing rail links. In other words, increased activity along the NSR and the related use of the road and railway system, as well as new energy-

production and non-renewable resource exploitation, should not extend east of the Murmansk-St. Peterburg railway-line. Any infrastructural extension into this area, specifically into *Lovozersky Rayon*, will automatically cancel out the beneficial effect that may be achieved.

An optimistic scenario based on positive results from extended activities along the NSR may quickly turn into a pessimistic scenario if a model of exclusive off-limits zone-building begins to dominate. Such an example has been provided for decades by the status of the military as an entity with its own exclusive territory, economic life, and jurisdiction (2.3). On a small but illustrative level, this model has been repeated by some post-totalitarian developments in the Region, particularly the recent "safari"-type wild-nature tourism (see 2.4 below). The creation of zones of exclusivity to which possible benefits are addressed, e.g. "foreigners only" transport links, exclusive tourism, etc., may only exacerbate the already tense situation in the Region.

In what follows, Part 1.0 discusses the geographical, historical, and demographic background, against which the present assessment has been made.

Part 2.0 discusses the major actors in their interdependence: the local tundra-dependent population, the urban civilians, the military, as well new agencies: wild-nature tourism, and mining companies.

Part 3.0 presents the current social and cultural processes of change within the community of the local tundra-dependent population. This dynamic is seen in its relation to proposed industrial and infrastructural development in the Region, and, specifically, in relation to an increased use of the NSR.

1.0 Background: territory, population, and inter-group boundaries

1.1 Brief geography

The Kola Peninsula belongs administratively to *Murmanskaya Oblast* (Murmansk Region), ¹ situated at the extreme northwestern part of European Russia. The Region comprises the Kola Peninsula itself, the parts of the mainland to the west and south which are contiguous to it, as well as a great number of islands in the coastal parts of the Barents and White Sea. The total area of Murmansk Region is 144,936 sq. km. From this figure 89,000 sq. km belong to the Kola Peninsula and the remaining 56,000 sq. km to the mainland parts and the islands.

Transport

Sea transport. For the NSR Murmansk is one of the two principal ports in the western part of the route (Arkhangelsk being the other one). At present, almost all of the shipping activities are conducted by the Murmansk Shipping Company (AO "Murmanskoe morskoe parohodstvo," MMP) created in 1939 and reorganized in 1953. The company has remained the leader in Arctic transportation, operating year round to Dudinka, as well as to Western ports. Currently MMP operates with eight to nine nuclear-powered ice-breakers. Freight handled has fallen from 6.7 million tons (1987) to around 3 million tons at present (compare Nilsen and Bømer 1994: 76-79; Seppänen, Susanna 1995: 59-62; Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996:202-204; Ivanov et al. 1998:7; Nilsen 1998:1).

MMP planned to revitalize its ice-breaker fleet with a new generation of fifteen vessels, but had to shelve these ambitious plans due to difficult economic conditions. An expansion of NSR activities, however, may be expected to bring them back to life.

Recently MMP has been reported to be in a difficult economic condition. By 1993 various enterprises which it served along the NSR owed the shipping company billions of

During the present century the territory of Murmansk Region (Murmanskaya Oblast) administratively belonged to Archangelskaya Guberniya as Aleksandrovskiy Uezd until 13 June 1921. From there on until 1 August 1927, Murmanskaya Guberniya; until 27 May 1938, Murmanskiy Okrug; since the last date, Murmanskaya Oblast. (Arkhivniy otdel 1995:28-52).

roubles. Norilsk Nikel alone had a debt of 8.5 billion roubles for shipping and ice-breaker escort to and from Dudinka. (Nilsen and Bømer 1994: 76)

MMP attempted to solve some of its economic problems in recent years by progressively making the ice-breaker fleet available for international commercial scientific and tourist purposes. This widening of the spectrum of MMP activities, particularly those of its nuclear-vessel component, may be expected to increase with revitalized NSR use with all accompanying possible benefits (economic revival) and dangers (nuclear accidents and leakage), as shall be discussed below.

Railway-transport is of primary importance for the Region, and the NSR has to be considered in relation to it. The Murmansk Department of the October Railroad (Murmanskoe otdelenie Oktyabrskoy zheleznoy dorogi) handles annually 45 million tons of goods as well as 3.5 - 4 million passengers.

There is a main vertical link to Petrozavodsk-St. Petersburg as well as horizontal links from this line to the west: Nikel, Zaozerny, Monchegorsk, Kirovsk, Kovdor, and Alakurtti.

The total length of railways in the Region is 900 kilometers.

Air transport has been providing the main form of transport service for the tundra-connected population during the recent decades. Occasionally fixed wing, but primarily helicopter transport has not only been servicing the passenger links between Lovozero/Revda and the outlying villages of Krasnoshchelye, Kanevka, and Sosnovka, as well as the villages along the Ter coast, but has also been carrying tundra-crews to and from temporary tundra-camps and enclosures (corrals), and has been providing indispensable help in transportation of meat during the reindeer-meat harvest. Swift deterioration of this service has had a highly negative influence on the whole of the tundra-connected community. Before the onset of the crisis of August 1998, the Lovozero Rayon Administration had found funds to subsidize passenger travel and the delivery of supplies to the village-shops. These subsidies have evaporated in the crisis. If the NSR emerges as a possible direct or indirect contributor to revitalizing the air-transport links in the eastern part of the Region, this will have an instantly palpable

beneficial influence on the local community. In this way the model of exclusivity, characteristic of the VPK and the recent wild-nature tourist companies, could be avoided.

Population. According to the last census of 1989, the population of the Region is 1,146,600 people (Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996: 204). Other estimates place it as 1,160,000 including permanently resident military officers, but excluding temporarily resident conscripts (Hansen 1993:21). The exact figure of the military population of the Region, however, is difficult to establish. Figures, including temporarily resident personnel (conscripts), as well as families of officers, will not be lower than 150,000 – 200,000 people (cf. Ries and Skorve 1987; Skorve 1991; Nilsen and Bøhmer 1994:18).

Since the beginning of radical economic reforms in 1991-92, migration back to original places of residence of labor-migrants to the Region has been steadily increasing. Only between 1991 and 1992, i.e. at the very beginning of "free-floating" for previously state-subsidized industrial and public-service facilities, the population of the Region (without the military) was quoted to have fallen from 1,165,000 to 1,143,000 people (Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996:205). A single mining center - the town of Revda - which is situated in the center of the reindeer-herding area (*Lovozersky Rayon*) has been decimated by unemployment to nearly half of its original population (see section 2.2: Revda below).

Emigration, together with other dynamic demographic factors such as a rapidly decreasing birth-rate and an increasing death-rate, has led to a population declining so rapidly that a precise figure for the population of the Region can be given only in a manner registering month-to-month changes. With this reservation, a provisional final figure which could be ventured for the ending months of 1998, including permanent and temporary resident military personnel, would be between 1,250,000 - 1,300,000 people. ²

² The Finnish newspaper *Lapin Kansa* (12/04/97) gave the figure 1,033,000 for the inhabitants of Murmansk Region. (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report)

1.2 Ethno-national distribution

Over 120 different ethnic nationalities are represented in the Region. The predominant part are Russians (83%), then come the Ukrainians (9%), and Belorussians (3,4%). Among other nationalities, the Tatars have to be mentioned (1%), the Jews, and the Finns.

The indigenous Sami people (*lopari*) are counted variously between 1,600 and 2,000 people (and even 3,000)³ and thus account for only 0.14-0.15% of the whole population. A similar percentage may be cited for the Komi, the Pomor Russians (*pomori*). The tiny group of the Nenets (nentsi) numbers about 200 persons. -The Sami, the Komi, the Nenets (and unofficially the Pomors, but see below) have to be mentioned separately as they comprise a fragment of the population administratively singled out as "root" or "native" residents (*korennie zhiteli*).

These residents are to be differentiated from two other major groups. The first and predominant one is comprised of labor migrants from the temperate and southern zones who have come to the Region in various waves throughout this century, some of them as convicts or POWs. This dominant and very diverse group shall be referred to by the blanket term of urban labor-migrants or their descendants, or simply as the urban population of the Region. Another term that is employed in the literature for this category is "newcomers" (*priezzhie*, e.g. Anderson 1996a: 100; Fondahl 1993: 191), but the term is awkward to use in respect of Murmansk Region. Labor migrants started coming by the turn of the century in connection with the building of the present port of Murmansk and the St. Petersburg-Murmansk Railway-line (cf. 2.2 *Murmanstroyka* below) and thus they can hardly be called "newcomers". Furthermore, some of the "root" peoples – in the sense of original belonging to the North – like the Komi and Nenets, came to the peninsula at exactly the same time as the first wave of labor migrants.

Second in size is the regional population belonging in various capacities to the military-industrial complex (VPK), including the border guard and related personnel. This group shall

³ Compare for instance figures for the present period: 1,592 (Rantala 1995:59); 1,615 (Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996: 204); 1,890 (Vakhtin 1994: 34); 2,000 Rassmussen 1995:54); 3,000 (Sami Instituhtta 1990:13).

be called loosely the military population of the Region, with the reservation that it includes para-military personnel, as well as families of permanently serving military ranks.

Among the local residents, in contrast to either the urban or military population, only a small part are directly connected with traditional forms of livelihood, dependent on a traditional social organization and culture. The main part are urban or agro-center based citizens, indistinguishable from the rest of the urban population. It is thus the case that only a fraction of the 1,900-2,000 Sami in the region are actively practicing reindeer-herding.

Together with families and other dependents this component can hardly consist of more than 150-200 persons. Sami speakers in the Region, according to one count, number 710 persons (Rantala 1995:59). Extrapolating on this basis for all local groups, approximately 2,000-3,000 non-urban, tundra-dependent people have retained a living praxis-based link with traditional cultural, social and economic forms of livelihood.

Although proportionally minute compared to the vast figures of the urban and military population, the tundra-connected community ("tundra-persons", tundroviki, comp. Anderson 1996b: 3) conduct their reindeer-herding, fishing, and gathering activities on roughly one third of the territory of the whole Region, or around 60,000 sq. km. With a reindeer-herd of about 80,000 head they not only provide an economically viable form of a unique type of subsistence in the Arctic, but ensure a fall-back line of defense, a home front, which becomes vital at times of crisis like the present one. The unique skills that tundra-connected life requires to retain sustainable use of local renewable resources, depend on cultural meanings and social organization of a similarly unique type. Although dynamically changing through the ages, and especially during this century, this socio-cultural complex has preserved certain core features. These are primarily a collective possession and transmission of knowledge of land-use, which have survived and even been incorporated into the Soviet system of large-scale collective farming. (Cf. Konstantinov 1997; Humphrey 1998:5)

The responsibility to this small group of tundra-connected people is therefore difficult to overestimate, and therefore assessment-analysis of a possible impact of increased NSR use should have them in mind in the first and most prominent place. Since, however, they are dependent and interconnected with all other groups of urbanites and military personnel, a

presentation of the whole ethnic, demographic, and occupational configuration in the Region becomes necessary.

2.0 Actors

2.1 The tundra-connected population

The tundra-connected population is usually referred to by the authorities as "local ("root") population belonging to the peoples of the North" (*korennoe naselenie prinadlezhashchee k narodnostyam Severa*), and this group is further specified on an ethnic principle as "Komi, Saami (Sami), Nentsy" (e.g. Glavohota RSFSR 1982: 5).

Efforts to preserve and sustain cultural traditions specific to each group should, unquestionably, stand out as a priority when problems of the local communities are addressed.

A practice-oriented approach, however, has evolved over time and has been codified by various administrative decisions. This approach overrides strictly ethnic boundaries, takes into account active occupational features, and recognizes the economic significance of traditional land use. Such a praxis-oriented approach should complement a strictly ethnic one, which tends to single out only the Sami people as a primary object of concern. Although criticism of occupational approaches has been well defended in other situations and locales (e.g. concerning the Swedish Sami, see Beach 1993:218), I shall attempt to justify its applicability in view of the specific historical developments and their outcome in Murmansk Region.

The Sami

Historically, the first people to populate what is today Murmansk Region, can be said to be the proto-Sami: a people speaking a Finno-Ugric language and settling on the peninsula as early as the end of the last Ice Age, or around 10,000 years ago (e.g. Sámi Instituhtta 1990:20f).

This people, which is the only one which can claim truly indigenous status in the Region, has experienced massive pressure from a variety of colonial powers - both from Fennoscandia and from Russia - in the course of a tortuous history. Especially during this

century, the Sami have experienced numerous rounds of enforced resettlement in addition to the hardships of two world wars, collectivization and accompanying repressions, and agglomeration into a single place of residence - the agro-centre of Lovozero, and practically a single traditionally-oriented economic entity, the former Sovkhoz "Tundra". All the numerous winter settlements (*pogosts*), and later villages, were removed from the map by these events and by the massive strategic build-up of the Cold War. Thus, today we find the main body of the Sami in a single village of high-rise blocks of flats wherein the Sami constitute 743 out of the total 3,537 people, (See Table 1; also Konstantinov 1998: 1-27). Out of over twenty Sami pogosts by the end of the last century (cf. Kharouzin 1890:75f), there is not a single fully Sami settlement left today. The nearest to that are the separate parts of the blocks-of-flats of Lovozero - or entrances - where flats inhabited by Sami people tend to be clustered together.

Pomors

The beginning of Russian colonization of the peninsula is set during the 11-12th centuries. This colonization established a local population known as the Pomor Russians or Pomors (pomory) who at various periods were engaged in fishing, sea-mammal and trap-hunting, reindeer-herding and trade. Today the descendants of these early colonizers mainly inhabit the villages along the southeastern rim of the peninsula, i.e. the coastal villages of the White Sea, as well as the opposite Arkhangelsk coast.

The case of the Pomors presents yet another facet connected with the problem of the "root" metaphor. While their presence in the local terrain is indisputably long, their Russian ancestry does not allow them a minority status and thus, in practical terms, does not give them privileges granted to "root" late-comers like the Komi and Nenets. Likewise, their interests when it comes to assessment of technological impact are not considered. Nevertheless, the tiny Pomor village of Sosnovka manages at present the biggest single-brigade reindeer herd on the Peninsula (according to local sources up to 8,000 or even 10,000 January head), besides operating a number of freshwater and sea-fishing crews. (Konstantinov 1997:18)

Table 1. Population of Lovozersky Rayon* - April 1996

By nationalities:	Revda	Lovozero	Krasnoshchelye	Kanevka	Sosnovka	Total for the Rayon
Total	10 845	3 537	638	97	83	15 200
Russians	8 670	1 850	103	20	57	10 700
Komi	81	745	361	63	10	1 260
Sami	41	743	93	11	12	900
Nenets	18	52	60		**	130
Ukrainians					1	1,010
Belorussians						420
Mordva						80
Karelians						95
Tatars						35
Chouvash						25
Moldovians						18
Other nationalities (Jews, Poles, Kazakh, Lithuanians, etc.)	352	147	21	3	4	527

Source: Statistical Bulletin of the Administration of Lovozérsky Rayon for April 1996

^{*} The data in this table refers only to civilian settlements.

^{**} There are at least two Nenets families living in Sosnovka who have not been indicated in the Statistical Bulletin [author's information].

Since the determinants of "rootness" and the whole problem of the indigenous identification in the Region tend to be highly arbitrary and eroded also by pronounced exogamy, as we shall see below, the very principle of determining cultural divisions requires a careful re-appraisal. This need is especially borne out by the case of the Komi and Nenets settlers - a case that invariably adds tension to the local discourse.

Komi and Nenets

Komi reindeer-herders from the area of the river Izhma, a tributary of the Pechora (and hence known as the Izhma Komi, *komi izhemtsi*) started coming to the Kola Peninsula in 1883, and by the beginning of WWI had established themselves in numbers almost equaling those of the Sami (i.e. around 2,000 people). The Komi brought Nenets hired herders with them and thus the third and smallest "traditional minority" fragment was formed (Cf. Konakov et al.1984; Konakov 1993: 97-101; Zherebtsov 1992:192-206).

The various segments of the tri-partite community of the "root" population (Sami, on the one hand, and Komi - Nenets - on the other) are thus historically divided by some 10,000 years, and also by settlement status — the first have the status of an indigenous population, while the second are comparatively recent settlers. The common link between these diverse groups is, however, a connection with reindeer-herding, and it has a currently valid actuality.

Until the arrival of the Komi (1883), the Sami used to practice intensive, mainly transport and milch-oriented reindeer-herding, in addition to other subsistence forms. The Komi, having incorporated the method of extensive herding from their northern neighbors, the Nenets, imported this form to the peninsula. The "root" metaphor, at present grouping all three segments in one "root population," is thus based not on local origin, but on depth of connection with an Arctic occupation (that of reindeer-herding) in one's original homeland. Today the descendants of the Komi and Nenets settlers are mainly concentrated in the agrocenter of Lovozero, the village of Krasnoshchelye, and the smaller villages of Kanevka and Sosnovka. Of the total Komi population in Lovozersky Rayon (1,260 people), the main part is in Lovozero (745) where they slightly exceed the Sami. (See Table I.) The Nenets are officially listed as 130 with the main part in Krasnoshchelye (ibid.).

More important than numbers is the fact that mainly Komi and Nenets represent the second reindeer-herding center of the Region – the village of Krasnoshchelye and its sovkhoz "Memory of Lenin," now transformed into a limited company (TOO) (see Konstantinov 1997). The TOO operates seven reindeer-herding brigades covering a herding territory roughly the same size as that of the nominally Sami former sovkhoz – "Tundra". The size of the total herd is again of comparable size, about 35,000 – 40,000 head, with an addition of a large herd of wild reindeer in the vicinity of Sosnovka.

The traditional village type reindeer-herding center of Krasnoshchelye as well as the other villages of Kanevka and Sosnovka, almost totally lack transport, energy and communication links (cf. CCU 1998: 32-39). Thus, Komi and Nenets reindeer-herding has come to acquire more "traditional" features than the more modern practices of "Tundra".

Komi - Nenets reindeer-herding and other subsistence forms (such as fresh-water fishing in the river Ponoi) have thus come to represent the ultimate line of retreat for traditional subsistence economies in the Region. In a scenario in which increased NSR use oversteps the north-south boundary described at the beginning of this report, and extends into the eastern part of the Region, the first possible destructive influence may be expected to be felt in the northeastern part of the reindeer-herding territories. Already, activities in connection with mining of surface deposits of minerals are threatening the existence of reindeer-herding brigades No 3,4, 5, and 7 of SHPK "Tundra" (see 2.5 below).

It is thus the case that although very late comers to the Region, the Komi and Nenets reindeer-herders, have retained - by virtue of their still continuing relative isolation in the southeastern interior of the peninsula - an often firmer link with what may be variously described as "indigenous", "root", "traditional", or "local" forms of livelihood. Thus it is necessary to consider the interests of a broad complex of tundra-connected people in the face of technological expansion, overstepping the rather restrictive boundaries of indigenous ethnicity.

paradigm as follows:

Big (numerous, "advanced") vs. small (few in number, "primitive") peoples

An additional feature of the local and generally the Russian context is what could be called
the "big-small" people division. Slezkine (1994: 1-2) describes the emergence of this

When the current classification [into big-small peoples - Y.K.] was established in the 1920s, the "national affiliations" of the newly defined small peoples were determined by government agents on the basis of tradition, political agencies, and contemporary linguistic and ethnographic data. None of these criteria was fully articulated or consistently applied. but the imperial practice of placing the circumpolar hunters and gatherers in a separate category was never questioned. Whether they were characterized as "wanderers and foragers who move from one place to another", "primitive tribes", "native peoples of the northern borderlands", or "small peoples of the north", they were always seen as distinct from their more "developed" neighbors. The Komi (Zyrian), the Sakha (Yakut), and the Russian "old settlers" [emphasis added - Y.K.] might be both circumpolar and "indigenous" in strictly geographical terms, but according to the Russian scholars and officials who formulated and enforced such classifications, their "traditional" economies were not exclusively associated with foraging, their cultures were not fully associated with "tradition" and hence their societies did not always qualify as primitive, traditional, small, native, or indeed indigenous and circumpolar.

For the composition of the local population in Murmansk Region the "big-small people" opposition is problematic on two counts. The first problem is presented by sheer statistics: the Komi are considered a "big people" because of their numbers in the Komi Autonomous Republic (1,2 million) plus around 100,000 in the Komi-Permyatskiy Autonomous Okrug. The Nenets are, however, a "small people" of about 35,000 persons. (e.g. Fondahl 1993:1992) Thus the traditional grouping together of the Komi and the Nenets on account of having settled together in the Kola Peninsula is split - the Komi are outside the boundary of concern.

The second problematic point is connected with the "advanced-primitive" opposition according to which the Komi are "advanced" and the Nenets "primitive". This archaic and easily refutable opposition does not work in the local scheme of things. The two groups tend to form a harmonious and symmetrical community, especially in the reindeer-herding part of the whole spectrum. Where a certain asymmetry prevails is in the level of organization and

representation. While the Komi are represented by their organization, The Association of the Izhma-Komi "Iz'vatas", the Nenets seem not to be represented by their own organization.

It is thus the case that in Murmansk Region neither the established western concepts ("indigenous") nor the eastern (Russian) ones "root", "big-small", seem to be applicable without a critical re-appraisal. A determinant which is not based on ethnicity, historical arrival, number, or "modernness" is necessary. The relevant determinant of a status which deserves serious consideration vis-a-vis the introduction of mega-projects in the Region, in this case connected with NSR use, should hinge on connection and dependence for subsistence on renewable resources extracted from the tundra, and, primarily, the resource offered by reindeer-herding. The term tundra-connected people denotes a connection with the tundra by means of dependence and management of traditional renewable resources, and, in the first place, reindeer-herding. This term is more descriptive and inclusive than "indigenous", "root", or other qualifiers, to identify the group of people and their culture and social organization that are an object of concern for us, threatened as they are by projects that may endanger or destroy their uniquely specific connection with the Arctic environment.

Exogamy and mixed status

Another feature concerning the ethnic picture in the Region and the question of indigenous rights is the fact of pronounced exogamy in all groups. One-fourth of all families on the peninsula are ethnically mixed, and nationality is decided upon in the family when a child reaches passport-bearing age (16). (Cf. Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996:208; Zherebtsov 1982:192-206).

Highly pronounced exogamy not only influences the traditionally local groups of Sami, Pomor, Komi, and Nenets people, but also newcomers or their descendants who were initially subsumed under the bracket of labor-migrants from the South, or the urban population of the Region. There are many mixed Sami-Ukrainian, or Komi-Ukrainian marriages, as well as every other ethnic combination, and also further mixing in the next generation of children from such mixed marriages. The Region has a highly pronounced melting-pot pattern of ethnic mixing. Divisions and boundaries that emerge are not based on ethnicity, but much

more on occupation: industrial/service employment vs. traditional renewable resource management. The principle adopted here of using this opposition as a determining one for defining domains of concern in the face of industrial encroachments is, thus, additionally validated.

Thus, this paper focuses on the tundra-community as a polyethnic exogamous social group unified by a specific and unique form of land-use and its determining system of transmission of knowledge and skills. Reindeer-herding - as culture and praxis - plays the pivotal role of a quasi-ethnic boundary determinant here, supplanting the role of an inherited indigenous (or other "root" status), although inherited socio-cultural forms are certainly an important basis for the whole present configuration.

Official representation

The local communities in Murmansk Region are officially represented on a regional administrative level by The Committee for the Root Peoples of the North (Komitet po delam korennih narodov Severa). On the non-governmental level there are several ethnic-based organizations. The Association of the Kola Sami (Asotsiatsiya Kol'skih Saamov) was founded in September 1989 (Rantala 1995:56-57), and a new Sami organization was formed in Lovozero in July 1998 — The Communal Organization of the Sami in Murmansk Region (Obschestvennaya Organizatsiya Saamov Murmanskoy Oblasti). The Komi are represented by the aforementioned Association of the Izhma-Komi "Iz'vatas".

Field-research by the author of this report, conducted with members of reindeer-herding brigades both of SHPK "Tundra", and TOO "Memory of Lenin", has not indicated any significantly working links between representative bodies and the tundra crews. While this opinion has been expressed emphatically by many herders, representative organizations have voiced numerous protests concerning the plight of the tundra-connected people and have thus made the herders' precarious existence known to the outside world. Recently, all organizations have risen in protest against imminent exploitation of pastures for mining purposes by The Voronya Minerals Company. Not only the ethnic Sami and Komi

organizations listed above, but also multinational bodies like the Lovozero Rayon Committee of War, Labor, and Army Veterans have come to the defense of the traditional pastures.⁴

2.2 Urban Population

Railroad link to St. Petersburg: Murmanstroyka

The first wave of labor migration to what today is Murmansk Region occurred in connection with the fact that by the end of the 19th century Russia had come to realize the strategic importance of the Kola Peninsula. Goaded by German naval expansion in the Baltic, Russia felt the necessity for developing an ice-free port in the North. This need was especially accentuated by the debacle during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and the growing fear that the Russian Naval Fleet might find itself trapped in the Baltic and Black Seas during a serious conflict.

By 1895 the building of a modern port had begun in the town called Alexandrovsk (today Polyamiy) situated at the mouth of Kola Bay. By the beginning of the First World War the need for a transit export-import facility in the North, in addition to military considerations, had influenced decision making in Moscow. On February 10, 1915 construction of a railroad

⁴ There has been loud public outcry against plans for this long-rumored exploitation of surface-deposits in the reindeer-herding part of Murmansk Region. A proclamation addressed to the Regional Governor and signed by the Lovozero Branch of the Kola Saami Association, by the Association of the Izhma-Komi "Iz'vatas", the Rayon Committee of the War Veterans, Labour Veterans, Army Veterans, and others, appeared in *Lovozerskaya Pravda*, 29 May 1998. An excerpt from this protest reads:

The Administration of Murmansk Region and the Committee of Geology and Underground Exploitation in Murmansk Region has announced an open competition for the right of exploiting underground mineral resources and of geological surveying with following extraction of gold, copper, molybdenum, low-yield sulphide, and platinum-metal ores. The total area which can be thus taken from the reindeer-herding pastures equals 675 sq.km. in size, which shall totally destroy a major part of the reindeer-herding in the Rayon, and thus destroy the basis for subsistence of the local tundra-depended population [korennie narodi Krainego Severa].

Anthropologist Hugh Beach, who visited Lovozero in September 1998, wrote, "the Voronya Minerals Company has won the competition. This mining company is composed 70% by the Swedish Boliden firm, and has received an exploration and exploitation lease for 25 years in the heartland of SHPK "Tundra" herding range starting now." (B-mail communication from Hugh Beach to the author, 10 Oct. 1998). The Center for Civil Society International (e-mail: ccsi@u.washington.edu) recently circulated a protest against the imminent mining-prospecting activities in the Voronya Area (12/12/1998). The protest is in the form of a resolution passed by The Second Indigenous Circumpolar Youth Conference (Resolution on Lovozero District 4 November 1998) and voices the concern of the Luajavri Local Branch of the Kola Peninsula Saami Association, the Association of the Komi-Izhemsti "Iz'vatas", and the Council of War and Labour Veterans. By early February 1999 the Swedish Boliden firm was reported to have withdrawn officially from the contract, and thus operations in the Voronya Basin have been suspended for the time being.

St. Petersburg - Petrozavodsk - Romanov-on-Murman (Murmansk) began. This major infrastructural project known as the Murman Railroad (*Murmanskaya Doroga*, *Murmanstroika*) and the accompanying enlargement of the port facilities created what has become the primary point of departure and arrival along the NSR. The Murman Railway used extensive resources and, consequently, 1,000 kilometers of the most northern railway in the world was built in only twenty months (Cf. Nilsen1992: 38-40). The construction attracted tens of thousands of people of many different nationalities: Russians, Tatars, Kirgiz, and Finns. There were also many POWs: Germans, Hungarians, Austrians, Czechs, and Slovaks. From Harbin some 15,000 Chinese were brought as navies. Lumber was supplied by Karelian and Vepsian workers. In the Navy, sailors were conscripted largely from the Ukraine and the Baltic countries. (See Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996:207)

Many of these labor and military migrants remained on the peninsula after the completion of the Murman Construction Project or on termination of their military service. This pattern was to be repeated over and over, as we shall see further below, to reach the present state in which there is an extremely rich ethnic diversity in the Region, a highly pronounced exogamy, as mentioned above, and a very high urban concentration unique for the Russian North (92%). Between the 1920s and the late 1980s the population of Murmansk Region (until 1927 - Murmanskaya Guberniya) grew from around 20,000 to over 1,300,000 people while the locals (including the Pomors) remained close to their original figures of around 10,000 total. A mega-project like the intensification of sailing activities along the NSR, as well as a wide opening to international traffic, may, in its need for the construction of new or enlargement of existing facilities, repeat the traditional features of labor migration in the Region. In the context of the present aggravated economic crisis this may mean not so much an influx of new migrants, but opening up of opportunities for continued residence for already settled people.

"Gulagstroika"

Very pronounced changes in the ethnic and demographic composition of the Region occurred during the period between the thirties and the fifties - a period which may be called, by analogy with the building of the northern railway-line, "Gulagstroika."

During this roughly twenty-year period, with the heavily destructive addition of violent war-activities in 1941-45, large masses of people were moved in opposite directions. On the one hand, thousands of dispossessed farmers (raskoulachennie krestyane) from the Ukraine, Belorussia and other parts of the Soviet Union were concentrated in the Murmansk Region to work on the new construction projects in the emerging mineral processing and energy-producing industries. Forced-labor camps dotted practically the whole Region, including the reindeer-herding interior. Here a major camp was in Revda and, right after the end of World War II, it created the Lovozero GOK (Lovozersky gorno-obogatitel'niy kombinat), today AO Sevredmet. At present this complex facility is the major economic actor with decisive influence for the urban population in the reindeer-herding part of the Region.

While prisoners from all parts of the Soviet Union were being distributed in the system of labor-camps in the Region, local population from the more traditional local groups — Finns, Norwegians, Sami, Komi, Nenets, or in other words, people from non-Russian ethnic origin (inonatsionali) were being deported from the Region mainly in the direction of Eastern Karelia and Siberia.

A process of "de-indigenization" — in the sense of severing the connection of the traditionally local population with the tundra — was also occurring during this time targeting decisively the western part of the Region. This process of severing people from their traditional environment and forms of livelihood eventually compartmentalized the Region into the western industrial and eastern pastoralist part that we find today.

The process began with the building of the St. Petersburg-Petrozavodsk-Murman railway-line (1915-17) and the appearance of Murmansk itself (1916). The mega-project of *Murmanstroika* forced the Kildin Sami eastwards from their traditional habitations and grazing grounds (Rasmussen 1995:48). The Suenjel (*Songel*) Pogost, traditionally situated in the northwest part of the peninsula, have faced perhaps the most traumatic dislocation during

the present century. In 1920 when Finland acquired the Petsamo (Pechenga) area and Soviet Russia took control of a part of the pogost traditional territory behind the new Finnish-Soviet border, the Suenjel Sami lost one-fourth of their land. In 1944 the Soviet Union took the Petsamo area back, and the Suenjel Sami (as well as other Petsamo Sami) left the territory and moved north of Lake Inari to Sevettijärvi in Finland where they live to this day.⁵ Finally, during the Stalinist repressions of the 1930s the entire population of the Ribachiy Peninsula, the area of Petsamo and the West Murman Coast, was relocated.

With the beginning of the Cold War, strategic military projects dramatically increased relocation, so that by the end of the 1960s any connection of the local population with traditional reindeer-hunting/hunting and fishing/gathering territories to the west of the Murmansk Railroad had been severed. One exception to this is the summer migration of the herd of the Murmansk Experimental Reindeer-herding Station (MOOS) to grazing grounds on Ribachiy Peninsula.

After the end of World War II that left Murmansk in ruins, the Region received thousands of Ukrainians and Belorussians deported on charges of collaboration with the German troops during the War. Measures were especially harsh in respect to people from Western Ukraine who fought against the Soviet rule during and after the war. Some of the prisoners – *vlasovtsi* who served in the collaborationist army of General Vlasov – built the electric power station on the Niva river as well as the Pechenga-Liinahamari road (Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996: 208-9).

Many other nationalities worked on construction sites in the Region after the war - either as convicts, or as labor migrants. This latter category was drawn by the northern premiums, popularly known as *polyarki*, reaching up to 180% over the basic salary (e.g. Ivanov 1991). The northern premium was a very powerful incentive, and together with other benefits like priority in allocation of a state-owned flat, continually drew armies of labor-migrants from the temperate and southern zones of the vast country.

⁵ I am grateful to Leif Rantala for his succinct and clear presentation of this tortuous episode in recent Russian Sami history (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report). There is also an excellent documentary film by the Norwegian Sami TV director Jos Kalvemo - "The Lost Suenjel" (NRK 1995) presenting the self-exile of the Suenjel Sami.

Post-Soviet developments

The dismantling of the Soviet system and the accompanying closure of industrial facilities, along with rapid erosion of the social security system, health, schooling and transport systems, and the disappearance of the northern premiums and salaries, dealt a very heavy blow to the labor-migrant population of the Region. The situation was additionally aggravated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent establishment of new separate states in the former Soviet republics. Ukraine and other new states required migrants to choose between using state-owned flats at their present place of residence, or in their own country, but not in both. Faced with this dilemma, and against the grim background of rising unemployment and hyperinflation, many migrants chose to use the option of "privatization" to finance their emigration from the North. They bought out their flats from the state at the relatively low "state price", then sold them for a much higher "commercial price" to those willing to stay or unable to out-migrate, and left the Region with the profit.

The case of Revda

A good example of this trend is the one-company mining town of Revda, situated in the center of *Lovozersky Rayon*. Together with Lovozero, Revda forms the twin capital of the reindeerherding part of the Region.

In 1948 the town emerged in the place of a tiny Sami village (pogost) in the heart of the reindeer-herding territory around Lovozero, as a site for mining of the strategic mineral Loparite by the inmates of a concentration camp. A processing plant began to produce mineral concentrates in 1951. Gradually the pastoralist Lovozersky Rayon was incorporated into the overall heavy-industrial development program that, until then, had affected mainly the western part of Murmansk Region.

"Important changes took place in the economic structure of the Rayon", the contemporary historian remarks. "In the gross volume of production, industrial production came to exceed considerably the agricultural one. During the period 1976-1980 the GOK [the mining-processing complex in Revda - Y.K.] turned out production for tens of

millions of roubles, while the agriculture of the whole *Rayon* accounted for just 14,100,000 roubles."

(Ushakov and Dashchinskiy 1988:171)

Industrialization of the old reindeer-herding territory rose sharply when the Umbozero mining-processing complex (GOK) was set into motion in December 1983. It took mining deeper into the mountain and onto the banks of the great Umbozero Lake a little south of Revda.

The emphasis on ever-growing improvement of living standards during the Brezhnev Era encompassed all aspects of life - medical care, schooling, construction, transport, food-supplies, communications, and all this continued to attract migrants from the South. Between 1948 and 1992 the mining town, officially called "workers' settlement" (rabochiy posyolok) was growing steadily, and by the late eighties its population was 12,000 people. This was over three times the population of neighboring "Sami" Lovozero, and at least twelve times the number of people who were connected with the tundra and dependent on its renewable resources.

With the onset of reforms and privatization in 1991-92, the economic fortune of the mining complex began swiftly to decline. Although the complex is unique in the world with its mining and processing of Loparite, by 1992 it operated at a heavy loss and had run into massive debts on account of not being able to sell its products. By the autumn of 1998 the complex, with its twin brother, the Umbozero GOK, had virtually closed. Left unemployed and facing rapidly rising prices, especially after August 1998, the population began to leave in panic. Even prior to the crisis of August 1998 nearly 4,000 people had left, driven out by unemployment, but after the crisis struck, the exodus became widespread. Those not leaving are either the very few with paying jobs, or people who have cut all ties with their previous homelands and have nowhere to go.

People like these, not only in Revda, but in the urban industrial centers all over the Region, feel trapped in the North and impoverished as a result of the economic and political reforms in the country. Currently they constitute the major threat to the local minute tundra-supported traditional population, or what I have called here the tundra-connected population.

The threat consists in sharply increasing poaching pressure on all available renewable resources, first — the reindeer-herds, and second — any wild game and fresh-water fish resource.

A relocation program

Of the plight of the stranded migrants, especially the OAPs, we can judge by the following biographical excerpt:

We have worked for 40 years in the North. Our parents came to this land in the thirties, in its earth they are buried. For us, their offspring, there is no place where people are waiting for us to go back. It is for this reason that state support for relocation came to be for us a spark of hope, but this spark is beginning to die down.

(Vecherniy Murmansk, June 27, 1998)

The spark of hope was a "Program for Relocating People Living in the North to Climatically Favorable Regions of the Country" (programma pereseleniya severyan v klimaticheski blagopriyatnie rayoni strani) which was announced in 1997 under the patronage of President Boris Yeltsin. It envisaged replacing currently used flats in the North for suitable ones in the temperate or southern zones, with the addition of a subsidy if necessary. The Program is addressed mainly to OAPs stranded in the North.

Like so many other initiatives, the Program quickly ran into difficulties for lack of proper financial support and the endemic bureaucratic ills. Thus the problem of those stranded in the North as OAPs or people of working age but currently unemployed, remains. The problem was especially aggravated by the critical economic decline that started in August 1998.

The stranded population of labor-migrants, the majority of whom cannot be called "newcomers" on any account as it has been shown above, and their current plight, should be seen as the major beneficiary of a possible revival of economic activity in the Region, an accompanying influx of investment, and creation of jobs. Such a positive effect from NSR expansion may be expected to reduce current pressure on tundra-connected renewable

resources and in this way help, indirectly, sustain traditional cultural and social forms of livelihood.

2.3 The military population - VPK and border-guard

The military-industrial complex (voenno-promishleniy kompleks, VPK) whose facilities are scattered all over Murmansk Region, together with the border guard (pogranichnie voiska), constitute the major force in the Region directly affecting the welfare and chances for cultural, social and economic survival of the tundra-connected local population.

The deteriorating economic conditions all over the former Soviet Union and related difficulties of the process of reforms, have reflected on this military population in a way which is comparable to the plight of the civilians. Impoverished and demoralized garrisons strewn about the tundra constitute a major threat for the local population on two primary accounts: nuclear facilities and the related problem of nuclear waste, and poaching pressure.

Nuclear facilities and nuclear waste

According to the Bellona Foundation reports, the Murmansk Shipping Company has eight nuclear icebreakers and a nuclear powered container ship at its base in Murmansk, with a total of fifteen reactors. There are four nuclear power reactors in operation at Kola Nuclear Power Plant in the town of Polyarnie Zori. Together with nuclear reactors on military vessels, a total of 240 nuclear reactors is concentrated in Murmansk Region, of them 236 are naval reactors. Thus the Region has the greatest concentration of nuclear reactors in the world (Nilsen, Kudrik and Nikitin 1996).

One of the most serious problems following from this fact is the lack of secure regional storage and treatment facilities of radioactive waste. This waste is deposited haphazardly throughout the various navy yards and bases, strewn along the coast of the Barents Sea from Zapadnaya Litsa in the West, to Gremikha (Yokanga, Ostrovnoy)⁶ in the southeast (ibid.).

⁶ Gremikha enters administrative documents as a workers' settlement (rabochiy posyolok) from 1936 until 1957, taking its name from the Inlet of Gremikha in the Ykanga Bay (Popov 1990:88). Before 1936 it was known as Yokangskaya Baza, near the old Yokangskiy Pogost. At the beginning of the 1980s it became a closed administrative-territorial unit (zakritoe administrativno-teritorial'noe obrazovanie). (Arkhivniy otdel 1995:170). It was renamed Murmansk-140 and, eventually, Ostrovnoy. (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report).

While only one small reindeer-herd summers along the coast to the West of Murmansk — that of the Murmansk Reindeer-Herding Experimental Station at Molochniy / Loparskoe (MOOS) — all of the brigades of SHPK "Tundra", but one, have the axis of their trek-routes from the interior of the peninsula to the coast. The single brigade that has an interior circular trek-route with vertical migration — namely Brigade No. 3 — is in almost direct contact with strategic facilities at Olenegorsk 8 and the Maloe Ramozero Base. Hardly a reindeer-herding brigade on the peninsula is not in some form of contact with a military installation — be it that of the VPK (military-industrial complex) or the *pogranvoiska* (border guard). This is all the more true for the sea-fishing brigades of the various former sovkhozes and kolkhozes, operating along the eastern Barents and the southeastern White Sea coasts.

The various implications of this tense relationship shall be discussed further below. Here I draw attention to a possible effect of an expansion of NSR activities in relation to the cluster of problems around the concentration of nuclear facilities, and particularly around the problem of the nuclear waste products.

Expansion of the NSR and an accompanying rise in the levels of operation, tonnage and sheer numbers of the nuclear-powered ice-breaker fleet makes solving the problem with storage and processing of wasted fuel all the more urgent. An expansion of the NSR, in other words, cannot be studied apart from the present storage and processing problems concerning the civilian vessels, as well as the dominating presence of naval reactors. Dangers from leakage or graver accidents exist not only for the local people, but also for everyone across many regional and national boundaries. It is enough to mention the effect of the Chernobyl disaster on reindeer-herding in Fennoscandia (Cf. Beach 1990; Thuen 1995:37).

One of the attractions of Murmansk Region reindeer-herding products is that, so far, they have indicated fairly low pollution levels well within EU health-bounds. The main market of meat is Sweden, the link being operated by the Norfrys-Polarica Company, based at Haparanda, Sweden, with an office in Murmansk and a regional representative in Lovozero. Norfrys-Polarica has built a modern stationary slaughterhouse in Lovozero, and its activities are keeping afloat not only SHPK "Tundra", but also TOO "Memory of Lenin" in Krasnoshchelye. Any increase in pollution over EU requirements will automatically kill the

market for local products, including not only reindeer-meat but also a sizeable quantity of cloud-berries which are exported by Norfrys-Polarica. The berry crop constitutes an important additional income for the local population (See Konstantinov 1998: 248ff).

Increased NSR use may further aggravate the nuclear waste problem of the Region and thus fatally endanger the renewable-resource base of the tundra-connected local population. Any increase in the levels of operation along the NSR must consider the need for solving effectively the problem of storage and processing of nuclear waste from the record number of civilian and military reactors in the Region. This need is further accentuated by projects for conversion of military nuclear submarines for under-ice transportation of liquid fuels (cf. Nilsen and Bøhmer 1994:138-140).

Poaching pressure

The problem of military poaching on local renewable resources is connected with the impunity which the military command enjoys in the area, but still more so with the grave economic problems which the military are experiencing. Specialists in the current state of the VPK speak of an expected social explosion among military personnel.

As Russia has sunk deeper into economic chaos there have been glimpses of disorder and despair among naval crews at the remote, poorly supplied, closed naval bases where the nuclear submarines of the Northern Fleet are situated. Since the economic chaos started in August, the naval bases have not received a single ruble. The first reports about lack of food came in September.

(Nilsen 1998:1)

A similar situation confronts naval shipyards, where labor union leaders have warned of strikes and other more drastic forms of action. Salaries have been withheld for months (ibid.).

The case of Gremikha

In February 1998 the closed naval cities were made dependant on the federal budget which cancelled the privileges (*l'goty*) which they had enjoyed until then. In the case of the

important nuclear submarine base of Gremikha the worsening of economic conditions became immediately apparent. Field-researchers found the formerly vigorous naval town as derelict and partly deserted.

The Gremikha naval base is in direct contact with the summer pastures of Reindeer-herding Brigade No. 9 of SHPK "Tundra". Brigade 9 is the most far-flung unit of the former sovkhoz, with a big herd of over 6,000 head. This herd is an easy target for an impoverished population of a distant closed town. The rich wild-game resources, formerly protected by the Tundra Game Reserve (*Toundroviy zakaznik*)⁷, present a similar target. This reserve once protected the local wildlife, especially the nesting grounds of migrating water-fowl in the vast marshes in the lower reaches of the river Yokanga, before it flows into the sea at Gremikha.

The problems encountered by Brigade No. 9 at Gremikha are typical for reindeer-herding teams (brigades) all over the eastern part of the Region. In the western part their activities were terminated years ago. Garrisons in the Region are often the boundary of pasture lands and thus a source of constant encroachments on the reindeer herds, as well as on any other form of game.

The case of Maloe Ramozero

Another good example of a tense relationship is between the inland brigade of SHPK "Tundra" (Brigade No. 3) and the strategic defense base at Maloe Ramozero. During my last field trip with this Brigade in April-June 1996, over 100 head of deer from the Brigade's herd were killed with automatic weapons right at calving time. The animals had been left in the snow with only some parts of the carcasses taken away. What deals a very heavy blow at reindeer-herding brigades as a result of such wholesale indiscriminate slaughters is not only the fact that pregnant and nursing cows get killed, but also trained sled-bucks (ezdovie biki)⁸.

⁷ For a full list and description of game-reserves, national parks, and other territories under various restrictive regimes in Murmansk Region, see e.g. Glavohota RSFSR 1982: 18ff; Reshenie IK/MOSND 1988:23-26.

A team of draft-deer usually consists of four animals in the winter and up to six in the summer. As they are placed side by side, the end-most at the left (as we look from the sled) is the leader and a highly trained animal. The herder uses it season after season, and it is the only animal to which the single rein is attached during driving. The other trained bull is the outer-most on the right, the one that keeps the team from spreading, especially, in a wooded area. The inside bulls can be fairly "wild" (untrained), in proportion to training and years of use of the outside ones, and especially, the leader. Apart from the several years of recurrent training and use connected

Wild reindeer, water-fowl and fish, together with precious-fur bearing mammals (beaver, marten, ermine, Arctic fox, wolverine, etc.), by now either extinct or on the brink of extinction, used to constitute the main resource base of the Sami in the pre-Soviet past.

Almost until the Komi settlement in the peninsula towards the turn of the century, reindeer-herding was used on a very small scale to supplement hunting and trapping; it was primarily intensive and transport-oriented (Cf. Kharuzin 1890: 100-134; Loukyanchenko 1971:19f).

This mixed subsistence pattern has left important traces to this day. When the herds are let go to roam freely between the end of June and beginning of October, reindeer-herders and their families and kin turn to fishing and gathering activities, much less so to hunting. The interference of the military in this vital area is destructive and greatly resented without, however, any viable form of defense in the hands of the tundra-connected community.

Poaching-pressure from the military is compounded by their status of secrecy and effective non-answerability to civilian jurisdiction.

The problem is additionally exacerbated by the virtual dismantling of existing protected areas and slackening of game-control. For example, the living quarters of the personnel of one of the protected areas in the heartland of reindeer-herding, the already mentioned Tundra Game Reserve (*Toundroviy zakaznik*), were found deserted in the spring of 1998 by the author of this report. The huts were being used by the herders of Brigade No.1 of "Memory of Lenin", and they said the whole reserve had been unmanned for the last few years. A similar situation is reported in all other protected areas with the possible exception of the Lapland Game Reserve (*Laplandskiy Zapovednik*) situated in the central part of the peninsula, west of the railway-line to St. Petersburg. Apart from the Lapland Reserve, strict controlling measures by inspectors and wardens seem to be applied only to territories leased to foreign companies for sport-fishing (Cf. 2.4 below, and CCU 1998: 60-69).

with a leader (and the right-sider), these animals are preferably white, bread-eating (*hleboyedniye*) and are objects of great pride. The shooting of such an animal to take only its antlers or haunches is considered the ultimate act of barbarity by reindeer-herders, especially taking into account that such reindeer may be easily recognized by either a bright plastic tag (*birka*) or a tag and a wooden collar.

Complementary relations with the military

While poaching on the part of the military personnel affecting traditional resources creates conflicts with the local tundra-connected population, these two groups are locked, nevertheless, in the interrelationship that neither of the groups can ignore. The military, meteorological crews, occasional geological surveying parties, and the reindeer-herders, are often the only people on otherwise desolate territories, and it is only natural that they establish mutually supportive networks, despite the conflict-laden activities described in the previous section. For the military, or for other state-posted personnel, the reindeer-herders and their intermediary tundra camps are a rare possibility for human contact in the tundra, and also for obtaining meat and other products of which the military are chronically short. In return, various materials which they have at their possession find their way into the hands of the reindeer-herders. It has to be borne in mind here that equipment necessary for tundra conditions cannot be bought over the counter by reindeer-herders because it is either not available in the shops or is imported at prohibitive prices. This applies to such items as water-proof equipment (especially rubber-boots), ropes, tarpaulins, engine- and radio-spare-parts, etc. Most importantly, meat is bartered for petrol and diesel-fuel.

Population of the Limes 9

Another aspect that makes the military-industrial complex a useful tool for the tundraconnected people is operation of ports along the eastern coast. There is a fuzzy boundary
zone between the opposite civilian and military population. In this zone, essential services are
maintained and, in that sense, are available to the local tundra-connected people. This
boundary zone - the classical *limes* - is occupied by the families of permanently serving
personnel, by non-military catering personnel, meteorological posts, radio- and beacon-crews,
telephone-line repair-crews, etc. Serving the needs of this diverse **population of the** *limes*,
passenger cruisers plying between Murmansk and Arkhangelsk stop at all military ports and
thus provide transport-opportunities for far flung reindeer-herders for whom helicopter

⁹ Limes derives from Latin for limit, border, especially, a fortified border. Here it is used to identify the population inhabiting or in contact with the off-limits military zones.

transport is often unavailable. Such is the case, for instance, with herders of the already mentioned Brigade No. 9 (SHPK "Tundra"). One way for herders to get to Lovozero from there is to go by boat from Gremikha to Murmansk and from there by bus down to Lovozero. Boat-transport is often the only connecting link between the tiny Pomor village of Sosnovka and the outside world. Beside passenger services this is relevant to marketing meat as well as supplying food-stuffs and consumer-goods.

Thus a complex web of interdependencies emerges among the tundra-connected population (as a custodian of locally specific cultural and social forms of livelihood), the population of the limes (a mixture of civilians and military), and the military themselves. NSR expansion could provide direct benefits by improving existing supplies and services, indirect benefits by reducing poaching pressure, and environmentally crucial benefits, including reduction of danger from nuclear facilities.

2.4 Wild-nature tourism

A new controversial actor has entered the local terrain since the start of reforms. A multitude of wild-nature tourist companies catering to an exclusive international public now operates in the eastern half of the peninsula, in the heartland of traditional resource zones, primarily along the salmon rivers - Ponoi, Varzina, Vostochnaya Litsa, Kharlovka, and Rinda.

Extensive coverage of the structure, activities and the debate around the new tourist enterprises has been presented in a Circumpolar Conservation Union Report (CCU 1998). Here only the possible relation between the tourist companies and the proposed NSR expansion shall be briefly discussed.

Notably, a nexus exists between the camps of the tourist companies and the military authorities, as territories previously under the jurisdiction of the military have been leased to these companies (Cf. CCU 1998: 25, map). Thus a military-foreign entrepreneurship connection is developing, as a reinterpreted but continuing form of cavalier treatment of local land-use rights by powerful external agencies. If this model is further reproduced by activities connected with NSR expanded use - both in the direction of commercial transport and increased tourism - local rights shall be severely damaged.

The amount of income that the new activity of sport fishing brings to the Region is difficult to estimate with certainty, but one source has put it at 3 million USD a year - a figure that may be considered a maximum estimate (Cf. CCU 1998:6, quoting *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 18, 1995). In spite of this sizeable new addition to the Regional income, the local tundra-connected population has felt pushed out of its traditional resource-base and driven to a state in which it watches from the sidelines as rich foreign tourists exploit for sport what the tundra-people need for survival. The highly asymmetrical and potentially explosive situation is a constantly recurring part of the local debate (cf. e.g. *Severnie prostori* 1991, No. 43; CCU 1998: 60-69). Measures on the part of the foreign companies to compensate and mitigate impact on local interests have so far been largely unsuccessful (Cf. CCU 1998: 69-79). The companies have encapsulated themselves in what amounts to off-limits zones, much like the military ones, and their interests are defended against the tundra-connected population by the power of Murmansk-centered law-enforcement agencies such as fish and game officers. In other words, these agencies function primarily to defend the interests of foreign companies and not the environment of the Region.

This model can be used to illustrate a pessimistic scenario of the expanded NSR use and expected subsequent expansion of related services. If these tend to be for the exclusive use and interests of top-range foreign customers, including tourists, the tension will increase and may be expected to erupt. The consequences, in view of the highly tense general situation of the recent months, may heavily jeopardize any beneficial effects that the NSR project may bring to the Region and its tundra-connected population.

2.5 Present and future industrial expansion in Lovozersky Rayon

The eastern part of the Region has been presented in this paper as a mainly pastoralist one, but this statement needs to be qualified.

Apart from the presence of the VPK in the interior of the eastern part, administratively belonging to *Lovozersky Rayon*, civilian industry has made sizeable inroads in the northern and central part of this territory (see Map). These inclusions are connected with the already mentioned building of the Lovozero and Umbozero mining-processing complexes (GOKs),

connected by road and railway to the main north-south transport links at the junction of Olenegorsk. Apart from the military air-fields, the only sizeable civilian airport in the eastern part is in Lovozero.

Another project that has seriously disrupted traditional forms of livelihood has been the building of the *Serebryanskoe* Reservoir (*Serebryanskoe vodohranilishte*), and a series of electric-power stations in 1963. This massive project in the valley of the river Voronya was accompanied by a process of agglomeration of existing small agricultural units (kolkhozes), the depopulation of existing Sami villages, and concentration of their residents in the blocks of flats of Lovozero, as it has been mentioned above in section 2.1 (The Sami) (see also *Lovozerskaya Pravda* No. 5, November 1988).

Additionally, propelled by demands of the military for ever greater off-limits territories for their facilities and garrisons, and the need for related infrastructure, the whole pattern of traditional reindeer-herding and other tundra-connected activities was disrupted during the Cold War period. Most importantly, the indigenous Sami population was totally uprooted and concentrated as a fragment of the main agro-center's population.

In the thirty-five years following construction of the major industrial and military projects, the tundra-connected reindeer-herding economy somehow readjusted to the new realities and asserted a compromise existence between the VPK and the local industry. Any further expansion of these complexes, however, especially ones that will need new energy sources and connecting east-west transport links will, with certainty, sound the death knell for the tundra-connected community and its economy.

Expanded use of the NSR may be expected to encourage new mining projects in this part, since possibilities for exporting raw materials or semi-processed goods will be greatly enhanced. The signal for this will be given by the start of operations of the Voronya Minerals Company in the valley of the Voronya river where "Memory of Lenin" is located. Another so far unthreatened territory is the Ter coast (*terskiy bereg*) along the southern rim of the peninsula and its Pomor villages. Unless, therefore, a check is put on further industrial expansion east of the Murmansk-St. Petersburg railway-line, the Sami component may entirely disappear from the complex identified as "tundra-connected people." The very

biological existence of the Sami in this community is threatened by very low life expectancy for men (42 years), a very high bachelor rate among reindeer-herders (over 70%), a nearly 100% dependence on alcohol, widespread anomie, and rampant crime.

3.0 Current trends in the tundra-connected community

With the economic collapse that began in August 1998, a tendency for ever greater dependence on non-cash subsistence sources for the local population swiftly spiraled to a new level. A brief review of these sources as existential survival strategies shall be made below.

The main economic agents, especially in the mainly pastoralist southeastern interior of Lovozersky Rayon, continue to be the former reindeer-herding collectives with their tundra crews (brigadi). TOO "Memory of Lenin" for example, has seven such crews, of about eighty fully employed members altogether (reindeer-herders, pastouhi). These eighty reindeer-herders, as well as an equal number of sea- and salt-fishing crews, support with their production a main part of the income for a temporary population of about a thousand persons (see Table 1 for Krasnoshchelye, Kanevka and Sosnovka). During the summer months, however, this population tends to double. Families and kin living in the towns spend their vacations helping elderly parents, enjoying a temporary respite from urban cash demands, and also help make food-reserves for the winter. These include helping in the sowing and cultivation of potato-patches, helping with hay-gathering for the dairy-cows, goats, and sheep of the villages, participating in the berry- and mushroom-picking in August, stashing away barrels of salted fish and reindeer-meat. Thus the tundra-connected population and its resources function as a fall-back support hinterland for the urban people, a home-front whose importance for those on the battle-line in towns is increasing daily.

Another tendency in respect to the villages is the growing demand for establishing residence there. Contrary to pre-reform tendencies to desert such villages and settle in towns, at the moment the tide is slowly turning back. Villages which had ceased to exist because of various civilian and military projects (see CCU 1998: 35, map) are slowly receiving a returnwave of former urban migrants. Such trends began as early as 1991 (see: *Severnie prostori* 1991, No. 46), and the number of people who go back is rapidly increasing at present. Thus a

temporary summer population is present in all the deserted villages: Chalmni Varre (Ivanovka), Ponoi, Varzina, Voronya in the limes zone in which the military still have the predominant presence. This tendency may be expected to continue with an increasing number of people who return to once deserted villages.

The second main income, prior to August 1998, came from the more or less regularly paid pensions to the village OAPs. Salaries could be paid only after many months, but the OAPs usually received their pensions on time. They thus formed some center of vital support for their children and grandchildren from town, especially at critical times with unavoidable cash demands as at the beginning of the school year.

The present crisis has shattered this next-to-last line of defense, and the available tundra subsistence base has assumed an increased and sharply existential importance. Against this critical background, a major project like NSR expansion has to consider the vital importance of preserving intact the still remaining present tundra subsistence base.

Conclusions_

1. Comprehensive area of concern: the local tundra-connected population and its urban links

Assessment of the expansion of activities along the Northern Sea Route on local communities in Murmansk Region has to take into account a number of highly specific regional features which single out this western section of the Arctic Ocean littoral from its predominant part to the east. As I have tried to show, these specific features are connected, in the first instance, with the fact that Russian expansion in the Arctic began with the colonization of the Kola Peninsula (11-12 cc.). Consequently, non-indigenous presence has been a characteristic of the local demographic picture for nearly a thousand years. This has established the early colonists - the Russian Pomors - as an early non-indigenous local population, among those who followed after the Sami in local presence. Further ethno-demographic changes occurred only around the turn of the century with the settling of Komi and Nenets reindeer-herders. The construction of the St. Petersburg-Murmansk railway line (1915-17) attracted the first wave of immigration, to be followed by the industrial projects of the Soviet Era, a sizeable portion of

which have relied on forced labor. All of these movements of population, and a highly pronounced exogamy lead to the conclusion that the local population of concern has to be expanded beyond the confines of those who are by legal definitions "indigenous." Such an approach is prompted by the highly eroded ("fuzzy") boundaries between indigenous and nonindigenous presence. Secondly (but more interesting, theoretically), custodians of indigenous cultural and social forms are not in all cases descendants of the original peoples – in our case the Sami – but representatives of other groups (e.g. the Komi). The pivotal support for such traditional forms is usually provided by a system of knowledge and praxis which is shared between various groups. The most important candidate for such a pivotal role appears to be reindeer-herding. Thus, while every effort has to be made to preserve the specifics of the four main local cultures: the Sami, Russian Pomor, Komi, and Nenets, in the face of a major technological project, such as NSR expansion, the primary concern should be the resource base that sustains systems of knowledge, practice, and social organization shared among the various segments of the tundra-connected population. This latter is formed by all local groups. It is characterized by highly volatile intra-group boundaries and an active give and take of cultural influences. It has, in addition, a growing importance for kinship-related urban residents.

- 2. New productive capacities and the urban stranded. In the context of the escalating economic crisis of the recent years, the predominant part of the urban labor-migrant population has been quickly impoverished, feels stranded in the extreme north, and creates a growing threat to the resource base described above. From this point of view, a revitalization of the economic situation following from expansion of NSR activities will not only help the urban population in its plight, but indirectly reduce poaching pressure on traditional resources. In this way, the NSR can be expected to extend a beneficial influence to the tundra-connected population of the Region.
- 3. The VPK. The population of the Region connected with the military-industrial complex is experiencing severe economic hardship comparable to that of the civilian urban population.

An expansion of the NSR and projected conversion activities may be expected to reduce the tension, especially in the more remote garrisons. This may reduce the threat stemming from the uniquely high concentration of nuclear facilities in the Region. In the second place, poaching pressure from the military may be hoped to subside, especially if environmental control and law-enforcement measures come to include the military personnel in an effective manner.

- 4. A beneficial effect from the NSR in the directions outlined above may be expected to take place only if the following concrete measures are taken.
- 4a. Nuclear waste. Operation of the existing nuclear-power ice-breaker fleet, as well as additions from the military on a projected conversion basis (e.g. conversion of submarines, see section 2.3 Nuclear facilities) take place only after the existing problem of storage and processing of nuclear waste has been effectively solved.
- 4b. Prevention of infrastructural expansion into the eastern part. A rise in NSR activities and related expansion of infrastructural links (road and railroad) as well as energyproducing facilities should not overstep the industrial/pastoralist boundary in the Kola Peninsula, currently presented by the railway-line from Murmansk to St. Petersburg and the highway parallel to it. Thus recommendations for "elaboration of technological transportation systems (...) from fields of the coast and shelf of the Barents and Kara seas" (Ivanov et al. 1998:25) should be qualified so as to exclude the pastoralist zone described above. One way to initiate protection for these areas would be to designate them as Preserved Territories administered by the respective rayon administrations (Lovozersky and Tersky). In this way the interests of the tundra dependent population of both rayons would be adequately represented and decisions reflecting environmental concerns could be effectively implemented. The legal basis for such a move to greater local autonomy over traditional resources already exists in federal documents, beginning with Articles 69 and 42 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, as well as in a number of decrees signed by President Yeltsin supporting further protection of traditional land use rights (cf. Osherenko, 1995). International awareness of the critical importance of the problems raised above and increased

rights of native peoples in other Arctic nations provides added impetus for aligning regional jurisdiction with requirements of an evolving international law.

- 4c. Mineral exploration projects which are planned to take place in reindeer-herding territories (e.g. such as those of the Voronya Minerals Co., see section 2.5 above) and may rely on or create NSR-related transport and energy corridors should be seen as a major threat to the local tundra-connected community.
- 4d. Exclusive territories. A model of cutting out chunks from the pastoralist territory for exclusive use, established by the military, and recently by wild-nature "safari"-type tourism (see section 2.4 above), should be avoided, as it disrupts the local communities and provokes tension in the Region. It follows that any improvement in terms of services or other economic opportunities should be made available on a non-privileged basis.
- **4e.** Support for air-transport. Funds for the support of air-transport in *Lovozersky* Rayon for the needs of the local community and the reindeer-herding/ fishing/ gathering local economy should be recommended in connection with expanded use of the NSR.
- 5. Finally, the renewable-resource tundra base is the last line of defense in the face of economic crisis. Crossing the north-south central line with expansion of industrial activities, in this case related to the NSR, will destroy not only the ability of the eastern zone to support highly specific Arctic cultural traditions but also the very basis for traditional subsistence practices important for the existence of the tundra-connected people as well as for their urban families, kinship, and quasi-kinship networks.

Further research

To ensure benefits of the NSR outlined above, further research is of vital importance in the pastoralist part of Murmansk Region, i.e. the reindeer-herding territories of SHPK "Tundra" and TOO "Memory of Lenin". This research must be carried out on a long-term basis, monitoring the highly pronounced dynamics of the current period in view of possible disruptive expansion into these territories following from NSR use. Such research should be conducted by working directly with reindeer-herding crews (brigades) at their tundra-camps, with this knowledge supplemented by data gathered in reindeer-herding and fishing administrative centers — primarily, Lovozero, Revda, and Krasnoshchelye. The first phase of this field-research should be planned for the period 1999-2001 with the immediately threatened brigades of SHPK "Tundra" - Brigades No. 3,4,5, and 7 along the river Voronya in the northeastern part of the peninsula.

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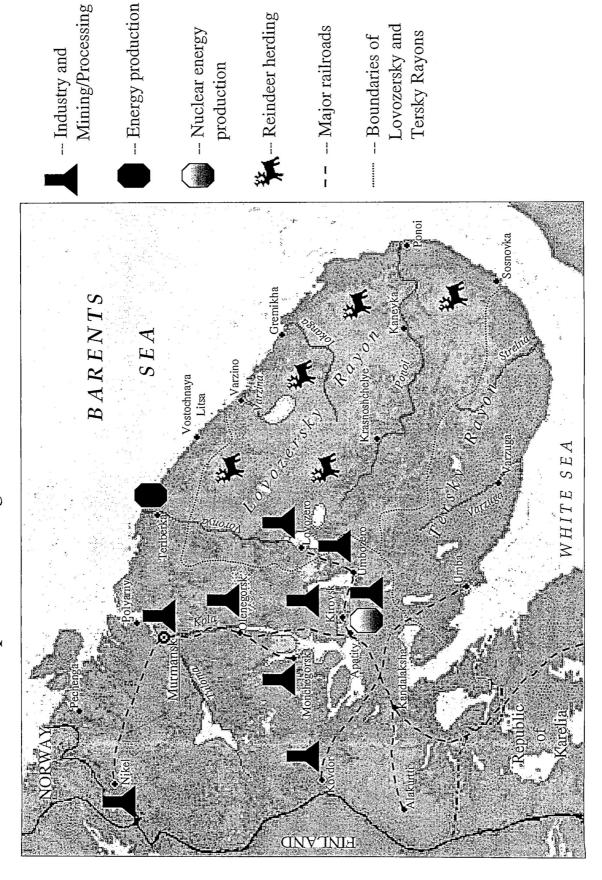
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Map. Murmansk Region: Industrial West and Pastoralist East



Map: Yulian Konstantinov (computer graphics by Oleg Prokhorenko)

Review of the INSROP - Discussion Paper by Yulian Konstantinov "The Northern Sea Route and Local Communities in Nortwest Russia: Social Impact Assessment for the Murmansk Region"

Dr. Yulian Konstantinov from Bulgaria is one of the few scientists, who has been doing field-work among the reindeer herders on the Kola Peninsula. Therefore he has a good starting point for writing this discussion paper on the social impact for the Murmansk Region of expanded use of the Northern Sea Route (NSR, in old days called "North East Passage").

The difficulty in reading this paper is that it contains a big amount of facts and evaluations, but does not tell so much of the horrible situation, in which the population of the Murmansk Region today (December 1998) is. This concerns all the population, not only the Sami, the Komi, the Nenets (formerly called Samoyeds). Some Sami have informed me that the have not had heating in their houses for years, for instance in Gremikha on the North coast. The terrible situation in Loparskaya has been reviewed in Norwegian press and unfortunately the situation is as bad as before. Just last week the village was visited by the gouvernor Jevdokimov.

A strange thing is that the situation in the villages or in the country-side seems to be much more difficult than in the towns. People say that the prices in the country-side are higher than in the town, that in the towns you can some-how earn some money and so on.

Dr. Konstantinov pays naturally much attention to the importance of the reindeer herding on the Kola Peninsula, but I cannot find any figures about the number of reindeer herders. Lazarev and Patsiya say in an article from 1989 that there are only 74 Sami reindeer herders in the Lovozero area. Talking about the mixted marriages Konstantinov writes (quoting Kiselev and Shevchenko) that one fourth of all families are ethnically mixed. He (or they) dont mention the Komi and the Sami, but Lazarev and Patsiya give statistics, which show that there are very few Sami-Sami marriages (about 2 out of 15 yearly).

Returning to reindeer herding, it is of course true that its importance is very high, because through your relatives you can get reindeer meat to survive the winter. So even if there are only 74 Sami reindeer herders, their importance is much higher than their number.

Dr. Konstantinov does not pay much attention to the various official structures of the region. There is for instance a *Committee for the Northern Indigenous Peoples* (Komitet po delam korennykh narodov Severa) under the Regional Administration in Murmansk. It has two workers (one Sami and one Russian). He mentions the Komi Association and the Association of the Kola Sami. He does not mention that the Lovozero Sami broke out of that organization in July 1998 and formed another Sami organization, called *Obeshchevennaya Organizatsiya Saamov Murmanskoy Oblasti*.

Dr. Konstantinov writes a great deal about the building of railroads and different plants, for instance in Revda. There is an unpublished report by prof. Kiselev, which tells that all the now existing plants and mines in the Murmansk region were built by prisoners from concentration camps. As late as in 1990 a plant in Monchegorsk had an agreement that they could use prisoners in the dirtiest jobs. In Revda there is even

today a prison for special severe criminals, which of course does not make the place too nice to live in.

If I then take some details from the discussion paper, which I want to point out, I want to mention these:

- On p. 5-6 Konstantinov writes about the transport. Kiselev and Shevchenko write that the sea transport consists of 6-7 million tons and 2-2.5 million passengers yearly, rail transport (as Konstantinov says) 45 mill. tons and 3,5-4 mill. passengers and air transport 7 mill. tons and 850.000 passengers.
- P. 7. The Finnish newspaper Lapin Kansa says on April 12, 1997 that there are 1.033.000 inhabitants in the Murmansk Region.
- P. 8. The total number of the Nenets people is some 200 persons, i.e. some 10 % of the number of the Komi and the Sami.
- P. 8. "...a part of them as convicts or POWs (spetspereselentsy)." These "spetsperelentsy" were not POWs, but people from the south, who had been deported to the north (mainly in the 1930s), because they were too rich (they could have owned 1-2 cows). They were not prisoners, but could not leave the place, where they were deported to.
- P. 8. The term "prishlye" (newcomers) seems strange, although it is a quotation from Anderson and Fondahl. The word hints that the person concerned has arrived by foot. Nowadays the Sami use the word "priezhie", which is almost a curse among the Sami.
- P. 13. The Pomors and the Komi and the Nenets. Since the Pomors mainly live on the South coast of the Kola Peninsula, it is doubtful if they at all should be included in this paper, which discusses the impact of the NSR. The Pomors are of course used to legitimate the presence of the Russians on the Kola Peninsula. The number of the Komi is today about 2.000 persons, but their number around WWI was much smaller. There have come Komi to Lovozero even in the 1950s.
- P. 18 "..had influenced decision making in Moscow". If "Moscow" here means the capital of Russia, so St. Petersburg (in 1914-1924 called Petrograd) was the capital until 1918.
- P. 19. Murmansk Region (Murmanskaya oblast) was founded in 1938. Before that is was called Murmanskij okrug (1927-1938), before that Murmanskaya Guberniya (some sources call it Murmanskij uezd) (1920-1927).
- P.20. Dr. Konstantinov mentions the Suenjel Pogost, but the text is too simplified. The Suenjel Sami were affected both by the WWI and the WWII. In 1920 they lost one fourth of their land, when Finland got the Petsamo (Pechenga) area and a part of their territory got behind the new Finnish-Soviet border (they became Finnish citizens for the first time in their history). In 1944 the Soviet Union took the Petsamo area back and the Suenjel Sami (and other Petsamo Sami, too) left the territory and settled down around the lake of Inari, where they live today. Principally they could in 1944 have stayed where they traditionally had lived since thousand years and become Soviet citizens, but they did not find that choice so attractive.

- P. 27. Dr. Konstantinov mention the case of Gremikha, which is one the most closed military bases on the Kola Peninsula. The civil population of that base has strange enough increased from 14.800 in 1989 to 14.900 in 1995. Nowadays it is called Ostrovnoy, which is its fourth name: l) Iokanga, 2) Murmansk-140, 3) Gremikha 4) Ostrovnoy. The author mentions the Tundra Game Reserve and the Lapland Game Reserve. One has to remember that there are many other reserves and national parks of different kinds. In some places the reserves are very destructive to the very day life of the Sami, because in the present crises they would need the fish and the game of these places. A Sami friend of mine said that he has never been allowed to put his foot in the Lapland Game Reserve.
- P. 33. Dr. Konstantinov mentions Lovozerskaya Pravda (November 5, 1988). This article which was written by Lyubov Vatonena, was the first article to tell about the true situation of Russian Sami, about suicids, alcoholism, forced relocation. Much has happened in 10 years!
- P. 38. The paper tells about Article 42 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and says that article "guarantees the right of peoples small in number to possess and use their lands ..." Strange enough the edition of the constitution, which I have (printed in Helsinki 1994) does not have any mentioning about the land rights of the indigenous peoples at all. Article 42 says: "Everybody has the right to favourable environment, reliable information about its state and for a refund of damage inflicted on his health and property by ecological violations."

Finally I want to point out that Dr. Konstantinov has made a very good work in this discussion paper. Nevertheless I want to mention that in Lovozero there has been a clear hierarcy among the different nationalities. On the top there have been the Russians ("priezhie"), then the Komi and on the bottom, the most subordinated, the Sami. The Nenets are so few in number, that they are not paid attention to in this pyramid. When a Sami, Vasilij Selivanov in about 1990 was appointed to a leading post, the Sami felt that it was a historical moment. But in fact his mother was a Komi...father Sami).

The present situation on the Kola Peninsula is so bad that many old Sami have said to me that the life today is much harder than during the last war. Up to now there are been no signs of things turining to the better.

Comment to the map:

The military base, Gremikha, does not belong to the Lovozero region. I have never seen a map, which exactly shows how the borders of the region go on the northern coast. There were some changes about five years ago.

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Reply to the Review of Leif Rantala

I wish to thank warmly Dr Rantala for his thorough and precise work on my INSROP-Discussion Paper. The incorporation of the majority of his suggestion has made the paper, as I hope, a more useful material.

Below I reply to each note. The page-numbers to which I refer are of the latest copy in the process, i.e. the version leading up to the final Working Paper stage.

1. "horrible situation": This initial general criticism is off the mark. The whole paper is based on the assumption that currently the population is experiencing a very difficult period, which an extension of the NSR may help relieve. This concerns primarily what I call the "stranded urban population", as well as the military, and their current destructive impact on tundraresources.

As for the Sami population, the following conclusion is clearly made (p. 36): "Unless, therefore, a check is put on further industrial expansion, east of the Murmansk-St. Petersburg railway-line, the Sami component may entirely disappear from the complex identified as "tundra-connected people". The very biological existence of the Sami in this community is threatened by very low life-expectancy for men (42.5 years), a very high bachelor rate among reindeer-herders (over 70%), a nearly 100% dependence on alcohol, widespread anomie and rampant crime."

1a. "A strange thing is....":

During my recent field-trip centred on Krasnoshchelye (April-June 1998) I was often told by local people that there is an increase of town-people who are coming back to the villages. This seems to be a general tendency. If the situation was worse than in towns, why should this be happening? Prices are indeed higher, but there is access to the renewable resources and this seems to be the important factor

2. Komi-Sami marriages:

To avoid increasing facts indefinitely I have subsequently referred to Zherebtsov (1982:195-207) who discusses the matter at length.

- 3. "I cannot find any figures about the number of reindeer-herders": Dr Rantala must have omitted the following paragraph (p. 9):
- "It is thus the case that only a fraction of the 1,900-2,000 Sami in the Region are actively practising reindeer-herding. Together with family and other dependants this component can hardly consist of more than 150-200 persons."
- 4. The various official representations of the local peoples had originally been part of a footnote (No 8). Subsequently, however, and in accordance with Dr Rantala's criticism a new subsection was created and a fuller presentation made in the main text (p.17).

5. "prisoners in labour camps": it is difficult to find justification for this comment. There is a whole section on the topic ("Gulagstroika"), as also the following text (pp.20-21):

"Forced-labour camps dotted practically the whole Region, including the reindeer-herding interior. Here a major camp was in Revda and, right after the end of the second world war, it created the Lovozero GOK (*Lovozersky gorno-obogatitel'niy kombinat*), today *AO Sevredmet*. At present this complex facility is the major economic actor with decisive influence for the urban population in the reindeer-herding part of the Region."

Specific comments:

p. 5-6 (transport volumes). In accordance with this note the following has been included:

"Freight handled has fallen from 6.7 m tons (1987) to around 3 m tons at present (comp. Nilsen and Bøhmer 1994: 76-79; Seppänen, Susanna 1995: 59-62; Kiselev and Shevchenko 1996:202-204; Ivanov et al. 1998:7; Nilsen 1998:1)."

p. 7 (population of Murmansk Region): I wonder if a figure given in a newspaper should necessarily be considered a corrective to specialised studies. Nevertheless, the figure has been incorporated in a foot-note as it may reflect out-migration especially of the last two years:

"2The Finnish newspaper Lapin Kansa (12/04/1997) gives the figure 1033 000 for the inhabitants of Murmansk Region. (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report)"

p. 8. (Total number of Nenets): To make matters simpler I have now used the number rather than the percentage in accordance with this comment (p.8):

"The tiny group of the Nenets (nentsi) is of about 200 persons."

p. 8 (prishlie): In accordance with the comment this was changed to "priezzhie".

p. 13 (the Pomors):

The Pomors need to be mentioned as those in Sosnovka are a clear part of the reindeer-herding community, having in fact the biggest herd in the Peninsula: a herd according to some estimates of over 8 000 January head. In addition they operate a significant number (14) of

freshwater- and salt-water fishing brigades and are thus susceptible to NSR activities.

Moreover, the concept of tundra-connected local population cannot exclude the Pomors simply because they are descendants of the first Russian colonists.

p. 18 (Moscow): To avoid misunderstandings stemming from the dual capital situation of the time, simply "Russia" has been used in the subsequent text.

p. 19 (Murmansk Region): The situation has been explained, following this note, in a new footnote (No 1):

"1 During the present century the territory of Murmansk Region (Murmanskaya Oblast) administratively belonged to Archangelskaya Guberniya as Aleksandrovskiy Uezd until 13/06/1921. From there on till 1/08/1927 (Murmanskaya Guberniya); till 27/05/1938 Murmanskiy Okrug; since the last date Murmanskaya Oblast. (Arkhivniy otdel 1995: 28-52) "

p. 20 (The Suenjel Pogost). Accepting the justice of this note the text has been considerably expanded here, following Dr Rantala's (pp. 21-22):

"The Suenjel (Songel) Pogost, traditionally situated in the NW part of the peninsula, has faced perhaps the most traumatic dislocation during the present century. In 1920 the Suenjel Sami lost one fourth of their land, when Finland acquired the Petsamo (Pechenga) area and a part of the pogost traditional territory remained in Soviet Russia, behind the new Finnish-Soviet border. In 1944 the Soviet Union took the Petsamo area back and the Suenjel Sami (as well as other Petsamo Sami) left the territory and settled north of Lake Inari to Sevettijärvi in Finland where they live to this day. Finally, during the Stalinist repressions of the 1930s the entire population of the Ribachiy Peninsula, the area of Petsamo and the West Murman Coast was relocated.

⁶ I am grateful to Leif Rantala for his succinct and clear presentation of this tortuous episode in recent Russian Sami history (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report). There is also an excellent documentary film by the Norwegian Sami TV director Jos Kalvemo - "The Lost Suenjel" (NRK 1995) presenting the self-exile of the Suenjel Sami."

p. 27 (Gremikha): The situation, in accordance with this comment, has been explained in a new footnote 7:

"⁷Gremikha enters administrative documents as workers' settlement (rabochiy posyolok) from 1936 till 1957, taking its name from the Inlet of Gremikha in the Iokanga Bay (Popov 1990:88). Before 1936 it was known as Iokangskaya Basa, near the old Iokangskiy Pogost. At the beginning of the 80s turned into a closed administrative-territorial unit (zakritoe administrativno-teritorial'noe obrazovanie). (Arkhivniy otdel 1995:170) Renamed to Murmansk-140 and, eventually, Ostrovnoy. (Leif Rantala, comment in review of the report). "

p. 33 (Lyubov Vatonena): The reference has been omitted in accordance with the comment

p. 38 (Article 42): The quotation has been omitted in accordance with the comment.

Map: I have the following comment to make responding to what Dr Rantala says (that administratively it is not part of Lovozerskiy Rayon):

This is correct although not reflected on official maps of the Region. The exact facts, if we decide to have a footnote to this, or another way of explaining them, are the following:

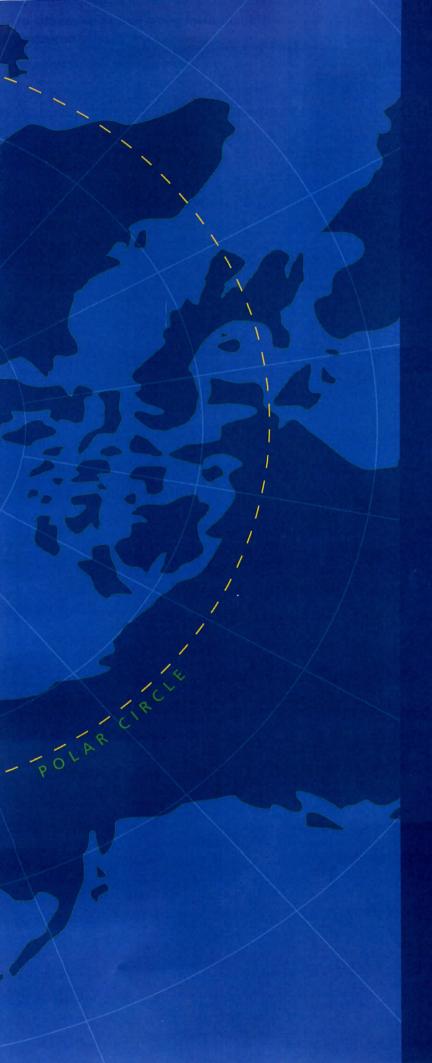
"With a decision of the Murmansk Regional Executive Committee (Murmanskiy Oblispolkom) of 26 January 1963, Saamskiy Rayon was disbanded. The village soviets of the Rayon were subordinated to the Lovozero Rayon Soviet (Lovozersky Raisovet), while the centre of the Workers' Settlement Gremikha (Rabochiy Posyolok Gremikha) was subordinated to the Severomorsk Town Soviet (Severomorskiy Gorsovet)."

(See: Arkhivniy otdel 1995:56)

In conclusion I have to say that contrary to Dr Rantala's initial general criticism about too much factual material in this paper, his own comments, being mostly of factual nature, have led to the inclusion of still more facts. This is, however, not necessarily to be seen as a negative development. The thoroughness and precision of the paper has increased, as I hope, and this would not have happened but for Dr Rantala's careful reading of the text and his deep and extensive knowledge of the region in question.

Yulian Konstantinov

Sofia, 16/02/1999



The three main cooperating institutions of INSROP



Ship & Ocean Foundation (SOF), Tokyo, Japan.

SOF was established in 1975 as a non-profit organization to advance modernization and rationalization of Japan's shipbuilding and related industries, and to give assistance to non-profit organizations associated with these industries. SOF is provided with operation funds by the Nippon Foundation, the world's largest foundation operated with revenue from motorboat racing. An integral part of SOF, the Tsukuba Institute, carries out experimental research into ocean environment protection and ocean development.



Central Marine Research & Design Institute (CNIIMF), St. Petersburg, Russia.

CNIIMF was founded in 1929. The institute's research focus is applied and technological with four main goals: the improvment of merchant fleet efficiency; shipping safety; technical development of the merchant fleet; and design support for future fleet development. CNIIMF was a Russian state institution up to 1993, when it was converted into a stockholding company.



The Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI), Lysaker, Norway.

FNI was founded in 1958 and is based at Polhøgda, the home of Fridtjof Nansen, famous Norwegian polar explorer, scientist, humanist and statesman. The institute spesializes in applied social science research, with special focus on international resource and environmental management. In addition to INSROP, the research is organized in six integrated programmes. Typical of FNI research is a multidisciplinary approach, entailing extensive cooperation with other research institutions both at home and abroad. The INSROP Secretariat is located at FNI.