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## **Taking ski tracks to the North. The invention and re-invention of Norwegian polar skiing: Sportization, Manliness and National Identities**

### **Abstract**

Norwegian explorers have for more than a century made a strong presence in the Polar areas. One of their distinctions was their dedicated use of skis. This article examines the Norwegian affection for skiing in the polar areas. The will to quest and conquer the polar extremes as well as the inland glaciers of Greenland, has been a part of Norwegian polar history, to such a degree that it can be termed a national characteristic. Through primary and secondary literature and other sources, the article discusses the historical background of this cultural practice, and how it has been able to survive into modern times. What is the significance of these modern expeditions which might otherwise be seen as mere repetitions of historic ventures? The article discusses polar skiing in the perspectives of modern sport, national identities and manliness.

Keywords: Skiing, polar history, explorers, sportization

### **Introduction**

Between 1996 and 2002, 88 Norwegian “sports expeditions” travelled to Greenland.<sup>1</sup> They were not the only ones. Among other nationalities Britons topped the list with 92 expeditions. However, when asked by the Danish Greenland authorities who had registered all the expeditions what they intended to do when in Greenland, the Norwegians stood out. While people from other nations listed kayaking, climbing, fishing, flora and fauna observations and some skiing, the Norwegians’ response to the question: ‘What to do when in Greenland?’ was obvious: ‘To ski across the inland ice.’ Sixty-six percent of the Norwegian expeditions had this goal in mind as opposed to just four per cent of the British.<sup>2</sup>

This article examines the Norwegian affection for skiing in the polar areas. Why does the will to quest and conquer the polar extremes as well as the inland glaciers of Greenland, continue to be a national characteristic, even in modern times? How is such a skiing tradition able to survive? What is the significance of these modern expeditions? They might be seen as mere repetitions of historic ventures, undoubtedly more brave and more strenuous than today’s missions?

In order to answer these questions the trend towards regarding the polar areas as sports arenas, with a focus upon achievements and records, is examined from a historical as well as a contemporary perspective. This is also seen from a perspective of national identity: How have Norwegians come to view themselves as natural polar explorers with special capacities in the field? As most of the participants in this practice are men, has this something to do with masculine ideals? Such a discussion cannot avoid an elaboration of the development of modern sport itself. Hence the perspective of sportification will be introduced and debated.

Sources for this study are mainly literature authored by the explorers themselves and partly secondary literature.<sup>3</sup> Most explorers, both in the pioneer and the modern eras, considered their achievements worthy of a book. This was their presentation of the hardships they had endured. To make use of the explorers own, maybe polished, and certainly edited versions of the events, raises challenges. They are first-hand sources. At the same time they often were the only persons present, and they wish to appear and be perceived in favourable ways – both in the public sphere and among their fellow explorers. They also want their stories, to be told – and sold, usually as dramatic and exiting accounts. The development of communication technology has not altered this. While the pioneers struggled to pen their diaries and notebooks by hand in a freezing tent, modern explorers communicate more directly; they write blogs or can be followed on the internet with daily communications. The book of the expedition, often together with a film,<sup>4</sup> though, still seems to be an end goal also for modern explorers.

## **Historical background**

Few, if any, countries in the world can display a national culture where skiing is given such a prominent role as Norway. More than a century ago when modern sport experienced a break-through, skiing found its role as a “national sport”. This was partly connected to the political situation of the nation and a search for national symbols. Norway, between 1814 and 1905, although being a state with its own constitution and parliament, found itself in a political union with Sweden. This meant Swedish supremacy concerning foreign policy and that the Swedish king held the highest ranking political position also in Norway. Although parliamentary rule, introduced in 1884, diminished the king’s power, the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a growing political struggle for complete independence. It also saw a cultural movement which could be interpreted as a “chase” for Norwegianness.<sup>5</sup>

The search for cultural and political independence meant a cultivation of practices and artefacts which could be presented as particularly ‘Norwegian’. In this process, skiing stood out as an apt symbol which could fit the young nation. Skiing could be linked to history, to heroes and heroic moments. It could also be linked to everyday life in the pre-industrial society. In the winter season, which could last up till half a year in some inland districts, skis were a much used appliance for transport on snow-covered terrain. Hence, skiing was an activity familiar to the peasant, the archetype of the Norwegian common man, at least according to the emerging national ideologues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the new national symbols were gathered from imagined peasant culture – it did not matter that numerically the inland peasants were outnumbered by their poorer compatriots who lived by the coast and practised a combination of meagre agriculture and fishing to make a living. The inland peasant and his culture came to be the national figure. Hence, skiing, and not rowing or sailing, came to be considered as a particularly national exercise.<sup>6</sup>

History gave skiing a special position in the “myth making” of the Norwegians. Medieval Viking kings liked to boast of their capacity on skis, and mythological and legendary figures from the same era were often characterized by special skiing abilities.<sup>7</sup> Norse mythology even had a god and a goddess for skiing, Ull and Skade. Archaeological findings indicate that skis have been used over a long time span. In Norway rock carvings from 2600 BC have been found which suggest that skis were already in use at that time. The oldest remnants of skis so far registered have been found in moors in Russia. They date ca 8000 years back.<sup>8</sup> Similar historical evidence have also been found in Finland and Sweden, which makes it fair to conclude that over several millennia there seems to have been a more or less steady tradition of ski use in Scandinavian areas. When Norse Vikings settled in Greenland about one thousand years ago they brought skis from Norway, as their preferred wood for ski making, did not grow there.<sup>9</sup> It should also be mentioned that a substantial part of this skiing tradition was provided by the Samis, the indigenous people who settled in the Northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

The clamour for Norwegianness in the 19<sup>th</sup> century also relates to national romanticism. The literature of the period elevated skiing to something particularly national – as well as masculine and fearless. Skiing acquired a symbolic potential which kept the idea of skiing alive in a period when practical skiing seems to have retreated to the inland valleys and the northern Saami areas. In general, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century skiing was not very familiar along the Norwegian coast and in the cities. It therefore seems fair to say that skiing as a practice for large parts of the population had to be invented in these years. For

an “invented tradition” to be successful, i.e. to function as a symbol of Norwegianness, it had to meet a popular resonance.<sup>10</sup> Due to its history and growing role in folklore, skiing had all the chances of doing that. Norwegians travelling in the polar areas with skis as vital parts of their equipment were parts of this story-making.

### **Norwegian pioneers and the polar quest**

The invention of skiing as a national sport took place parallel to an increasing interest for the polar areas, in the world in general, and in Norway in particular. Nobody epitomizes this better than Fridtjof Nansen.

During his lifetime (1861-1930) he held several roles and occupations; scientist, skier, explorer, diplomat and humanist. For his work with stateless refugees and prisoners of war, particularly in Russia and Armenia, and against famine in the same areas, he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922. However, his status as an undisputed Norwegian national hero was by then already established. It derived entirely from his endeavors as skier and explorer.

As a skier Nansen for the first time received some attention when he in 1884 crossed the mountain plateau between Bergen and Oslo on skis. He did this to take part in a skiing competition in Oslo.<sup>11</sup> The newspapers found this an original and peculiar way of travelling. As a competitive skier, though, he never excelled, his placing in the “Husebyrennet” (a forerunner to the more famous Holmenkollen races) was only ninth.<sup>12</sup> Hence, it was his polar skiing expeditions which made his reputation grow. In 1888 he set out to cross the inland ice of Greenland, together with five others, two of these of Saami origin, as Nansen wished to benefit from their anticipated expertise in skiing and polar conditions. The expedition started from the uninhabited East coast of Greenland, where they landed from a small ship that immediately left for other ventures. Nansen’s group was aiming for the West coast. Here they hoped to find one of the indigenous settlements which were known to Europeans. Nansen’s bold, or in modern terms risk-taking, approach expressed through the motto: “The West Coast or death!” was not appealing to traditional Saami winter expertise, nor is it congruent to modern outdoor life ideals, for which Nansen has become a modern icon. However, the expedition was a success. They reached the East coast and thus performed the first documented crossing of the glaciers of Greenland. When they returned to Norway in the summer of 1889, what had been reserved attitudes in the public sphere at the point of their departure was turned into

national celebrations of new heroes in a new field. What was being celebrated? Apart from the triumphant feeling the young nation experienced by being *first* in something, although the greatness of this was not particularly estimated in other countries, Nansen and his compatriots emphasized that the Norwegian expedition had *skied* across Greenland. The Norwegian title given to the book of the expedition emphasized the use of skis, while the English and French translations instead highlighted that what had been performed was a *crossing* of Greenland.<sup>13</sup> As we saw at the beginning of this article, during the last fifty years the practice; “to ski across Greenland” has established itself as a national tradition,

In the 1890ies, the pioneers of polar exploring had their heyday. In 1893 Nansen attempted to reach the North Pole with his ship Fram. His idea was that once frozen in the polar ice, ocean currents would lead the ship to the Pole, and Nansen and his men would become the first humans on the North Pole. The plan did not involve too much physical effort and its sportive content was not obvious. However things took another turn after a year and a half, as Nansen’s impatience with the slow progress of his ship, locked up in the ice, led him to think otherwise. He decided that he and another crew member, Hjalmar Johansen, would ski towards the North Pole assisted by sled dogs. This was a risky venture, but Nansen was the leader of the expedition, so they set out heading north. Eventually they had to give up at 86° 14’ north, or ca 270 miles, covered by difficult and cracked ice, from the Pole.<sup>14</sup> After a dramatic and fortunate struggle back, they managed to return home in 1896, three years after their departure. Nansen and Johansen did not conquer the North Pole, but at least they had gone further north than any human being before them. The geographic distance covered was a new record in North Pole exploration. In Norway, the figures 86°14’ became legendary and as defining for their time as any later sports record.

The record for farthest North expeditions was by then held by the American army officer, Lockwood. He reached 83° 24’ northern latitude on a dog-sledding journey, with an unknown Inuit from Greenland as his dog handler. The conquest of the North Pole was in 1909 claimed by Robert Peary from the USA, a claim that has been disputed ever since.<sup>15</sup>

However, in Norway Nansen’s feats spurred national celebrations. After the Greenland expedition in 1889 the not very sports-interested author Knud Hamsun, later Nobel laureate, wrote ‘Nothing more important seems to have ever happened in Norway than the return home of Nansen and his comrades’.<sup>16</sup> His sarcasm could not disguise that something extraordinary was going on. Sixty thousand people welcomed the heroes on the quay; fifty thousand accompanied them to their hotel. But this was a small gathering

compared to the celebrations which were to take place in 1896 following the abortive North Pole expedition.<sup>17</sup> The return from what in reality was a failed North Pole Expedition which had been turned into a success story, gave him the status of a national hero, a position which continued to be unrivalled for most of his living days. Through writings based on his expeditions, he made a massive impact also internationally. Within three years his book from the Greenland crossing (1888-89) was translated to three major European languages; English, German and French.<sup>18</sup>

Nansen was the founding father and continued to be a model for the Norwegian polar exploring tradition. After his death his status was upheld. His writings were considered healthy, good reading especially for Norwegian boys. Chapters from his books were given status as part of the national curriculum for schools. Only recently have biographies and studies been published that nuance the picture of the national hero, bringing up sides of the man that are not entirely heroic.<sup>19</sup> Yet, his status as a national icon has not been brought into serious doubt.

Nansen's expeditions established a framework whereby polar expeditions became a matter of national honour in a larger international competition between nations and their representatives. National rivalry was a key feature. The polar explorers often staged themselves and their expeditions as scientific. After all they were exploring hitherto unknown territories. Polar exploration was also considered to be an honourable science since it was so obviously a heroic science, with large self sacrifices. Hence, by the help of Nansen, Norway had won a great victory on the 'battlefield of science'.<sup>20</sup>

During the next few years Nansen and another Norwegian, Roald Amundsen rivalled with opponents from larger nations. While Nansen failed to beat American Robert Peary in claiming the North Pole as first-comer, Amundsen's victory over the Englishman Robert F. Scott in the 'race to the South Pole' in 1911 is among the most frequently recounted races of all time.<sup>21</sup>

## **Expanding the map**

In addition to Greenland and the Arctic, also the Antarctic had attracted considerable interest among explorers around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The global map gradually became more and more complete and devoid of "blank areas". In Europe, science and the wave of romantic literature had transformed the image of savage and infertile regions into 'unexplored' and even 'sublime' virgin territory. The 'wilderness' bore an irresistible attraction, at least for the people with the power of such definitions, and had to be

conquered – more than once. In the literature penned by the explorers themselves, like Fridtjof Nansen, the quest for the North emphasized individuality, personal competency and inventiveness.

Civilization's conventional values were set aside during the expeditions, at least in some of the dramatic moments that were conveyed to the public back home, as when the dogs in Roald Amundsen's South Pole expedition experienced the fate of being their own and partially the men's meat reserves, or when Nansen and Johansen shared sleeping bag, to keep the body temperature at a reasonable level. Nature was a true and neutral judge of human fighting spirit in a fair game, where no unscrupulous official could influence the outcome.<sup>22</sup>

Different cultures and groups found an interest in this practice; Britons, Americans, Russians, Japanese, French, Italians, Germans and others including those from smaller nations such as those of Scandinavia. During a span of 25 years both the crossing of Greenland and journeys to the two Poles became accomplished feats. Scandinavians had the advantage of a closer geographical proximity to the northern polar regions. In Norway, winter and skiing were already integrated into the national culture and fascination for these areas could be seen as a 'natural' expansion of an existing skiing practice.

The quest for polar records can be viewed as an offspring of the colonial interest in geographical exploration. The discoverer – i.e. the first white man on the spot – was given several 'rights' by the international community. His nation could, for example, claim sovereignty over the territory and he could designate a name for the territory. During the age of imperialism cartographers were not interested in learning the terminology of the indigenous population.

However the appeal of the polar records has survived the imperialistic context out of which they arose. This is partly due to the scientific interest in the areas which was present also after they were discovered. It may nevertheless be questioned whether polar research could have been met with such interest had it not been for the fervour of the hunt to conquer uncharted territory.

The fact that Norwegians made a noticeable presence in these areas established a conviction among Norwegians that they had a natural errand in the polar fields, that their presence was more 'natural' than the presence of many other nationalities. 'The North' was often portrayed as a Norwegian 'playground'.<sup>23</sup>



To go ‘into the ice’ could be compared to the drift to ‘the West’ or ‘the South’ of other nations. While other nations’ expeditions utilised machines, dogs, other animals or simply walking and man-hauling, like Scott to the South Pole, the fact that the Norwegians had used skis as their main means of transport in their most successful ventures; Nansen’s across Greenland and towards the North Pole, and Amundsen’s South Pole expeditions, gave skis an increased symbolic value in the Norwegian context. “Two wooden planks” were the tools which had taken the national heroes to their goals and made Norwegian explorers famous. It gave skis, already a distinguishing device, a special rank in the national culture.<sup>24</sup>

During the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century skiing established itself as the national pastime, as a national identity builder in Norway through being a popular activity as well as a national symbol. Norwegians travelled and spread skis and skiing to Continental Europe and to North America.<sup>25</sup> Shortly after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was a widespread suggestion that Norwegians were ‘born with skis on their feet’.

### **Re-Invention and a new era**

The conquest of the poles in the short time span 1909–1911 was followed by approximately half a century of disinterest. After all, the Poles had been conquered through immense physical efforts, something that in the popular opinion, at least in Norway, made it natural to regard these efforts as sports achievements. Could there be more here to do from such a perspective?

Apparently there was. Commencing in the 1960s the polar areas gradually became re-discovered as challenging physical arenas, and polar exploration was re-invented.<sup>26</sup> In 1962, free from scientific ambitions, but equipped with a great admiration for Nansen and his achievements, two young men, Bjørn Staib and Bjørn Reese, decided to retrace Nansen’s ski tracks across Greenland. Since they were the first to follow his exact route, they had a persuasive claim to be ‘Team no. 2’. They were convinced that they skied “on historic ground”.<sup>27</sup>

Staib and Reese called their expedition a ‘sport’s trip’ and inaugurated an epoch marked by a new interest in polar feats and accomplishments. Greenland’s inland ice seemed to exert a strong attraction on young Norwegians with a quest for adventure. The general Norwegian public, however, viewed their exertion with a mixture of admiration and confusion. The confusion was that such feats had been done before, so what exactly was the point? The influential newspaper *Dagbladet* warned against risking lives and

spending resources on something that was bound to be nothing more than a repetition, an imitation of what the real heroes had done many years before.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, even if uncharted territories had disappeared from the map and goals had been reached, the fascination of the Poles did not wane – a parallel to mountain climbing's continued popularity. The two young men heralded a new interest in polar journeys and a new type of journey that took into account that 'everything had been done'; the Poles had been conquered and the seaway passages navigated. However, what had already been done could be done again, only in an even more extreme and special way than before. One could always go faster than anyone before. Recorded achievements could be differentiated, between men and women for example. It was also possible to do something in a more or less 'original' or 'authentic' way, even if it never could be as dangerous, or have the same significance as the great expeditions of the classical period.

This new interest of the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century could be termed a sportification of the polar exploring practice. Increasingly polar expeditions were portrayed as competitions, races, tests of strength or attempts to push limits. Polar records were no longer only concerned with the first persons to arrive at a given geographical location, but in time spent and in the ways of arriving. This also meant taking skiing as sport to an extreme and uncontrollable environment on the most deserted fringes of the earth.

A part of this was a continuous search for the best equipment that technological development provided, which again meant an increase in costs. The solution for many explorers was to enter into partnership with producers of clothing and outdoor life equipment and receive their products free of charge. The payback would be to display these items and particularly their brands at moments when they could be seen by many. Hence, those looking for finance of their polar expedition had to ensure media coverage, and in order to do that, had to appeal to a nation's polar heritage. Polar expeditions became tests on the borderline between commercialised high-tech contributions and human efforts.

### **“Unsupported” and the sportification logic**

The last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new breed of polar adventurers emerged in many countries. Even if the geographic Poles had been conquered, there were still records to be set, and a new 'first-man culture' arose among Norwegians and foreigners alike. At the beginning of this new epoch the non-Norwegians were those who were dominating. In 1978, Naomi Uemura of Japan became the first to travel alone with a dog team from

Ellesmere Island in Canada to the North Pole. In 1986, the Frenchman, Jean-Louis Etienne was the first to ski solo to the North Pole. Both received air support. Also in 1986, the American, Will Steger and his companions went by dog sled to the North Pole being the first to do so ‘unsupported’, meaning without motorized equipment, supplies from air or pre-organized depots. This marked a turning point at a time when the concept of being ‘unsupported’ was taking shape and was spurring discussion among the explorers themselves. For example, the main criticism of Steger’s expedition from “unsupported” purists has been that dogs were used. Steger’s intention, which he did not follow up, had also been to return from the pole without support, which he viewed as being more in the spirit of earlier pioneers. (It might be more accurate to say more in the line with their possibilities.)

The 1988 centennial of Nansen’s journey across Greenland inspired a new turn of authenticity-seeking among the adventurers. As technological development had progressed, resulting in better clothing and more efficient equipment, several expeditions made a point of using the same equipment as the pioneers. Only then would an explorer experience a true challenge in the right spirit.

Sportification – or sportization – can be defined as achievement orientation and competitive thinking within a rational framework.<sup>29</sup> The dynamics of sportification must be seen in their historical context, but they would ideally push for a development where the characteristics of modern sport will occupy the front seat. Hence, we should ask: How does sportification in the extreme conditions manifest itself? How can competitiveness in this field be organized in a rational way?

Observations of the expeditions reveal that races and records have become dominant values and goals for participants in polar expeditions. This will also influence the thinking around these kinds of polar activities. The concrete outcomes of sportification are (amongst others) lighter and better equipment, improved preparation, training, and so forth, all in order to improve the physical achievements, i.e. to go faster, to cover longer distances and to master challenging conditions.

A consequence of this development has been that the performers, in the absence of a traditional governing body of the field, have made rules to be observed and followed, for a performance to be accepted as a true achievement. As in other modern sports, the purpose has mainly been to make achievements less easy and more challenging. For polar explorations this would mean to disallow some sorts of modern equipment which would or could make polar travels more comfortable. Quite early in the new era the use of

motorized vehicles would make an expedition irrelevant from such a perspective. Later, the use of dogs would be considered beyond the rules. Eventually, the rule of making ‘unsupported’ polar explorations, meaning expeditions that were explicitly self-carried and self-supported, gradually emerged from around 1990. The rules are not undisputed though. E.g. the use of wind power (sails, kites) is not accepted by some influential web sites, because it means to step over the definition of human power. The argument that some of the pioneers used sails (e.g. Nansen on Greenland in 1888) has not altered this.<sup>30</sup>

Revealing of its cultural context, the ‘unsupported’ ideal was partly presented as an eco-philosophical and sustainable ideal. But at its heart was a clear sporting philosophy: the ideal established the limits inside which expeditions in the polar areas had to operate if they were to be acknowledged as what they aimed to be – true and honest challenges; man against itself and nature. Violation of these norms would be unsportsmanlike.

‘Unsupported’ has since then become a credo and a defining argument for modern polar treks. The urge for participants to follow and observe the same rules and regulations undoubtedly invokes familiarity to regulations that guide and define modern sport. Hence, more expeditions emphasized human power and enhanced ecological awareness. The development built up to a new concept of what ‘correct’ polar journeys ought to be like. It can be interpreted as an attempt to dress ecological and authentic principles on a sportified physical activity taking place under extreme conditions.

Norwegian explorers decided to sign up to the new polar credo of going ‘unsupported’. In 1990 Børge Ousland, Erling Kagge and Geir Randby set out with the intention of being the first to reach the North Pole without support. Teams before them had used designated depots, they had equipment and provisions airlifted for them, or they had sled dogs to help them transport provisions. When the Norwegian trio set out, they agreed with one of their rivals, the Englishman, Sir Ranulph Fiennes, that ‘everything that helped us physically to travel north, should be regarded as support’, and thus excluded.<sup>31</sup>

In 1990, the Norwegian trio became part of a race between teams from five countries, all aiming to be the first to reach the pole, exclusively and under their own steam. There was no specific starting point or departure time. The contestants themselves decided where and when to begin, due to among other things length of daylight and calculated ice conditions along the route. They all started late winter or early spring. The British couple, Fiennes and Stroud, started from the Soviet Union as the first Western expedition to do so since 1917. After 57 days on skis, Ousland and Kagge reached the pole. None of the others did. However, the Norwegians’ feat was considered controversial by their British

rivals. The third man of the team, Randby, had had a misfortune injuring his back. Eventually it became necessary to evacuate him by air. After his withdrawal, Ousland and Kagge continued to the pole. They stressed that they did so without receiving provisions from the plane that evacuated Randby along with his share of food and equipment. But Fiennes claimed that air contact was a rule-breaker for unsupported trips. He even compared it with drug abuse on the part of Olympic athletes.<sup>32</sup> Even if the media and the public opinion did not come out to support Fiennes, neither in England, and certainly not in Norway, the accusations made some disturbances to the achievement.

Nevertheless Kagge and Ousland became another famous duo in Norwegian polar history. Parallels with Norway's pioneer heroes, Nansen and Amundsen, were drawn both by the media and by the two men themselves. There was no lack of international attention, which in turn increased interest at home. Erling Kagge wrote a book about the North Pole trip which, rather ironically it turned out, had the title 'The Last Race'.<sup>33</sup> It is possible that Kagge actually believed that his and Ousland's expedition in 1990 was the final race – that it had settled the score. The North Pole had been conquered, once and for all, unsupported. However, Kagge himself was quick to think otherwise and so did many other adventurers. Rather than being the last race, the 1990 expedition was the start of a new era, when a stricter variant of polar extreme sport would be practiced. And many would be the challenges.

In retrospect the introduction of the unsupported rule made the challenges seem clear. At the South Pole, Sir Ranulph Fiennes and his partner Mike Stroud replicated what Kagge and Ousland had done in the North. Then polar crossings or *traverses* became achievements to strive for. At the North Pole this meant to move from coast to coast, over the frozen Polar Ocean from Russia to Canada, or the other way around. Due to varying sea ice conditions one had to be prepared for many forms of transport: to walk or ski on the sea ice, alternatively to paddle over short stretches where the sea ice had broken up. Børge Ousland reported he even had to swim to get from one ice mass to another on his way to the North Pole.<sup>34</sup> In the Antarctic, crossings meant to traverse the continent, walk or ski on snow- or ice-covered land from coast to coast. In both cases the Poles became the midway point.

Such trips could also be replicated, only alone. From 1993 unassisted, unsupported trips were the ultimate challenges. Hence, explorers registered new first unsupported trips to both poles; first solo, first woman, first return trip, first traverse, explorers could also try to be the first to start from a certain point, or to be the first to start in the winter season,

even first disabled(!) person was registered. As in the pioneering age a surprisingly large amount of these “firsts” continued to be Norwegians.<sup>35</sup>

### **National identities**

The polar areas are usually covered with ice all year around, with a climate so hostile that no humans have settled there for permanent dwelling. On the fringes of these areas Inuit people have eked out a living and more nomadic groups have also tried to harvest from the riches of nature (fishing and hunting) without living permanently there. The existence of these groups is important as they possess vital knowledge about techniques for transport and overall survival skills – knowledge which open-minded travellers had the opportunity of learning.

In the period when the traditional national heroes were created, one of the things that supposedly distinguished the culture of Norwegian polar exploration was the heroes’ will and interest to learn from the few peoples who managed to survive in these areas.<sup>36</sup> The Inuit mastery of nature impressed many including Fridtjof Nansen. The Norwegians partly built their (successful) polar strategies on a more humble approach to cultural survival techniques than the British who, according to Francis Spufford, could be blamed for their more arrogant approach to the areas they aimed to conquer.<sup>37</sup>

The Norwegian way was to learn from other cultures and to claim the advantages of home-made skis and skiing as fortunate ways of polar transport. In his book of the Greenland expedition, Nansen included a long chapter on the history of skiing, where he stated that ‘skiing is the most national of all Norwegian sports’. Hence, Norwegians ought to have a natural advantage in these areas.

National prestige also had a financial side. While Nansen as a relatively unknown young scientist had to go abroad to Denmark to raise money for his Greenland crossing, the situation was different to that prior to the North Pole expedition in 1893. Nansen had become a national hero and the Norwegian. Parliament granted financial support. The state invested economic capital – money – to harvest symbolic profit – honour. What kind of honour? Was Nansen’s expedition foremost competing among the nations to set records, or was it to advance scientific knowledge? Parliament saw it as both. The two purposes combined to strengthen the expedition. However, reaching the North Pole was the most important. Here national prestige was invested. Therefore it was of utmost importance for the ship’s crew who were to be the expedition members to be Norwegians. For the scientific personnel on board this was not as important. After all the

relevant Norwegian qualities defined by Nansen consisted of ‘courage, wisdom and toughness’.<sup>38</sup>

The outcome, when the expedition returned in 1896, fulfilled the wildest expectations. Even though the North Pole was not conquered, this was soon forgotten and overshadowed by the fact that they had been further north than anybody before them. The entire crew returned home safe and sound. To claim that the explorers’ feats had united the nation and generated international admiration is an exaggeration, but points to the reported ambience of the time. The change of plans during the expedition; that Nansen and Johansen made an effort to reach the North Pole on skis, instead of drifting passively with the ship, altered the tale of the expedition. Now hardships on skis could come to the forefront in the story of heroes. It was ‘...the greatest proof of physical and mental endurance ever suffered by human beings’ according to Sir George Baden-Powell.<sup>39</sup>

Could a polar expedition unite the people? A parallel to other physical achievements is evident. The ability to unite presupposed that the achievements were non-controversial in nature and content. So what seemed to unite was the recognition of courage, strength and the ability to survive, and the deep pride over the fact that Norwegians stood out as shining examples of such virtues. The historians Drivenes and Jølle in this respect have compared the celebrations of the polar journeys to a royal wedding: Much ado while it is on, while its long-term political importance can be debated.<sup>40</sup>

A classic way of portraying national identities is by form of representation in an ‘us vs. them’ dichotomy. This was particularly clear in the famous ‘Race for the South Pole’ where Roald Amundsen and his crew represented ‘the Norwegians’ in a competition in polar force and competence against ‘the British’, represented by Captain Robert F. Scott and his team. The two groups set out to reach the geographical South Pole in 1911 using different equipment and arguably had a different approach to the venture. These differences have later been attributed to a national identity discourse and also to the outcomes. The race ended in triumph for the Norwegians, who ‘conquered’ the South Pole as the first human beings ever on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1911. It ended tragically for the British. Scott and his men managed to reach the Pole only to find out that their rivals had arrived there more than a month previously. On their return from the pole they all succumbed to the extreme conditions; frostbite and a lack of nutrition.

The destinies of the two expeditions went into national discourses. In Norway the success was partly explained by the use of skis – by then, a distinguished Norwegian practice and a symbol of Norwegianness – as well as the thorough preparation and the will to learn

from others, including more 'primitive' cultures. The British failure was explained by the Norwegians as precisely the opposite – the lack of all these. The British self-inquiry did not arrive at any clear conclusions. Explanations varied from heroic tales of men struggling against conditions which really were impossible for civilized men to handle, to cultural explanations which allowed the myths to live on, for example, that 'the English love their heroes to die'.<sup>41</sup> The interpretation of the 'defeat' involved finger-pointing at the opponents for not acting properly, of unfair play. Since the days of Ernest Shackleton the Antarctic had been considered by the British as their playground. As a representative of British tradition, Robert F. Scott was regarded as having the right to be the first man on the South Pole – a right which Roald Amundsen denied him in a rather ungentlemanly way. Amundsen's expedition was e.g. willing to use their dogs as a meat reserve for themselves and the other dogs. Scott was willing to eat his ponies, but drew the line at his dogs.<sup>42</sup> In other words, the strategies and behaviour needed to survive in such conditions suggested that the Norwegians were somewhat un-civilized in themselves.

The English of this period could construct a history of men who were brave together; men who had great visions. In later years, more self-critical viewpoints have emerged. Recent literature has emphasized that although this bravery was expressed with 'appalling understatement',<sup>43</sup> it could not disguise a dismal incompetence. They were 'uniquely unprepared for the job', according to Francis Spufford. In this connection almost a century later, Charles, Prince of Wales, gave his distant relative Sir Ranulph Fiennes – one of the foremost in the modern generation of British explorers – a rather unfortunate compliment when he referred to one of his expeditions 'a mad and suitably British enterprise'.<sup>44</sup>

However, as the sportification logic and modern explorers took over towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this did not mean that national identity lost its bearings. We are following 'in the ski tracks of the pioneers', Bjørn Staib proudly stated in 1965.<sup>45</sup> When the modern Norwegian heroes succeeded in the rather exclusive exercise of skiing to the extremities of the earth, they were particularly anxious to stress their belonging in a national tradition. Having reached the North Pole for a second time in 1994, this time alone, Børge Ousland claimed that he represented the same spirit and stamina as Nansen and Amundsen: '... I am convinced that I have been able to do this because we Norwegians have struggled for centuries against the forces of nature. It is our Viking heritage and the legacy of Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen that inspired me.'<sup>46</sup>

The media representation also enabled the Amundsen vs. Scott rivalry, Norway vs. England, to be re-lived once more eighty years later through the Erling Kagge vs.



Ranulph Fiennes contention on the Antarctic. In the Norwegian polar discourse Fiennes was very close to being labelled as a new version of Robert F. Scott.

That the Norwegians saw such a parallel says much about their eagerness to construct a national self-image based upon certain characteristics. Fiennes, after all, had been labelled ‘the world’s greatest living adventurer’, certainly a British distinction, but nevertheless met with some global approval.<sup>47</sup> The extent of his achievements is unrivalled. He has reached both Poles on foot, circumnavigated the globe and climbed the ‘third pole’; Mount Everest. The Norwegians, through Kagge, chose nevertheless to focus on the negative aspects. As Scott, although brave, he had failed because of insufficient preparation and inadequate equipment. The only difference between Scott and Fiennes was that the latter could be saved by the Twin Otter, the small airplane used in rescue operations. Fiennes, like Scott, was not lacking in courage, but competence. The Norwegians of the 1990s were hard to men like Fiennes, who at that time had had a few unsuccessful expeditions. It was considered arrogant to refuse to learn from mistakes and to continue to haul excessively heavy sleds. Fiennes was ‘the Sisyphus of the pack ice’<sup>48</sup> who displayed a gap between ambition and ability. – Fiennes himself has not downplayed this national rivalry: ‘For nearly 40 years I’ve had a constant problem with them [the Norwegians]... You need healthy competition’.<sup>49</sup>

The British-Norwegian and British polar rivalry should, however, not overshadow the fact that also other nationalities have found an interest in polar adventuring. Japanese, Americans, Russians, Canadians, French, Koreans and others have made a strong presence in the tracks to the Poles. Other Scandinavian nations, Finland and Sweden, have also been involved, after the pioneering achievements of the Finnish-Swede Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld in the 1870s.

### **Manliness**

Polar exploring has been a field dominated by men. Skiing in the extremes thereby invites tales of masculinity and bravery. The gendered adventuring could certainly be a topic by itself. Here we can only mention some of the examples.

Polar struggles and manliness both, in their traditional forms, seem to require an element of bravery, for example, fearlessness or toleration of pain. When it comes to polar skiing though, the tales acquire additional flavours. Ranulph Fiennes described the main challenges of polar exploring in three words: deprivation, stress and physical pain.<sup>50</sup> Although Fiennes speaks with expertise, one could argue that such words cannot be defining, as they exist in high-level sport as well. However, what we also find in the polar

tales are more explicit forms of pain such as freezing and hunger, and the mental strains of loneliness and fear. One could also add the need for patience, simply because of the long time periods involved in such ventures. These torments are non-existent or controllable in the modern, affluent world from which most of the explorers come. They are, however, introduced again through the re-invented tradition of polar adventuring – an arena which is constituted by the self-inflicted pains it produces. As in regular sports, polar skiing represents a field where courage can be displayed.<sup>51</sup>

Fridtjof Nansen was not a character who defied freezing or other challenges. Nansen's account of his trip towards the North Pole for a long time was expected reading for every Norwegian schoolboy. This was the story of a national hero, a real man, in a winter and skiing nation. The tale was packed with dramatic incidents.<sup>52</sup> E.g. Nansen and Johansen coped with fear. As Johansen is reputed to have said in calm voice, when trying to keep a polar bear (the most lethal animal in the Northern hemisphere) at bay, waiting for Nansen to find his rifle: 'Now You must hurry up, or it will be too late'.<sup>53</sup>

The story of Robert F. Scott and his men is of course *the* story of masculine heroic death. Having used more energy than they really possessed, Scott and his men struggled under-equipped to the South Pole in January 1912 only to find that Amundsen already had been there. The pain of defeat is poignantly described in Scott's diary: 'The Pole, yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected [...] None of us having slept much after the shock of our discovery [...] This is an awful place and terrible enough for us to have laboured to it without reward of priority.'<sup>54</sup> Scott continued to write as the unavoidable fatal end came nearer. Perhaps the most famous quotation from Scott's diary is attached to one of his men, Edward Oates, an Eton old-boy. As Oates left the tent where Scott and the others were sitting, enfeebled from illness and lack of food, he spoke his last words: 'I am just going outside and may be some time.' To use an understatement like this in such a situation, as he struggled – with his frostbitten and damaged feet he could barely walk – into a blizzard to disappear, is one way to face a certain death. It was also one way for Scott to write himself and his men into a heroic death.

The efforts required during polar exploration in the pioneering age were extreme. Unlike other sporting challenges, there was rarely any possibility for changing one's mind, of withdrawing, or pulling out of the race: it was 'the West Coast or death'. To accomplish such extreme goals, 'no prisoners could be taken', no sick or injured dogs could be cared for, and no excessive empathy could be shown. It was necessary to become unsympathetic, even callous. 'Forward we *had* to go – for this all other things had to give way. It is sad that such an adventure systematically kills all your good feelings and just

leaves the cold-hearted egoist back', Nansen reflected.<sup>55</sup> The emotions are perhaps not very different from what a normal egocentric sports person goes through. However, the polar context makes it a more pressing reality.

Can this 'original' way of experiencing polar hardship be reconstructed in modern times? The technological development of equipment has made the physical side of the expeditions easier. However, this physical 'ease' can be, and is, offset by unsupported lonely struggles. The physical challenges of unsupported modern polar expeditions are immense. Polar bears, crevasses and other dangers are constantly present stressing surroundings. Nonetheless, the fear factor can never be the same in modern expeditions. The development of satellite communication has made mental aspects less harrowing. When rescue and assistance is just a phone call away, the element of danger becomes less mortal. This is not to say that injuries, frostbite and pain can be just as troublesome as before; moreover, the mental pressure is still there. Børge Ousland describes fear, isolation and depression as things to overcome in order to reach his goals. In 2002 this meant three months of solitude in the northern arctic. He had to 'peel away all layers of civilization'.<sup>56</sup>

Manliness is cultural as is femininity. Polar pioneers were exclusively, men. In the modern version women are entering the field, although males still dominate. The will to be a heroic male adventurer, who overcomes gruelling physical struggles, fighting his way with "hardihood, endurance and courage", as Scott portrays the experience,<sup>57</sup> still seems to be a vital ingredient in men's polar narratives. This aspect of the story does not seem to be as prominent among the female adventurers who focus instead more on contemplation and feel-good components.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps women do not wish to buy into the conception of polar adventures as masculine and exhibitionistic tests of strength. Instead the female presence in these extremely hostile environments can associate to trivialisation and de-romanticisation, according to Anka Ryall.<sup>59</sup> Certainly the Norwegian discourse on polar trekking invites the conclusion that solid preparation and planning can enable both men and women to master a polar adventure.

However, if we compare Norwegian and British expeditions, the differences stand out also among women in a way that can lead us to believe that gender differences are not always the primary explanatory factors. The expeditions led by e.g. Liv Arnesen and Monika Kristensen certainly also represented the traditional Norwegian "preparation" discourse, perhaps more than a gender based discourse. Could it be that British women, along with their male counterparts, differ from their Norwegian colleagues of either sex in relation to issues such as heroism and the pain involved in reaching heroic status – as

suggested in the story of Ann Daniels and Caroline Hamilton, the first all-female team to walk to both geographical poles?<sup>60</sup>

## Future?

Polar skiing has increasingly come to resemble long-distance cross-country skiing under harsh conditions. Standardization is one of Allen Guttman's seven characteristics of modern sport.<sup>61</sup> As tracks and routes have been established, at the end of the day it comes down to being the fastest. This has, among other things, attracted Olympic gold medallists looking for new challenges. Vegard Ulvang and Knut Holmann, with Olympic victories from 1992 and 2000 respectively, both have felt the joy at a certain time of being record holders in the exclusive sport of Greenland crossings. It will take some time though before their recorded times will be as legendary as other winter sports records, or for that matter Fridtjof Nansen's famous 86° 14' North.

Was there a popular resonance for these re-invented traditions? When Børge Ousland, together with South African Mike Horn, set out in 2006 on their hardest trip ever, to become the first to reach the North Pole in the winter darkness (another differentiated 'first'), Norwegian media were conspicuously silent. As with all cultural phenomena the interest for the new polar heroes is not constant. Maybe the 1990s were the heydays, when the 'next great challenges' were in abundance. Ranulph Fiennes possibly pointed to this when in 2001 he said: 'There are only two poles and me and my rivals from Norway and places have been battering away at them for 30 years and the only ones left are gimmicky: you have to go by camel or motorbike or [something] to be first.'<sup>62</sup>

However, the fascination for doing things by oneself is another matter. Whether Norwegians will continue to travel to Greenland to ski in the tracks of their national hero Fridtjof Nansen is still uncertain though. Perhaps more than traditional skiing, this is a sport that is dependent both on cultural interest and natural climate.

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<sup>1</sup> So-called sports expeditions had to be granted permissions from Danish Greenland authorities (Dansk Polarcenter: [www.dpc.dk](http://www.dpc.dk)) to perform activities in Greenland. They registered every application.

<sup>2</sup> [http://dk.nanoq.gl/Emner/Landsstyre/Departementer/Departement\\_for\\_uddannelse/Forskning/Forskning/Koordinerings\\_forskningsstoette/Dansk\\_Polarcenter.aspx](http://dk.nanoq.gl/Emner/Landsstyre/Departementer/Departement_for_uddannelse/Forskning/Forskning/Koordinerings_forskningsstoette/Dansk_Polarcenter.aspx) [10 October 2005]

<sup>3</sup> Einar Arne Drivenes og Harald Dag Jølle (eds.): *Norsk Polarhistorie*. Vol. 1-3, (Oslo: Gyldendal 2004), especially Vol.1: *Ekspedisjonene*. (Oslo: Gyldendal 2004). English abbreviated version: E.A.Drivenes and H.D.Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice*, (Oslo: Gyldendal 2006). Matti Goksøyr: "Kappløp i gamle spor" in: *Norsk Polarhistorie. Bind 1: Ekspedisjonene*, eds. Drivenes og Jølle (Oslo: Gyldendal 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Børge Ousland has produced no less than seven films from his expeditions, e.g. "Alone to the North Pole" (1994) and "The Big White" (2001). <http://www.ousland.no/about-borge/films-documentaries/> (3.5.2012).

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- <sup>5</sup> Øystein Sørensen (ed.): *Jakten på det norske. Perspektiver på utviklingen av en norsk nasjonal identitet på 1800-tallet*. (Oslo: Ad Notam. Gyldendal 1998).
- <sup>6</sup> Matti Goksøy: "Nationale idrætter" – et 1800-tallsprodukt? In: Sørensen (ed.): *Jakten på det norske*.
- <sup>7</sup> Olav Bø: *Skiing throughout history*. (Oslo: Samlaget 1993).
- <sup>8</sup> The Ski Museum Holmenkollen, Oslo: <http://www.holmenkollen.com/nor/Home-Holmenkollen/Skimuseet/Skihistorie> 5.5.2012.
- <sup>9</sup> [http://www.dpc.dk/PolarfrontenDPC/3\\_04/ski.pdf](http://www.dpc.dk/PolarfrontenDPC/3_04/ski.pdf) [10.12.2005].
- <sup>10</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.): *The Invention of Tradition*. (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- <sup>11</sup> His own version of this trek: «En skitur fra Voss til Kristiania og tilbake», *Aftenposten*, March 1884. Reprinted in: F.Nansen: *På ski over Grønland*. (Oslo: Aventura, 1988).
- <sup>12</sup> *Bergensposten* 1884, no.47.
- <sup>13</sup> Fridtjof Nansen: *Paa ski over Grønland. En skildring af den norske Grønlands-ekspedition 1888-1889*. (Kristiania: Aschehoug 1890); F. Nansen: *The First Crossing of Greenland*. (London: Longmans, Green & Co 1890); F. Nansen: *Auf Schneeschuhen durch Grönland*. (Hamburg 1891); F. Nansen: *A Travers Le Groenland* (Hachette 1893). – The German title has been discussed, but can truly be ascribed to the fact that skis were not familiar in Germany at this time, and the "Schneeschuhen" was one way of explaining the use of these instruments.
- <sup>14</sup> Later calculations have determined their turning point more precisely to 86°04'
- <sup>15</sup> Sale, 130-133; Drivenes and Jølle, 210-211.
- <sup>16</sup> *Dagbladet* 1889, quoted in: E.A.Drivenes and H.D.Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice*, Gyldendal, Oslo 2006, pp. 106–107.
- <sup>17</sup> Figures for such occasions must be inaccurate given their popular nature. However, of joyful occasions only the gatherings in May and June 1945 to celebrate peace and the King's return after World War II can be compared.
- <sup>18</sup> Horst Ueberhorst: «Fridtjof Nansen and the development of skiing in Central Europe»; Lutz Eichenberger: «Fridtjof Nansen – the originator of skiing in Switzerland?» in *Winter Games, Warm Traditions*, eds. Matti Goksøy, Gerd von der Lippe and Kristen Mo (Oslo: Norsk idrettshistorisk forening, ISHPES, 1996).
- <sup>19</sup> In 2011 two new Norwegian biographies were published: Harald Dag Jølle: *Nansen. Oppdageren*. (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2011; Carl Emil Vogt: *Fridtjof Nansen. Mannen og verden*. (Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2011). This adds to a long bibliography already established
- <sup>20</sup> .A.Drivenes and H.D.Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice*, (Oslo: Gyldendal 2006)
- <sup>21</sup> E.g. Apsley Cherry-Garrard's account of the initial part of the Scott expedition: *The worst journey in the world*. (London: Constable, 1922), was translated into Norwegian in 2011: *Den fryktelige ferden*. (Oslo: Schibsted, 2011).
- <sup>22</sup> Drivenes and Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice* (2006).
- <sup>23</sup> A parallel to the (English) Alpine Club member W.C.Slingsby: *Norway: the Northern Playground*. (Findon: Rippling Yarns, 2003). First edition: (Edinburgh, Douglas, 1904). This is also discussed in Drivenes and Jølle (2006).
- <sup>24</sup> Tor Bomann-Larsen: *Den evige sne. En skihistorie om Norge*. (Oslo: Cappelen, 1993). Roland Huntford: *Two Planks and a Passion: The Dramatic History of Skiing*. (London: Continuum UK 2008)
- <sup>25</sup> E. John B. Allen: *The culture and sport of skiing. From Antiquity to World War II*. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).
- <sup>26</sup> Floris van der Merwe gives an interesting account of how the international scientific interest for the polar environment, also could give opportunities for indoor sports in the Antarctic: "A history of leisure activities at SANAE, an Antarctic research base (1970–1993) In: *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 15 (1998), 1.
- <sup>27</sup> Bjørn Staib, *Nanok. Over Grønland i Nansens spor* (Oslo: E.G.Mortensen, 1962), see also Goksøy 2004.
- <sup>28</sup> *Dagbladet* 1962, quoted in: Goksøy: "Kappløp i gamle spor" in: *Norsk Polarhistorie. Bind 1: Ekspedisjonene*, eds. Drivenes og Jølle (Oslo: Gyldendal 2004).
- <sup>29</sup> Matti Goksøy: *Idrettsliv i borgerskapets by. En historisk undersøkelse av idrettens utvikling og organisering i Bergen på 1800-tallet*. (Doctoral dissertation, Norges idrettshøgskole, Oslo 1991). See also Hajo Bernett: «Die Versportlichung des Spiels», *Sportwissenschaft* 14, (1984), 2, 141-165; Norbert Elias:

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- «An Essay on Sport and Violence» in: Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement. Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).
- <sup>30</sup> See definitions at ExplorersWeb: <http://www.adventurestats.com/rules.shtml> (1.8.2012) and debate e.g.: <http://www.icetrek.com/index.php?id=237> (17.8.2012)
- <sup>31</sup> Erling Kagge, *Nordpolen. Det siste kappløpet* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1990), 8.
- <sup>32</sup> For a discussion of this, see Richard Sale, *Polar Reaches. The History of Arctic and Antarctic exploration*. (Seattle: Mountaineers Books, 2002) 144.
- <sup>33</sup> Kagge, “Nordpolen”. 1990.
- <sup>34</sup> Børge Ousland, *Alone to the North Pole* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1994).
- <sup>35</sup> ExplorersWeb: <http://www.adventurestats.com/statistics.shtml> (12.9.2012) Børge Ousland did the first solo, unsupported travel to the North Pole in 1994. 19995: Canadian Richard Weber and Russian Michail Malakov first return trip to the North Pole. 2000: Norwegians Rune Gjeldnes and Torry Larsen first to traverse the North Pole unsupported.. Theirs was a troublesome and dramatic trip, which may explain why they have been the only ones so far to do this.2002: First female: Swedish Tina Sjögren. First disabled at the South Pole 1994: Norwegian Cato Zahl Pedersen.
- <sup>36</sup> L.P.Kirwan, *A History of Polar Explorations* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962).
- <sup>37</sup> Francis Spufford: *I May Be Some Time. Ice and the English Imagination*. (London: Palgrave, MacMillan, 1996).
- <sup>38</sup> Drivenes and Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice*, 111.
- <sup>39</sup> Sir George Baden-Powell, 1896, quoted in: Drivenes and Jølle (eds.): *Into the Ice*, 114.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid, 116.
- <sup>41</sup> Wally Herbert, English polar explorer, quoted in Erling Kagge: *På eventyr*. (Oslo: Damm, 1994) 70.
- <sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Hallam and Andrew Prescott (eds.): *The British Inheritance. A Treasury of Historic Documents*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1999), p.117.
- <sup>43</sup> Spufford: *I May Be Some Time*. 5.
- <sup>44</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2007/oct/05/features11.g21> [20 September 2011]
- <sup>45</sup> Staib, *Nanok*, 29, 104.
- <sup>46</sup> *Verdens Gang*, 25.4.1994.
- <sup>47</sup> *Guinness Book of Records* 1984. See also Ranulph Fiennes, *Mad, Bad and Dangerous to know. The Autobiography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2007).
- <sup>48</sup> Kagge, *På eventyr* (1994) 48, 70.
- <sup>49</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/moslive/article-1244964/The-secrets-success-Ranulph-Fiennes.html>. [23.1.2010] [31 October 2011]
- <sup>50</sup> Ranulph Fiennes: *Captain Scott*. (London: Coronet, 2003).
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- <sup>52</sup> Fridtjof Nansen: *På ski over Polhavet*. (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1994) 108.
- <sup>53</sup> Quoted in: Drivenes and Jølle, *Into the Ice* (2006) 97.
- <sup>54</sup> British Library (online): Diaries of Robert F. Scott: [http://ttdownload.bl.uk/app\\_files/silverlight/default.html?id=12878B6A-36B9-44DB-A940-365B21BFE524](http://ttdownload.bl.uk/app_files/silverlight/default.html?id=12878B6A-36B9-44DB-A940-365B21BFE524) [11 December 2011].
- <sup>55</sup> Nansen, *På ski over Polhavet* (1994) 29.
- <sup>56</sup> Børge Ousland, National Geographic (Online): Available HTTP: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/speakers> [22 December 2004]
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- <sup>59</sup> Anka Ryall: *Odyssevs i skjørt – kvinners erobring av reiselitteraturen*. (Oslo: Pax 2004)
- <sup>60</sup> See M. Oliver: Oliver, M. (2002) ‘Frostbite forces polar woman to abandon trek’ *The Guardian*. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/northpole/story/0,11743,707728,00.html> [30 April 2002], and follow-up articles.
- <sup>61</sup> Allen Guttman: *From Ritual to Record*. (New York: Columbia Press, 1978).

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<sup>62</sup> Richards, L. 'The January Interview', *January Magazine*. Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.januarymagazine.com/profiles/rfiennes.html>>. October 2001> [31.October 2011].

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