Content of today’s lecture

1st half: • The Russian hunters
  – Pomors – the cultural background
  – Development on Svalbard
  – The structure of Russian hunting and trapping
  – Why did the activity stop?

2nd half: • Norwegian hunting and trapping
  – A troublesome start of Norwegian trapping
  – Winterers and “small-trappers”
  – Specialization and variation
  – Hunters and trappers in the 20th century

Problem: • Impact and economic significance?

The Pomor culture

• Russian colonization of “Pomorye” – the White Sea region from the 12th century
• A versatile economy: agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting and trapping, fishery, artisan production and trade
• Marine mammal hunting – particularly seals and walrus
• Trading contacts with Western Europe and northern Norway from the 16th century
• Spiritual culture: “old believers” and the role of monasteries

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Pomors on Svalbard

- Pomor expansion in the Arctic: Pechora, Kara Sea, Novaya Zemlya – and Svalbard
- When and how did the pomors arrive?
  - Vadim Starkov: before 1550
  - Marek Jasinski & al.: around 1650
  - Tora Hultgreen: after 1700
- Grumant – the origin of a place name
- Summer expeditions
- Wintering teams: extensive and intensive resource exploitation
- The 4 “Robinsons” on Edgeøya 1743–49

Structure of pomor trapping

- Organization: outfitters, “kormschiks” and crews
- The system of main stations (stanki) and huts (izbushki): The distribution of activity
- Varied resource exploitation: marine mammals, fur animals, seabirds, eggs ...
- Development of the Pomor activity – when and why did it stop?
  - Competition or erosion?
  - Depletion of stocks?
  - Structural changes in Pomor economy?

15 minutes break
Arrival of the Norwegians

- Norwegian Arctic whaling and sealing
- The advent of North Norway: Hammerfest and royal privileges 1789
- Cooperation with Russians: the first attempts on Spitsbergen in the 1790s
- Development of the Arctic trade 1820–60
  - Hammerfest as the leading Arctic port
  - Tromsø joins in: the economic importance
  - Summer and winter expeditions: economic adaptation to regional economy
  - The dangers of hunting and trapping on Svalbard; fatalities during wintering

The golden age of sealing

- Expansion of the Arctic trade from 1860: the exploitation of "new" sealing grounds
- Sealing from Northern and Southern Norway: similarities and differences
- Arctic skippers: explorers and experts. The construction of "modern" heroes
- West Ice, East Ice and North Ice: economic importance of Svalbard in the 19th and 20th centuries

The revival of trapping

- Renewed interest in hunting and trapping on Svalbard in the 1890s
- Structural changes:
  - Smaller wintering parties, usually 3–4 people
  - Outfitters and individual "entrepreneurs": the division of Svalbard into hunting terrains
  - Greenland and Jan Mayen
- The organization of trapping expeditions
  - Outfitting: supplies and equipment
  - Beg, steal or borrow: building traditions
  - Managing through the year: work processes
Trappers – who were they?

- Recruitment to hunting and trapping
- 60% of the trappers 1895-1945 spent only one season on Svalbard
- The “professional” trappers: only a handful
- It’s a man’s world – or isn’t it? Masculine ideals and anti-modern heroes
- Conflict of interests: wintering trappers, “small-hunters”, tourists and mining companies
- The decline of hunting and trapping after World War II

Significance and impacts

- Hunting and trapping on Svalbard was of modest economic importance to the nations involved
- A continuous problem: too many hunters, too little game; little regulation
- Wintering trappers probably did not deplete stocks of game, but the total hunting pressure over time was too high
- Hunting and trapping has had a certain cultural impact, particularly in early 20th Century Norway (and on Svalbard)

Polar bear catch

- Catch of polar bears 1945-1973
- Seals: 48%, Other hunters: 26%, Crew at weather observation post at Svalbard: 17%, Trophy hunters: 9%

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