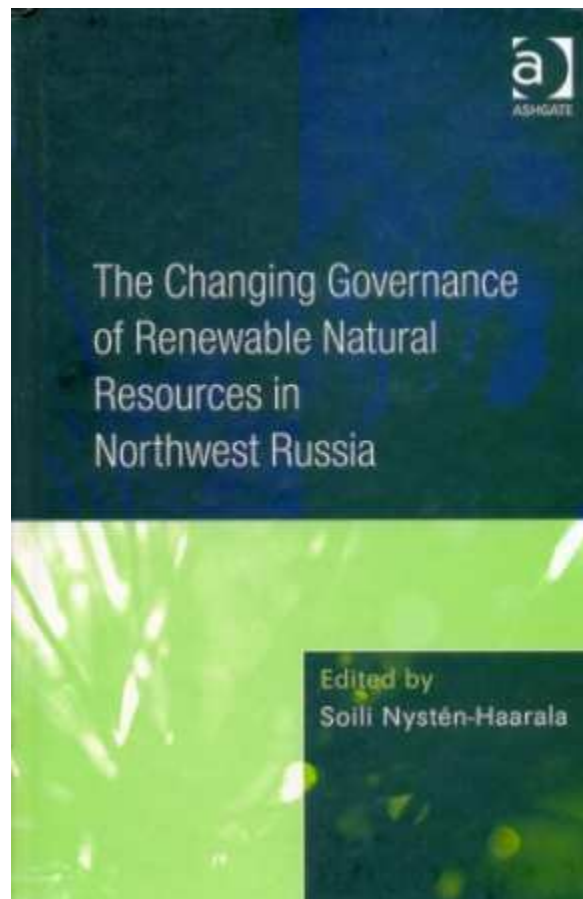


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Chapter 10

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Transformation of Nature Management in Pomorie: Fishing Villages on the Onega Peninsula of the White Sea

Introduction

In this chapter we analyze the transformations that have taken place in the nature management institutions of Pomor fishing villages on the Onega Peninsula of the White Sea². We focus on changes in traditional nature management practices, primarily with regard to fishing, as this is the main source of employment in these areas and brings about the development of a certain type of culture. We look at social institutions in the Pomor villages from a historical viewpoint, as well as analysing their current situation. In order to analyze the institutional forms of organization with regard to fishing in Pomor villages, we apply the theory of path dependence, first formulated in the mid-1980s in the work of Douglass North (North 1990). This theory was then developed in the work of such authors as Klaus Nielsen, Bob Jessop and Jerzy Hausner (Hausner, Jessop and Nielsen 1995), and also Oliver Williamson (Williamson 2000).

Through their work, the researchers put forward two approaches: on the one hand, social institutions characteristic of a particular society tend constantly to replicate themselves over the course of the society's development, thereby hindering both their own transformation and the emergence of new institutions, and thus movement always proceeds along the same path. On the other hand, the 'path dependence' approach presupposes that, through the activity of various social agents, motion along this path can be corrected and overcome. In order for this to occur, social agents must create a new, strong direction of movement, which will bring about the creation of new institutions. In this way, the current path is rejected (path-shaping) and a new path is taken up.

¹ We owe thanks to Hugh Fraser, Nadezhda Mukhina, Lois Kapila, Barbara Seppi, Eleanor Bindman and John Riedl for the translation of this chapter and Barbara Seppi and Edward Saunders for the proofreading of the translation.

² The historical territory of Pomorie comprises territories of Russian North in the Onega, Dvina, Sukhona, Mezen', Pechora, Kama and Vyatka river basins, which have a specific culture. In our days a smaller territory is more often regarded as Pomorie - the coastal territory of the White Sea and Barents Sea in the Arkhangel'sk Region, Karelia Republic and Murmansk Region. The Pomor cultural-ethnic group is identified on the basis of the territory they live in and traditional economic practices such as deep-sea and costal fishing, seal hunting, river and lake fishing and forest hunting. Fishing still remains the main economic activity of the Pomor people; most of the money they earn comes from fishing.

In our chapter we will be applying both of these approaches, but focusing on the first, looking at how historical forms of organization in society and nature management which developed during the Soviet and pre-Soviet periods have been retained through the period of reform. We will be focusing above all on transformations in the fishing kolkhoz, a social institution that has been the most stable organizational form for collective management for more than 70 years. By analysing the current situation and the problems relating to nature management in Pomor fishing villages, we allow the current survival strategies of these communities to be distinguished. In addition, because there is a strong link between traditional fishing and the Pomor identity, we will also be looking at contemporary means for seeking ethnic identity.

The chapter is based on field material collected over the course of three expeditions in November 2005, February 2006 and November 2006, on the Onega Peninsula of the White Sea and in the cities of Onega and Arkhangel'sk. We would like to thank all respondents who allowed us to interview them and who provided us with materials. We would like to express particular thanks to the chairs of the fishing kolkhozy 'Belomor', '40 Let Oktyabrya' and 'Imeni Lenina', and the heads of the non-governmental organizations - the chair of 'Pomorskoe Vozrozhdenie' and the head of 'Aetas' - for their help and contributions. For purposes of the research, high-quality sociological methods were used. During the expeditions, biographical and semi-structured interviews were conducted, materials were collected, and travel notes kept. Respondents included members of fishing kolkhozy (the chairs, workers and pensioners) and other local people, representatives of local and regional administrative bodies, members of local government, village public sector workers, private businesspeople, scientists, and leaders of Pomor non-governmental organizations.

Respondents were selected on the basis of the social structure of the village, of which the fishing kolkhoz is the basic institution. Most people in the villages - including both workers and pensioners - are members of this organization. The remainder are public sector workers, working at the school, club, library or medical station, but also private businesspeople, berry pickers, hunters and anglers, unemployed people, and regular seasonal residents (whose main place of work or residence is elsewhere). Here we should point out that the fishing kolkhoz is not only the main social institution in a Pomor village, structuring both its economic and social life, but that it also determines the main forms and practices of nature management. Of course, nature management is not limited to the kolkhoz, but in this contribution this form will be the focus of our analyses.

As mentioned above, we will be analysing transformations in communities in Pomor fishing villages with the help of the theory of path dependence or, as it is referred to by Russian sociologists, 'track theory' (Auzan, Radaev, Nureev, Naiskul et al. 2006). Looking at the Pomor village as a community whose economy is

based mainly on the traditional use of natural resources, we see a limited, fairly stable set of year-round and seasonal practices. This stability can also be seen in the social institutions that help to organize the life of the community.

If we look at these social institutions from a historical viewpoint, we can observe a gradual change in the elements that make them up, but also a continuity. Often, new forms of social institutions include elements taken from the past. For example, the first fishing kolkhozy absorbed characteristics from pre- and post-revolutionary fishing workers' cooperative associations. It could be said that the life of people in the Pomor village develops 'along a familiar track', or 'according to path dependence'. Yet at the same time, global modernization processes introduce new technologies into old forms of nature management (Korotaev 1998), bringing about changes in the 'path'.

But this takes place according to a process not so much of substitution, as of addition. The transformation of old social institutions and the emergence of new ones in Russia over the past decade has had virtually no effect on institutional forms in Pomor villages. The last radical change in social institutions in Pomor villages took place when the kolkhozy were first formed. Thus we can speak of the inertial potential of communities in Pomor fishing villages as being characteristic of a traditional society.

At the same time, the current phase of transformation of Pomor communities reveals the possibility of a new fundamental change. The state is radically changing the rules of play in the primary area of nature management - fishing - but also in forestry and other activities, changing the laws with the aim of strengthening large businesses operating in the fishing and forestry industries. This directly affects life in the Pomor communities, and weakens their developing foundations (Titova 2006).

In contemporary scientific literature, much has been written about the current state of traditional nature management, both in Russia and elsewhere. Russian writers generally describe traditional nature management as conducted by indigenous peoples in the Russian North, Siberia and the Far East, analysing the relationship between traditional nature management and traditional lifestyles (Mangataeva 2000). They analyze the legal aspects of the rights of indigenous peoples to the territory on which they practice traditional nature management, as well as approaches to protecting these rights, taking as an example the conflicts that arise between the market interests of large extracting companies, and the goal of protecting the homelands, culture and identity of indigenous peoples (Novikova 2003).

Much has been written with regard to preserving the cultural-natural landscape and the sacred places of indigenous peoples, and preserving the peoples themselves (Vedenin and Kuleshova 2001). One aspect that is dealt with is the relationship between the preservation of culture and community, in other words

between the preservation of traditional nature management practices, and the ethnic identity of the indigenous people (Arkhangel'sk Region Territorial Community of the Pomor Indigenous Minority, 'Pomorskaya Storona 2004). Articles and books on contemporary nature management have also analyzed state policy in this field, for example regarding problems facing the fishing industry in Russia (Titova 2006), and the management of natural resources in the Barents Region (Averkiev et al. 2004).

Traditional Pomor nature management has generally been examined from a historical viewpoint. Cod fishing and other types of fishing in the Barents Sea have been analyzed (Krysanov 2002), as have the state of seasonal industries and their significance for life in villages on all shores of the White Sea (Popov and Davydov 1999). The remaining forms of nature management in Pomorie - in-shore, river and lake fishing, sealing, hunting, reindeer herding, salt-making, agriculture and forestry - have also been analyzed, generally from a historical point of view.

This chapter is unique in applying path dependence methods to analyze problems relating to both the transformation of the current state of traditional nature management, and to the fishing industry. We believe that the nature management conducted by the communities in Pomor villages, which is currently divided between fishing kolkhozy and the private sector, is both a part of the fishing industry, and a traditional form of Pomor nature management.

It is important to note that there is great uncertainty surrounding the status of Pomorie and of the Pomors, who are not included in the state's official list of indigenous minorities, and to whom legislation grants none of the rights of native minorities to conduct traditional nature management. Thus Pomorie does not officially exist as a territory. However, in the last full Russian population census in 2002, some 6, 500 people cited Pomor as their ethnic group (most these people live in Arkhangel'sk Region). Most of the population did not know that the Pomors have at last been added to the list of nationalities in Russia; in other words, the Pomors did not know that they would be officially counted if they cited their ethnicity.

There are still debates surrounding the acceptance of the Pomors as an ethnic group, among both scientists and politicians. A variety of constructs of the Pomor identity exist, including dictionaries of the Pomor language (Moseev 2005). There are non-governmental organizations in Arkhangel'sk Region fighting for the Pomor population to be granted the right to ethnic self-determination - NGOs 'National Kultural Avtonomia Pomorov', 'Pomorskoe Vozrozhdenie', 'Obshchina Pomorov', etc. Although all of the required documents have been submitted, the Pomors have still not been accepted as an indigenous minority at the federal level. There are different viewpoint on the question of Pomor ethnic identity - 'who are Pomors?' - among scientists. Some of them, such as Doctor Bulatov, head of Po-

mor State University, see Pomors as a separate ethnic group based on Finno-Ugric and Slavic (Bulatov 1999a). Some others, according to Doctor Bershtam, a well-known Soviet ethnographer who conducted extensive research on the Pomors, identify them as ethnic subgroup of North Russians (Bershtam 1978). Most specialists in Russian traditional culture and the history of the Russian North identify Pomors as belonging to the North Russians (Vlasova 1995). But independently of how they identify the Pomors all researchers emphasize that the Pomor population have a specific lifestyle, including traditional nature management practices.

History

The territory of Pomorie came into being over several centuries. Officially, Pomorie had formed by the sixteenth century, comprising territories in the Dvina, Sukhona, Mezen, Pechora, Kama and Vyatka river basins (Bulatov 1999b). By that time Pomorie had developed into a separate, unified region characterized by a *“common territory, access to the sea, common features of economic activity in its administrative districts and towns, particular character traits, the specific mental and spiritual makeup of the Pomor people and a distinctively northern culture. The northern form of the Russian language also developed, providing the basis for contemporary local tongues and dialects”* (Bulatov 1999b).

The question of the identity of the Pomors (coast-dwellers) and its relation to their traditional usage of natural resources can now be considered. As the Pomor ethnic group, distinct since the sixteenth century, has never been recognized as a nationality (ethnic group), attitudes towards it have always been to some extent ambivalent. Moreover, the ambivalent approach to their ethnic identity is shared by the Pomors themselves and their neighbour peoples. Non-Pomors consider the inhabitants of this region to be Pomors and Russians simultaneously, but they still note the peculiarities of their character, culture and use of natural resources.

This unique ethnic group (the Pomors) is identified on the basis of the territory they live in. They are people who live in a particular territory, say, in a coastal village, and have particular occupations, such as deep-sea and costal fishing and seal hunting, among others. The Pomors do not necessarily consider themselves to be Russians. They associate their identity with the territory they live in and their economic practices. But they still continue to regard themselves as Pomors even if they move to another place or give up fishing.

As already mentioned, Pomorie is a sizeable territory, but our discussion here will be limited to the coast of the White Sea. In centuries past, the main occupations of its inhabitants were fishing and seal hunting. Fishing still remains the main economic activity of the Pomor people; most of the money they earn is from fishing.

In the nineteenth century, the Pomors were engaged in several types of fish-

ing. The main activity was cod fishing in Barents Sea near the Murman coast, in which a significant number of Pomors from all parts of the White Sea took part. Cod fishing began in May and ended in late autumn. Other occupations included seal hunting in spring, as well as coastal and river fishing. These occupations are regarded as traditional because they were carried out using traditional fishing equipment. There were small rowing boats for sea fishing. Moreover, the traditional character of fishing is confirmed by the Pomor concept of fishing as akin to harvesting, something which can only be carried out at a particular time of the year. This concept of fishing is reflected in the saying 'the sea is our field' (Maximov 1984). The traditional nature of this trade is also confirmed by the use of sacred magic rituals during fishing, various incantations and ceremonies (Korotaev 1998). Fishing existed in this form until the early 1930s, when collective farms, the kolkhozy, began to be established in Russia.

Russia's transition to a market economy and competition from Norwegian fishers initiated a transformation of traditional methods of nature management. However, there were no crucial changes at that time, and the Pomor traditions were still upheld. The one thing that helped conserve the traditional way of fishing was the Pomors' resistance to the modernization of fishing boats and equipment. This trend emerged among the Pomor people at the turn of the nineteenth century. It is interesting that Russian Pomors communicated very actively with the Norwegian Pomor people, who were the driving force behind this modernization. *"Russian Pomors watched the Norwegians. They neither rejected everything, nor did they adopt everything. For instance, Russian Pomors rejected trawling, because they considered it destructive"* (Korotaev 1998: 49). The traditional ways of nature management by the Pomors, including fishing, was based on the Pomor traditional culture - a dialogue between human being and nature, which was viewed as an intelligent power.

The physical requirements of deep-sea and coastal fishing determined how it was organized. Since fishing tackle was sizable, even in small boats several men were needed to handle it. For this reason, fishing had to be carried out collectively, by a group of people or a team. In other words, the collective nature of Pomor fishing determined its organizational form. Thus, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the practice of pokruf, or employment, emerged. This was when wealthy Pomors, who owned boats and fishing equipment, hired a team of poorer men, who were called 'pokrutchiks' (Krysanov 2002).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian state promoted cooperatives that were independent of wealthy boat owners, providing loans to them to enable them build boats and buy fishing equipment. Pomors also organized cooperatives for coastal ice-fishing and established common settlements for fishers. Seal hunting was also carried out collectively. The fishers acquired all the necessary knowledge in the traditional way - from previous generations (Korotaev

1998).

It should be pointed out that, in addition to fishing, the Pomor village residents were also engaged in farming and various forms of forestry, which involved whole families and even clans. Social interactions were regulated by a traditional village community called 'mir' (Vlasova 1995: 8). Thus, the Pomors were simultaneously fishers, seal hunters, peasants, hunters, sealer, gatherers and woodcutters. But their main activity, fishing, still prevailed. This traditional way of life in a Pomor village was maintained for centuries (Bershtam 1978). The most significant changes that took place in the Pomor villages in the twentieth century were establishment of fishing kolkhozy in the late 1920s and 1930s. During that period, the Russian village was transformed. The Soviet regime tried to eradicate traditional ways of life and agricultural practices in Russian villages and make it exclusively utilitarian from an economic point of view. As a result, the social and economic life of the Pomor villages deviated from its traditional forms for the first time in this period as a result of the policy pursued by the Soviet state. During that period, the main social and economic institution of the Pomor village, the 'mir', was forcibly destroyed and replaced by collective farms (Korotaev 1998).

As regards the history of Pomor collective fishing farms, in the early thirties, collective farms became the main social institution. In this context, social and economic activities, including traditional nature management, were developing in the Pomor villages. Collective farms were established and traditional agricultural methods were transformed, a development which we will now examine.

The Transformation of Collective Fishing and Other Fishing Practices in the Soviet Period: The Collective Farms of the Onega Peninsula in the Arkhangel'sk Region

Practically all of the fishing kolkhozy on the Onega Peninsula appeared in 1930. Originally, almost the entire adult population joined collective farms. One of our respondents described a kolkhoz in the following way, "*It is neither a private enterprise, nor is it a state one, but a productive cooperative. People combine their material portions and their labour. And with these they can raise capital*" (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946). The main distinguishing factor with regard to the creation of fishing kolkhozy in coastal villages was the presence of the tradition of collective fishing, which had been in existence for a considerable length of time, during both the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. '*We had artels here, you see; it is difficult to work alone at sea, it's hard on the family*' (Hunter and fisher, former teacher in Purnema village, m., b. 1960). The actual process of organizing the collective farm was, as in other places, extremely difficult. Compulsory collectivization of the fishers' boats and vessels, livestock and equipment took place; some were dispossessed ('raskulacheny') and sent into exile. However, the ready-made social structures, namely the fishing artels, made

the transition to the kolkhoz collective system of farming considerably easier. Although the fishing kolkhozy were created as fisheries, their members were also forced to do a considerable amount of agricultural work.

Although the fishing kolkhozy were created as fisheries, their members were also forced to do a considerable amount of agricultural work. One of our respondents observed, '*At that time, we had gosplans [state plans from State Planning Committees] and party tasks*' (Chair of the collective fishery, man, b. 1946). They began to cultivate new crops and breed animals, which had previously not traditionally been bred. Alongside the traditionally cultivated cereals and legumes, members of the collective farm started to cultivate vegetables, including potatoes, while those involved in livestock began to keep poultry and swine, as well as the traditional horse-breeding and sheep and cattle rearing. The agricultural work was carried out by teams of workers. Often adolescents were among those who laboured in the teams.

Traditional methods of fishing in the collective fishery were gradually transformed. By the end of the 1930s and beginning of the 1940s sea fishing was already dominated by the use of small vessels - boats with mechanical engines. In addition to this, sailing and rowing vessels (lod'i, ran'shiny, shnyaki, yaly, kar-basy) were still being used, but significantly fewer were being produced. On several motorboats, a trawler net was already being used for catching fish. This was considerably more lucrative than traditional seasonal fishing with lines³, sweep-nets, riuzhi⁴, and nets. These boats, nevertheless, had limited movement, and like those with sails were unable to venture further than 40 miles from the shore even in good weather. Fishing with them, therefore, continued to be limited. All the fish which were caught were processed by the crew by hand before being passed on. The amount of fish caught was comparatively small, and thus this form of fishing did not undermine the fish stocks (Korotaev 1998).

It is necessary to note that fishing using small vessels and motorboats is fully compatible with the historical view of traditional exploitation of nature. To a certain extent, this could be considered comparable to the transition from traditional hunting methods to the use of firearms. Furthermore, the rigging used on the boats was in principle the same as that used on sailing boats. Such fishing practices can therefore be considered traditional, to the extent that they were not alien to the coastal village community. Previously, members of the collective farm participated in the fishing, and only the captain and the mechanical engineer were engaged as trained professionals, having completed special training elsewhere. The remaining members of the team learned the skills of seafaring and fishing from the previous generation, and studied them within the community.

³ Lines - fishing tackle comprised of a rope, several hundred metres long, and bait, usually small fish, on hooks.

⁴ Riuzha - a variety of net, used in shore (ice) fishing.

In addition, one segment of the population of the communal farm practised sea fishing while another practiced coastal and stream fishing, both when working and in their free time. The traditional sacred relationship to fishing surprisingly quickly gave way to a utilitarian approach. Prayers and incantations faded from everyday usage, but did not disappear completely, remaining at the back of people's minds. Such customs were still adhered to by the older generation. Often, when they found themselves in extreme situations, both the older and younger generations resorted to these customs (Filatov 1994).

Besides all this, the members of the collective farm were busy with agriculture. It is necessary to note that agriculture was first and foremost directed towards ensuring that their own needs were met; the remainder of the produce went to the state, although it was always unprofitable due to the lack of satisfactory transport links. One of our respondents characterized their agricultural production in the following way, *“There was agriculture, just as there is today. It's been preserved to a small extent. But all this was only supplementary due to the profit that we received from our fleet of boats. Agriculture was fundamentally unprofitable; we didn't make any profit from it. Both bringing things here and transporting them away is very expensive. You just end up over-paying. It was to feed yourself as well. We handed over some to the state, of course. We had to fulfil the [state] plan”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, b. 1958).

Work on the collective farm was extremely hard, especially during the Second World War and its aftermath, as the majority of the male population had perished. One of our respondents recalled this period, *“In spring, we ploughed collective fields for 30 days. I ploughed using a couple of horses. And then sawed all the firewood for the collective farm and for ourselves, and then there was hay-making in remote areas. We were cutting, rowing, making stacks. Autumn and summer pass in the same way, we dug up the potatoes, transported them, ploughed the fields. Then in winter, in the fishing season, we caught fish in very remote places”* (Pensioner, former worker at the collective fishery, b. 1918).

During this period, fishing was continued by the women, under the direction of the elderly men. The women not only occupied themselves with the shore fishing, but also went out on the boats. One of our respondents remembers it in this way, *“I was also at sea for a year, and spent the winter in Murmansk. On the 3 November, such a strong storm swept in from Pertominsk. It was impossible to eat or drink. Then, another year, I only arrived on the 14 November, and spent a whole year on the boat. We set off from the collective farm to fish for herring with a sense of duty. Even if you didn't want to, you went”* (Pensioner, former worker at the collective fishery, b. 1922). The geographical location of the fishing villages determined their daily routine in many respects. The majority of them were isolated from the wider world, did not possess reliable transport links, and were out of range of all electrical supplies and radio and telephone links.

Accordingly, the provision of transport links depended upon the season. In summer, access was from the sea, and in winter over land. It was expensive to use aeroplanes and helicopters, therefore helicopters were deployed only in cases of emergency. Settlements had their own mini power stations. Then, in the Soviet period, coastal villages had an image of being isolated communities; there was an increase in communication between villages, but significantly less with the rest of the mainland, the regions and the administrative centres of the districts.

Notwithstanding the isolation of fishing settlements, the state system of handling over and processing fish was organized in such a way that it worked well for the collective farms. Besides this, the kolkhozy had their own association, - a fisheries cooperative - within the framework of which they resolved all issues pertaining to fishing, the sale of fish, loans for repairs and the acquisition of vessels. Moreover, this administrative structure and system stayed in place until the end of the 1990s.

One distinctive feature of the fishing kolkhozy throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet period was their profitability. The practice of fishing gave the upper hand to the collective fishing farm over the purely agricultural kolkhozy, which in the 1950s and 1960s were converted into sovkhos farms (state collective farms) en masse; in other words, they became state enterprises. This phenomenon was brought about due to the state's new investment policies, directed first and foremost towards the support of unprofitable state farms in areas where farming was unreliable. One of our respondents described it in the following way: *“Soviet agriculture appeared, and the state began to help. Capital was invested, and not only directed towards production but also towards the social sphere, with the aim of developing the sociocultural daily sphere. The government made significant investments in this. The make-up of the feed changed a lot then. A lot of sugar beet, sunflower residues and feed-combinations were brought from the south; in other words there was a massive injection of resources into the agricultural industry”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, b. 1946).

This period took its toll on the collective fisheries. Several collective fisheries were also forced to abandon fishing and become state farms. At the same time, collective farms were enlarged. From 1930 to 1957, the territory of the collective farm overlapped with that of the village and its fields and woodland. In 1957, however, a government decree enlarged the collective farms to the extent that they absorbed three to four villages. They have remained in this form until the present day (Interview with the head of a fishing kolkhoz, b. 1958).

The process of enlarging collective farms and the change in the organizational structure of several collective farms (kolkhoz) into state collective farms (sovkhos), took place in the context of the technical modernization of the fishing industry. In spite of their considerable profitability, additional means were needed for the modernization of the collective fisheries, namely loans. Loans were only

given through the fishing kolkhoz union, or 'Rybakolkhozsoyuz' and with the agreement of the party leader of the Arkhangel'sk district, and therefore not all collective farms successfully acquired credit (Interview with pensioner, former head of a fishing kolkhoz, f., b. 1922).

Towards the beginning of the 1970s, lines of communication were laid through the territory of several collective fisheries in the Onega region. These railway lines and highways meant that their agricultural activities became relatively more profitable. This was one of the reasons for the transformation of the fishing kolkhozy into agricultural sovkhov state farms. One could therefore see in these villages the substitution of one fundamental social institution for another. The new institution was essentially different from the previous one.

It is important to note that all six kolkhozy on the Onega Peninsula remained collective fisheries. In other words they preserved their fundamental social institute, that of a kolkhoz. In this same period, these fishing kolkhozy undertook a qualitative change in the structure and organization of the exploitation of natural resources. From the end of the 1950s to the 1970s, the fishing kolkhozy gained possession of large fishing trawlers. Through their union, the fishing kolkhozy hired professionals from elsewhere to work on the boats. At the beginning, those workers in the collective fisheries who had undertaken specialized training worked on these boats, but by the mid-1990s, on the whole, only hired workers operated them, although they did not become members of the fishing kolkhoz. One of respondents described it in the following manner: "*The crews of both the large trawlers and medium-size trawlers assembled in Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk. In other words, the colleges prepared entire workforces for the fishing fleets there. Our rural folk also went there, but as a rule they started as sailors then studied to become skilled technologists and mechanical engineers; they then became residents of the town*" (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b, 1946).

The modernization in the methods used to catch fish led to a general change in the practice of fishing. Ocean fish were caught, and as a result a rift appeared between catches and traditional places and seasons. Kolkhoz boats were now out fishing throughout the year, working not only in the White Sea and the Barents Sea, but also venturing into the Atlantic Ocean. In addition, the quantity of fish caught increased, partly due to improved technology, and fishing was now practised on an industrial scale. It is easy to understand that such a view of the exploitation of natural resources was subject to a quota, determined by international agreement. In relation to this, one of our respondents noted: '*From 1975, we were limited by quotas, each year this quota grew smaller*' (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1958).

A rather paradoxical situation arose, as members of the fishing kolkhoz were transformed from workers and participants in a cooperative into proprietors of boats, quotas and fish. The kolkhoz, as a single collective proprietor was making

a profit, and paid for moorage and boat repairs at ports, paid the wages of the vessel's crew, and for the team of fishers, while also organizing the sale of fish. The fishing kolkhoz spent the remainder of the profit on provisions for members of the fishing kolkhoz and other inhabitants of the coastal villages. Furthermore, the kolkhoz collective farms and all agriculture were maintained solely by the profit from the fish caught using trawlers. The farms produced dairy and meat products and cultivated vegetables and grain. Beyond this, the profit made from sea fish was also used to maintain the bureau of the kolkhoz and other kolkhoz housing, paid the wages of all members of the kolkhoz, was used to buy a tractor and other machinery and paid for the upkeep of the local diesel power station, which continuously required additions and deliveries of fuel oil (Interview with the Head of a fishing kolkhoz, f., b. 1967).

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of economical and social development, both for the fishing kolkhozy and the coastal villages, which were provided for by the profit from the fishing industry and fishing resources. Simultaneously, fishing with trawlers also provided the collective fishery with considerable revenues, and the politics of taxation of the Soviet government permitted the kolkhoz to use the revenue for the development of their infrastructure and social sphere. *“The trawler worked, agricultural production worked, there was a lot of livestock. All the same, the collective farming produced a profit and little by little started to build up a material base. We built one farm, then another; we built a garage, a boiler room, and then a nursery. The Soviet government began to help with the children's nursery. Before that, we hadn't had any help from them”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

At the same time, the kolkhoz showed itself to be a self-governing social institution. Decisions pertaining to construction projects in accordance with the rules of the kolkhoz were taken at communal meetings of members of the kolkhoz. *“It was always like this, there were always discussions at any time. It was a democratic procedure. It always was, is and will be. I might be expected to say, as the chair, that this made things difficult, but it didn't. Discussing these questions meant that we discovered the weak and the strong points. In other words, I always ask the question, Are we making the right decision? It's good when there are suggestions. And it's bad when mere aren't, when you come across a passive response to this or that question”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

It is impossible to reconcile fishing practices using trawlers with traditional exploitation of natural resources; trawling is a purely commercial, industrial practice. However, it was precisely this practice which has provided security for the traditional life in coastal villages for the previous 30 years or so. It is possible to discuss, at this point, how within the fundamental social institution, new practices appeared which did not lead to a change in the usual path ('path dependency') or departure from the usual route ('track') of social practices and provided for the

reproduction of institutions. We have seen how, over the course of several decades, a complete change occurred in fishing technology, in its participants and in the quantity of fish caught. It should be noted that, in spite of the modernization of engineering and technology, the same institutional form was preserved - the kolkhoz and the social practices of the exploitation of natural resources within the village.

The modernization of sea fishing did not result in a change in the fundamental forms of activities or the social institutions of the coastal villages. The functioning of the kolkhoz remained on its usual 'track' and new forms of fishing and agriculture were built upon this. But the onward development of coastal fishing villages with the collective farm as the fundamental socioeconomic institution was impeded by the reforms of the 1990s and substantially changed at the beginning of the twenty first century. We will analyze this period in the next section of this chapter.

Contemporary Life Strategies of Fishing Kolkhozes and Coast-Dwelling Communities

We highlight a few life strategies of coast-dwelling communities that were adopted in the reform period (1990s and beginning of the twenty-first century) to ensure reproduction of the community. The main strategy was the retention of the kolkhozy as the main social-economic institution. And within this institution we further distinguish strategies that helped the community to survive and to continue its development. Among the strategies adopted by the community was the creation of an indigenous minority and community council. As noted above, most agricultural kolkhozy existed until the 1950s and 1960s and were transformed into sovkhozy, that is, into government businesses, many of which operated at a loss. In the fishing kolkhozy this did not happen. On the one hand, their basic activity, fishing, was yielding high profits, so these kolkhozy were considered to be rich. On the other, their structure and activity corresponded to their historically established collective form of nature management. For these reasons the kolkhozy survived the first wave of economic reforms, whereas in the middle of the 1990s all sovkhozy were handed over to different shareholders and turned into non-governmental stock companies, many of which went bankrupt and were liquidated.

In our view, the conservation of the kolkhozy as economic organizations and as the Pomor community's form of nature management tells about the peculiarities of the Pomor character. Ethnographers (Maksimov 1984, Terebikhin 1993) and respondents said it to be characterized by the absence of a business spirit in its contemporary understanding as the maximization of profits and outperforming all competitors. As a consequence, the reforms of the 1990s had no immediate impact on the socioeconomic conditions of the Pomor villages.

This gave the fishers of the kolkhozy a readiness to practise a real fishing economy and maintain themselves to a large extent. As a matter of fact, the fishers in the kolkhozes were self-financing throughout the Soviet period. They had only their own resources to invest in new technology and infrastructure and were able to provide themselves with basic vegetables, meat, dairy and fish products. This way the economical reforms could not prevent the Pomor villages from developing in their other, customary way ('track'). The main social establishment of the village could be well preserved thanks to the organizational forms that were necessary to adapt the reforms.

However, the reforms forced the kolkhozy to search for new partners (to look for a direct exchange with foreign countries), create new organizational forms (connect with each other, set aside part of the kolkhoz production for the use of the kolkhoz population), return to traditional agricultural technology (switch from tractors and cars to horses) and start making additional income by exploiting the forests; this meant that they had to start manufacturing, an unusual development for the most prosperous period of the fishing kolkhozy.

Despite the active search for living strategies, the fishing kolkhozy as enterprises operated at a loss for several years. Therefore they could not immediately restore their agricultural production under the new taxation system. One of the interviewees criticizes the policy of the government: "*As Chubays says, no matter how much money we send to this village, it all disappears. Therefore I could only tell him: don't send anything, just don't oppress us with taxes*" (Head of fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

In 1998 high taxes, inflation, liquidation of the whole administrative structure and of the system of the fishing kolkhozes' union led to substantial difficulties, for example in the activity of the kolkhozy or in their interaction. Some kolkhozy kept working independently; five kolkhozy united their fleets, establishing an 'association founded on trust, without the constitution of a juridical identity' and founding a management structure - a fleet management service consisting of hired specialists. This way, a new organizational structure emerged, one founded on free will and one in which the kolkhozy themselves decided on the extent to which they wanted to follow the fishing kolkhoz union. One institutional form appeared in the place of another, taking in previous patterns and, now as before, proposing a preset course.

Voluntary merger of the kolkhozy, as well as the inclination to work with foreign partners, proved to be an effective strategy. This allowed the kolkhozy to pay off debts within two years and to begin renewing the fleet structure in the year 2000 - improving the management and the fish-catching by hiring specialists and leasing new vessels that made it possible not only to fish for usual types of fish, but also to fish on the ocean. A respondent said: "*We were able not only to fish for cod and Peter's fish, but we also started fishing for herring, mackerel and*

perch. And thus we started buying boats, new models. We borrowed money from the government. The interest rates were high; even today they are not low. But we developed in terms of structure; we started cooperating with the Norwegians, meaning they became our partners. Selling fish has always been more convenient abroad than in Russia” (Head of fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

Life in the fishing kolkhozy was eventually put into order; wages could be paid on time and the agricultural equipment was modernized. However, the government was preparing new difficulties. In 2004 it started new 'nature preservation' reforms that reduced the fishing quotas for the fishing kolkhozy while increasing fees for biological resources. For the Barents Sea, the biological resources were redistributed between Russia and Norway by the bilateral Russian-Norwegian Commission. Until 2004, the laws were such that Russia distributed these resources among different subjects of the Federation, every one of which received shares according to their concrete activity. This distribution of the fishing resources is called the distribution of the fish catch quotas. (For more about fishing quotas, see Chapter 5).

After 2004, fish became a federal resource. Therefore the setting of fees for using this resource and the distribution of the quotas among enterprises came under the direct control of federal institutions. The quota for each enterprise was determined according to a 'historical principle', or, as our respondents think, according to 'pseudo-historical' principles, since quotas were formulated according to the data available for the past three years. This way the main fishing enterprises, large industrial undertakings that had been actively participating in the quota auctions, received a large share of the Russian quotas. This is the manner in which quotas were distributed until 2008.

Under these circumstances, the majority of the fishing kolkhozy received small quotas (permission to catch 100 to 1, 000 tons of three different types of fish, each year), since many of them were not able to take part in the auctions and could not buy quotas. In essence, the kolkhozy will receive their small share until 2008, and even afterwards the Russian government plans to continue this same form of distribution. One respondent explained: *“Whoever has received little will still receive little for the next five years. This is our hopeless situation - we are locked in a circle. We cannot participate in the auctions, we have no means for that, and we have no priority rights as an indigenous minority”* (Head of fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967).

To further explain this situation, we will show how the quotas were redistributed using the example of one kolkhoz. From 1998 to 2003 the kolkhoz received quotas of 900 tons of cod each year and as it owned a trawler, it could basically fish all year round. In 2004, the quotas went as low as 240 tons of cod and 130 tons of haddock, that is, 370 tons of sea and ocean fish per year. In addition to this, the government introduced restrictions. If a business or the fishing kolkhoz

owned less than 620 tons of biological resources in their fleet, it was not allowed to go to sea. This forced the fishing kolkhozes to unite their quotas with other kolkhozy and companies, to reduce their fleets or to rent them out. As a result, the kolkhozy have been making less profit than if they were to use their quotas independently. This has had effects on the agricultural and social conditions of the Pomor villages.

In the course of these developments, large fishing businesses and different holdings asked the kolkhozy to sell their quotas or change their organizational form so that they could become part of the holdings. The kolkhozy did not take this step, understanding that this would make them lose their independence. The kolkhozy had not gone bankrupt and were not liquidated under extremely hard economical conditions. The kolkhoz collectives, supported by the entire village community, made a conscious choice and stayed on the 'beaten track', going the 'former route'. In contrast, the government's policy was to force the fishing kolkhozy to abandon their beaten track.

Not only does the governmental policy not support the fishing kolkhozy, but it also intensifies their competition with new private companies. This is how one of the respondents evaluates them: *“Once this was not a private traders' business. There were no private traders here. There were only large companies and the fishing kolkhozes. That's all. But then, in the 1990s, when this ended, private traders appeared everywhere, here and in the Far East. And sure, they also needed to make profits. They most likely also had friends in the government. They were able to lobby for their interests in the Duma. And that's it. They decided to pool everything, and again everything was redistributed at our expense”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1958).

It thus becomes clear that it is hard for collective fish farms to compete with major companies and their factories in a modern market economy. From an economic point of view, a collective fish farm, which is burdened with 'attendant industry' in the form of agriculture supporting community infrastructure, is not the most effective type of enterprise in the field of fishing, nor is it supposed to be. A kolkhoz has a different purpose - the welfare of its members. In this case one must understand the dual nature of the collective farm: on the one hand it is a business, on the other it is an association of local residents, a cooperative and a community which secures their everyday life, and even, to a certain degree, a form of autonomy. As a result, kolkhozy are not trying to make as much money as possible; they want to make enough to secure the lives of people in the community. When one considers that kolkhozy are virtually the only enterprises in coastal villages and that life in these settlements is entirely dependent upon them, one can understand the enormous role they play in preserving the coastal population. The issue is not just the preservation of local traditions and culture, but the preservation of these communities in general, since at present no real economic

alternative for their development has been put forward.

Market reforms and the policy implemented by the state thus created a situation in which fishing kolkhozy found themselves in a difficult position. This prompted them to adopt a vital strategy which promised gains but kept to the beaten track as before. By uniting in an association based on trust, five fishing kolkhozy became fairly major players in the region's fishing industry. The kolkhoz association went to an auction and bought up more quotas so that there would be no less than 1,000 tons on board, bearing in mind that their boats could catch 1,500-2,000 tons per year. This would allow them to achieve the main aim of the activities of the fishing kolkhozy: to direct the profits from fishing towards preserving the lives of the population of their villages. One of the respondents spoke about this directly: *“In the village farming is not profitable. We sell electricity to the population for 80 kopeks, but its cost is 20 roubles. The state guarantees that we will receive the difference, but while everything is fine on paper, as soon as you get down to business the state says 'sorry, we don't have the money in the budget right now, the money will come later”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1958).

Another respondent added: *“Here we pay for all the training and the journeys to treatment centres, there and back. Not to mention that for pensioners every celebration and funeral is at our expense; it happens thanks to the kolkhoz. And local maintenance of roads, bridges, and berths as well”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967). In order to guarantee their competitiveness, the collective fish farms started to draw up another new and vital strategy which consisted of working directly with foreign partners. This strategy was relatively new and as before it incorporated existing experience. Russian Pomors had lengthy experience of pre-revolutionary cooperation with Norwegian coastal dwellers. From the 1930s to the 1990s, however, direct cooperation was not put into practice. During the reform period of the 1990s the conclusion of direct agreements with Norwegian, Swedish and other foreign enterprises and direct yields in foreign markets not only provided additional profits, but also developed direct sociocultural links. The strategy of working with foreign partners gave collective farms the opportunity not just to receive prepayment (of up to 80 per cent) and sell fish in Norway, Denmark, England and Portugal at a higher price than in Russia, but also to receive credit for the modernization of their fleet at more favourable rates than were possible in Russia. A respondent explained: *“While here we would get credit at a savings bank at 19 per cent annual interest, they would give us credit at 9 per cent interest. It was a noticeable difference. And they helped us to obtain, or rather, lease these modern boats. We started to build, processing plants there, and as a result we gradually renovated our fleet”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

Yet another strategy which has enabled the viable development of fishing

kolkhozy is the additional production which has come about in the past few years - seaweed harvesting, catching seals, fish cultivation, and timber exploitation (timber harvesting and lumbering). Let us look at timber exploitation in more detail. Timber exploitation for both personal needs and for sale existed in coastal villages even in the pre-revolutionary and Soviet pre-collective farm period. It was traditional. Timber exploitation for the sake of the collective farm was carried out during the entire period of the farms' existence, but it became an independent form of production only in the 1990s in a few kolkhozy. A respondent told us: *“Around 1994-97 we cut down a forested area here and transported it to Murmansk with our fleet. At that time there were roughly 30 boats in the Union of Collective Fish Farms system. We took the wood and planks there and brought back fish. You could take a truck with 10-12 lots of timber and bring back 10-12 tons of cod, haddock, flounder or halibut. And of course the whole village and the town were pleased that the collective farm workers were finally bringing back fish again and feeding everyone with it. It was great”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

As we have already mentioned, virtually all kolkhozy cultivate woodland and use the timber for their needs. Another respondent explained the other uses of timber by collective farms: *“We have to provide wood in the first place for our schools, clubs, libraries, hospitals, clinics, kindergartens, and administrative buildings. Then the collective farm members and pensioners who have the rights receive free wood from us; in other words we fully supply them with wood for the year. We do this in accordance with a decision made by the general assembly. And in this way we have protected our population throughout these 14 years of reform”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1946).

The opportunity to export lumber and lumber products all year round is very significant. But the volume of timber harvested by the collective farms is 10-20 times less than that produced by timber companies in the Arkhangel'sk Region. Even those kolkhozy which sell lumber and products do not produce more than 10, 000 cubic metres per year, part of which goes for the renovation of collective farm homes and buildings and part of which goes on sale in processed form and as logs, with roughly a quarter of this wood for the coastal village's population and social facilities. Sometimes the wood is sold to businesses in the town of Onega. One collective farm which is situated next to a highway managed to self its prepared timber in Onega and the planks from its lumber mill in Arkhangel'sk, which helped them to survive the year when fishing was suspended and the farm suffered losses. All of the timber harvesting of the kolkhozy is carried out in the so-called rural forests, which previously belonged to the farms but in 2004 were transferred to the control of the regional authorities and began to be divided up at auctions and based on tenders. Since fishing kolkhozy were unable to compete with major timber companies or even small specialized timber enterprises for a

raw timber base, in the last few years it has become increasingly difficult for them to get wood for their activities and the new Forestry Code passed in 2006 will make it even more difficult to lease forests. Thus profitable timber harvesting is also a relatively new strategy and fits entirely within the path previously taken. Here, the state, in supporting the major timber companies in this field with legislation, is squeezing the kolkhozy out of this area of activity.

Other types of extra new activities in kolkhozy, such as harvesting seaweed, involve low prices for the raw materials and difficulties with delivery and distribution. The development of other forms of activity in the majority of kolkhozy which have free-standing diesel electricity stations is also problematic due to the high cost of electricity and, as a result, the high cost of any production. Because of this, one kolkhoz set up a fish farm near Arkhangel'sk, but the kolkhoz is situated on the Onega Peninsula, far from this location. Thus the fish farm is another economically profitable enterprise owned by the kolkhoz, but is separated from it geographically. The workers at the fish farm come from Arkhangel'sk, meaning that the farm cannot provide jobs for kolkhoz members, but it can provide money to support life in coastal communities.

An essential function of the kolkhoz is the support of unprofitable and completely inefficient production in Pomor villages. This reflects the kolkhoz's social, rather than economic, orientation and demonstrates that it is a social as well as an economic means of organizing the local community. Unprofitable production in coastal villages, which includes production of electrical energy, agricultural production, and coastal fishing, is directed toward maintaining the community, creating jobs, and ensuring self-sufficiency. We will focus on coastal fishing, which is self-sufficient, yet does not make a profit for the collective farm. Besides providing jobs and fish for the community, support for coastal fishing is also support for a traditional way of fishing that is connected with the Pomor identity. Since, as we have already noted, deep-sea fishing is no longer part of traditional natural resource use and is even alienated from it, traditional fishing practices are preserved only in coastal fishing for herring, navaga, salmon, hunchback salmon, and flounder. One of the respondents said: "*Any fish that lived in the sea, we caught. In my day, we caught navaga and herring, but earlier they caught korekha, herring, flounder, whitefish, and bull trout. We fish from Kiy Island to the Konyukhovoy Gulf. That is, along the entire shore*" (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1963).

In addition, the traditional gear, methods and collective form of fishing are still being used. The same respondent said: But for the kolkhoz, we fish only with nets. We have about 80 nets for six people. It takes all day to collect them, and then we have to sort them out. After all, not only navaga are caught in these nets. Fluke and korekha also get in there. We dump them out onto the shore, which we freeze for the purpose. There we stir them around with rakes, so that they freeze,

but do not freeze through. Next, we get down on our knees and sort them, small fry with the small fry, and big ones with the big ones. The navaga have to be hand picked, large, straight, and frozen; this is how we produce our product.

Horses are used to carry the fish from the ice, and the brigade of fishers lives in fishers' huts during the entire catch. These round-timber huts are about 4 metres by 3 metres, are lit with kerosene lamps, and have a small stove with a cooker. Six people sit and sleep on plank beds that surround a table. The sale of fish from the coastal catch is arranged by the buyers themselves. A different respondent explained: "*Certain people concern themselves with the fish. They call, they find out if there are fish or not; they come, buy them up and sell them in Arkhangel'sk, Severodvinsk, and Novodvinsk. Today, they come from close by. In about two and a half hours they drive here, carry away the fish, and sell them back there. They drop by, find out how many fish have been caught, drive to the kolkhoz, pay their money in the office, get their invoice, and return here. It's all the same to them, since on the return trip they drive past anyway. When we didn't have roads, we took the fish on horses to the southwest logging road. There, we had to arrange the time that the car carrying the buyers would arrive*" (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1955).

Payments for biological resources, in this case fish, are high enough, but as long as the kolkhoz withholds certain deductions, it pays out only part of the money, and the fishing remains self-supporting. Traditional coastal fishing is also preserved when Pomors fish for themselves. Everyone takes part in these catches - the men, the women, the small children, and even the very old. They look upon the catch as an integral part of their livelihood and as a traditional activity without which they could not imagine themselves living and through which their coastal identity is constructed. One of the respondents said: "*When the ice appears, the old women come out onto the ice to catch navaga. We sometimes quarrel over our spots. We all want to eat the fish, and only those that can't don't go out*" (Pensioner, former finance manager of kolkhoz, f., b. 1931).

The traditional, specially ornamented fisherwoman's jumper, worn only for fishing, proves that among the Pomors fishing was traditionally not only a male occupation, but also a female one. Today, life on the fishing kolkhozy is hard enough. However, personal life strategies are frequently connected with the collective farm. This is true for the young and for the middle-aged. "*Yes, most often now the young remain, because there is nothing for them to do in the city*" (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967).

The young people used to move to the city and find work. Today, work has become significantly more difficult to find. Even more so, it has become more difficult to get an education. If at one time there was a system of free elementary and higher education, now it has practically turned into a system that requires payment. However, kolkhoz workers earn only two to three thousand roubles a

month -lower than the regional subsistence wage - and cannot pay for their children's higher education.

In the Soviet Union, village teachers were mainly outsiders. The system distributed graduates of teachers' colleges among the villages. New graduates, being young specialists, had to work three years in such villages. No such system exists anymore, and teachers, including those who used to live in the villages, try to find work in the cities or suburbs. In coastal villages, teachers are often graduates from village schools who do not have any special education. As a result, the level of teaching is low, thus making it impossible for graduates to move onto college. The same respondent said directly: *“If the children are not educated, they can't get situated in the city, and they stay in the country”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967).

Other everyday problems could also be added to this picture. Among these are furnace heating; the absence of sanitation; low levels of electrical power resulting from outages and the eight to ten hours per day that the dizel' electric plant works; one television channel - that does not always work; very bad telephone connections; the absence of mobile phone service and internet connections; and lack of access to qualified medical care, legal services, cosmetic services, and other services characteristic of the city environment.

Low wages, the everyday village routine and the loss of the traditional holiday culture during Soviet period all prompted parents and children to conclude that 'there is nothing to do in the village'. From this picture, it is clear why village youth are trying to leave their native regions and migrate to the cities. Collective fish farms understand this mentality and are trying to help the young make their choice. A respondent said: *“Fortunately, in general, they find a place on the kolkhoz, this one at the dizel' station, that one at the local course for tractor drivers. We train them. We disburse as much money as possible for our children's education in colleges and technical schools. If someone wants to do work that doesn't fit our profile, we give him a loan, and he slowly pays it back after he starts working. If the work does fit our profile, it is connected with the fishing industry, then he receives the education for free. This comes from the fishing profits”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967).

We turn to a vital strategy that already extends beyond the framework of the fishing kolkhoz and by which the local community is trying to organize its life. This strategy, which is closely connected to the coastal identity, consists of creating and registering a native minority community. It can be considered an attempt to move off the beaten path (path dependency); that is, it is the creation of a new social institution in the coastal community. Where the formation of the Pomor identity is concerned, on the one hand, native residents of the fishing villages are called and call themselves Pornors; on the other hand, since such a nationality did not exist in the Soviet Union, they were registered as Russians. This situation be-

gan to change in the 1990s, when there occurred a surge in national self-consciousness. At that time, several Pomor organizations were established in Arkhangel'sk. These organizations not only revived the culture, traditional holidays, clothes, songs, and so on, but also achieved recognition of the Pomors as a native minority and their inclusion in the list of nationalities.

This was the most that they could do. However, these organizations were not able to build a connection with the Pomor villages, because the Pomor identity is formed in the villages with little or no input from the Pomor organizations. In addition, the village population knows practically nothing about these organizations. One of the respondents said: *“This question is far fetched. When we had a population census, I personally harboured great resentment toward our administration. They didn't even tell us that we could register and declare ourselves Pomors. And, in that all-Russian census we were simply designated as Russians. Not only in one such village, but everywhere. If we had known that we could have, we would have registered as Pomors everywhere. I know that I am a native Pomor. Maybe they would treat us differently, as they did with other nationalities. In my opinion, the Arkhangel'sk Pomor organizations exist for themselves alone. They've spent no time in Pomor villages, and they're not interested in us”* (Village teacher, f, b. 1958).

However, residents believe that Pomor organizations will work in the country as well as in the city, and the true census will finally take place. In this census, Pomors will be able to freely declare themselves Pomors. Another respondent said: *“The true census will come. After all, there are also Pomors in Arkhangel'sk, in Severodvinsk; how could there be a Kholmory without Pomors; in Mezen, they're all Pomors”* (Hunter and fisher, former teacher, m., b. 1960). In addition, residents of coastal villages understand that their Pomor identity is formed by their connection to the sea and that, above all, residents of coastal villages can call themselves Pomors. The same respondent said: *“But after all are people in Arkhangel'sk really as closely connected to the sea as we are? We are connected to this sea by a living umbilical cord”*.

Many village residents and the management of the fishing kolkhozy understand that their recognition as an indigenous minority would give them a chance to preserve traditional natural resource use. The local population, which has always fished with traditional gear for themselves and for the collective farm, does not understand why several years ago they introduced a charge for using biological resources, that is, for their traditional catch. The introduction of this fee put the local population on the same footing as any city-dweller who comes to catch fish on the seacoast. In conjunction with the changes in the law, a whole 'war' broke out when armed men came with the fish inspector and took the 'illegal' fishing gear from the Pomor fishers. After a while, this situation was rectified, but as we noted above, it could change at any time, and the collective farm members

will have to pay the full fee for use of biological resources. Residents think that having the status of indigenous minorities would enable them to avoid such a situation. A respondent said hopefully: *“Maybe if they had registered us as Pomors back then, they wouldn't have stolen our nets, and cut them loose. Here everyone, all the fishers, had their nets cut loose. They decided down there that we drain the sea's biological resources. It was such an insult to one's nets cut loose, and later in the same yea, they spilled oil into the sea. But the sea is our life”* (Hunter and fisher, former teacher, m., b. 1960).

Understanding this situation, some of the kolkhoz chairs began to actively support links with Pomor organizations, and one of them initiated a Pomor community organization in the villages belonging to his kolkhoz. The initiative was supported by the collective farm workers, and the community was registered as a social organization. A respondent reported: *“We've formed an indigenous minority community with three villages and an island. However, we literally are just beginning our activity. All this turns on the fact that people want to live today and not sometime in the future. It turns on the fact that we will be able to get biological resources and have priority to take them, only if the government recognizes us”* (Head of a fishing kolkhoz, m., b. 1967).

Even in this case, however, the Pomor community is afraid that problems will emerge. The bureaucrats could allow them to catch a certain quantity of fish for food, but not to sell. The same respondent said: *“And after all there is the 1982 Convention on Maritime Law, which talks about the economic independence of coastal communities. We don't need a primitive life, eating only fish, but we need to survive economically”*.

As a result, this Pomor organization is already more representative than the kolkhoz, and, if needed, can help the population stand up for their rights more effectively. For example, this community is close to the leased base of OAO Onegales, which is certified according to the international system for forest certification FSC (Kulyasova and Kulyasov 2007: 23-27).

The certification standards stipulate that indigenous minorities have a priority right to exploit the forest, that they should be consulted, and that they have control over the plan for wood harvesting. Moreover, an organization such as the community can sign contracts for cooperation with Onegales (Karpachevskiy and Chuprov 2007).

The negotiations between the community and Onegales have already started. In this way, the strategy for the creation and registration of the Pomors communities already might be successful with the defence of the nationality's rights to traditional forest use. When Russia acknowledges the Pomors as an indigenous minority an already prepared organization will defend the right to use the sea's resources.

Conclusion

The analysis of the transformation of nature management in the Pomor community showed that the Pomor village as a community presents itself altogether as a stable set of daily and seasonal practices. The social institutions of the Pomor villages maintain stability and adherence to the beaten track (path dependency). The fishing kolkhoz functions as a fundamental social institution. The first fishing kolkhozy included features of both pre- and post-revolutionary fishing cooperatives. The Pomor fishing kolkhozy preserved specific sociocultural features, connected with traditional culture and traditional nature management.

The appearance of the fishing kolkhoz, in the late 1920s and in the 1930s, became the most significant transformation of the community in the fishing villages for the entire twentieth century. In this period, the Soviet power made great efforts to eradicate traditional society and traditional nature management and aimed to make nature management part of the exclusive utilitarian economic trail. In this way, the leave from the beaten track of Pomor villages' community and their move to another form of development came about in the 1920s and 1930s and was connected with the policies of the Soviet government. New Soviet institutions shaped the path of Pomor society and built a new social structure.

Modernization processes took place in the 1950s and 1960s with the aim of changing the fishing kolkhozy into commercial industrial businesses based on trawling. New practices were introduced, but little changed in the kolkhoz as a social institution. We may say that new practices appeared inside the basic social institution that did not lead to a change of the beaten path or to a departure from the habitual track of social practices and that secured reproductive institutions. Despite a complete change in fishing technology in the course of several decades, its members and the amount of fish caught, the kolkhoz and its social practices of nature management were preserved inside the Pomor villages.

The modernization of some nature management practices such as ocean fishing did not lead to a change of the basic forms of activity and social institutions of the Pomor villages. The functioning of the fishing kolkhoz stayed on the beaten track and built new forms of nature management. But the development of the Pomor fishing village and the kolkhoz as its basic socioeconomic institution was disrupted by the reforms of the 1990s and suffered profound changes in the 2000s. Using the example of a kolkhoz, we traced how the organizational forms of the community and of nature management that developed historically in the pre-Soviet and in the Soviet times have been preserved in the current period of reforms.

The stability of the kolkhoz as a social institution in Soviet and modern times can be explained by economic and sociocultural reasons. On the one hand, the basic activity of kolkhozy - fishing - accounted for self-sufficiency to a large extent. Indeed, throughout all the Soviet period, the fishing kolkhozy were self-

supporting. They had only their own resources to invest in new technology and infrastructure and they were able to support themselves with basic vegetables, meat, dairy products and fish. Therefore the economic reforms could not divert the development of the Pomor village onto a path other than the beaten track. The basic social institution of the village was preserved thanks to the presence of organizational forms in it that were necessary to adapt to the reforms. On the other hand, their structure and activity corresponded to the historically developed forms of collective nature management.

The current stage of transformation of the Pomor community proves the possibility of a new crucial change. The government has radically altered the rules of the game in the essential areas of nature management such as fishing and forestry. It changes the laws in order to strengthen large business in the field of fishing and forestry. This directly affects the life of the Pomor community and undermines the foundations on which it is built. The government pursues policies aimed at the diverting the fishing kolkhozes from the beaten track. However, looking at the example of the strategies analyzed, we can see that the community chooses strategies promoting its preservation in the context of the beaten path (path dependency). These are connected with the attempt to reinstate the traditional Pomor identity and to create new institutions that protect the traditional way of life.

We single out the following for the modern life strategies of the Pomor community: the preservation of the kolkhozy and the creation of a community of indigenous minorities and a community council. The kolkhoz collective, supporting all the village communities, made a conscious choice and stayed on the beaten track. The citizens of the villages supported the kolkhozy because they want to save their Pomor identity, their specific culture and their way of life. They decided to go the habitual path (path dependence). For the kolkhoz we also single out several new strategies that nevertheless had their beginning in the pre-revolutionary and early Soviet period: foreign partners, commercial forestry management and other types of activity yielding profit.

These strategies secured the efficacy of the kolkhozy and the preservation of the traditional way of life in the villages during the reform period. However, they economical institutions, not considering their social and self-supporting character. Therefore the kolkhoz will be further forced out from the economic field of activity by the government. But this government strategy is not socially responsible, because the state did not suggest any social alternative to the people from these communities. The state operates according to the economic logic of big business and tries not to seeing the community's problems. It does not hear the voice of the Pomors or respect the choice of traditional life style by the Pomor community. Instead of the state, kolkhozy try to play the role of social bodies for the community and can do it effectively if they have a large enough fish quota from the state. If the state gives the Pomors the status of an indigenous people, it could be one

form of social support and a sign that the state regards the Pomor people as having special cultural identity. Instead of pursuing its current policy, the government should try to protect these people as a minority with a unique culture and because they have no social dividends living in the very difficult conditions of the North.

The new strategy of the Pomors is the attempt to create a new social institution in the Pomor community and shape the beaten track (path dependency). This new institution is the Pomor neighbour community of indigenous minorities, which have NGO status. This strategy gives the community a new chance for the preservation of the traditional community and unique traditional culture.

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