Reindeer herders knowledge: a worldwide phenomenon

By Johan Mathis Turi

Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH)
• More than 20 different Arctic indigenous peoples are involved in reindeer herding.

• Approx. 2.5 million domesticated reindeers (2007)

• Distributed among 28 regions in 9 countries

• Reindeer pastures cover an area of around 4 million sq. km (approx. 9-10 x size of Norway)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uralic-people</th>
<th>Altaic-people</th>
<th>Tungusic people</th>
<th>Paleo-asiatic</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saami</td>
<td>Dolgans</td>
<td>Evens</td>
<td>Chukchi</td>
<td>Komi (Uralic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nenets</td>
<td>Tofalars</td>
<td>Evenks</td>
<td>Koryaks</td>
<td>Yakut (Altaic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khanti</td>
<td>TodzhaTuva</td>
<td>Negidals</td>
<td>Chuvans*</td>
<td>Finns (Uralic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mansi</td>
<td>Soyots</td>
<td>Oroks</td>
<td>Yukagirs*</td>
<td>Norwegians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selkups</td>
<td>Dukha</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Russians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enets</td>
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<td>Inupiat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nganasan</td>
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<td>Yupik</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khets*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inuits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = isolated languages
Norway:

Reindeer people

• Sámi
• Norwegians
Sweden: Reindeer people

• Sámi
Finland: Reindeer people
- Sámi
- Finns
Murmanskaya Oblast, Russia:

Reindeer people

• Sámi
• Komi
Komi Republic, Russia:

Reindeer people

- Komi
- Nenets
Khanty-Mansisky Aut. Okrug, Russia: Reindeer people

- Khanty
- Mansy
- Komi
- Kets
Yamalo-Nenetsky Aut. Okrug, Russia:

Reindeer people

- Nenets
- Sel'kup
- Khanty
- Komi
- Kets
- Entsy
Dolgano-Nenetsky (Taimyr) Aut. Okrug, Russia:

Reindeer people

• Entsy
• Nganasans
• Dolgans
Evenkisky Aut. Okrug, Russia: Reindeer people
- Evenkis
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia:

Reindeer people
- Evenkis
- Eveny
- Dolgans
- Yukagirs
- Chukchis
- Yakuts
Irkutsky Oblast, Russia: Reindeer people

- Tofalary
Tyva Aut. Republic, Russia:

- Reindeer people
  - Tozha-Tuvins
  - Soyots
Mongolia (Khovsgal Aimag)

Reindeer people

• Dukha
Buryatia Aut. Republic, Russia:

- Reindeer people
  - Evenkis
  - Soyots
Chitinsky Oblast, Russia:

Reindeer people

• Evenkis
Peoples Rep of China (Inner Mongolia):

• Reindeer people
  • Evenkis
Amurskaya Oblast, Russia:

- Reindeer people
  - Evenkis
Sakhalinsky Oblast, Russia:

Reindeer people

- Uil’ta
Magadansky Oblast, Russia:

Reindeer people:

• Eveny
• Evenkis
• Chukchis
Kamchatky Krai (outside Koryaksky A. O), Russia:

Reindeer people

- Eveny
- Koryaks
Koryaksky Aut. Okrug, Russia:

Reindeer people:

• Koryak and others (related to Koryaks)
Chukotksky Aut. Okrug, Russia:

Reindeer people:

- Chukchis
- Chuvans
- Eveny
- Yukagirs
Alaska, USA: Reindeer people:
- Inupiat
- Yupiks
(Sámi)
Canada (NWT):
Reindeer people
Inupiat-Sámi
Greenland (Denmark):
- Reindeer people
- Inuits
Scotland, UK:
1 herd
(own by local people)
Concluding remarks

- reindeer herding - “nature’s own choice” for the North?

- Reindeer herding is almost identically organized wherever it is practiced. In fact, it represents a common circumpolar model for the management of the remote barren pastures in northern regions:
  - Reindeer herding has been developed over an extensive period of time, adjusting itself specifically to Arctic regions
  - It has enabled the sustainable use of marginal natural resources – resources that could otherwise not be used
  - The organisation and operation of the livelihood may appear to be simple, but it has proved to be efficient and sustainable enough to keep reindeer herding cultures almost unaffected from time immemorial to the present